

GIOVANNI CHRONICLES IV

Nuova Malattia



Giovanni Chronicles IV:

Nuova Malattia™



**BY HEATHER GROVE
AND MATTHEW MCFARLAND**

CREDITS

Authors: Heather Grove and Matthew McFarland
Developer: Justin R. Achilli, Archnemesis of Internet Whiners

Editor: Ronni Radner

Art Director: Richard Thomas

Layout & Typesetting: Pauline Benney

Interior Art: Mike Danza, Michael Gaydos, Vince Locke, Drew Tucker

Front & Back Cover Design: Pauline Benney

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

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INTRODUCTION

For heAVens Sake cAtch Me BeFore I Kill More I cannot control myself
— Written on a murder victim's wall (in her own lipstick) by serial killer
William Heirens

This is the fourth and final installment of the *Giovanni Chronicles*. This epilogue concludes the events of *The Last Supper*, *Blood and Fire* and *The Sun Has Set*, and allows players to experience the more recent history of Clan Giovanni from the inside.

That's right — in the final installment, the players will not play the elders they have worked so hard to bring to power over the centuries, but Giovanni underlings, looking at the *World of Darkness* from the bottom up once again. The elder characters instead act as opponents, not in the sense that they directly and physically oppose the new characters (which would make for a quick fight), but in the sense that they act as foils to the new characters.

So, the question is, why now? After nearly 600 years of being told that their characters would play a great part in the

development and destiny of Clan Giovanni, why is the viewpoint suddenly being shifted across enemy lines?

Well, for a number of reasons. For one thing, a chronicle of elders is difficult to manage, just because of the way elder vampires tend to function. Old vampires worth their salt rarely take a direct hand in things, preferring instead to pull strings and use underlings to accomplish their ends. This approach, while fascinating to consider, makes for difficult and fractious roleplaying, not to mention that a "coterie" of elder vampires is unlikely. The shift in character allows for a more hands-on approach — and there is much more at stake for these characters than for the elders (the destruction of the Shroud and the Apotheosis notwithstanding).

Another reason is practicality. *The Last Supper* was released in 1995. For any number of reasons, the troupe

whose characters began as neonates in 1444 may not be the same as the one that began as ancillae in 1666, or as elders in 1848. This approach allows a Storyteller to begin with an entirely new troupe, if necessary, or a mix of old and new players.

The final reason for this change is that it forces the players to diversify the type of characters they make. If a player created a charismatic Setite character who achieves his ends by infiltrating religious institutions, and then tries the same thing with his new character, the Setite is going to be much more practiced, and will probably keep an eye on the local churches, to boot. The players must construct characters with new methods and ideas, lest elders who are undoubtedly their betters at traditional power games beat them.

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

For the benefit of those who have not played the first three titles in the *Giovanni Chronicles*, a (very) brief synopsis follows.

The Last Supper: In Italy, in 1444, 13 people receive invitations to the home of Claudius Giovanni, a wealthy Venetian merchant. While there, they discover that their host and his 12 guests are vampires, and that instead of being treated to dinner, the "guests" are meant to be dinner. This sadistic meal ends when the Founders of the Camarilla attack, forcing the vampires (known as the Conspiracy of Isaac) to flee. First, however, they hastily Embrace their hapless guests nee vessels, in hopes that they may delay the Founders. Not all of the fledglings survive the night (which ones do depends on the Storyteller's sense of drama; the process of creating such characters is detailed below), but one who does is Marianna, the intended meal and bastard child of Claudius Giovanni.

(Note that if the players actually partook in *The Last Supper*, their characters would have survived. The Storyteller's fiat applies only to chronicles in which the troupe had no part in earlier chapters of the *Giovanni Chronicles*.)

While in the Founders' custody, the Conspiracy's childer receive a visit from Durga Syn, an elder Ravnos with powers of divination. She reveals that the vampires, known as the Children of Isaac, have a great role to play in the story of the Necromancers, and they must be allowed to do so. Hardestadt, a Ventrue elder and leader of the Founders, declares then that the hapless childer shall be used to expose and destroy the Conspiracy of Isaac and, should they fail, they will die with their sires.

The aforementioned conspirators mean to destroy the Cappadocian clan and to establish Augustus Giovanni as a new Antediluvian. Despite the fledglings' best efforts, however (or because of them, as they may have chosen to throw in with their sires), Cappadocius dies at

Augustus' hands. The Giovanni family, in the ensuing years, destroys most of its parent clan, becoming in itself a clan in the true sense of the word. The Founders take the Conspirators of Isaac into custody (where they may very well remain to this night[®]). The Children of Isaac are left to fate, to do as they will.

Blood and Fire: Over two centuries after *The Last Supper*, the Founders summon the Children of Isaac and charge them with a new responsibility. They have discovered the Giovanni plan, using magics and theory advanced by Cappadocius himself, to somehow diablerize God. This process, called the Apotheosis, has prompted the theft of books from the Vatican. It is during their investigation in Rome that the children, now ancillae or elders themselves, first learn a name that will plague them for years thereafter: Ambrogino Giovanni. He has stolen clues to an ancient Chaldean text known as the *Sargon Fragment*.

Following Ambrogino's trail to the Swiss Alps, the coterie meets and converses with members of the newly formed Sabbat, and helps to cement the ideological theories that become the Paths of Enlightenment. Some of the vampires may have elected, then or later, to join the Sabbat. In any case, Ambrogino has already departed, but the Children of Isaac learn his destination from Marianna, who is also hunting Ambrogino.

The vampires follow the trail to London, where they discover that they are not the only parties looking for the *Sargon Fragment*. They are attacked first at sea by a pirate ship commissioned by the Giovanni, and then on land in broad daylight. This attack, perpetrated by Egyptian ghouls, costs the life of Lester Vance, a Tremere archon. All of this is later reported to Mithras, the Prince of London; to Valerius, his chamberlain; and to Violetta, the Toreador justicar and child of the Prince of Paris.

During the course of the investigations, the coterie finds its way to a Sabbat Tremere named Andre Mallotte. He tells the Children of Isaac little, but is in fact being used by the Giovanni to translate the *Sargon Fragment*. However, he overestimates his own control of the power and incinerates himself and a large portion of London in the Great Fire of 1666.

The Sun Has Set: Now powerful elders, the Children of Isaac follow tales of Giovanni activity back to London, and are witness to a Sabbat attack on the Camarilla. The attack, however, is a cover-up for Ambrogino's own interests; he still wishes to obtain the text that eluded him in 1666: the *Sargon Fragment*.

The coterie discovers a letter in a tomb beneath Prince Mithras' haven; the prince himself has gone missing. Valerius sits as a temporary prince, and can give little useful information about the tomb. However, the letter gives the location of another copy of the *Sargon Fragment* — Egypt.

Ambrogino learns this as well, and dispatches Giovanni agents to Egypt to obtain the document. The Children of

Isaac, however, are hot on the Necromancers' trail, as is Marianna, who has mounted a continuing vendetta against the Giovanni since her Embrace. In the sands of Egypt, the Children of Isaac are tested by the terrain and by the Setites, as are the Giovanni, but eventually end up finding the tomb, and two stone tablets that contain the *Sargon Fragment*. The tomb also contains the body of Claudius Giovanni, with enough blood left to lower the generation of one or more of the vampires present.

This chapter of the *Giovanni Chronicles* may have ended in any number of ways. The Giovanni may have captured the *Sargon Fragment* (and the true tome of power, the *Anexhexeton*), or the Sabbat, the Camarilla, the Setites or one of the Children of Isaac may have it. Marianna may also have smashed the tablets. If the Storyteller plans to introduce *Nuova Malattia* as the fourth installment in the series, she should read through the first three books and review exactly how those sessions concluded. If the troupe plans to play this part of the *Giovanni Chronicles* as a stand-alone game, the above synopsis should provide sufficient information.

THEN AND NOW

The Sun Has Set ended in 1888, while this book begins in 1929. Several events have occurred in the interim (and earlier) that come into play in this book.

CAPPADOCIUS

The Antediluvian who originally intended to bring Heaven to Earth under his rule was forced into the Shadowlands in 1444. Although Augustus committed diablerie upon him, the interference of the Children of Isaac made the Amaranth incomplete. He existed as a ghost for years, watching the world change, and not involving himself directly in the affairs of his childer. He had met his end as a martyr, and chose to remain one.

As the years passed and he watched his progeny die, he grew angry. He ignored this, however, trying desperately to be the enlightened individual he had been in unlife. He also believed that someday he would have a chance to rest forever, as the Malkavian Founder Camilla Banes prophesied in *Blood and Fire*.

Sadly, this was not to be.

LA MADRINO TEMPESTA

On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb code-named "Little Boy" on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. As devastating as this act was in the physical world, it also had far-reaching effects in the realm of the dead.

The Shadowlands, which is what wraiths call the dismal realm in which they reside, is prone to horrific storms called Maelstroms. These storms usually reflect some violent occurrence in the living world (or the Skinlands, in wraith parlance), and sometimes such an occurrence is so cataclysmic it pro-

duces a Great Maelstrom. These soulstorms are so devastating and cause such chaos in the Shadowlands that the dead set time by them. The Fourth Maelstrom occurred during the First World War. Wraiths at the time thought they had seen the worst of human atrocity. They were terribly wrong.

Little Boy fell on Hiroshima, and *La Madrino Tempesta* ("the Mother of the Tempest") exploded across the Shadowlands. The chaos it caused never really subsided and, even in modern nights, the Shadowlands aren't quite safe. This causes some consternation to the Giovanni, who rely on wraiths quite heavily, but caused even more to Cappadocius.

Cappadocius had a chance to transcend this world and the Underworld but *La Madrino Tempesta* robbed him of the chance. It also drove his mind, already unstable by centuries of waiting and inaction, into an inescapable frenzy. Blown into the depths of the tempest by the storm, he emerges in 1998 with only one thought — revenge.

Even before he returns, the players' characters should feel the storm's effects. If the troupe plans on playing downtime sessions between acts, Necromancy might get more difficult to use in the months after Hiroshima (reflected by a temporary increase in difficulty). Perhaps the characters hear rumors of a fellow Giovanni who braved the storm and has not been heard from since. Perhaps they must strain to hear any wraiths with which they speak because of the storm.

SUPPORTING CAST

The following is a list of important characters, all of whom appear in this book. Some characters were introduced in the other *Giovanni Chronicles*; some make their first (and possibly last) appearance here. This list is given as a quick introduction; more complete information, including Traits, where applicable, is given in Chapter Five.

THE GIOVANNI

Ambrogino Giovanni: The powerful Necromancer does not appear in this book, although his grandchilde, Andreas, is a major figure. Although he bears a special grudge in his unbeating heart for the Children of Isaac, he has more important things to do in the modern nights. For more information, see *Children of the Night*.

Andreas Giovanni: The head of Giovanni operations in Boston, Andreas is seductive, pragmatic and utterly ruthless. A supporter of psychology before the practice was invented, he Blood Bonds and Embraces the characters for experiments as much as for assets to the clan. For all his study and knowledge of the human (and vampiric) mind, he is not as strong as he pretends; if he survives Act III, he is paranoid almost to the point of incapacity in Act IV.

Francis Milliner: Andreas Embraces Francis Milliner in 1954. Prior to this, however, Milliner was a partner at Columbia Trust Bank, with Joseph Kennedy. Francis was blatantly passed over for promotion at the bank in favor of



Joe, and began an association with Andreas Giovanni. Francis is a superb financier, but much more interested in money than power. This is another reason Andreas likes him so much; he poses no threat to Andreas' seat of power. Francis is not wholly driven by greed, however; his grudge against the Kennedy family lasts to the modern nights.

Jason Milliner: Francis' nephew Jason is Embraced in 1959, an ambitious and intelligent member of the family. Unlike his Uncle Francis, he wants power, and may come into competition with the characters for status within the clan.

Domenic Giovanni: A rising member of the family, Domenic is nevertheless stripped of his station in Act II. Embraced in 1959, he blames the characters for his disgrace and plans his revenge on them. Although they won't know it at the time, the characters later share the stigma of disgrace, and Domenic will be there to enjoy it (in Act IV). He serves as an unliving example of the proverb, "Be careful how you treat people on the way up, because you'll meet them again on the way down."

Genevra: Genevra was never meant to be a vampire. She tricked a doddering but powerful Giovanni named del Georgio into granting her the Embrace. She accomplished this by manipulating the Inquisition into murdering his domineering wife, Carmina. Over the years, Genevra has sent other Giovanni to Final Death in similar manners while consorting with the Sabbat to further her own ends. Augustus Giovanni is aware of this and, in 1999, grants Francis Milliner permission to diablerize her, thus lowering him to the Eighth Generation. Neither he nor Francis tells anyone of this, so in Act IV, the troupe will investigate the murder of an elder Giovanni, not knowing the killer is one of their own.

Hank Rothenstein: Hank is not a vampire. A ghoul in service to Andreas, Hank has no desire to receive the Embrace. His specialty is acquisition, be it drugs, guns, booze or women. He is also very sensitive and, like many servant ghouls, somewhat mentally unbalanced, and he can therefore serve as a good ally or a dangerous enemy. (He bears no relation, by the way, to the Las Vegas Rothstein Giovanni family)

THE CAMARILLA

Quentin King: The Prince of Boston does not figure prominently into this book until Act IV, during which the Sabbat and the Camarilla clash over Boston. A Malkavian, King handles the pressure poorly. His greatest assets — the princes of six outlying provinces — are all in his thrall, believing him to be King Arthur, and they his knights.

Effie Feng: Effie poses as a Malkavian. She is not. She is a Kuei-jin, an Asian "vampire" on the run from her own people. She may act as an ally and supplier for the characters in the first act. She is not directly involved in Acts II or III, but the characters will find her to be a source of valuable (if cryptic) information in Act IV.



THE SABBAT

Max Lowell: Embraced in 1948, Max is a City Gangrel with his eye on Boston. If any of the Children of Isaac who arrive are Sabbat, he is their contact. When the Sabbat attacks in 1999, Max leads the assault (see the Synopsis below).

OTHERS

Reginald: The restless soul of a drifter who died in 1928, Reginald meets the coterie early on and maintains a dubious watch over it. He honestly believes that he is in Purgatory, working off his time, so he is not as miserable as many other wraiths.

Marianna: The child of Claudius Giovanni is in Boston as of Act II. She follows the last remaining copy of the *Sargon Fragment* here, and meets her death in Act III. However, she definitely leaves a lasting impression — how much of an impression depends on the characters.

THE CHILDREN OF ISAAC

Some of the most important characters in this book are not merely members of a rival vampiric sect or competitors within the clan. They are elders who have watched and fought the Necromancers since the clan's usurpation of

power. If the troupe has run the first three *Giovanni Chronicles*, the Storyteller should be able to choose several elders (three or fewer is probably best) to appear in *Nuova Malattia*. In choosing which elders to use, the Storyteller should let logic and the story guide her decision.

The Storyteller should let the elders' players have a say in this, preferably if they don't realize the importance of the decision they're making. Who would continue to follow the Giovanni, and to pay attention to their machinations? They have been told that they are destined to play a part in the clan's future, but is that destiny to fall before the Necromancers? Do the Children of Isaac even believe this prophecy? Also, the players should consider very carefully what their elder characters have done for the past four decades. Have they spent the time in torpor? Are they still in torpor? Have they remained with their sect or become (or stayed) independent? Are they allied with other vampires, or were they responsible for murdering one or two in a previous story? Consider that the period from 1882 (the end of *The Sun Has Set*) to 1929 (the beginning of *Nuova Malattia*) is the shortest amount of downtime that the characters have had. The world has changed drastically in so short a time. How have the elders coped? Do they still pursue their vendetta against the Giovanni, or have they given up in favor of other interests? How seriously do they take the assertion that their fate is inexorably linked to the Necromancers?

With all this in mind, the Storyteller should choose some, but certainly no more than three, of the Children of Isaac for this game. The Storyteller assumes the roles of these Kindred during this story, as they attempt to cripple the Giovanni. If the players of these characters participate in *Nuova Malattia*, the Storyteller should consult with them about how they think their characters would arrange certain situations, so as to give a more accurate portrayal of the elders. The Storyteller must be careful not to tip her hand, however — keep the elders' appearance a surprise for later in the story.

If the troupe undertakes *Nuova Malattia* as a stand-alone story, the Storyteller must create these elder characters. Refer to the above synopses of the *Giovanni Chronicles* for information on these elders' unives. The Conspiracy of Isaac (the sires of the elders who appear in this book, remember?) included all 13 of the clans presented in *Vampire: The Masquerade*. The elders appearing in this book can be from any clan, except Giovanni.

In creating the Children of Isaac, remember that they were not Embraced following seduction or a sudden attack. They were never meant to be Embraced; they were meant only as aperitifs for their sires. They each had taps in their throats and were being drained like wine casks when the Founders stormed Claudius' manse and forced him to leave the characters behind as fodder. As long and varied as their unives have been since, as much status in their chosen vampiric sect (if any) as they have gained, they have not forgotten their humble beginnings.

The Children of Isaac have met many luminaries in the World of Darkness, including the Founders of the Camarilla, Durga Syn, Ambrogino Giovanni and even the Ancient Cappadocius (albeit briefly). They were neonates when the Camarilla was new and ancillae when the Sabbat took form. They have seen the rise and fall of emperors, countries and cities. The sheer amount of history they have witnessed is staggering to imagine, and even these characters have their betters. This sense of never quite knowing who has been around longer, who speaks to (and for) which sect or elder, is one reason these mighty elders do not simply sweep into Boston and destroy the Giovanni there. The fact that they witnessed the diablerie of Cappadocius and that Augustus Giovanni knows them by name and sight is another.

In game terms, elder characters are created as described in *Vampire: The Masquerade*; they simply get more points to spend. Elders receive a 10/7/5 dot allocation for Attributes, a 20/12/8 allocation for Abilities, 10 dots in Disciplines (the majority of which should come from their clan, but nonclan Disciplines may be taken as well), 15 dots in Backgrounds and 7 dots in Virtues. This system generates elders who have been undead for approximately a century. To reflect the long unives of the Children of Isaac, you may wish to give them 95 freebie points, and begin them with a Humanity or Path

HELPFUL TRAITS

The following Abilities should be represented in the group. Given that the characters will be immersed in the subculture of the Mafia immediately after the Proxy Kiss is granted them, the usefulness of most of these Traits should be evident:

Streetwise (A character who begins with this Talent has a head start)

Subterfuge (Useful for second-guessing clients, ferreting out snitches and day-to-day survival around Andreas)

Etiquette (With a possible specialty in Mafia. As organized crime has its own rules of conduct, it would behoove the characters to know them)

Firearms

Security (Cracking safes, stealing documents, etc.)

Bureaucracy

Finance (Someone should have a rating of 2+ ideally; see "Money Matters" in Act I)

Investigation (As much for covering the group's tracks as anything else)

Law

Linguistics (Someone should speak Italian)

Occult (Not an uncommon trait; in 1929, spiritualism is a popular pastime)

Also, the Intuition Talent (which appears in the *Vampire Storytellers Companion*) would be applicable. It should be noted, however, that this gives a very loose sense of the mystical, and it is certainly no substitute for Auspex or Necromancy.

rating *three points lower* than the total of the appropriate Virtues. This represents the inevitable degeneration that vampires experience; while it is possible to have a highly principled elder, it is an expensive, demanding proposition. Humanity or Path dots can be bought with freebies, but the cost is 4 freebies per dot.

If the elder has not been active the full time (has been in torpor, for example), she gets fewer freebies, but her Humanity does not drop as much. The exact "point value" of the Children of Isaac isn't as important as their identities, their motivations and their methods. Of course they could easily kill the players' characters in combat and, since all parties involved know that, exactly what Discipline or weapon they'd use to do it isn't crucial.

In choosing (or creating) the elders, the Storyteller must carefully consider their place in both the mortal world and the Jyhad. Both the Camarilla and the Sabbat have interests in Boston that span this entire story, so an elder of either sect (or both) would be appropriate, as would a member of one of independent clans, excepting the Giovanni, of course.

CHARACTER CREATION

The players' characters begin the game as mortals, and are promptly changed into ghouls by Andreas Giovanni. As such, they should be created using the rules for generating ghouls. The characters receive a 6/4/3 allocation for Attributes and an 11/7/4 spread for Abilities. Backgrounds, Virtues, Humanity and Willpower are calculated in the same way as for Kindred, although Backgrounds such as Generation and Status are obviously disallowed. Ghouls begin with one dot in Potence and one dot in another Discipline, which their domitors (the vampires whom they serve) must know. Usually, this is a clan Discipline, but characters may choose from any Disciplines that Andreas knows, except Thaumaturgy.

When designing characters for the game, the Storyteller should keep careful track of the characters' ethnicity. It is important that some relation to a Giovanni family exists. This could be the "main" branch, the African-based Ghiberti, the Scottish Dunsirn or even the Meso-American Pisanob (see *Clanbook: Giovanni*). Of course, the characters should know little (if anything) about their family's supernatural habits; they should be distant enough relatives to have escaped the perversion so common to the Giovanni upbringing (this is important; see Theme and Mood below). However, as long as some trace of Giovanni blood runs in their veins, Andreas can justifiably consider them for the Proxy Kiss and, later, for the Embrace.

The players should design the characters as ghouls, although they begin play as mortals. Their change into ghouls occupies a good portion of the first chapter, and the Storyteller may choose to forego the choice of Disciplines until this change occurs. The characters can come from virtually any background. The only common thread must be the Giovanni. A character with a "foot in the door," i.e., who already works for the family in some capacity, be it soldier, mortician, researcher, city official, is perfectly acceptable, as is a housewife whose family owes the Giovanni money, or an accountant who does some of their books. Whatever the character's concepts, certain Traits will be helpful or essential to them during the game. These are listed below.

Also, certain Merits and Flaws should be restricted or disallowed. Only one character, if any, should be allowed to take the Iron Will or Unbondable Merits, and it should fit his concept. Likewise, the Benevolent Domitor Merit (from *Ghouls: Fatal Addiction*) is off limits; Andreas is not benevolent. Many of the other Merits and Flaws from *Ghouls: Fatal Addiction* are legitimate choices; some, however (True Gypsy and Kinfolk among them) are best made unavailable.

Merits and Flaws such as Dark Fate are certainly allowable. Having a character with Dark Fate is highly

recommended, in fact, as such a character fulfills a role in the final chapter of this book (said fate will also mean the death of the character, but such happens to those of whom fate takes notice). Any extra drama the player may evince with his death is definitely worth a few extra freebie points at the beginning of the game.

THEME AND MOOD

As a Black Dog book, *Nuova Malattia* covers some ground not entirely appropriate to all troupes. Storytellers should select their troupes carefully, or think long and hard about whether their troupe is prepared to handle matters in the spirit in which we present them. It's easy to turn this book into a mess of B-movie clichés or to reduce the troupe to a group of nervously giggling post-adolescents. Make it obvious you want the players to take the story very seriously (assuming you do). This story—indeed, the entire *Giovanni Chronicles*—isn't for everyone.

THEME

The major theme of this book is desensitization. Throughout the story, the characters are in some cases asked and in others demanded to commit some obscene acts against their fellow humans (at least, while they themselves are still human). That said, during character creation, an important question to consider, and one best asked of the players in private, is what their characters' moral limits are. Does the character consider murder acceptable under certain conditions? What about torture? Has the character ever been a victim or practitioner of rape or abuse? How does the character's Humanity reflect this? Is he grimly resigned to his fate? Has his Humanity started to crumble at its foundation? Bear in mind that during the first two chapters of the book, women's independence was just beginning to take form, and many people still held to the "woman-as-servant" ideal. There were no special hotlines to call, and most victims of incest and abuse grew up repressing their hatred, only to inflict it upon their own families later. A character who grows up in that environment might think it normal, or at least inescapable, and feel no real remorse about causing pain to others.

Along the same lines, what would the character do to survive? To get rich? What is the most important thing to the character? Whatever it is, it is about to be replaced by vitae. Mothers have sold their children for a hit of crack, and vitae is even more difficult to resist. How far will the character go, knowing that to turn back means death at best, and Clan Giovanni's disfavor at worst?

Just as important, especially considering their domitor, are the characters' views on sex. Andreas is very interested in human sexual desire and what happens to it after the Proxy Kiss. He is himself amazingly seductive, and has no problem seducing men; after all, his actual sex drive is gone, and everything else is only acting. This may touch

upon some sensitive issues among the players, and certainly the characters. After all, until the modern era, homosexuality was usually classified as a mental illness. Are any of the characters secretly (or openly) gay or bisexual? Does the very idea horrify them? Is the housewife character married with an increasingly boring sex life that she wishes she could enhance, or has she been taught that sex is nothing more than a burden she must bear? Depending on the characters' answers, they may find themselves with alien feelings as the Blood Bond takes hold, or find their libidos amplifying terribly.

The immense lust a ghoul feels must be released, just like any other strong emotion. The way in which this is done will say much about the ghoul in question and her slide into moral decay. The Storyteller can reinforce this by informing players that people their characters encounter "seem" to be flirting; hopefully they will take the bait, only to discover that what they thought was a come-on was just friendliness. Rejection might not sit well with such a ghoul, and people have killed for less, after all. This is especially true for a male character who is ostensibly straight, but has developed (and repressed) a sexual fixation on Andreas.

This story echoes the core theme of *Vampire* perhaps more strongly than any book prior to it. Humanity and morality by nature come to the fore — this is not a story about amassing Disciplines and slaying foes. Even the political angle serves to illustrate the depths to which a character must sink to achieve prominence. A character (or several) may very well drop to Humanity 0 over the course of the tale — such is the price of power.

As a final note, never push the theme on a player who has grown uncomfortable. It may be wise for a coterie to develop a "safe word" that lets everyone know when to take a time-out. *Vampire*, while not necessarily a comfortable experience, is nonetheless a game, and if a player cannot enjoy herself under the circumstances, it is the troupe's responsibility to respect that person's mores. Such a player suffers no shame — this story may simply not be her cup of tea.

MOOD

The mood of *Nuova Malattia* can best be described as forced civility. Consider: The Mafia is a highly complex, very social organization. "Respect" is a serious consideration, as not showing it to one's superior can be fatal. Meeting with an enemy boss is often done over a meal. This kind of casualness should be very unnerving for the characters at first; not only do they have to kill people, arrange brutal fights, sell drugs and find young prostitutes, they have to remember to be *polite* while discussing it! As the characters get more used to the rules of conduct that accompany the Mob, however, this forced civility may eventually become something they force on others, perhaps their own ghouls or childer. This, of course, plays back into the theme of degeneration.

PROGRESSION

This book covers 70 years, much more time than any of previous installments of the *Giovanni Chronicles*. In addition, changes occur much more quickly in the 20th century than in previous eras. The Storyteller should endeavor to create a "feel" for whatever the current decade is. The first chapter, set in 1929, should have a much faster and frantic pace — the "Roaring '20s" — than the second chapter, which is set in 1959.

Also, the characters change from mortals to ghouls to vampires over the course of the book. Some of the coterie (roughly one third) should be Embraced at the end of the first three chapters. Each chapter provides the reasons and the circumstances of the Embrace. This means that until the fourth chapter, only part of the group will be Kindred. This also means that part of the group may have amassed more status than the rest, and they may be in a position to give orders.

The coterie's scattered Embraced is done for several reasons. One is simple realism; the Giovanni do not Embrace neonates by the handful. They wait for eligible ghouls to prove themselves before granting this honorable curse. In a troupe with six players, this means the rate of Embrace should be roughly one per decade. This is still fast, but Andreas enjoys inflicting the Embrace, observing what changes is brings to the mind and soul of a person.

The second reason is story-based. It would prove inconvenient in the first and second acts if none of the group could function in daylight, and downright damning in the third. Daytime activity is an advantage that the Kindred don't possess, and if they are wise, they will not be too nasty to the "lowly ghouls"; after all, said ghouls might be testifying in court to save the business some day.

The final reason is good, old-fashioned opportunity for conflict. The characters spend the first act as ghouls, all toadying to Andreas. Then some of them are Embraced. At this point, they should realize that the only way to end the cycle of dependence on Andreas' blood (and to become "made men," of a sort), is to receive the Embrace. Likewise, the characters who are still ghouls might kiss up to the Kindred characters, in hopes that they put in a word with Andreas.

Of course, such a separation between Embraces will put some characters above others in terms of raw power. However, this is a Black Dog product, which demands a greater degree of maturity than other games. Hopefully, players in the *Giovanni Chronicles* have learned that vampires rarely fight each other directly, and that having one more dot of Potence than your opponent only matters in a physical altercation. With luck, your players will recognize this as the superb chance for roleplaying that it is, and not get caught up in "Hey, how come *she* got Embraced, and not me?" (Of course, a character saying that is just fine....)

Another element to consider is the change from mortal to servant to servant with power. Below are some ideas for how to implement these changes, along with systems for how they work in game terms.

MORTAL TO GHOUL

This change occurs in the first chapter when Andreas feeds the characters his blood. As the vitae infuses their veins, the characters gain one level of Potence and have all the traits of a ghoul: retarded aging, the power to heal wounds, the power to increase Physical Attributes, the capacity to frenzy, etc. Of course, the characters aren't told about these things and a great deal of time in Chapter One is devoted to the character's transition into ghouldom.

Mechanically, a ghoul can hold two blood points of vitae in her system comfortably, and several more uncomfortably. For each point of Stamina a ghoul possesses, she may hold an additional blood point. Drinking more than this requires a Stamina roll (difficulty 8). Success means the blood can be used normally. Failure indicates nausea and pain (the character suffers an unsoakable Health Level of bashing damage for every point above her Stamina + 2, and must purge the excess blood before using any at all).

Even if the character succeeds in holding more blood, however, she is considered to be overdosing. While overdosing, the character receives an extra dot of Dexterity to reflection a heightened reaction time, but must also check for frenzy as does a vampire (though she will not frenzy from hunger). In addition, the player must roll Perception + Self-Control (difficulty 6) each scene or suffer from bloodborne hallucinations, the nature of which are up to the Storyteller.

It is possible for a ghoul to change her own supply of blood to vitae, but it requires ingesting vitae nightly for a month. After the one-month point, the ghoul may convert her own mortal blood supply into vitae at a rate of one point per night, as long as the feedings continue. If more than three consecutive feedings are missed, the ghoul's body converts vitae to blood at a rate of one point per three nights. Imbibing vitae again halts this, but it takes another month of consecutive feedings before the conversion may begin again. Note that this is not a fact known to many Kindred, let alone ghouls, so ghoul characters should not have justification to ask their newly Embraced allies to feed them every night during downtime. Andreas, incidentally, never feeds his ghouls this often.

More information on the conversion and on overdosing, as well as many other helpful facts, can be found in *Ghouls: Fatal Addiction*.

GHOUL TO VAMPIRE

This change can come anywhere throughout the book, be it from Andreas, or one of the other players' characters (either with Andreas' approval or not). Mechanically, a neonate Embraced by Andreas is of 9th Generation, whereas one Embraced by one of the players' characters is of 10th,

diablerie notwithstanding. A newly Embraced vampire keeps whatever clan Disciplines she knew as a ghoul, and upon the Embrace is "given" two additional dots in Disciplines. These, of course, must be chosen from the Giovanni clan Disciplines of Potence, Dominate and Necromancy. The character is assumed to practice these powers during the downtime that follows the Embrace.

As far as roleplaying goes, a few concepts bear mention. The characters probably begin their slide into inhumanity before their Embrace, but it is after the Embrace that maintaining a certain level of Humanity becomes critical. Andreas will inform them that though they are now beyond the human condition, they must maintain at least some facet of it, lest they become lost to the Beast and therefore useless to him. Andreas' own obsession with the human condition has sustained him (although, ironically, following this obsession was probably what dropped his Humanity so low in the first place). He will advise them to find a vocation, a pursuit, even an ideology; something to keep them human. However, no amount of trying to stay human changes the fact that the characters are not; they are now dead in a clan obsessed with death. What may eventually happen, as it did with Andreas, is that whatever they choose to keep them human becomes an unhealthy passion, and ends up turning the characters into obsessed monsters. (Hannibal Lecter, the cannibalistic serial killer in *The Silence of the Lambs*, is an example of this. While he is assuredly a monster, he is also a doctor, a socialite, an artist and a superb chef. The book brings this out much more vividly than the film, by the way).

Another important fact is that once the Embrace occurs, the character has died, both physically and spiritually. This means that the Blood Bond, while still intact, weakens considerably. This means more for the Embraces in Act III than in Act I, of course, but the sudden absence of feeling for Andreas can be easily replaced by confusion ("I thought I loved you"), confabulation ("I think I still love you"), fear ("How could I have loved you?") or possibly even anger ("I hate you!"). If any newly Embraced neonate gives him lip, Andreas will surely bond him again. However, it should provide an interesting look at the "maturing" process, as the vampire can look at the star-struck ghouls and think, "I remember that."

As mentioned above, it is possible for one player character to Embrace another. If this occurs, the Storyteller must decide what kinks this throws into the story. Was the character justified in doing so and does Andreas think so? Does she have enough autonomy to even make such a decision? An inappropriately Embraced neonate probably won't be killed outright, but may be disdained, put down, ignored and generally forced to prove herself double-time to make up for her sire's indiscretion. Plus, she will be of higher generation than her fellows will. Hardly seems worth it, right?

FLEDGLING TO NEONATE

This change takes place at different times for different characters. The important thing to remember is that vampires tend to remain rooted in the period during which they died. Therefore, a character Embraced in 1929 probably carries slang, ideals and habits with him into the next several decades.

This is not, of course, an immutable fact of vampiric existence. Some vampires react to change better than others, and Andreas Giovanni, the characters' sire, is one of them. The adaptation to the ever-shifting tide of mortal trends depends on how much the vampire in question cares. The characters, then, get to see the Mob change and grow over the years, but might begin to miss points like national politics or sports. Of course, trying to fight this stagnation can stave off the loss of Humanity, if done in the right way.

DOWNTIME BETWEEN ACTS

What happens to the character sheet during the downtime is also important. It should, however, reflect what has happened to the character. At the start of each act, the Storyteller should require an account of each character's activities during the past years (how many varies: 30 between Acts I and II; 13 between Acts II and III; and 27 between Acts III and IV). Take into account what happened in the interim. How did the Second World War (one facet of which is discussed above), the Moon Landing, the Vietnam War, the civil rights movement, Kennedy's death, etc. affect the character, if at all? What interests has she pursued (apart from wealth and necromantic power, of course)?

Ghouls and vampires obviously have very different options for this downtime. A vampire may (and should) remain active within the clan and the Mafia, but had best remove herself from the public eye. After all, if in Act II, a character Embraced in 1929 is cavorting about at night, not having aged, never eating, the locals are likely to grow suspicious. This suspicion is lessened for ghouls, but remember that they don't age much (visibly), either. How the characters cope with this is certainly something to address.

As far as Traits go, the Storyteller should grant the characters a number of freebie points at the end of each act. A chart (below) shows the breakdown between acts, and between ghouls and vampires.

Act	Points (for Ghouls)	Points (for Kindred)
1-2	15	10
2-3	8	5
3-4	15	10

Note that Kindred receive fewer points than ghouls do. This is because of the aforementioned tendency of Kindred to have a hard time learning "new tricks." If anyone complains, you may remind them that five freebies hardly make up for the difference in power between a vampire and a ghoul (if the player of said ghoul doesn't point it out for you).

In addition to the freebie points, Storytellers may also allow characters to "shuffle" some Traits. This only applies to Backgrounds, Abilities, and Merits and Flaws. "Shuffling" traits allows a character to develop new ties and skills as her old ones decay. For example, a character starts play in 1929 with an Empathy score of 3. At the end of Act I, she is Embraced. During the interim, the player decides that her character will pay special attention to the movements of other vampires in the city. Knowing that this will not only take her further away from Humanity but also require a more complete knowledge of conversational skullduggery, she trades two of her points in Empathy for two of Subterfuge. Likewise, a character with several dots in Allies who is Embraced might find that maintaining these friendships becomes too difficult as a vampire. She might trade those points for Influence...or if she doesn't wish to let her friends go quite so easily, Retainers.

Shuffling works well for Merits and Flaws, too. For example, if a character begins play with Soft-Hearted Flaw, she is likely to be very uncomfortable much of the time, which is fine. Over time, however, she may find that the discomfort is lessening as she becomes inured to violence and suffering, although her sleep is less than peaceful, perhaps from the guilt she represses. In game terms, she has replaced the Soft-Hearted Flaw with the Nightmares Flaws.

Some Storytellers may feel that this sort of balance is unnecessary and that the players should accept losing Traits as they atrophy. If the players are willing to go along with this, good. However, if the players decide (especially en masse) that they don't want to see Traits disappear as time goes on, shuffling is an easy and fair way to keep players happy. The Storyteller must make sure the privilege isn't abused, of course. Such changes should make sense. This system is intended to give the characters an edge, not to make them unstoppable super-vampires who can easily meet any challenge.

With regard to Disciplines, Kindred progress normally. Ghouls may purchase new Disciplines, provided that 1) their domitor knows the Discipline, and 2) someone gives them at least minimal instruction in its use. For example, a ghoul in service to Andreas who wishes to learn Dominate may do so, but she will probably need to convince one of the coterie to teach her, as Andreas has little patience for instructing ghouls. Disciplines cost (current level) x 15 for clan Disciplines and (current level) x 25 for nonclan Disciplines in experience points for ghouls. Freebie point costs are 10 per dot. Depending on how far the Storyteller wants the ghouls to advance, she may either stick to the recommended maximum of one level in any given Discipline, or allow the ghouls to advance. It is unlikely that any ghoul will earn more than two dots in any one Discipline before the Embrace is visited upon him, anyway.

SYNOPSIS

Below is an Act-by-Act synopsis of *Nuova Malattia*.

Act I – First Communion: The characters begin as lowly mortals. Their connection to the Giovanni is already established, but they certainly shouldn't know that their employers are anything worse than gangsters and bootleggers. However, they receive a rude awakening, as, for one reason or another, they become recipients of the Proxy Kiss, the Giovanni term for being thrust into ghouldom.

After this first draught of Kindred blood, the Giovanni give their newest ghouls time to adjust. They are under constant surveillance for the first few nights, however, until the Blood Bond can be completed. The characters here have a chance to experience their normal, mundane lives through the filter of vitae. They find that their tempers are on edge, as are their sex drives and appetites. This section of Act I includes several scenarios to acclimate the characters to their new condition somewhat. Something, be it withdrawal, anger or desperation, should drive them back to the Giovanni in short order.

Once the bond is complete, Andreas tells the ghouls what he expects of them. Their first assignment is to "acquire" controlling interest in a speakeasy called the Red Carpet, currently dominated by Charles "King" Solomon. While doing so, they discover another of Solomon's budding business ventures: bare-fisted fighting, and the gambling accompanying it. Whether by the characters' suggestion or by their own judgment, the Giovanni decide to take over this enterprise as well, and make the characters their primary agents.

While immersed in this brutal depravity of the underworld, the characters clash with Solomon's empire again as he attempts to win back the industry. While the ghouls have a decided advantage in gunplay and violence, another problem soon arrives.

Francis Milliner, a ghoulish and a well-known local businessman, calls the characters to a meeting and asks them to undertake a special assignment for him, not Andreas Giovanni, their domitor. The mission involves a meeting taking place between King Solomon's son, a Kennedy operative, and a servant ghoulish of the Boston Camarilla. The characters are to kill the ghoulish and the Kennedy, but to kidnap Peter Solomon.

This request does not actually come at the behest of Milliner. Andreas Giovanni engineered the meeting. He has several reasons. One is to test the loyalty of his ghouls. Another is to strike at the empires of both Solomon and Kennedy. And the third is that, since Peter Solomon is now a Camarilla ghoulish, he is nominally protected from the Giovanni by the pact they made in 1528 to stay out of Kindred affairs. The Promise of 1528 keeps the Giovanni from direct interference...but does nothing to protect the Camarilla from random acts of violence by gangsters.

With any luck, the act ends with the characters completing the task successfully. As a reward, some characters will receive the Embrace, as discussed in the introduction.

Act II – The Blood of Her Enemies: The year is 1959. The Milliners have gained a great deal of status in the eyes of the Giovanni over the years. Their business deals are almost always legitimate, and the characters certainly stand to benefit from their presence. The act begins with Jason Milliner asking a favor of the coterie. This first section is mostly to get a feel for the Mafia in the 1950s. The characters also have a chance here to make a contact that they see again later: a Mafia researcher and historian named Teresa Powers. The characters may be interviewed, befriended or even seduced by Ms. Powers. They may also have to clean up after one of their own when he becomes too free with information.

However, things are not going entirely smoothly. The characters' troubles did not end with Charles Solomon. The new head of New England's mob is Raymond Patriarca, a vicious crimelord. A gang war begins, with the Patriarcas as the aggressors. As the characters deal with this, some new arrivals disrupt their nightly existence: the Children of Isaac.

Part I of Act II concludes with the troupe taking possession of stone tablets meant for the Children of Isaac. These tablets contain a powerful secret: the *Anexhexeton*.

Part II of Act II is told entirely in flashback, with the players assuming the roles of ghouls and Kindred in Egypt, immediately following the events of *The Sun Has Set*. These characters quest for and find the tablets. However, the Malkavian who is to bear the tablets sees a vision, which convinces him that the tablets must be found in the New World. Thus, the tablets are sent to Boston in 1959, and intercepted by Giovanni ghouls.

Part III picks up where Part I left off, with the coterie in possession of the tablets. The gang war still rages, and the characters must choose between giving up the tablets to Andreas, the Milliners, the Children of Isaac, or no one at all. Regardless, Andreas gets the tablets; the only matter open for debate is whether the characters get the credit. At the end of the act, both Jason Milliner and more of the coterie are Embraced in two separate and gruesome ceremonies.

The gang war ends, and the Patriarcas' power wanes, but the Children of Isaac make it clear they have come to stay.

Act III – A Test of Faith: By this point, some of the coterie are neonates, some older but not quite ancillae, and some still lowly ghouls. In any case, the ensuing decades have seen some changes for the mob, the most notable of which is the RICO Act of 1970.

The RICO Act (Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organizations), in brief, allows government authorities to bring a business up on charges if they can uncover a pattern of illicit activity. It also allows the arrest of an individual for belonging to a certain group, effectively legalizing guilt by association. What this means for the troupe is that any of their underlings

or business associates that were mistreated in Act II may very well turn state's evidence to save their own skins. Why, after all, should they reward their ill treatment at the hands of the Giovanni with loyalty?

Eventually, with or without help from former associates, the ghouls in the group are arrested. While they can probably make bail, they have a great deal to answer for. They are told by the family in no uncertain terms that they will receive the best legal aid that can be provided (which is considerable), but little else. Andreas is unwilling to stick his neck out too far to aid the coterie, partly because he is unable to intervene too blatantly. This is because the Children of Isaac are responsible for leaking information to the FBI in order to expose the coterie, and once again, the Promise of 1528 forbids active reprisals. However, another force that no one, not even the elders, expected is at work.

The Society of Leopold, the feared Inquisition, has discovered that the ghouls are pawns to a much greater evil, and brings its considerable power to bear on the Giovanni.

The characters also have a few logistical problems. First of all, none of them have aged visibly since 1929 unless they have altered their appearance somehow. Second, even if they have all been aged (unlikely), most of them are now incommunicado during daylight hours. Third, the characters must be careful to protect not only the family, but the members of high society (councilmen, judges, etc) who have come to be regular "customers" for one reason or another of the Giovanni. Finally, the characters must consider the Masquerade. Quentin King, the Prince of Boston, would love an excuse to call a blood hunt on the Boston Giovanni, and the slightest slip on the characters' parts affords him the opportunity to do just that.

The coterie does have some cards to play, however. First of all, Reginald, the wraith they met in Act I, still follows them, and makes his presence known by delaying the trial, discovering information on witnesses, and even disproving some of the FBI's evidence.

Also, the coterie probably has an alibi for just about anything the prosecution can produce. The RICO Act, by the way, must be invoked within 10 years of the alleged wrongdoing, so anything before 1960 isn't really fair game for that (which is one reason why it is so important to keep track of the characters' activities between acts). Murder, of course, has no statute of limitations.

During the trial, the ghouls are given the choice to take their chances in court, or betray Andreas and the clan and be protected. This offer does not come from the FBI only, but from the Children of Isaac, still embroiled in their vendetta against the clan. While the Kindred characters face attacks from the Inquisition and must face their own Humanity (or whatever remains of it), the ghouls must face their sense of loyalty and respect for their domitor.

At the end of the trial, whether guilty or innocent, the ghouls are Embraced. However, their Embrace plays a role in the future of the clan's activity in Boston, and conclude the saga of an elder named Marianna.

Act IV - To Everyone Who Conquers: The act begins with the characters' reputation being smeared from all sides. Although they may have gained a great deal of status in the last act, someone has set them up to lose it and fast. Sabotage, trickery and pressure take their toll on the characters' standings. The mysterious hands at work here belong to the Children of Isaac, though the reason for the assault is different this time. They need help, and help that only the Giovanni can provide.

Before the elders' plan comes to fruition, however, the characters are called upon to solve a murder. Genevra (see above) arrives in town, and meets the characters shortly before her death at the hands of Francis Milliner. Reginald shows the characters the murder using his wraithly powers, but cannot identify the killer. No one misses the duplicitous Genevra, but no one wants to chance her killer striking again. The search introduces the characters to some of the local Kindred before leading them to their own family, where they find the diablerie was sanctioned.

The Children of Isaac, content to watch the Giovanni chase their own tails for a time, find that time is now becoming short. Cappadocius (see above) approaches, and a fanatical cult worships him and preaches suicide and doom. The Children of Isaac have a way to stop him but, as mentioned above, it requires the aid of a competent Necromancer. With Marianna dead, the elders plan to squeeze the characters until they must deal, if only to save their own necks.

With the city crashing down around them from the combined attentions of the Sabbat, the Camarilla (both of whom wish to establish a firm power base in Boston) and Cappadocius (who wishes the Giovanni and anyone in the way dead), the coterie must choose between staying loyal to the family and refusing the Children of Isaac...or ending the greatest threat to its continued existence and being marked as the basest of traitors.

The Sabbat's attack on Boston does not go as planned, and when the smoke clears, the Giovanni are left with a firm enough power base to oust both the Sabbat and Camarilla from Boston. Thus, the Camarilla loses what tenuous hold it had in this city and the Giovanni take a bold step forward.

DESTINY

So, for those players and Storytellers who played the first three **Giovanni Chronicles**, the obvious question is: What gives?

Why, for 600 years, was this group of vampires (the Children of Isaac) jerked around by elders, routinely tortured, just as routinely bailed out of trouble by Marianna, and

possibly corrupted by the Setites, the Sabbat, etc.? After all, the Giovanni are as much in power at the end of this epilogue as ever – maybe more so. Some of the Children of Isaac are dead, as are some important Giovanni but, all in all, things seem pretty much normal (for the World of Darkness). So where's the big destiny thing?

There are plenty of "real" reasons for this. Different people wrote the books over a span of nearly five years. The stories couldn't be carbon copies of each other, but had to keep continuity. But these reasons will mean very little to the Children of Isaac and, in any kind of storytelling, the characters cannot be left hanging (plus, the players will certainly want to know about the destiny, too). Also, this book is especially tricky because the players are portraying foils to the destined vampires, Kindred on the other side of enemy lines who are relative Johnny-come-latelies to the whole scenario. They don't share the destiny of the Children of Isaac... do they?

Destiny cannot be nailed down. The notion that destiny follows a linear course is outdated and rather a cop-out; one of the implied themes of this book is responsibility for one's actions. After all, no matter how a character might try to rationalize his actions, there eventually comes a reckoning,

whether it be the gang war in Act II of this story, the antagonism the Inquisition in Act III, or the vengeful shade of Cappadocius in Act IV.

Free will is something for which humans kill and die, and yet the tragedy of being a slave to one's destiny is theme in many great works of literature. Destiny may serve some great purpose, but then again, it may be very subtle. Instead of the Children of Isaac being destined to destroy or cripple the Giovanni, they could just be destined to do what the Giovanni never could stop Cappadocius from bringing his insane "Heaven on Earth" plans to fruition.

Suspecting one's destiny (or one's character's destiny) makes for great speculation on where the story might be going and what role the character might play in the great scheme of it all. *Knowing* one's destiny, on the other hand, is boring. The story becomes more of a script and, like so many films of today, we participate not to enjoy the kinks and subtleties of the plot, but the pyrotechnics and special effects. The end should not be a foregone conclusion. The players don't know their character's destinies, but when *Nuova Malattia* ends, they should feel as though those destinies have been fulfilled.

And if not, the *Giovanni Chronicles* certainly need not end simply because there are no more books...





ACT I: FIRST COMMUNION

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities.
— Romans 13:1

As Nuova Malattia begins, the characters are ordinary mortals who have little or nothing in common — except the Giovanni. As discussed in the Introduction, the characters should all have a reason for the Necromancers to take note of them, be it an outstanding debt, exemplary service, etc. The story opens with each character receiving an invitation to a midnight mass at St. Leonard's Catholic Church. The message is mailed to characters who are (or believe they are) on the Giovanni's good side; those who would have reason to believe that the Mob wants them dead (based on their concept or background) are told in person by Hank Rothenstein.

SCENE ONE: THE INVITATION

Rothenstein is a ghoul in service to Andreas Giovanni, and is known throughout the underworld as "Hank the Fixer." He can acquire nearly anything: drugs, prostitutes (of legal age and not), booze, legal papers, etc., and leaves virtually no paper trail — some characters may know Hank as part of their backgrounds. He is also a very irritating man, and characters who enjoy intimidating others may be inclined to talk down to him. During this act, take careful note of who behaves kindly or respectfully to Hank, especially female characters. A little

kindness now may pay off very well later. For more information on Hank, see the Characters chapter.

Hank personally contacts any character who does not receive a mailed invitation. If possible, he calls on them at home, but if he cannot find them, he tries their places of business, their churches or even their families. After a little pleasant conversation, he asks them their connection to the Giovanni family. If they tell him, he nods, and hands them the invitation. If they dodge the question or demand why he wants to know, he merely shrugs and comments that he's worked with the family for years, and he's never been invited to Mass. (He's being glib here, of course, and if the characters don't catch the joke, he'll assume they're going to be used as thugs or concubines and treat them as such).

The message arrives, in whatever form, the Tuesday before the Mass. The characters have three days to make whatever preparations they wish, but all will be watched carefully until then. In the event that any character tries to skip town or otherwise escape the appointment, the Giovanni retrieve her while she sleeps (through use of Dominate, if necessary) and return her to her Boston home, setting the invitation by the bed.

Characters can pass the intervening day as they wish, from celebrating a possible promotion (which is true, in a sense), to composing a will in anticipation of their impending doom (which is also true, in a sense). In any case, when Thursday arrives, they should be at the church on time.

R.S.V.P.

Andreas' invitation comes handwritten on fine stationery with black corners. It reads:

Dear (character's name),

It is my extreme pleasure to invite you to a midnight Mass this Thursday, August the 16th. It is to be held at St. Leonard's Church. Please come alone, and do not be late, as no one will be admitted once the Mass begins. After the Mass, it would please me for you to remain, as we have something of mutual import to discuss.

Yours Sincerely,

Andreas Giovanni

SCENE TWO: THE CHURCH

St. Leonard's was the first Italian Catholic Church established in New England; the current building dates to 1891. The characters may be familiar with the church, perhaps even parishioners. However, they should have never been to a night Mass here before. During the night, the church belongs to Clan Giovanni. (For more information on the church, see the Appendix.)

By day, the church looks majestic. The gray stonework is made less cold by clinging ivy, and the stained-glass windows, depicting the stages of the Crucifixion, bathe a visitor in a surreal red-blue light as she stops at the font to cross herself. The statue of Christ behind the altar is well carved and kept in good repair; it is lifelike enough to command reverence, but not so graphic as to frighten children.

At night, this all changes. The stonework outside dwarfs a visitor. The doors look impassive, as if God has become inaccessible until morning. The ivy seems to slither along the walls in a wavelike motion from the foundation, as though something lives and reaches out from the ground around the church.

The inside of St. Leonard's is worse. The statue is lit from the bottom, giving it a sallow, charnel look. Instead of having an expression of suffering on His face, Jesus overlooks the pews madly, almost hungrily. Perceptive characters may also notice that His wounds look freshly painted and slick. The confession booths stand open, but appear dark, and the inside dimensions cannot be seen. The pastor is not the priest that parishioners will remember, but a dingy-looking Mediterranean man in priest's garb. He is unshaven, his hair is wild and flowing, and he bites his fingers nervously as he arranges himself for Mass.

When the characters enter, they are greeted by Hank Rothenstein. He thanks them for coming and asks that they sit in the front row; Andreas will join them shortly.

The characters may exchange introductions, chat, or keep to themselves. Only one other person sits in the church with them initially, a gentleman of about 40 in an expensive black suit. His dress and manner scream "wise guy"; streetwise characters may

recognize him as Stephano Giovanni, as might any character whose player succeeds in a Wits + Area Knowledge or Streetwise roll (difficulty 7). Stephano has been in the papers lately; he is identified as a "local businessman and reputed mobster." More information on Stephano is given in the *Dramatis Personae* chapter. During the next few minutes, several other churchgoers trickle in to populate the pews sparsely. These late arrivals seem haggard and worn — unkempt, dirty and probably homeless.

When all of the characters have arrived, the Mass begins. Organ music suddenly fills the church — the characters cannot tell from where — and three men enter from behind the characters' pew and walk down the center aisle. The first two wear black suits and carry a large, leather-bound book and a crucifix on a pike, respectively. The third is the added priest the characters saw earlier.

The priest leads the Mass through the greeting and the Penitential Rite. The characters may notice that when the parishioners cross themselves, they do so with their left hands. However, even odder, the priest speaks the Mass in Italian, not in Latin (remember that until the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s, the Mass was given in Latin, although churches usually provided books in English for the laity to follow).

Andreas stands up and walks to a pulpit. His voice echoes throughout the church as he gives the first reading, in English. "A reading from Psalms, Chapter 5. 'For thou art not a God who welcomes wickedness; evil can be no guest of thine. There is not place for arrogance before thee; thou hatest evildoers, thou makest an end of all liars. The Lord detests traitors and men of blood.'" Andreas delivers the quote with a quiet reverence. The next thing he says, however, is so spiteful and bitter that the characters unthinkingly flinch: "This is the word of the Lord." The proper response is "Thanks be to God," and Catholic characters probably answer this way. However, the rest of the church is silent.

Stephano replaces Andreas for the second reading. His manner is less quiet reverence and more barely contained fervor. His voice is quiet, but strained, as though he might scream at any moment. "A reading from the Epistle of Paul to the Romans. 'If God is for us, who can be against us?... Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies... As it is written: For your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Yet in all these things we are more conquerors through Him who loved us.'" His concluding statement, "This is the word of God," is delivered in a dreadful whisper, and this time, the congregation answers him: "Thanks be to God."

The priest performs the Gospel reading. "A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew. 'So Jesus said, 'Are you also still without understanding? Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man.'" At this, the priest lifts the Gospel up and hurls it



backward over his head. He then bids the congregation stand for the Profession of Faith. They speak in Italian, but the Profession is very different from what Catholic characters know. The Profession has been replaced by a Sicilian proverb: "Don't ask for something you aren't prepared to take."

The Mass continues. The homily the priest gives, still in Italian, refers back to the readings. "Define your terms," he says. "If God is for us, who can be against us? Who, then, is God? This being that detests men of blood?" At this, he bites his own index finger and flings blood into the audience. The characters, seated as they are in the front pew, will certainly be splashed with it. "We are all men of blood! All men, all are of blood! But some are weak! Some die, some die when born, some die in poverty, some take their own lives. I say to you that these are 'men of blood' that God detests, not those who are strong enough to take the blood they need.

"But consider also the reading from Matthew. If all these evils come from the heart, and the heart directs blood, it is easy to see why God might detest such men. But isn't it those who can lie, cheat, steal, and kill who survive? So what does God want? He simply wants homage! He sent his one begotten Son to us, knowing that we would kill Him! But somewhere along the way, the most pervasive faith of all time was started—ours! So we give God what he wants—tribute—and we go about our nightly business. Remember the tribute. Treat those above you with respect, for God put them there for a reason. Disre-

spect them, and find your soul wrenched from your body to serve God's greater plan, all the while with the Devil whispering in your ear for all eternity." While he preaches this sermon, he focuses on the characters, staring, unblinking, at each in turn. While he speaks, have each player roll Perception + Empathy or Awareness (difficulty 9). If a player scores at least two successes, her character sees shadowy, gaunt, but definitely humanoid figures appear where a choir would normally stand.

The priest then raises a gold chalice, and says (still in Italian), "Blessed are you Lord. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the soul and work of human hands. It will be our spiritual drink."

The priest skips the Eucharistic prayer (which would normally follow the Profession of Faith) entirely. He stands again at the altar and leads the congregation in the Lord's Prayer. However, these words are different, too. Characters who speak Italian will hear, "Our Father, who art in Heaven, howled be thy name. The Kingdom come, thy will be done, in the next world and in this. Give us this night our daily blood, and forgive no one, as we forgive none who trespasses against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil of lesser men." The words are spoken very quickly, and scarcely above a whisper, so it is unlikely that any one character will catch all of the changes.

During the sign of peace, the other parishioners do not shake hands or even kiss each other on the cheeks. Rather, they embrace and bite each other lightly on the necks.

The priest again raises the chalice, and says, "This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are those who are called to His supper." Looking directly at the characters, he says, "You are not worthy to receive him, but only drink and you shall be healed." No bread is passed, and no songs are sung during communion. Instead, the priest comes down the parishioners, and offers a drink from the chalice. Andreas is the first to drink, and he lingers at the cup (this is because he is not drinking, but bleeding from his tongue to fill the chalice).

Assuming the characters drink from the chalice, they feel a sudden rush of euphoria. They also experience a slightly queasy feeling akin to strong sexual arousal, coupled with a strange sensual increase. They can see better in the dimly lit church than they could moments ago, smell the aftershaves and perfumes of those around them, and they can sense all too keenly the smiles of the other parishioners. The "wine" leaves them edgy, energetic, and with a newfound respect and regard for Andreas Giovanni. The characters have just taken their first drink of Kindred blood.

A character who refuses receives doleful looks from Andreas and the priest's two attendants. If she still abstains, Andreas approaches her and whispers one word: "Drink." He lends this command the authority of his Dominate Discipline, which should let the character know exactly where she stands as well as engendering a sense of violation — she literally has no choice. This makes the experience that much worse, however, as the character still wants to leave but cannot.

The Mass then concludes rather abruptly; instead of the usual Dismissal, the priest simply states, "Go in peace, brethren. May God have mercy on your souls." He then cracks a strange, bloody smile and exits through the back of the church.

If, for some reason, Andreas' Dominate fails (the Iron Will merit, for example), Stephano reluctantly uses his Presence to attempt the same results. The character may not feel quite so violated then, of course, but it might make for some interesting conflicts later when she tastes Andreas' blood and is still under Stephano's power.

After the Mass ends, Andreas assembles the newly created ghouls and introduces everyone. He does not reveal anyone's connection to the family, however. He then tells the characters politely to talk amongst themselves, and takes each one aside privately.

During this private chat, he tells characters who were in good with the family that they have been promoted. Just how will become obvious in a few nights, but for now, they should go about their business as usual. Characters who owe the Giovanni or are otherwise out of favor are told that the debt has been settled by "extenuating circumstances" and that they should forget it ever happened. All characters are given a phone number to call if they "need anything." After all of the private sessions conclude, he gathers the group again, and invites them all to a party being held by a "friend of the family," Paul DiCarlo, at his house on Saturday night. He provides the address, and then excuses himself.

The characters can go anywhere they wish from here. It is roughly 2 A.M., but none of them feel sleepy. For the

PORTRAYING ANDREAS

Andreas Giovanni should come off as a smooth, desirable individual, regardless of the gender of his audience. The attraction he commands is not necessarily one of lust, however. Rather, he possesses a classical, androgynous appeal. People want to be with him, and any connotation that enthusiasm takes is best left to the individual character. Some may crave Andreas' presence on a more basic level than others, which should provide an interesting group dynamic in the nights to come....

record, the characters have one point of vampiric vitae in their bodies, and have developed the complementary (not complimentary!) dot of Potence. There is no need, of course, to share these specifics with the players yet.

The Storyteller may choose to run some of the scenarios from Scene Three at this time, if the characters' actions warrant it.

SCENE THREE: LIFE AS A GHOUL

The next "scene" is a loose collection of encounters and happenings that the Storyteller can spring on the players, singly or in groups, over the next three nights. It is important, however, that the characters receive another drink of Andreas' blood between now and Sunday night; he wants them to start work the following week. The Storyteller is, of course, free to make additions or amendments to these vignettes to personalize them to the characters.

ON THE JOB

How this vignette plays depends largely on the character's daily routine. The basic idea, however, is the character's reaction to stress. If the character is an accountant, and is used to dealing with people who are broke, she may stop feeling pity and start feeling contempt. If the character has children, perhaps she won't be able to tolerate them doing anything else but sitting still... very still. In general, play a normal day in a character's life almost to the point of monotony... then have something piss her off. After that, let it build. The accountant's secretary is late, and he goes into his first meeting without his daily cup of coffee, only to find his first client is so broke that he cannot pay his fee. The housewife's children are screaming, she shouts at them to shut them up, and then the dog tips over the full garbage can. Gauge by the player's roleplaying (and the character's Self-Control rating) when enough is enough, then call for a Self-Control roll (difficulty 7). If successful, the character feels a horrible buildup of rage, but manages to deal with it. If the roll fails, the character does not frenzy, but simply "acts out." The accountant flings his empty coffee mug over his client's head, sending porcelain shards down on him. The housewife punches the wall, and puts her hand through to the other side without so much as a scraped knuckle.

THE GRADUAL SLIDE

Beginning now, the characters are faced with an extraordinary problem. They must retain their Humanity—and their sanity—while still being able to function in the Giovanni family. The rest of the book, but this chapter in particular, reminds the Storyteller to make checks for Humanity loss at appropriate times. However, those checks should be most frequent while the characters are still human. Remember also that it is unlikely any character has reason to suspect that his “Humanity” is eroding—character are unaware of the mechanical systems that govern the game. A character may certainly feel herself growing more callous, and should look to herself rather than a rulebook to see what that means.

When considering Humanity loss, the character should feel it much more harshly when she *succeeds* in keeping her Humanity—such is the function of Conscience. Becoming less human is easy; staying humane requires discipline, ethics, restraint and denial. When a player succeeds in a Conscience roll, describe the guilt and hesitance the character feels. She may feel the awful temptation to lash out at the person who angers her, to take the money that tempts her, etc., but somehow she suppresses it. It might feel good in the moment, but emphasize later how much “easier” or “more satisfying” things would be if she had given in.

Also, remember that these humans have suddenly been given powers that were not meant for mortals. While the players may understand that Auspex is a useful tool and a superb listening and surveillance device, the characters might well panic as sensory input suddenly doubles. And this is to say nothing of the more “inhuman” Disciplines such as Necromancy and Vicissitude. Use of Disciplines may call for Humanity rolls simply because the character is admitting her inhumanity by using inhuman powers (which characters this applies to depends on their particular outlooks, of course; a devout Catholic might be much more susceptible to this loss than a closet demonologist—use discretion).

In general, when a character uses any Discipline in a casual way (i.e., “Heavy? I can lift this, no problem!”), or upon manifestation of a more inhuman Discipline (such manifestations are discussed below under “New Toys”) have the player roll Conscience (difficulty 6). Success means the character has reconciled this strange new power with her worldview—for now. Failure means the character loses a point of Humanity as she feels unholy power spurring her on (not that this has to be unpleasant). A botch strips the character of a point of Humanity, and inflicts a power-based derangement of some kind.

This scenario should be run only with characters who have somewhat “normal” lives, not with gangsters or occultists.

THE WATCHFUL STRANGER

This scene is designed to make a character feel very paranoid.

While out walking, a character spies a man in a dark blue suit and a fedora walking toward her. The man slows while she passes, makes an almost predatory circle around her (making no effort to conceal his stares, either), and then walks on his way. A character who has manifested Auspex or who has the Intuition Talent may feel a small shiver as the man sizes her up. Depending on how you describe him, the player might think the man is an FBI agent, a rival mobster, a rapist or human predator, or even a Lupine.

In fact, it is entirely up to the Storyteller. The man could be any of the above, or he could be a Kennedy operative, a Camarilla ghoul, or even a former classmate of the character's. A sensitive character will still feel the aforementioned shiver, however; each character is being watched by a wraith.

If the character decides to follow up on (or even follow) the man, the Storyteller should make a decision as to his identity. One possible suggestion is to make him an Inquisition operative, who recalls a “strange feeling” from the character and notes this. These notes could be used in Act III to identify the character. Another possibility is that the man is a thrall of one of the Children of Isaac. Why the servant takes an interest might be just a coincidence, but it will still enable the Children to find the character more easily.

NEW TOYS

Each of the characters develops one level of Potence upon ingestion of the blood. However, after the second drink, they also manifest an additional Discipline. The players may choose any Discipline they wish, so long as Andreas knows it, of course. Since the characters have not been instructed in these arts, they should choose Disciplines that reflect their personalities and vocations. For example, the housewife in the above example might manifest Auspex, as she is used to paying attention to several things at once. The accountant, however, might be more inclined to develop Presence, if for no other reason than to finally get some respect and attention.

Some restrictions apply, however. First, a character must have an Occult rating of at least two and/or spend a good amount of time around dead bodies to learn Necromancy. A character learning Necromancy might teach himself a level one Ritual, such as Call the Hungry Dead, but not learn the first dot on the Sepulchre Path until given some training. Second, each player must roll Stamina (difficulty 6) after the first drink of Andreas' vitae. Failure on this roll indicates that the character has become infected with Vicissitude. If the player selects Vicissitude as one of his character's Disciplines, the newly infected ghoul will likely have little control over this new power. This makes for some very disturbing “accidents,” as a character might stroke her child's face only to watch it come off in her hand or pet a dog that may only hobble away afterward. For more information on Vicissitude as a disease, see the *Guide to the Sabbat*, pages 124-125.

As an option, the Storyteller might choose which Disciplines the characters learn herself. Since the characters learn them instinctively, this may make more sense, so long as the players trust the Storyteller in making this decision.

In describing how the Disciplines manifest, the Storyteller should make every effort *not* to use game terms. If a character has learned *Auspex*, the Storyteller should describe this in an appropriate manner, such as, "You can hear your boss coming from down the hall. You hear not only his tromping footsteps, but a sickly grating sound as he chews his hourly cigar," not, "your senses of hearing and sight are doubled."

Remember also that all the ghouls have a dot of Potence, which has now greatly changed their lifting capacity. Consider: A character who has a Strength of 2 can lift about 100 pounds comfortably, without the Proxy Kiss. Now, however, she can lift 250 pounds—more than twice what she is used to! This change in physical prowess and the inherent difficulty in controlling it should certainly be addressed in a character's first day as a ghoul.

As far as Disciplines such as Presence and Dominate, which affect others, describe them in terms of reactions. Waiters may serve a character with Presence first, while a character with Dominate may suddenly find his secretary much quicker to grant a lecherous request.

Characters may also discover that they can make themselves faster, stronger and more durable for short periods of time. This should be handled in much the same way, with the exception that, after it happens, they feel drained, weak and agitated. They crave something, but just what it is they'll have to figure out by themselves (not that it should take much figuring).

For the time being, do not place emphasis on the consequences of using these new powers. The characters should feel as though for some reason, they have been placed above their fellow humans. If some sort of minor god complex follows this, all the better. The aim of the Proxy Kiss, as far as Andreas is concerned, is to change these mortals to monsters before they are even considered for the Embrace.

THE RED BEVERAGE

Visit this scene on the character with the highest Humanity rating. While out walking, perhaps to or from work, the character hears several car horns, and then tires screeching followed by the crunching sound of metal on metal. If she investigates, she sees that two new "automobiles" have hit head-on.

There are two people in one car, a man and a woman. The woman is awake but dazed, while the man's head hangs loosely in front of him. A quick check reveals that both are alive.

The other car's occupants were not so lucky. The passenger hangs half-in, half-out of the windshield. Blood oozes down over the hood of the car from his mangled face and from open wounds on his torso. The driver fared even worse, as the steering column came up to meet him when the cars collided. It now rests midway through his chest cavity. Both men are apparently dead.

How this scene plays depends on the character's status as far as vitae goes. If, for any reason, she has spent her first blood point,

she is in mild withdrawal. In this case, the blood spilling over the hood and out of the driver's door (which flew open) looks oddly inviting, and she finds herself growing ravenous. The player must roll Self-Control (difficulty 4), as per the usual frenzy rules. If she fails to resist frenzy, she horrifies herself by drinking deeply of the blood, either by licking it off of the car or directly out of one of the men's wounds. If this happens, the character hears a low moan as she feasts. Looking up, she sees the man whose blood she is drinking blink his eyes and whisper, "What...are you...doing?" He then dies, a look of horror and revulsion frozen on his face. The character must immediately check for Humanity degeneration.

If she succeeds in resisting the frenzy, she may take whatever action she wishes. However, as she does so, she sees a small, white mongrel walk carefully up to the car and begin licking the blood from the seat on the driver's side. If the character calls attention to herself, the dog looks up, panting, its white muzzle stained pink and its tongue covered in blood. Have the player roll Perception + Animal Ken (difficulty 6). Success indicates that the character feels a curious sense of identification with the mongrel.

If the police arrive while the character is feasting, they arrest her, though the Giovanni bail her out later.

The worst part about the whole affair is that the blood does not even offer the benefits of vampiric vitae—the character has a thirst that does not depend on the power or potency of the blood.

THE SHOOTING

This vignette should be run with a character who has ties to the Mafia. If no such character exists, choose the character you feel would be most likely to embrace the Mob as a career.

While dining in one of the numerous restaurants in Boston's north end, the character sees two men seated at a table, facing each other, talking heatedly in Italian. If the character understands Italian, he will know that they are discussing an upcoming vote. The vote would disallow certain tax breaks, which were heretofore allowable. A character with ratings of two in Finance or Law and in Streetwise knows that gangsters often use tax loopholes to "launder" money. One man argues that the issue must be voted upon, and there isn't anything he can do about it (an Intelligence + Linguistics roll, difficulty 7, reveals that he speaks Italian with a slight Irish accent). The other man not-so-calmly replies that if the issue is not voted down, there may be other "issues" arising soon for "you fucking micks." At this point, the Irishman states his point in no uncertain terms: "King Solomon can fuck off, and so can you," whereupon he rises, drops a roll of cash on the table, and moves to leave.

The other man rises and pulls a gun. At this point, allow the player to calculate his initiative. He must have an initiative rating of at least 7 to act before either of the other two men (the only other people here are staff, all of whom dive for cover). If he does not interfere, the Irishman, seeing the other's reflection in the window, spins, draws his own gun and fires five times. The Italian falls backward over the table and his gun discharges as he hits the floor.



Make a roll as though determining where the bullet will go, but regardless of the result, the bullet strikes the character in the arm. Allow the player a soak roll, but again, the result doesn't matter; the character takes two health levels of damage. (Remember that, as a *ghoul*, the character may soak this damage; were the character simply a normal mortal, he would have no opportunity to soak.) In any case, the character has been shot in the upper arm (which one is your choice) and bleeds freely.

This, of course, is where the character discovers another bonus to being a *ghoul*. He unconsciously spends a blood point and heals one health level, closing the wound. Instead of a messy flesh wound, the character now has what looks like a slight puncture, and a stiff arm. This, of course, might frighten or fascinate the character a great deal, particularly since his shirt bears the stain of a much worse wound than he actually has.

It is also noteworthy that there is a lot of blood around. A character who has just used his last blood point must check for frenzy as described above. Although the outcome is not as horrific as the car wreck (this man is truly dead), the player must still roll Conscience (difficulty 8) or check for degeneration if his Humanity is 6 or above.

THE PARTY

Andreas invited all of the characters to the house party for a reason; he wants them to see the benefits to working with the family, and then provide their second drink.

The atmosphere is one of fervent abandonment; loud music plays, everyone dances, drinks, laughs and generally has an illegally good time. The host of the party, as stated in Scene Two, is one Mr. Paul DiCarlo, a prominent Boston lawyer, who is a "friend" of the Giovanni family.

Paul DiCarlo is a cousin to Stephano Giovanni, give or take a few generations. While he knows the true nature of the family, and has, in fact, received the Proxy Kiss, he is badly in denial and tries to balance his lives as professional, dilettante, family man and *ghoul*. While he enjoys the money and prestige that being associated with the Giovanni gets him, he does not like the way they tend to leer at his daughters (one of whom, Maria, is only five years old), and he has already had federal agents question him. However, he always wins their cases, even if it means that the family comes up with some damning evidence to help "persuade" the prosecutor to be somewhat less effective. (The last time, said prosecutor was shown photographs of himself and his niece sharing a romantic candlelit evening in bed. He dismissed the charges.) As a result of all this, DiCarlo is very solicitous of any Giovanni associates who come calling.

While DiCarlo does not know it, Stephano is very fond of him, and plans to Embrace him soon. He will become a contemporary of the characters Embraced at the end of this chapter. More information on Paul can be found in the *Dramatis Personae* chapter.

The party is in full swing when the characters arrive. Flappers and their dates dance frantically to a small band of

musicians, while a host of black stewards dressed in immaculate black suits carry trays of hors d'oeuvres and glasses of wine and whiskey. The characters can mix as they wish, meeting a variety of people. The Storyteller is free to populate the party with whatever characters he likes, but some ideas are listed below.

Paul DiCarlo: A tall, whip-thin man of about 40, Paul is Italian but speaks with a slight Boston accent. He is dressed in a fine gray suit, and seems out of place at his own party. He often throws wistful glances at the younger folks around him. If spoken to, he welcomes the characters to his home, offers them a drink, and introduces them around. Present are several other lawyers, two judges, as well as a handful of local businessmen and even a few obvious and notorious gangsters. The only member of the family present, however, is Stephano Giovanni. He will point out the characters to DiCarlo and mention their association with the Giovanni.

The characters should recognize this party as a way to make a lot of powerful acquaintances in the city. This will become very important later in this chapter, so pay attention to whom they speak and how politely they do so.

Stephano Giovanni: Stephano has little to say to the characters. He is, however, able to supply some of Andreas' blood, should the characters be craving it badly (see *The Second Drink*, below, for how this affects them).

Grace Michaels: A flapper of about 19, Grace wears her blond hair short and her bright yellow skirt even shorter. Her eyes have a smile for everyone even when her mouth doesn't (which usually means it is otherwise engaged). She drinks whiskey without a care in the world, dances through the party paying no heed to the hour or the number of stares (and propositions) she gets, and tends to hike her skirt higher and higher as the night goes on. The characters can't help but notice her, and any of them who would feel attracted to such a woman feel themselves lusting for her.

If a character decides to proposition Grace, he finds her choosy. She enjoys the attentions of both men and women, but she only likes beautiful women (Appearance 4 or higher). Men, she isn't quite so particular about, but prefers large, strong, and preferably Italian men to all others. A would-be seducer (or seductress) must roll Appearance + Subterfuge (difficulty 7, or 6 if the above requirements are met) to get her attention; only one success is needed for this. Presence negates the need for the more conventional seduction ritual; Grace becomes so intrigued that she propositions the character herself.

Paul's house has several bedrooms upstairs, some of which are already in use. The master bedroom is empty, however. The door has been closed all night, and the temperature of this room is close to 100 degrees. Should they enter, both Grace and the character begin to sweat the moment they pass the door.

Grace is a girl best described as kinky. Bisexuality and D&S (Dominance and Submission) games are simply not discussed with the same flagrancy as they are now, though they are certainly practiced. Whether with a man or a woman, Grace prefers to be submissive. With a woman, she

expects to be told what to do, and demurely performs whatever is asked of her. She does not make eye contact and keeps her head lower than her lover's. She gladly accepts whatever attentions a female lover gives her, but does not ask for them.

With a man, much the same thing goes, but Grace enjoys being forced, to a degree. She struggles just enough to make a man work to keep her in place. If a man responds by pinning her arms, she moans, clamps her legs around him, and submits completely.

Pinning Grace's arms is probably a wise move. During sex, Grace has a tendency to claw, and her nails are very sharp. She bites her lip to keep from screaming and digs her nails in. When she calms down some, her lip is bleeding, as is the character's back unless he has restrained her.

Describe the sight of blood, the smell of blood, the feel of sex, the oppressive heat, the sounds of sex from other rooms, the smell of whiskey and the music, which breaks into a frantic drum solo as the tryst builds in intensity. Grace looks up at the character, helplessly, shuts her eyes, and places his hands on her neck. Have the player roll Self-Control to check for frenzy (difficulty 8). If the character fails, he becomes caught up in Grace's game of submission and squeezes.

The sex changes suddenly, as Grace struggles, but is much too drunk (and too weak by comparison) to escape. Her larynx collapses in the character's hands, and her orgasmic whimpers changes to wet gasps as her throat fills with blood. It leaks out of the corners of her mouth, which should spur the character on all the more. The next thing the character knows, his vision clears and Grace is lying on the floor, her body still warm, and her murderer's mouth wet and stained with her blood.

Stephano can arrange for the body to be removed with a minimum of fuss, but he does ask the character what happened. He will confirm the story by using his powers of Necromancy on Grace's corpse. Stephano does not show his opinion on the matter, but it is that the character is a weakling who has no control over the power he has been given. That character has earned Stephano's (literally) undying enmity.

The Seance: A group of people is experimenting with a Ouija board in the basement. If a character joins them, there is suddenly a change in the air. It grows cold, and the board begins to quiver slightly. In the dark, the character feels a gust of air across the back of her neck.

This is due to the fact that a wraith follows each character. The wraith in question is named Reginald, and if the character is suitably impressed, or expresses an interest in identifying or helping the ghost, Reginald takes a liking to him. If the character is skeptical or tries to find a way to exorcise the spirit, Reginald is annoyed. (Reginald's attitude toward the characters becomes important in later years.) In this chapter, he helps them regardless of their actions, but later on, his motives become more significant (more information on Reginald can be found in the *Dramatis Personae* chapter).

Susanna DiCarlo: Susanna is Paul's niece, and is here against her better judgment. She is 17, about to enter her last

year of high school, and wants to take a story back to the girls when classes begin.

The man hitting on her, however, is not what she wants. He is a gofer at best, and a revolting toady at worst. He works for one of the businessmen present, but his employer has already left.

When Paul notices this slug making advances on his niece, he moves to put a stop to it. Stephano, however, intervenes, and tells Paul not to worry; that he will fix it. He then sends one of the characters (preferably someone intimidating) to shoo the man away.

The man is rude when first approached, and remains unless the character mentions that he is an associate of the Giovanni. Then, Susanna's would-be suitor turns white as a sheet, apologizes to the point of embarrassment, and flees out the door, never looking back. This should give the character some inkling of the power and respect that being a Giovanni employee carries with it.

The party concludes around 4 A.M. Paul thanks the characters for coming if they have not already left, and says they will remain on his guest list.

SECOND DRINK

Sooner or later, the characters are going to feel the need for blood. Perhaps they want to become more powerful than they are, perhaps they simply need a fix. Either way, they do have a number to call.

The number reaches Hank. He's expecting them, of course, and asks them to come to his office.

Hank's office is desolate. A vacant lot separates the building itself from others, and there is neither doorman nor front desk. Hank tells them on the phone to take the stairs to the second floor, and that his office is at the end of the hall. The building appears to be new and in good repair, but no one except Hank seems to be renting here. The staircase still smells of sawdust, and the hallway to his office is long and badly lit. There are no sounds save for a squeaking from the office (his chair).

The character(s) find Hank sitting at his desk with stacks of paperwork in front of him, almost like a Dickensian protagonist. He smiles at them, and asks them how they are. If the characters tell stories of their new condition, he does not yield any useful information, he simply says that it's normal and it will pass. He then offers each character present a large, sealed tumbler full of blood.

It is probable, at this point, that the characters have not realized what they drank. If asked, Hank replies sarcastically that it is "fine Italian wine" called "vitae" (which he pronounces "wit-tye"). Any character who understands Latin will recognize this as "life." If a character comments that he has never heard of it, Hank replies "Really? It's all the Kindred drink." If asked who the "Kindred" are, he answers that the family heads and decision-makers (or "wise guys," if the character is streetwise) call each other "Kindred."

At any rate, the tumbler contains two points of Andreas' blood. Immediately upon drinking, the ghoul feels the wash of power she felt the night before, but doubled. Her eyes immediately

fall upon a portrait of Andreas hanging on Hank's wall. The Blood Bond is two-thirds formed, and when Hank tells the characters that Andreas desires their presence at his home on Sunday night, they feel elated, flattered and probably quite impatient.

THE FINAL DRINK

Sunday, August 18, shortly before midnight, the characters find themselves seated in a dark livingroom, waiting for Andreas. The only light comes from the moon in the window, and the if the characters try the lights, they find them inoperative.

The room contains a sofa, several comfortable chairs, a fireplace with a heavy grid in front of it (which is padlocked into place, if the characters look closely) and several cabinets with shelves of silver kettles and plates. What the moonlight catches most clearly, however, is a tapestry. A character whose player makes a successful Perception + Academics skill roll (difficulty 9) estimates its age at several hundred years. The scene depicts a long table, around which 13 people are seated. A number of the faces are shadowy and indistinct, but some are fairly clear. These faces are of Marianna and the player's characters from the previous installments of the *Giovanni Chronicles* (if you did not play the first three installments and are using elders of your own creation, describe those three and make up 11 more, should the characters take interest). This tapestry was mentioned briefly in *Blood and Fire*; the players may remember it, though their current characters have never seen it. However, as the characters look over the faces in the tapestry, a cold chill runs down each of their spines.

At this point, Andreas enters quietly. He takes a moment to examine the characters, then walks among them, patting their shoulders and fondling their hair. His touch is always very familiar, like the touch of a close friend or lover. He is just as affectionate to men as to women, and heterosexual men might well respond warmly to him, in spite of themselves.

If asked about the tapestry, Andreas explains that it was hanging in a mausoleum in Rome, and he brought it with him to the New World. He does not know its origins, but he makes some vague comments about who the figures were (as far as he knows; if one of the elder characters was a noble of any import in life, he'll know it, but serfs and wanderers are beyond his knowledge. He knows who the individuals are as Kindred, but doesn't tell the ghouls that). He then stands in front of the fireplace, and nods to someone who the characters can't see. At this point, a light on the mantle switches on, revealing the portrait of Andreas from Hank's office hanging over the fireplace.

Take a moment here and allow the players to consider, silently or aloud, how the blood bond affects their characters. The housewife character in the above examples might see Andreas as her ideal affair, while the accountant may regard him as a new employer, albeit an employer to whom he feels he owes his life. The bond is not always romantic or sexual love, but this is certainly a possibility (especially for Andreas; see his entry in the *Dramatis Personae* chapter).

"Now," he says, "it is time for you to find out the source of your new strength, as well as the nature of your promotions...or pardons, as the case may be."



"We have a custom in the family. When new members are inducted, they drink of the *don's* blood. After this ceremony, their loyalty should be assured, and they can be trusted with sensitive assignments." At this point, Andreas reaches into his suit coat and produces a small dagger. He slices his right palm, and places it to the lips of the nearest character.

If the characters were not two-thirds Blood Bound already, they would probably run. If any character balks at drinking blood directly from a man's hand (unlikely at this point, but supreme efforts of will may arise), have her player roll her Willpower (difficulty varies, depending on the nature of the past two days for that character). If she succeeds, she may refuse, for all the good it does her. Andreas then completes the others' bonds and has them force the reluctant character's mouth open for the final drink.

If any character possesses the Unbondable merit, things progress somewhat differently. A smart character will play along, and you should allow the player of such a character a Wits + Empathy roll (difficulty 5) to realize the subtle but evident change that has come over the other characters. However, a resistant character not only receives the third drink, but may well cause Andreas to schedule a session of heavy-handed Dominate if she continues to resist.

However unlikely, it might happen that all of the characters panic and run. Andreas is prepared for this. Both of the doors leading out of this room are locked, and there are several wraiths

in the room. If most or all of the characters try to bolt or attack Andreas, the wraiths possess them and hold their bodies still.

Once the bond is complete, Andreas allows the characters a few moments to let the vitae sink in. The now-familiar rush returns, and with it carries a feeling of love, loyalty and possibly lust for Andreas. Make it very clear that whatever the character's feelings toward other people, be they family, friends, etc., they are now willing to kill or die for Andreas Giovanni.

After a moment, Andreas speaks again. "You are now part of the family, and just as beloved as pets are in any family. Make no mistake, you are now in much deeper than you know. Your lives are at great risk, for not only will the mortal authorities want you dead or imprisoned, but you serve a family of Necromancers and Kindred.

"You are not Kindred...yet. Might you be? Perhaps someday. But now, you are a collection of those we favored and those we did not. You see, those we favor are preserved with vitae and given strength. Those we do not are bound, so they will not flee or betray us. What is the difference? Not a god damned thing.

"You have seen some of your new power; you will learn more as time goes on. I suggest you compare notes, as I have better things to do. I will be checking on you from time to time, but for the most part, you report to Hank. He will give you your first assignment, after you've discussed anything you wish among yourselves." He walks to the door, and the characters feel an immediate longing as he leaves. "Oh," he adds, turning back,

WHY THE GIOVANNI REALLY WANT THE CLUB

The profitable new industry is bare-fisted boxing, but that's peripheral to why the Giovanni want the club. The club is a place of power, what occultists would call a "nexus." The type of energy it focuses could be kindly described as aggression, and more accurately described as bloodlust. The Giovanni assume (correctly) that Necromancy would be very easy to perform at the club.

This bloodlust is, in fact, what inspired Solomon to host boxing matches here. It is also what possesses him to incite and persist in a gang war with the Giovanni, even if they buy the club from him.

In game terms, all difficulties on rolls to resist frenzy are increased by two while at the club, as the feeling of bloodlust pervades characters who have their ire roused therein.

"One more thing. You may remember the priest at Mass saying something about restless shades serving God as punishment for disrespect? There are several with us tonight, and you may join them at a moment's notice." If Grace died at the hands of a character, he nods to him and whispers "One of them would love to be reacquainted with you." He then leaves the room.

The characters may discuss their new condition for as long as they like. When they finish, Hank enters and sits in a chair. He smiles broadly, winks at any attractive women in the room, and digs through his pockets, finally coming up with a matchbook. On it is written "Red Carpet" in gold lettering.

He informs them that the place is a speakeasy, and a very successful one. However, it is currently owned by Charles Solomon, the most powerful mortal head of organized crime in New England. Hank tells them that, by hook or by crook, the place must be in the hands of the Giovanni by next Friday. He can provide them with documents, information, or the like, but they must do the legwork, and they must check the place out. Rumor has it, Hank says, that a profitable new industry is based at the club, and Andreas Giovanni wants in on it.

As the characters leave, Hank stops one (choose someone, but one who has either shown respect, kindness, or some good solid common sense to Hank in the past). He tells that character that becoming Kindred means becoming a "made man," in the highest sense of the word. However, there are only so many slots to fill. Hank makes it very clear that, no matter how vivid the illusion of camaraderie, the characters are in competition for the greatest prize of all; becoming more like Andreas.

SCENE FOUR: THE SPEAKEASY

The Red Carpet presents the front of being a social club; dancing is allowed, alcohol is not. However, the front room is usually populated by people who are either not street smart

or who are in the employ of the club's owner, Charles Solomon. Access to the back room, where the bar is located, requires knowledge of a special password, which varies weekly.

In trying to acquire the club, the characters can try several avenues.

BUYING THE CLUB

Solomon does not own the club legally. A check of records shows that a man named George Goldman holds the deed. This could be a break for the characters, as Goldman is fairly easy to manipulate, which is why Solomon uses him in the first place.

Goldman can be found with little effort; he rarely leaves his home. He is a widower and a veteran of the First World War. The stress of combat, coupled with his present stress of being in the Mob's pocket, has taken years off his life.

If the characters come calling during the day, Goldman can be seen through his front window. He is sitting at a desk playing chess with an unseen opponent (there is, in fact, no one there). A tough-looking man in an expensive suit answers the door. He asks would-be visitors their business, and then asks Goldman if he's expecting anyone. He'll say no, but both he and the guard are gullible. Gaining access to Goldman should pose no real problem.

Once inside, they can ask George about the club. He rambles off on tangents frequently, however, and talking with him should prove a frustrating experience. He will tell the characters that the club is not for sale, and if they threaten him, he summons his guard to show them out.

Dominate can be used on Goldman, but Presence confuses him so much that he asks the characters to leave so he can lie down. If he is forced to sell or give the club to the characters, he tells them that his lawyer is unavailable until tomorrow. If one of the characters can act as a lawyer, the deal can be done immediately. If not, he sets up an appointment for the next day (by which time his guard will have reported to Solomon, and Goldman will be dead. If the characters kill or otherwise prevent the guard from reporting, they may return and purchase the club).

If the characters break in at night, there is still a guard on duty. The guard is sleeping on a sofa in the front room, however. Each character entering the house must score three successes on a Wits + Stealth roll (difficulty 6). Otherwise, the guard awakens. He is armed with a revolver, and shoots to kill.

A thorough search of the place turns up a cash hoard of about \$1000 hidden in a locked box on top of a tall bookcase. There is also a strongbox under Goldman's bed containing his will and the deeds to several properties, including the speakeasy. His will stipulates that all his goods be left to his son, Luther.

The characters can try doctoring the will or the deed, if they like. This requires someone with at least three dots of Streetwise (preferably with a specialty in Forgery) and someone with at least two dots in Law. A would-be forger must acquire five successes on a Dexterity + Streetwise roll (difficulty 7; this is an extended action with each roll indicating 30 minutes of work).

NEGOTIATING WITH SOLOMON

Getting in touch with Solomon is difficult enough. Hank can tell the characters where he lives, but getting in to see him requires getting through his flunkies. If the characters seem to be discussing using violence to get to him, inform a player whose character has a high Perception or Occult score that he feels a strange presence with them. They then hear a voice whisper the words, "Choose your battles." This is Reginald, trying to keep the characters alive. Hopefully, this hint will be enough to stop them from attacking Solomon directly.

If they visit Solomon, all the players must make a Manipulation + Etiquette roll (difficulty 8). If the combined total is less than five (but still positive) successes, they are told politely but firmly that Solomon will not sell. If the total is between five and 10, they are told that he'll consider it and to come back at the end of next week. If the roll is failed or botched, they are told to leave in no uncertain terms, and get the feeling things might get violent if they stay.

If the total successes are greater than 10, however, they are admitted to see one of Solomon's top men, Richard Lake. Lake is in his mid-50s, but looks fit and trim. He is bald and has a friendly smile on his face when the characters are shown to his office.

He explains that he cannot authorize the sale at this time, because the club is going to be used as a business experiment. If the characters seem interested, he hands them each a red silk pocket handkerchief with the initials "C. S." monogrammed to the corner, and tells them to go the club on Friday night, and that the password is "Pugilist." He has nothing else of value to tell the characters.

HITTING THE STREETS

If some characters have street contacts, they might try finding out information about the club by asking around. The following information about Red Carpet is available on the streets; who knows what and what they have to be bribed to reveal it is up to the Storyteller. It bears noting, however, that Hank could find out any of this information in a day or so, and will if asked. He will remind them, however, that relying on him too much reflects badly on their ability to think for themselves.

- The password this week is "Pugilist."
- There's some kind of special party happening this weekend, judging from the amount of whiskey Solomon purchased.
- The guest list includes several higher-ups in the city government (if the characters think to ask, they find that some of the guests were also at Paul DiCarlo's party; he himself was not invited).
- Word has spread that some new form of gambling will be introduced on Friday. Speculations include racing dogs, dogfights and boxing.
- The police are being heavily bribed to steer clear on Friday, but the chief received an invitation (this piece of information should not come easily).

THE CLUB (BEFORE FRIDAY)

The front room is about half full, some people dancing, a table of men in suits playing cards. The room looks contrived and

dull, as though the people here are paid to pose and would much rather be somewhere else (which is true, for the most part). There is a door at the back of the room marked "Private." If the characters knock at this door, they are asked the password; the correct answer this week is "Pugilist," as stated above.

Behind this door is a narrow, stuffy hallway that reeks of cheap perfume. It goes on just long enough to make the characters claustrophobic, and then their escort opens another door.

The room beyond this door is like a carnival. Nearly 100 people dance, drink, and laugh to loud big band music. This place differs from DiCarlo's party in that his, while decadent, was still very classy. Not so with this place. As the characters search the room, they see couples immodestly kissing and fondling each other on the dance floor. At one of the few tables in the room, an immense and hideous man shoves a young woman underneath the table and slouches in his seat. The look on his face changes from amusement to bliss to distortion, then he opens his billfold, throws some cash under the table, and walks toward the bar, zipping up his pants. The woman crawls out from under, stuffs the money into her dress, and begins working the crowd again, wiping her mouth.

The dance floor makes up the bulk of the room. The bar is small and set along the back wall. Three steps lead down to the dance floor as the characters enter, and there are similar steps on the other three sides of the floor. The steps on the sides lead to small areas with five tables apiece, but all are occupied. There is no apparent source of the music. The walls are bare and wooden, colored in places by a spilled drink, or a blood or vomit stain. There are several little alcoves in the walls. Some are empty, some contain whores peddling themselves or other salespeople selling drugs or small firearms.

The characters may speak to whomever they wish. Most of the patrons are here only to have a good time. No one here can answer questions about the club's ownership, nor about Friday's activities. The bartender, if asked, tells the characters that if they enjoy betting on sports, they can buy a pass for Friday for 10 dollars. These passes are red silk handkerchiefs, monogrammed with "C. S."

If the characters are unfamiliar with this part of society (i.e., no dots in Streetwise), the club should thoroughly shock them. Alcohol, they probably expected; but here, sex, drugs and violence are on sale as well. If a character expresses distaste too loudly, she will be ejected from the club into a back alley. Any threat to call the police is met with laughter from the security men (and, in fact, the police do not come if called). That character will not be allowed back in without special (and grudgingly given) permission from Lake or another high-ranking member of Solomon's gang.

The characters can dance and purchase drugs, favors or booze until the club closes at 5 A.M., but no one here can help with the acquisition. Guests are expected to "know people."

PAUL DICARLO

If the characters think of it, they can visit DiCarlo on the subject. Paul DiCarlo is a very talented lawyer, and might be able to lean on Solomon enough that he agrees to sell the club

(that particular club isn't all that important to him anyway, though he does not realize what an effect the place has had on him. See "Why the Giovanni Want the Club," above). DiCarlo sets up a meeting between himself and Lake at Paulo's Ristorante in the North End, and asks that the characters be present.

Lake and DiCarlo circle each other in conversation for a while, then get down to business. Lake's asking price is fifty thousand dollars. This is about twice as much as the club is worth, and much more than Andreas would be willing to pay. Lake, DiCarlo, and the characters can haggle as much as they wish. However, the lowest Lake will drop is \$38,000, unless the characters use some mind-altering power on him. It should be noted that Lake's Willpower score is 8, making him difficult to affect with such abilities. In any case, one of his requirements is that ownership of the club will be passed after the "special event" on Friday.

SCENE FIVE: THE FIGHT

This scene takes place on Friday night, August 23. By this time, the characters should have either acquired the club, or have created a definite plan for doing so. The first part of this scene remains the same regardless; the end depends on the status of the club.

The fight is scheduled to occur at 11 P.M. At that time, anyone who did not present a red handkerchief (or who is not attached to

someone with such a handkerchief) is escorted out. The dance floor is cleared, and a man in a tuxedo walks to the center.

"Tonight," he says, "we have something new at the Red Carpet. Right here, on the dance floor, for your entertainment, two expert fighters will go toe-to-toe, without boxing gloves, without bells, without water breaks and without a referee! You may place your bets at the bar, but first, may I direct your attention to the door on my right?" He gestures, and from the door on his right walks a black man, wearing only a pair of boxer shorts. He is nearly seven feet tall, and walks with a slight limp. A scar begins on his left ankle and runs up the length of his leg, disappearing beneath his shorts. He is bald, heavily muscled and thoroughly savage-looking. "Our first fighter comes from the land of Africa, where he grew up protecting his village from lions and other beasts, with nothing but his bare hands. Weighing 368 pounds, may I present, Morabi!" The crowd applauds, and chatters about the "monster nigger."

The emcee gestures to his left and shouts, "And his challenger!" The man who walks through the door hardly seems a match. He appears short, but this is only due to his proximity to the African. He is thin, but obviously muscular. He wears a pair of stained blue pants, a white shirt, a derby and newly shined black shoes. He looks the crowd over, and smiles at the ornamental young ladies attached to some of the patrons. He has charming blue eyes, and a mop of bright red hair, which falls out from his hat as he tips it to the room. "This young man grew up on the shores of Ireland, but left for America at the tender age of



13. He has fought for food on the streets of New York, and that skill as a fighter has led him to us. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you Colm Brennan!" Scattered boos, catcalls and shouts of "lousy mick!" erupt from the crowd. One man near the characters mutters "A mick and a nigger in a ring beating each other to death." He smiles, shakes his head and lights a cigar.

The bar opens for bets, minimum bets are 20 dollars. The odds are seven-to-two in favor of the African. Once all bets are in, the fight begins.

The fight does not go as predicted. Morabi, while strong enough to flip a small car, is fighting someone who is used to not being there when a punch is delivered. Colm also fights dirty; his first shot is at Morabi's throat. Colm circles him, ducking punches and getting his own in when he can. He finally gets cocky, however, and doesn't move quite fast enough. Morabi picks him up by his red hair and punches his face. Colm responds by spitting blood into the African's eyes. He drops him, and Colm scrambles back, bleeding badly from the nose.

If the characters look around during all this, they notice mixed reactions. Some patrons look disturbed by the fight, but most are excitedly cheering their chosen fighter. The man with the cigar screams "Kill him!" and is joined in this sentiment by several others. Nearby, an older man with a much younger woman rubs his hand between her thighs as she watches. If she catches someone staring at her, she smiles and blows him a kiss.

Colm seems to be on the ropes, and Morabi closes in for the finishing blow. As he does, Colm ducks the punch, grabs

Morabi's scrotum in his right hand, and squeezes. The African screams with pain, and lashes out, but Colm has already moved. He jabs two fingers at the African's right eye, and draws them back bloody. Morabi falls to one knee.

The fight is really over at this point. Colm continues to circle, and throws a jab in whenever Morabi tries to get up. Finally, he kicks the giant in the teeth with a newly shined shoe, and keeps kicking until he stays down. The emcee declares Colm the winner. The few patrons who bet on him run to the bar to collect their winnings. Morabi is dragged off by three thugs, while Colm is led to a table and given ice.

What happens now depends on how (and if) the characters obtained the club.

If the Characters Have Not Obtained the Red Carpet:

Andreas and Stephano are in attendance, but do not make their presence known. Lake and Solomon are also here, surrounded by goons. The two Kindred are watching the characters to see what their course of action will be. Whatever it is, remember that while random, chaotic violence will probably get the characters killed and should be discouraged, the characters may be able to take down Solomon's goons somehow and force Solomon into giving up the club.

If whatever they try fails, Andreas steps in and Dominates Solomon into giving him the club. This causes the characters to lose a great deal of face in the eyes of their domitor. Bound characters find themselves unable to regain Willpower until Andreas forgives them.



If the Club Was Acquired from Solomon:

Solomon and Lake are here, and as promised, turn over ownership to Andreas after the fight. Andreas is here to receive it, and congratulates the characters on a job well done.

If the Club was Acquired by Treachery:

The fight should still happen. Andreas tells the characters to let the club operate as usual until Saturday. However, as the fight closes, one of the characters feels his head move in the direction of the door (Reginald's doing). Through the throng of people, the character notices Lake leaving. His goons have also left.

The character may guess that something bad is about to happen. This is correct; there is a bomb hidden in a case of whiskey behind the bar. Reginald, the wraith, noticed some of Solomon's men setting it up. Hopefully, the characters search the bar quickly; the bomb will go off in five minutes.

Allow each player cognizant of the suspected treachery to roll Wits + Investigation (difficulty 8; the place is crowded). This is an extended roll; the first player to reach five successes finds the bomb (unless, of course, a player states that his character is looking in the whiskey crates behind the bar, in which case he finds the bomb automatically). If, at the end of five turns, no one has found it, Reginald possesses a character and leads him to it. This does not solve the problem, of course. Disarming the bomb requires a Wits + Streetwise roll (difficulty 10, or 6 if the character use the Demolitions Ability instead). Three successes are needed; this is an extended roll.

If the bomb explodes, it inflicts 15 dice of aggravated damage to anyone within four yards, deafens everyone in the room (at least temporarily) and does a great deal of structural damage as well. Some of this could be avoided by throwing the bomb out of the window before detonation. Andreas will see this as perhaps not the best of all possible outcomes, but acceptable, and goes to work on getting the club repaired (and harvesting the souls of those who died in the explosion).

SCENE SIX: THE CIRCUIT

The next evening, Andreas summons the characters to meet him at the Red Carpet. He congratulates them on a job well done, or sternly reprimands them for not doing their assigned task, depending.

He also tells them that the fight was a huge success, and he has already received word that demand is strong for another. However, he feels that holding such fights at known speakeasies is asking for trouble. Besides, they turned a lot of people out last night, who probably went to other clubs, which is money lost for the family. (He also wants to start using the club for his own experiments, but the characters aren't told this).

With this in mind, he tells the characters that they and Hank are now going to be in charge of this endeavor. They will be responsible for finding fighters, locations, refreshments, and any other sundries that might be necessary to keep

the patrons happy. If the characters balk at this, he tells them to work on it for a while, and if they are still uncomfortable, they can request reassignment. If they do so, he puts them on grave-robbing detail until they come around.

This scene functions in much the same way Scene Three did; the characters can act singly or as a unit to put the circuit together. The scenarios below are meant to cover most of the major goals they should achieve, and how to lead them to these people and places in particular.

GETTING STARTED

There are a few things the characters should consider right off the bat. For example, who is going to be the "visible" head of the boxing circuit? That is, if someone wants to know the time and place of a fight, to whom do they go to find out? Likewise, who is going to be in charge of finding fighters? Arranging liquor? Prostitutes? How about making sure the police either don't know or don't care? And speaking of the authorities, what about the Feds? Much more difficult to buy than the locals, they also watch for undeclared money, so some method of laundering the profits becomes necessary. The introduction provides a list of recommended Abilities; hopefully the group has a good mix of them.

Once they have decided who the "contact man" of the group is, they should inform Hank. Hours after Hank is told, that character is phoned regularly, and from some very important people. The want to know details, times, places, odds, whether girls for hire will be there, the quality of the whiskey, etc.

The characters need to be careful, here. Any of the calls could be an undercover cop, Fed, reporter, or perhaps even rival Kindred seeking to bring the circuit down. They need to find a way to distribute information safely, maybe with some form of code.

Once the system is worked out, Hank can get it to everyone in the city who needs to see it, within a day.

LOCATION

Finding a functional location for the fights is probably the most immediate concern, along with finding capable fighters. Hank proposes several choices to the characters.

- Outside of town, a good 30-minute drive, Hank knows of a clearing that may work. If the characters check it out beforehand, they find a small valley right off the road, with a good-sized copse of trees. The advantage is that police interference is practically unheard of, and there is no charge to use the land. The obvious downside is that neither the weather nor the light can be guaranteed. Plus, hauling liquor and/or prostitutes out that far might turn out to be a pain. The not-so-obvious downside to this, but one that occurs to Andreas, if he is consulted, is that the land is Lupine territory. If the fight occurs here, play up the bright, cool light of the full moon, and the strange sounds from the cluster of trees not 100 yards away.

- A warehouse near the waterfront may work, according to Hank's sources. One of the smugglers who commonly works for King Solomon offers to host the fight, and easily accessible whiskey can also be made available (though the characters must supply any other refreshments). This option is open



whether or not Solomon willingly gave up his club, for reasons to be discussed below. This locale combines the advantages of a quick drive, readily available whiskey, a low rental cost (because whiskey profits go to the house, not the Giovanni), and a lot of space. The primary disadvantage is that the cops watch the place intermittently, and a lot of expensive cars in a warehouse parking lot would definitely attract attention. A fight here will almost certainly be raided unless the characters pay the cops off or find another way to avoid it.

The reason that this is an option regardless of Solomon's attitude towards the characters has to do with the elder characters from the first three *Giovanni Chronicles*. At least one of the Children of Isaac probably has a hand in shipping, and all of them have an interest in keeping an eye on the Necromancers. This elder recently learned of the nascent fighting circuit and wasted no time in making the warehouse available — keeping her enemies closer, as it were.

- Hank also suggests Boston Central Catholic High School. The principal, Bill Beretti, is an opium addict and a regular customer of the Giovanni. Hank recommends calling him up. The gymnasium can be made available easily, as school is not yet in session. The advantages here are many: a large space; a kitchen (should the characters wish to serve food), cheap rent (Beretti will call it even if his pipe is kept full) and little police trouble. The main problem is one of atmosphere; there is little ventilation in the gym, and in August it gets almost stiflingly warm.

FIGHTERS

Just as important as location, a pair of warriors must be found. Of course, they *could* be just a couple of thugs, but seasoned combatants hold the crowd's interest far better — and for fights to come. Colm Brennan will fight again, but cannot do so until his face heals (he still can't quite see straight). So, the characters must go searching.

- If the characters contact Effie Feng about opium (see *Drugs*, below), she can introduce them to a young Chinese man whom she calls her "houseboy." Feng Lin is, in fact, her son, and a dhampyr. He is a mediocre martial artist, but has managed to learn the first level of Jade Shintai from his mother, and this, combined with his ability to use Demon Chi, makes him a skilled opponent. Whether or not the characters use him as a fighter, they will see him later in the chapter. For more information on dhampyrs and Demon Chi, see *Kindred of the East*. If you do not have access to this book, Feng Lin can root himself to the ground, becoming impossible to knock down or throw. He also has four "Chi Points" which he may use during the fight as extra actions or automatic successes on damage.

- One of the characters may take on the responsibility himself, if the group so desires. Being a ghoul means a decided advantage in a fight, after all, and this circuit might prove an outlet for the Beast. The Storyteller should remember, however, that while ghouls don't frenzy as easily as *Kindred*, they do check for frenzy more often. The fight should definitely test the character's self control.

• Bertrand Rousseau, a wealthy French immigrant, contacts the characters. He loves America, he says, but craves action. He heard about the fights from an associate (he names one of the businessmen present) and asks not to be invited, but to be a fighter.

The characters may balk at this apparent fop wishing to be a fighter, but Bertrand would be a good choice. He is handsome, charismatic, and has a bright, winning smile. He learned the art of *savate* (French kickboxing) when he was a boy and has practiced it as a hobby ever since. He is, however, inexperienced in full-contact fighting and will definitely lose his first fight because of this.

• Hank contacts the characters with a prospect. His name is Bobby Leroy, and he has just been released from prison after serving five years on an assault charge. He worked briefly for the Giovanni before getting arrested, and wants back in (his lifelong dream is to become a "made man"). While in prison, he learned to fight dirty. He is lean, very muscular and terribly antisocial unless one of the family is around, in which case he is quiet and deferential.

• When a character, preferably one with a high Humanity rating, is walking alone, he is approached by an old Korean man. He introduces himself as Cho, and says he'd heard the character was looking for fighters. If asked how he knew, he looks confused, and stumbles with English words for a moment. If he is told he is too old to fight, he stammers out the word "Demonstration." If the character provides an opponent, Cho immobilizes him with a joint lock within three seconds.

Cho is a practitioner of *hwarang-do*, a Korean martial art. While he looks thin and frail, he is strong for his age and in perfect control of his body. He detests fighting, for money or otherwise, but has a young daughter who needs food and medicine, and so he sought out the characters (how he knew about them is another matter — it would seem the streets have begun to recognize the characters).

If Cho ends up fighting Feng Lin, the fight turns brutal as Cho's mystical senses detect Lin's unholy heritage. The fight can end up with either as the winner, but Lin should survive to be encountered later.

AUTHORITIES

The characters may have already met some of the local law enforcement at DiCarlo's party or at the Red Carpet. The cops don't have much loyalty to Solomon in particular, so they won't care if he is ousted forcefully from the club. They will not, however, turn a blind eye to human cockfights in their city without say-so from the chief.

Hank advises the characters to go and see the chief of police, Carl Doohan. Doohan is Irish born, and doesn't care much for Italians. However, he is easily bribed. He discovered early on that his chosen lifestyle — lots of booze and women — could not be financed on a policeman's salary. When Prohibition came down and the Solomon gang came in, he struck a favorable deal with the King: If Solomon could get him into power as chief, he could enable Solomon easy access to the city's liquor market. As time went on, he just became greedier and more complacent until finally he stopped making an effort to even appear interested.

That was until Timothy Kennedy stepped in. Timothy is an idealist (kindly put) and truly believes that Prohibition can work. He is also deputy chief of police, and watches his superior very carefully. This young man has made it very difficult for Doohan to meet with Solomon's men, as such a meeting would certainly fuel Kennedy's drive to oust Doohan. So, if the Giovanni family comes calling, Doohan makes his demands clear. He wants five hundred dollars a week, and he wants Timothy Kennedy dead. If this is done, he'll gladly allow the fights, and keep his men away.

If the characters assassinate Kennedy, Hank tells them to keep it quiet, even to make it look like an accident. The last thing the family needs, he says, is more trouble with the micks.

REFRESHMENTS

Depending on where the fight is to be held, booze may already be handled. If not, the characters must find a way to import it. Finding a supplier is no problem; Hank can handle that. Once the trucks are in town, the characters must transport them to some sort of holding facility, get them to the fight scene, and handle distribution (meaning someone has to tend bar). Hank can make sure there is wine, whiskey, and beer available; if the characters are smart, they'll provide water as well.

Alcohol is not the only concern, however. The characters have already heard requests for drugs, and the "contact" character will hear many more. The Giovanni in Boston have heretofore not been involved with the drug trade, so Hank can only offer possibilities.

• Effie Feng is Hank's first call on opium. Getting an appointment is difficult. However, Hank comes through and tells the characters where to go and when to be there.

Feng's home is impressive from the outside, a mansion dating back to Colonial times. Inside, however, is breathtaking. Art from China adorns every wall, including a seven-foot-long, three-foot-high jade statue of a Chinese dragon. Feng's "manservant," Lin, welcomes them and ushers them into a sitting room for a cup of tea.

Feng is quite willing to discuss business, and is cool and professional unless a male character flirts, in which case she speaks to him exclusively unless directly addressed by another character. If the player succeeds on a Charisma + Subterfuge or Seduction roll (difficulty 6), Effie quietly invites him to stay behind. That character is in for the night of his life. Come morning, he finds himself barely breathing, and will feel very drained (and have lost two blood points).

Effie's prices are reasonable (for a smuggler), and she agrees to donate a small amount of pipe opium as "samples" for this first fight. After that, it begins to cost, but if the samples have their desired effect, the next fight should have more takers. If the subject of fighters is raised, she mentions that her manservant is an accomplished fighter (see Fighters, above). More information on Effie Feng is given in the Dramatis Personae chapter.

• Any druggist in the city has access to a wide variety of prescription drugs. Of course, pharmacists tend to be very ethical people, which means that characters wishing to obtain drugs from one will probably need to tend more toward coercion than persuasion. Andreas suggests "leaning" on a pharmacist — exactly whom is irrelevant — until he gives. The methods of intimidation



are limitless: threats, bribes, blackmail, Dominate, torture, etc. The pharmacist will resist as long as he is able, but is only human. Be sure to levy Humanity checks if the characters get too brutal, relative to their current Humanity scores, of course.

PROSTITUTION

The characters surely noticed the number of men with attractive women at the last fight, and probably few of them are naive enough to assume that the couples were married. At the Red Carpet, whores work much like waitresses; they scan the crowd, offering quickies in the corner and blowjobs under the tables, and the house takes a percentage of whatever they make in a night. If a client wants to leave with a girl, she keeps any money collected, but is also not protected by the club.

This rather chaotic system, however, does not work for a floating fight circuit. The characters need to nail the girls down (so to speak): where they come from, how many will be there, how much they charge, etc. There are several ways to accomplish this.

- They can use street contacts to get in touch with the women who usually frequent the Red Carpet, and offer terms. This is slow work, and fully half the girls refuse to work for the "wops who stole the Carpet."

- The characters can go out recruiting. This means going to the bad side of town, finding girls who perhaps dream of the glamorous life of a gangster or desperately need money. The characters can also check other speakeasies and burlesque houses, but they will surely incur the enmity of the proprietors unless they "grease the wheels" with cash or other indulgences.

- Hank gives them the address of a brothel. The madam, Dallas, an Irish woman in her late 50s, is initially unwilling to let any of the girls take clients anywhere but at the house (the house, by the way, is much too small to host a fight). She requires some form of persuasions. Possibilities include bribery, an invitation to the fight to make sure the girls are safe, or coercing her in some way. Once again, Humanity checks may be necessary.

This brothel can provide 20 girls, which is probably a safe number for the first fight.

- Andreas pulls a character or two aside and tell them that some of the clientele enjoys somewhat...younger...partners. He chooses characters who he feels will be able to make such arrangements (i.e., those with low Humanity scores). Finding child prostitutes (or slaves) probably involves kidnapping, perhaps even from an orphanage. Characters who go through with this despicable act should almost certainly check their Humanity (how low did it start, anyway?). However, all proceeds from this "young talent," as Andreas puts it, go to them only (minus a small percentage for the Giovanni, of course).

THE FIRST FIGHT

The characters' choices determine the setting of the first fight. Many of the details of the locations have been left to the Storyteller; this is deliberate, as it allows some room for creativity on her part.

In running the fight, keep the characters busy right up until the fight starts. Anyone who has ever hosted a large party or dinner

MONEY MATTERS

In the case of Effie Feng's drugs, rental cost for the locations and other matters, the characters may be spending Andreas' money. The head of Giovanni operations in Boston fully understands that in order to make money, you must spend money. However, he keeps very close track of where his money is going, who got it there, and how much profit it can expect to yield.

In game terms, make sure one of the characters is keeping up the books, and periodically ask for an Intelligence + Finance roll (difficulty 6). This roll simulates an hour of work. If the character neglects this duty, raise the difficulty by one for every major transaction that goes by without the books being updated. If they get out of whack by any noticeable margin (which is a matter of dimes, because Andreas is a superb financier himself), the character(s) responsible will pay dearly.

The characters may also choose to spend their own money; managing it is then entirely in their own hands, and keeping the books balanced becomes even more important. In this case, a botched Finance roll costs a dot of Resources.

will know that any number of things can and usually do go wrong. Perhaps Bill Beretti, the high school principal, is passed out in this office and cannot hear the characters knocking. Perhaps the whores from the brothel are all suffering from an outbreak of gonorrhea or syphilis and are considering cancellation. It is probably better to spring only one crisis on the characters and see how well they deal with it; perhaps Andreas himself causes such a mishap just to test the wits of his new ghouls.

The fight itself can also go any number of ways. The official "rules" to the fights were never nailed down, unless the characters thought to do so. That in mind, a fight might well go to the death, depending on who the fighters are. If a player's character is fighting, his Potence and healing powers almost assure him victory, but he must be mindful of frenzy — and that someone in the crowd may recognize his edge.

Keep the fighters in mind, too. Cho does not use strikes often; he relies on throws and holds. Bobby's style is cagey and dirty; he uses throat and crotch shots, pulls hair and bites. Bertrand's *savate* is much more stylized, and he uses kicks to keep himself distanced from his opponent. Feng Lin will try to grapple an opponent, then root himself using Jade Shintai. Ultimately, the winner is up to you. The fight may be resolved using dice, but freeform combat is recommended (especially if none of the player's characters are fighting).

The house — and that means the characters — sets the odds. If they wish to place personal bets, they may do so. Likewise, the "refreshments" before, during, and after the fight need to be coordinated. Hopefully, the characters have covered their bases with regard to the police; a raid would be inconvenient, and make the characters look bad.

After the fight, the guests take their leave, and it falls to the characters to clean up. Hopefully, the characters have hired people as cleaning staff; hiring friends and family, in fact, is a good way to garner favors. Even so, cleanup takes hours, and the sun is rising when they leave whatever establishment hosted the fight. As they walk to their cars, they notice two other cars that do not belong here.

The ghouls may realize they are in danger via Auspex. Waiting in the cars are four of Solomon's men. As soon as the characters exit the building and near the parking lot (or whatever passes for one), two of the men open fire with Tommy guns.

SOLOMON'S BUTTONMEN

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Firearms 3

Weapons: Tommy gun (damage 5), Saturday Night Special (damage 3)

The men fire on full auto. Whether or not the characters can dodge effectively depends on where they are (Storyteller's discretion). Combat proceeds as normal. The two men on the passenger sides of the cars have the machine guns, the other two carry pistols. None of the thugs take more than a few steps away from the cars.

The goons' battle plan is simple; they fire at the characters for two turns, then lob two homemade grenades at them. These detonate at the end of the following turn (the grenades "lose" initiative) and inflict eight health levels of lethal damage to anyone within a yard of detonation, decreasing by two health levels per yard.

After the grenades go off, Solomon's thugs leave, assuming the characters to be badly wounded, if not dead. This is, of course, unlikely — the thugs were sloppy and the characters are ghouls.

The Giovanni will be furious. If they took the club by trickery or force, they might have expected reprisal, but if not, this will come as quite a shock. The characters can take any kind of revenge they wish, short of killing or attempting to kill Charles Solomon. Andreas forbids them from doing so, should he suspect they are considering it. Whatever they do, it is answered immediately. The characters have begun a gang war with the most powerful Mafioso in New England. What's worse, Solomon is so taken with bloodlust that negotiations are impossible.

SCENE SEVEN: THE WAR

Charles Solomon is a difficult foe to beat. He has the drive and the resources to carry on a protracted battle with the Giovanni. With the aid of other crimelords, he could probably even win.

However, in May of 1929, Solomon attended the Atlantic City Conference, a massive gathering of Mafiosi hosted by Meyer Lansky and "Lucky" Luciano. The main purpose of the meeting was to avoid costly infighting between gangsters and get on with the business of getting rich. Because of this meeting, Solomon can call upon little support from his fellow

gangsters. Even alone, though, a war with Solomon means some extra considerations for the fights.

For one thing, security must be improved. Guards must be added, and the guests searched and disarmed (if necessary) before the fight begins. The Giovanni family must spend more money on weaponry, and each of the characters should learn to use a weapon.

The characters can plan whatever hits on Solomon and his gang they wish. Some important points in the war are detailed below, but regardless, Charles "King" Solomon himself should not die at the characters' hands—he is assassinated in 1933 by another rival gang. The war lasts until early October; you may choose to run scenes in the war consistently until then, or to simply run the scenes below and consider them the turning points of the war. To allow the greatest amount of freedom for the players, the vignettes below are largely actions taken by King Solomon.

THE HIJACKING (EARLY SEPTEMBER)

A shipment of whisky from Ireland is stopped at the docks and impounded on a Friday afternoon. It is to be kept under lock and key in a warehouse until Monday morning, when the authorities will dispose of it.

Exactly who tipped the cops off is in question. However, the shipment was supposed to be received by Solomon's men and redistributed throughout New England. The cops only impounded it to stop the Feds from moving the liquor that night. Now, both Solomon and the Giovanni want the booze.

The warehouse is not obviously guarded, but that shouldn't fool anyone. There are federal agents inside the warehouse, in buildings across the street and parked in a nearby parking lot. The characters, should they wish to steal the whiskey, will need to bypass or distract these men somehow. The characters can shoot, cajole, sneak or even bribe their way to the booze. There are 10 crates of whiskey in the warehouse, and each case is roughly three feet long by two-and-a-half feet high.

Getting by the Feds isn't the main problem. Solomon wants this whiskey as badly as the Giovanni—more, actually, since he paid for it! Through his own police ties, Solomon learns that there will be a "window" on Monday morning at three A.M. during which most of the agents rotate off their shifts. He plans to send a five-man team with a delivery truck to sneak in, bribe or kill any guards in the warehouse (his sources say there are only two), and make off with the whiskey. The characters, if they have their own ties with the cops, or if they press Hank to get some inside information, can learn this as well. Attacking while Solomon's men are there is double the risk, but leaving them holding the bag would be well worth it.

NAME YOUR POISON (MID-SEPTEMBER)

One of the tragedies that came with Prohibition was the accidental poisoning of thousands of Americans. Some of these occurred from homemade booze made with wood alcohol, and others from booze stored in tin (which causes the alcohol to become toxic). Solomon and his gang have been very careful to avoid such mishaps, as it does not contribute to repeat customers, for obvious reasons.

So, when King Solomon's men receive a hooch shipment from southern Massachusetts in tin containers, they are incensed at first. The vendor, however, wisely offers a refund, and Solomon decides he has a use for the "bad stuff." He sends some flunkies to mix the stuff into the booze being sold at one of the Giovanni's fights. The characters should have a chance to notice this as it happens; if they are caught, Solomon's hoods will use the tins as Molotov cocktails and attempt to set whatever building they are in ablaze. If they are not caught, early guests start getting sick and require immediate medical treatment, which, in turn, requires an explanation of why the victim was drinking in the first place.

THE HIT (LATE SEPTEMBER)

Recognizing that the characters take their cues from "some shadowy dago," Solomon decides to try to whack Andreas Giovanni. He finds the characters with their domitor coming out of a production of *Oedipus Rex* (a favorite of Andreas') and has his men fire into the crowd with submachine guns. Have each player roll Wits + Dodge (difficulty 7). If at least two successes are rolled, that character is safe. Regardless of whether the characters are unharmed, several innocent audience members are harmed, prompting a front-page story on Boston's "RAGING GANG WAR!" featuring photographs of the characters and their regnant.

Solomon has positioned sharpshooters across the street with rifles. The three of them each fire once at Andreas. Unless the characters do something (like take the bullet themselves), all three shots hit, and Andreas falls.

This demands an immediate check for frenzy for the characters (Self-Control, difficulty 5). Frenzying would be ill-advised; the sharpshooters can easily take down a charging target (they have dice pools of 6; their rifles inflict 7 dice of damage). The other problem is that Andreas needs to be removed quickly, before he is carried off in an ambulance. The characters may or may not understand the true nature of their master at this point; if they do not, Andreas beckons one of them and demands that he not be hospitalized. How the characters handle this definitely weighs on his choice of childer later in this chapter.

THE FIX (EARLY OCTOBER)

Solomon is horribly jealous of the fighting circuit which, if the characters are at all competent, should be turning in a great deal of revenue for the Giovanni Mob. He therefore attempts to sabotage the circuit's credibility by fixing a fight.

The fighter he goes after is a young Jew named Martin Gellar. Gellar grew up on a farm and is as strong as an ox, and nearly twice as smart. He moved to Boston following his brother's inheritance of the land and found work as a bouncer in one of Solomon's clubs. Solomon, recognizing the young man's potential as a pawn, had him enter the circuit.

Gellar's opponent is unimportant, but ideally it should be someone who looks weak or unskilled (either Cho or Bobby would work). Solomon has instructed him to throw the fight in such a way that it looks planned. Gellar, true to his instructions, overacts badly and falls after only a few

punches. The audience doesn't at all buy this (Gellar is a very large man), and someone in the crowd starts yelling "Fix!"

The characters need to defuse the situation. They could intimidate Gellar into giving an honest fight (this will be difficult — Gellar is really too stupid to understand that he has no protection while at the fight, and he makes a great show of being loyal to Solomon). They could also find someone else to take his place — perhaps one of them. Canceling the fight is also an option, but that scores Solomon a victory, and he circulates invitation to his own circuit if this happens.

THE EXPERIMENT (ANYTIME)

This is not an attack from Solomon or any other rival gangster, but is one of Andreas' sick experiments. He has had very limited experience with Lupines, but has heard stories that mortals — and ghouls — invariably panic when confronted by one. He has been anxious to observe this phenomenon himself for some time, but has had no opportunity.

Stage this scenario when the characters are out of favor, or, if no such opportunity presents itself, assume that Andreas is simply too impatient to delay this experiment any longer. Andreas informs the characters that he needs a corpse, not more than one month dead, but more than a day (so they can't just nab someone and kill them). The body must be relatively intact, and not embalmed or altered.

The characters might well wonder where they could find such a corpse. If, however, a player can roll three successes on a Wits + Streetwise roll (difficulty 7), he remembers a patch of land not far from the area outside of town mentioned in Scene Five (under Locations). This land has been used by the Solomon gang for quite some time to bury bodies (the Giovanni never seem to want to bury them...) and there are probably bodies fresh enough for Andreas. If none of the characters think of it, Hank may tell them.

The land is deserted. The copse of trees nearby is barren and the autumn smell of decaying leaves is carried on the wind. A character with Auspex may notice another smell — a musky, animal odor. She may also sense movement from the trees.

While there are Lupines in the area, they have never attacked Solomon's men during their impromptu funerals. The characters, though, are here to exhume bodies. Fortunately for them, the only werewolf in the area is young and does not immediately attack, but moves closer to investigate.

The sky is cloudy, and the characters must work by whatever lights they bring. As they dig, lightning flashes, and something very large moves closer to them. Allow one player, probably one with Auspex, the luxury of a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 7) to notice the huge shape before it vanishes again. This repeats, the thing moving closer and closer with every flash.

Finally, the characters hear a growling, snuffling sound and footsteps, just outside their field of vision. Characters with Auspex do not fare any better at identifying the sound. The werewolf is deciding whether to kill these "humans." At the moment, it's too curious about what they're doing to attack.

Andreas has instructed a wraith servitor to cause the werewolf to feel a slight burst of anger, and then bewilderment. The characters hear a snarl, and then the werewolf steps from its cover.

The beast is nearly eight feet tall. It is covered with light gray fur, and still sports a tail. Its arms would dangle nearly to its knees, if they were hanging limp. They are raised to eye level, however, and its paws end in wicked black claws. Its mouth is open slightly, and even in this dim light the characters can see fangs which make their own look like toothpicks.

The characters are immediately gripped with a fear the likes of which they have never known. Characters with low (4 or less) Willpower ratings will panic and run, perhaps becoming catatonic. Those with better ratings (5-7) might run in a controlled panic, or even have presence of mind to shoot the beast, for all the good it does. Those with Willpower scores above 7 remain rational enough to slowly move to the cars and get the hell away. Hopefully, it is these characters who have the keys.

The wraith is under orders not to let anyone die. If the characters attack the werewolf, he uses his Keening power to implant the idea of escape into their heads. If that doesn't work, the werewolf just might have to kill one of them for the message to sink in. At any rate, the characters forget what they saw and likely think a mad dog scared them off. The wraiths in attendance report the whole thing back to Andreas, who notes this and decides to keep his people away from that area.

SCENE EIGHT: THE MISSION

The last installment in the war that Solomon initiates is The Fix. The characters are then free to take any retributive action they wish. When this is not acknowledged, naive characters may think they have won. Realistic characters will know something is wrong.

At any rate, on Tuesday, October 15, they are contacted by Hank, who wishes to set up a meeting with a possible "job" for the characters. However, this sponsor has asked that all of the characters be present. If the characters ask, Hank tells them that the sponsor is Francis Milliner.

If a character moves in legitimate business circles, he has probably heard of Milliner. Milliner is a former associate of Joseph Kennedy, and a one-time employee of Columbia Trust Company. The word is that Milliner was passed over for presidency of the company for Kennedy. This is true, but Milliner didn't take it lying down. He had found a new business associate: Andreas Giovanni. (For more information on this, see **Clanbook: Giovanni**.)

What the characters don't know is that Milliner has been granted the Proxy Kiss. Unlike the characters, he is granted a great deal of creative freedom from Andreas, and with good reason — he has been brought to the attention of Augustus Giovanni. His main concern has been taking the

Kennedy's empire out from under them, but he has uncovered a threat to both his own and the Giovanni's status in the city.

Quentin King, the prince of Boston, recently changed King Solomon's son, Peter, into a ghoul. The prince hopes that by working his way into organized crime, he can use it against the Sabbat, and perhaps even the British Kindred (see *Dark Colony* for the full story on the Camarilla struggles in New England). Recognizing the Kennedys as a great source of revenue, King is arranging a meeting between the Kennedys, Peter Solomon, and the Camarilla, represented by a capable ghoul. The meeting will take place during daylight hours in order to prevent Kindred interference.

Milliner, however, keeps close tabs on the Kennedys, and got wind of this plan. He reported it to Andreas, who, ever wishing to test his ghoul's mettle, suggested Milliner call the meeting with the characters. By presenting the mission as a mission for him, not Andreas, he sets the characters up to break the rules.

Milliner meets with the characters at any locale they choose. He comes alone, and pays for a meal, if applicable. He then presents an abridged version of the above (carefully leaving Andreas' name out of the matter initially), tells the characters when the meeting is to take place (the next day at 1 P.M.), where it will be held (a conference room at Columbia Trust) and what he wants done. He wants the Camarilla ghoul and the Kennedy rep killed, and Peter Solomon kidnapped and delivered to him. He tells the characters that they will be paid handsomely for this, and that Andreas will be pleased with "our initiative." If a character is sharp, she will realize that Milliner is insinuating that Andreas does not already know.

The characters have two choices. Their inclination, due to the Blood Bond, should be to tell Andreas about this. However, there is no real reason that they can think of for Andreas not to approve. In the end, either choice works out — if they tell him, he is impressed with their loyalty; if not, he appreciates their ability to recognize priorities of the family (but does reinforce the bond).

With little time left to plan, the characters can stake out the building and talk strategy. The Columbia Trust building is guarded heavily during business hours, but a back door leads straight down a hallway to the conference room in question. The building opens at 9 A.M., and characters wishing to get in before that must bypass the alarms, which requires three separate Wits + Security rolls (difficulty 7, three successes on each roll necessary).

Getting in during business hours can be done through guile or — foolishly — by shooting through the guards and charging the conference room. The characters could also send one member in to get past the front desk and the guards to open the back door, or they could simply force the back door.

In any event, the meeting gets underway at one o'clock. Present are Peter Solomon; Edward Neary, a Kennedy official; and Feng Lin, the Camarilla "ghoul." Solomon and Lin arrived together. Lin and Neary are not armed, but Solomon is packing a pistol.

THE DREAM

The night before the meeting, choose one character, preferably the one whom Reginald pranked at the party. While she sleeps, Reginald uses his ghostly powers to enter her dream.

The dream itself does not change, as Reginald has not yet learned to alter dreams, merely to enter them. Reginald may appear very out of place, depending on the content of the dream.

He warns the character that the Camarilla ghoul is someone they have met, and he is not what he seems. He also warns her that this ghoul must not escape, for he knows of their connection to Clan Giovanni. If she seems confused, Reginald becomes blunt: "Vampires, friend. We work for vampires. I don't have time to convince you, but look around for yourself. Ever wonder why Andreas never eats? Or why he feeds you blood? I'll tell you, though, I'd rather be you than me."

With that, he lets the dream continue and vanishes. The character will remember his words in the morning and hopefully chooses to act on them.

If they hear a commotion outside, they'll have time to prepare. Neary calls the cops, and Lin calls for ghoul backup. The characters must get in, do their job, and get out within one minute.

If the characters sneak in, they catch all three by surprise. The conspirators aren't stupid; they'll surrender if there are suddenly guns in their faces. Neary, in any case, begs for his life. He has three children and his wife is carrying their fourth (which may require a Humanity check if someone does something brutal to him). Lin, on the other hand, stays quiet, but lunges for Solomon with a knife. He reasons that Solomon will be of no use to the Giovanni if he's dead.

SCENE NINE: THE EMBRACE

The characters should leave as quickly as possible, obviously. When they deliver Solomon to Milliner, they find Andreas waiting for them. He grills them on the details of the mission, separately. When he has finished this session, he chooses some of the characters for the Embrace. Whom he chooses should depend on whom, in Andreas' eyes, has contributed the most to the clan during their brief tenure as a ghoul. He then sends the other characters off. As they leave, they hear Hank mutter "Better luck next time."

Andreas then leads the character(s) into an adjacent room. There, a girl of about 13 lies asleep on a sofa. She wears a white dress, as though dressed for Confirmation. She is Italian, and long black hair spills over the sofa's armrest. If a character shows an interest in her, Andreas smiles and says "We'll discuss why she's here, but later. First, I have lesson for you."

FENG LIN, THE CATSPA W

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Dodge 2

Skills: Crafts 2, Martial Arts 2, Melee 2

Knowledges: Finance 1, Occult 2

Disciplines: Jade Shintai 1

Backgrounds: Mentor 2, Resources 2

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

Willpower: 7

Humanity: 7

Equipments: Knife (4 damage)

Use the "Criminal Enforcer" Traits in *Vampire: The Masquerade* for Peter Solomon, but add a dot of Potence. Neary will not enter combat, so should require no Traits — if someone is so coarse as to want to kill him, he dies with little appreciable resistance.

He then proceeds to tell them about the clan. He does not give them the full history, but explains the eventual goal of the clan: to destroy the Shroud and merge the Earth and Shadowlands. He explains the mechanics behind the Blood Bond, and that it breaks upon death. He also explains that they are about to join the clan. He reiterates, however, that the breaking of the bond does not bestow the right to disobey — or disrespect — one's superiors, and that the bond can always be reinstated.

He Dominates one character into staying — just in case she panics — and sinks his fangs into the other's neck. He drinks slowly, but constantly, and the character can feel his body getting slowly colder as the intense pain of the Giovanni Kiss overwhelms him. During the feeding, Andreas slips one hand between the legs of the character and masturbates her (or him) gently, which he believes comforts the character from the pain of the Kiss, but should serve only to make the individual even more violated. The character feels a numbness start at her fingers, as a fiery pain circulates through what little she can still feel. Her knees buckle and her legs give way. The hand between her legs changes from a lover's caress to simple pressure. Her head swims, then aches mightily. Her vision blurs, and the room gets dark.

The other character watches Andreas bite his own tongue and shove it between the lips of her dead compatriot. Said compatriot feels a tugging, as though something is trying to pull her on. Then the tugging is gone, lost in a torrent of strong wine and fire. The rush, the invigoration that the character has felt before when imbibing of Andreas' blood is nothing compared to this. Her vision clears again, and she feels herself locked in the most intense kiss of her life — and death — with Andreas. Then the hunger hits.

Vampiric hunger on a good night is much worse than simple desire for food. It is not a craving, it is not a lust, it is

a need. And the character realizes, for one horrible moment, that what she needs is human blood.

Andreas smiles, and points to the other character.

The newly Embraced Giovanni feeds upon her comrade, and in doing so, immediately checks for degeneration, unless this would take her below Humanity four. This should be almost an afterthought, however. What causes the Humanity pang is not so much the murder of a peer, for the neonate is teetering on hunger frenzy, anyway. What causes it is the feeling she gets when drinking, the realization that this act replaces sex, food, a walk in the sun, a good stiff drink, everything, everything is now blood.

The character on the receiving end, on the other hand, does not even get the benefit of Andreas' rather kinky Embrace. He simply sees his former comrade advance, spring, and bite, and then is lost in a brief and horrifically painful death. (Fiendish Storytellers may give the character a derangement for this brutal excanguination.) The next thing he feels is the rush from Andreas' blood, this time from his wrist, as Andreas hates to repeat himself. When this character awakens, Andreas points him toward the Italian girl.

If there are more than two characters being Embraced, Andreas lets them fight out between them who will be in the neonate's path when she attacks.

AFTERMATH

At this point, Act I ends. However, there are some details that need to be addressed.

Over the course of several nights, Andreas trains the neonates in the mechanics of their new forms, including Disciplines. He also tells them that the other members of their group are now beneath them, still mortal while they are true Kindred. They are, as far as the Mafia goes, "made men," and hard to touch. If they ask him for permission to Embrace the others, he tells them that the Embrace must be earned, and they need to prove their worth. This can (and will) take years.

Peter Solomon is killed and summarily forced to serve as a wraith. He will, in fact, be indirectly responsible for leading his father into death in 1933. The characters, while they may hear rumors to this effect, will never know for sure. If Lin killed Solomon at the bank, the assassination still takes place, but the Giovanni are forced to act directly. This annoys Andreas, who has no wish to come the attention of the FBI.

The fighting circuit continues, but takes a serious dip in quality during the Depression, as people don't have quite as much money to burn. However, by the time Act II begins, the fights will be back in full swing.

In 1944, the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are destroyed. These events have serious repercussions to the Giovanni (see the Introduction).

Finally, in 1954, Francis Milliner is Embraced, and is given permission to create a "family" of his own. The characters may balk at this, particularly those who are still ghouls, but the Kindred characters know now that the Milliners have been allied with the Giovanni for much longer than they have.





ACT II: THE BLOOD OF HER ENEMIES

*"Neighbors!" I cried, "Friends!" I screamed
I banged my fist upon the bar
"I bear no grudge against you!"
— Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, "O'Malley's Bar"*

PART ONE: BUSINESS AS USUAL

DOWNTIME BETWEEN ACTS

If the Storyteller decides to allow the characters to perform actions during downtime, the coterie may have a number of things it wants to do. Characters may wish to "lean on" a particular business establishment, break into a new market, or recruit one or more of the Storyteller characters from the previous act as ghouls (for Kindred) or employees (for ghouls). They could bribe or blackmail a politician into acting on their side, or set up an "arrangement" with the police. They might attempt to establish closer relations with other members of the Giovanni, developing allies and contacts in all manner of places.

An entire adventure could revolve around a ghoul or vampire developing a new Discipline, or learning how to do something new with an old one; remember that these "powers" are still fairly new to the characters. Paul DiCarlo's Embrace at the hands of Stephano is another noteworthy

event that could be handled in characters' play. The characters could even choose to expand the local fight circuit they've started.

One idea should definitely manifest during the downtime if the Storyteller is running adventures then, or during Act II if he is not: Unless the characters take great to avoid keeping contacts outside of the Giovanni for any length of time, and perhaps even if they are, people should begin to notice that the characters are not aging. This may tear them apart from their families, who think they're monsters or freaks. This might frighten their business partners and perhaps even scare some of their contacts away. What do the characters say to their friends, who are developing gray hair and wrinkles, when they remain young? Immortality is not necessarily a blessing, and the characters should begin to feel alienated from everyone except the Giovanni and Milliners (or other vampires) themselves during this act. The characters may still try to have relationships with mortals, but these relationships may very well not work out the way the characters plan them to. Even those mortals who appear to be accepting of the characters may simply be using them in an attempt to discover their fountain of youth.

A LITTLE HISTORY

Early in the 20th century, both Jewish and Irish immigrants got in on the organized crime act. By now — 1959 — most of them have moved into respectable society. Most of the Southern Italians brought with them from their homeland a distrust of government-mandated education, so the streets teem with surly, rebellious recruits for the Italian Mafia.

For a while, organized crime was a significant factor in politics: Many politicians were also major figures in organized crime. Gangs would influence votes either by voting repeatedly ("early and often!") or by "convincing" people to see things their way. Even unions have come under Mob influence; some gangs would wade right in and break up strikes, while others were more subtle and worked their members into the unions. Then, not only did they control the unions, but they often gained influence over the manufacturer who had called them in to deal with the union in the first place.

In Boston, King Solomon and his son Peter are dead by 1959. Raymond Patriarca and his family took over operations of the New England Mafia, now popularly referred to as La Cosa Nostra, in 1954, when Phil Buccola retired. Raymond Patriarca's family is traditionally headquartered in Providence, Rhode Island, but theoretically has sway over both Boston and most of Connecticut — or so he'd like to think. Patriarca puts on a good front and tells an impressive story about his Boston operations, but anyone who deals there knows how powerful the Giovanni family is. The truth is, Patriarca barely holds his own in Boston. He's desperate to make everyone think he can hold onto it, so he cuts into Giovanni operations at every opportunity.

At first, everyone said that Patriarca would be crazy to try to do business in Boston. The criminal culture knew that the Giovanni were in charge, and the death of Solomon was fresh in the Mafia's minds. Patriarca was firm, however. One of his advisors, a man named Warwick whom Raymond's father had trusted for years, had promised that he would help Raymond against the Giovanni. He gave Raymond information that enabled the Patriarcas to gain a toe-hold in Boston. Warwick was a Nosferatu, and he thought that by using the Patriarcas to bother and irritate the Giovanni, he would be able to distract the Giovanni from his own presence in the area.

1959 is a dangerous time to be in the Mafia. The rigid structure is eroding. No longer do soldiers and executioners always get permission from their family head before doing anything, especially harming or getting in the way of another family. Underlings are getting rebellious, and family heads command less and less obedience from their subordinates. It used to be that one obeyed those above without question and could expect the same from those beneath, but no longer is that entirely true. The Giovanni have retained a greater degree of this patriarchal control, however; vampires never accept change as quickly as mortals do, and the Blood Bond doesn't hurt.

As for Camarilla and Sabbat activities, little has changed. Both groups vie for control of Boston. The Camarilla "Prince"

of Boston, Quentin King (see *Dramatis Personae*), would like to believe that he "rules" the city, but he knows better than that. His worry is more the Sabbat than the Giovanni for now; the Giovanni have mostly kept to the business and organized-crime world and remained primarily within certain territories of the city, so Quentin could pretend that they didn't exist. The Sabbat do not maintain a constant presence within the city, but they often move packs through and occasionally make overt strikes at the Camarilla. The Sabbat, too, know to stay away from Giovanni territory. It does not, however, pretend that the Giovanni do not exist; they see the Necromancers as domesticated, and believe it is only a matter of time before the family falls to the Sabbat. The Sabbat is content to take the Camarilla down first, and root the Giovanni out at a later date. The only Sabbat member who can reliably be found in the area is Max Lowell (see *Dramatis Personae*).

CHARACTERS' RESOURCES

The characters have had 30 years in which to build up their resources. Kindred may wish to have a ghoul or two; perhaps they ghoul one or more of their associates from Act I: One of the fighters from the fight circuit might make a good option (perhaps Bobby Leroy or Colm Brennan). Certainly the characters might wish to have a good "soldier" under their command, as well as fewer Mafia-specific employees (a personal valet, maybe?); perhaps a street thug or two would make useful employees. The characters probably have a little more money now; players may wish to raise both their Contacts and Resources Backgrounds between Acts I and II, if the Storyteller agrees.

Contacts, of course, are more than just resources on legs. The Storyteller may wish to make sure that people's contacts ask for as much as they give during the course of this chronicle. Any underlings the characters may have are at a level of the family such that they are not supposed to be making big decisions on their own; the characters should find themselves having to answer questions and make decisions about various business problems throughout this act. If the characters have gotten involved in any business partnerships themselves (or if they own any businesses on their own), then they'll have to look after those interests as well.

The ghouls in the characters may find themselves vying for the attention (and blood) of any Kindred in the characters, and the vampires may delight in making the ghouls jump through hoops for what they want. However, the Kindred are now at one distinct disadvantage: They cannot go out in the daylight. They need the ghouls to take care of any daytime business. The Storyteller may wish to gloss over daytime activities in order to allow the Kindred equal play-time with the rest of the characters, or — better — she may wish to run certain activities during the day in order to stress the dependence of the Kindred upon the ghouls. This would also give the ghouls the opportunity to do things when the Kindred have no chance of seeing or listening in on them.

During the downtime, the characters drink of Andreas Giovanni's blood at least once a year in order to maintain the



strength of the Blood Bond. If the Kindred characters are unwilling to provide for the needs of the ghouls, they may have to feed from Andreas more often than that.

In Act I, the Giovanni had wraiths following the characters around. These wraiths (or ones like them) are still with the characters, keeping an eye on their activities and reporting back to the Giovanni if the characters do anything particularly strange. For the most part, they do not interact with the coterie, but if the Storyteller wishes to have one of them convey some piece of information, she may have them do so. A wraith might whisper in a character's ear, or move some part of a character's body briefly in order to make a point (as Reginald did in Act I). The Storyteller should avoid using this too often, however; any interference the wraiths cause should be brief, surprising and creepy. If it becomes commonplace, it loses the aura of fear and strangeness it brings to the table. Also remember that as the wraiths spend most of their time with the characters, they won't know a whole lot of information that the characters don't know themselves. Try to keep in mind that the wraiths have emotions of their own, often very strong ones, and it may be a good idea to decide in advance whether each person's wraith follower likes, loves or even hates the person she's tailing. The wraiths' opinions of the people they follow may also change during the act depending on what those people do.

PRELUDE

Andreas Giovanni at some point makes it clear to the characters that he does not want them to bother him with all of their problems, and tells them to go to the Milliners or to Hank first. Jason Milliner is to be their main contact point; see *Dramatis Personae* for more information on him. The characters, especially any Kindred, may rightfully resent having to report to non-Kindred (and nonfamily, to boot!), but Andreas explains that the Milliner family is an important part of Giovanni interests, and that they deserve the respect of family members. During this scene, both players and Storyteller should keep in mind the characters' Blood Bond to Andreas. If anyone makes a scene, Andreas throws them out and tells them to come back when they can behave as adults.

SCENE ONE: FUR FLYING

Jason Milliner arranges a meeting with the characters. He has a friend in the fur industry who is having some troubles. The fur industry is a remarkably cutthroat business in the late '50s, and otherwise upstanding businessmen will lie, cheat and steal to get ahead in it. Jason's friend, Alfred Montagne, is about to default on his loans. One of Alfred's rivals, Eric Mobley, stole a shipment of furs meant for Alfred's warehouse, and filled the truck with rotting cabbage instead.

Jason tells the characters to get the furs back, and to make sure that Mr. Mobley understands how impolite it is to do business in such a manner. Alfred Montagne, a stooped, older gentleman in a cheap suit, is very solicitous of the characters.

As the Milliners are fast becoming good friends of the Giovanni, Jason and his friend wouldn't have to pay for such a service — it would come under the heading of duty to the family and good relations with business partners. Alfred however is happy to make one or more of the following offers to the characters, he is so grateful for their help. He cannot offer them money, but he can certainly give them good-quality furs once he gets the shipment in: "And what woman can resist a beautiful mink?" He winks conspiratorially at the characters. He also can offer to do favors for them later, when he gets back on his feet. This could range from giving them a place to hide from the police when things are hot, to laundering money for them, to offering them safe meeting places. Alfred may be old and his business may be ailing momentarily, but he could be a useful contact for the characters. If the characters refuse any payment, he will be even happier to help them out later should they need it. Perhaps he could even host a fight in his warehouse.

THE HEIST

Once the characters have gotten the details, such as where Mr. Mobley's warehouse is, they have a heist (and a little leaning-on) to pull. First of all, they'll need a truck for the furs. Mr. Montagne can't give them his, as it's currently being cleaned, unless they want to wait a few extra nights (and Alfred begs them not to wait that long: "The bank is like a vulture waiting to eat my liver. I have no time to spare.")

The characters may rent a truck from any of a number of places, or get in contact with Domenic Giovanni, a family ghoul who has partial ownership of a local trucking company. (Anyone in the family could point the characters to him.) If they explain to Domenic that it's a favor for a family friend, he'll charge them only quarter-price for the truck. If they want to know why he won't donate it, he explains that he has to show some payment on the books or his partner gets suspicious, and his partner is still useful to him. The characters could also steal a truck, or use their own money to rent one from a stranger (this might, however, leave a trail that the police could follow to them).

If the characters wonder why Jason Milliner hasn't simply loaned the money to Alfred, either Alfred or Jason can tell them that the Milliners won't consider Alfred a good enough risk until he can get the furs back and be fairly certain this won't happen again. "It's business," Jason tells them with a shrug, or Alfred tells them with a sigh. If the characters decide to throw the money at the problem themselves, then it may look for a little while as though they've solved the problem. Eric Mobley is still out there however, and he's still determined to come out on top. Mobley continues sabotaging shipments to Montagne. If that fails for whatever reason, Mobley resorts to having the storefront attacked, or even Montagne on his way to the bank. At any rate, the characters end up losing whatever money they sank into poor Mr. Montagne's business.



Once the characters have the truck they need to plan the heist. "Mobley's Furs" keeps business hours from late morning until mid-evening, and they have a fairly steady stream of customers, which is not uncommon given the store's location on the shopping drag near the Boston Common. Eric Mobley remains after hours (until late evening) tallying the receipts and balancing the books. He's a stout man and doesn't scare easily; he also keeps a shotgun behind his desk. Mobley also keeps a few employees around in the evening, including one balding security guard. If the characters end up killing Mobley, then Alfred will be grateful but more than a little pale, and he will treat the characters very gingerly. If they simply instill the fear of organized crime into Mobley, then Mobley will leave Montagne alone, and Montagne will be extremely grateful to the characters. If the characters take the furs and destroy Mobley's store in one way or another (bomb, fire, acid), then Mobley will go out of business and Montagne will positively fawn over the characters. If any of the characters are male and appear to be of a marriageable age, Montagne will mention his beautiful granddaughter, Anna, in glowing terms.

REWARDS

If any of the characters actually take Montagne up on his offer to have dinner at his home and meet Anna, they find her to indeed be a very lovely young woman who is quiet and shy. Montagne would be very happy for her to be married to a "family man," believing that she will be safer that way, but if she is mistreated in any way, he will go to the Milliners and demand retribution. The Milliners may press the issue and the Giovanni may reprimand the character who hurt Anna, but they will not particularly punish him. The character may find that he is a little less trusted in family matters for a while until he can show that he understands the difference between people who aren't under the family wing and people who are, and that he can control himself accordingly; he might find people making jokes at his expense. The characters also lose out on any favors they might have had from Montagne if bad feelings preside.

If for some odd reason one of the characters decided to marry Anna, Montagne will expect to be protected by him in the future, and will become something of a permanent resource for that character. Anna turns out to be a proper and helpful wife, but she will be shocked at most of the things that go on in the (un)life of one of the characters, and will gradually slide into a deep and abiding depression. Her black moods will culminate in her suicide (by hanging) some months later. If a Kindred uses Dominate or Presence to keep her more in line, she will deteriorate into little more than an automaton. Montagne will delude himself into thinking that she is happy, and if she kills herself he'll develop a full-scale derangement; he'll believe that she was killed by a nonexistent burglar. If one of the characters manages to keep Anna somehow isolated from that life, she will lead a happy and pleasant life with the character — apart, of course, from gradually noticing that her new husband isn't aging at all.



SUSPICIONS

If the characters keep Montagne as a contact, he will, toward the end of the act, hesitantly ask how it is that the character was supposedly born so long ago, but still looks young (this happens with a character who has not gone to great lengths to hide his date of birth in available records, or who hasn't severed all contacts from years ago). If the character indicates that it's none of his business, or that he shouldn't talk about this to anyone, Montagne backs off immediately. He was merely asking to allay his own fears. If the character gives even a halfway reasonable explanation, Montagne is relieved and accepts it happily.

SCENE TWO: ALL IN A NIGHT'S RESEARCH

A woman named Teresa Powers (see *Dramatis Personae*) approaches one or more of the characters when they appear to be relaxing or going about some mundane business. (She would prefer to deal with them one or two at a time rather than all at once, and she comes to them during the daytime if possible.) She is a very straightforward, business-like young woman, although she is friendly and has a good sense of humor. She is currently working on her Master's degree in American History at Harvard, and she would like to interview the characters.

THE INTERVIEW

During their conversation (if they consent to be interviewed) she asks the characters questions about their childhoods, their ethnic backgrounds, their parents, what life was like for their families before they came to the States, what business they're in, etc. Gradually, it becomes obvious that she knows they're in "the business," and that this is what she's most interested in. She's especially curious about the Mafia's organizational structure, and the differences between various Mafia families. She reveals that she has interviewed members of the Patriarcas as well.

If the characters express concern over where her information is going to end up, she explains that it's destined for "a very boring existence, not unlike mine; it will sit neglected between sheets of paper until several dusty old men consent to review it, find a number of nonexistent faults with it, and then decide whether they'll give me my degree or not. After that, it'll swelter in the tall, cramped stacks of the thesis library for the rest of its life." She explains that she isn't looking for details such as the locations of secret warehouses, the schedules of heists or the stash sites of long-lost jewels. She wants to know structure, family relationships, politics, history and such. She has interest in what sorts of personalities would be happy in this kind of life, and what sort of sacrifices they have to make for it. It becomes obvious that she's fascinated by the Mafia way of life, and even slightly starstruck by it. "If I'm extremely lucky, some fat guy from Hollywood will pay me lots of money to use my research as source material, then he'll butcher it for the sake of a 'good story' and turn it all into a love plot." She rolls her eyes dramatically.

Teresa is unwilling to reveal any information from other sources, especially the Patriarcas, unless forced to by some means. Even then, her information is of little use to the characters — she really is looking for the kind of information that won't hurt the Mafia if it gets out. If she is asked whether she has any other sources among the Giovanni, she says yes, although she will not admit whom unless forced to do so. Her main sources are a couple of low-end soldiers ("I think they liked the attention," she tells the characters. "I'm coming to understand that the Mafia is about respect, in a lot of ways. Everyone wants it, and they think this the Mafia is the way to get it. Since the low guys on the totem pole haven't really gotten it yet, they'll look for it in other places.") and one Antonio Giovanni, Domenic's father.

TOO MUCH INFORMATION

If the characters force her to tell what her other Giovanni contacts have told her, she reveals that Antonio has been talking out of line. He's told her a bit too much about the family's shipping interests and less-than-legal storage facilities. If the characters pass this on to the Milliners (or to Hank, who has been becoming busier lately and passes the coterie off to Jason Milliner ever more frequently), they nod seriously and thank the characters for the information.

If the characters are unwilling to be interviewed by Teresa, they see her again here and there talking to other Giovanni and Milliner associates. She will try again to interview them (or she will try to interview other members of the coterie if she tried only one or two at first), although she won't make a complete pest of herself. If the characters report her presence to Hank or the Milliners, they are amused by her. They say to keep an eye on her, and that if the characters should find her asking any questions about things that shouldn't get out, or if they find her passing her information to the police, the Feds or the Patriarcas, they should kill her. Otherwise, what would it hurt to indulge her for now? Besides, they may be able to use her to ferret out the less loyal associates of the family by asking her to ask certain questions of them if they find her reliable and trustworthy.

FRIENDSHIP?

If the characters react favorably to Teresa then she will visit them now and then in their places of business or leisure. She is amenable to becoming a long-term contact and even friend of the characters, and is relatively easily drawn into the seamier side of the underworld. She has more confidence and independence than most women of the period, and she has a dark side that she usually keeps well to herself. If she finds out about the Kindred aspect of things she will be very surprised, but she will adapt. She would even be amenable to being ghouled. Teresa isn't particularly easy to seduce if that is the wish of one of the characters, but if she finds someone attractive and close to her age group, and if she develops a strong friendship with him, she might agree to sleep with him. She prefers long-term relationships to one-night stands, however. She doesn't like being forced to do things against

her will, and if she ever realizes that's what someone is doing to her, she will be quite angry with him. Teresa doesn't believe in mind-altering powers however, so unless someone's being very blatant, she's unlikely to recognize Dominate or Presence for what they are.

LIMITS AND PUNISHMENT

Teresa is something of an opportunity for the characters to explore the limits of their leashes — to find out just how much latitude they have with respect to talking to people about the business they're in. It's also an opportunity for them to make a real friend for once, rather than just another contact. If someone tells Teresa too much without ghouling and Blood Bonding her in order to guarantee her silence, then he finds Jason Milliner visiting him. Jason appears to be in a good mood and is amiable. He explains that the character is to report to Hank Rothenstein immediately.

Hank invites the character into his office, clapping him heartily on the back as though pleased to see him. He then, without warning, has several ghouls hold the character down, and he cuts the character's tongue out. Hank explains that he is very disappointed in the character, and that the character's loose tongue was a real problem. The vampire or ghoul can of course heal the injury with blood, but it's going to hurt like hell in the meantime. The Storyteller should be sure to have the player roll for frenzy: Not only does the injury hurt, but the taste of blood is all-pervasive. If the character frenzies, Hank has him locked up until he calms down and is even more disappointed in him.

SCENE THREE: THE PATRIARCAS MAKE A DENT

The characters by now should have interests in a number of businesses around Boston. There are restaurants, casinos, billiards clubs, gun shops, brothels, jewelry stores, breweries, liquor stores, banks, factories, furriers, book stores, realtors, drug labs, car dealers and repair shops, medical supply stores, hair salons, freight companies, tobacco stores, grocery shops, and all manner of other interests. Some may be perfectly legitimate. Others are primarily legitimate, but may launder money for the characters or provide for them a place to have meetings with clients or a location for bare-fisted fights. Still others may be fronts for completely illegal businesses, such as drug smuggling or trafficking or arms dealing.

The Patriarcas are more than a little worried about the Giovanni, and they've taken to making raids on some of the more peripheral Giovanni interests. They're not so much trying to hurt the Giovanni directly; they're trying to make the people who deal with the Giovanni afraid to conduct business with them. The Patriarcas want people to know that the Giovanni can't protect them, and that simply being involved with the Giovanni may be enough to get them killed.

The Storyteller should pick one or two businesses the characters are involved in, preferably ones they hold only partial interest in with mortal partners. The Patriarcas attack



these establishments, most likely in broad daylight. The Mafia is known for more than just shooting things — the Patriarcas are known to use guns, bombs, or even acid attacks. In this particular case, a car drives up to the relevant establishment — perhaps even while one of the characters is visiting. A man gets out of the passenger's side and walks confidently in through the door; he's dressed in an expensive suit. He pulls a small, cloudy glass bottle out of one pocket, pulls a black rubber stopper out of the mouth, steps up to the counter with a smile, and splashes the contents of the bottle over the cashier's face (or waiter, or other relevant employee). He then tips his hat to the first customer in line and runs from the building. If none of the characters are present, then he takes the time to drop a business card (see "Who Done It?" below) and walks out of the building slightly more sedately.

The characters' partners come to them, complaining that they were supposed to be safe, that the Giovanni were supposed to protect them. They want the characters to deal with whoever attacked them, and if the characters can't, then perhaps they'll find someone else to partner with, someone who can make things right. Threats might put them in line temporarily, but it will certainly turn them against the characters in the long term.

WHO DONE IT?

When the characters examine the scene of the crime and question witnesses, they see blood everywhere, and any players whose character is hungry must make a roll to avoid frenzy. The shopkeeper refuses to touch the blood, and tells the characters that it is their business to clean up, since the characters failed to protect him, his employees and customers. The cashier is still alive and in the hospital. If the characters visit her, she looks absolutely awful. A hole has been eaten in her cheek by the acid. One of her eyes is bandaged, and the bandage is bloody. Her shoulder, neck and chest are obviously bandaged. She's heavily medicated, but clearly in a great deal of pain. If the characters speak to her doctor, they find out that she isn't expected to live for long. She has a great deal of difficulty talking, but she doesn't have any good information to reveal anyway.

The police do show up, but they are fairly ineffective. They're determined to stay out of the war between the gangs.

The characters can question the witnesses and the shop owners. All will remember what the car or man looked like, and some will even be willing to give the characters a description. The others are afraid, and only a large payment or fervent promises of protection for the witness or her family will convince them to talk. One or two people won't talk at all. The Patriarca soldiers were very bold and wanted the Giovanni to know who was hitting them, so they didn't hide their faces or remove their license plates. If someone has a contact in the police department, she can find out that the car belongs to one Michael ("Micky") Patriarca, one of Raymond Patriarca's nephews. The characters can find out the same information in other ways, perhaps by describing

the men involved to various Mafia or police contacts; Micky is fairly well known in the area.

Perhaps one of the people who was hit knows who hit them: "He said to tell you that Micky Patriarca sent his regards." Or even, if the characters have been helpful and not threatening, "He said it was nothing personal, and that he could protect as well as kill me. He tipped his hat to me, and handed me a card with his name and number on it. See? Here." If the characters have been threatening, then the shopkeeper keeps the card and later calls Micky Patriarca. If the characters don't get Micky's number this way, they can get it through other contacts. Hank has an office address for Micky, and Jason Milliner has a home phone number.

WHAT TO DO?

The characters may decide to try to meet with Micky, or they may want to kill him outright. They will find him fairly well guarded, with three large bodyguards, but he is certainly capable of dying. If the characters plant a bomb in his office it will be found by his bodyguards unless the characters are particularly clever about it (Storyteller's discretion); one of the guards always goes in first in the morning to check. A drive-by shooting might work, but one of the bodyguards will throw himself in front of Micky, shielding him from all but the first of the bullets unless the characters stick around to finish the job. If Micky is injured but not killed, then he is shipped off to Providence and cared for on the family estate.

If Micky is shipped off to Providence, Reginald decides to take a trip along with him. Reginald sends his own message to the Patriarcas by walking Micky off of a balcony, killing him. Shortly thereafter, when Reginald returns from Providence, the character he usually follows is treated to a whispered account of what happened.

The characters may decide to meet with Micky. He is understandably suspicious, and agrees only to meet in a neutral public place, with no more than two people, and he must be allowed to bring one bodyguard. He is easygoing and he and the characters may even be friendly with each other, but he cannot be swayed; his family is determined to keep interest in Boston, and the only way to do that is through the Giovanni. He might be swayed into going after Giovanni interests other than the characters' if they are friendly, but if they try to sell out any associates or members of the family in an attempt to save their own hides, he becomes disgusted with them and leaves. "Loyalty clearly means nothing to you, and so I cannot trust you."

In the event of a meeting, Micky does his best to plant his own men in the crowd, and odds are the characters will want to do so as well. Whether this is possible depends on where they meet. Micky has a pretty good idea of what places the Giovanni hold interest in, and will not meet at any of them. To his credit, he doesn't try to trick the characters into meeting on Patriarca turf.

If the characters do not kill Micky, he becomes something of a thorn in the Giovanni's side. He chips away at their interests, trying to take over whatever he can. He stays away from the characters if he agreed to do so, but he expects them

to stay out of his way in return. If they do not, then he hits back at them hard. The Milliners or Giovanni may ask the characters for help against Micky if he is allowed to become too powerful; if the characters reveal that they have made a deal with Micky then they are told to break it in no uncertain terms. If they do not break it, they are treated with a certain lack of trust and respect among family.

If the characters kill Micky, then their partners and employees are satisfied and stay with them; the Patriarcas still manage to make a dent in Giovanni business, but without their trusted local commander they aren't nearly as effective, and Raymond doesn't send in his nephew Lucio until the beginning of Part Three of this act. If they make a deal to keep Micky away, then their partners and employees are skeptical at first, but are won over as they see over time that they are safe while others are not. If the characters and Micky remain at odds, the Patriarcas continue hitting the characters' establishments, and the characters lose partners and employees one at a time.

SCENE FOUR: A SURPRISE ARRIVAL

BACKGROUND ON THE CURRENT INTERESTS OF THE CHILDREN OF ISAAC

In Scene Four, one or more of the Children of Isaac have arrived in Boston by ship, having heard that the ghoul John Mackler of the Malkavian Anatole is on his way with *The Anxhexeton* and *The Khazar's Diary* (see Part Two of this act, "Redirections"). They didn't arrive with any particular secrecy, so the characters may easily find out, assuming they have contacts in shipping or otherwise at the docks. If the old characters are Camarilla, they have presented themselves to Quentin King at the Aquarium (see the Appendix). They found him somewhat distant, but he did seem happy to see them (in truth, he was just relieved to have such elders in the city; he thinks it will help him to hold Boston longer). They were introduced to the Toreador by King, but there were few others around. Quentin told the characters to leave the Giovanni alone; he has an "understanding" with them (he's terrified of them and they laugh at him, but he didn't put it that way) and he doesn't want to fight a war on two fronts.

If the elders are Sabbat, then they will have been asked to find and introduce themselves to Max Lowell, who currently makes his haven in Chinatown in the basement underneath a restaurant called Blue Pearl; he holds a sort of "court" in a small function room in the back of the restaurant. He was congenial and wished the characters well; he told them to have fun tormenting the Camarilla if they wished. He also told them that the Sabbat was waiting to deal with the Giovanni until the Camarilla was no longer a problem, but that if they wished to start making a dent in Giovanni operations, no one would complain. He'd rather they didn't piss off the higher-ups just yet, as the Sabbat don't have many Cainites in Boston and they don't want the Giovanni targeting them. He knew only a little detail on the Giovanni.

No Setites have made permanent havens in Boston, so if the Children were corrupted by the Setites at the end of *The Sun Has Set*, then they'll have to come up with their own depravities to enjoy.

The group might stay in one or more "sunshine suites" at the Hornsby (see the Appendix). There are plenty of other places to stay as well. They may have sent ghouls ahead to secure houses, or even to buy up restaurants or other establishments with useful basements or back rooms.

If the Children of Isaac wish to stir up trouble against the Giovanni, they'll find Pug Jackson a possible ally among the Camarilla (see *Dramatis Personae*); if he thought the odds were just a little less uneven than they have been in the past, he'd be happy to make trouble for the Giovanni. The Sabbat don't really have enough vampires in the area, but occasionally a Sabbat or two comes through town, and they'd be more than happy to get into a fight; after all, it isn't their city, so they don't have to worry about cleaning up the mess. Because of this however, they're likely to go about things in such a way as to draw undue attention to themselves.

If Micky has been causing trouble for the Giovanni, then the Children might find a few mortals here and there to win over. Shopkeepers who've had to pay protection money to two gangs, merchants who have people from both sides of the fence "asking for" free merchandise, and bankers who've lost more than one trusted employee to raids and robbers would be more than happy to see the "god damned guineas put in their place."

HISTORY LESSON

In Act I, in a scene called "The Final Drink," the characters awaited Andreas Giovanni's pleasure in a darkened living room. Within that room hung a tapestry that depicted a long table with the old characters sitting around it. When employees of the characters (if Bobby Leroy or Colm Brennan is still around, he is the one who arrives) bring black-and-white photos of the Giovanni's old enemies to the characters, a successful Perception + Investigation roll at difficulty 9 (two successes or more) will bring back the memory of the tapestry. It's been a long time though, and the photos aren't particularly good ones; they were taken at night in an era before night-vision equipment, and streetlights aren't all that bright. If the person who brings the characters the pictures knows about vampires, then he mentions that he's only seen these people at night.

If none of the characters remember the tapestry, they may show the photos to other members of the family. Jason Milliner will not recognize them. Hank will frown at them for a moment, looking thoughtful, and eventually tells them to talk to Andreas. He promises to set the meeting up for them for the next night, saying that Andreas is currently in a meeting with Francis Milliner and can't be disturbed; he asks to keep at least one of the photos to show Andreas.

The next night the characters meet with Andreas; if the characters allowed Hank to keep some of the photos, they are

put in an anteroom of St. Leonard's Church, in which the tapestry from Act I hangs on one of the walls. Anyone who gets at least one success on a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 8) notices the resemblance between the figures in the photo and those on the tapestry. As the characters enter the church, if they have not already done so this act, describe some of the little ways in which the church has changed since Act I (see the Appendix). The candles are still real and the statuary yet magnificent, but the garden has already shrunk, encroached upon by stores and restaurants on all sides. Some of the stonework closest to the ground has been painted over with brown paint, "to protect it from erosion and graffiti."

Andreas keeps the characters waiting for at least 10 minutes. A young mortal girl is brought in before he enters, and presented to any Kindred in the characters as refreshment; the appetites of the ghouls are not looked after. The girl, a long-haired brunette in Sunday clothes, keeps her head bowed, and does not speak even when spoken to; her tongue has been removed and sewn up again. She struggles if anyone tries to hurt her, but to little effect — she isn't strong. Andreas won't bat an eyelash when he comes in, no matter what has been done to the girl, and he completely ignores her.

Francis Milliner enters the room with Andreas, but remains to the side. He appears to be paying close attention, but he doesn't speak unless one of the characters addresses him directly, or asks a question which he can answer better than Andreas. Even in the latter case he looks to Andreas for acknowledgment before speaking.

Andreas comments on the likeness between the people in the photos and those on the tapestry. He seems very pensive tonight and lapses into silence for minutes at a time unless prodded to continue; he was hoping the Children of Isaac would pass Boston by for some time yet. The account he gives to the characters of the people on the tapestry is a very biased one. He holds forth the Giovanni as having "generously" arranged for the creation of those Kindred, and stresses the lack of gratitude of the recipients of their generosity. He expresses regret for having lost these misguided lambs, and says that the family has made many overtures of friendship toward the group over the years, all for naught. He says that the Giovanni have reached the end of their patience, however.

He tells the characters that the newcomers are old, wily and dangerous. If in *The Sun Has Set* the Giovanni Rosaura and Baldezar stayed with the Setites for a time and made their way out again, then Andreas warns his proteges that the visitors may have been corrupted by the Serpents as well. He tells the characters to keep an eye on the family's old enemies, and to report to him any dealings the group may have. He particularly would like any packages delivered to the group to be intercepted and given either to himself or to Francis.

Above all, Andreas expresses sadness rather than anger at the new arrivals' attitude toward the Giovanni. Anyone with decent Auspex can see in his aura that he is indeed sad, but it is a detached feeling, and there is fear and anger mixed in with it.

TROUBLE BREWING

At first the new arrivals seem to be innocuous. They immediately set about making contacts, but they don't appear to interfere in Giovanni business. The characters will probably wish to give their underlings at least partial responsibility for keeping an eye on the group; the characters are businessmen now, with responsibilities and people to deal with. They can't sit around all night taking pictures of people. The Children are seen to have several ghouls going about in the daytime; they appear to be conducting fairly normal business, stopping by banks and stores around Boston and Cambridge.

SUDDEN INTRODUCTIONS

If the characters are doing any of the surveillance themselves, then one of them (preferably a ghoul) follows one of the Children of Isaac around the corner of a building. When the character turns the corner, Marianna is standing in front of him. She is just wrapping a remarkably tattered cloak around herself (the shrouds provided by Japheth in *The Last Supper* that allowed the characters to see wraiths), or (if the Setites taught the non-Thaumaturgical ritual in *The Sun Has Set* to the other Children and she learned it from them) holding a smooth black stone in her hands. In the latter case, Marianna is just licking closed a wound in her other arm, and small rivulets of blood drip from the stone over her hand. "Ahh," she says, disappointed, glancing just past the character's shoulder and back again to his face. "I had hoped we would be able to speak alone. Does it bother you that your Giovanni masters keep you on such a tight leash?" She smiles coldly.

It's up to the Storyteller whether they continue to speak or Marianna leaves the hapless follower behind. She had hoped to feel out the character for loyalty to the Giovanni, but she knows, given that he's being followed by a wraith, that he'd just lose his life if he were disloyal.

The point to this scene is to let the characters know in no uncertain terms that they are not fully trusted by the Giovanni, and that they are never alone.

SCENE FIVE: THE DELIVERY

The following scene can happen to a ghoul the characters "own" and a couple of his flunkies, or to the characters themselves depending on whether the characters spend any time by the wharf (see the Appendix), and on the Storyteller's desires.

John Mackler (see Part Two of this act) arrives at the Commercial Wharf by boat. He has brought with him a trunk that he allows no one but himself to touch. He mutters to himself continuously, and if anyone uses Auspex to overhear him they will hear an address and name being repeated over and over. The name is that of one of the Children of Isaac, and the address is that of a location one of that person's underlings has set up in, probably an office or a back room in a business somewhere.

If the characters do not disturb Mackler (hopefully they will remember that Andreas instructed them to intercept any packages meant for the newcomers), then the ghoul and flunkies approach will have to be used after all.

THE WRATH OF GOD (OR MAYBE NOT)

If a ghoul and his flunkies are used in this scene, halfway through the night, one of the characters is approached by the ghoul (it could also be a particularly violence-oriented mortal, if none of the Kindred in the characters have an appropriate ghoul). The ghoul tells the characters member, probably the Kindred who ghouled him, about the odd little man (John Mackler), and his trunk. The ghoul relates that he and his flunkies tried to make Mackler open the trunk and show them what was in it, but he refused, saying that God would strike them down if they opened it. Well, they opened it all right; Mackler stood aside, apparently expecting that God actually would strike them down. Luckily for them God was busy. Mackler became very agitated when the ghoul and his flunkies saw the cracked stone tablets in the trunk with their odd writings, and attacked them; Mackler took a big chunk out of one of the flunkies, but the others cracked the man's skull open. The flunky would live. "Anyway, boss, we thought you might want to take a look at these rock things. They look like real bad juju." The ghoul then takes the character or characters down to the wharf, and gives them *The Anexhexeton* and *The Khazar's Diary*.

If the characters do the deed themselves, things unfold pretty much the same way. The characters may attempt to subdue the ghoul instead of killing him, but he won't stop fighting until he's knocked out. He becomes unintelligible after that, jabbering about God and failure and wrath and Armageddon and Gehenna; at that point Dominate and Presence are all but useless on him.

PART TWO: REDIRECTIONS

In various parts of the first three *Giovanni Chronicles*, the characters are concerned with a piece of lore called the *Sargon Fragment*. It contains ancient and powerful lore linked to Cappadocius' plan to diablerize, and thus become, God. The Giovanni wish to use it to make a sort of Hell on Earth — to remove the barrier between the lands of the living and the lands of the dead.

The Children of Isaac end up traveling to Egypt, to Lazarus' tomb, where they eventually find a stone tablet that is the *Sargon Fragment*. They only reach the tomb, however, after spending some time with the Setites, on whose land the tomb rests. The Setites spend this time attempting to convert the characters in any way possible. A Tzimisce who works for the Setites, one Alexei (actually Sascha Vykos, a long-time enemy of the Cappadocian Constanica), attempts to get the tablet away from the characters, convinced that it contains the means to great power (which it does).

This scene, told in flashback, requires that the players portray characters other than those they created for *Nuova Malattia*.

CHARACTERS FOR THE PLAYERS TO PLAY

It is recommended that Constanica herself is played by the Storyteller; she will not be present for most of this flashback, and

she has very specific directions to give to the other characters. It is also recommended that Alexei (Sascha Vykos), the Tzimisce who currently holds the documents, as well as Constanica's ghoul Dalia and Vykos' guard, be played by the Storyteller. However, if the Storyteller wishes to play up the horror of whatever fate befalls Dalia, he may arrange with a player to play her as a sort of "plant": the player would have to follow her "script" very carefully, and wouldn't have full free will as the others do.

Some possibilities for characters the players may play are: Marat Bechade, Constanica's favored ghoul; Anatole, the Malkavian religious lunatic; either of Anatole's "apostles" (ghouls): Mark Gershon or John Mackler; or Seren Sukardi, a Setite. If you have more players than the characters that have been provided, you should create additional ghouls for any of the vampires involved.

The ghouls all have a dot in Potence, and you may allow them all to choose another two dots in various Disciplines (four for Marat, due to his advanced age). No Discipline should be higher than 2 and no unusual Disciplines should be chosen. Some of the main possibilities are Auspex, Obfuscate, Fortitude, Celerity, Presence, Dominate. Give each ghoul one to three blood points to play with.

The characters in this flashback can be found at the end of this part, as they will not reappear in the rest of the book.

THE MECHANICS OF RUNNING A FLASHBACK

The Storyteller should strongly consider running this flashback without dice, as the events contained herein have already happened and thus should not be subject to the whims of chance. It is recommended that it be run more as a series of vignettes, narrated by the Storyteller, but during which the players are given the opportunity to bring the events about in the manner they believe best.

Discipline levels are provided so that Storyteller and player both have some idea of what characters are capable of; they are not there to encourage dice-rolling. The Storyteller should read through the section to get some idea of which characters are capable of what, as well as how the scene should end, and make rulings accordingly. General ideas are given of how various characters might be affected by certain abilities and Disciplines.

THE SET-UP

The lore of Sargon is found on cracked stone tablets with numerology and words in Chaldean chiseled into their surfaces. There are several dispositions the *Anexhexeton* and the *Khazar's Diary* might have ended up in at the end of *The Sun Has Set*. The players' characters might have obtained it from Lazarus' tomb. Alexei might have taken or traded for it from the characters. The Giovanni might have acquired it. The characters might have broken the stone tablets in order to keep either Alexei or the Giovanni from getting their hands on the documents.

If Alexei made off with the tablets then all is set up appropriately and after you have run "Arrival," you may skip ahead to "The Servant's Interruption, Version 3." If the Giovanni or the characters took the tablets, then use "The

Servant's Interruption, Version 1" as a brief introduction. If the tablets were broken, then run "The Servant's Interruption, Version 2" instead.

If you did not run the previous book of **The Giovanni Chronicles**, then choose the introduction you like best and run with it.

ARRIVAL

This scene takes place eight nights after the characters at the end of **The Sun Has Set** left Lazarus' tomb.

The first few scenes take place in Constanica's desert hideaway, which she has termed Hell for various and sundry reasons. It consists of a ramshackle hut out in the middle of the desert, seemingly deserted, and the cave system beneath it. The entrance to the caves is actually in some dry brush nearby rather than in the hut. The hut has no windows, and is usable as temporary shelter for a vampire. The caves are dark and cool, with only the occasional torch (set well back from the passage so that no Cainite need venture too close to the flames) and some luminous fungus to light the way. The caves hide a maze of tunnels, and without guidance no one is likely to find her way through it. Two ghouls and one unspeaking *zombu* guard the entrance (from the inside, so that they cannot be seen from the outside), and three other ghouls stand stationed at various points along the passageway that leads to Constanica's rooms. One ghoul at the entrance and two of the ghouls in the tunnels possess low levels of *Auspex*.

Constanica's rooms are almost as dark, with sputtering torches in the distant corners. Constanica herself sits upon a large stone chair along one wall, her eyes shrouded in thought and her fingers idly playing with the stylized carvings of the chair. There are three different exits to the room, two of which potentially lead back to the entrance, and the third of which leads to another exit altogether. Another ghoul and a second zombie guard this exit, although Constanica has never used it and thus expects that no one knows about it; it is only there in case of emergency. Constanica sleeps much further within the cave system.

In this scene Anatole arrives at Constanica's desert hideaway. There is a bustling confusion as the dirty, dazed Malkavian and his ghouls enter the first of the caves, and are led by the ghoul who brought them here from Cairo to Constanica's chamber. Constanica looks out at Anatole from narrow-lidded eyes, and her face is confused between the welcoming smile on her lips and the spark of anger in her eyes.

Constanica greets Anatole amiably enough, ignoring any ghouls he may have brought with him. "You took well enough time getting here, my dear," she chastises him. If the characters made off with the tablets, then she comments that the Cainites she summoned him to help seem to have done quite well enough without him. If the Giovanni took them, she says that she has much better prey for him than a few pathetic Setites with delusions of corrupting the world — "not that they'd understand what true corruption means," she muses. If Vykos took them, she says that Anatole may still yet

be of use to her. If the tablets were broken, she sighs, appearing to be caught between anger and a deep depression, and says that all may be lost — "but at least those vulgar Giovanni won't get their dirty fingers on Sargon's lore."

THE SERVANT'S INTERRUPTION, VERSION 1

Use this scene if either the Giovanni or the Children of Isaac from **The Sun Has Set** took the tablets.

Constanica is making Anatole at home, calling Marat Bechade, her favored ghoul, to lead the Malkavian to his resting place for the swiftly approaching day. If Anatole or his ghouls ask, Mark, John and any other ghouls or mortals he brought will be housed in a bare room near the entrance to the cave system. It is obvious that Constanica gives little thought to the care or comfort of the ghouls, and regards them (with the exception of Marat) as little more than animals.

A ghoul rushes into the chamber: She is a young Egyptian girl, about 13 years of apparent age. She has been Constanica's ghoul for about 11 years, and her name is Dalia Gombar. Constanica values the girl for her spying abilities — she can be as quiet as a summer breeze, and she can hide in the smallest places. Dalia rushes up to Constanica with a child's excess of energy. She pushes one of Anatole's ghouls roughly aside in her haste, barely remembering at the last minute to kneel before Constanica, bow her head, and wait to be spoken to.

"Yes, child?" Constanica's tone is even, but she sits forward in her chair, her eyelids opening from their half-lidded position.

"There is news, Lady. The torturer has reclaimed the tablets."

"How?" Constanica's face is a mask of barely restrained fury.

"He sent an evil creature, twisted and broken, and it traveled by daylight. The ghouls and servants were no match for it. It erased its trail behind it, so that it could not be followed by the Kindred, but I watched and traced it back to Vykos. I heard him say that the ones he took the tablets from left Egypt, following a false trail he left for them." The girl glances at Anatole and his ghouls, seeing them for the first time. "I can lead others back to him." She waits for Constanica's reply, still kneeling on the hard stone floor.

Constanica reaches for Dalia, but stops short. "I still need you," she mutters, then calls "Asif!" A mortal appears from the shadows, a middle-aged man with gray speckling his black hair. Constanica grabs the mortal and tears into him as though he were Alexei himself, draining his blood and scattering his limbs to the corners of the room. The man screams for a brief moment before she rips his throat out. Then she orders Marat to take Anatole and his ghouls to their resting places, "for it is too close to sunrise for you to venture out tonight. Tomorrow Dalia will take you to where Vykos lies."

THE SERVANT'S INTERRUPTION, VERSION 2

Use this scene if the tablets have been broken.

Dalia rushes into the Constanica's audience chamber just as in version one of this scene, again knocking against one of Anatole's ghouls in her haste. This time, however, she

tells Constanica that "the torturer has reassembled the tablets." Again Constanica asks how, her face the same mask of fury, and the child replies: "I saw him summon a demon, a woman in a white dress with long white hair and white eyes. He bargained with her; he agreed to do services for her in return for a whole tablet." Dalia looks confused. "I know she saw me; she winked and smiled at me when his back was turned, even though I was hidden very well. But she never told him I was there."

The girl looks at Anatole and his ghouls as in the other version of this scene, and says that she can lead others to where the Cainite lies. Again, Constanica barely restrains herself from killing Dalia, instead summoning the mortal Asif and ripping him apart before sending Marat to escort Constanica's guests to their quarters.

THE SERVANT'S INTERRUPTION, VERSION 3

Use this scene if Vykos made off with the tablets on his own.

The girl rushes in just as before, but this time she says "the torturer has stopped. He's holed up in the abandoned temple. He couldn't wait to look at the tablets. I saw someone else there with him, though; there was a woman with white hair and white eyes. They were arguing, but I couldn't tell what they were saying. Then the woman nodded and turned to go. As she turned, she saw me, even though I was hidden very well. She winked and smiled at me when the torturer's back was turned, and she never told him I was there."

Constanica uses the incident to try to convince Anatole that the Tzimisce is bargaining with demons. She is jubilant that he was foolish enough to stop running, and determined to make the most of his mistake. She calls for Asif and casually drinks from him, stopping when he slumps to the floor to tell Marat to escort her guests to their quarters.

THE RACE BEGINS

CONSTANICA'S MEETING

Anatole and his ghouls are escorted back to Constanica the next night, again by Marat. If the Storyteller wishes the various ghouls may speak with each other during the day, or even spy on each other. If Anatole's ghouls wander too far they become lost within the tunnels. Eventually Marat, or another of Constanica's ghouls, will find them and take them back to their room. If Interruption 1 ran, then Dalia seeks out the ghouls at some point and tells them that she saw Vykos speaking with the white-haired and white-eyed woman, and that the woman saw her, smiled at her and winked at her. She shivers when she says this, and she gets a cold, faraway look in her eyes.

Constanica explains the situation to the other characters, telling them of her search for some method of revenge against the Giovanni for the deaths of the rest of her clan, and of the heroic efforts of the vampires who searched for and found Lazarus' tomb. She will paint Vykos as the worst possible Cainite, a Tzimisce sorcerer who tortures ally and foe

alike, makes bargains with demons, and seeks only to gain power for himself through whatever means possible (this isn't far from the truth). In deference to Anatole's sensibilities, she will stress the part about bargaining with demons, describing him as an enemy of and an offense to God.

Constanica exhorts the characters to allow Dalia to lead them to Vykos, and asks that they take back the tablet and pass it on to the Children of Isaac (after allowing her to verify its authenticity), so that they may use the information contained therein to destroy the Giovanni utterly. She orders Marat to go with Anatole and his ghouls (if other players are playing other ghouls of Constanica, then Marat may use his position as Constanica's favored ghoul to order others to come along, or to request of Constanica that she do so).

As Anatole's retinue turns to go, Dalia in the lead, a Setite contact of Constanica's named Seren appears silently in the doorway, having used a high level of Obfuscate to get past the guards, and a Thaumaturgical ritual to find his way through the passages to the audience chamber. Constanica is outraged at his appearance, but if he at all mentions his enmity with Alexei, or his mission to retrieve Alexei so that the Setites may torture him, she relents. She cares far more about her enmity with Vykos and her hatred of the Giovanni than about the Setites. "What better fate for the demon-spawn than to spend an eternity at the skilled hands of Setite torturers?" she muses. If the "guest" corrects her or mentions a time limit, she frowns, but acquiesces anyway. "Perhaps you could keep him a little while longer. I will speak to you about this later, however. Right now it would be best if Vykos did not escape."

Constanica always calls the Tzimisce by Vykos or Sascha, although she knows that he currently goes by Alexei.

Before the characters leave, she gives Anatole a ruby brooch. "It is rumored to have protective powers against demons and those who serve them," she tells him. "I do not know if that is truth — I only know that it is old, and that it was blessed by a saint some centuries ago. No one seems to know which saint, however." No demon, and no mortal or Cainite who has made a pact with a demon, may touch the brooch or use ritual magic against its wearer.

THROUGH THE DESERT

It is nighttime, and the desert is surprisingly cold. If Marat does not think of it another of Constanica's servants will offer new, heavy cloaks to Anatole's ghouls. Constanica's ghouls lead two camels out, laden with water, a little food and a bundle of sand-colored cloth shrouds. The ghoul recommends to Anatole that any mortals be left behind, and that he drink his fill before he goes.

If the Setite is being controlled by the Storyteller then he eyes the ghouls hungrily, especially Dalia. There is a slight cold wind, and the party must shield their eyes to keep the sand out. Dalia leads with soft words, so that the party may follow the sound of her voice. She speaks in Egyptian; if asked, either she or Marat can explain that she is reciting the words to an old Egyptian prayer for protection. It is impossible

for any of the foreigners to tell how Dalia is finding her way; one sand dune looks pretty much like the next to them.

Close to sunrise, Dalia stops by a small, dead stand of brush. "We should stop here," she tells the others. To Anatole and the Setite, she says, "we can bury you in the sand, and place the shroud overtop to make certain the light does not reach you." She begins digging with her hands, and she does a much better job than one might expect for her size and apparent age, thanks to a bit of Potence. If anyone insists on going further, she explains that the only shelter nearby is the abandoned temple Vykos is staying in, and that they would not quite reach it by sunrise. Dalia erects another shroud for the ghouls to sleep beneath during the day; she says that it will help keep Vykos' guards from seeing them, although she thinks the party is staying far enough away to guarantee that anyway. Anyone who helps the girl is rewarded with a shy smile, and a sparkling of black eyes.

If no one else suggests it first then Dalia recommends setting a watch for the day, taking turns among the ghouls. She tries to arrange to be on watch with any ghoul who has shown her kindness. The day turns out to be boring; no one arrives to give the ghouls trouble. When someone who has shown Dalia kindness beds down, she will attempt to curl up with them. (If no one has, then she will choose the ghoul who has seemed the nicest so far.) This may seem very childish, even sweet, but after a few minutes she'll reach out her hands, exploring her new-found friend's body. If her companion allows her to, she will have sex with them, skillfully initiating a prolonged and fairly gentle lovemaking session (although she does not object if her partner is rough, as long as the man or woman does not harm her). If her chosen sexual partner objects due to her age, she giggles girlishly and points out that she isn't even a teenager anymore.

If her partner harms her, she'll scream for Marat, who will hopefully realize that she's the only way they'll find Vykos (and who knows that Constancia would be upset if something happened to the girl without her permission). If her chosen partner refuses to sleep with her, she stomps off into another corner of the makeshift tent, pouting and angry. From then on she will snub the person, refusing to acknowledge their existence.

ALEXEI

ALEXEI'S CAMP

Dalia leaves the camp at nightfall, just as the others are rising, insisting that she can check things out best herself — that her hiding place won't fit an adult. If someone insists on following her or uses Obfuscate to do so, they see her disappear into a small hole (apparently the result of a crack that has eroded over time) in a large, decrepit stone temple partially built into a cliff. The hole is too small for anyone bigger than Dalia to follow; indeed, she just barely slips into it, tearing the hem of her shirt along the way. If the Setite uses *Serpentis* to transform into a snake and follow her, he finds that the tunnel leads to a small, dark corner of the first floor of the temple. Sascha is at the side of the room at a stone table. He bends over

the top of the table, muttering to himself. There is another shadow off to the side, shuffling oddly in the darkness; without *Auspex* it is not visible in the darkness. A pair of odd, luminous yellow eyes can be seen, however. The pupils are slitted like a cat's, although the shape appears to stand upright.

If Dalia sees the snake, she scowls and shakes her finger at it, trying to shoo it back toward camp.

When Dalia returns, she says that Vykos is completely absorbed in translating the tablets. She says that one of his twisted monsters guards the main entrance to the temple, and that the only other entrance has long been blocked by fallen stone.

Allow the group to be creative in how they enter the temple, if that is their wish. They may, with some difficulty (and at least one broken bone as the result of a fall) scale the wall of the temple and enter through a high window. The ghouls and vampires may heal their wound with blood, but it may also leave them quite hungry, especially if it's the last of a ghoul's blood pool.

The characters may try to enter through the blocked entrance, although that should quickly become obvious as a bad idea; the stone would take at least all night to move despite the ghouls' Potence, and the noise would become audible inside the temple once they got close to breaking their way through. The Setite can enter the temple himself through the hole in snake form. However, if he goes too far into the temple, the guard-creature sniffs him out and attacks. (While the Setite's preperformed rituals protect him against Sascha's direct intervention, they do not protect him against Sascha's creature.) He may flee before it can kill him (it is much too large to follow him into the hole), but he cannot best it.

ALEXEI'S BETRAYAL

The main entrance to the temple may be the most obvious, or the players may decide it's a trap and avoid it. The only sense in which it's a trap is that the guard is there. Sascha was in such a hurry to delve into the mysteries of the tablet that he posted only the one guard; the siren song of power is too much for him. Besides, he has no reason to suspect Constancia's presence in the desert, and he knows that the Giovanni and the other party have already left the area. He may expect the Setites to come looking for him, but he knows that they do not have a way to best his guard other than physical combat. By the time a 10-minute physical combat has been drawn out, he can escape.

Of course, Alexei did not count on the brooch. Nor did he count on being so involved in his studies that he wouldn't hear the first couple of minutes of fighting (giving the party a couple of moments to discover the use of the brooch).

Additionally, Alexei overlooked being betrayed by one of his less savory helpers. Just before the characters encounter Alexei's guard, a woman with straight white hair and plain white eyes and wearing a long white silk dress appears before them. She looks familiar to Anatole, although he can't quite place why.

The woman's eyes have an Asian slant to them. She kneels before Dalia, smiles sweetly, and says "Remember me!"

Dalia nods mutely. The woman looks at Marat and says, "May I have her? In return, I can guarantee that you have a chance to take Sascha." If Marat declines (he can find the way home for the group, but he may not wish to give away Constancia's property), she says, "Are you sure?" Her expression turns nasty. "I can also make sure that he escapes unharmed, if you will not give her to me." Dalia is shaking, but says nothing, even if asked what she wants to do. If Marat or any other character, including the Setite, agrees at any time, then the woman smiles happily. She places a hand upon Dalia's shoulder and leans down to speak in her ear, just loud enough so that the others can overhear. "Come, child. We have a world of pain and pleasure to explore, and I have so much to teach you!" As the two vanish, a faint echo of Dalia's scream can be heard.

If anyone tries to attack the woman, she gestures fluidly with one white-clawed hand and the person finds themselves thrown back against a wall. If someone wearing the brooch attempts to attack her, she sighs and vanishes, reappearing somewhere nearby, with another character between her and her attacker. "Is this what you term hospitality?" she says. If someone with the brooch tries to use it to repel her, she flinches in pain and retreats before them, but she does not leave unless cornered or unless her mission appears useless.

THE INNER SANCTUM

Once the characters breach the temple and best its guard, there are several possibilities for what might happen next.

If the characters spent the 10 minutes fighting the beast (which the Storyteller should not allow to happen, as there is no obvious reason for the brooch to not have been present), Vykos is in the process of escaping through the blocked entrance, which is now mysteriously free of debris (a ritual Vykos had set up ahead of time to give himself an escape exit). The tablets appear to have been too much for him to simply grab up, but he has a sheaf of papers with crabbed, hasty writing on them in his hands.

If the party banished the beast, then Vykos is just looking up from the tablets, blinking owlishly. He was so absorbed in his work that he didn't notice what happened. He is dazed from the new concepts and understandings that course through his mind.

If the characters gave Dalia to the demon, then as Vykos steps toward them he shudders slightly. His eyes lose focus. He pulls himself together long enough to mutter an incantation of some sort, but the Setite glows briefly, and nothing happens. Vykos slides to the ground, acting for all the world as though he's exhausted. His words are slurred and nonsensical. Seren may now step up and transport himself and Vykos away from the temple, taking him prisoner. If Seren doesn't, and if the party does not find another way to incapacitate him, then he recovers after five minutes and concentrates on escaping. (The group, except for Seren, may wish to let him go, as he leaves the tablets behind in his haste to depart.)

If the characters did not give Dalia to the demon, then they face a more difficult challenge. Vykos again mutters the incantation, with the same lack of effect. He tries a second

time, his voice rising, but again he fails. Then he tries to escape. He will run for the doorway of the temple. Anyone who gets in his way is shoved rudely with one hand — and finds their flesh agonizingly sluiced from their bones by Vicissitude where his hand touched them. He grabs Dalia if she is still present and throws her into the nearest character; her bones are heard to crack and reform beneath his hands and she shrieks. A character member may trip him up or jump on his back; as long as they hold his hands to prevent his using Vicissitude to reshape them, they may hold him prisoner briefly — but not long enough for Seren to work his ritual before Vykos assumes a monstrous beast-shape. Seren fails and Vykos escapes.

At any rate the party ends up with the tablets, which Vykos has left behind in his haste to escape the Setites. (Of course, who is to say how much of the knowledge he translated and remembers?)

If Vykos had the chance to use his Vicissitude on Dalia, then she is too badly damaged to live for long, and the most kind thing to do for her would be to kill her. If the party chooses to take her back to Constancia, then she will live long enough to reach the caves. Her body is horribly twisted, however; her bones can be heard to grind against each other. She cries incessantly, mewling in pain.

THE END

Anatole and his ghouls should go back to visit Constancia, as Marat must return to report to her right away, and they will need a guide to get them out of the desert. They may have left supplies and retinue with Constancia, and the ghouls will need more food and water to return to Cairo.

Constancia is very grateful to the party for what they have done and stresses how important it is that the tablets get to the first party. She accepts the news of Dalia's death with equanimity, if Dalia died; if Dalia was traded to the demon for help, then she shrugs and says it was a small price to pay for such a prize. If Dalia is not dead yet and was brought back by the party, then Constancia picks the girl up in her arms almost gently, and offers her to Anatole. If Anatole refuses, then Constancia drains her dry. Dalia has been whimpering and crying all the while, and her cries subside as her killer drinks. When she is dead, Constancia drops her to the floor like a toy that is no longer entertaining.

THE VISION

After Anatole leaves (presumably with a guide), he sees a pale angel standing in the sand before him. She looks surprisingly like the demon, except that her dress is pale blue and her eyes are normal (with hazel irises); at this point Anatole remembers why the demon looked familiar. She is an angel he has seen many times before, who has guided him well, and this time she tells him, "the ones you seek will be found in the New World, some decades hence. Find them there." She then fades away into the blowing sand, all trace of her obliterated by the wind.



THE CHARACTERS

VYKOS' GUARD

The guard at the abandoned temple where Vykos makes his haven looks something like a cross between a cat and a tentacle... thing. It's black and knotted, muscular, and foul-smelling. It walks upright on two legs when wandering or on guard by the temple door. When hunting something it goes down on all fours. Its claws are sharp and its hide is hard, like stone; Potence or something that causes aggravated damage is required to harm it. It's relatively smart, but it doesn't like Vykos very much, so it interprets his orders fairly literally. It was told to stand at the door and guard the temple, so as long as someone doesn't actually come *into* the temple they're fine. It noticed Dalia the first time she came by, but since she didn't come any further into the temple than the hole in the wall, it left her alone.

The guard is very strong, and Potence, Fortitude and Celerity don't impress it all that much. It's very hard to damage. If it were attacked by the entire group at once they might be able to bring it down, but it would take about 10 minutes, during which time the guard would badly damage the characters and Vykos would escape. If anything less than the entire group were to attack it, it would eventually win. If, however, someone wearing the ruby brooch that Constancia gave Anatole approaches it, it will whine, grovel, and run away through the temple entrance, doing its best to avoid the person bearing the brooch. It will, however, give a parting claw at anyone else in its way, doing three health levels of aggravated damage in one blow (despite Fortitude) before running away into the darkness.

Unless Anatole (or someone else bearing the brooch) approaches the beast first, the Storyteller may wish to allow the guard to do some damage before it reaches the correct person and flees. The guard's mind is too alien for Presence or Dominate to have more than a fleeting, superficial effect upon it.

CONSTANCIA

Constancia is the first childe of Japheth, Cappadocius' son, and is of the Fifth Generation. She isn't an adventurer, but she has traveled across Europe, as well as into Africa and Asia. She cultivates contacts everywhere, and is constantly answering letters from distant friends. She is a widely renowned scholar and thanatologist, and was the matron of the Cappadocians' Erciyes temple until 1443.

Constancia's great age, as well as her grim studies, have resulted in an intense paranoia. She suspects everyone she doesn't know of malice, and is constantly worried about assassins. She has an ongoing enmity with Sascha Vykos, and news of his doings typically sends Constancia into long bouts of paranoia and seclusion. The Malkavian Anatole inspires her; she claims that his divine madness gives her new insight.

Constancia disappeared in 1443, precisely one year before the Giovanni purge of Clan Cappadocian. Shortly before that, many Kindred had expressed concern over her experimentation upon both mortals and Cainites alike. Constancia traveled for a time under various names, and spent some time in London with the Cappadocian Thomas Becket Camden. Eventually she went on to Egypt, determined to find out whether the Lazarus she had heard of was indeed her sire Japheth as she believed. She sought his wisdom, and the lore of Sargon, in her effort to destroy the Giovanni.

Meanwhile, her spies bring her some news of the Giovanni and their doings, and she is alerted to their ongoing struggle with the Children of Isaac. When this sequence takes place, Constancia still exists in Egypt, and she disguises herself as a beggar woman named Kahalis whenever she ventures near human civilization; she has found that as a beggar, she may pass almost unobserved. Her paranoia and worry have taken their toll on her, and she is a shadow of her former self, obsessed with revenge. She believes that the Children of



Isaac are in a better position than she is to make use of Lazarus' documents against the Giovanni.

Image: Constanica is tall and thin to the point of emaciation. Her hair is light brown and extends most of the way down her neck. Her features would be beautiful if they were not set so harshly, and were not so sunken. When she leaves her haven, she wears a long robe that covers her hair and face, as well as most of her exposed skin, so that she isn't obviously a foreigner. She speaks Egyptian flawlessly.

Roleplaying Hints: You have a sort of tragic dignity to you when you're lucid and calm. Draw yourself up rigidly straight and speak very clearly, with precise diction. When upset, take everything the wrong way and suspect everyone except Anatole or Marat of being in league with your enemies. You are obsessed with death now, most particularly the deaths of the Giovanni. Your moods swing wildly back and forth, calm for a few minutes and then furiously angry. You do have a certain measure of restraint and control, however, and it's been almost 80 years since you killed one of your ghouls during one of your fits.

MARAT BECHADE

Marat is Constanica's ghoul. He follows her loyally when she is in her right mind, and takes care of her when she isn't. He has been with her for almost 300 years, and knows her and her wishes very well. He began his term as her ghoul by falling in love with her. He long ago outgrew such feelings, but he still feels very fondly toward her due to the blood bond. She treats him well when she's calm, and he knows when she's being paranoid and angry that she doesn't really mean the things she says. He is incredibly patient and caring, and would do anything possible to help Constanica achieve her desires.

Marat is the guide Constanica hired when she first arrived in Egypt. He was fascinated by the beautiful foreign

woman, and remained her guide and companion throughout her stay. She rewarded him by ghoulizing him, determined that he should remain her companion in her search for Lazarus, and concerned that he must be absolutely loyal to her — the Blood Bond would certainly insure that.

Image: Marat has dark skin and curly black hair. He is tall and slender, but strong, and he keeps in shape. He has cast himself as Constanica's protector, and he looks the part — even if she is the powerful one of the two.

Roleplaying Hints: Treat Constanica with patience and care no matter what state she's in. You are generally friendly, but when others come to speak with your mistress you make certain in little ways that they know they are not worthy of her. You regret that she may not occupy a station befitting her, but you realize the necessity for secrecy. You are more determined than ever to let her know that she is important to you, and that she is cared for. You know however that in public you must treat her simply as another beggar, and in front of Cainites and their ghouls you must treat her as you would treat a queen.

ANATOLE

Anatole was born to the wife of a captain of the guard in Paris in 1172. He became a guardsman with the city watch, but he was fascinated with the Church and was a very devout soul. Pierre l'Imbecile, a Malkavian (and also a devout soul), chose to Embrace Anatole because of his ability to see the movements of God on Earth. Pierre explained to Anatole that his role was to prove that Cainites serve God's purposes, and then he abandoned him. Anatole's derangement, a tendency to experience hallucinations, causes him to see symbols, people and objects that don't exist (although Anatole believes them to reveal God's presence). Anatole has been known to repel Kindred by calling out to the angels he sees in his fractured mind.



Anatole is adept with both sword and shield, and possesses an impressive array of Disciplines. A number of his Disciplines do not fall within the province of the Malkavians, but Anatole isn't saying where he learned them. Anatole has been seen with an entourage of monklike pilgrims, believed to be his ghouls, his herd or a combination thereof.

Anatole spent almost a century in a religious fervor, during which he believed that God had directed him to diablerize vampires; he made many Cainite enemies throughout those years. By the end of the 18th century, Anatole had become involved with the French Revolution and the lay mysticism it inspired. He changed the focus of his fervor from Christianity to the Jyhad. Anatole met with another Malkavian, Octavio, who asked Anatole to diablerize him and thus passed on his visions of demons rising from the earth. With this new motivation, Anatole journeyed to the New World, where he spread the word of Gehenna's approach.

Before Anatole went to America, however, Constanica sent word asking him to come to Egypt. The angels agreed, and so Anatole and some of his ghouls answered her summons. Constanica had received word of the Children of Isaac coming in search of Lazarus' tomb. She thought that they might need help against the Setites and the Giovanni, but did not want to involve herself with them — she was in one of her periods of seclusion. Unfortunately, Anatole's visions wanted him to stop several times along the way, so he arrived just a little too late to help the characters against either Alexei (Vykos) or the Setites. Constanica still has a use for him, however.

Image: Anatole's long blond hair is tangled and filthy. He has fine features and an average build, and looks like a vagrant mercenary; he wears piecemeal armor scavenged from corpses. His sword is rusty and blood-encrusted, and he often has dried blood on his mouth, hair and clothing.

Roleplaying Hints: God has granted you divine visions and speaks to you through even mundane items. You understand that only those blessed by God can see what you see. The objects around you explain where you must go and what you must do, and you believe them implicitly. Trust the angels who guide you; they often lend their aid to you.

Notes: Anatole has a True Faith rating of 1. See **Vampire: The Masquerade** for the effects of True Faith.

Disciplines: Anatole has Auspex, Obfuscate, Celerity, Fortitude and Potence all at 2 dots or more.

MARK GERSHON

Mark is Anatole's ghoul. He believes he is the apostle Mark reincarnated to do God's work in the final days of man, and that Anatole is Christ. He has been alive for 70 years, 42 of those as a ghoul, but that has never surprised him. Nor have the miracles that Anatole performs — they're part and parcel to his delusions. Occasionally he wonders why it is that Christ only walks the earth at night, but then he shrugs and reminds himself that it is not his place to question God's will. He understands that this time around Christ is an instrument of his father's vengeance rather than his father's mercy, so it doesn't



bother him to see Anatole kill people. He has a little trouble seeing Anatole drink people's blood, but he puts that down to demons giving him evil visions in an effort to distract him from his path. As for his drinking Anatole's blood, that was simply a more direct way of partaking of Christ's body and blood.

Mark has no real memory of his life before Anatole, but he was a mercenary soldier. He'd become despondent over the number of people he'd killed when he watched a child die in his arms. He traveled to a nearby church and had a religious conversion — he was prepared to become a hermit when Anatole recruited him instead.

Image: Mark is short, whip-thin and pale. His hair is light brown, dirty and infested with lice. He probably hasn't taken a bath in years. His clothing is cheap peasant garb, tattered, torn and blood-stained. The sword slung across his back looks rather incongruous, but at least he knows how to use it.

Roleplaying Hints: You don't see Anatole's angels, or any of his other visions, but you believe in Anatole and do whatever he says. Sometimes the killing bothers you — after all, this is what you'd been trying to escape — but then you remind yourself that you're doing God's will and everything becomes all right. If you spend too much time away from Anatole you become less and less sure of yourself, and find yourself having difficulty with the idea of killing people. You resent your fellow ghoul, John Mackler, because he is given the same rewards as you even though he is not a willing servant of the Lord. You take every opportunity to show him up.

JOHN MACKLER

John is the other "apostle" in Anatole's retinue. He was a servant in a nobleman's house in England until Anatole "liberated" him. Anatole's angels told him that John was necessary to his cause, and so the Malkavian ghoul and Blood Bound the young man into his service. John was more than a little unhappy about this — it meant leaving behind his



family, including two young daughters. However, Anatole's blood worked its curse on the young man's mind, convincing him that he was in service to God, and that as much as he might resent it, it was a necessary thing. Eventually he even believed Anatole's claims that he was the apostle John reborn.

John has some of the same confusions about Anatole's blood-drinking that Mark does, but as he has privately always believed God to be a dark and terrible creature, he hasn't needed to come up with a delusion in order to understand it.

John was ghoulé 29 years ago, and he was 23 at the time.

Image: John is one of the few followers of Anatole who keeps himself relatively clean, when possible. He bathes in whatever rivers or ponds the group might come across. His hair is shoulder-length and dark brown, and his eyes are of a similar color. His face has been prematurely aged by worry and resignation, and is heavily lined.

Roleplaying Hints: You don't like what you do, but you know it's necessary. Go about your work with a heavy heart and a sigh, but do it well. You don't understand why the apostle Mark resents you, as the both of you are in the same situation, and you do what you can to appease him. You keep a secret correspondence going with your daughters when you have the opportunity, although you do not tell them about Anatole; you say simply that you are doing the Lord's work.

SASCHA VYKOS/ALEXEI

Sascha Vykos was a Transylvanian noble and mage who was Embraced by the Tzimisce in 1002, and whose apparent age is difficult to determine. Sascha fled to Constantinople to escape his past enmity with the Tremere, and fell in with Setites at the beginning of the 19th century. He sought dark magics in the hopes of some night besting his Tremere rival, Goratrix. Vykos cultivated his Vicissitude and practiced hideous tortures. He followed the Path of Caine, and sought



power in an effort to make himself worthy to serve Caine. The Setites have allowed him to study their tomes in return for his service, and he has delved into secrets and performed rituals that frighten even them.

Lazarus' tomb interested Sascha greatly. He believed that if the Giovanni and other vampires were willing to come all the way to Egypt and court the Setites simply to gain access to the tomb, then there must have been something incredibly important there. He suspected that the Serpents hadn't discovered all of the tomb's secrets.

Sascha has 18 years left of the time he agreed to spend with the Serpents, but he is willing to risk their displeasure if it will win for him the contents of Lazarus' tomb.

Image: Alexei has made use of his Vicissitude to sculpt his face into a mask of alien and sinister beauty. His features are perfectly symmetrical. His eyes are contemptuous and his expression derisive, but his words are entirely polite and well measured. He wears the greatcoat of a modern European gentleman.

Roleplaying Hints: You are a master torturer and a charming conversationalist; you want your victims to understand exactly what you're doing to them as you use your Vicissitude to cause them untold agonies. You will risk almost anything for more and darker power.

Disciplines: Sascha has Animalism 5, Auspex 5, Dominate 4, Fortitude 2, Potence 3, Thaumaturgy 4, Vicissitude 6.

SEREN SUKARDI

Seren Sukardi was a slave to the Setites several hundred years ago, but his sadism and willingness to sell out his fellow slaves, or harm them in any way, endeared him to his captors, and after a time he was Embraced. He has a talent for pain and is capable of great stealth and cunning; he has become an assassin for the Setites. Some of his peers look down on him, seeing him as a common thug, but he sees his chosen profes-



sion as an art. Usually he's too wrapped up in his own world and his own self-appreciation to realize what his peers think of him; when he does notice, he silently vows to show them up, and works even harder at his job. His fantasies are replete with images of revenge upon those who look down on him, although he is strong-willed and would never let those dreams interfere with his duties to his clan.

Seren has always coveted the position of torturer for the Setites, but he knows that as long as Alexei is in a position of favor with the court, he will never have that chance. He is quite happy to see Alexei's star fall, and hopes to be given the opportunity to torture Alexei when he brings him back. He privately suggested to Neferu, Queen of the Setite Fire Court, that Alexei's punishment should be to spend his last 18 years as the tortured rather than the torturer, and was delighted to see her regretful nod of acquiescence. He knows that Alexei was one of her favorites, and he hopes to replace Alexei within her dark heart.

The Setites want Alexei back. He is very useful to them and is the best torturer they've ever had; they also realize that he's walking out with a great number of their most dangerous secrets, without having fully paid his fee. They want him back, and will pay almost any price to have him. Allowing a few random Cainites to walk off with something the Setites don't have much of a stake in is hardly a high cost for them, though of course they'll never admit that. Seren journeys to offer the Setites' help to Constanica. He believes that letting her people serve as distractions while he takes Alexei is worth allowing her to have the tablets virtually for free.

One of the rituals Seren performed just before he left the Setite court is one he is very proud of. Given 15 seconds of quiet chanting, he can take himself and any one person he is touching back to the Setite court with him.

Image: Seren is short and thin, with long curly black hair and almost-black eyes. His Potence makes him much stronger than he looks however, and his Celerity faster. He is known for killing people before they even realize he's there. His gaze is extremely intense, and he doesn't blink at all. He is very beautiful, as though his face was sculpted out of mahogany, and he appears to be in his late teens.

Roleplaying Hints: You are quiet and speak only when you have something worthwhile to say. When people speak to you, stare at them unblinkingly, even if it makes them uncomfortable — secretly you enjoy your ability to make people uneasy, even though you speak quite politely. Do your best for Neferu; it is her favor which will gain you the position you seek within the court. You are not afraid of Alexei — you have known for a long time that you would get your chance to best him, and have been secretly studying all of the same rituals and tomes which he has spent so much time on. Anything he tries, you expect to be able to counter with the rituals you performed on yourself just before you left the Setite court.

Disciplines: Obfuscate 3, Presence 2, Serpents 4, Thaumaturgy 3

DALIA GOMBAR

Dalia was ghoulé 11 years ago by Constanica, when she was 13 years old. She is by far the youngest of Constanica's retinue, both physically and mentally, and she feels very lonely. She found, however, that a number of the other ghouls (and some of the mortals) find her very attractive, and that having sex with them is one of the most certain ways to get affection and attention. It hurt a lot at first, but she's gotten used to it. The act itself doesn't make her feel good, but knowing that someone is paying attention to her does. She won't let anyone hurt her, although she doesn't mind some rough play (and once she trusts someone enough she'll even let them tie her up — she isn't a submissive, she's just starved for



affection), but other than that she'll happily do anything someone might wish. Constanica doesn't care what the girl does as long as she's still useful, and has once or twice taken the girl to bed herself, drinking her blood while using her body.

Dalia knows her way around the desert better than any of Constanica's other ghouls; she has an eidetic memory and an incredibly uncanny sense of direction. Constanica found her when the girl picked the "beggar's" pocket; Dalia is very good at lifting things from people's pockets and then smiling so sweetly if she gets caught that almost no one has the heart to turn her in to the police. Dalia had been stealing to support herself and her sick older brother; Constanica left a little money for her brother and then took the girl away.

Image: Dalia is small and thin; she can fit into almost any confined place. She's quick and still has a child's energy and enthusiasm. While she is actually 24 years old, everyone still treats her as a child, and so she has never really grown up. She has black hair, cut short to avoid lice and so that someone chasing her can't grab hold of her hair. She wears raggedy tunics decorated with cheap gold thread, and white or khaki pants that are usually too big for her.

Roleplaying Hints: You vacillate between adult sensibilities and a child's display of emotion and enthusiasm. You crave attention, and will do all sorts of helpful things for other people in an attempt to get it, but you get very frustrated if they don't cooperate.

PART THREE: EVOLUTION

SCENE ONE: THE PATRIARCAS ARE STILL IN THE BUILDING

It's time to remind the characters that not all of their concerns are supernatural in nature. The Patriarcas are a force to be reckoned with, even if they are mortal. If Micky is still alive then things have continued pretty much as in Part One. Either Micky and the characters made a deal to leave each other alone, or they're still enemies. If they made a deal to leave each other alone, then the characters is beginning to find little things going wrong around the edges. At first they may not even connect the missing drug shipment or the torched car with the Patriarcas. If they talk to Micky, he looks troubled and promises to look into things. As it turns out, his uncle Raymond doesn't entirely agree with the way Micky is handling things (most specifically he thinks Micky's sense of honor is misguided), and he secretly sent Micky's younger brother Lucio to do a little dirty work behind Micky's back. Micky may not like it, but he feels he has no choice but to go along with it. He will apologize to the characters, but he won't do anything to stop Lucio.

If Micky and the characters are enemies, then the campaign against the characters steps up. Micky's uncle isn't pleased with the limited results Micky has been obtaining, and has told him to either get a chunk of Boston under Patriarca control or step down in favor of Lucio. Micky knows how brutal his brother is, and doesn't lack ambition for himself, so he's doing everything he can to step on the Giovanni's feet. Partway through this portion of the act, whenever the Storyteller thinks the characters are getting too complacent, Lucio shows up anyway to help his brother Micky out.

If the characters (or Reginald) killed Micky Patriarca, then they may be surprised when incidents start occurring again. After all, who would dare to blow up their warehouse or kill their staff after the way they dealt with the Patriarcas? Raymond finally got around to sending Lucio after his brother Micky. Lucio and Micky may have disagreed on most things, but Micky was family and Lucio's big brother, and Lucio is very, very angry with the characters. He's here to carve a very large niche out of Boston for his family, and an even larger niche out of the characters for himself. He intends to hunt them down and kill them one by one.

Things should start getting tough for the characters. They may lose some of their hard-earned resources, and their contacts may see them as being too dangerous to be associated with. It's just possible that one of them might even die. Their sources are being bought out from under them or threatened into not dealing with them. Their shipments are vanishing. The progression should start out slow and ramp up steadily until "Truce and Betrayal," below. Of course, hopefully the characters return the damage blow-for-blow, hurting the Patriarcas as the Patriarcas hurt the Giovanni.

Paul DiCarlo makes a reappearance when he arrives on the characters' doorstep. The Patriarcas have been threatening his clients, and Andreas told him the characters would help him out. The characters might provide extra guards for Paul's offices and the surrounding areas, or they might try to clean the Patriarca influence out of that neighborhood entirely. Alternatively, they might provide Paul with a new set of offices in safer territory. The players can get creative here. Paul will repay the characters by using any influence or resources at his disposal to help them.

THE MILLINERS' STAKE IN THINGS

Early in this part of the act, Jason Milliner comes to the vampire(s) among the characters and tells them that the Patriarcas knocked over a bank under Francis' control, killing one of Francis' cousins and stealing some important papers. Francis wants the characters to do anything they can to deal with the Patriarca problem, and can give them some funds if it would be directly useful in this cause. If the Storyteller wishes to make retrieving the papers a story unto itself this is possible; otherwise Jason says that the harm has already been done and the family will recover, so only revenge is in order. This is the first time the characters have seen Jason angry.

If the characters seek confirmation from Andreas or Hank before carrying out the Milliners' instructions, they are told that the Milliners are "practically family," and are to be treated as such. They are also told that the Patriarcas are becoming an intolerable pest of an organization, and that it's time the characters did something about them. Unlike the Milliners the Giovanni themselves do not offer help. However if the characters asks, there are of course contacts and resources that could be divulged in the name of getting rid of such a menace.

ANDREAS' OBSESSIONS

While Hank is simply worried about the threat the Patriarcas pose, Andreas is fascinated. He wants to know how it is that mortals could possibly threaten his empire in any major way; it just isn't anything he ever expected to happen. In a twisted sort of way, Andreas almost admires the Patriarcas. If the characters speaks with him he mentions wanting to capture some of the Patriarcas alive. He seems determined to find out why they think they can win, and how they do so well. (The answer is probably that most of them feel a true family loyalty, devoid of the Giovanni's backstabbing and perversions, but Andreas would likely never believe that.)

If the characters bring Andreas any Patriarca prisoners, he proceeds to torture them without delay. Rather than the stern, forceful countenance one might expect from a torturer, however, a childish fascination lights up his face. He bypasses all expected questions of numbers, locations, passwords and resources, and gets straight to finding out what makes the man tick. He wants to know whether he can buy the man, if not why not, and why the man fights him. "Come, every man has his price. What's yours? Money? Sex? Blood?" Andreas opens up his wrist with one long fingernail and the prisoner looks shocked and sick. If anyone tries to remind Andreas about the "important" questions, he ignores them entirely. Andreas continues his questioning until the man dies in his bonds, and looks vaguely disappointed when that happens, as though his toy has broken. He lifts the man's bruised and bloodied face by the chin, frowns, and allows it to drop to the man's chest with a slight thud. "Get rid of that," he says. "And bring me another."

BREAKING TRADITION

Something to remember: The Mafia is a very ethnic group. It may have associates who aren't Italian, but never "made men," and it doesn't use non-Italians as soldiers or buttonmen. One way in which Raymond Patriarca breaks tradition, however, is that he uses non-Italian executioners. It is a practice for which he has come under fire by other families, but it means that his targets can't simply stay away from Italians and be safe. If the characters does some research on Patriarca they should be able to find this out; certainly there is some small rumor of it among the Mafia and the cops. That won't help them much, though. If anything it should heighten their fear: now instead of worrying about unknown

Italians and feeling (falsely) safe around others, they'll need to worry all the time, about everyone.

The characters have one secret on their side — the Patriarcas likely don't know that the characters are ghouls and vampires, and so don't know how hard they'll be to kill. Of course after the first or second time the Patriarcas shoot someone and then see her walking around again the next night, they should figure something out.

SCENE TWO: STONE TABLETS AND REWARDS

In Part One of this act, the characters came into possession of a set of stone tablets. There are a number of things they could choose to do with these. They might hold onto them. They might turn them over to the Milliners. Or they might turn them over to the Giovanni. If they hold onto them, they may try to decipher them. This probably work; the language chiseled into the tablets is Chaldean, and the characters aren't likely to find someone to translate it without going to either the Giovanni or possibly the Children of Isaac.

If the characters hold onto the tablets for too long, Francis Milliner himself comes knocking. He bluntly asks the characters whether they were ever planning to turn the tablets over to the family, all but openly questioning their loyalty. He refuses to be drawn into an argument about how he found out about the tablets (the Giovanni had some clue that something important was coming to town, although they didn't exactly know when and where, so both they and the Milliners had agents in likely places. The Milliners were covering the wharf where Mackler's boat came in). He also refuses to leave without either the tablets or a promise that the characters will deliver them to the Giovanni. He is polite and reasonably friendly at first, but becomes more stern and authoritative if the characters argues. He tries to gently steer the characters into giving him the tablets instead of the Giovanni, but he isn't obvious about it and doesn't push the issue if they want to do it themselves.

Alternatively, the Storyteller could have Jason bring the subject up when he arrives in "The Patriarcas Are Still in the Building," above. If Jason talks to the characters about it but they arrive on Hank or Andreas' doorstep later still in possession of the tablets (and not carrying them in their arms), then Hank or Andreas makes it clear that they'd better bring the tablets by that very night. Things should never reach this point, of course, and the characters are still under the effects of their Blood Bond to Andreas which should keep them (theoretically) loyal to the family.

TEACHER'S PET

If the characters brings the tablets straight to Andreas, then he is extremely pleased with them. He promises them a reward, and asks them to meet at Hank's office as soon after sunset as possible in five nights' time. At this time, the Storyteller should run "The Blessing of the Animals," below.

If the characters ask for a translation, Andreas tells them that a translation will take time, and that perhaps some night they might find out what the tablets say.

If the characters bring the tablets to the Milliners, then the Milliners thank them very professionally and take the tablets straight to the Giovanni. They don't claim to have found the tablets themselves, but neither do they mention the characters. At this time, the Storyteller should run "Office Party," below. If the characters complain to Andreas, he smiles, shrugs, and says "you're going to have to be faster on the draw than that. Hopefully this will teach you a good lesson." If the characters feel cheated, well, they should.

SCENE THREE: TRUCE AND BETRAYAL

Things seem to be effectively stalemating between the Giovanni and the Patriarcas by this point. Both sides are doing damage. Both sides are taking losses. People are dying, in what is easily the bloodiest Mafia war ever. Businesses are being destroyed. The cops are trying their damndest to stay out of it, but the people of Boston demand that they put an end to the bloodshed; no one feels safe any more. People who had crawled their way up out of poverty and into the middle class are rapidly falling back into poverty as their businesses are ruined underneath them. Almost every headline the characters see should be about the violence, the death toll, and the responsibility the cops have to make it stop. Various analysts predict that neither side can win; if Teresa Powers is still alive, then she is interviewed for one such article. She points out that the Giovanni have the home turf advantage, but acknowledges that the Patriarcas have been making their mark. She tries to be pro-Giovanni without being obviously biased (unless the characters has mistreated her in some way, in which case she attempts to be pro-Patriarca without being obviously biased).

Nonfamily contacts of the characters are also demanding that the war end. It's bad for business, and if it keeps up some of them are going to start moving away. During this time even more of them should refuse to work with the characters any more: "It's too dangerous to be involved with the Mafia any more. You used to protect us — now you get us all killed!"

The Patriarcas have taken great losses, and it isn't even in a fight for their own territory. Many of them are becoming demoralized. If Micky is still alive then he is positively despondent; he sends word to his uncle Raymond saying that either they come to an arrangement with the Giovanni or pull out of Boston, or within two months they'll all be dead. Lucio doesn't want to agree with his brother, but he is forced to admit that this is the truth. If Micky is dead, then Lucio is still trying to hurt the characters in any way possible. If anything this is hurting his effort, as he is concentrating on the characters and leaving himself open

on other sides. The characters can take advantage of this by having other family members cause Lucio problems while he's busy with the characters. Eventually Raymond Patriarca sends word to his nephew(s) that it's time to try to reach an agreement with the Giovanni.

ASKING FOR A MEETING

Lucio contacts someone in the coterie and asks for a meeting "to work this here thing out between us, once and for all. I'm not much of one for talking, but my uncle tells me it's an important skill, so let's do it." If the Patriarcas have reason to suspect the supernatural nature of the characters then they insist on meeting during the daytime, and only relent if meeting at night is the only way to get a meeting at all. Again they insist on a fairly public locale, with as few people as possible. They also demand that whoever arrives must be able to deal with the Giovanni.

If the characters contact either the Milliners or the Giovanni, they are put in touch with Andreas and have a meeting with him in a darkened room. The smell of blood is prevalent, and there are dark stains on Andreas' fingertips. Anyone in the characters who is hungry should roll for frenzy; if someone does frenzy, ghoul guards emerge from the doorway and subdue the character. Andreas says he's grown tired of this little war, even though it has provided its share of amusement. As he says this he glances back into the shadows of the room, and a small moan can be heard. Anyone with *Auspex* can see that there is a man bound to a table in the back of the room. He is naked and blood covers most of his body. There is very little life left in him; he turns his head feebly toward the characters and attempts to call out for help, but he only manages a quiet gurgling sound. One of the characters may recognize the man as a Patriarca soldier.

Andreas tells the characters to go ahead and set up the meeting. It's time for them to prove their ability by settling this thing. He doesn't care if they have to make a couple of concessions to the Patriarcas in order to get them to behave; he trusts them to know the limits. He says this last bit with a predatory smile that indicates if they don't know the limits, they're going to be in a great deal of trouble. Andreas suggests that if they're worried about being betrayed, they send a flunky to arrive at the meeting first and tell him to leave again five minutes after the start of the meeting; if the flunky doesn't leave then it's obviously a trap. If Teresa Powers is still alive then he suggests sending her; after all, the Patriarcas know her, so she might even put them at ease if it isn't a trap.

Andreas then allows any vampire who frenzied to drink three blood points from the tortured captive; as the Kindred drinks, the captive slides into pained unconsciousness. If a ghoul frenzied, then Andreas feeds him one blood point from his own wrist.

THE MEETING

Jason Milliner finds the characters just before they go in to meet the Patriarcas (but after they send a flunky in, if

they have followed Andreas' advice). "It's a trap," he says simply. "Don't go in." The characters may of course push him for further details. If the characters have not yet received their Embrace and new job, then Jason says, "The FBI is planning to pick up both you and the Patriarcas at this meeting. If you go you'll both be caught. If you stay away, then the Feds get the Patriarcas, we're minus one enemy, and you can take the credit to Andreas. I'm sure he'll be quite pleased with you." If the characters asks him about his sudden generosity he shrugs and says "it seems fair recompense for what we did to you before. That was just business, you understand, but it's no reason we can't get along in the future." Anyone who tries to read his aura however will find no warmth of regret or camaraderie.

If the characters have already received their Embrace and new position, then Jason says "Look, if you go in there you'll be in jail for a long time to come." He looks at the Kindred in the coterie with a long, measuring look. "Or maybe just one night. When the sun comes up in the morning." He lets his words sink in and leaves. By now the Feds are already springing their trap, believing the meeting to have started, and the Patriarcas and any flunky the characters has sent in are in custody.

If the meeting is during the daytime and Jason has already been Embraced, then Jason's secretary, Rudy Nolan, delivers the message to the characters. Instead of the cold demeanor of his employer however, he barely covers over his fear of the

characters with a poker face. Any successes on a Perception + Empathy roll (difficulty 6) will make this obvious to the characters, as will use of Auspex to read his aura.

AFTERMATH

The Feds of course take the credit for ending the bloodiest Mafia war in New England history. The local police are more than a little angry, and make a lot of noise about how they would have taken care of it if the Feds hadn't gotten in their way. The characters might want to try to get their flunky out of jail; with a little help it can be managed, especially if they did a few favors for DiCarlo earlier in this part of the act. Depending on which flunky they sent in, there may not be much for the Feds to pin on her anyway. If they leave her in there to rot, then she might add to the characters' troubles in the next act.

If the characters have already received their rewards then the Milliners go to Andreas and explain how they brought down the Patriarcas permanently, when the soft-hearted party would have given the Mafia family part of the Giovanni territory in order to pacify them. If the characters have not yet received their rewards then the Milliners allow the characters to take credit for what happened. Jason will even back up their story, saying that he met with them just before the fateful meeting (or his secretary did), and that they told him their plan to get rid of the Patriarcas. Andreas raises an eyebrow at that, but accepts it with an amused smile.



SCENE FOUR: OPPOSITE NUMBERS

The Children of Isaac have not been entirely silent during this time. They lie low, taking their time getting the lay of the land and finding out whatever they can about the Giovanni in general and the characters in particular. They're quite old after all, and have all the time in the world.

It takes them a little while to find out that their package must have been intercepted; they didn't know exactly when it would be arriving. Eventually the Malkavian Anatole drops by and asks after his ghoul; when the Children of Isaac inform him that they haven't heard anything about Mackler, he leaves Boston. Anatole did tell the Children, however, that Mackler had been traveling by boat. It isn't difficult for them to find out from there that the Giovanni observe almost every waterway to Boston. They draw the obvious conclusion. Unfortunately for them, they have no way of knowing who might have their precious package now. They decide that two simultaneous strategies are in order.

First, the Children of Isaac must gather as much information as possible on the Giovanni: who is in charge, who is important in the city and why, where they're located, and where their interests are. Second, they need to cause as much trouble for the Giovanni as possible without causing so much that the Giovanni turn all of their attention to the Children.

WHERE THE CHARACTERS COME IN

In their investigation of the local Giovanni, the Children can't help but notice the characters, especially as the coterie was the main force opposing the Patriarcas in the recent war. The Children have their ghouls check out the characters, making lists of the establishments the members of the characters own or share interest in. They also make note of any flunkies, ghouls and friends the characters have. They try to ascertain to whom the characters report and how often (in other words, how short their leashes are). They find out who is Kindred and who is ghoul by seeing who steps out during the daytime, and who is capable of eating real food. If any of the Kindred in the characters have herds then the Children make note of who they are.

As this act comes to a close, the Children begin acting as well as watching. They set themselves up in opposition to the characters wherever possible. As the characters now have charge of Domenic's trucking business, the Children buy into a competing operation. They take over, one by one, any businesses they have to in order to become the characters' opposites in every way possible. Just for good measure, they do a similar thing on a smaller scale to several other Giovanni and Milliners. For example, one of the Children buys into (and uses any supernatural abilities

at his disposal to gain influence over) a group of lawyers who rival Paul DiCarlo. Obviously the Children can't do all of this immediately; they spend the intervening time between the second and third acts of this book accruing their new purchases.

The characters begin to feel some small effects of the Children's influence toward the end of this act. A couple of things should happen toward the end of the events with the Patriarcas — their business isn't going quite as well. Their rivals seem to be doing better than they used to be. Their rivals have more money for advertising than they used to and are running new ad campaigns; maybe one rival's nightclub has just been renovated and has all-new facilities. When someone among the characters (or an underling) investigates, they are told by their rival that someone new is running the business, that they're just hired help now. The former owner of the business appears nervous, but happy. He ushers the characters' member to a back room to meet the new owner (or the new owner's representative, if it's daytime).

The person the character meets appears happy to see her. "I'm so glad you've come," he says. "I wanted you to see my new facilities. Aren't they handsome?" He offers the character a seat, and refreshments. If the character is Kindred, then a dazed stock clerk or bartender is brought to her. If the character is a ghoul, then *espresso* and cake are presented to her. The Child of Isaac insists on waiting until the character has had her refreshment. "I do hope we can get along," the Child of Isaac tells her. "After all, I'm sure we'll be seeing a great deal of each other in the coming years. I do hope that there are no hard feelings. It's all business, of course, and you're on the wrong end of mine. By the way, if you have my package, I want it back. Make sure you tell your masters that I and my companions are here to stay. After all, we like Boston." The Child of Isaac smiles disarmingly. At about that time, the drugs in the "refreshments" begin to take effect, and the character's vision blurs. Within moments she is unconscious on the floor. She awakes a half-hour before sunrise to find herself on the top of a tall building. She can easily get out of the sunlight before it's too late, but the point has been made. If she's a ghoul and not Kindred, she finds herself lying far too close to the edge of the building for comfort.

If the character refuses to partake, then the Child of Isaac is insulted. "You refuse my hospitality? And I was trying to do this the easy way. I so want our stay here to be a happy one." He motions to the character to leave. "No, I won't talk with you," he says petulantly. "You won't play by the rules. Just for that, I'm going to have to make your next few decades very uncomfortable. I was only going to make them a little uncomfortable before. But you did have to push me." He ignores the character until the character finally leaves. As she is walking out the door, he says "Oh, and I want my package back. Tell your masters that." Then he lapses back into silence and refuses to explain himself any further.

SCENE FIVE-A: THE MILLINERS' EMBRACE/OFFICE PARTY

The characters receive hand-delivered black-engraved invitations to a "Board Meeting and Office Party" at the Old South Bank, one of the Milliners' better-known holdings. The event is to take place two hours after sunset. The ghoul bearing the invitations tells the characters to be sure to "eat" before the meeting. When the characters arrive, Hank corrals them and says quietly, "vote yes on the first two, and no on the last." He then turns and enters the boardroom without further explanation.

OFFICERS' STATEMENTS

The board meeting opens with "officers' statements" from Francis, Jason and Benjamin Milliner. (Benjamin is Francis' oldest son.) The rest of the room is filled with Giovanni, including Andreas and Hank. The statements include summaries of how they're doing their jobs and what they've accomplished lately, as well as justifications of how they can be useful to the family.

Francis is confident and strong-willed. He boldly lists either the acquisition of *The Anxhexeton* and *The Khazar's Diary* or the arrest of the Patriarcas among his accomplishments, smiling slightly at the characters as he does so. (If the characters try to say anything, Andreas glares at them.) He lists the financial institutions he controls and points out all of the financial deals he's brokered for the Giovanni. If he loaned aid to the characters in their earlier troubles against the Patriarcas, then he mentions this as well. He promises to use his financial wizardry and his great resources to aid the Giovanni family in its endeavors. He claims that his money and ability, when married to the Giovanni's resources, contacts and shadier endeavors, will make the two families unstoppable.

Jason is more subdued than his uncle. He lists a number of deals that he has brokered for his uncle, and any ways in which he gave aid against the Patriarcas. He gives the names of several high-society men with wealth whom he has put into contact with Giovanni who sell drugs and whores.

Benjamin sweats very slightly, and a tinge of nervousness colors his aura. He speaks glibly however, describing the number of people who are deeply in debt to the Milliner family and who could be tapped for favors. He also reports that one of his loyal employees has achieved a seat in the state congress, and plans to use that position to affect laws for the family.

BLOOD OATHS

Andreas next requires that the three Milliners swear an oath of loyalty sealed with blood. "Repeat after me," he says, reciting one line at a time and waiting for the Milliners to repeat it. "I swear absolute loyalty to the Giovanni family. I endeavor to promote the benefit of the family. Personal loyalties are secondary to the family. My blood, my flesh, and my heart belong to the family."

Benjamin hesitates almost imperceptibly on this last phrase, but he repeats it.

Andreas smiles brightly and hands a beautiful old knife to Francis. The hilt is wrapped in burgundy leather and the blade is razor-sharp. Francis slices into the flesh of his forearm and holds it up; Andreas drinks from the wound, which sends the old man into a racked spasm. When Andreas is done he motions to Francis to sit in the chair waiting behind him; Francis, who is looking a little unsteady on his feet, gratefully sits. His arm is still bleeding. Andreas hands the knife to Jason and then to Benjamin, repeating the process, who both double over in pain at the Giovanni Kiss. Then, when all three are sitting in their chairs bleeding, Andreas turns around. "So, it's time for the vote!" he says with a huge smile. The bleeding Milliners look shocked, their faces growing steadily paler.

Andreas holds a vote for Francis, and asks for a show of hands. Francis passes, and Andreas moves on to Jason. Meanwhile the Milliners are looking more and more confused and worried. Benjamin is positively terrified. His eyes fall to his arm, and he feebly tries to rise from his chair; he fails and falls back into it, his eyes closing. Andreas holds the vote for Jason, and Hank interrupts him. "I'd like a secret ballot," he says on Andreas' instructions. Andreas pauses for effect as Jason's eyes widen, then nods. Squares of blank paper are passed out with pens. Everybody scribbles briefly, and the papers are passed forward to Andreas. Andreas frowns briefly as he counts the papers, then smiles. "He passed!" Jason slumps back in his chair in relief. Andreas quickly carries out the last vote, again asking for a show of hands, and this time Benjamin does not pass. Andreas frowns. "Well," he says, "I suppose it was to be expected, after he passed information on our drug industry off to the police."

None of the Milliners are moving much at this point. Blood covers their expensive suits and soaks into the plush carpet. A spark of rage enters Francis' half-lidded eyes, but he doesn't have the strength to do anything about it.

Andreas approaches Francis. He lifts the man's arm up to his lips and drains the last of his blood. Francis lies like a rag doll in his chair, his skin paper-white, his eyes dull. Andreas opens up his own wrist with his fangs, and holds it to Francis' lips. Color gradually returns to Francis' cheeks and he clamps down onto Andreas' wrist. After a surprisingly brief moment Andreas peels him off and pushes him back into his seat, blood on the new vampire's mouth. Andreas then moves to Jason and repeats the process. Andreas stops in front of Benjamin with a look of disgust on his face. He then pulls the man up as though he were made of straw, and drops him on his family-members' laps. In a frenzy of hunger, Francis and Jason rip into their relative, draining him of the rest of his blood.

THE PARTY

The crowd drifts into the next room as people start to chat. Decorations are strewn about the room; a brightly painted sign says "Congratulations!" Glass punchbowls filled with blood sit on long tables covered in white tablecloths. A

four-man jazz band plays in one corner of the room; a Kindred the characters recognizes as a distant Giovanni cousin remarks that he "discovered" them at a nightclub he owns and promptly ghouled them.

Francis and Jason disappear for a short while, and come back cleaned up and wearing new suits. They look unsettled, but they're flushed with the newness of vitae and the uneasiness passes quickly. The rest of the evening passes in a gay haze of welcome and happiness.

SCENE FIVE-B: THE CHARACTERS' SECOND EMBRACE THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Before running this scene, the Storyteller should choose one ghoul who has particularly pleased the Giovanni so far this act (or displeased them the least) to receive the Embrace.

The characters presumably arrives at Hank's office very soon after sunset, as Andreas requested. They are made to wait there for an hour while Hank doodles on an office pad. Eventually the phone rings. Anyone with Auspex might hear someone on the other end of the line say "It's time." Hank says "right," nods to no one in particular, and hangs up. He stands and motions for the characters to follow him.

A large limousine waits outside, and the characters are motioned into it. Ghouls are offered alcoholic drinks from the limo's wet bar. Hank gently pushes the drinks on the party, and unless someone is abstaining they all find themselves growing a little tipsy over the hour-long ride.

The limo pulls up in front of a small chapel in the sleepy suburbs. If the characters ask where they are, Hank just snorts and says "In the middle of nowhere." The chapel is of white-painted wood, with simple yet beautiful stained-glass windows. Hand-painted paper taped over a wooden sign reads, "Annual Blessing of the Animals TODAY, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M."

Hank ushers the characters into the chapel. Andreas and a handful of Giovanni ghouls wait inside near the altar. One ghoul holds the leash of a large black dog. A priest stands next to the altar; he is shaking slightly and his eyes dart back and forth between the suited men with guns. His black robe has been torn and his right arm and shoulder, as well as half of his pale chest, have been exposed. On the altar has been tied, spread-eagle, a young man (or woman — whatever sex the soon-to-be-Kindred prefers), naked and gagged. His eyes are wide and he strains at his bonds.

Hank motions the rest of the characters to the side, and pushes the woman who is to be Embraced forward. He presses gently down on her shoulders until she kneels in front of the priest. The priest looks to Andreas, who nods. The priest hesitates, but moves forward to the character when one of the ghouls places his hand on his gun. The priest's voice shakes as much as he does, and his voice cracks once every few words.



The priest puts his hands lightly on the character's head. "God help me," he whispers. Andreas raises an eyebrow, but remains silent. "God bless this animal and keep her safe throughout the coming year. May he grant her health and happiness, and..." Here the priest hesitates, looking at Andreas. Andreas smiles at the priest, nodding. Finally, exasperated, Andreas whispers "Say it!"

"...And the blood of her enemies." The priest rushes through this last bit, grimacing as he says it.

Andreas steps forward, but stops when a gray cat unexpectedly jumps on top of the "sacrifice" spread out across the altar. Andreas' eyebrows go up, and the cat stretches, yawning. She reaches out with her claws and kneads them in the man's stomach, purring contentedly. The priest lets out a startled yelp and reaches for the cat, but one of the ghouls grabs him and throws him to the floor. Andreas laughs, walks over to the altar and picks up the cat, scratching her under the chin for a brief moment before she struggles out of his hold, jumps to the floor and runs away. The man on the altar can be heard screaming through his gag.

Andreas raises the ghoul to her feet with a touch on her shoulder and walks her forward to the altar. "Lick up the blood." The man is struggling now with all of his strength, to no avail. Andreas gives the ghoul a few moments to enjoy the blood. If the ghoul feels inclined to play with the sacrifice Andreas gives her even longer, enjoying the show. Before the

ghoul gets to her feet however, Andreas bites hard into her neck, draining her of blood.

Andreas sucks the ghoul's blood out over the altar. By now the priest is wailing quietly in a heap on the floor. As Andreas drops the ghoul on top of the sacrifice, one of his ghouls pulls out a gun and shoots the priest. Andreas bites his wrist open and feeds the ghoul a single blood point, then pulls her off of the altar and almost throws her at the dog. He smiles as the new Kindred devours the dog, which whines as its blood is drained from its body.

Once the vampire has eased her hunger, Andreas leads her by the hand to the altar. "This is my birthday gift to you," he says. "On one condition. Make it a good show." He smiles cruelly and backs away. The character can do anything she likes to the captive; the more cruel she is, the more approving Andreas is. If the character chooses to do something bizarre such as let the man go, Andreas sighs and says, "I do hope you'll reconsider." If the character insists, Andreas kills the sacrifice himself and stalks out of the chapel, where he waits for the characters by the car.

THE GALLERY

After the Embrace, Andreas takes the characters off to the Forgotten Worlds Gallery (see the Appendix). There he explains about Antonio and Domenic Giovanni, as he languidly walks through a display of elegant paint-



ings. As the characters learn about their new duties, they gradually realize that the elegant paintings of classical subject matter aren't quite right. Cherubs have claws. Angels' feet are bathed in blood, and their eyes speak of madness. Andreas finishes off by describing the gallery, and the characters' responsibilities with respect to it. He tells them that their first assignment is to arrange a small party (for about 20 people) in four nights' time, to celebrate their good fortune. The characters will need to race around to have everything dealt with in time; staff needs to be notified, catering needs to be arranged for those ghouls who will be in attendance, and vessels need to be found for those Kindred who will wish them.

The party itself is an elegant affair. Antonio and Domenic are in attendance, although they are forced to stand by the door, as though they were common bodyguards, and watch. Andreas delights in praising and honoring their successors in front of them, and smiles whenever he can tell by Domenic's face that he's gotten a rise out of him. Eventually Domenic frenzies, and his own father takes him down with help from Hank (Antonio does it to save Domenic's life, but Domenic will never forgive him for it. It's after this party that Antonio offers Domenic the Embrace; see *Dramatis Personae* for more details). After that excitement, the party breaks up. The characters may get the

distinct impression that the party wasn't really for their benefit; they wouldn't be incorrect. Andreas cared far more about humiliating the fallen sheep than about lauding his new child.

POSSIBLE DOWNTIME PLOTS

The Children of Isaac are playing a game with the characters, and almost anything could come of it. The elders are old and jaded, and should be more than a little strange around the edges by now. The Children are enjoying the game too much to simply kill off their prey — after all, entertainment is hard to come by at their age. But they might go to great lengths to make the characters' lives difficult. The Children's slow rise to power in Boston in opposition of the characters could make for some interesting adventures, as the characters struggle to hold onto both their ill-gotten and hard-earned gains. The characters might find that the more "entertainment" they provide for the Children, the more power they manage to hold onto.

If the characters is interested in getting their flunky out of prison, then this too could be played through. The characters may have to, with Paul DiCarlo's help, figure out exactly who needs to be bribed or blackmailed, and how it should be done.





ACT THREE: TEST OF FAITH

Put your trust in the Lord. Your ass belongs to me.
— Warden Samuel Norton, *The Shawshank Redemption*

A note to the Storyteller: Several sections in this chapter involve only part of the coterie, be it the characters who are still ghouls, or the character who is unlucky enough to be captured by the Inquisition. You will want to plan your session accordingly, in order to avoid players sitting around and waiting their turns.

Act III occurs in 1972, after the fall of Romantic *La Casa Nostra* and right between the indulgence of the late '60s and the greed of the '80s. The result, of course, is the drug-addled, disco-plagued abyss of the '70s.

SCENE ONE: THE PORTENT

This scene takes place on the night before the ghoul characters are arrested (see below). The entire troupe should be together at a fight. The tone of this scene should be carefree; no Humanity checks, no cops, no consequences, no hint of rival gangs or delinquent debtors. Just lately, things have been going very well. The Giovanni have entered the decadent '70s, joyously embracing the public's lust for a good time.

The fighting circuit's business died off a bit during the 1940s and '50s, but picked up again in the last few years. Currently, the fad among fightgoers is to snort cocaine before

and during the fight, and then to either take Quaaludes or smoke pot afterward to calm down.

The setting of this fight is a disco club called the High Dive. The place had constant troubles with the law and with young punks coming in and trashing the place — until the Giovanni stepped in. Now, neither the local cops nor the local gangs disrupt the place. The High Dive is a "meat-market" singles bar, a prime hunting ground for Kindred and a buyer's market for drug users. Notables who can sometimes be found hunting here include Pug Jackson and Effie Feng. Occasionally, however, the club is closed to the general public (Kindred included), and most of the clientele arrives in limousines.

The fighters square off under flashing lights and loud music. The characters can be anywhere they like; tending bar, mingling, taking care of business, etc. This particular fight looks as though it will be very one-sided. One fighter is a very large Mexican man, wearing cutoff jeans and covered in tattoos. The other is shorter, lean, and dressed in sweatpants. The odds are probably placed in favor of Guerrero, the Mexican; Mike, the other fighter, doesn't seem to stand much of a chance.

As bets are being taken, however, there is a sizable amount of money being placed on Mike. It seems that the underdog wins more often than usual at these fights, especially in the last few years. If the characters have occasionally been slipping a weaker combatant a point of vitae to bulk them before a fight, they may understand this. If not, however, it may come as a bit of a mystery, perhaps leading them to wonder if the mysterious elders are slipping their fighters blood, perhaps in an attempt to bond them. They aren't, however; Andreas does this occasionally just to see what effect it might have. He hasn't told the characters about it because he is interested as much in their reactions as the crowd's.

Tonight, however, betting with the odds is safer. Guerrero demolishes Mike in less than a minute. The young man flies backward into the crowd, spewing blood and teeth from his shattered face. One of the characters notices a man of about 40 standing near him, and recalls that he bet a large sum of money on Mike. The man crouches down and takes Mike's pulse, finds nothing, and stands, shaking his head. He grimaces at the character and says, "*Deus vult*." He then disappears into the crowd.

If any character speaks Latin, or asks someone who does, he finds that *deus vult* translates to "God wills it." The fact that this is the rallying cry of the Inquisition will most likely escape the troupe at this point, since not even Andreas knows that. The phrase itself might be enough to worry paranoid characters, but the man will be long gone.

The man is an Inquisitor whose primary function is investigation. If the characters ask around, they find he did not order a drink or any other chemical refreshments, and no one present can identify him. A conversation with a watching wraith determines only that his aura shone gold. This tidbit, if the characters mention it to Andreas, will worry him. He is, however, unreachable until tomorrow night, by which time the proverbial hammer will have already fallen.

SCENE TWO: THE ARREST

This scene takes place the following day at 10 A.M. The FBI arrests any of the players' characters it can find. The Storyteller should consider very carefully where the characters sleep and where they went from the fight last night. The Feds knock on the door loudly, saying that they have a warrant for the character(s) in residence. Ghouls will awaken right away, and may decide to run for it. This is a bad idea; they have just added resisting arrest to the charges against them if they do so. The Feds have them surrounded, and will warn and then shoot them if they run. A ghoul's best bet is to surrender quietly and stand on his right to remain silent.

A vampire is in an entirely different situation. If the FBI agents that trailed the character home last night (see sidebar) saw her enter a building and not leave, they have a search warrant and will use it, regardless of who tries to stop them. If a guardian ghoul gets violent, they will subdue

MOVEMENTS IN THE SHADOWS:

There are several happenings in this chapter that may make the characters — and the players — wonder. How the Feds managed to follow them home without any wraiths raising an alarm; why calls to highly placed Giovanni agents won't get the characters released; why the agent-in-charge, Terrence Monk, doesn't respond to Dominate; even how the FBI got some of its more damning (and false) evidence — all of these things are puzzling, to say the least.

The answer is the Children of Isaac. They have not been idle since 1959, and have their own puppets in the city's power structure. It is very likely that they know something about wraiths by now, and thus can find ways to avoid or waylay them. They have also arranged for planted evidence, and have Conditioned Terrence Monk to not respond to anyone's suggestion but theirs (he is not a ghoul, however). They are also the reason that Monk acts to preserve the Masquerade; it wouldn't do to have suspects screaming and burning in sunlight, after all.

The elders, however, are only interested in starting the ball rolling on the investigation. They assume that modern crimefighting and legal techniques will ensure the conviction of these obviously guilty gangsters, if they are only dragged into court. At the very least, it will force them to go underground, and perhaps leave the city.

Another puzzle for the characters might be the prosecuting attorney's stubborn refusal to respond to threats or bribes. The answer is simple: William Halbert is a member of the Inquisition, and detests corruption in all forms (and he has the Faith to back up these convictions).

and arrest said ghoul. They may even have a warrant for the ghouls arrest as well, in fact, at the Storyteller's discretion. A Kindred character may come up with several different ploys to avoid detection and arrest, including Obfuscate, Dominate, Presence, use of wraithly allies, etc. However, keep in mind that for a vampire to function during the day, the player must succeed on a Humanity roll (difficulty 8) each turn, and even then, the character's maximum dice pool is her Humanity.

A Kindred character who fails to stave off the Feds and is on the verge of being dragged out into the sun may either play along or begin a standoff. Play either option up as long as the tension lasts. At the last moment, a deep voice says, "Stop. I'll take it from here." Entering the scene is Special Agent Terrence Monk of the FBI, the ranking officer of this operation.

Monk is of medium height and is built like a runner. He has thinning brown hair and looks about 35 years old. He reacts to his surroundings calmly, but by no means slowly.

Monk instructs the other agents to leave, and then introduces himself to the Kindred. He stays very briefly, and does not allow any questions. His words seem rehearsed, and during his little spiel his eyes unfocus, as though the words are not his (which they aren't). "I know what you are," he says, "and we have met before. If any harm comes to this messenger, you will know no peace, for you will have violated the Promise. Your empire will fall, and the fall begins now. Your only chance to avoid exposure in the mortal world and utter failure in our world is to return what you have stolen to their rightful owners, and to give complete and truthful testimony regarding your family. The choice is yours." Monk then leaves. If the character tries to stop him, he ignores her. When he gets outside, he informs the other agents to "let this one go."

This scene ends when each character has had her own separate run-in with the FBI, and is either in custody, on the run, or once again (if somewhat fitfully) asleep for the day.

SCENE THREE: THE INTERROGATION

This scene applies only to ghoul characters. The agents take them not to a precinct, but to a "safe house" on the edge of town. The characters recognize the place as the "Mafia graveyard" where they may have unearthed bodies in Act I.

The years have changed the area little. It is still desolate, and as the characters are marched at gunpoint past the "burial ground," they notice that the earth is disturbed, as though someone was buried — exhumed — recently.

The "safe house" was abandoned and boarded up until a few weeks ago. Monk distrusts the local police, and wanted his own headquarters for the investigation. The FBI kindly gave him the funds to purchase the old house and refurbish it to a point. As the characters enter, they find the living room contains four card tables, all cluttered with newspapers, bank documents, photographs and handwritten notes. The ghouls are ushered through this room quickly, but may have time to see their names on some of the papers.

The ghouls are led downstairs to the basement. This room has not been renovated to any degree, or even cleaned, by the look of it. The agents sit the characters down in and handcuff them to some very sturdy wooden chairs. Then they leave them, turning out the lights as they go.

A dark basement should hardly frighten the ghouls. If they chat (as Monk is hoping they will), have any player whose character has *Auspex* roll *Perception* + *Alertness* (difficulty 8). If the roll scores two or more successes, the character hears a reverberation to his voice, as though it is being played through an amplifier. Hopefully, the character realizes they are being tape-recorded, and shuts up. If not, anything they say "can and will be used against them in a court of law." (It might be wise to record any conversation here, or at least take good note of anything that would aid the case against the ghouls later).

Monk arrives shortly after the ghouls are taken into custody. He lets them sit in the basement and talk if they

haven't figured out what a mistake it is to do so. When they've finished, or if they don't talk about anything useful, he comes downstairs and turns some bright lights in their faces.

Terrence Monk is a superb interrogator. He knows when to lean a little harder, when to bargain and when to quit. He sits in front of the characters, sizing them up a bit. He then picks up a legal pad and reads off the characters' legal names, if they have them. If not, he reads their aliases and asks their real names. Regardless of any response, he goes on to list the charges against the characters.

At this point, the Storyteller must gauge what the characters could have been observed doing. It is known, however, that they run an illegal fighting circuit, traffic in narcotics and prostitution, and associate with "reputed" mobsters. Consider where the characters have been and what they've done lately. They might also be indictable on charges of larceny, murder, assault, carrying concealed weapons (having a permit is one thing; having one to conceal a gun is another), contributing to the delinquency of a minor, etc. Monk will not play every card he has at this point; while he knows there are people who will turn evidence against the characters, he tries to get them to confess. What he really wants is the man who runs the show, a man his sources say is named Andreas. He will not ask the characters who Andreas is, however. He tries to get them to say that they were under orders, or that they report to a boss. He asks something like, "So, what else does Andreas have you do?" He says this, casually looking at his legal pad. If the characters answer, they are in effect admitting they know who Andreas is. At this point, Monk's tone changes. He has been very professional and detached up until now, and has taken a very brisk air to questioning. Any question the characters seem reluctant to answer he brushes off. Now, however, he sits forward and looks at the assembled characters pointedly. "And what else can you tell me," he asks, "about Andreas?" The characters should realize they have made a bad mistake.

Monk has information on crimes that predate his own birth. The disappearance of Grace Michaels, if she died in Act I, is one possibility. The deaths of Timothy Kennedy, Edward Neary, the theft of the whiskey shipment (also from Act I) and "conspiracy to the theft of property of a Mr. John Mackler" are others. If the characters have not aged since 1929, Monk does not mention anything from this long ago, since there is no way he could make the charges stick. If, however, the characters look as though they could have perpetrated these crimes, Monk questions them on these events.

More recent crimes include the heist of Eric Mobley's furs (and/or his murder), possible charges of extortion and racketeering, and especially the gang war with the Patriarcas. The Giovanni-Patriarca war is still relatively hot news, and many of the true victims — those who have lost friends and family to the battles — are still alive and able to testify. Monk never mentions names, he only says that he doesn't really

need a confession — it would just make things go more smoothly. The characters will probably refuse to confess anything and eventually Monk takes them to the police precinct, books them, and allows them their phone calls.

The interrogation scene can go as long as the players let it. You may wish to give a character with the Law Knowledge a chance to avoid all this (Intelligence + Law, difficulty 5). The ghouls do, in fact, have the right to remain silent, and if they stand on this right, Monk remands them into police custody more quickly. In any case, bail is set at \$50,000 apiece. The characters might be able to pay that much under normal circumstances. However, they have been arrested under the RICO Act, which allows the FBI to freeze their assets. The family will pay their bail and supply a lawyer, but after that will instruct them to keep their distance from family affairs until this situation is defused (see sidebar).

The Kindred characters may be able to pay the ghouls' bail. There are several things to bear in mind once the characters are free, however. They are being followed and watched at all times, not only by wraiths, but also by the FBI. Monk reports anything he finds back to the Children of Isaac.

CAUTIONARY WORDS

While the characters are under suspicion, the family shuns them. Hank will not take their calls or meet with them, the Milliners will deny knowing them, and Andreas is nowhere to be found. Reginald contacts Kindred characters in their sleep and explains Andreas' course of action.

First of all, the characters are on their own. Legal assistance will be provided and paid for, but nothing else. Andreas is going to disappear for as long as this takes — he has time, and so do the Kindred characters. Reginald informs them that if they are smart, they will leave the ghouls to their own devices and vanish for a few years. They are not to leave town, however.

Second, the empires the characters have built are going to die. Nothing, in Andreas' eyes, is worth possible exposure to the mortal world or giving the Camarilla an excuse to attack. No, much better to cut losses and pick up later.

The characters (and their players) might well feel very disappointed by all this. If they keep an eye on the elements of their plight, however, they notice a curious theme to the backdrop. They are on a stage, and the audience is full of vampires in medieval clothing, watching intently. With luck, the characters will realize that Andreas does not at all wish to lose the business the characters have brought, and he wants them to fight for it. They must simply be subtle (you may wish to allow players an Intelligence + Subterfuge roll to realize this).

The ghoul characters are scheduled to be arraigned in a week, which gives them some time to investigate the charges against them and meet with their lawyer.

Their lawyer is a mob attorney, but not a local one. Andrew Douglas Holloway is not Italian (to offset a bad reaction from the jury) and not a ghoul (to offset one from the Camarilla). Holloway hails from Chicago, and to this point never defended anyone really important. He has a friendly but professional manner, and immediately asks the characters to tell him their sides of the story. He informs them that no matter what they say ("Some of this happened over ten years ago — how could they expect you to remember it all?"), they all have to be consistent. He also shows them the list of witnesses against them.

The Storyteller must now decide who is going to testify against the Giovanni. Refer back to the previous two chapters. Recall any instance in which the characters did something illegal out in public. Who might still be alive? A man who was 13 years old in 1929 would now be 56, but would definitely remember that heydays of Prohibition — and might have seen the characters around. Likewise, business partners — and former business partners — who were mistreated, caught in the crossfire, endangered or impoverished in Act II would certainly take the stand against the characters. You will need to create names and personas for these people, as their exact identities will vary based on what the characters became involved in (however, don't get too detailed yet; these witnesses may never testify. See below).

One name should shock the characters, however. Teresa Powers, who attained her degree some years ago, plans to testify at the trial, assuming she has not been Embraced or bound to the family. She is not there to give testimony about any specific people (she told her interviewees back in 1959 that their conversations would be confidential, and she meant it). She is there to help identify a pattern of crime that would enable a conviction under RICO — in effect, to give expert testimony. This allows the defense to come up with its own expert witness to rebut her testimony.

The case against the characters is fairly daunting. The FBI has fingerprints, photographs, recordings, and other such evidence to indicate the characters' direct involvement in drug traffic and the fighting circuit. There is no evidence for murder (none that would stand up in court, anyway), however, but Holloway's sources suggest that the FBI is still trying to find it. Clever characters may realize that the statute of limitations has long expired on several of these crimes — but that the crimes are individually less important than the conviction they face under RICO implications.

The characters' homes have been searched, so anything they keep there, including weapons, money or drug stashes, diaries, or Necromantic paraphernalia, is now in police custody. The ghoul characters should feel as though the game

is up, and they are the ones to pay the check. They may feel some resentment against their Kindred acquaintances and even Andreas, as they will get off scot-free. As all involved are about to discover, this is far from true.

SCENE FOUR: WITCH-HUNT

As was mentioned earlier, the Society of Leopold has discovered the characters, and is involved in the trial procedure. The prosecuting attorney is one William Halbert, a native Bostonian and a Councilor in the Boston Cenaculum (a house maintained by the Inquisition). The Inquisition's Boston contingent, it should be noted, is one of the oldest and most powerful in the country.

Halbert is aware that he will never get Kindred in court. He knows they believe themselves to be outside mortal law, and he agrees to a point: Only God's law can effectively judge these monsters. So, while Halbert attempts to convict the ghouls, the rest of the Inquisition goes hunting for the Kindred.

Rather than follow the Kindred directly, the Society has been trailing the FBI. The Inquisition is very discrete; they have to be, as they cannot pull rank if exposed. They have "learned" a few "concrete" facts about the Kindred in Boston over the years.

- They seem to be divided among many lines. One division appears to be familial, as there seems to be an entire clan of Italian vampires.

- These Italian vampires run the Mafia, at least to a degree.
- These monsters use the spirits of the departed as spies and slaves. (The Inquisition has divided opinions on the exact nature of wraiths, but they believe that the Giovanni servants would have gone on to their final reward had the Kindred not snatched them away).

- They run a brutal fighting circuit, at which drugs and whores are peddled.

- Any other facts the Storyteller thinks would become apparent.

After the recent fight, the Society called on Guerrero. While he may be a thug and a brute, Guerrero is also a devout Catholic, and confessed everything. He identifies all of the characters by whatever names they are known on the street. This all takes place during the time the characters are being arrested and/or hassled by the FBI. That night, the Society tries to find as many of the Kindred characters it can. Have each player roll Wits + Alertness (difficulty 6) opposed by a dice pool of seven for the Inquisitors. If the player wins, her character notices two men watching her. They are not staring intently, merely looking her way. However, she also notices that one wears a small crucifix around his neck. If the characters ask any nearby wraiths about the men, the wraith will claim not to be able to see them. This is because the Inquisitors each wear a blessed medal of St. James; this ward renders them invisible to wraiths for one night. Each player should make this roll



once during the course of the night, separately. If the Inquisitors see that they have been "made," they fall back and do nothing more tonight. If none of the characters notice, or if a character notices but is alone or decides not to tell the others, the scene proceeds as detailed below.

THE ATTACK

The Society plans to force confession out of one character, and then use the information to capture the others. If the hunters have managed to stay hidden, they choose one character and follow her. If the characters stay in a group to sleep, the Society simply watches to see if anyone stays awake or leaves during the day. If so, the kidnap the ghoul and interrogate him. This does not apply to ghouls who have been arrested, however.

An isolated character is trailed back to her home. Ideally, this should be the same character that Marianna contacted in Act II. As she walks to her door, you may allow her player an *Auspex* roll, if she possesses the Discipline, to detect the incoming attack. If so, the character might be able to dodge by throwing herself to the ground. If not, the character is shot from a nearby rooftop or tree by an Inquisition sniper.

Make the sniper's attack roll as usual. He has seven dice in his pool, and will take a turn to aim. The rifle does a base eight dice of damage, plus any damage for extra successes. The character may soak, but of course has no time to raise her Stamina with blood or otherwise react. The attack may very well stun her. At this point, the other Inquisitors move in.

Five attackers participate in the operation. The sniper takes no action for eight turns; he needs to get down first. The Inquisitors attempt to grapple the vampire and stake her. Of the six hunters present, three have True Faith; the leader has a rating of 4 and two others have ratings of 1. The leader recites Scripture while helping to grapple the character, repeating the verse "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (Matthew 8:2). The player must make a Willpower roll each turn (difficulty 7) to attempt to get up, if she fails, the priest's faith keeps her down.

Each hunter has a Strength rating of 3, and one concentrates on each of the Kindred's limbs. Meanwhile, the leader positions a stake over the Kindred's heart and pounds it home with a mallet.

If the character makes a good fight, she might actually escape. In this case, a car containing Father Carlos and Mary (see below) pulls up as she runs away, and they motion for her to get in. It is much more likely, however, that the character will be subdued. As the stake is pounded home, the priest continues to chant his mantra, and the character's mind is filled with memories of people who have died beneath her fangs or at the end of a gun. Then, all she can see and hear is a queer, murky darkness through which deep voices rumble.

When the character wakes up, she is in a living room. She has been chained to the wall and curtains and towels

cover the wall facing her. The glow from behind the curtains is enough to indicate what will happen should she try to escape.

It is daytime, and each turn the character must fight to stay awake. The difficulty to do so is only six, however, due to stress and fear. When the character awakens, she is alone. If she possesses *Auspex*, she can hear strains of conversations from the next room. The hunters are discussing the capture and making plans for capturing the rest. If she managed to wound any of the hunters, she hears their cries of pain and a slow mumbling in Latin, and then silence. Then, steady footsteps approach the door. The feet stop, and the vampire hears a man say, "Inform Brother William of the capture. I'll begin the interrogation." The door opens.

The man who steps into the room seems immaculately clean. He has stiff, white hair, which is brushed back tightly and tied into a ponytail. He wears a priest's outfit, and there is a large, wooden crucifix around his neck. He carries a black case, much like a doctor's bag, but larger. He sets it on the floor where it lands with a metallic thud. This is Father James Petri, a Jesuit priest and dedicated vampire killer.

Petri is aptly named. He does not smile, does not comment as he looks the character over. He looks at her eyes without fear, and indeed is immune to both Dominate and Presence through his Faith. After looking the vampire over a bit, he turns and opens his bag, removing a set of knives in a leather folio and a miniature blowtorch. He ignites the torch and holds it against a six-inch knife, humming calmly all the while. If the character asks him anything or screams for help, he starts, as though just noticing the vampire. "Oh," he says. "You see, when purifying a cadaver such as this through pain, using fire or sunlight directly is ill advised. Satan seems eager to claim them, and fire often ignites and consumes them before proper confession can be given. By heating the knife, however, one can extract nearly anything one needs to know. The good news is, these monsters don't bleed, so we shan't be making a mess of the room, hmm?"

The character might well worry, as there doesn't seem to be anyone else in the room. There is, however. Standing in the corner is a boy of about 15. He is tall for his age, and quite thin. He has dark brown hair, which is cut short — strange for the times. He has dark green eyes, rather like a cat's. If the player states that her character is carefully searching the room, allow a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 9, double Perception dice if *Auspex* 1 is used). If the player succeeds, the character sees the boy, and is filled with an inexplicable terror of him. The boy seems unassuming enough, but his very presence makes the character quake. A moment after she sees him, the boy disappears from view, as though using the *Obfuscate* Discipline. In fact, he is invisible to Kindred, due to a peculiar side-effect of his Faith.

The Kindred has other problems at the moment, however. Father Petri finishes heating the knife, and steps forward.

"A vampire's chosen path," he says, "is to lie. We therefore do not bother with questions in the beginning." He then leans forward and slices the character's nose in half.

The blade burns like fire and the character immediately loses one health level; this damage is lethal (not aggravated), but is difficult to heal (the player must succeed in a Stamina + Fortitude roll, difficulty 6, each time she wishes to heal such damage). The pain, however, is excruciating, and the character cries out unless the player spends a Willpower point. The priest seems to take offense at this, and sternly retorts, "Cry out rather for your many victims, or for your own soul, not for your dead flesh." He then proceeds to cut the character's face seven times. When he is finished, the character's lips are both cut in half, her eyelids are gone, she has holes in both cheeks, and long slices are slit down both of her ears. All of this results in another health level and a check for frenzy. Frenzy will do little good, of course; the character is bound securely, though the Beast may well leave a derangement to mark its passing. As the vampire strains against her shackles — or begs for mercy — Petri begins heating a longer knife.

The torture continues, Petri making longer and longer cuts in the character's flesh. Each turn (a turn here lasts much longer than three seconds — as much as several minutes) have the player make a Willpower roll, and oppose this with Father Petri's Manipulation + Interrogation dice pool (8 dice). The player's difficulty is (10 - her Courage rating), while Petri's is the character's Permanent Willpower rating. For every success by which Petri's roll exceeds the character's, the character loses one temporary Willpower point. If the rolls are even, or if the character wins, she loses no Willpower. However, she does take a health level of lethal damage every other turn. If the character runs out of health levels (or blood points) before she runs out of Willpower, she slumps into torpor. Proceed with "Confession," below.

If the character runs out of Willpower first, she breaks down and will answer any questions Petri asks. Petri begins questioning the character, and wishes to know the following:

- How long has the character been a vampire?
- What is the character's true name?
- Who are the character's friends/broodmates, and where do they lodge?
- Who damned the character (by this he means the character's sire)?
- Where is this vampire now?
- How many innocent Christians has the character murdered for their blood?
- Would the character like to confess her sins before God before meeting the sunlight?

If the character does wish confession, Petri informs her that her confessor will be in shortly and leaves. He has no wish to hear the confession of a corpse.

SCENE FIVE: CONFESSION

The character soon lapses into slumber and does not awaken again until after sundown. She regains one point of Willpower for sleeping, if she confessed. If not, she is brought out of torpor by the sudden rush of potent blood. She is fed three blood points, and the source vanishes from her lips.

Standing in front of her is an old priest. His face is covered with wrinkles that are equal parts age and worry. He is completely bald and his back is slightly hunched. He whispers in Italian to the character. If the character does not understand, he switches to English, but stays very quiet.

He explains that he, unlike Father Petri, does not believe that all vampires are irredeemable. His name is Father Carlos, and he has come to hear the character's confession. If she confesses her sins and is truly repentant, he says, the Lord might well see fit to save her.

This is truer than the character knows. Marianna, the rogue Giovanni whom the clan has hunted for more than 500 years, stands Obfuscated against the wall. She is taking a very big risk by coming here, but she feels that the young characters might just be her way to revenge and final rest.

If the character confesses honestly, allow the player to make a Conscience roll (difficulty 8). If the player scores two successes or more, her character gains a point of Humanity,

A TRIP TO THE OTHER SIDE

The character had best not let go of Marianna's hand during the trip. The Shadowlands are a strange and dangerous place, even for someone as seasoned as Marianna, and the character would not last an hour alone. While here, they can both pass through walls as easily as wraiths can. That is the only real benefit.

The character sees things as wraiths see them; that is to say, dying. Everything is decaying, the buildings, cars, people. Father Carlos appears sallow and gaunt. His lips and fingertips are blue, and he looks like a walking corpse. All around, wraiths glare at the character and shout horrible threats and oaths, scream that she and her kind have robbed them of the peace they should have known, have cheated them out of their last good-byes, etc.

The most horrible thing of all is the storm, however. Since La Madrina Tempesta (see the Introduction), the Shadowlands haven't quite calmed down. A storm still whirls over the lands of the dead, and in it the character can hear horrific screams as wraiths are caught and devoured by the many Spectres.

This may very well scare the character into making some sort of change in her unlife. At the very least, she may give up Necromancy — or she may decide to forsake the clan entirely. In any case, she will hear these sounds in her sleep for years to come.

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and all the responsibilities this entails. Wound penalties do not apply to this roll.

If the character lies, have the player roll Manipulation + Subterfuge (difficulty 7). Three successes on this roll are necessary to convince both Carlos and Marianna that the confession is sincere. Wound penalties definitely apply to this roll.

In either of the above instances, Carlos frees the character, and Marianna pours ashes on the floor to make it seem as though the character has been burnt. The trio then proceeds quietly out the building. Go to "Rescue," below. If the character refuses to confess or fails to convince them, Marianna steps forward and asks, "Perhaps you'd like to know what your 'family' has done through the years?" At this moment, however, a door opens in the next room. "Damn," she says, "we can't let them kill you yet." She empties a bag of ashes on the floor, and nods to Carlos, who opens the shackles. If the character tries to run or attack them, Marianna uses her *Caul the Living Mind* ritual (see *Dramatis Personae*) to immobilize her. She then uses the Level Four Ash Path power *Ex Nihilo* to step into the Shadowlands, dragging the character with her.

SCENE SIX: RESCUE

It may have already occurred to the character that if the Inquisition captured her, they may be hot on the trail of her

cohorts. This is especially true if she broke down under torture and confessed the other character's routines, havens, etc. to Father Petri.

Father Carlos knows the Inquisition's plans. The hunters are going to attack another member of the coterie, but not bother with capture this time. While neither he nor Marianna necessarily objects to the destruction of Kindred (and Giovanni in particular), they have their reasons for wanting this group of Kindred alive, at least for the time being (namely, Father Carlos feels they should get a chance for redemption, and Marianna merely wants the tablets).

If the captured character revealed nothing to the Inquisition, she must only reach the other characters and warn them; there will be no attack tonight.

If the captured character did spill her guts about the others, the Society probably knows some of the group's havens. However, the character can only confess to the best of her knowledge, so if the other characters are using different or secret havens, the Society will be knocking at the wrong door. If a true confession was given, the Society will attack the character of which the confessor painted the worst picture. The confessor must now guess which character the Society plans to attack; if she guesses wrong, at least she can recruit the other characters for help.

The hunters will begin the attack from a distance. There are eight hunters, plus the teenaged boy who was

INQUISITION HUNTERS

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 2

Skills: Drive 2, Firearms 2 (the hunters with rifles and shotguns have 3), Melee 2, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Occult 2, Theology 3

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

Humanity: 8

Willpower: 6

Faith: Four of them have none, two have 1, two have 2, and the boy has 6.

Equipment: Two have large rifles, two have sawed-off shotguns, two have light pistols, and the remaining two (it is these two who have the higher Faith ratings) carry wooden stakes and mallets. All wear crucifixes.

The boy has the same statistics, except his Strength and Stamina are 2 and his Perception is 5. If the character asks, at any time, who this boy is, Carlos tells her that he is an orphan who was recently apprenticed to the Jesuits. He also says that the boy — Sullivan, by name — has Faith stronger than any living Inquisitor has ever seen.

present before. Statistics for the hunters are given in the sidebar.

On the first turn, the four hunters armed with rifles and shotguns fire at the characters' legs. This is intended to cripple ghouls and wound Kindred. The Kindred get no warning from wraiths about the attack, and their initiative difficulty is increased to seven due to surprise.

All of the hunters are under whatever cover is available. The hunters assume that anyone who does not lie on the ground and scream in pain is a vampire, and therefore delay their next actions. If a character rushes at them, the hunters with stakes step forward and attempt to stop the character using their faith. The hunters with rifles then shoot the hapless Kindred.

The hunters' basic strategy is to stake and then burn any Kindred they can. They will not try to kill ghouls, but will if no option remains.

Father Carlos, Marianna and the recently rescued character can arrive at any time you feel is dramatically appropriate. Father Carlos cannot interfere with an *auto da f*, as doing so would mark him a traitor. He waits in the car. Marianna has no desire to kill Inquisitors, and so will immobilize them using Dominate or Caul the Living Mind. Her focus, however, is getting the characters out of danger.

The fight is really over when the cavalry arrives. Feel free to give the Inquisition some parting shots as the characters escape, but they probably won't succeed in killing any of the Kindred. As the characters escape, Sullivan, the boy, steps from the shadows and stares at the characters. He points at Marianna, and whispers "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator" (Hebrews 9:16). She only nods, and the Kindred beat a hasty retreat.

SCENE SEVEN: HISTORY

Father Carlos drives the characters to any destination they choose. Marianna then tells them the truth behind the tapestry, which may seem shockingly out of place, given the characters' situation mere seconds ago. In truth, Marianna doesn't care about the characters — they merely serve her purpose for the moment.

"In April of 1444," she says, "I and 12 other people were invited to the home of Claudius Giovanni, a wealthy merchant. Some of us were nobles, some, like myself, only commoners. It was strange; I always thought the nobility lived with grace and class, and a vibrant life. After all, they had all they wanted and never dirtied their hands — why shouldn't they be closer to God for all that? But these people, Claudius' other guests, were not godly people.

"I'll spare you all the details. In short, we thought we there to have dinner and be received by these fine folk. Instead, we were to be dinner. They were all Kindred, each of a different clan, and as we sat around the table, with iron collars and taps in our throats, dying slowly, with those monsters laughing like drunk lords," she breaks off here, her voice cracking.

"They were attacked. And rather than face their enemies, they Embraced us, and left us to die at the hands of other vampires. Some of us did. But some of us survived that night, and have been a thorn in your clan's side ever since. The Children of Isaac, we were called.

"I know some of us are in Boston, but I haven't spoken to the others. They want the tablets back. What else they want, I don't know. But they know you. You have gained the notice of those in high places," she says with a nasty smile. "Prepare for interesting times.

"I cannot help you. I have devoted my unlife — or whatever you want to call this — to destroying your clan, and to believe that it spawns anything but monsters would be naive of me. I can only offer you a chance to do God's will, the right thing, a good deed, whatever you wish to call it. Return the tablets to the Children of Isaac. All I can offer you is the possibility that if you do not, Hell may come to earth. Or to put it another way, what if Andreas Giovanni were made God?"

With that, she leaves. Father Carlos will offer the characters confession. If asked his side of all of this, he simply answers, "I believe the soul to be everlasting and always good, regardless of the one who bears it. I also believe that, if a person is changed into a beast, it is a beast with a human soul, not a soul devoured by a beast. I believe in hope, even for you."

The character may question Marianna on some subjects (the identity and/or affiliation of the other Children of Isaac, for example). She tells the truth before she leaves, reasoning that what little information she can provide will make little difference.

The characters must make some tough choices here. They may inform Andreas of all this, try to meet with the Children of Isaac, attack and try to capture Marianna (which would be unwise), or simply wait. The night, however, is drawing to a close, and the next day begins new troubles for their compatriots.

SCENE EIGHT: THE TRIAL — DAY ONE

The actual proceedings of a trial are long, drawn-out, complicated and vary greatly from state to state. This being the case, several liberties are being taken with the American legal system for the sake of playability (it happens often enough for less noble reasons, after all). The character's trial will be held much sooner than usual; commonly, there will be months between the arrest and the actual trial. The characters may well suspect that some unknown hand is pushing their trial date up. They are correct — the hand belongs to Andreas, using his influence in the one way he can.

The characters are arraigned on the charges given in Scene Three. They face indictment on several felonies, which may or may not include murder. Before going to court, Holloway discusses his strategy with them. He instructs them to answer questions as truthfully as they can, without incriminating themselves. This means staying calm, using "yes" and "no" answers, not using gangster slang, and not offering personal feelings or opinions on the matter. The first day of

the trial will consist of the lawyer's opening statements, and some presentation of evidence. Witnesses will be called the next day. Holloway looks very worried when he tells the characters this; if they ask, he says, "If the witnesses' testimony goes the way I think it will, you're all screwed. I'll do my best, but my best won't discredit some of these witnesses."

William Halbert, the prosecuting attorney, makes his statement first. He does not take long, saying that this case should be quick, cut-and-dried and obvious to any intelligent people. "I'm a deeply religious man," says Halbert. "I feel confident that the truth will out, and your only duty will be to confirm it. If these people," with a dismissive wave at the characters, "can sit on this stand, before a jury of their peers, before the members of the audience and press, and before almighty God, and say they are innocent of all the charges against them, it will my pleasure to drop these charges." He turns and looks the characters, and they suddenly feel his gaze as a physical, judging weight. "I am positive that these people cannot do so, and that the witnesses we bring before you will convince you of their guilt." He thanks the jury, and sits.

Holloway stands, and delivers his statement. He, too, is brief. "What can I say to that? I agree. I agree that the truth will out, I agree that my clients should be free if they can take the stand and deny the charges against them. I would like you to remember he said that. And, to remember that as the prosecution, he has the burden of proof. He

cannot legally ask my clients if they are guilty and expect a response. He must prove his case. Now, his case is vast. He has collected a wide array of witnesses, wiretaps, and other things to prove my clients' guilt, most of which are quite unconstitutional. We, as Americans, must remember that neither the Boston police nor the FBI has the power to entrap, coerce or infer a confession from a citizen. You, as the jury, will have much to consider in this trial, but keep this in the back of your mind — was this evidence acquired in a legal manner? Because if it wasn't, how can we pretend to be any better than those whom we saddle with guilt? Thank you."

Halbert calls the first witness. The witness is Terrence Monk himself. The first few questions are simple enough: who he is, what he does, etc. Then, Halbert asks him to tell the court what he discovered in his investigation of the characters. Monk will play back any recording he made of the character's interrogation that might be useful, quote anything they said, and bring evidence seized from the characters' homes — drugs, guns, money, etc. — *even if none existed*. There are conversations from the characters' phones, that implicate them. Holloway fights to get these declared inadmissible evidence, but the judge will not hear of it. By the time Monk finishes his testimony and Holloway rises to cross-examine him, the jury is scowling and shaking their heads.



Halloway asks to see warrants for the search and seizures of property and for the arrests of the characters. He asks about the interrogation techniques used, and questions everything he can. Monk, however, answers each question steadily and easily, and by the time Halloway dejectedly says "No further questions," the characters should very well feel they are fighting a losing battle.

Halbert calls Halloway to the bench for a moment, and Halbert returns. "They've made an offer," he says, "And I think you should consider it. They want you to turn state's evidence and testify against Andreas, Stephano, and anybody else who's a bigger fish than you. Also, they want all the goods on anybody in city government who attends the fights or buys the drugs. If you do it, they'll drop all charges not pertaining to RICO, and you'll do maybe five years. Probably more like two. What do you say?"

INSIDE A WRAITH'S MIND

As Storytellers familiar with *Wraith: The Oblivion* know, every wraith has a constant, nagging voice in her head: the Shadow. The Shadow is (in brief) an amalgam of every nasty, spiteful, guilty and generally destructive urge the wraith had while still alive. The Shadow wants a variety of things, all of which vary from wraith to wraith, except that all Shadows wish for Oblivion and the escape from the pain of the living passion it brings. A Shadow has powers of its own, and can occasionally take over a wraith's consciousness. It is unlikely that the characters know this, however.

Reginald's Shadow wishes to inspire a respect for God, but for the Shadow, "respect" is closer to "fear." It therefore spitefully supports Reginald's service to the Giovanni, and revels in the fear they cause by being both vampires and gangsters. During the conversation, Reginald hesitates before answering questions, and sometimes his lips move as though responding to an unseen voice.

Reginald wants to be free; he feels he's done his time here. His Shadow doesn't want this servitude to end. If over the first two acts, the characters have treated Reginald more like an equal than a slave and perhaps gotten to know him a bit, he will offer what information he knows about the witnesses and the false evidence, in exchange for a favor. If they have mistreated him and especially if they do so now, his Shadow takes control and tells the characters where the witnesses are staying, and that the building is a firetrap.

In either case, Reginald does not address the offer to betray Andreas. If he is asked his opinion, he replies, "On the one hand, you'd be biting the hand that feeds you. On the other, maybe it's time you left the nest. Never know."

Let the characters consider. The ghouls, of course, are still bound to Andreas, but in the face of death in prison, this might not seem like such a bad idea, particularly if convinced that this is the "right thing to do." Before they can decide, however, Reginald trips the fire alarm. The characters are immediately surrounded by armed FBI agents, so they have no chance to escape. However, the trial is over for the day, and they have all night to discuss the offer.

SCENE NINE: THE REUNION

That night, at sundown, Reginald visits the Kindred characters and informs them of the offer. He then offers to take them to where the ghouls are being kept.

The ghouls are in custody, but the Kindred should have little trouble getting by the guards. The characters can discuss the past few days, as they probably haven't seen each other, and decide what to do. Reginald possesses one of the guards, and takes part in the conversation. What he advises them to do depends largely on his overall opinion of the group, and how they have treated him over the years (see sidebar).

Reginald has inside information on the evidence against the characters, and about the whereabouts of the witnesses. Which information he gives them varies as described in the sidebar.

IF REGINALD STAYS IN CONTROL

He tells the characters where the witnesses are, and who they are in private life. They have been sequestered at the Vadia Hotel (see the Appendix for more information). They are heavily guarded at all times, of course, but he can get to them — and invade their dreams, if necessary. This knowledge also makes it possible for the characters to send ghouls to their families, or, if the characters wish, to visit the witnesses personally.

Reginald also knows a few things about the evidence the FBI planted. The firearms and drugs they "seized" from the characters' homes were, in fact, taken from Boston Police Department storage. The cop who works the night shift, an old man named Nate O'Connor, remembers a bunch of Feds came in one night, flashed a lot of paper in his face, and took some stuff from lock-up. His testimony, and the investigation that would follow, would discredit Monk's testimony. Like many city policemen, O'Connor dislikes the meddling of federal agents in local matters and would be very happy to testify against them.

All of this information does not come free, however. Reginald asks that he be released. For this to be accomplished, he asks that his old jacket be given to Goodwill. The jacket is currently in the back room of the Forgotten Worlds gallery (see the Appendix). Once this occurs, Reginald follows the new owner of the jacket, a drifter like himself, out of town.

IF REGINALD'S SHADOW TAKES OVER

He has no interest in getting free, but no real interest in saving the characters' necks, either. He tells the characters



only that the witnesses are staying at the Vadia, and that it is a firetrap. The characters can handle the arson themselves, or give this task to servants. Either way, if the Vadia burns at the characters' behest, most of the witnesses are killed, and the rest recant their testimony.

If the characters do not start the fire, the hotel burns down later in the year, apparently by accident.

SCENE TEN: THE TRIAL — DAY TWO

What happens today depends largely on what happened last night, of course.

If the characters tell Halloway about the false evidence, he asks for a recess while he locates O'Connor. O'Connor's testimony shuts the courtroom down for the remainder of the day as the evidence is investigated, but his testimony alone sways the jury in favor of the defendants. Said defendants also have an extra day to deal with the witnesses.

If the characters have done away with the witnesses, Halbert asks for a day's continuance to restructure his case. This is granted, of course, and Halbert makes a point of saying that the fire is under investigation.

If neither of these things happened, the witnesses give their testimony. Many identify the characters as being the criminals and gangsters that they are. Halloway manages to discredit some of them, probably the ones who remember the

characters from past decades, but the general feeling at the end of the day is pretty grim.

If the characters decide to betray Andreas and take federal protection, now or at any time, go to Scene Eleven.

SCENE ELEVEN: BETRAYAL

Run this scene if the characters choose to accept the offer of turning evidence against Andreas and the Giovanni.

The characters are remanded to federal custody and loaded into a van to be taken in for questioning. They are manacled together, the ride is hours long, and the characters get a sense of someone watching. They should come to realize that federal protection is their only safe haven, ever, for the rest of their lives.

When the van finally pulls to a stop, it is well past midnight. The characters have been driven to a deserted barn. They pile out of the van with federal agents at their backs, and they see someone walking out of the barn to greet them. It is not Terrance Monk, however, but one of the Children of Isaac. Depending on how many are in the city, and how they all get along, there may be more lurking about.

Their reception depends on who gives it. If this is one of the players' characters from previous games, you may either turn the reins over to her for a moment, or try to do the character justice yourself. The elder introduces herself, and explains that the characters have been remanded to her

custody. Since they have agreed to give information on Andreas, she will spare their lives and allow them to return to the family. She will even arrange to have charges against them dropped. The only catch is that all the information they give must be truthful as far as they know — "The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," she smirks.

If the characters refuse, she sighs, and they are taken back and given over to police custody. However, news of their "betrayal" has already reached Andreas, and he is furious. No matter what happens in the rest of this act, the characters will never regain his good favor. He refuses to speak directly to them, and this stained reputation will follow them indefinitely (+2 difficulties on social rolls with the Mafia).

If they agree, the elder invites them into the barn, one at a time. Each character is interrogated in a manner consistent with the elder in question. If the elder in question belonged to a current player, you may allow her to run the interrogation against the other players (if there are more elders present, this will work even better). Under no circumstances should any of the elders use Dominate or Presence on the characters.

The elders want to know everything. Details about who is in the Mob's pocket, about what the Giovanni have their fingers into, and anything they know about Andreas.

If the characters attempt to bargain, they are initially stonewalled. If they are persistent, allow the player to roll Manipulation + Subterfuge (difficulty 9) as an extended roll. Lower this difficulty for extremely good arguments. If the player nets five successes in three rolls, the elder might agree to a concession. This might include delivering Marianna; allowing the ghouls and their associates to keep their businesses; or even freedom from the Giovanni. If it is freedom the character wishes, the elder allows the ghoul to drink of her potent blood. The player may then roll Willpower (difficulty 7, or lower if you feel the Blood Bond between Andreas and the character is weak). If the roll succeeds, the character is no longer bound to Andreas. (Note that this does not work if the Child of Isaac is of 8th generation or higher, as his blood is not powerful enough to foil the bond.) Any other favors must be negotiated. You will need to decide the elder's response to any given request, but any of the sample elders would give Marianna to the Giovanni if the reward were great enough.

Several good questions might occur to the characters and players during the interrogation. Why, for example, do the elders not simply use Dominate or Auspex and read the ghouls' minds? What about wraiths? Surely the elders know that they constantly watch the ghouls.

The reason the elders do not tamper with the ghouls mentally is Andreas. They know that he is a master of Dominate, have heard that he is a skilled Thaumaturgist, and have very conflicting reports about his generation. They have already seen the heads of minions explode during

questioning (way back in **Blood and Fire**), and have no way of knowing what precautions Andreas has taken. As far as wraiths go, Marianna told them to use this site for the questioning, although she herself is not present. The reason is that it sits on a huge nihil (see **Wraith: The Oblivion** for details, but basically a sinkhole into the most violent parts of the Underworld) that sucks in any approaching wraith. There were guardian wraiths around, but they were simply unable to approach.

When the interrogation is over, the characters are piled back into the van and shipped back to town. If they cooperated, they might expect the trial to suddenly fall their way and for victory to be assured. What neither they nor the elders know is the Halbert cannot be bought or influenced. The trial is still on.

SCENE TWELVE: MARIANNA

This scene takes place if either group of characters decide to turn Marianna over to the Giovanni. If Kindred characters wish to meet and bargain with her, or perhaps try to give her the tablets, this scene can be used as well.

The characters' first problem is finding her; she didn't give a method for doing so. If the ghoul characters betrayed Andreas in return for Marianna (above), they are contacted and told that Marianna will be at St. Leonard's Church the night following the close of their trial. If she met with one or more of the Kindred characters, they may find her by sending out scout wraiths, using contacts within the vampiric community (assuming any still exist), or trying to find Father Carlos through the church.

Marianna meets with the Kindred at any location they wish, so long as it doesn't appear too suspicious. She spies on the area with wraiths ahead of time, and if there is an ambush waiting, she simply does not come.

If the coterie attempts to capture Marianna by itself, they have made a serious mistake. Unless they recruit some powerful allies and come up with a masterful strategy, they are going to lose. Marianna is five centuries old and has been running from the Giovanni for nearly all of that time. Marianna won't bother to kill the Kindred, but incapacitates them and leaves them where they lay. Hopefully, the characters can recover before sunrise.

If the characters contact Andreas or another higher-up (Stephano, Francis, Jason, etc.) and let them know of their opportunity, they are told to let it wait until after the trial. They are told to arrange a meeting for the night after the trial ends, at St. Leonard's.

If the characters wish to give Marianna the tablets, they find that they cannot even get near them until after the trial (remember that Andreas has cut contact until these troubles blow over). Regardless of what the characters do, Marianna will be at the meeting. If, however, they can arrange it, so much the better for them.

SCENE THIRTEEN: THE TRIAL — DAY THREE

When Holloway greets the characters today, he is noticeably nervous. He explains that today, they will testify. Their initial chances of swaying the jury depend largely on what happened yesterday.

If Monk's testimony was discredited, he is recalled to the stand and apologizes for the mistakes his team has made. He claims clerical errors and miscommunication were responsible, and Halbert reminds the jury that only some of his evidence was false. There is still more than enough, he tells them, for a conviction. Holloway declines to question Monk again.

If the witnesses were murdered, a large chunk of Halbert's case has been stolen. If the characters were not careful about their arson methods, Halbert reports that the fire was started intentionally. "What was it that you weren't meant to know?" he asks.

If both of these things have happened, Halbert uses both of the tactics mentioned above. He also has come to the conclusion that the characters are too well connected to allow even the freedom of prison.

If neither the witnesses nor Monk's testimony has been eliminated, Halbert doesn't even bother with an opening statement. He believes that he has this case locked up tight, and at the moment, he is quite right.

Before the characters testify, Halbert announces that he has one witness to call. He calls Teresa Powers to the stand.

She was not staying at the Vadia, and has been under federal protection since the start of the trial. Skip this section if Teresa is now a ghoul or Kindred.

Teresa, again, is not there to testify against the characters in particular. She does, however, give testimony about the businesses they run, their finances, the slang on the wiretaps, and the records the FBI has on them. At the end of her testimony, she states that it is "very likely that they have connections to organized crime." She also states that there is a pattern of crime in their businesses, and this makes them indictable under RICO.

Holloway does the best he can. He questions RICO's wording and asks Powers if, in her opinion, a "pattern of corrupt activity" should be enough to convict a citizen of a felony. Powers replies that she is unsure, but she certainly feels that the law has the potential for abuse. Holloway asks the jury to note that, and reminds that, absurd as it may be, if their employer were engaged in illegal activity, they themselves could be indictable under RICO.

If the Vadia burned down, the expert witness who was to rebut Powers' testimony died in the fire. If not, he is present. Said witness is a sociologist who is being very highly paid by the Giovanni to say that all the characters' businesses are legit, and sound good doing so. However, he swears upon the Bible (see below), and therefore cannot lie effectively. He stammers and contradicts himself, and finally Halbert smugly suggests that he is not qualified to make this rebuttal. Still under the relic's power, he agrees (he is not qualified to do so if he cannot lie), and the jury is told to disregard his testimony.

The time has now come for the characters to testify. Holloway reminds them to answer questions directly and succinctly. He is nervous about many facets of the trial, but he suspects Halbert has something up his sleeve. He is right.

Allow each player to make a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 8). If the roll succeeds, their characters notice the bailiff unwrap the Bible upon which they are to swear from a blue cloth as they approach the bench. This may not mean anything to them, but it soon will. The bailiff is an ally of the Inquisition, and the Bible is a holy relic, used in interrogations of witches and Kindred for many years. When the first character places his hand on it to swear, he feels a strange burning sensation. See "Perjury," in the sidebar.

Halbert begins the questions by asking the character's real name. This should give the character some inkling of she is up against; even so basic a lie is an effort. Halbert then continues with conventional questioning: "Is this your voice on these tapes?" "What do you do for a living?" "Were you aware that a fighting circuit exists in this city?" "Who patronizes this circuit?" "Who is your employer?" Add other questions, but remember that Holloway will object on any grounds he can. Any question that would incriminate the character is contested, and the objection sustained, but Halbert tries to be careful. He sticks to the material evi-

PERJURY

When a character swears upon this particular Bible, her player must roll Humanity (difficulty 6). If she fails, the relic has no effect on her. If the roll is successful, however, the player must roll Manipulation + Subterfuge to lie during this scene. This difficulty on this roll is 5 plus the number of successes scored on the Humanity roll. If this raises the difficulty above 10, the character may not even attempt to lie.

This effect applies to any and all lies, including half-truths. The character must tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The effect is even invoked if the character tries to judiciously leave a detail out. While the difficulty on the roll might not be very high, odds are that the character will fail eventually, and perhaps even perjure herself by contradicting an earlier statement.

If a character refuses to swear on a Bible, Halbert notes this, and grills this character mercilessly. The combination of his Faith and his aggressive questioning is enough to make a weak-willed character collapse on its own. The player must roll Wits + Performance (difficulty 8), or the character becomes flustered and stumbles over her words. While this does not, by itself, damn the coterie, it will certainly influence the verdict.

dence that the FBI provided, if possible, trying to get the characters to slip up. The questions, of course, should reflect what the characters are being tried for. Be creative here; Halbert will certainly come up with questions that the characters won't expect. Industrious Storytellers may even wish to have a friend (or a player whose character is a vampire, and thus not present at the courtroom) portray the role of Hallway.

Each character present is put through this. The whole thing is further complicated by the fact that Halbert asks each character to confirm the others' stories. He realizes that some lies will get through, but not for everyone.

Halloway also questions the characters, but this merely gives them more opportunities to bury themselves. If something is obviously wrong, however, Halloway will decline to question them. When the characters have finished their testimony, the court breaks for lunch. When they return, the lawyers make their closing remarks.

Halbert's closing remarks depend on the trial. If he has the upper hand at the end, he merely reiterates what he said before. If he has lost some face, he clings to whatever he can, especially if the characters flubbed their testimony badly. Halloway, too, varies his conclusion by the state of things. He calls the jury's attention to the mistakes made due to "clerical error" (whereupon he gives them an exaggerated wink), if applicable. In any case, the verdict of the trial could go either way.

VERDICT

You will need to decide, based on how the characters have presented and conducted themselves, and all the other given factors, what the jury will decide. The case is not cut-and-dry at all; some serious issues exist about the constitutionality of RICO, for one thing. However, other gangsters in other cities have been convicted under the act, and the jury will know this.

The jury deliberates for several hours. If Reginald is still around, he can flit back and forth between the rooms and give reports, but doing so too much weakens him. At the end of the deliberation, the jury will give its verdict.

GUILTY

If the characters are found guilty of some or all of the charges against them, they are duly sentenced to a correctional institution for a number of years ranging from 5 to 10 (minor charges, RICO, drug traffic) all the way up to a life sentence (murder). They should realize, however, that either would be fatal; without their supply of blood, they will age 43 years in a matter of months.

They are taken away to await transportation to prison. On their way out, one of their police escorts leans in and whispers, "Andreas says to tell you not to worry. You won't make it to the prison alive."

Andreas does, in fact, intend to kill the ghouls. The characters may sweat about this all they like, perhaps even



trying to escape. You might allow them to do so; Andreas can find them wherever they go. Either way, they will end up at the St. Leonard's church tomorrow night (see "The Church," below).

INNOCENT

If the characters are acquitted on all charges, Halloway smiles winningly at the jury. Halbert, however, stares at them and mutters, "God have mercy on the fools." He is later quoted as saying the trial was a "miscarriage of justice" and that he is "ashamed to be a servant of such a legal system."

On their way out, the cop finds the characters and tells them that Andreas wants to meet them at St. Leonard's Church tomorrow night. Until then, they are to enjoy their well-earned freedom.

SCENE FOURTEEN: THE CHURCH

St. Leonard's has continued its slide into tackiness during the last few decades. Most of the lighting inside is now electric. The votive candles are the only nonplastic ones remaining. Outside, the ivy has been stripped away and the stonework painted over, marred by graffiti, and then painted again in a cycle that leaves chunks of paint on the ground.

All of the characters should be here on the night following the conclusion of the trial. Kindred characters may be here to meet with Marianna, for whatever reason. Ghoul characters are here to meet with Andreas. If the ghouls were found guilty and try to run, they are each abducted by Giovanni thugs and dragged to the church. If they resist, they find that any weapons they carry do not function, thanks to the ever-present wraiths.

Andreas waits inside the church. Stephano and Paul DiCarlo are also with him. The Milliners are not here; they feel it is risky to associate with the Giovanni too openly just yet. There are a number of wraiths here as well — six, in all — and more if Marianna is coming.

Andreas is here for one reason — the ghoul characters. He asked the Kindred characters here (if they do not already have a reason for being here) to be witness to either the reward for loyalty or the punishment for failure. His intention is to kill the characters if they were convicted, wrenching their souls from their bodies and using them as wraith servants. If they were acquitted, he plans to Embrace them.

Marianna is here as well, hiding quietly in the shadows. If she is expecting to meet the characters, she is outraged that Andreas and company are present. If no contact with her was made, she is here stalking Andreas. She believes that with Andreas dead and the Inquisition so hot on the Giovanni's trail, the clan would fall apart in Boston. She may be right.

This scene will play in much the same way regardless of why people are here, but their motives will be very different. The characters have a number of big chances to advance themselves in the eyes of the Giovanni — and some very difficult decisions. Timing is very important. Suspense should

also be a key element, so do not let dice rolls drag the action down, especially before the fighting begins.

If the Kindred are expecting to meet Marianna, she arranged to meet outside the church. When they arrive, however, the door opens and Paul DiCarlo approaches them. He asks why they are here, leaving the door open.

The players can lie if necessary, but if they were going to kill Marianna, they could simply tell the truth. As they talk, Marianna slips into the church. If any character has an *Auspex* rating of 4 or more, her player may roll *Perception* + *Alertness* in an opposed roll against Marianna's *Wits* + *Stealth* (difficulty 7 for both). If the player wins the contest, inform her that her character sees a human figure duck into the church. Presently, a cry of pain issues from inside the church.

Paul — and probably the characters — rush in to find Stephano lying across the altar. His chest is cut open in a diagonal gash, and his ribs are severed and exposed. He has not met with *Final Death* yet, but is in torpor (and a great deal of pain). Andreas stands behind the altar with a pistol in each hand. His suit is torn open at the shoulder; he has healed the wound, however. Andreas is down to 12 blood points, while Marianna has 18 remaining. Marianna is nowhere in sight.

If the characters were here to meet with Andreas, they were already in the church. Before the ghouls arrive, Marianna uses the *Incorporeal Passage Ritual* to pass through the wall in the back of the church. She then slips into the main body of the church, creeps up on Stephano, and attacks.

She strikes with a Japanese sword, and her attack cuts Stephano through the bone. He falls backward onto the altar. Marianna swings around and slices a very surprised Andreas' shoulder open, then dives for the pews and vanishes. Andreas heals his shoulder, and draws his pistols.

At this point, Marianna assumes the characters were going to kill her regardless of their early statements — or intentions. While she does not know of the imminent attack on the church by the Inquisition, she realizes quietly that tonight is her last night on this Earth. If she was dangerous before, she is much more so now.

Andreas slowly walks down the aisle towards the characters, turning around slowly and watching corners. "She's here," he whispers. "And if she's here, where are the others?" As he comes closer, the characters realize that Andreas Giovanni is *frightened*.

He motions them towards the door, which opens just then. The ghoul characters have arrived, either alone, or with guns to their heads. In the former case, Andreas motions them out of his way and makes for the door. In the latter, he says, "Oh, good, it's you idiots. There is, in this room, chance to redeem yourselves. Kill her." He then pushes the door open.

William Halbert stands in his way.

Halbert raises a crucifix on a silver chain and forces Andreas back through the door (there is not enough room to shoot Halbert, and even then he is wearing a bulletproof vest). The doors are shut and locked, and the characters inside hear mumbled Latin in a cracked voice, as if from a teenager. Immediately all the Kindred in the room feel a searing pain tear through their feet and legs, while the ghouls feel a sudden horror leaving the building. Sullivan, the boy mentioned earlier, has created a miracle — the church is now true holy ground, with a Faith rating of 2. Kindred now take a one-die penalty to all rolls from the pain, and ghouls characters' players must succeed in a Willpower roll (difficulty 9) if they attempt to leave. This effect also hinders Marianna as well, however.

The Inquisition knows nothing of Marianna (except, of course, for Father Carlos, who is not present). They plan to attack at daybreak, kill any vampires present, and imprison the ghouls until the poison is out of their systems (which would kill them, but the Society doesn't know that). Inquisitors watch every exit, and any ghoul who tries to run (assuming she wills herself to do it) will be immediately tackled and bound. Any Kindred who tries to run, incidentally, will be so wracked by pain that she flees back into the church in a kind of Rotschreck.

Marianna is badly outnumbered. She does not attack initially, but instead speaks from her hiding place. The

acoustics in the church make her location difficult to track, and she keeps moving regardless. The characters can join the conversation at any time, should they so desire. "I was a young girl before you stole me," she says, almost matter-of-factly. "Your clan — cursed by God from the start!"

Andreas raises his guns, but cannot draw a bead on anything. "God? You still have the mentality of a 15th-Century wench, you know that?" The characters become aware a low moaning sound rolling through the church.

"God is timeless," comes the response.

Andreas laughs. "Timeless? God changes like any fable! If the Bible were accurate, God would be a certifiable lunatic! I am timeless."

"You are a child." Marianna's voice is still calm.

Andreas' cool, detached demeanor, which frayed a bit before, now begins to unravel completely. Anyone near him sees that he is close to frenzy (which might be a good clue to step away). Players may roll Perception + Alertness to notice a shadowy figure standing behind a gaudy plaster statue of the Virgin Mary.

If they call his attention to it, Andreas empties both clips at the statue. The characters may fire as well, if they desire. The statue falls, riddled with bullet holes. There is commotion outside as the Inquisition reacts to the gunfire. Andreas motions to the Kindred characters — or the ghouls if they were convicted — to approach the statue.



Marianna is not there. The figure was a ritual Thaumaturgical illusion. As the characters leave Andreas' side, Marianna creeps up behind Paul DiCarlo and uses Caul the Living Mind to incapacitate him. Have all players roll for initiative. Marianna acts first this turn, but has taken her first action to immobilize DiCarlo (she has others through Celerity).

Play out the battle as usual. Marianna's goal is to kill Andreas Giovanni. The characters can enter the battle in any way they wish. The moaning, however, becomes louder, and the wraiths in the room become visible. They are still translucent, so present no obstruction to vision, but whirl around the room as if caught in a windstorm (which they are, in fact).

The fight can go any way the Storyteller wishes. The characters (especially those Embraced in 1929) may realize, however, that if Andreas dies, they are within their rights to make a grab for his seat, not to mention the fact that they could consume the souls of Stephano and Paul as well. They may also wish to fight alongside Marianna on moral grounds, however unlikely this may be.

If the characters join with Marianna, the fight is one-sided. Andreas fights with all of his considerable power, but is ultimately beaten. One of the Kindred characters may choose to commit diablerie upon him (if the character has even heard of diablerie; Storyteller's discretion), or perhaps the characters will simply choose to send him to Final Death. Either way, as the characters loom over him, Andreas pulls a small, black marble from his sleeve and throws it to Marianna. Surprised, she catches it, and shrieks in pain. She collapses, and her flesh begins to dissolve. The marble allows the Spectres in the room to focus on her specifically. If any character picks the marble up, they immediately suffer eight levels of aggravated damage. This does not instantly kill, but is fatal for Kindred. Only the Embrace can save a ghoul who touches the marble. Marianna grants that favor — see below.

If the characters fight on Andreas' side, Marianna eventually falls, fatally wounded. However, she inflicts as much damage to the Kindred in the room as possible (she will merely incapacitate ghouls). When the fight ends, Andreas, nearly in torpor himself, beckons a ghoul character over. If the poor fool gets within arm's reach, Andreas seizes him and drains him dry. He forces the dying ghoul to lap his spilled blood from the floor. The character will enter the Becoming slowly, as this tiny bit of blood works its way through her system. It will take several hours for it to be complete.

Still partially in frenzy from fear and pain, Andreas then drains another ghoul and throws him to the floor next to Marianna. The dying girl glances up at Andreas and whispers, "Look to the everlasting night ahead, and know Auriel's Prophecy: that forever shall Childe rise up to slay Sire." She then pulls the character to her and kisses him.

The kiss is gentle, yet contains all the force of simple, loving girl who lived her entire lifetime — and many others — unable to let herself love anyone but God. Andreas howls and lunges for them, but is pushed back by a wave of white light. The character lies on the ground convulsing in the pain of the Becoming, while Marianna's body crumbles to dust. The white light glows brighter above her and a human figure turns and walks away. The character she Embraced is of the seventh generation.

The flash of light happens regardless of the circumstances of the Embrace. Outside, the Society believes it has witnessed a miracle. A palpable sense of peace falls over the church, and the Inquisitors leave, thinking the threat to be over.

AFTERMATH

The tablets are still in the Giovanni's possession, and the Children of Isaac still want them. If Marianna was killed without their knowledge or consent, they are incensed. Camarilla elders lean on Quentin King to increase pressure on the Giovanni, while Sabbat and independent elders watch the Necromancers at every turn, looking for — and occasionally striking at — weakness.

If the characters murdered Andreas Giovanni, they are the only ones who know it. Even the wraiths that normally follow the characters were swept up in the soul-storm and do not remember the events clearly. The burst of light wipes the auras of the characters clean (if necessary), and both Stephano and Paul were unable to see the act.

However, as Benjamin Franklin said, "Three can keep a secret if two of them are dead." Here, even that isn't good enough. One of the other characters might well try to blackmail his broodmate for money, favors, or the Embrace. If such a situation develops, the Storyteller must be the final arbitrator.

If someone diablerized Andreas, blackmail is not her only problem. From time to time, the character will get strange flashes of insatiable, sadistic curiosity. She also subtracts one from the difficulties of any Courage rolls, as Andreas' disdain of fear rises to the foreground.

The characters may have chosen to destroy Stephano and Paul in the church as well. Committing diablerie upon either of these Kindred is useless for childer of Andreas; Paul is of equal generation and Stephano is eleventh. Also, while Stephano has never been particularly kind to the characters, he has never backstabbed them, and Paul has always treated them as friends. Any character who murders them might need to check for Humanity degeneration, as might any character who can stop them and does not. Also, while destroying Andreas may make a bid for power easier, destroying these two Giovanni will force the characters to take over their responsibilities as well.

If there were any characters left un-Embraced at the end of this Act, Stephano Embraces them himself. While

he has never cared much for this group, he also is angry with Andreas for leaving him to die on the altar and reasons that this is an acceptable way to one-up him (whether or not he is still undead). If Stephano or Andreas met the Final Death, Paul DiCarlo Embraces them out of respect for their long service. An Embrace from these characters would put a neonate at 12th or 11th generation, respectively.

If Andreas dies, there is a power vacuum in Boston. Stephano, Jason Milliner, and one of oldest characters are the only serious contenders. You must decide who "wins" and becomes the new don, which makes for an ideal extended chronicle. Stephano will relent if power is not handed over to him quickly. Jason will not relent unless he feels someone else is strong enough to lead. If the characters lend their support to either contender, he becomes don and the characters earn a favored position.

If Andreas survives, he is horribly humiliated by what happened. He becomes steadily more unstable, and by 1999,

his Willpower has dropped to 6, his Conscience to 0, and his Humanity to 1. If one of the characters is Marianna's childe, Andreas wants to kill him, but is so afraid of the otherworldly repercussions that he does not.

Terrence Monk is reassigned, and William Halbert retires from active duty in 1982. Father Carlos dies peacefully in his sleep in 1978. Teresa Powers, if left to her own devices, finds work with the FBI, as a special expert in organized crime. Hank approaches the characters and says that requests have been coming in for a revival of the fighting circuit.

Sullivan, the teenaged boy, disappears shortly after his experience in Boston. This part of his life confuses him; he watched as Marianna died, and saw her taken into the light. His Faith cannot accept salvation for these creatures, and as a result, he blocks out his entire time in Boston, and will apply for training in the Jesuit order again in 1980. Although these characters may never see him again, other Kindred certainly will, if only for a moment.





ACT IV: TO EVERYONE WHO CONQUERS

*I refuse to let my youth sour and my beauty sag when the keys
to eternity are within my sight.*

— Genevra Giovanni

The Boston Giovanni left Act III in a rather uncertain position. Who leads them now? A humiliated and weakened Andreas? Stephano? Jason Milliner? Or perhaps one of the player's characters?

If Andreas is in charge, relations between him and the coterie have deteriorated. He is paranoid and untrusting, and doesn't want anyone but Hank to be close to him. If one of the coterie is Marianna's or Stephano's child, then that character is not allowed in Andreas' presence. Andreas becomes more deranged and, by the time this act comes around, he shows signs of what one might call paranoia. He's still a force to be reckoned with, however, and so he remains in charge for the moment. Hank, regardless of whether Andreas is in power, still considers the coterie beneficial and helps them out when he can.

Stephano is far more stable than Andreas. However, he isn't overly fond of the characters. He has never cared for them (or moved much against them, really), and if one of them killed Grace in Act I, then that character has a hard time finding any favor with Stephano. The characters have

spent the last couple of decades trying to win back much of the respect they spent the first acts gaining. If the coterie supported Stephano's rise to power, then they start off in a somewhat better position.

Jason Milliner has nothing specific against the characters, so they come out ahead in that regard if he is in power. However, he also has no particular love for them; he believes they're useful, but he isn't one to develop great friendships, especially among nocturnal predators. He's all business, so if they want his approval and respect, they need to earn it. What the troupe has been doing during the last 27 years — as Act IV begins in 1999 — should determine where they start out in Jason's eyes. If they've achieved good things for the family, then Jason accords them respect as it is deserved. If they've been sitting on their laurels, then they start at a significant disadvantage.

If one of the characters is in charge, then the troupe is only marginally better off than if Andreas is in power. The coterie is relatively young and thus has much to prove. The characters' sire is dead, so they have almost no

one but Paul DiCarlo (who doesn't wield a great deal of power among the Giovanni) to speak on their behalf. The Giovanni do what the Kindred in power says, but they also grumble behind the coterie's back. Antonio Giovanni, and especially his son Domenic, have taken the opportunity to sow the seeds of dissent.

WHAT HAVE THE CHARACTERS BEEN UP TO?

What have the characters done during the past 27 years? The fighting circuit needs their attention at the very least, as does the repair of their tarnished-by-prosecution reputations and their other business concerns. The Children of Isaac have changed tactics slightly since Act III, but this may not be obvious. Their activities have now had two ends in mind: to test the characters' abilities, and to gently whittle down their position. The true assault on their reputation will not happen until this act begins in earnest, but the Children wanted to plant the seeds of doubt in the minds of those around the characters before they began their campaign. They know that if the coterie suddenly and inexplicably has trouble, it might look suspicious.

The Children spend the downtime between acts getting in the way of the characters' business. They want the characters to look less competent than they are, and they want any claims of "the Children of Isaac did it!" to be viewed as though the characters were "crying wolf" to an empty pasture. At least a third of any business ventures attempted during the downtime should fail for various reasons. More likely, half of their ventures will fail. This is up to the Storyteller: It depends on just how inventive and sharp the characters are.

THE SABBAT AND CAMARILLA

An archon named Theo Bell recently took New York City for the Camarilla. Now one of his lieutenants, Yong-Sung Chang, has set his sights on Boston. Quentin King is unhappy about giving up control to somebody else; he's caught between wanting the Camarilla to have influence Boston and wanting to have influence over the local Camarilla. He knows that if someone else comes in to deal with the Giovanni, he won't be allowed to remain Prince of Boston. Yong-Sung knows of the Sabbat's plans to take Boston, and intends to wait until they and the Giovanni have wasted most of their energy on each other. Then he'll come in with the Camarilla and wipe up what remains.

The Sabbat has finally decided to make its play for Boston. Max Lowell privately thinks they'd be better off going for other cities first, but he's happy enough to give it a try. A tough fight is good for the soul after all, not to mention a lot of fun. As he knows Boston best, he has been put in charge of the assault. Unfortunately for Yong-Sung, Max plans to involve the Camarilla whether they like it or not. The incident at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (see the Appendix) was his idea; he wants to stir up as much trouble as possible between the Giovanni and the Camarilla.

PART ONE: REPUTATION IS EVERYTHING

SCENE ONE: LET THE GAMES BEGIN

It's time for the characters' standing among the Giovanni to take a nose dive. When this act opens, the characters have just lost a very lucrative chain of drug stores to the Children. The Children Dominated and bribed a group of pharmacists into giving people the wrong medications. The lawsuits that followed might have taken a huge chunk out of the troupe's resources; if the characters had kept the stores, they would have had some real financial troubles.

The coterie, for the sake of the story, attempted to get to the people who'd filed the lawsuits, but they were being protected by the Children. Since the characters held the drug stores through a dummy corporation and they knew their names weren't likely to be traced by mortal authorities, they backed out and sold off the chain. As they knew by this time that the Children were involved, the only worry was that the elders would finger them somehow, and the coterie wanted out before that could happen. The chain was swiftly bought up by the Children through a new mortal servant the characters didn't recognize, and then the Children arranged for the lawsuits to be dropped.

EXPLANATIONS

If the characters are not in charge of the city, then they have just been called on the carpet by the person who is. If they are in charge, then Jason and Stephano have come to demand an explanation for what just happened. The drug stores had provided not only money, but also some harder-to-obtain prescription drugs. Unless the characters are extremely convincing, they will not be able to make Jason or Stephano (or Andreas, if he's still in charge) believe that they did the right thing. It was the only way for them to avoid some very serious problems and, in all likelihood, was the only way out of a bad situation, but all the others see is that the family has lost something important. It doesn't matter that there was no real way for the players' characters to overcome the problem; they "should have found a way."

If the troupe brings up the subject of the Children of Isaac, the man facing them scowls. "Not those ghosts again," he says. "You know, you're the only ones in the family who've had problems with them. I'm starting to think that you've made them up in an attempt to explain away your failures." Andreas will be more sympathetic than Stephano or Jason in this matter; Stephano has absolutely no tolerance whatsoever for this kind of "nonsense."

If the characters bring up the photographs that were originally taken, that doesn't get very far. If it's Stephano or Jason, he says he's never seen these photos (if that's the case) or that he has no way of knowing that the subjects photographed are really the mythical "Children of Isaac." Even if the characters show him some carefully preserved photos next to a faded tapestry (which was found in Andreas' quarters), he shrugs. They say that the details in both the photos and the tapestry are too faded. If the coterie obtains fresh photos, which should be very difficult, Jason or Stephano stills says that the tapestry isn't detailed enough to be sure.

If it's Andreas, his paranoia starts to show. He says that the characters had seen the tapestry before the Children of Isaac showed up, and that they might have manufactured the photos somehow. Andreas' decline starts to show itself here — he knows that it's now possible to touch up and alter photographs, and he can't understand that it wasn't also possible when the photographs were taken. Andreas' sense of time is deteriorating, and his ability to tell what happened when (and what was possible when) is going to pot.

This is when the "Children of Isaac" explanation truly stops working. The characters are met with only doubt and suspicion. The troupe should realize that every failure of the past 40 years for which they gave this explanation is now suspect. Their empire is beginning to crumble beneath them. If they continue to use this explanation throughout this act, the Giovanni only doubt them more and more.

SCENE TWO: DiCARLO'S PARTY, REVISITED

DiCarlo has Embraced his niece, Susanna (from Act I), with the blessings of whomever is in charge (unless the character in question has a problem with it, in which case, she will have been Embraced surreptitiously), and this is something of a coming-out party for her. She has followed in her uncle's footsteps by becoming a lawyer and has made several important acquaintances around the city. The party is more for their benefit than hers. The excuse given to the mortals for the party is that Susanna is finally being given a full partnership in her uncle's law firm. She has worked for him as a ghoul for a number of years; she poses as a younger member of the family when in public.

The party takes place at the Forgotten Worlds Gallery, of which the coterie is still in charge. Unfortunately for them, things go wrong throughout the night. One of the prized paintings currently on display, an exquisite oil painting of a blond woman being crucified, has been ripped (by a ghost). The characters discover this when they go into the gallery before the party. They can attempt to hide the painting, but its artist, Susanna herself, takes one of the characters aside and asks about it. She becomes very angry when she finds out that it was damaged. She doesn't make a scene, but she does tell her uncle and Stephano about it later. After all, the characters are responsible for the safety of everything in the gallery, aren't they?





COCKTAILS

The caterer displays his wares on top of red tablecloths as the guests enter the room. If the characters do not inspect the food, then the following happens (if they do inspect the food, then they can prevent it from being served, but their guests will wonder where their food is): One of the characters notices a ghoul raise a canape in her hand. She is just about to eat it when a look of surprise crosses her face. Before the character (or the ghoul) can do anything, one of the mortal guests, a city councilman, strides up to him. He holds another canape under the character's nose.

"Do you always serve your guests live insects?" he says loudly. As it turns out, several dishes are infested with various types of bugs and spiders. If the characters act quickly, they can be rid of the food before too many people make this discovery, but the councilman has already walked out in disgust. One or two people who were close enough to hear him have also walked out. Susanna and Paul look worried, and flit back and forth between the remaining guests to assure them that everything is fine. Other family members, however, stare at the troupe and whisper to each other. Domenic Giovanni says, just loudly enough for the characters to overhear, "If my father and I were still running this place, this never would have happened."

If the caterer is questioned, he is completely perplexed as to how this could have happened. The effect was arranged by one of Cappadocius' Spectre servants. If the characters question any wraiths in the area, they might remember seeing an unknown wraith earlier in the evening whose face was decaying. No one went near the wraith or questioned her because they were afraid of her.

COCKTAILS, PART II

As if the bugs weren't bad enough, one of the Giovanni (a vampire) collapses after drinking a goblet of blood drawn from one of the vessels kept tied in a back room. If tests are run on the vessel, she is found to have overdoses of several different drugs in her system. This was perpetrated by the Children of Isaac, and can in fact be traced back to one of the Children's ghouls, who was seen slipping into one of the back rooms by a Giovanni ghoul. The Giovanni thought the catering company had some business back there and allowed the woman in (the ghoul was Dominated). The ghoul does not remember what the woman looked like. The Giovanni who collapsed will be all right once the drugs clear her system, but until then she appears to be in bad straits. The only way the troupe can uncover the identity of the woman is to find suppliers of the drugs in question and find out what customer they had in common.

The characters may try to salvage what is left of the evening, but half of the guests have already left. Domenic is one of the ones left behind, but he's taking the opportunity to speak ill of the players' vampires to various family members. He phrases things carefully so as to not seem too ill-mannered, but the dazzling smile he gives the characters makes it clear that he doesn't care whether they know what he's up to.

THE SPECTRE OF CAPPADOCIUS

Cappadocius is a very old and rather powerful wraith. The Malkavian Camilla Banes long ago foretold that Cappadocius would "rest in the light" after 500 years (*Blood & Fire*); Cappadocius died in 1444 (*The Last Supper*). Denied his eternal rest by the Fifth Great Maelstrom (see the Introduction), his rage overcame him. He wants revenge upon the Giovanni for his death and almost-diableric, he wants revenge upon the Ventrue for instigating the plot that led to his death, and he wouldn't object to some mindless violence as well.

Cappadocius is fairly powerful, but limited by his lack of ability to approach the mortal world (it is just possible for him, but very difficult; he will only do it once deliberately provoked in Part Three of this act). Most of his abilities have to do with harming other wraiths. Cappadocius' Fetters have all been destroyed or resolved a long time ago. Because of this, he has four Spectres serving him. The concept of a wraith's Shadow is explained in Act III, in the sidebar "Inside a Wraith's Mind." Here we explain Spectres for those Storytellers unfamiliar with Wraith: the Oblivion.

A Spectre is a wraith whose Shadow has taken control, permanently. The original personality, the Psyche, still exists, but it has been relegated to the back of the head — where the Shadow was originally trapped. The Psyche has the ability to affect the Spectre in the same ways the Shadow can affect the wraith, but remember that a Psyche is not necessarily "the good half" of the wraith. Not everyone's living personality is sweetness and light.

It's possible that the two separate incidents in the Gallery may alert the characters to the fact that they're fighting a war on two separate fronts.

SCENE THREE: LILLIAN

If the characters drive home from the gallery after Susanna's party, this happens just outside the gallery (if they would be driving in different directions), or when they're stuck in a traffic jam (if they ride together). If the characters walk somewhere, then it happens when they reach a busy intersection. If the characters leave the gallery at different times, then this happens to either the first character to leave or the character the Storyteller deems most appropriate.

A street preacher stands on a convenient rock. She has drawn a small crowd around her, and she has their rapt attention. Unlike many street preachers, she is well dressed, in a navy-blue business suit and a white blouse. She is, however, barefoot. This is Lillian Russon, the high priestess of Cappadocius' Spectre cult.

As the characters near the group they hear Lillian's voice, strong and clear, ring out across the sidewalk. People half a block away stop to listen to her. She sounds very convincing,

and unless the characters make a successful Willpower roll they will want to stop and listen for a while. Her sermon sounds like the usual millennialist spiel in content (except that the scope is smaller), but she comes across as much more earnest. If the characters listen for long enough they'll find out that she was a successful businesswoman until three weeks ago, when she was visited by a dark and terrible angel. That angel told her that the people of Boston had angered God, and that they were going to die. She urges everyone to prepare themselves for the angel's coming. She claims that if they kill themselves now, they won't suffer as much later.

HE'S HERE FOR YOU

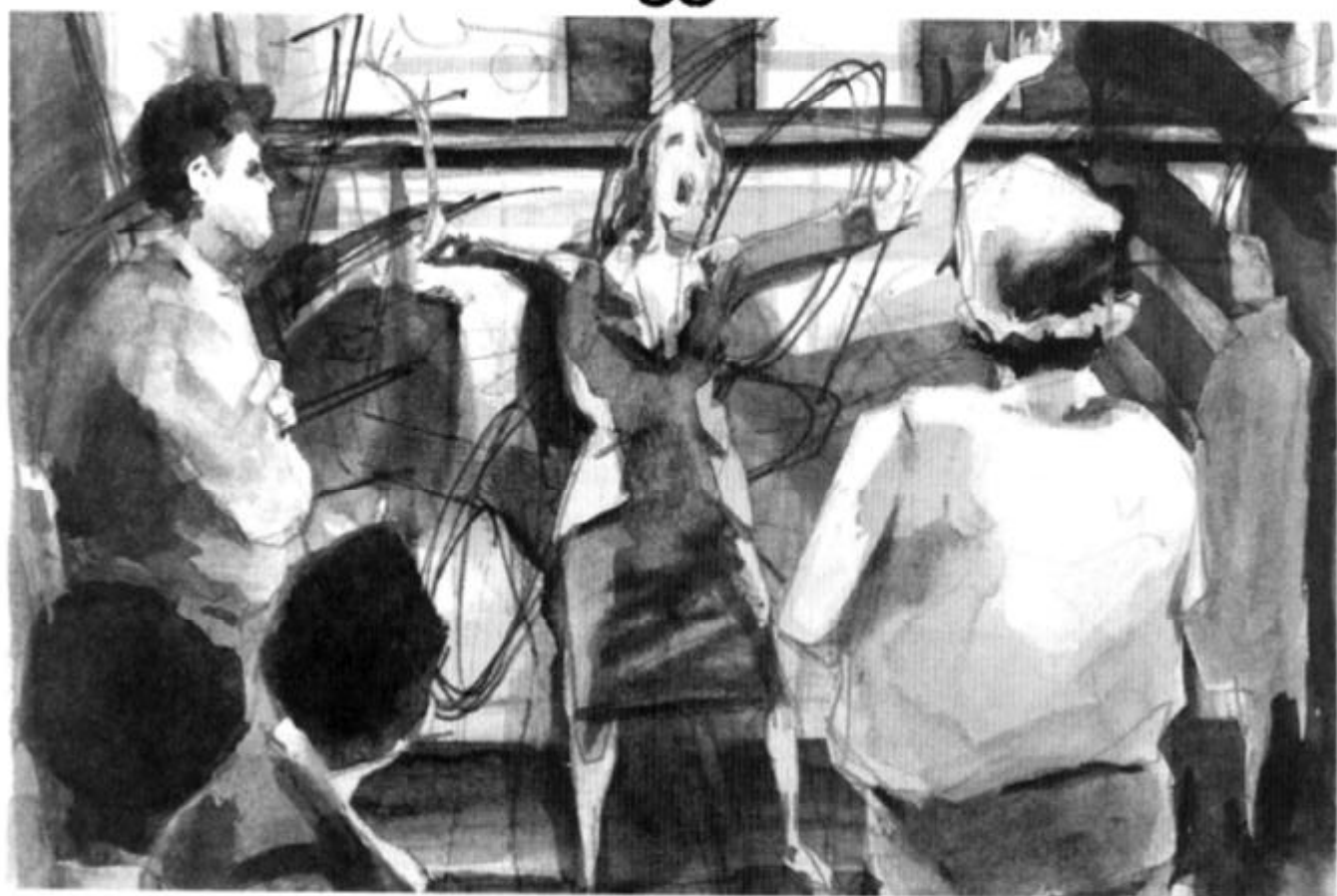
At some point in this scene, before the characters leave, Lillian looks them right in the eyes from her perch upon her rock. "He comes for you!" she cries. "You have angered him, and he will have his revenge!" Her expression has changed from earnest to enraged, and the characters get the distinct impression that if she weren't surrounded by people, she might well get down off her rock and attack them.

If the characters try to speak with Lillian that night, they find this easier said than done. She is constantly surrounded by people. Unless the characters are extremely observant (Perception + Alertness, difficulty 8), when she slips down off of her rock they lose her in the crowd. Even if they see her, they find their way blocked by milling people when they try to follow her. By the time they get through the people she's gone, having slipped into a dark car with no license plates that pulled up to the curb.

If the characters ask around, they can easily find out Lillian's name. They can track down her previous place of employment and even her supervisor if they wish (she worked at an advertising agency and was a model employee, if a bit isolated and quiet, right up until she left). The one piece of information no one seems to know is where she's staying right now. An address is given for her home, but it's empty — even her furniture is gone. Since Lillian is staying with another cult member, her name doesn't show up in any paperwork anywhere.

Tracking down Lillian herself is a little harder. She has delivered Cappadocius' message, and will not be easy to find again until Cappadocius wants her to be found. Lillian preaches on street corners every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday in an attempt to gain new converts to her cause, but she does it during the daytime from now on. Although the characters can discover her schedule, she never preaches in the same place twice, and she never stays long in any one place.

If by dint of some very hard work the characters should happen to find Ms. Russon, she comes across entirely as the cool professional. She calmly explains to them that they have angered God's angels, and that in the coming nights — which should set off the characters' nerves — they will be among those who are struck down. She has the Iron Will merit and cannot be Dominated into revealing the names or locations of the other cult members — Cappadocius refuses to let his minion be swayed by such wretched vampires as these. She



could be tortured, but if this happens one of the Spectres (who's been watching from a distance) will get involved. She will drain Lillian's life essence by several health levels at a time. This will put Lillian in enough pain that she will not be able to speak. If the characters persist then the Spectre will drain Lillian to the dregs, killing her.

If the characters should happen to speak with a local coroner, doctor or police officer sometime during this act, they will be told that there has been an odd pattern of suicides lately.

SCENE FOUR: FAMILY SUPPORT

Anyone in the family the characters speak to about Lillian is skeptical. If the family member has enough power, he openly speculates as to whether the characters are becoming deranged. If she doesn't, she keeps her mouth shut but makes her feelings clear with tone of voice and facial expression. If the characters have no real police connections, they are told that Domenic is the person to speak with about that. Domenic will openly deride the characters for caring about a lunatic preacher. "What, are you looking to join up with the Malkavians?"

Anything the characters say about this to the family will only make their standing worse, which won't be good for them. Their position is bad enough after the botched party. If the characters attempt to mention the Children of Isaac with regard to either incident, they are openly laughed at or laughed at behind their backs, depending on the rank of the person they speak with.

BEING SHADOWED

Regardless, Antonio (and especially Domenic) are taking this opportunity to malign the characters behind their backs. They have a stealthy ghoul or two following the characters and looking for anything they can use against them, so any odd behavior on the part of the troupe will come back to haunt them. The ghouls have been told that it's more important not to get caught than to keep up with the characters, so it will take a lot to notice them. The Storyteller should choose one or two characters at the beginning of each night who are being followed. At some point, when those characters are not particularly preoccupied with other things, they should each make a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 8). With two or more successes, they notice that someone is following them. The ghoul in question should have a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 6 unless the character is making a particular effort to pretend not to have noticed him; otherwise 7) to notice that he's been made. If he notices, he will attempt to escape.

The ghoul believes he is the servant of Elsa, a local Toreador. He thinks that the blond woman he meets every few nights (a maid from Domenic's house) is Elsa. Domenic's purpose in creating this fiction is twofold. He doesn't wish to be caught spying on the characters, and he figures that if they catch his ghoul, he might as well use the situation to cause yet more trouble for the characters. After all, if they start a fight with the Camarilla, no one

will be happy with them. The ghoul has only received Domenic's blood by proxy, from a thermos that "Elsa" brings with her.

The two ghouls live together, and if one of them fails to come home or acts at all strangely, the other will call a cell-phone number and inform the blond woman of this. When this happens, "Elsa" will stop showing up at the appointed place and time. The ghouls are also supposed to call her twice a night; if one of them misses a call, he is immediately regarded as being off limits.

ADDITIONAL SCENES

If the Storyteller wishes to make things even harder on the characters, there is more that can be done. Most simply, the Children can continue to make the characters look like fools, with a little "help" from Cappadocius.

Things could get as complicated as desired. Perhaps the Children have a contact with a little Dementation arrive into

town. One or two uses of that, and the characters would begin to look as though they were going over the deep end. Alternatively, perhaps the new visitor knows a little Chimerstry. The characters are going to look pretty stupid when they insist that Stephano, who was with Jason and Francis all evening, killed one of their ghouls or took some shots at them in public.

The Storyteller should be creative, and above all keep in mind that the Children aren't trying to get the characters killed—they're trying to drive them away from the Giovanni (which shouldn't actually happen until the beginning of Part Three). If the characters are particularly inventive, give them the opportunity to discover the identities of their detractors. This should be very difficult for them to do however, and should not be undertaken lightly if success is at all expected.

The Storyteller could also throw in something of a millennialist cult and Rapture scare if desired. Lillian's little cult could easily be upped to this status.

SPECTRE CULTS

A Spectre cult is a group of mortals who have made a deal with a Spectre. The mortals bargain for whatever sort of manifestations of power a Spectre can provide, and the Spectre feeds on the negative emotional energy generated by the actions of the cult. The Spectre pretends to be whatever dark deity or demon the group thought they were summoning, perhaps making the walls bleed or performing some other parlor trick to make his point. To the Spectre, it's theatrics. To the cult, it's the proof that they're serving a dark and powerful god. This cult is run by one of Cappadocius' Spectres as a proxy for him.

The Spectre finds himself a mouthpiece, perhaps a "high priest," as it costs too much energy to repeatedly manifest in the lands of the living. The Spectre tricks his priest into believing that he has mastered the demon, and lets him do the legwork from then on.

Spectres can sometimes "invest" their pawns with otherworldly powers. This also requires investing the mortal with some of the Spectre's dark emotions. This can result in the mortal going mad (if the mortal has little Willpower), but the Spectre can always find another willing pawn in this case. These powers fade over time, and the Spectre must reinvest them. Cappadocius and his Spectres have revenge as their primary goal, and this rubs off on the cult.

Following are examples of Investments. A point value is provided. The simplified explanation is that the mortal can only take on as many points in Investments as she has points of Willpower. (For greater detail, see *Mediums: Speakers with the Dead*.) The Spectre has a limited number of points to invest; assume that each Spectre

serving Cappadocius has 2 points to invest, but they will only do this if absolutely necessary—even Spectres don't like to waste their power. Lillian already has Preacher's Charm laid upon her, and she has a Willpower of 6.

The Storyteller may come up with other Investments. Use the following as examples of possible power levels.

Preacher's Charm (3 points): When the mortal invested with this power calls upon it, his words ring with an undeniable truth. He adds three dice to any roll involving Leadership for a single scene. It costs one of the three points each time the mortal calls upon Preacher's Charm (after three uses the power must be reinvested).

Visions from Beyond (2 points): This power gives the mortal visions of an otherworldly place, one of storms, shifting landscapes, and dark creatures. She can reproduce these images in the minds of others with a successful Willpower roll (difficulty of the target's Willpower). These images can disorient a mortal, and may be used to impress nonbelievers. This costs one point for each use.

Healing Touch (3 points): This power allows the mortal to heal with an invocation to her deity and a touch to the afflicted area. Two health levels of normal or lethal damage can be healed for each point spent, and only one point can be spent at a time. This Investment is particularly useful for convincing nonbelievers of a "deity's" power. After the use of this power, the mortal must rest for a half-hour before performing any strenuous actions; otherwise, she is at a two-die penalty to her die pool.

Burning Eyes (2 points): This Investment allows a mortal's eyes to glow with any color he chooses for one scene. This Investment costs one point for each use.

PART TWO: THE DEATH OF A TRAITOR

SCENE ONE: RUMORS

The coterie, by now, has become the butt of jokes at best, and openly distrusted at worst. If they are in charge, they have been receiving much less respect than they wish, but cannot give the proper reprisals, as too much brutality might result in a sunbath. If Stephano or Jason is in charge, the vampires find themselves with a great deal of free time, as more important assignments are given to Domenic or DiCarlo.

Even so, the characters are still members of the family, and they still hear things. Below is a list of rumors that they may hear during Part One of this Act.

- Augustus Giovanni is planning to take direct action in the power structure of Boston. There are many theories about whom he plans to give control, ranging from the probable (Jason Milliner or Stephano), the possible (Lucretia Giovanni, Andreas' sire) and the unlikely (the Capuchin, Antonio).

- The Camarilla has decided that the Giovanni hold too much power in Boston and plan to send someone with a backbone to oust them.

- Andreas (if he is still undead) has become "crazier than a shithouse rat" and is a danger to the family.

- The fanaticism seen among mortals regarding the millennium is happening in the Shadowlands, too — many wraiths are afraid to talk about the Underworld, and the Giovanni's usual Restless contacts have gone mad, missing, or simply vanish when summoned forth.

- Any number of rumors regarding the characters' ability to lead or function within the family. One disturbing rumor, however, is that they are in the pocket of some unnamed Camarilla elder.

These rumors are true, to one degree or another. It is the first one that should concern the characters most, however. While Augustus does not plan to restructure the leadership in Boston completely, he does plan to reward a useful Giovanni with the blood and soul of a dangerous one. He has decided to allow Francis Milliner to diablerize Geneva.

The arrangement is that Geneva will arrive in town and meet with some members of the family who are on the outs. When she is alone, Francis will attack and subdue her, using a special ritual to drive her wraith servitors away. He will consume her blood and soul, and from become equal in generation to Andreas (or if he is no longer in charge, he will exceed any other contender's generation by at least one). He will then be in a position to take Boston for himself.

SCENE TWO: GENEVRA

Genevra's will arrive in Boston soon, ostensibly on her way to New York City (she has been told that the Giovanni need a good operative in the recently liberated Big Apple; this is true, but it won't be her).

She arrives in town on a ship from Europe. If one of the players' vampires is in charge, he must send someone to meet Geneva. If not, the don sends one of the coterie to do so. The other characters are welcome to attend.

Genevra steps off the boat with the grace of an aristocrat. She is dressed in a simple black skirt and blouse, and carries an expensive leather attache case. She is talking to someone on a cellular phone, which she hangs up as she approaches the characters. She introduces herself, and asks to be taken for a bite to eat.

The characters can take her hunting or feed her from their own herd, whichever they prefer. While hunting (or feeding) they can chat about whatever they choose. The characters find her pleasant and loquacious, if a bit arrogant. If the events of the last act arise, Geneva becomes very interested, especially about the Inquisition. If questioned about her interest, she says lightly, "Oh, there was a time when I could direct the hunters, to a point. That's a gun I'd like to reload." She is telling the truth; her own ties with the Inquisition evaporated in the early 1900s, though she still has several mortal hunters under her thumb.

She will tell the story of her own Embrace, if asked, though of course she lies about some points. If the characters confide in her about their recent problems, she says, "Stick it out. Power can change quickly anywhere, but especially in this clan. Just try to stay respectful, and when this blows over, people will remember that."

As day breaks, Geneva decides to take subway to her lodging (she has booked a "sunshine suite" at the Hornsby Hotel). She waves as she descends the stairs. This is the last time the characters will see her.

SCENE THREE: MORE DREAMS

That day, as the Kindred sleep, they each feel a tug and a sensation of flying. When their vision clears, they are standing in a subway, with their old acquaintance, Reginald.

If Reginald left town during Act III, he explains that he's made peace with his wanderlust, and came back to Boston to finish his time in purgatory. If not, he's been here the whole time. Either way, last night when the characters left Geneva, Reginald saw a wraith in her retinue that looked "worth talking to," and followed (said wraith was also drop-dead gorgeous, but Reginald reasons that the vampires don't need to know that).



He tries several times to explain what he saw, but keeps stammering and losing his train of thought. Finally, he holds up his hands and vanishes. The subway scene remains, however, and the characters become aware of running footsteps.

They turn, and see Genevra running toward them. Her skirt is riddled with bullet holes and blood, but she has healed the wounds. She stops for a moment and listens. At that moment, the lights in the subway flicker and die. The characters are left in pitch-blackness, and then see two red pinpricks — Genevra, using the first level of Protean. This should strike them as odd; Protean is an uncommon Discipline, usually known only by Gangrel (Genevra, in fact, learned it from a Sabbat Gangrel some time ago). The Kindred is given little time to consider this, however, when a bright light strikes Genevra's face.

The light surprises and blinds the elder for a split second, but that is enough. The characters hear a gunshot, and half of Genevra's face tears itself away. The blast spins her around, and she flings her attache case down the tunnel with all her considerable strength. Two more reports sound, both striking Genevra in the back. She collapses to one knee, and turns to face her assailants.

The light centers itself on her heart. Genevra's eyes grow wide with fear, and the next moment a small crossbow bolt protrudes from her chest. She collapses in torpor, and a hand reaches out, grabs her hair, and pulls her into the light. All the characters can see are her feet, which curl, then stiffen, then shrivel and fall to dust.

Allow the players to roll Perception + Alertness (difficulty 7). If successful, the character notices her attache case lying on the ground some distance down the track. The scene begins to go dark as she dies, but if the player rolled three or more successes, she sees a warty, bloated hand grab the case and pull it into the darkness.

As the dream fades, Reginald says, "I'm sorry I didn't get a look at who got her, but I had to Skinride a bum to avoid notice. All the other wraiths there disappeared, like they were called away or forced away right then. All very strange. Just thought you'd want to know — someone nasty's in town."

The characters may decide that finding Genevra's killer would be a good way to regain some of the face they have lost. Normally, this would be true. However, the killer in this case is Francis Milliner, and he was acting with full knowledge and backing of Augustus Giovanni. No one else in Boston, not even his son Jason, knows this yet.

If the characters take this to the don, whoever it is tells them to investigate. If they balk at detective work, the don says, "Well, I could give the case to Domenic. Let me see, you were the last ones to see her before the Final Death, and you found her remains! Which way do you think he'd take the investigation?"

If one of them is the don, the coterie might well worry what the clan will do when it hears that an important Giovanni has died in their care. Either way, the characters are now attempting to solve a murder mystery — without a body.

THE CHILDREN OF ISAAC

The investigation can take as long as you wish. While it goes on, the Children of Isaac are not idle. They pursue their own interests, especially if said interests are in the Sabbat (which will soon try to siege Boston) or the Camarilla (which will soon try to prevent this).

If the elders are from both sects, they won't necessarily work at cross-purposes. They will try to maximize damage to the Giovanni and minimize damage elsewhere. The murder of Geneva — a purely internal Giovanni matter — is good for the rest of Boston's Kindred, as it keeps the Necromancers busy. As such, during the investigation, the characters find their unives running smoothly for a change.

SCENE FOUR: INVESTIGATION

The characters could take many different avenues. What follows is a good, but by no means comprehensive, list of these avenues. If the players take the investigation off in a totally unexpected direction (as players are wont to do), you will either need to steer them back to one of these choices, or wing it. The latter is highly recommended.

HERRINGS RED AND OTHERWISE

The characters can find a number of facts with a few phone calls. You may choose to allow the characters to think to ask these questions if the players succeed in an Intelligence + Investigation roll (difficulty 6).

- Did Geneva check into the hotel last night? (She did not.)
- Was anything sent to the hotel from the ship? (Yes, two suitcases and a very heavy trunk.)
- Did she have transportation to New York waiting? (No. She was told she'd be contacted in Boston, and of course that isn't true.)
- Was there a blood hunt called on her? (There was not, although Quentin King wouldn't exactly mourn her passing if he had any idea who she was.)
- Was she carrying anything of value, i.e., was anything she took with her insured? (Nothing was insured, but only because the valuable items she was carrying were too strange to declare to anyone. See "Luggage," below.)

MORE ABOUT GENEVRA

In order to establish a motive, the characters may attempt to learn more about who Geneva was and what she did for the clan. This requires making calls to Giovanni in other cities; Hank can give the characters some good contacts, if asked.

Genevra's main areas of concern were Detroit, Miami, Philadelphia, Montreal, and various cities on the Eastern

Seaboard. While she was not head of operations in any of these cities, she did wield considerable influence in the business world. In fact, she has bankrolled businesses that now have chains in all of the above cities; these are largely entertainment and media-oriented. Any Giovanni with which the characters speak will give much the same assessment of Geneva. She is driven, intelligent, and none of them trust her any farther than they can stroll in the sun (this shouldn't worry the characters overmuch; they've seen firsthand exactly how much the Giovanni trust each other). Also, the contact in Philadelphia, Donald Miller (a Dunsirn Giovanni) tells them that up until a week ago, she was working on expanding her interests to other cities in Pennsylvania. She received a call from Europe, and made preparations to leave the following weekend. If asked, he admits that he didn't take the call or hear any part of it, so he has no idea if the caller was whom he claimed. If told that Geneva is dead, he sounds just shocked enough to be polite.

What the rest of the family has missed, however, is that all of Geneva's stomping grounds are Sabbat controlled or contested. You should reveal this information to the characters only if a player succeeds in an Intelligence + Camarilla or Sabbat Lore roll (difficulty 6). Seen in that light, Geneva's interest in New York takes on a different tone, as New York has only recently been liberated from Sabbat control.

If the characters check into her Embrace story, they will need someone old enough to remember her induction into the clan (see *Children of the Inquisition* — available for free download at the White Wolf Website — for the full story, but the salient points can be found in the Introduction). There are no Boston Giovanni of that age, so the characters' best bet is to call someone in Europe. It takes a full night of checking, but they will finally discover that Geneva was Embraced by del Georgio immediately following his wife's death by hunters, while he slept peacefully in the next room. This should make the characters a bit suspicious.

LUGGAGE

As mentioned above, Geneva's luggage — two suitcases and a trunk — was delivered to the Hornsby Hotel. The characters can retrieve the luggage easily (the night help is easily bribed or Dominated).

The suitcases contain clothes and sundries. Geneva travels with a full makeup and toiletries kit, even with feminine hygiene products, just to keep up appearances. Also in the suitcases are books on New York: maps, travel guides, etc. Subway routes are marked and highlighted, as are some passages on certain nightclubs. It should be obvious that Geneva is not a frequent visitor to New York. Another thing the characters might notice is that there is no contact person for her in New York mentioned anywhere. It seems there were no arrangements for Geneva's arrival in New York at all.

The trunk, however, contains the real prizes. Geneva is no fool, and has rigged the lock on the trunk. If it is not



opened with the proper key, it self-ignites, destroying the contents. The key is in her attache case (see below). A character attempting to open it must rip the lid off the trunk in one fell swoop (requiring a Strength + Potence total of 5), after which the lid will burst into flames (hopefully not setting the room on fire). The lock can be picked, but it requires four successes on a Dexterity + Security roll (difficulty 7, only one chance).

Inside the trunk are dozens of books. Some of them are printed, some are handwritten. Few of them are in English, and those are decoys; they contain only fantastic stories and trumped-up rituals, nothing of real value. In truth, only seven of the books (all of which are handwritten) are useful.

Six of them are notes that Geneva has taken over the years. They are all in Italian, presenting a character with a flair for Linguistics an invaluable opportunity to study the language. More importantly, these books contain Geneva's studies of Necromancy. Any character who studies these books can make significant progress in his own knowledge of the Discipline. In game terms, if a character is attempting to learn any level of the Sepulchre Path, the Bone Path or the first three levels of the Ash Path, she may roll Intelligence + Occult or Research, difficulty 7. Every success reduces the costs to buy or raise the Discipline by one experience point. Additionally, all of the Necromantic rituals presented in *Vampire: The Masquerade* are detailed here, plus any others the Storyteller wishes to add.

The seventh book is Geneva's diary (the latest volume, anyway). It begins in 1982 when she came to America. The book has details on the movements of the American Sabbat and of several different witch-hunters (the characters shouldn't get too excited about this last bit; most of the hunters Geneva knew are now dead. Sullivan Dane is not mentioned by name, but the death of a Caitiff in Washington D.C. is noted as so: "The work of a very skilled hunter. The victim was quoted, before being found as a pile of ash, as saying she had seen a man that she couldn't focus on, as though he were a Nosferatu." This might sound vaguely familiar...). A character reading this book carefully may learn up to two levels of Sabbat Lore. Also, in the last entry (dated two nights before she died), Geneva writes that she is to stop in Boston and then continue to New York, where she will be contacted. She notes that she hopes to have time to make contact with someone she refers to as "Max" — this note is written above a circled area on the map. A character with Area Knowledge (Boston) — which should be all of them, by now — knows the circle area to be Chinatown. "Max," of course, is Max Lowell, the head of Sabbat operations in the area (see *Dramatis Personae* for more details).

THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

Reginald can lead the characters back to the site of Geneva's demise. Francis, heady with the thrill of diablerie, didn't bother to clean up after himself. Shotgun shells lie strewn about. There is also a pile of fabric full of a caked, wet



substance with a crossbow bolt stuck in the middle of it. These are Geneva's clothes and ashes.

The lights in the tunnel are working, should the characters think to check. If they ask, Reginald will tell them, "Oh, I think someone on my end put the lights out." Any character who uses the *Auspex* power of *Spirit's Touch* on the scene will see much what they saw before, just from a different perspective. Using the power on Geneva's ashes will give her last few moments in first person. Unfortunately, she never saw her killer; the light in her eyes prevented that.

If any character noticed the *attache case* during the dream, they may decide that it is worth pursuing. If they look for it, it is not there. If a character saw the hand that took it, it should be obvious that some disfigured sewer-dweller was responsible; if not, it shouldn't take too big a mental leap to reach that conclusion.

The characters can wander around the subway looking for the creature in question for as long as they like; hopefully they won't. Finding a *Nosferatu* on its own turf is impossible even for another *Nosferatu*, let alone for a bunch of *Giovanni*. Even *Giovanni* who know the sewers are tourists compared to the *Nosferatu*.

The *Nosferatu* in question calls himself *Meathead*. A young vampire, *Meathead* saw the fracas, but decided (wisely) not to interfere. He took the *attache case*, figuring that someone would come after it eventually. So, when the characters begin searching, he follows them. He knows they

will want the case and is hoping they will wander until close to sunrise, so that they won't be able to bargain effectively. If they stand still and call for him, or if they make ready to leave, he will reveal himself.

Meathead is aptly named. His flesh has not taken on the bluish tint that his clan's sometimes does. It has stayed pink and bloody. *Meathead* was thrown into the street by a bored gang and ended up with his face buried in the grille of an oncoming car. His sire found him and decided to see if there was enough left to *Embrace*. There was, but he still looks like roadkill.

Meathead knows very well what these people want, but did not see Geneva's killer. He will bargain for the case. Money is not a big concern for him, but information is, especially about the state of *Clan Giovanni*. He asks them to confirm rumors that the *Necromancers* helped the *Camarilla* reclaim New York (false); that their wraith servants protect them from *Assamite* marauders (very false); and that their clan's *Antediluvian* is still awake and leading the clan (occasionally true, but the characters won't really be able to confirm it). He also asks who leads *Clan Giovanni* in Boston in the modern nights, which may or may not be a tricky question.

If the characters wish to obtain more information from *Meathead*, he knows little of real value. He does know that the *Prince of Boston* has been moping about just lately. There are rumors that the *Camarilla* has finally decided to replace him.

THE ATTACHE CASE

The case is locked, but the characters could easily pry it open. Inside are some directives on expansion of Geneva's companies. Also inside are a pager, a cloth bag and two vials of earth, and the key to her trunk (see above).

The papers will tell the characters what they probably already know: the cities in which Geneva does business, and her plans for expansion.

The pager has registered two new calls. One is seemingly random series of numbers. In fact, it is a danger signal from one of her wraiths (delivered too late, obviously). This "call" was made several minutes before her death. The second call is from a local number. If the characters call it back, a rough voice answers. The characters can come up with whatever excuse they like for calling, but unless they mention Geneva's name, the voice will hang up in a few seconds. This voice is Max Lowell.

If they do mention Geneva, Max will agree to meet with them, but he wants to see the scene of the crime first, alone. Once he does, he calls the characters and asks them to meet him in Chinatown. See "Max," below.

The cloth bag contains a gold ring, a letter opener encrusted with dried blood, and a button that says, "It's your Hell...you burn in it!" These are Fetters for the wraiths that Geneva keeps as thralls. If the characters wish, they could use Necromancy — Reginald knows the names of wraiths: They are Judith, Miguel, and Otto, respectively.

None of the wraiths will be very happy at being summoned, and none of them was distressed to see Geneva die. They were worried about their Fetters, however, and stayed in the area. While their personalities differ tremendously (and the Storyteller is free to develop these wraiths as much as she wishes), they all know the same things. Geneva was taking the subway to the Hornsby Hotel, and was pulled off the platform by some goons in expensive suits, thrown into the tunnels, and shot several times. She ran, but the goons caught up to her. The wraiths had planned to help her, but there was a sudden blast in the Shadowlands that forced them away from the area. When they returned, it was all over.

The wraiths are not interested in finding Geneva's killer, but are vulnerable to Necromancy as long as the characters have their Fetters. Depending on what the characters decide to do, these wraiths may be free or may just have changed masters. Reginald will urge their freedom, and if the Kindred keep the new wraiths, he will leave, if he is able.

The vials of earth are part of a ritual that Geneva was researching. Since she never wrote the ritual down, however, the earth is probably useless to the characters.

MAX

The characters might discover who Max is by poking through Geneva's luggage or her attache case, or they might just make the connection between her and the Sabbat and figure the local Sabbat might be a good place to check. In any

case both Meathead and Effie Feng know of Max and tell the characters that he makes his haven in Boston's Chinatown.

While that might not seem like much of a lead, Max is well known in Chinatown and it won't take much asking to find him. If they go asking around, he eventually finds them and motions them into an ally. There are several other figures in the shadows. These are the Backwater Bastards, Max's pack.

Max isn't openly threatening. In fact, he is polite and patient. If they tell him of Geneva's fate, he grows agitated. He knows, but certainly will not reveal, that the Sabbat plan to move on Boston soon and he wanted to work out some kind of deal with her first. With Geneva dead, the Sabbat will have no help from the Giovanni.

Max knows nothing about who killed her, but he does know a bit about diablerie. He tells the characters that Geneva knew the basics of Protean, and if she was diablerized, it's possible that her murderer does too, if only temporarily. He says that Disciplines gained this way are seldom permanent, but aren't easy to control either. "If you find a good suspect, turn out the lights and watch for the red dots," he advises them.

The City Gangrel can't tell them much else, but he does make note of what they do with the information. If they avenge Geneva's death, or if they seem sympathetic at all, he might parlay with them later during the war. Their behavior makes even more of a difference if one of the local Children of Isaac is a Sabbat member, as Max will report this situation to her.

OTHER GIOVANNI

Andreas: If he is still alive, he doesn't respond well to questioning. Anything that sounds remotely like an accusation is met with anger, and Andreas is getting increasingly paranoid.

Stephano: He actually has some good information, although he doesn't know it. One of his wraiths regularly commutes from Europe, and chats with other Giovanni wraiths while there. One of them mentioned that Geneva's "last stop" was Boston. The wraith didn't think much of it, and therefore didn't bother Stephano with this news. If the characters question Stephano, about opinions about Geneva or her origins, he summons that wraith to answer questions about Europe. The wraith seems surprised to learn of her death, and repeats the information. This tells the characters that the higher-ups in clan Giovanni knew that Geneva was going to die here.

Domenic: He knows nothing about the situation, and wouldn't talk if he did.

Jason Milliner: He refuses to discuss it unless they give him all the facts. He says this is to have a clear picture; really, he just wants to know what the hell is going on. If they tell him what they have found, he wonders aloud if it might have been an Assamite hit. This theory, while tempting red herring, should be one the characters reject: the Assamites do not normally have power over wraiths. In the face of this information, Jason agrees it looks like an inside job. He has an alibi for that night, but he does not know where his father was.

Francis Milliner: Francis takes their questions with a smile, reminding them of the bygone days of Prohibition and the first jobs they did for the family. He acts uncharacteristically jovial and pleasant, which should tip the characters off. If any of them know *Auspex 2*, they may perceive black veins in his aura. They pulsate through the violets and purples like horrendous black maggots. The characters have found their killer.

If none of them possess this power, Reginald does, but waits until after the interview to reveal it (he does not know the veins' significance).

SCENE FIVE: UNMASKING THE KILLER

The characters can stage this any way they like. They can try to get Milliner alone, they can gather all the Giovanni in the area together, or do whatever they feel is appropriate.

How they choose to unmask Francis is also their choice. They may shut the lights out and, as Max predicted, two tiny pinpricks of red will appear. This is not proof in itself, but because Geneva's diary mentioned learning the Discipline, it would make a good point upon which to rest their case. They might also ask Andreas or another vampire who knows sufficient Thaumaturgy to "test" Francis. The results here are clear as well — recent diablerie.

They could also Dominate or intimidate Francis' ghoul into giving their testimony, and Reginald could easily talk his wraiths into speaking out against him. Regardless, when the truth is out, all that remains is what to do with it.

Francis will quickly claim that he had permission from Augustus Giovanni himself. This claim is not easily verified; getting through to Augustus isn't easy for anyone in America, and Francis had promised never to discuss it. The other consideration is why the death — even by diablerie — of a Sabbat-loving traitor matters at all. In the end, the characters stand to gain no credit for their work, and if they cry out for justice or defend Geneva, they will lose even more.

The characters have scored one minor victory, however. While this may have been sanctioned diablerie, it was diablerie nonetheless. That will stain Francis in the eyes of Stephano, DiCarlo, and even his own son. His bid for power will have to wait, and he will not forget — or forgive — the vampires who delayed his rise.

SCENE SIX: AFTERMATH

The characters may have discovered who killed Geneva, and probably have very little to show for it. They might have some knowledge, perhaps some new servants and contacts, but they have learned how solid the clan truly is. If the characters weren't paranoid before, this should do it. And now that they know a bit about diablerie, some of them might look at other vampires a little differently, especially if one of them is Marianna's child.



Francis calls the characters to Augustus' attention. The clan founder now knows of them, and he instructs that they be watched. This is not so much out of fear or distrust, but he feels there is something important about them. There is a storm coming, and Augustus knows it.

PART THREE: THE DEVIL'S DEAL

SCENE ONE: THE BREAK-IN

On a night when at least one character has no interaction with other Giovanni, and preferably on a night when one character (it must be a character who was booked in Act III) is off on his own entirely, a vault in Stephano's house is almost broken into. Apparently his ghouls manage to frighten the intruder off. Stephano has a friend or two in the police department check for fingerprints and, lo and behold, they find one. It belongs to that character who was off on his own (and thus has no useful alibi). The Giovanni don't want one of their own taken in by the police, but they certainly can't allow this sort of behavior to go unchecked. Since one of the players' characters is apparently guilty, then all of the coterie is guilty by association. This is the final straw that splits apart the characters from the Giovanni as a whole.

Note that the forgery was done by an identification technician with the Boston police. She was smart enough to hide the fingerprint card afterward so that her forgery could not be detected. Even if she hadn't, however, none of the Storyteller characters would have thought to check. This technician is in the employ of one of the Children of Isaac.

FINGERPRINT FORGERY

Yes, it is possible to forge a fingerprint, and here's how it's done. First of all, the person committing the forgery must be or know an identification technician with the police department involved in the case, and she must be the technician working on the case.

Then, the technician photocopies the suspect's fingerprint card. While the photocopy is still hot, she lifts the print with fingerprint tape. She puts the tape down on the object the print is to be found on, and photographs it. Her explanation is simple: She put the tape there to protect the print.

There is only one way to detect the forgery, and an easy way to stymie that. Every fingerprint is different, simply because of differences in position and pressure. If the fingerprints match the fingerprint card exactly, the police know they have a forgery — although they're unlikely to think to look for this. Also, if the aforementioned technician is smart enough to get rid of the fingerprint card, then there's nothing to compare the fingerprint to.

By the way, don't do this. It's illegal as all hell.

The troupe is warned of the danger they are in by Hank, who may still have something of a fondness for them. The warning barely comes in time. The Storyteller should orchestrate this scene however she feels will be most dramatic, but it should take place somewhere such that the Giovanni shouldn't have known to be there at that time. The Giovanni come for the characters, but the characters are rescued by the Children of Isaac. It should be entirely evident to the characters that their choices are to die at the hands of their former associates (who aren't holding back at pulling the trigger), or to go with their former enemies.

Just as the characters are being fired upon, one of the Children arrives in a van (a young ghoul is driving) and yells at the characters to get inside. The characters have just enough time to look into the van and see that it is empty (even to *Auspex*) before they have to make their decision. If they delay too long or try to go it on their own, one of them is shot down by a Giovanni with an automatic weapon. If this character is pulled into the van and given blood to drink he will be all right, but if the characters stay, he will be shot again, and he will die, relieved of most of his head. If the characters still do not want to go with the elder, then one of them sees Hank around a corner. Hank gestures at the character to get in the van.

SCENE TWO: TRUCE?

The ghoul drives like a maniac, eventually parking the van inside of a warehouse. The rest of the Children of Isaac are there, and they indicate that they aren't looking for a fight. "Just grant our audience," one of them says soothingly, "and then you can leave if you wish."

The elders go on to explain that Cappadocius is in town. They attempt to explain the concept of a Spectre, but since they have their explanation secondhand from Marianna (who's been dead or gone for 27 years now), and the characters have some experience with Necromancy, they may well be preaching to the choir. They tell the characters that Cappadocius' aim is to destroy the Giovanni. They say that they understand the characters may not have any loyalty left for the Giovanni (they apologize for their mistake if anyone takes offense at this), but Cappadocius won't make the distinction. The characters are now in danger from two different sides.

If the characters want to know how the elders found them, one of the Children explains that they've been keeping an eye on the characters, and that they have a couple of contacts in the police department. This is where the characters should find out about their fingerprints showing up on Stephano's vault. One of the elders frowns; "How did they find you so quickly? I was sure they didn't know where you'd be at that time." As it happens the Giovanni were tipped off to the coterie's location by one of Cappadocius' followers (see sidebar on Spectre cults); Cappadocius was hoping to prevent the characters and the Children from getting together.

The Children go on to explain that Marianna left them a ritual that will put Cappadocius' soul to rest. There are two

problems with this, however. One is that they're having trouble figuring out Marianna's often-odd wording, and the other is that from what they can tell so far, the ritual will go much faster if they have the help of someone who knows Necromancy. Since Marianna is dead, that leaves the players' characters.

HAGGLING

The characters have little reason to trust the Children, and the Children know this. Therefore, they've come to the bargaining table with a few other goodies. If the vampires doesn't yet know who's been setting them up, then the Children offer to tell them: "After all, we've been watching you for years. You think we don't know who's been betraying you?" They also offer to help them try to repair their reputation ("We know you didn't do that break-in. We can hand you the person who set you up," — the technician). They imply with their words ("betraying," "set you up") that the characters have been ruined by a Giovanni or someone else close to them, but they never actually say so. On top of this, they tell the characters that both Sabbat and Camarilla forces prepare to enter the city, and that with the help of the Children, the Giovanni will be much more likely to come out on top of this situation. If all else fails, the Children will offer to translate the tablets from Act II.

OPTIONS

The coterie has several choices they can make. They can ally with the Children, help to put Cappadocius to rest, and be hunted by the Giovanni as traitors. They can attempt to turn the Children over to the Giovanni somehow, regaining some of their tattered reputation in the process, and watch Cappadocius destroy Boston. Or, they can let the Children continue to hunt Cappadocius on their own, remain fugitives from the Giovanni, and watch a good deal of Boston burn around them.

If the coterie seems uncertain, or if they refuse, one of the Children gives them a business card with only a phone number on it, and tells them to go. "Watch, and see what happens in the coming nights. Once you have seen what Cappadocius has planned, call us. We will welcome your help then."

SCENE THREE: MAKING A CHOICE

If the troupe chooses to remain on the run from everyone and largely independent, they will find unlife to be extremely difficult. The Giovanni hunt them relentlessly. Their havens are being watched, as well as their businesses, and their partners and employees have been told not to speak to them (and to call the Giovanni if they see the characters). Eventually their only option should be to return to the Children, or utter, abject flight from Boston. Before they do either, however, something else happens: Go to "A Demonstration of Power." The Storyteller may also choose to begin the Sabbat-Camarilla invasion while the characters are fugitives.

If the characters attempt to turn the Children over to the Giovanni, they will need to be very circumspect about it; the

Giovanni won't believe anything the characters tell them, after all. Hank might be willing to help the characters. Only one or two of the Children can be captured, and the rest will go on working to put Cappadocius to rest. This simply means that it will take even longer, and more damage will be done. The capture of one or more of the Children of Isaac will help the characters' case with the Giovanni, but it will by no means erase the past. The characters will, once more, be at the bottom of the totem pole. If one of them was in charge at the beginning of the act, then they've been deposed by Jason Milliner.

If the characters agree to work with the Children, then go to "Of Ritual and War."

A DEMONSTRATION OF POWER

One or more of the troupe step into a trap without realizing it; two Giovanni and a ghoul have them surrounded. Even if the characters have their enemies outnumbered they're likely to lose at least one of their number, because the Giovanni are very well armed and have the advantage of surprise. Just as one of the characters sees a laser-sight cross her chest, the dot jiggles violently and disappears. A strangled scream is heard from the direction of the sniper, a ghoul. The two Giovanni panic and start shooting from behind their cover; one character takes a bullet in his left shoulder. Then something jerks the arm of one of the Giovanni (the work of a Spectre), and he hits his compatriot with a spray of bullets. He stops in shock and runs to his companion's side. If the characters don't kill him themselves, then several well-placed sniper bullets do (the work of one of Cappadocius' mortal followers).

A translucent form shrugs into being standing over the corpse's body; he has a look of ecstasy on his face and he shudders slightly. His skin is stained with blood and in some places is almost disintegrating; bone and sinew can be seen beneath. One of his eyes is a bleeding mass in his head. If the characters haven't already fled, then they see a spasm of pain cross his face, and he covers his ears with his hands. "I'm coming; I return already." He turns and walks away, fading from view as he does so.

OF RITUAL AND WAR

There is a fair amount of information to be presented in the rest of this act, so here is the form it will take:

- A section on the war; strengths and weaknesses (and fatal flaws) for the various sides.
- A section on the ritual; major points of the ritual, its design, and its effects.
- A timeline to lay out which aspects of the war and ritual should happen in specific order; the timeline can be tailored to an individual chronicle.

THE WAR

Numbers and down-to-the-minute strategies are not provided because the strengths of the various sides and how the war plays out should be tailored to the chronicle's needs and the characters' abilities and preferences. Some of the

characters should come out the other side of this war with their unives intact. If the players don't like combat, then the Storyteller should concentrate on the ritual and have them primarily deal with the effects of the war. If the players aren't good strategists but enjoy combat, then the Storytellers should have them encounter the street-level of the war rather than the high strategy. This war might best be played by presenting a number of representative scenes rather than the entirety of the strategies, strengths and weaknesses. If the players would rather be involved in the entire thing, then the Children of Isaac can provide fairly detailed information about what is going on. They don't know everything, however. If the Storyteller wishes to involve the characters in the Giovanni part of the war, then she could allow them to regain the good graces of the Giovanni by helping them out in the war. (See the section "Getting Back in the Good Graces," below.)

THE SABBAT

The Sabbat are strengthened by war. They perform the Vaulderie more often, strengthening the bonds of loyalty between them. They create more childer in large quantities. They do not have as much care for the notice of mortals as the Camarilla does; they don't want to end up being hunted, but neither do they prance around trying to avoid the least notice. Young Sabbat are not usually as afraid of Final Death as their Camarilla counterparts. The Sabbat fully expect to lose large numbers of their people during wartime. They use terrorist tactics, perfectly happy to cause indiscriminate casualties among innocent bystanders. On top of this, they have a patient and cunning leader in Max Lowell.

This does not mean that the Sabbat are without their flaws and vulnerabilities, however. Some of the imported Sabbat have a hard time seeing Max as a good Sabbat leader; after all, he keeps company with mortals and isn't as flamboyantly nasty as many Sabbat. This undermines Max's leadership until he has the chance to make a few examples and prove his ability. After Max's lover is drained dry by a newly arrived Sabbat pack, he kills the pack's leader in a very quick and decisive combat, and replaces him with someone he trusts from his own pack (which has come in from Maine to help).

When the Sabbat first arrive in Boston, it takes them a little time to realize that the Giovanni have mucked with one of their message posts (see the section on the Freedom Trail in the Appendix). In the meantime, troops and supplies get a little lost, and one pack walks right into an ambush.

Max is required as the archbishop of the city to keep an oasis and parish for the Sabbat; this is what the Blue Pearl becomes. This means that the Sabbat are concentrated in Chinatown. This makes them difficult to attack because they have the advantage of numbers, but it also makes them easy to find once their location becomes known.

Unfortunately for the Sabbat, one of their members who arrives from out of town is an Infernalist, a follower of the Path of Evil Revelations. Eventually the Sabbat catch on to this, and waste valuable time and resources trying to hunt

down the Infernalist. When one pack gets too close to figuring out the woman's identity, she leaks the location of that pack's haven to the police; thanks to an Inquisition presence among the local law enforcement (see Act III), most of the police even make it out alive. Owing to the Giovanni's ties to the police and the mayor, they find out about the incident, and realize that the vampires are congregating in Chinatown. The Giovanni spark off a crime wave in the area using mortal gangs, forcing the mayor to set a curfew. The police and Inquisition members in the area are of limited effectiveness against the Sabbat, but they do make a dent.

Unfortunately for the Sabbat, they end up killing Lillian, the high priestess of the Spectre cult. The cult, as revenge-minded as it is, set their sights on Chinatown. Their Spectre allies don't care about the death of a mortal, but they can occasionally be convinced to help kill a few vampires in the name of bloodlust.

Max deliberately provokes relations between the Giovanni and the Camarilla, making certain that the Camarilla will not be able to sit, watch, and wait until everyone else is weakened. Unfortunately, the Giovanni do the same between the Sabbat and the Camarilla, and soon it's a big, hellish shitstorm of a free-for-all.

THE CAMARILLA

The Camarilla have the benefit of a sound strategist on their side. He's willing to use some of the Sabbat's own tactics against them, such as creating new childer to throw at the other side and relaxing the Masquerade rules temporarily. The problem with this is that the Camarilla who previously held the city are going to be more than a little shocked and offended by this. Yong-Sung will hide it from them as long as possible — he trusts his own people to keep their mouths shut — but he can't keep it from them forever.

Pug Jackson will happily help out the new Ventrue for a while; he's pleased to finally be doing something about the Sabbat and Giovanni in the area. However, even Yong-Sung can't be charming all the time, and eventually Pug is reminded once too often that Yong-Sung is a Ventrue and that the Ventrue enslaved him after he was Embraced. At that point, Pug starts feeding information to Quentin King and the Six (see *Dramatis Personae*). Chang isn't stupid, so he realizes fairly quickly what's happening, and sets Pug up to be killed by the Sabbat.

Quentin King is at first frozen with his usual indecision. He wants to retain control over Boston, but he fears to stand up against Yong-Sung. He's been a puppet for so long that he doesn't know how to stop any more. The Six, still convinced that King has been ensorcelled, and now convinced that Yong-Sung is the one who ensorcelled him, believe Chang to be a worse problem than the Giovanni. After all, the Giovanni are simply merchants, and thus beneath notice. Two of the Six set up a meeting with Stephano. They make a deal with him — they will feed him information on Yong-Sung and his people (his people only — they would not betray the original Camarilla of Boston) on two conditions. One, that the Giovanni also act on any

information the Six can bring them about the Sabbat. Two, that once Boston is cleaned up, the Giovanni allow the previous resident Camarilla to remain unmolested if they wish. The Six plan to convince King to move to another city, but they do not want the rest of King's subjects to be forced to leave. Stephano agrees — he knows the Giovanni can handle a handful of Camarilla, especially since their numbers are likely to be lessened by war. He is also more than pleased to take any information the Six can give him about the Sabbat, as well as Chang.

Perhaps Chang's worst problem, however, is Cappadocius, his Spectres, and his cult. Cappadocius has had more than 500 years to find out who was behind the Conspiracy of Isaac and all the other problems that led up to his death. He knows that the Ventrue, and Lady Jadviga in particular, played a large hand in events. Because of this, Cappadocius and his followers are going to make life Hell for Chang (Jadviga's grandchilde) and his people.

THE GIOVANNI

The Giovanni's biggest problem is the sheer number of opponents they face. The Camarilla are being led by a competent commander, as are the Sabbat. Cappadocius himself is coming for them. However, they don't have the loyalty problems that the other two groups have, and they have the home turf advantage.

The Giovanni will do their best to make sure the Sabbat and Camarilla spend most of their time fighting each other. If the Giovanni find out from the Six that Chang is going to attack one of their warehouses, then they leak information to the Sabbat that the Giovanni are meeting in that place at that time, and sit back to watch the fur fly.

The Giovanni may be Cappadocius' favored target, but they have other advantages in that arena. Their wraiths may ultimately not be a match for the Spectres, but they can slow them down and divert them for a while. The Giovanni figure out Cappadocius' hatred for the Ventrue fairly quickly, and use it to their best advantage. Cappadocius' Spectres are very nasty creatures, and they're easily distracted by the prospect of death and carnage, no matter whose it is. Cappadocius will also be distracted by the antics of the Children of Isaac.

CAPPADOCIUS, HIS SPECTRES, AND THE CULT

Cappadocius' biggest problem is the multitude of enemies laid out upon his table. Who to start with? Every time his people start in on one group, someone gets distracted by another group. Spectres aren't exactly easy to lead, so the group of them tends to get fractured. One Spectre will go after Chang while another works on the Children of Isaac and a third chases a Giovanni. They don't tend to be very effective that way. Mostly they end up being thorns in everybody's sides.

THE CHILDREN OF ISAAC

The Children are primarily concerned with the ritual. If it is necessary in order to convince the troupe to work with

them, they will feed them information on the war. However, the Children have not forgotten their enmity with the Giovanni. They will, when possible, attempt to harm the Giovanni, or help the Giovanni's enemies — but only if they're absolutely certain they can get away with it without losing the help of the troupe. Ultimately, whatever efforts they can muster will not be enough to bring the Giovanni down.

OUTCOMES

Finally, the Giovanni remain the dominant influence in Boston. The Sabbat eventually realizes the city isn't worth the trouble (Max gets in a last "I told you so"). If Max survives through the events then he remains behind in his old position once more; unfortunately for him, Chinatown is fairly well wrecked by the Sabbat's prolonged presence in the area, and his lover ended up as someone's dinner. Max's former supporters are less than happy with him.

Chang is killed by Cappadocius when Cappadocius is dragged closer to the mortal world (see the section on the ritual, below). Chang's people, bereft of his leadership, fracture and scatter, eventually leaving Quentin King in control. Quentin allows the Six to convince him to leave Boston well enough alone and departs post-haste. Some of the Camarilla who resided in Boston to begin with are dead; Pug Jackson is killed in the fighting. Elsa, with the help of a Giovanni art fanatic (Susanna DiCarlo), fights off a Sabbat attack and decides to remain.

Cappadocius is "laid to rest" by the Children of Isaac, with or without the coterie's help. The difference is this: If the characters help, Cappadocius is laid to rest much sooner, and the Giovanni have fewer casualties. The difference is marked; the Children really do need the Kindred's help. The Children don't fare very well either way; if the coterie helps them, then a couple of them die by the end of the act. If the coterie doesn't help, then most or all of them die.

While the Giovanni remain in control, this doesn't mean they come out of things unscathed. If the characters help the Children of Isaac, then the Giovanni take some losses, but they come out relatively intact. If the coterie doesn't help the Children, then the Giovanni take significant losses by the end of the act. Jason Milliner dies, as does Andreas if he's still alive. The Giovanni in the area are still viable, but barely. At the end of the act more Giovanni are called in from out of town to help fill holes in the infrastructure of the local clan. Several members of the troupe should be dead by the end of this act.

THE RITUAL

THE POINT OF IT ALL

Because Cappadocius has no Fetters and cannot come close to the mortal world without a great deal of effort (in Wraith terms, he cannot enter the Shadowlands), he is very difficult to affect. The point of the ritual is to drag Cappadocius into the Shadowlands, and then lay his soul to rest.

MARIANNA'S RITUAL

One problem with the ritual Marianna researched is that she was expecting to be around to use it. Therefore, Marianna used a number of terms which the Children of Isaac are having problems with (she has traveled a great deal). For example, she uses "Yin worlds" to describe the lands of the dead. In this particular case, the characters can get help from Effie Feng. Yong-Sung Chang might also know what it means, but he's much less likely to tell the characters. The Storyteller can make this as simple as what is above, or as complex as he desires. The characters might find themselves spending most of the war conducting research in order to interpret the ritual.

CAPPADOCIUS' NEW BEST FRIEND

Once the ritual has been clearly interpreted, it's time to go to work. First of all, it is necessary to make it possible for Cappadocius to enter the Shadowlands. The characters can achieve this by finding a wraith servitor with the ability to affect other wraiths' Fetters. This wraith must be compelled to give Cappadocius a temporary Fetter. The Children can provide the location of a member of Cappadocius' cult; they recommend that another few wraiths follow the cultist until they see a Spectre, then follow the Spectre to Cappadocius; then Cappadocius must be tricked into entering the Shadowlands (giving Cappadocius a temporary Fetter requires touching both Cappadocius and the object at the same time). This isn't an easy task. The Children give the wraiths some pointers as to what to say to make Cappadocius angry enough to come into the Shadowlands.

Note: If the coterie does not help the Children, then the Children must convince a number of wraiths to help them without the benefit of being able to summon or compel them. This is why it takes so much longer to accomplish, why more of the Children end up dead, and why much more damage is done if the characters aren't helping them. If the characters aren't helping, then the Children should make occasional appearances throughout the rest of the act as they attempt to perform the ritual themselves. The characters watch as one by one, the Children die at the hands of Cappadocius.

Once Cappadocius is where he needs to be, the wraith will give him the Fetter (and then Cappadocius will destroy the wraith); according to Marianna's ritual, the Fetter must be one of the participants in the ritual.

Simply giving Cappadocius a Fetter does not guarantee the characters mastery over him. Cappadocius has a Willpower of 10 and the Fetter only has a rating of 1, so the characters are fairly likely to fail if they attempt to summon or compel him.

THE RITUAL ITSELF

The ritual can be as complex or simple as the Storyteller desires, probably depending on how involved the characters become in the war. It is something of a slapdash exorcism ritual, with chants and amulets and such. Due to Marianna's

worldliness, almost any ritual tradition might be worked into it. Perhaps she studied *feng shui*, in which objects must be placed in particular arrangements in order to have a desired effect. Maybe the chants call upon God and all the angels to cast out the spirit of Cappadocius. Perhaps she studied some Crowley, and the ritual involves candles, bells, incense and a sword. Cappadocius' cult will try to stop the characters, right up until Lillian is killed by the Sabbat, at which point they forget about everything except their own revenge. Cappadocius' Spectres, however, will still be a problem; they don't care about a mortal's death.

Some of the elements of the ritual should be specific to the time period. For example, the ritual requires that the troupe and the Children surround Cappadocius and say "I command thee to depart and return to the turning of the Wheel; and may God send thee upon thy proper journey" with one voice. But if the characters cannot compel Cappadocius to remain in one place, this cannot obviously be done. However, it might be rightly guessed that Cappadocius is within the city limits. The characters may go to the city limits, and use cell phones to say the phrase "with one voice."

Cappadocius may be more vulnerable because of his new Fetter, but he also has more freedom. Before the characters put him to rest, he'll kill Yong-Sung Chang. He'll also kill one or more of the characters and the Children. Ultimately, a good 50% of the troupe and Children should die unless they're particularly clever about things. At the ending of the ritual, Cappadocius will kill his new Fetter in an attempt to break free — such is the will of the Antediluvians — but it will not be soon enough, and the ritual will be successful.

AFTERMATH

To everyone who conquers, I will give permission to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God.

— Revelations 2:7

GETTING BACK IN THE GOOD GRACES

Getting back in with the Giovanni is probably foremost on the characters' minds in Act IV. This can be accomplished with some hard work, and there are a number of things the characters might try. First of all, if the characters help the Giovanni out during the war, their status will start going back up. They might get information to the Giovanni about Sabbat or Camarilla movements (the characters could get some of this themselves or through various contacts, or they might squeeze it out of the Children of Isaac). The Giovanni wouldn't believe them at first, but it would only take a couple of correct predictions before the Giovanni started listening. If they fed their information through Hank, the ghoul would present it as information from "one of my sources," until it was obvious the information was correct. Then he would explain whom the tips came from.

A LOOSE TIMELINE

This is not intended to be set in stone; the Storyteller may alter things as suits his chronicle best. This is provided as a guideline.

- Sabbat come to town.
- Yong-Sung Chang and his crew come to town.
- Max Lowell's lover is killed; Max kills the leader of the pack responsible and has him replaced.
- Much research must be done on Marianna's ritual to make it legible.
- Max provokes bad relations between the Camarilla and the Giovanni (two men with Italian accents and first names kill one of Pug Jackson's Brujah, and a second Brujah escapes to tell the tale).
- Chang makes his first attack on the Sabbat.
- The Sabbat catch on to Giovanni interference with their messages.
- Infernalist leaks Vaulderie location.
- Boston Camarilla discover how Chang fights; they take offense. Chang tells them to do better themselves or go take a flying leap.
- Cappadocius finds Chang; Cappadocius' Spectres make life difficult for the Camarilla and temporarily forget about the Giovanni.
- Supplies must be collected for the ritual.
- The Six approach Stephano and make a deal; the Giovanni receive an influx of valuable information.
- Curfew established in Chinatown.
- Chang plans attack on Giovanni warehouse. The Six leak this to the Giovanni. The Giovanni leak this to the Sabbat, who end up in an all-out battle with the Camarilla while the Giovanni sit back and laugh.
- Preliminary actions must be taken for the ritual (any adjustments, the outfitting of a ritual space).
- Pug Jackson's resentment toward the Ventrué hits the boiling point; he tells Quentin and the Six everything he knows about what Chang is up to.
- The Inquisition hunts the Sabbat.
- The Sabbat kill Lillian.
- The Spectre cult goes after the Sabbat.
- Pug Jackson is killed by a pack of Sabbat thanks to information leaked by Chang.
- Elsa and Susanna DiCarlo fight off a couple of Sabbat.
- The Sabbat changes its mind and goes away.
- Cappadocius gains a Fetter.
- Cappadocius kills Chang.
- The Camarilla changes its mind and goes away.
- Cappadocius is laid to rest by the Children of Isaac (and perhaps the troupe). Cappadocius' Fetter, and others, are killed.
- Quentin and the Six leave town.

The characters could help out in the trenches. If Giovanni on the street are rescued by the characters, especially if it happens more than once, the characters are going to start looking much better.

The Children, true to their word, will tell the characters after the ritual that they were the ones who set the troupe up to look bad. They'll even let on that they were the ones who arranged for the fingerprint forgery. If the characters request it, the Children will indicate which technician did the forgery (they don't care about her life). The troupe could use her (and the fingerprint card she's hidden) to prove to Stephano that they weren't the ones who tried to break into his vault.

As the Children are greatly reduced in numbers, the characters could set them up after gaining back a little of the Giovanni's confidence. Proving the existence of the elders would certainly help the troupe's case, especially if Stephano is in charge.

The Storyteller should allow the characters to be creative in finding other ways to impress the Giovanni and prove their loyalty.

WHO'S IN CHARGE?

If Andreas was in charge at the beginning of the Act, he is no longer. Either he was killed (by Cappadocius' servants? by the Sabbat? by the Camarilla?), or he was deposed. Andreas may have been a force to be reckoned with, but he was no longer fit to be a wartime leader. If Andreas was deposed or destroyed, then Jason is in charge now.

If Jason was in charge by the beginning of the Act, then either he looks very good for having brought the Giovanni through this mess more or less intact, or he was killed (if the troupe decided not to help the Children of Isaac). If Jason was killed, then Stephano is in charge.

If Stephano was in charge to begin with, then he still is. He is somewhat shocked by the sheer devastation around him, but he is up to the challenge and does everything he can to get the Giovanni back on their feet. He isn't too shy to call for outside reinforcements if the troupe refused to help the Children and Cappadocius' havoc outstripped the war.

If one of the characters started out in charge, then Jason is now in command of the Giovanni. The character will not get her old position back; even if the characters have gotten back into the good graces of the Giovanni, they aren't trusted enough for that yet.

FURTHER STORIES

The Giovanni have most of an empire to rebuild. Those characters who yet remain are going to have to reestablish good relations with many of their former partners; after all, they dropped off of the map and word was put out that they were off limits. Some businesses were caught in the crossfire during the war and will need to be rebuilt. Damage control

will need to be done on a much wider scale, as the Sabbat and Camarilla weren't particularly discreet during the war. The police and mayor are going to be ill disposed toward the Giovanni for a while, as are a number of other people. A fair number of small adventures could revolve around reestablishing good relations with various people, and perhaps finding ways to put people in debt to the Giovanni again.

Cappadocius' cult may still be wandering around somewhere if the Sabbat didn't finish them off. If the Storyteller worked in something of a millenialist scare in the beginning of this act, then that could really begin to take off now. The cult could well find another "sponsor" and a new high priest or priestess, or stay with some of the other Spectres that had been working for Cappadocius if they're still around.

The Giovanni will need to replace some of their wraith servitors; a handful of them were destroyed or driven away by the Spectres. The locals may well be catching on to the danger the Giovanni present, so this could be harder than it sounds.

Several players in the group are likely to need new characters. Perhaps in an attempt to bolster the flagging numbers of Giovanni in the city, the remaining characters Embrace some younger Giovanni.

If Domenic and Antonio weren't killed during the war, they could still present something of a challenge for the

troupe. Perhaps it's time for the characters to face their rivals, and finally vanquish them.

The tablets are still out there, and the Children may have even agreed to translate them for the characters in return for their help. Check out **Clanbook: Giovanni** for more information about what the Giovanni are trying to do with the information contained on the tablets.

Max Lowell is probably still around and kicking. He isn't a particular threat in and of himself, but the Giovanni may decide that they don't like having a Sabbat spy around. Also, perhaps some of the transient Sabbat or Camarilla who came to help out with the war don't want to leave. They aren't listening to their superiors, who don't want them causing any more trouble in Boston. They just want revenge for what they see as their total humiliation at the hands of the Giovanni.

What will become of the burgeoning friendship between Susanna and Elsa? Is Elsa being swayed to the Giovanni side of things, or is Susanna becoming sympathetic to the Camarilla's view of the world?

Any number of plots remain to be explored in the world of the Giovanni Chronicles. The examples above are just that: examples. More plot ideas can be found in almost any World of Darkness book that could be applied to the current situation, as well as in character descriptions and the Appendix of this book. This story is yours now: Do with it what you will!





DRAMATIS PERSONAE

This chapter includes the Traits and Storytelling devices for the cast of characters in Nuova Malattia. Several of the characters below only have background information. This is due to space restrictions; it wasn't feasible to give every character a complete write-up, including Traits. For these characters, it is unlikely that a complete set of game-specific statistics is necessary. As always, Storytellers should make concessions in favor of the story rather than relying solely on what Madame Ten-sider has to say.

In complete character presentations, Trait scores have been annotated to reflect the character's development over the course of the book. Where a score is given presented as Celerity 1/2/3/3, it means that the character had one level of Celerity in Act I, two in Act II, and so on.

GIOVANNI

ANDREAS GIOVANNI, *Capo di Tutti Capi*

Background: The scion of Giovanni activity in Boston was born in 1690 in a tiny Sicilian town. He was inducted into the stranger aspects of the family at age 10. By age 12, he was fully aware of vampires, ghouls and other supernatural beings, and unlike most Giovanni, he was *offered* the Proxy Kiss, which he refused until he got older.

In 1716, Andreas finally accepted the vampiric blood of his family. He spent several decades as a ghoul, continuing his studies into vampirism (both folklore and truth), the human mind, possessions, sex and anything else re-



ported to be demonically inspired. He had a great deal of trouble accepting that an evil being lurked in a dark, burning pit sending people impulses and changing ordinary folks into murderers and rapists. After all, godly men fell from grace while pagan people did just fine when they were left alone. He finally came to the conclusion that people were simply afraid. They set rules for themselves that they couldn't possibly follow, swore allegiance to a king they'd never met or some totally improbable deity, and then wondered why they were miserable. Andreas Giovanni laughed at mortal minds and decided he'd had enough of fear. He renounced human nature and vowed to spend his life quietly trying to perfect his own condition, and to see what he could do to "perfect" others. It was this decision, and his unwavering contempt of fear, that attracted him to the attention of Lucretia Giovanni.

The Embrace didn't change Andreas much; he continued studying people and wraiths, the vampiric condition, the human condition, etc. As a vampire, however, he was able to truly refine his Necromancy, and made leaps and bounds in that field as well. He was amazed to discover that mortal foibles amplified tremendously in death, so he set about applying his study to wraiths. Such a skilled scholar and Necromancer who was also a superb financier and leader to boot could hardly escape the notice of the clan, however.

In 1920, he was sent to Boston to aid the resident Giovanni. They acknowledged him as a leader quickly, and when the former head of operations was slain in a riot in 1921, Andreas assumed nominal leadership of the family's interests. He immediately reassigned or disposed of the former *don's* minions and instituted his own. Stephano Giovanni, the *don's* grandchilde, was the only one he kept.

Image: Andreas is a slender Italian man with olive skin, a thin goatee and a cherubic smirk on his face — for the cameras. Andreas easily adopts a mask, be it to fool reporters, seduce a vessel or parlay with the Prince of Boston. He favors expensive suits and loves the glamour being a Mafioso brings. He also wonders what will happen to that glamour when Prohibition ends, as he is sure it will.

Roleplaying Hints: You consider yourself a pioneer of psychology, another Freud or Jung, except without the limitations of mortality (or cocaine). You can (and did) study what effects a childhood encounter with a monster will have on an adult — and on that adult's children, and their children, and so forth. The scientific possibilities are unlimited! Pity you'll never be published.

You are curious about — even obsessed with — sex and death. All cultures have taboos on these subjects — why? You never feared death and always found sex natural, with either gender. You miss it sometimes, but you can still draw pleasure from a partner who wants something new and different. Such partners are getting harder to find, however.

Behind the scientist, however, is a brilliant financier and Necromancer. You serve the clan with all your considerable ability, confident that eventually, the Shadowlands and the living world will merge, and then what games you'll play! The one thing that frightens you, however, is Marianna. For some reason, the rogue Giovanni's name tends to crop up in your interrogations of older wraiths. You've been threatened more than once with otherworldly terrors by irate wraiths, but the frequency of these worries you.

Clan: Giovanni

Nature: Manipulator

Demeanor: Deviant

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1754

Apparent Age: mid 20s

Sire: Lucretia Giovanni Capriccio

Physical: Strength 3 Dexterity 3 Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 5 Manipulation 4 Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3 Intelligence 4 Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 4, Expression 3, Grace 2, Intimidation 4, Intuition 3, Leadership 4, Streetwise 3, Style 2, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Body Crafts 2/2/3/3, Etiquette 3, Firearms 2/2/3/3, Performance 1

Knowledges: Academics 3, Area Knowledge (Boston) 3/4/4/5, Enigmas 2, Finance 5, Investigation 2, Law 2, Linguistics (English, French) 2, Occult 4, Politics 3, Psychology 4

Disciplines: Auspex 2/2/3/3, Celerity 1/1/2/2, Dominate 3/4/4/4, Fortitude 2, Necromancy 5, Potence 2/3/3/3, Presence 1, Vicissitude 2/3/3/3

Necromantic Paths: Sepulchre Path 5, Ash Path 3, Bone Path 0/0/1/2

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Contacts 5, Influence 2/3/4/5, Resources 4, Retainers 5, Fame 2 (Act I only)

Virtues: Conscience 2/2/1/0, Self-Control 4/4/4/3, Courage 5

Morality: Humanity 4/4/3/1

Derangements: Megalomania, Nymphomania (and Paranoia, if he survives to Act IV)

Willpower: 8/8/8/6

STEPHANO GIOVANNI, THE COUNCILOR AND SERGEANT

Background: The Giovanni line spawned Stephano Giovanni in 1755 to a wealthy branch of the family. He never had any illusions about the source of his relatives' wealth: They were thieves and murderers, and he didn't want to be a rebel. To the contrary, he worked to find ways to improve his family's estate, and proved adept at squeezing victims until they gave up all they had...and the names of those who could give more.

On his 16th birthday, Stephano was given the Proxy Kiss, under the pretense of losing his virginity. He spent nearly 40 years as a ghoul. He enjoyed the power it bestowed — as a boy, he'd been too weak physically to put his plans into effect directly. Now, as a preternaturally strong boy, he could do so with thrilling results.

Then, in the year 1800, Stephano was captured. He has never stated who his captors were, only that they were not vampires and that they had plans and plots that far outshone his. He was in their custody for only a few months, but that was enough for the Blood to wear off. When he was captured, he was a boy of 16. He left as a man in his 50s.

Stephano professed to have told his persecutors — whom he simply called the "Guild" — nothing. As a reward (and out of a strange mercy), the vampire who found and questioned him also Embraced him. Stephano spent the next

100 years in Rome, studying the occult and rebuilding his body. In the year 1901, he left for America. He came to work in Boston, where he discovered that Raoul Giovanni, his grandsire, was the resident *don*.

In Boston, he was in charge of strong-arm tactics and leg-breaking until Raoul died in 1921. When Andreas took over, Stephano was the only member of the former organization he kept. Stephano considers this an honor and, despite creative differences with Andreas, serves him faithfully.

Image: Stephano is a distinguished older gentleman. He almost always wears gray suits, crisply pressed and perfectly tailored. He refuses to use a cane or any other aid which would reflect his apparent age; in many ways, he still thinks himself a young man. He has silvery hair and a thick white moustache.

Roleplaying Hints: Although your blood is not as pure as some, you have proven yourself to this family time and again, and you will continue to do so. Resting on laurels is repugnant to you; immortal beings cannot be idle, as madness follows that route. You are stern and commanding with underlings, and have no time for beating around the bush or for old wives' tales. One of your main disputes with Andreas, in fact, is over the "Children of Isaac." Your opinion is that they may once have foiled a plot or two of that egotistical bastard, Ambrogino, and he spun them all out of proportion. Of course, as Andreas is Ambrogino's great-great-grandchild, he would never believe this.

Clan: Giovanni

Nature: Director

Demeanor: Bravo

Generation: 11th

Embrace: 1800

Apparent Age: 50s

Sire: Paulo Giovanni

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 2/2/3/3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 2

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Intimidation 4, Leadership 2/2/3/3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Drive 1/1/2/2, Etiquette 2, Firearms 3, Performance 1/1/2/2, Security 2

Knowledges: Finance 2/2/2/3, Linguistics (English) 1, Occult 3

Disciplines: Dominate 3/3/4/5, Fortitude 2, Necromancy 1/2/2/3, Potence 3/3/3/4, Presence 1/2/3/4

Necromantic Paths: Sepulchre Path 1/2/2/3

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Influence 2, Resources 3, Retainers 4

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 3, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 6/5/5/4

Willpower: 7





PAUL DICARLO, THE ALPHA

12th Generation, childe of Stephano Giovanni

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Gallant

Embrace: 1930

Apparent Age: early 40s

DiCarlo was born in Italy but has few memories of the Old Country. His family immigrated to New York in 1903. His father, a brilliant and highly moral man, was wooed by the Giovanni family as a contact in the local police, but refused them. Paul has vague childhood memories of his mother begging his father to take work with them so that he could buy food, and his father refusing on moral grounds. To this day, these thoughts make Paul physically ill, simply from association.

Paul's father died in 1909 of influenza. Paul worked from that point on, at whatever jobs he could get. This included working for the Giovanni family, who recognized his talent for bargaining and sent him to law school.

Paul wasn't given the Proxy Kiss until after he was married and had a family. Stephano Giovanni discovered that this talented lawyer was a cousin to him, albeit several times removed, and admired his strength and realistic approach to things. Paul was made a ghoul a matter of weeks before the players' characters. He is Embraced shortly thereafter.

Paul is slightly over six feet tall and very thin, though not morbidly so. His once-black hair is graying, but his face remains young. Like many "professional" Giovanni, he wears tailored suits and silk ties.

Paul's demeanor changes a bit in the shift from ghoul to vampire. He has blinding, nigh-uncontrollable urges to Embrace his entire family so that they don't change; he knows, however, as a father, how cruel that would be to a child. Paul's niece, Susanna, is the only one he chooses to Embrace (in Act IV). Paul is a gentleman, a gracious host and a talented lawyer.

If his new unlife is based on breaking the law, it is because he feels America broke its promise to him in allowing his family to go hungry, forcing it to choose between starvation and crime. Paul bears a mote of ill will toward the Giovanni family because they allowed his wife to die of cancer (in 1927) before revealing how she might be made eternal.

ANTONIO GIOVANNI, TIRED OLD KINDRED

10th Generation, childe of Augustino Giovanni

Nature: Martyr

Demeanor: Autocrat

Embrace: 1875

Apparent Age: 48

Antonio had a sharp mind, and he and his wife Elisa were both Embraced by Antonio's father in 1875. They worked extraordinarily well together; there was very little the two could not do if they set their minds to it. They ghouled their son, Domenic, and brought him into the business.

In 1954, hunters killed Elisa. Antonio was devastated. On the outside he continued almost as before; his temper flared more often and his tongue sharpened, but he kept up the appearance of his old unlife. He wasn't as effective with her gone, but he pretended he could continue without her.

Inside he was dying again. He tried to explain how he felt to Domenic, but his son didn't understand. Domenic told Antonio to get over it, that if the Giovanni became displeased with him, Domenic wasn't going to back him up. All Domenic cared about was power and the Giovanni family; he couldn't see past that to his father's grief.

Perhaps that's why Antonio speaks too freely to Teresa Powers in Act II. He needs someone to understand what he was going through. And after five years without his beloved Elisa, he didn't much care whether the Giovanni killed him. He tried to pretend to be his old self for Domenic's sake, but the more



Domenic proved himself to be a power-hungry bastard, the less Antonio cared about what happened to the boy.

Traits are not provided for Antonio because if anyone ever attacked him, they'd succeed in killing him. Antonio would pretend to put up a fight, but secretly he'd be trying to join Elisa.

DOMENIC GIOVANNI, THE TURK

Background: The Giovanni do not tolerate failure. Domenic used to have a friend in the family, Amilar; the two were approximately the same age, and they were both ghouls. Then, in 1921, Amilar screwed up a business deal and lost the Giovanni a valued business partner. Andreas held a big party for all of the Boston family. When Amilar arrived, Andreas smiled and shook his hand. Then Andreas pulled a knife and gutted the young man. He had Amilar hung up by his feet against a wall, and the Kindred in the room filled their glasses from the blood that flowed from his fingers.

Domenic never forgot the lesson he learned that day: Never disappoint the Giovanni. He spent the better part of a decade making sure Amilar's screw-up wouldn't reflect on him.

Domenic loves his father, Antonio, in his own fashion. And he misses his dead mother as well. But neither of those emotions is enough to overpower his fear of the Giovanni. He'd rather kill his father himself than allow his father to screw up his chances with the family.

Unfortunately for Domenic, he's too busy trying to get noticed in 1959 to anticipate his father's indiscretion with Teresa Powers. By the time he notices, it's too late, and his father is already being demoted. Among the Giovanni, the sins of the father are visited upon the children, and Domenic is demoted along with his father. He confronts his father, enraged about what happened, and his father offers him the only thing he can — the Embrace. In 1959, Domenic becomes one of the Kindred.



Domenic has two goals: to erase the stain from his background and convince the Giovanni he is worthwhile and to take revenge upon the people who were given his and his father's positions.

Image: Domenic is short, with a stocky frame, although he is not overweight. His hair is dark brown and held back in a ponytail. He wears white collared shirts and nice black pants; when possible he leaves the collars unbuttoned and forgoes a tie (he's always found ties to be too constrictive). His jaw is large and his eyes are dark brown.

Roleplaying Hints: Do anything the Giovanni tell you to do; you'd sell your soul to be in their good graces. You constantly calculate what to do to win yourself praise and erase the stain on your record. Revenge upon those who were promoted above you is less important than your own self-promotion, but you won't forget about it. And eventually, sometime when she isn't so well watched, you'll torture and kill that little Harvard bitch who trapped your father into fucking you over.

Clan: Giovanni

Sire: Antonio Giovanni

Nature: Rogue

Demeanor: Conformist

Generation: 11th

Embrace: 1959

Apparent Age: 28

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 1, Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 1, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1

Skills: Drive 2, Firearms 3, Melee 2, Security 2

Knowledges: Finance 2, Investigation 4, Occult 1

Disciplines: Dominate 1, Necromancy 1, Potence 2

Necromantic Paths: Sepulchre Path 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Generation 2, Herd 1, Resources 2

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 4

Willpower: 4

MARIANNA

Background: Claudius Giovanni's accidental progeny was a simple and naive Italian peasant girl, just shy of 18 years old in April of 1444. She was thrilled to be invited to the manse of Claudius Giovanni for dinner. The result was an unlife of persecution and terror.

Embraced by Claudius, Marianna studied first with Cappadocius' monks, then in the Far East, and later mounted a campaign against her clan. Over the years, she has been responsible for the deaths of a number of highly placed Giovanni, has become an accomplished Thaumaturgist, and is a leading (if quiet) vampiric expert on wraiths and the Underworld.



Each passing year, however, brings the guilt of being a vampire to bear a bit more. With the destruction of Hiroshima, she knew her time — and that of Cappadocius — was coming. She is determined, however, to not die alone or in vain.

Marianna has cultivated contacts in the Inquisition, which allow her access to otherwise lost texts. She knows that Cappadocius' soul, whatever condition it's in, must be laid to rest before the Giovanni find out where and what it is. To that end, she started researching a means to do so. This research brings her to Boston shortly before the other Children of Isaac arrive. Unlike previous encounters, however, she shies away from them. She has no wish to drag them down with her — or to give them a bargaining chip with the Necromancers.

Image: Once a lovely young woman (though still attractive) Marianna's features and bearing carry an intensity that scares those around her. She does not wear dresses or skirts, and wardrobe herself with the notion that she may be called to combat at any moment. She wears her flame-red hair back most of the time. Her eyes were once a deep, innocent brown, but lately they have darkened, becoming almost black.

Roleplaying Hints: You have never felt so pressed for time. You look at death like some people might regard graduation — long awaited, but never really achievable. Soon, though, you know your moment will come, and you are determined that your mentor, Cappadocius, will rest in peace. You are extremely lonely, and you pass people on the street at night and wonder about their thoughts, try to read their faces, try to see where they might be going. "Slow down," you want to scream, "you are all blessed." But you cannot. You fall asleep weeping tears of blood every morning.

Clan: Giovanni

Sire: Claudius Giovanni

Nature: Martyr

Demeanor: Loner

Generation: 6th

Embrace: 1444

Apparent Age: mid 20s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 5, Brawl 3, Dodge 5, Empathy 4, Hagglng 2, Interrogation 3, Intrigue 4, Masquerade 3, Seduction 4, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Etiquette 3, Melee 5, Meditation 3, Performance 3, Sleight of Hand 2, Stealth 4, Tracking 3

Knowledges: Alchemy 2, Camarilla Lore 4, Investigation 4, Law 3, Linguistics (a broad selection of European languages) 5, Medicine 2, Occult 6, Research 5,

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Celerity 3, Dominate 4, Fortitude 3, Necromancy 4, Obfuscate 4, Potence 5, Thaumaturgy 4

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 4, Spirit Manipulation 3, The Green Path 2

Necromantic Paths: Sepulchre Path 4, Ash Path 4

Backgrounds: Allies 1 (Father Carlos), Contacts 5, Resources 3 (no steady income, but a great deal of liquid wealth)

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 7

Willpower: 7

Notes: Marianna may know whatever Thaumaturgical or Necromantic rituals the Storyteller chooses. However, there are two mentioned in the main text. One is Incorporeal Passage, which may be found in *Vampire: The Masquerade*. The second is called Caul the Living Mind.

When a person dies and becomes a wraith, they enter the Shadowlands wearing a hood called a Caul. It prevents the new wraith from panicking, but also shuts down her senses. The ritual does much the same thing — it immobilizes a target without causing real harm.

The ritual involves mixing the caster's blood, graveyard dirt and a small piece of baby skin (as embarrassed as she is about it, Marianna often uses the foreskin from recently circumcised babies). This mixture is then enchanted over the course of two hours. The result, a tiny piece of skin, must be touched to the target's face or neck. The target will then collapse, blissfully immobilized for one scene. If the skin leaves the caster's hand before touching the target, however, that skin is useless. Marianna keeps three on her person at all times.

Caul the Living Mind is a level four Necromantic ritual.

JASON MILLINER, THE PRODIGY

Background: One of Francis Milliner's nephews, and a shrewd businessman, Jason was born to Francis' younger brother Lawrence and was always the baby of the family.

Jason has always been determined to make it on his own. Gradually, through hard work and cunning, Jason made a name for himself. When he acquired a small bank Francis' eye had been on, even Jason's father stopped calling him "Boy."



Jason was no longer the baby of the family; he was "My Good Nephew Jason." Soon Francis was sending people to the young man when he didn't have the time to take care of things himself. Jason wasn't Francis' son, but he was treated as such, even more so than Francis' real son Benjamin.

Jason has become a cutthroat businessman. He's charm overlaid on top of a coldly calculating, ingenious mind. He has retained an odd sense of honor through all of this; he believes in repaying his debts, and the people he screws over in business deals often find their lives getting better in odd little ways. This is why he helps the characters to win the Embrace at the end of Act II — assuming the Giovanni screwed the characters out of the Embrace earlier in the act.

Jason is fiercely loyal to his family. While he didn't want their handouts, he knows they meant well, and he is grateful to his family for all they've done for him. Benjamin's death at the end of Act II shakes him up badly, and he will never quite forgive Andreas for it. He understands that Benjamin was stupid and brought it upon himself, which is why Jason does not openly act against the Giovanni.

Image: Jason is tall and slender, with short hair on the blond side of brown. Other than a large nose, his features are handsome. His eyes are a cold blue. Jason wears expensive suits in white or gray. He stuffs his hands in his pockets when he isn't using them to illustrate a point. When he wants to charm someone, his face lights up and he smiles sweetly; those who know what he's really like can see the calculating switch from one face to another, but most others are fooled.

Roleplaying Hints: You're all business. Even when you're charming someone, it's business. You're shrewd, cunning and cold. You're fiercely loyal to your family; you only get angry when someone has hurt them. Otherwise you're very good at staying in control. You have an odd sense of honor that bothers you at times. After all, in the course of

business you're always hurting people, taking away their money or their homes or their businesses. Hurting people doesn't bother you; it's the sense that you're taking something too easily that drives you crazy. So when you ruin a man by destroying his business so that it won't compete with your own, you might set up an anonymous trust fund so his daughter will be able to go to school. If you've had to work hard for something, then it's a different matter; it was a fair fight and you don't owe anything. You have "friends" in high society, but you look down on most of them. They're useful, nothing more than that, although you're careful to be friendly to their faces.

Clan: Giovanni

Sire: Andreas Giovanni

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Gallant

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1959

Apparent Age: 27

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 1, Dodge 2, Intimidation 1, Leadership 1, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Firearms 1, Performance 2

Knowledges: Academics 3, Bureaucracy 2, Finance 4, Law 1, Linguistics 2, Literature 1, Politics 3

Disciplines: Auspex 1, Dominate 1, Potence 1, Presence 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 4, Generation 3, Herd 1, Influence 2, Resources 4

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

Morality: Humanity 6

Willpower: 5

Notes: By Act III, Jason has picked up two dots in the Strategy Skill and one dot in the Necromancy Discipline. Obviously, until he is Embraced in Part III of Act II, he has no Disciplines.

CAMARILLA

PUG JACKSON

Background: Embraced in Africa in 1734 and enslaved by American Ventrue six years later, Pug Jackson worked as a slave on a plantation until the overseer to whom he was bound was killed. At that point, Pug fled to Boston, where he met a Brujah named Denmark Turner, who would be his mentor. In 1861, Turner left to fight in the Civil War. He asked Pug to guard his property while he was gone, but he never returned. By 1895, Jackson had created a brood that subsisted off the mortals in the area.

In the modern nights, Jackson has ties to a few gangs in Massachusetts, both mortal and Kindred. He is a surpris-



ingly powerful player in the Camarilla politics of New England. He operates Denmark's, a popular nightclub among both Hispanic and African-American populations of the area.

Image: Jackson is tall, imposing and bald. He prefers to wear red Converse high-tops and black baseball caps. He carries a heavy aluminum bat at his side and a SigSauer P220 under his jacket.

Roleplaying Hints: You treat people rough because that's what they did to you. If someone earns your contempt, you become brutal.

Clan: Brujah

Sire: Sranganyika

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Bravo

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1734

Apparent Age: 25

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Intimidation 4, Leadership 3, Streetwise 5, Subterfuge 1

Skills: Drive 3, Etiquette 1, Firearms 4, Melee 4, Security 2, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Area Knowledge (Boston) 4, Finance 2, Politics 2

Disciplines: Celerity 4, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 1, Potence 5, Presence 3

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Contacts 3, Resources 3, Status 3

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

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 7

YONG-SUNG CHANG, THE HOPE

Background: Yong-Sung Chang was one of the lieutenants of Theo Bell, the archon who took New York City from the Sabbat. Yong-Sung has been sent (in Act IV) to "liberate" Boston of Sabbat and Giovanni influences. Yong-Sung is competent, strong-willed, intelligent and charismatic: in short, a great wartime leader. Unknown to Prince Quentin, Yong-Sung has been told that if he takes Boston, he can keep it. He skillfully treats Quentin with deference, while giving all of the orders himself. Quentin is sharp enough to see through this, but as Yong-Sung's behavior is technically flawless, there's nothing Quentin can call him on. Yong-Sung heard from Pug Jackson, who happily signed up to help, that the Six will obey Quentin's every order, so he tells Quentin what to tell them and watches to make sure the orders are relayed correctly.

Yong-Sung enjoys the prospect of power, but his true passion is to destroy the Sabbat, the Giovanni and any others who won't be a part of the Camarilla. He would probably be Prince of Boston for a decade or two, but he would inevitably move on to take another city.

The Camarilla's action is successful against the Sabbat because Yong-Sung understands the Black Hand and is willing to do battle on their terms. Because of this he lacks a few of the morals the Camarilla holds most dear. He understands this, and sees it as a necessary sacrifice. He also understands that this isn't something the Camarilla should find out about.

Image: Yong-Sung is slender and of medium height. His eyes are a dark brown and he wears his shoulder-length black hair loose on his back. His face is round and almost childlike, but the set of his shoulders erases any doubt as to his maturity.

Roleplaying Hints: The expression on your face is carefully neutral; you display as little emotion as possible, except



when deliberately planned for a specific effect. You treat your people well so that they will serve you with loyalty as well as obedience. You're a plotter, a schemer and a strategist.

Influence: Yong-Sung wields a great deal of influence among the New England Camarilla; much of this comes from Theo's success at New York. He still has to prove himself to those Camarilla who already exist in Boston, but those he brought with him are devoted to him. Most of them served under him in New York.

Clan: Ventrue

Sire: Rosalind Farrell (childe of Lady Jadviga Almanov; see *The Last Supper*)

Nature: Visionary

Demeanor: Leader

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1848

Apparent Age: 28

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Leadership 4, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1

Skills: Etiquette 2, Firearms 4, Performance 2, Security 3, Stealth 3, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 2, Bureaucracy 3, Expert Knowledge: Strategy 3, Finance 2, Investigation 3, Law 1, Linguistics 2, Politics 3

Disciplines: Dominate 3, Fortitude 2, Presence 2, Protean 2

Backgrounds: Followers 3, Generation 5, Herd 1, Influence 3, Resources 3, Retainers 2, Status 3

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 5

Derangements: Berserk

Willpower: 6

CHARACTERS FROM DARK COLONY

QUENTIN KING III, THE ARTHURIAN

Background: Quentin King was a police inspector on the trail of a child-killer and cannibal named Skarvan. King got close to capturing Skarvan a number of times, but failed again and again. His failure ate away at him until he became desperate, and he raised a posse to search for Skarvan.

Skarvan, a Malkavian, had been watching the inspector. He was outraged that a mortal might endanger him, and he plotted revenge. He Embraced King, and threw him into a pit. He covered him with alternating layers of dirt, worms and pieces of Skarvan's previous victims. By the time King had clawed his way out of the pit, he had moved from shock, to panic, to horror, to rage. Then Skarvan slit his own throat, laid his head on King's lap and was promptly diablerized.

The odd act of self-sacrifice was prompted by six Blood Bound vampires (see *The Six Knights*) who believed them-



selves to be squires to Skarvan. They combined their abilities to force him to give himself over to the inspector (to them, King Arthur), and they asked him to knight them with Excalibur (a butter knife).

The good King led the six vampires to Boston, where, with their help, he became a leader. King wreaked havoc on the local Sabbat and took the princedom of Boston. He determined to create a "court" of beauty and justice, and became popular with the Toreador. He spent too much time on his court, however, and not enough on the Sabbat. King was forced to accept the aid of the British Camarilla in keeping the Sabbat at bay, and he became little more than a puppet for other Camarilla.

King is involved in everything but the church and the underworld — both provinces of the Giovanni. He has contacts and ties among the police and judiciary system, major corporations and politicians of the area. He is well liked among Toreador, who value his ability to critique art.

King's Six Knights remain loyal, but they and the Toreador are almost the only ones. King is too frightened of his enemies to fight them. King worries about the Giovanni, but refuses to admit this. He already has two problems he can't handle in the British and the Sabbat, and he doesn't want anyone to suspect that he has a third. King keeps a close eye on the Giovanni, but he leaves most of the decisions to other Camarilla. He feels penned in on all sides, and wonders if moving to another city wouldn't be the better part of valor. He feels shame at his cowardice, however, and keeps it to himself.

Image: Quentin is sandy-haired and tall, with broad shoulders. He has long lashes and compelling hazel eyes, as well as a square jaw.

Roleplaying Hints: Stare hypnotically at those who beg your audience. Drum your fingers on the arm of your chair if

you're sitting. Walk with dignity — tall and straight, taking your time. Never laugh or otherwise display a sense of humor; sarcasm and irony are lost on you. Speak as if you are involved in a formal debate; attempt to move the characters with inspiring rhetoric.

Clan: Malkavian

Sire: Nathan Skarvan

Nature: Conniver

Demeanor: Judge

Generation: 8th (through diablerie)

Embrace: 1811

Apparent Age: mid 30s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Expression 2, Intrigue 4, Leadership 4, Masquerade 4, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Etiquette 4, Firearms 3, Performance 4, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Academics 2, Area Knowledge (Boston) 5, Bureaucracy 3, Expert Knowledge: Criminology 3, Investigation 4, Law 3, Politics 3

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Celerity 1, Dominate 5, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 3, Potence 1, Presence 3

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Herd 3, Influence 3, Resources 5, Retainers 3, Status 5

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

Morality: Humanity 4

Derangements: Delusion, Schizophrenia

Willpower: 7

THE SIX KNIGHTS

Background: Quentin's Six Knights were institutionalized for various forms of mental illness. They became good companions, and shared a delusory world of knights, dragons and sorcerers, which gave them some limited ability to interact with the real world. When Skarvan Embraced them and took them away, they believed they had been ensorcelled by a dark knight.

When Skarvan captured Quentin King, the Six believed Quentin by his noble bearing and royal features to be a great king. When the Six saw the terrible treatment Skarvan gave this noble, who was obviously of higher station than Skarvan was, they did not approve, and part of the ensorcellment (the Blood Bond) dissolved.

The Six saw Skarvan Embrace King and bury him beneath the earth, and they were shocked by Skarvan's beastliness. When King clawed his way free of the earth, the Six concentrated on destroying Skarvan. As a result, Skarvan sacrificed himself to King. The Six presented themselves to "Arthur," and had him knight them with a butter knife. Since then, they have followed King faithfully and have become princes of various cities in Massachusetts.

The Six do not understand why King would make them follow the orders of some other petty king's pawns (the

Camarilla outsiders), and they fear their once-great ruler may be the victim of an ensorcellment of his own. The Six refuse to disobey King, but they resent the ensorcellment of their leader and have vowed to find out who has done this to him, and slay the dark sorcerer.

The Six care less about dividing lines such as Camarilla, Sabbat, and Giovanni than they do about serving and protecting their liege. They believe the Sabbat to be monsters, and hunt them as the knights of stories hunted dragons. They have little interest in the Giovanni, whom they see as simple merchants.

The Six don't make much of an appearance until Act IV, when they return to help their Lord with the war. Unfortunately for Yong-Sung Chang, the Ventrue who comes to town to lead the assault against the Giovanni and the Sabbat, they decide upon his arrival, due to his commanding tone, his bearing, and the way he gives orders to Quentin, that he is the King who has ensorcelled their master.

The following are Traits for all the Six Knights, although they may (and should) be individualized as the Storyteller wishes, where page count isn't a limiting factor.

The knight Sir Cum Laude remains in Boston to advise King. The others "rule" their own cities: Sir Praxis rules Worcester; Sir Sine Qua Non rules New Bedford; Sir Pro Bono rules Gloucester; Sir Sine Die rules Lowell; and Sir Probus rules Quincy.

Image: Two of the knights are male and in their early 30s. One female and two males are in their 20s. One boy is 13. All stand straight and proud. They basically keep up with the times, but they wear formal clothing with a certain flair and style.

Roleplaying Hints: You believe yourself to be a noble lord in a medieval fantasy world. Sabbat are monsters rather than vampires; Quentin King is King Arthur himself. You are cordial, chivalrous and polite at all times, but you demand respect.

Clan: Malkavian

Sire: Nathan Skarvan

Nature: Varies

Demeanor: Judge

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1810

Apparent Age: varied (20s and 30s, but one is 13)

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 4, Expression 1, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Etiquette 4, Melee 4, Survival 2

Knowledges: Academics (variable), Area Knowledge (Boston or own city) 4, Politics 1

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Dominate 3, Obfuscate 4

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Herd 2, Influence 2, Resources 3, Retainers 3, Status 5

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

Morality: Humanity 6

Derangements: Delusion and take your pick

Willpower: 6

Notes: The Six possess a sort of innate magical ability. It allows them to mentally Dominate other creatures. They must concentrate; it takes a couple of minutes and is very hard on them. At least one of them must be able to see the target at all times, and all of the Knights must be in agreement as to what they want the target to do. Each Knight contributes as many points of temporary Willpower as he wants, and each point equals one die in the Pool. The Six roll against the target's Willpower, and must accumulate 10 successes. If successful, they can command anyone, even vampires of lower generation. If a botch occurs, all accumulated successes are lost and the Six must start again from scratch; the difficulty of this repeated attempt is one higher. The Storyteller should keep in mind that the loss of so many points of Willpower at once is not a trivial thing.

ELSA LINDEN

Background: Elsa is a stunning composer, but because she is a woman, her musical career was destined to go no further than the salons her parents held. During one of these salons, Elsa caught the attention of Annabelle Triabell, a Toreador. Elsa's parents entrusted her to the care of Annabelle, who Embraced her. When Triabell left for Chicago, Elsa refused to leave New England.

Elsa assumed the principedom of Manchester, Vermont, in 1890, although no other Kindred made havens there. She transformed the town from a dull village into a thriving center for the arts. In 1895, the Lupines came uncomfortably close to the city, and the Sabbat and the British Camarilla fought over Vermont. Elsa moved to Provincetown, on the easternmost tip of Cape Cod, Massachusetts.



The British Kindred in Boston ignored Elsa and her few progeny; the Toreador seemed of little immediate threat. However, one of the British arranged the destruction of an exhibit which Elsa was under contract to protect. The destruction of the exhibit brought Elsa's reputation low.

Elsa is furious with the British, and would do anything to have her revenge upon them. Despite this, she gets along well with Quentin King. She finds his outdated manners and odd delusions charming, and has helped him to gain popularity among the Toreador. She takes advantage of his acquaintance to plant Toreador sympathetic to her in Boston.

Elsa has met some of the more savory Giovanni at functions at the Boston Public Library, the Museum of Fine Arts, and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Because of her one-sided experience of the Giovanni, she has a reasonably high opinion of them. She pays attention to rumor, however, so she knows they aren't all that they seem. Elsa thinks Andreas has some intriguing ideas about art and what it shows about the artist; her good sense vies with her wish to continue the conversation at some later date.

Roger Drake, Elsa's pseudonym, is known as one of the premier composers of the present day. She is a well-respected, if reclusive, member of the town's musical elite. She travels to many New England movie festivals in disguise, and she maintains some influence over Manchester, Vermont.

Image: Elsa's strawberry-blond hair cascades down her back. Her features are fine, and her violet eyes peek out from beneath long, thick eyelashes. She wears simple but alluring dresses.

Roleplaying Hints: Play the part of a witty socialite at Kindred functions. Maneuver other people into lauding your accomplishments for you. If you interact personally with those of lower station, act distant or bored. Only ply your wit upon those who are worth it (those who are at least as powerful as you).

Clan: Toreador

Sire: Annabelle Triabell

Nature: Gallant

Demeanor: Bon Vivant

Generation: 7th

Embrace: 1791

Apparent Age: 24

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 6

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Talents: Acting 2, Alertness 1, Artistic Expression 5, Diplomacy 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Intrigue 4, Leadership 4, Seduction 3, Singing 3, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Dancing 2, Drive 1, Etiquette 4, Firearms 1, Masquerade 3, Music 6, Style 3

Knowledges: Art History 1, Kindred Lore 2, Linguistics 3, Literature 1

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Celerity 3, Chimerstry 2, Dominate 4, Presence 6

Backgrounds: Fame 1 (under pseudonym Roger Drake), Herd 2, Resources 4, Status 5

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 2, Courage 4

Humanity: 5

Willpower: 8

Notes: Elsa's sixth level of Presence can cause others to fall in love with her, similar to the effects of a Blood Bond. Her Chimerstry Discipline allows her to create minor immobile illusions. She keeps her ability with Chimerstry largely secret, using it only to amuse herself.

SABBAT

MAX LOWELL

Background: The vampire named Max was born Kazunori Takeishi. He was well on his way to an early grave, probably via drive-by shooting, when a City Gangrel decided this gang member could be useful and dragged him off to the Sabbat Creation Rites. Max proved himself worthy of his sire's confidence. He's an extraordinary city hunter, tracking his prey for nights or even weeks sometimes before moving in for the kill. He's patient and cunning, although he takes a pleasure in killing that frightens even other Sabbat members.

Max was sent to keep an eye on Boston. He privately suspects that the Giovanni will always hold Boston; he thinks that's a reasonable loss as long as they show no signs of expanding and the Camarilla don't get Boston for themselves. Max road-trips to his pack's communal haven in Yarmouth, Maine, at least once a month.

Most Sabbat believe it to be wrong to consort with humans in any respect. Max is allowed to keep his

Chinatown arrangement because he gets so much information out of it. Or perhaps the Sabbat member he'd had to give an accounting to simply appreciated it when Max shrugged and said, "Anyone who wants to kill me has to get through them first. By the time my little unfortunates are all dead, I'm long gone."

Image: Max is neither tall nor short. His hair is long and black, and pulled sharply to the back of his head. He dresses in understated black leather, like an extra from a bad action movie.

Roleplaying Hints: You are patient and quiet. Your sire taught you that there was more to be learned by listening than talking, and you took her lesson to heart. You act friendly and open, right until you put your fangs to someone's jugular vein. Once you decide that someone needs to die, you are relentless. Some might call your long hunts torture; they're probably right, but that doesn't bother you.

You may not seem like Sabbat material on the surface, but those who know you have learned better. An impetuous young Lasombra once questioned whether you were really fit for unlife. Two nights later he was found on a rooftop with his throat slit and his limbs ripped from his body; his badly mutilated corpse was almost unrecognizable before it crumbles to ash.

Clan: City Gangrel

Sire: Mallory Jameson

Nature: Predator

Demeanor: Pragmatist

Generation: 12th

Embrace: 1948

Apparent Age: 23

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Interrogation 2, Streetwise 4

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Firearms 2, Security 3, Stealth 4, Survival 3

Knowledges: Area Knowledge (Boston) 3, Enigmas 2

Disciplines: Celerity 2, Obfuscate 2, Protean 2

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 3, Generation 1, Herd 2, Influence 1, Pack Recognition 1

Virtues: Conscience 1, Self-Control 4, Courage 3

Morality: Humanity 3

Derangements: Blood sweats, Gluttony

Willpower: 4

Notes: it would be difficult for anyone to attack Max in Chinatown; most of the people in the area know him and would move to protect him, to repay a favor or because they fear him. At the very least, they would alert him to any danger. In return, he protects them as well.





MORTALS

HANK ROTHENSTEIN, THE PROVIDER

Giovanni ghoul, regnant of Andreas Giovanni

Nature: Conformist

Demeanor: Confidant

Blood Bond: Established 1923

Apparent Age: mid 30s

Born to a very strict Jewish family in 1889, Henry Rothenstein grew up with very little sense of self. Everything he undertook was done for the benefit of his family, school, work, synagogue; nothing was for him. He wasn't resentful of this; in fact, he didn't even realize it until he met Andreas Giovanni in 1923.

Andreas couldn't have cared less about Hank's religious background. What he cared about was Hank's extraordinary logic and organizational skills, as well as his prowess with numbers. Andreas gave him the Proxy Kiss, and explained to him outright that he stood no chance of becoming Kindred. Hank, who had only recently begun to want things for himself, accepted that, and has never once felt jealous of his Kindred peers.

Hank rose to infamy in the Boston underworld very quickly. Despite Hank's grating personality and aggravating voice, no one debates his amazing skill at bartering and diplomacy. By 1928, he was known as "Hank the Fixer," and had his fingers dipped lightly into so many pies that even Andreas does not know the extent of his connections. This hardly matters; his Blood Bond to Andreas is faultless and Hank would never betray him.

If Andreas dies in Act III (or later, in Act IV), Hank will need to find a new domitor and he knows it. He petitions Paul DiCarlo if no one else (read: the troupe) volunteers.

Hank is a short, stout, man with traditional Semitic features. He wears unnecessarily thick glasses and speaks with a nasal whine mixed with a thick Boston accent. He favors expensive suits (he gets them wholesale) but never looks quite right in them. He refuses to carry a gun, claiming he doesn't need one. He's right; in the event of his death (at least in 1929), enough damaging information would be released via secret contacts to indict half the civil servants in Boston.

Andreas finds Hank's motives unquestionable: He has none. Hank seems to live to serve. That isn't because of the bond, and it's not a lie, it's just the way he is. He honestly enjoys getting people what they want, because he rarely wants anything for himself. Hank is flattered that Andreas, so powerful and important a man, takes such an interest in him. The Giovanni often asks him personal questions, and Hank answers to the best of his ability. Hank has an appreciation for verbal fencing, and often laces his conversation with subtle jokes. Often these are self-deprecating, but sometimes they are political, sexual or just wry. If someone misses a joke Hank thinks is obvious, he tends to patronize the "lackwit" somewhat.

WILLIAM HALBERT, GOD'S SOLICITOR

Nature: Judge

Demeanor: Judge

Apparent Age: early 40s

William Halbert was born to a rich Bostonian family in 1940. His family profited tremendously from the Second World War, and he lived a life of luxury. This life ended abruptly in 1954, when Halbert's father was arrested for embezzling. The family lost everything, and William had no sympathy for his parents, merely a feeling that this was God's justice.

Never a religious person before, the young Halbert sought out advice from various priests and pastors, but never quite found what felt right. Finally, he stumbled over a bum on the sidewalk and attempted to give him money. The bum



lunged for his throat. Halbert fell back, screaming the only phrase from the Bible he could remember: "I will teach you fear of the Lord." The bum fell on him, then recoiled and fled. Down the street, Halbert heard screaming and gunfire. He ran, and found a cell of the Boston Cenaculum, from the Society of Leopold. He had found his faith.

Halbert became an Inquisitor and also a prosecutor. He is known in Boston as a very obstinate man: He does not plea bargain, and has been reminded by several judges that he is not conducting a witch-hunt. He takes umbrage at that; to him, that is exactly what he is doing.

Halbert does not smile much, if at all. He dresses for whatever courtroom he finds himself in; for him, all life is judgment. In the court of Man, he dresses like a successful lawyer. When dispensing God's law, he dresses in loose-fitting black clothes, and always carries at least two crucifixes.

William Halbert is living proof that the sins of the father are not visited upon the son. He finds himself humbled each day, however, by the fact that all of Boston's upper crust knew his father, and they think William to be a failure because of his steadfast refusal to join the men's clubs. "This must be the generation of those who love pleasure more than God," thinks William Halpert. "So much work to do, and only one lifetime in which to do it."

TERESA POWERS, THE STUDENT MOLL

Background: An enthusiastic scholar, Teresa is working on her Master's degree in American History at Harvard. She's almost there, but the last part is the hardest; males dominate this part of the academic process, so she has to fight sexism all the way. Still, she manages; she's nothing if not stubborn. Her mother called it "perseverance"; Teresa preferred to call it her mule blood.

Teresa's father disowned her when she entered Harvard. Maybe if Dad had a son it would be different, but he'd been stuck with a daughter. Luckily for Teresa, her mother's father

was proud of her — she was his only grandchild. He paid her way through college. Her parents died in an auto accident during her sophomore year; she went to the funeral, but she didn't cry. She couldn't — too many memories kept her attention. Memories of her father pointing a gun at her in a drunken rage. Memories of her mother telling her that her father just got that way sometimes, and to pay no mind to it.

Teresa has a dark side. She doesn't fear much of anything; staring down the barrel of a gun at a drunk man when you're eight can do that to you. She studies the Mafia because they excite her, because the danger of dealing with them turns her on. She isn't interested in getting hurt — she just likes the feel of danger, the adrenaline rush, the cold knot in the pit of her stomach. Once, when a good "family man" offered to let her hold his gun, the feel of the cold metal in her hand turned her on more than anything she'd experienced before. She fucked the enforcer right there on the interview table; she left bite marks on his neck that his cousins teased him about for weeks. In a sexual situation, she likes to struggle with her partner; a good physical fight for dominance excites her regardless of the outcome of the fight.

Stephano uses Presence on Teresa to find out whether any Giovanni have been telling her too much. Teresa finds him fascinating. Teresa's grandfather is still alive, although deteriorating rapidly. She visits him in the hospital often.

Image: Teresa cuts a confident figure. She wears jeans and designer sweaters and pulls her light-brown hair back in a long ponytail. Her eyes are gray-blue and are perpetually shadowed by light bags, as though she doesn't sleep enough. Her mouth turns up on the left when she smiles, and her eyes sparkle with a dark sort of mirth.

Roleplaying Hints: You know how much danger you put yourself in, but it doesn't bother you. You walk into the havens of cold-blooded executioners with the same confident stride that carries you to the store next door. It's this same confidence, and an innate friendliness and sense of humor, that sees you safe again out the other side. You're a tomboy, and most men who aren't out-and-out sexists treat you like one of the guys — or one of their guns.

You have standards and prefer longer relationships to one-night stands, but when the situation is dangerous enough and you get horny enough, you'll make exceptions. You want to know everything you can find out about the Mafia and the way they operate; the whole idea of the Mafia excites you. If someone as high up in the Mafia community as the characters are wants to lay a more permanent claim on you, can keep up with your tastes, and otherwise interests and doesn't abuse you, you'll be more than happy to become involved.

You haven't done anything illegal yet, but it won't take much to send you spiraling down that dark path.

Nature: Thrill-Seeker

Demeanor: Deviant

Born: 1935

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2



Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3
Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3
Talents: Alertness 1, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 1
Skills: Animal Ken 1, Drive 1, Etiquette 1, Firearms 1, Stealth 1
Knowledges: Academics 3, Bureaucracy 1, Economics 1, History 3, Investigation 2, Medicine 1, Politics 1, Psychology 2, Science 1
Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 5, Resources 1
Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 2, Courage 5
Morality: Humanity 6
Willpower: 5

Notes: If Teresa lives long enough, she'll pick up the Computer Knowledge (as well as other modern abilities) fairly easily, and might make a very valuable retainer for it. She likes to learn new things, and as long as she has the money and is allowed to do so, will continue to take classes in all sorts of interesting areas. Some possibilities might be Psychology, further Anthropology and Economics, Biology, Mathematics, Geography, Forensics and other areas of History.

PATRIARCAS

MICHAEL "MICKY" PATRIARCA, HEIR APPARENT

Background: Crime boss Raymond Patriarca's oldest brother, Angelo, is Micky's father and, as Angelo's son, was expected to take over the family after him. Angelo died young however, and Raymond stepped in. Micky was glad to be rid of that particular obligation, so he supported his uncle's rise to power in the family. Only Micky's younger brother Lucio occasionally caused trouble about the matter; Lucio wanted Micky in power so he could be Micky's right-hand man. Raymond recognized Lucio's ambition and promised that

when the Patriarcas took Boston, Micky would run it with Lucio at his side. He hinted to Lucio that Micky would be his heir, seeing as his only son had died several years earlier, and that satisfied Lucio.

Micky only cares about his family, particularly Lucio. He keeps himself at arm's length from everyone else. He plans never to marry; he's unwilling to break his perfect front for anyone, and he would never marry someone he couldn't show his true self to. He's broken a few hearts, and every once in a while a rumor surfaces about the true nature of his sexuality. His brother squashes those rumors as soon as they start, usually by dragging Micky to a brothel and making sure people find out about it.

Shopkeepers and businesspeople like Micky's straightforward way of dealing, when they aren't on the wrong end of it. His reputation as a man of his word wins him friends in good places. It doesn't take long after Micky moves into Boston for him to win people over with his open ways. Some see him as a godsend after dealing with the Giovanni for so long, although others resent being squeezed from both sides and don't want him stirring up trouble.

Image: Micky's hair is a slicked-back dark brown; not a strand is out of place. His suits are expensive and perfectly tailored. Everyone but Raymond and Lucio sees him as the prototypical stylish Mafioso; Raymond and Lucio know it's just an act. They support him in that act, because he's family and because he's still useful to them.

Roleplaying Hints: You're a man of your word when you can afford such a luxury, but if your uncle says "jump," then you'll reluctantly ask, "how high?" even if it means breaking that word. You do your best to interpret Raymond's words in ways that will allow you to keep your word, but you'll never disobey a direct order. Sometimes you wish you hadn't been born into a Mafia family so that you could have gone to college and into some other line of work. But duty calls, so here you are. You'll do your best for your family, even if it means hurting people.

Nature: Visionary

Demeanor: Bravo

Born: 1933

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Intimidation 1, Leadership 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Etiquette 2, Firearms 3, Melee 1, Performance 4, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Finance 1, Investigation 1, Law 1, Politics 2

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 3, Favors 2, Influence 2, Resources 2

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 3

Morality: Humanity 6

Willpower: 5



Notes: Although Micky himself only has a Resources score of 2, he has access to family money as well. This effectively brings him up to Resources 3 or so, but he has to account to Raymond for any of that money he uses.

LUCIO PATRIARCA, THE MORALIST'S TRAITOR

Background: Lucio possesses the true lack of conscience necessary to enforce the Mafia's will. Unfortunately for him, he was born six years after Micky rather than before. That might not be so bad if he were willing to have his brother quietly offed, but he isn't. Lucio's weakness is a fierce protective streak with respect to his brother. Lucio often disagrees with the way Micky handles things, and he might even tell him so in private, but woe betide anyone else who speaks up to Micky.

Lucio has a relatively low opinion of his brother; he thinks Micky lacks the spine and moral flexibility to do what needs to be done. He accepts, however, that things are the way they are, and he works within those limits. He sees himself as his brother's keeper; Micky may be the elder brother, but Lucio feels as though things are the other way around. He allows Micky to give the orders, but he doesn't mind telling Micky when he disagrees. If he disagrees strongly enough he might even give Raymond a call. He would never publicly contradict his brother, however.

Lucio is a lady's man; he has his brother's good looks but none of the reservations about getting involved. Lucio often has his arm around one beautiful lady or another when he isn't working.

Loyal to the Patriarcas as a whole, Lucio loves only Micky when all is said and done.

Lucio's influence covers a different section of society than Micky's. Lucio knows the street gangs and the enforcers. All he has to do is dress down a bit, and the kids on the street think he's one of them. He often walks the streets under the name Franco, picking up information and making connections and friends he couldn't make as Micky's brother Lucio.



Image: Lucio is physically similar to his brother, but he carries himself differently. Where Micky is suave and sophisticated, Lucio is jaunty and friendly. Lucio wears his long, dark-brown hair loose about his shoulders. His brown eyes sparkle with a sense of humor that has endeared him to many; his dates never have to pretend to be laughing at his jokes. Lucio often wears suits, but he wears his collars open, with his ties loose about his neck. If it weren't for the suits he wears, Lucio would look like a teenager; when he dresses down people think him younger than he is.

Roleplaying Hints: You are charming and friendly, with a good word for everyone and a joke for all occasions. Underneath this facade, you're calculating and dangerous, and you'd kill anyone you weren't related to if you thought it would benefit you. You've developed a sense of humor about the way people treat you like a kid; you laugh with them right up until you tell them you're Micky Patriarca's brother. Then you laugh at them while they toady up to you and apologize all over your shoes. Never contradict or disagree with Micky in front of anyone else; never allow anyone else to do so either.

Nature: Director

Demeanor: Bon Vivant/Bravo

Born: 1939

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Grace 1, Intimidation 2, Leadership 2, Streetwise 3, Style 2, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Etiquette 2, Firearms 3, Melee 3, Performance 3, Security 2, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Investigation 1, Politics 2,

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 4, Influence 1, Resources 1

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

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 5

Notes: Although Lucio has a Resources score of 1, like Micky, he has some access to family funds. Because of this, his Resources score is effectively 2, but also like Micky, he must justify use of family funds to Raymond.

OTHERS

EFFIE FENG, "FLAWED ORCHID FLED"

Nature: Fanatic

P'o Nature: Legalist

Demeanor: Visionary

Balance: Yang

Dharma: Thrashing Dragon 3/3/3/4

Direction: South

The yawning pits of Yomi spewed Effie Feng back into the world during the 18th century in Hong Kong after she was executed for betraying a noble. The Second Breath and



induction into the Kuei-jin courts provided a second chance, but she betrayed her undead liege as well and was declared *akuma*. She fled the Middle Kingdom and settled in Boston, posing as a Malkavian, trying to find a way to atone.

In the first two acts of this book, Effie maintains a comfortable unlife. In 1970, her interests arouse RICO Act (see Act III) suspicion, and she loses her fortune. By 1999, her assets have been greatly reduced and she makes her haven in the basement of a liquor store in Boston's Chinatown.

Lin is her son, dhampyr born during a period of Effie's Yang imbalance; his father is long dead. She forces Lin to pose as her "ghoul" for his own protection, a role to which he grudgingly bows.

Well under five feet tall, Effie is nonetheless attractive in a vampiric sense. Her skin is bone white; her hair long, black and silky; her eyes large and deep brown; and her lips blood red. Once an Asian noble, she still bears herself regally, yet she can play the seductress with the most innocent, alluring look. Her regal act curdles a bit in later years, but she still favors long red or black robes, usually embroidered with firebirds or dragons.

REGINALD, PURGATORIAL PENITENT

Nature: Penitent

Demeanor: Jester

Shadow: Martyr

Reginald had taken a shortcut through a large clearing in a thunderstorm one night in 1927, thinking about his sins and going to confession, but also about where he might get a bite to eat and perhaps a woman; then he was struck by lightning. Reginald has no idea what unfinished business he may have left in the Skinlands, and truly believes that God has resigned him to Purgatory until he can work off the sins of his meaningless life. Upon becoming a wraith, he wandered as aimlessly in the Shadowlands as he did in life, until the Giovanni "recruited" him.

In Act I, Reginald is a tall, thin man wearing a pair of scorched brown loafers and a white shirt that still smolders. By Act III, his hair has begun to smolder as well and, in Act IV, the whites of his eyes have darkened to a charcoal color.







APPENDIX: BOSTON HIGHLIGHTS

*And here on dark, unfriendly streets
I find the comfort that I seek.
— Oingo Boingo, "Lost Like This"*

This appendix serves as a rough introduction to Boston for Storytellers who wish to lead their troupes through Nuova Malattia. By nature, it is far shorter than the "by Night" books published by White Wolf but, hey, we've only got so much space in each book. Some of the concepts and characters mentioned herein originated in the early Vampire supplement, *Dark Colony*, and are labeled as such. However, for those who don't have *Dark Colony*, brief summaries of these characters appear in the *Dramatis Personae* chapter. *Dark Colony* is, however, useful for the Storyteller who wishes to explore the Camarilla and Sabbat sides of the New England

conflict prior to the 1999 Sabbat strike. The book presents a fair amount of background on Kindred activity in the area; it contains relatively little information on the 20th century, but plenty on the 19th.

BOSTON, PEARL OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY

Boston proper is just one part of the Boston metropolitan area. The Boston area includes: Cambridge, which is across the Charles River from Boston (north of Boston); Somerville, which lies northeast of Cambridge; and Brookline, which is mostly west of Boston.



Short, sturdy buildings comprise Boston until roughly 1965, when development booms. Skyscrapers begin appearing around this time, although they're rarely as large as those in other cities (no one wants the older buildings to be crowded out). Developers encounter strict review procedures, and have dozens of regulations to contend with. Some of the local Kindred have done their part to hold onto the older buildings — no one wants their haven to be razed and replaced with condominiums. Other Kindred, engaging in a little investment fun, have been backing the new buildings. After all, it's a great way to have your opponent's haven bulldozed while making a quick buck.

COMING AND GOING

Boston is accessible from many directions. Many ships arrive at the waterfront, though they're mostly used for shipping cargo. Logan Airport is extremely active once air travel becomes popular. Hectic South Station is a popular rail station for the first half of the century; then it's demolished and rebuilt. In the modern nights the station includes bus terminals and an entrance to the Red Line of the subway system.

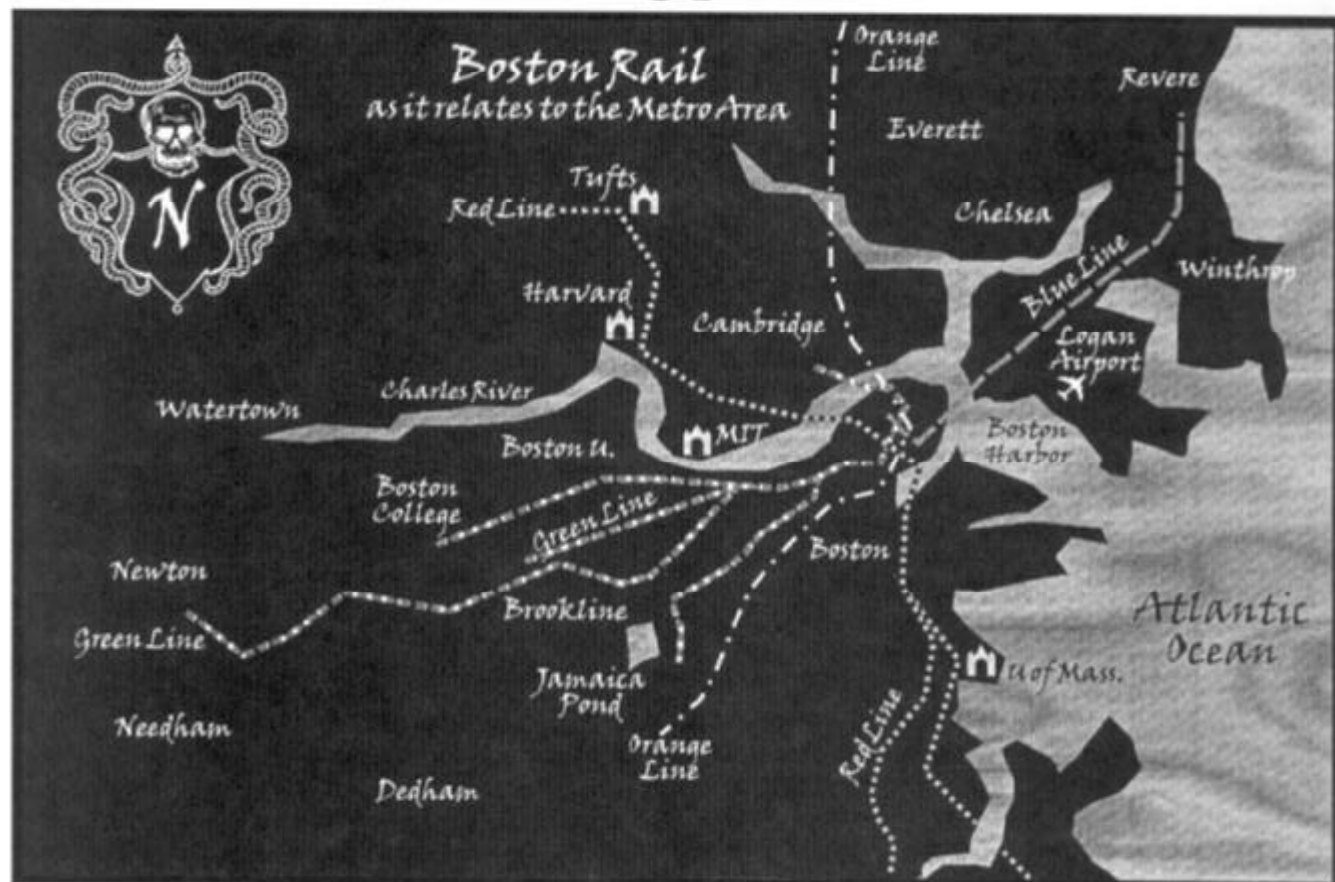
Many cab companies operate in the Boston area. Cabs have strictly defined pick-up territories: Taxis that are allowed to pick up in Boston may not pick up in Cambridge, and vice versa, though they can deliver anywhere.

THE T (MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY) SUBWAY

Modern Boston supports four subway lines: Red, Green, Blue and Orange. The last line (the Red Line) is created in 1912; the first (the Green Line) in 1897. The subway consists of many underground passages, including a few the authorities don't know about (and that don't show up on blueprints). Vampires fight over underground access to the T; it's about as safe from the sunlight as one could ask. Not all stops are underground however, so it pays to map out the lines before using them near sunrise or sunset. By the 1990s, the trains on the Red Line are some of the newest, while those on the Green and Orange Lines still sport decades-old, faux-wooden paneling.

The T operates from early morning (about 5:00 A.M.) until approximately 1 A.M., seven days a week. Time between trains is supposed to be 15 minutes but, in practice, it varies from five minutes (during rush hour) to 30 (late night on a Sunday). Trains are often off-schedule, and sometimes one will go "express," skipping stations (this is announced first) in order to make up time.

Two or three Nosferatu influence the majority of the subway system in Boston but, for a small fee of information or favors, they allow certain others access to portions of the tunnels. Those tunnels inside Giovanni territory are strictly under Giovanni "jurisdiction." Andreas Giovanni also makes a point of maintaining relations with the Nosferatu; access to the tunnels is more than useful, and the information the Nosferatu sell can come in very handy.



The MBTA also operates a number of above-ground buses, most of which keep similar hours to the T itself.

PLACES TO STAY & ENTERTAINMENT

THE HORNSBY

The original Hornsby Hotel opened in 1848, and hosted a number of famous people in its time, including John Wilkes Booth and Charles Dickens. George Hornsby died in 1896 and, in 1922, new owners demolished the original building. In 1928, the new building opened. No expense was spared on the new building; the architect found beautiful uses for polished granite, oak and mahogany paneling, and crystal chandeliers.

The Hornsby changed in many ways over the subsequent years of its change in ownership. Formal restaurants replaced the basement billiard room and pub in 1928. The rooftop terrace that opened in 1930 closed in 1965; by that time the other downtown buildings had grown too tall and obscured the magnificent view. The only rooftop ballroom in Boston replaced the Hornsby's terrace.

The owners of the Hornsby modernized the decor with each new era. The food and service at the Hornsby have become legendary throughout the decades. Not so many famous people visited the Hornsby after the rebuilding as once did — more luxurious and expensive hotels existed in the area

for that — but the Hornsby always managed to hold its own. Even into the modern nights, it draws businesspeople and conference-goers, and its restaurants attract local politicians.

The Hornsby maintains a small handful of rooms scattered about the hotel suitable for Kindred. Instead of the standard hotel suite design of a handful of living and sleeping rooms encircling a bathroom, these few rooms have the bedrooms at the center, such that they have no windows. A visitor simply has to ask for one of the "sunshine suites" to be assigned to one of these special rooms. Rumor has it that the architect of the 1928 building has a niece with porphyria, and wants to be certain she'll always have a place to stay at the hotel; in truth, Andreas Giovanni had a little "chat" with the architect before the designs were completed.

Once the original building is demolished and replaced, and fewer famous people frequent the hotel, the Hornsby becomes an ideal place for Kindred to put up their visitors and hold business meetings. The Hornsby offers all the ambiance and service of the more expensive hotels, with none of the worry that the man at the next table might be a reporter hoping to interview a movie star.

SOUTH AFRICA

The South Africa is a dance club that opened in the early 1980s. It's one of the most popular in the city, and its theme is African Safari. Faux grasses and trees decorate all three floors of the club. Fake and real stuffed animals, including lions, tigers and zebras, are displayed in the club's corners. Even the

furniture and light fixtures come from Africa. Murals of hunting expeditions decorate the walls; some of the more "human" Kindred in the area recommend the club as the place a vampire can go to see an almost-realistic sunset (if she wants more realism than she can get in a movie theater). Only the most popular modern music plays on the first floor, with music about a decade old on the second floor, and theme music from the previous decades on the third floor. The South Africa is a fairly upscale club. In the posh basement, traditional African food is served alongside more Americanized cuisine.

THE VADIA

The Vadia is a magnificent old hotel, and housed such luminaries as Mark Twain and Oscar Wilde in its heyday. Marble and blue velvet dominate the building; some call it gaudy, but most call it beautiful. In 1881, The Vadia was the first public building in Boston to receive electric lighting. Unfortunately, in 1972 a fire destroyed a large part of the building, and the owners rebuilt the hotel as a condominium complex. According to Kindred, several vampires started the fire accidentally during a quarrel over (of all things) a mortal woman's favor, but the newspapers all report it the conflagration as the result of a derelict living in the boiler room.

GIOVANNI INTERESTS

THE BOSTON HARBOR ISLANDS

Thirty small islands dot the topography in and near Boston Harbor. By the 1980s, the islands are used primarily for recreation, but earlier in the century they served well as temporary stash sites for smuggled goods. This is one of the ways in which the Giovanni manage to move so much illegal merchandise through Boston without being caught. The Camarilla often maneuver to have the islands heavily marketed as public recreation areas in an attempt to hurt the Giovanni. Unfortunately for them, the Giovanni have enough legitimate holdings to front the money for the bribes, and they possess the equipment necessary to get around this small impediment by the time it becomes a problem.

THE COMBAT ZONE

The Combat Zone is Boston's red-light district, and it borders on the Theater District and Chinatown. It appears as such in the 1960s with the help of the Giovanni, whose opinion on the matter can be summed up by, "It's great for business, but doesn't belong next to my granddaughter's school." It ends up in Chinatown because, unfortunately for the locals, they don't have the money to front the bribes to convince the politicians to help them. It houses triple-X cinemas, stripshows and porn shops. The locals have been trying to shut the district down since it started up and, in 1986, they make some headway. The shops close down one by one until the Combat Zone takes up one city block, rather than the seven it occupied in the 1970s. That one block stubbornly refuses to disappear however, and even in the 1990s, it can be a very unseemly neighborhood. Visitors should be forewarned.

THE COMMERCIAL WHARF

The Waterfront changes over the course of the century from a place for business to a place for luxury. The Giovanni family uses the wharf for both. The Giovanni have two warehouses in the area used for storing the goods they bring in by sea; one of those warehouses is in their name and is used only for legal goods. The other warehouse is under the name of a dummy company, "Ross Enterprises," and is used for storing the illegal goods. Some of the police know about this arrangement, but the Giovanni pay them well to look the other way. The Giovanni also keep a set of offices in the area, primarily for the still-mortal members of the family.

The Giovanni own a comprehensive package store known as the Spot on the wharf that people visit from all over the state; the store sells wines unavailable anywhere else, and has a reputation for being able to find all sorts of rare vintages. Some few know it as an upscale drug house — those who wouldn't be seen dead buying drugs on the street can buy them here. It's the only place in town where a man can slip an extra wad of bills to the cashier, who slips an extra package into his bag.

FORGOTTEN WORLDS GALLERY

This is a private gallery, owned by Andreas Giovanni and run by Antonio Giovanni until the end of Act II, when Andreas turns Antonio's responsibilities over to the characters' coterie. Various Giovanni with artistic talent have showings here. Family members bicker over whose work will be displayed. It is the responsibility of the person running the gallery to select the art that will be shown. Frequently this turns into a political game; those running the gallery exhibit the art of people whose favor they wish to curry, and family members offer bribes to convince the curators to choose their work.

Because the gallery is privately owned and run and available for viewing only by Giovanni or their contacts, displays are uncensored. Pornography, death and torture are favored subjects. Parties often take place at the gallery; the building contains extensive entertainment facilities including large dining rooms, a ballroom, a stage with an orchestra pit and comfortable seating for 60, and modern sound-system equipment.

Although most of the art shows are composed of photographs, paintings or sketches, there has been the occasional live exhibition, usually as the centerpiece for a party. These centerpieces usually involve the torture and death of one or more mortals. A popular theme toward the latter half of the century was the use of one or more reluctant mortals to rape, torture and kill another on pain of death. When the Giovanni grow tired of watching, those same reluctant mortals become dinner.

HACKETT, GUTTELL & Co.

The Giovanni use Hackett, Guttell and Co. mid-century as a pornography publishing house. It publishes the triple-X material under a separate imprint, "The Red Line"; most people still believe HGC to be an upstanding publisher of fiction, poetry and even cookbooks. The Red Line includes several magazines of photos and fiction, as well as a line of

novels and, later, videotapes. Privately, the Red Line runs a market in the kind of pornography most people won't turn a blind eye to — S&M, bondage, rape, snuff films and child pornography. They screen their clientele very carefully to make sure no one finds out about this.

THE NORTH END

The North End is a predominately Italian neighborhood, and is the seat of Giovanni influence in Boston. By the late 20th century, it's so crowded that no one in their right mind would try to drive there — they certainly won't find a parking space in the neighborhood unless they own one. The North End is originally Mediterranean in ethnicity, but the Italians have been the majority of the population since approximately 1920. The North End is something of a small peninsula, and possesses a bustling waterfront business. From the '20s onward, the Italians have been steadily restoring the neighborhood from the slum it was when they got there, with a great deal of help from Giovanni funding. The streets still bear the characteristic meandering directions of the cow paths they began life as, as do many other streets in Boston.

In the North End, nearly every other building houses an Italian or Mediterranean restaurant. Interestingly enough, most of them don't serve desserts the way American restaurants do — if someone wants dessert, she must go to a separate espresso-and-pastry shop. These shops are almost as plentiful as the restaurants. The North End is busy and crowded and possessed of a very close-knit community. Strangers are noticed there, but welcomed nonetheless. Many people visit for the all-day festivals; in July and August, every weekend is dedicated to another saint.

PARADISE JEWELERS AND BROWNSTONE COINS

The Giovanni use both Paradise Jewelers and Brownstone Coins to launder money from 1971 onward. Paradise Jewelers stocks everything from cheap citrine to the most expensive diamonds, and specializes in designing new and unusual settings for their stones. Brownstone Coins is known for being able to find almost any rare coin, and for being willing to buy even the more common ones. Both stores have impeccable reputations and reasonable prices.

ST. LEONARD'S CHURCH

St. Leonard's Church is built in 1873 and the present building dates to 1891. It's the first Italian Catholic Church established in New England. It has a "Peace Garden" in the front, created at the end of the Vietnam War, filled with flowers and statuary that's spotlighted at night. This garden contains two shrubs brought over from the altar of the Boston Common, where Pope John Paul II celebrated mass.

St. Leonard's is a magnificent site in the 1920s. Stained glass and rich stone statuary adorn the building. Throughout the decades it shows a gradual decline, however. The Church becomes hemmed in on all sides by stores and restaurants in Boston's crowded North End. The beautiful stonework on the outside of the building is painted over with brown paint.

The marble statues are replaced by "lifelike" painted statues that resembled figurines from a tourist shop. Garish red electric candles are substituted for the real ones. The giltwork and stained glass remain but, by the 1990s, St. Leonard's glamour and elegance clash wildly with the sorts of decorations more commonly seen at garage sales and discount stores.

St. Leonard's is a building that remains functionally the same throughout all four acts of this book. However, because of its changing appearance, it makes a wonderful index of transformation for this chronicle. In each act, the characters should be returning to the hallowed halls of St. Leonard's to see just how much the times have changed. As it is a favored haunt of Andreas Giovanni, this will not be difficult to achieve. Most people related to the Giovanni family pass through St. Leonard's at one time or another.

BOSTON'S CAMARILLA

THE AFRICAN MEETING HOUSE

The African Meeting House is the oldest standing black church in the United States, erected in 1806. It is closed during the mid-1970s for renovations and reopened to the public in 1987. It's a stop on the Black Heritage Trail, and acts as far more than a museum; church meetings, concerts, lectures and exhibits are all held here. The AMH is created not merely in response to the need for a place of worship for black Bostonians, but also as a forum for self-expression. Funds for the meeting house come from both black and white supporters. In 1808, the AMH even housed a school for black children, and abolitionists held meetings in the church. By 1898, the "congregation" had outgrown the meeting house and moved to other areas of the city, and the AMH was sold as a synagogue. In 1972, the Museum of Afro-American History purchased the AMH, and had it designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1974. However, in 1973, a worker accidentally started a fire in the building, and the AMH remained closed until 1987. Now the AMH offers a broad range of educational programming related to the history and culture of African-Americans.

Pug Jackson (see the *Dramatis Personae* chapter) can often be found in or near the AMH. During the time it serves as a synagogue, he occasionally paces the block, frowning at the old building. In 1972, he comes up with enough money to anonymously donate the funds to the Museum of Afro-American History with which the Museum purchases the AMH. Again, in 1973, he donates much of the money with which the AMH is restored and renovated after the fire. He even provides the descriptions of the original building, on which the architects and contractors base their plans.

THE COMEDY SPOT

Some of the younger Brujah and Ravnos who pass through town can be found here, enjoying a laugh while casing the crowd for both dinner and likely recruits. Both professional and amateur comedy talent can be found here, and the crowd is



primarily made up of local college students. Some find it quite easy to pick up a drunken meal here, who will pass off what happened as an alcohol-induced dream at worst. The only problem with this is that people rarely come to the Comedy Spot alone; it's hardly a singles-bar atmosphere.

THE ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM

The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum is erected by Isabella at the beginning of the 20th century to house the many works of art she and her husband have collected over the years. Isabella is a fiercely independent woman, a trait viewed as incredibly scandalous during her day, and various unlikely legends about the sort of behavior she engages in sometimes still circulate among the upper classes. The jewel of the museum is the central courtyard garden, housed in a 79-foot-tall glass-roofed atrium. The collection is dominated by Italian Renaissance paintings (including Titian's *The Rape of Europa*), 17th-century Dutch works, and 19th-century pieces of American art. The famous atrium garden includes rare orchids, though much of the plantings change according to season.

Isabella stipulates in her will that the arrangement of the museum is not to change after her death or the museum will be shut down and its contents auctioned off. This is unusual for a museum and, as a result, its contents have remained largely the same since 1924, when Isabella supposedly died, but was in fact Embraced by Toreador Elsa Linden (see

Dramatis Personae). Since then, Isabella has moved to the Midwest, but she still visits her legacy on occasion.

The museum added an external administrative wing in 1932, a gift shop in 1972, a café in 1978, and greenhouses in which to grow plants for the garden in the 1970s. The displays are largely unprotected from the elements or wandering hands; many hang near sunlit windows or out in the open where anyone can touch them. As a result, a permanent staff of conservators constantly upkeep and make repairs to the displayed works. In 1990, two Sabbat City Gangrel disguised as police officers talked their way past the security guards, disarmed the alarm system, and stole 200 million dollars' worth of art — 13 pieces in all. They stole the art to finance Sabbat initiatives in the area, and choose the property of a Camarilla Toreador for the irony of the act. They left a hat belonging to one of the Giovanni at the site, in order to make as much trouble as possible. This disrupted the almost temperate relations between the Giovanni and the local Camarilla.

A seal carved in marble and set into the museum's brick wall bears Isabella's motto, "*C'est mon plaisir*," French for "it is my pleasure." It also bears a phoenix, symbol of immortality and rebirth.

THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

The Museum is no ordinary art collection. The MFA displays everything from paintings of American Revolutionary patriots to exhibits on Egyptian funerary techniques, a tiny ivory-and-gold

statue of a Minoan snake goddess, and Peruvian tapestries. It even displays a Japanese garden outside. Elsa Linden, a Toreador who resides in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, has made an extended loan of a sizable portion of her collection to the MFA, and would do almost anything to see that it comes to no harm.

THE NEW ENGLAND AQUARIUM

Since the early 1970s, the aquarium has served as an Elysium for local Camarilla Kindred, and Quentin King (see *Dramatis Personae*), the ostensible Camarilla Prince of Boston, can occasionally be found here, staring morosely into the eel tank. Seals and penguins frolic in an outdoor pool year-round, and a three-story-tall tank holds sea turtles, fish and sharks. A kinetic sculpture called "Echo of the Waves" has been known to mesmerize young Toreador for hours.

NEWBURY STREET

Newbury Street supposedly ties for third place with New York City's Fifth Avenue for the highest rents in the United States. It's a fashionable place, where even walking across the street demands two hours of grooming and preparation. Newbury Street boasts hair designers, modeling studios, tanning salons and ritzy stores selling antiques and artwork, as well as several upscale cafés.

THE SOMERS CLUB

The Somers Club is an private, exclusive club owned by Christopher Hammet, a recluse of a Ventrue who prefers to

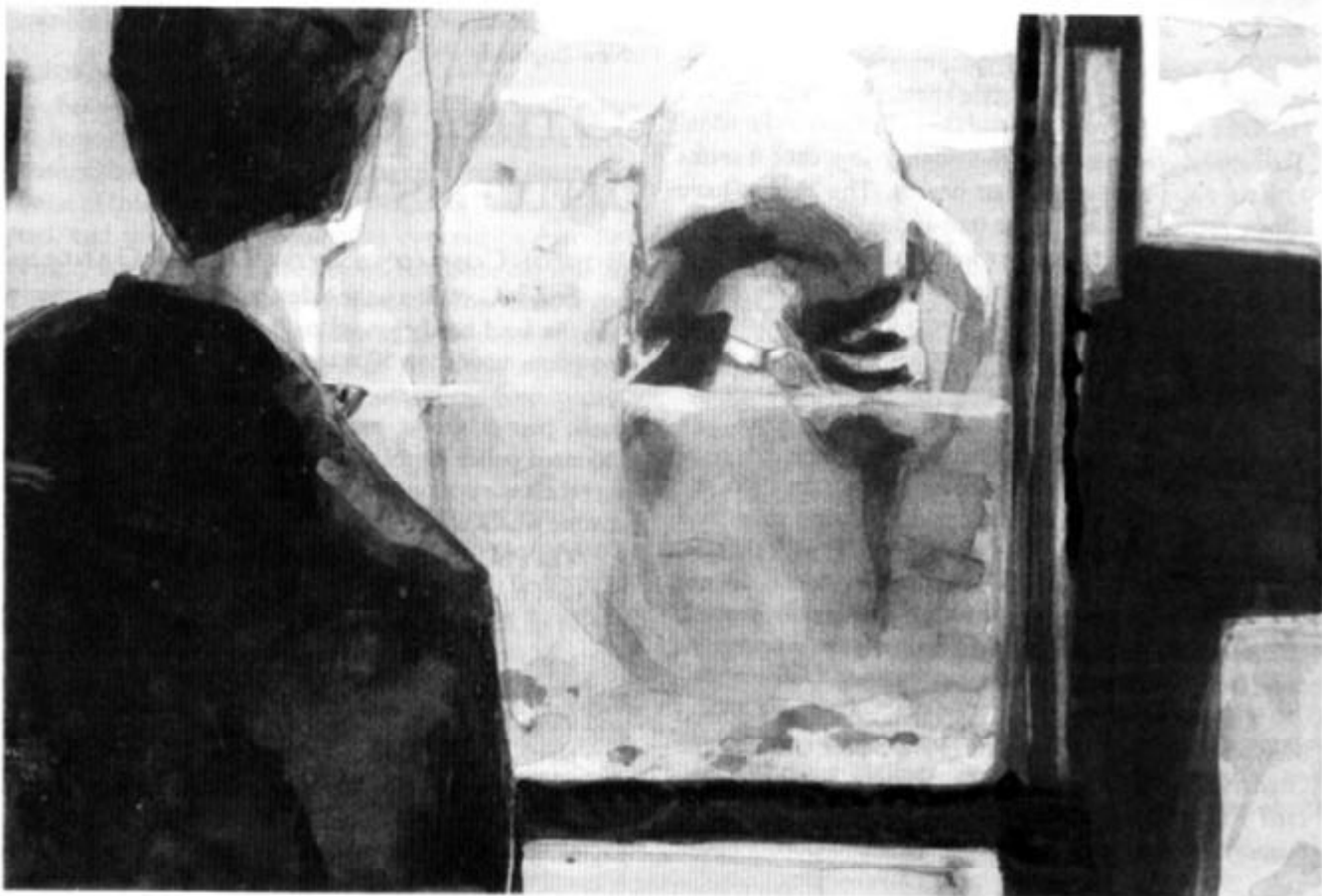
have everyone come to him rather than go out to political functions. The Somers Club has a good enough reputation that he has some success with this, though not as much as he would like. This is not, however, enough to make him willing to go out and brave the streets filled with these new, filthy, dangerous things called "cars."

Hammet hides his technophobia behind an eccentric love for the old and an outwardly confident personality. Hammet has his haven in the concrete shelter beneath the club, which he had installed mid-century. Everyone knows how to find him, but no one considers him dangerous enough to deal with. He won't see anyone who hasn't made an appointment with his secretary first. This is more than a small come-down for the Ventrue, who is rumored to have been a prince in Europe somewhere for a number of years. Some say he's too outmoded to function well in the modern world, much less any kind of political arena. If it weren't for the sizable fortune he's amassed, he likely would have little to no effect on politics anymore.

BOSTON'S SABBAT

THE BLUE PEARL

The Blue Pearl is a restaurant in Chinatown under the influence of Max Lowell (see *Dramatis Personae*), a City Gangrel. Max is pretty much the only Sabbat member



permanently stationed in the area, though others come and go with fair frequency. Max's rooms exist in a sub-basement beneath the Blue Pearl, accessible through a few winding old tunnels, the entrance to which is well hidden. Max holds a sort of court in a back room of the restaurant. Chinatown residents, many of whom either know what he is or have some idea that he isn't quite what he seems, come to Max with information and requests. The information he takes gladly. If he's in a good mood and it's within his ability he may grant the requests; he merely extracts a promise of a favor later. Because of this arrangement, many of the people in Chinatown owe Max.

The Blue Pearl is furnished in all shades of blue. Paper lanterns hang near the ceiling. Low tables of a dark wood surrounded by teal cushions decorate the special private dining rooms. A beautiful, quiet Japanese girl in a long dress, black with blue flowers, greets visitors at the door, and ushers them to their tables. The girl's name is Christine, and she is Max's lover.

THE FREEDOM TRAIL

The Freedom Trail is primarily known as a three-mile-long, red tourist trap. A stretch of bricks overlaid by red paint marks the trail, which links 16 sites, each of which played a part in the revolution that created America. The trail is overseen by, depending on where you are, National Park Service rangers, U.S. Naval officers or personnel employed by specific sites. It is known as one of the safest tourist sites available — during the day, at any rate.

The occasional Sabbat vampire can be found here; because the Sabbat like to style themselves as rebels and "freedom-fighters" of a sort, the symbolism of the Freedom Trail appeals to them (the "tourist-trap" aspect of it seems to have gone right over their heads). The Sabbat have chosen several sites along the trail as message-posts, where missives can be left for Max Lowell or the next Sabbat who comes through town. A couple of young Giovanni ghouls find one of the sites at King's Chapel in 1970, and delight in making minor yet important alterations to the messages they find there.

The Freedom Trail was marked as such by 1953. The Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and the Advertising Club of Greater Boston keep up the trail. In 1966, the first information booth went up, distributing maps and brochures about the trail. The main problem with the site, as far as the tourists are concerned, is that the sites are not all owned by the same people (some are federally owned, others owned by the city or state), so the hours of operation differ from site to site.

The 16 sites are: the Boston Common, the gold-domed Massachusetts State House, the Park Street Church, the Granary Burying Ground, the Unitarian (previously Anglican) King's Chapel, King's Chapel Burying Ground, a memorial to the First Public School, the Old Corner Book-

store, the renovated Old State House, the Boston Massacre Site, Faneuil Hall, the Paul Revere House, the Episcopalian Old North Church, Copp's Hill Burying Ground in the North End, the Bunker Hill Monument and the USS *Constitution* (the ship also known as "Old Ironsides"). Even the Sabbat tend to stay away from the last five sites, which are in Giovanni-influenced areas, unless they're trying to anger the Giovanni.

TRINITY CHURCH

Trinity Church is known as a masterpiece of architecture, not just in Boston but throughout the country. Its interior is remarkably Victorian, with massive towers, magnificent religious murals and exquisite stained-glass windows. Trinity is an Episcopalian church, with a long history of bold, charismatic priests. The church also runs extensive programs to help the unfortunate, from coordinating volunteers to help AIDS patients, to running prisoner early-release programs, literacy projects and shelters for battered women.

A Lasombra named Jessica Wagner, who travels extensively throughout Eastern America, is a patron of the Church, and donates large amounts of money to it. No one at the Church knows what Ms. Wagner is; she takes on the identity of her own daughter every 20 to 30 years, and those who run the Church rarely, if ever, see her in person. The rector of the Church, however, always has contact information for her, and can be persuaded to pass on a message for a worthy donation. Jessica is influential in Sabbat politics of New England.

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

BOSTON COMMON AND THE PUBLIC GARDEN

Boston Common is the oldest public park in the country, and the land has belonged to Boston since the 1600s. It comprises more than 50 acres. Many sights can be enjoyed within its boundaries — magicians, musicians, sermons, duels, puppet shows, parades, horse races and fireworks. Mounted police patrol the common, pushcart vendors display their wares along the paths, and proselytizers preach to anyone who'll listen.

The Public Garden isn't as large as Boston Common, but is at least as beautiful. A pond lies ensconced in the center of it where people can take rides in swan-shaped boats. More than 100 varieties of trees grow in the garden, and most of them are labeled with both their vernacular and Latin names.

Neither the common nor the park could be considered safe for mortals after dark, but such is true of most parks in urban areas. For the Kindred, however, dark is when the fun begins. The parks become known as good places to lose

pursuers, especially for young punks who like to irritate the police. In the 1960s, a couple of Toreador decided to clean up the parks so that artists could "hold court" there. The two young men disappeared mysteriously however, and their precious artists decided to find a haven elsewhere after being chased out by... *something*.

THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Boston Public Library consists of two buildings: the older McKim building erected in 1895, and the newer Johnson building erected in 1972. The McKim building is a comfortable place to elder Kindred; it is filled with marble, huge arches, great staircases, columns and beautiful works of art. The modern building is much more functional and practical, but still attractive — its wide-open plazas aren't the norm for modern libraries.

The BPL is America's first major free municipal library, and it's the first public library in the 19th century to allow people to remove books from the premises. The BPL sponsors many concerts, movies, lectures and exhibits. It's huge, and many find it easy to have private, unobserved meetings within its gargantuan halls. Some of the BPL's events provide good opportunities to mingle with prominent Bostonians. The BPL is one of the Milliners' favored charities, and the library maintains a well-protected private collection of books (that only one or two of the librarians are aware of) for the family. Some of the Camarilla population of Boston can be found here, attending evening events.

FENWAY PARK

Fenway Park is tied with Detroit's Tiger Stadium for the honor of being the oldest major-league ballpark in the country; it opened in 1912. It is never rebuilt during the course of this chronicle. The scoreboard is manually operated, and the grass is genuine, as opposed to AstroTurf. Fenway is the home of the Boston Red Sox, but it is also used, on occasion, for concerts, memorial services, revival meetings and soccer games. Fenway has become a popular attraction for young Kindred in the area; some even conduct business meetings in the private suites during evening baseball games.

ISLAND LEATHER

Island Leather's front room sells everything from jackets to boots to gloves to purses. Anthony Frazier, the store's original owner and his daughter Lindsay (who took over in 1973) even sell whole sheets of dyed leather. If a customer asks to be shown to the back room, he is escorted into a long room filled with leather-and-metal implements. The prurient trappings of the leather-fetish culture can be found there: leather cuffs; collars; chains; whips; and more exotic equipment, both for show and for serious use.

Anthony and Lindsay are extremely discreet, and will never deliberately divulge their customers' eccentricities.

They can also create custom leather works, and will go to great lengths to find just the right accents to finish off a piece. They're perfectly willing to make outrageous leather outfits if that's what a customer wants, but they specialize in functionality. Andreas goes to the Fraziers for some of his torture equipment.

PINCKNEY STREET

Until the mid-60s, when much of the area is renovated, Pinckney Street divides the "haves" and the "have-nots" of Beacon Hill. For the Kindred of the area it's an uneasy place; Toreador or Ventruer might find themselves walking down the street in front of a Brujah spoiling for a fight, or a Giovanni hitman.

THE PRUDENTIAL CENTER

"The Pru" involves a 52-story tower and a much shorter, sprawling complex. The tower has an observation deck on the 50th floor that gives a wondrous panoramic view of the city. The shorter complex below houses apartments, offices, hotels, a food court, restaurants and many stores. It's an easy place to become lost in and, if you're looking for something to buy, this is probably the place to do it, though the prices won't exactly be cheap. Its odd little corridors and unexpected courtyards make convenient meeting places.

THE RUM NOVEMBER

The Rum November is a speakeasy during Prohibition. The establishment's blinds are lowered three inches as the sign that the latest shipment of booze has arrived. When Prohibition ends, the Rum November is turned into a restaurant. The back room where the booze is stored during Prohibition becomes a drug clearinghouse in the 1940s.

A SECRET PLACE

A number of unusual tools can be found here; A Secret Place specializes in carrying — legal — items that can't be found anywhere else in the Boston area. They charge outrageous prices, but they get away with it because they have no competition. Everything from electronics to office supplies to gardening tools can be found here. Mail-order catalogs are available, and the store keeps late hours.

SYMPHONY ANTIQUES

Symphony Antiques specializes in restoring antiques, though they do buy and sell a few pieces. Mary Gore and Ulysses Rohan, two Boston natives, own the shop. For those Kindred who have trouble letting go of their pasts, this is the perfect place to ensure their trappings' longevity. Mary and Ulysses take tender care of those artifacts entrusted to their keeping, and produce them again looking like new. Symphony opens in 1964.

UNIVERSITIES

Three of the most notable universities in the Boston area are Boston University (BU), in Boston right next to the Charles River; the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), almost across the river from BU in Cambridge; and Harvard, further on into Cambridge from MIT.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

BU is quite the party college, and a drunken fraternity party is prime feeding ground for those vampires who can pass for near-college age (those vampires who look older can sometimes pick from the drunken visitors on their way home). Some MIT frats are in the same area and are good for the same thing. An enterprising vampire will pick up a college ID or three (real or fake) for those times when the frats bother checking. While frat parties might look different in the early 20th century, make no mistake — they exist. This is one of those mainstays of Boston society, as much as the natives dislike it. One of the reasons the fraternities have prevailed despite local opposition is that Pug Jackson, in the interest of maintaining viable feeding grounds for all comers, has thrown some money and political muscle around.

THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

MIT is the ultimate place to hide, especially if a vampire thinks she's being tailed and doesn't want to reveal the location of her haven. A legend lists MIT as the third-largest set of interconnected corridors in the world, after the Kremlin and the Pentagon. Most MIT buildings on the main campus are connected both above and below ground. A few of the above-ground corridors have windows opening on to them, but most are dark even during the day, and there are plenty of steam tunnels in which to hide regardless. Almost every building has at least three or four different entrances and exits on various floors, making it easy to lose an unwanted follower. A rumor among the local Kindred since the late '70s or early '80s has it that a number of MIT "roof-and-tunnel hackers" get together on the second-floor lounge of the student center every Friday night at 11 P.M. and, if a vampire were to go along with them, she could get a guided tour of the hidden parts of campus.

HARVARD

Harvard is the place to win friends and influence people for those more politically minded Kindred. Many wealthy and influential families send their children here, and a number of future politicians come out of Harvard's halls. Less well known is Harvard's night school, the "Extension School," in existence since 1910. Many successful professionals go to Harvard's evening classes for further education. Some Kindred have discovered this to

be a marvelous backdoor into offices around the city. Harvard also contains a number of museums and libraries, including the only museum in America dedicated to Germanic art, and a botanical museum with a display of 3000 glass flowers.

OTHER SUPERNATURALS

For those interested in crossing their **Vampire** chronicle with White Wolf's other World of Darkness games, we present the following information. Be warned, however — crossover is a dangerous thing, and requires not only a bit of work beforehand (to make the systems operate sensibly), but also a mature group of players who can handle the differences in their characters' concepts and power levels. Storytellers should also consider their desire to bring other denizens of the World of Darkness into **Nuova Malattia** — this is certainly not the chronicle for happy elves, gore-spattered werewolves or philosophical mages who look heavenward instead of at the world around them. This story works best with vampires only, but the ultimate decision rests in the Storyteller's hands.

MAGE AND WEREWOLF

For those who play **Mage: The Ascension** and wish to work it into their chronicle, there are a few Virtual Adepts and Void Engineers in the area, particularly at MIT, the Computer Museum and dozens of technology-oriented companies. A Progenitor or two can be found at the late-century wealth of biology companies. For the same reasons, those with **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** may wish to base a few Glass Walkers in Cambridge. An Uktena sept exists just outside of town. It is entirely possible that Technocrats and those others in the technology industry might run afoul of Giovanni who have invested in their companies. If the Giovanni have interest in competing companies, then perhaps the Giovanni wish to procure blackmail material or some other hold over these people in order to obtain trade secrets.

World of Darkness: Sorcerers mentions that there are Bone Gnawers who protect the Boston temple of a group of hedge mages called the Ancient Order of the Aeon Rites. The temple is located in a charity center called Saint Simon's Rest. This might be just the group to try to right some of the Giovanni's wrongs — they'd be very outclassed, but their werewolf friends might help to even the odds a bit.

Halls of the Arcanum may be a useful source for the Storyteller who wishes to involve the Arcanum's observers in her plots; the Boston chapter of the Arcanum was the second chapter established. The Chapter House was burned down in 1910, but later rebuilt. The Boston chapter enjoys

some measure of autonomy. Certainly it's possible that these researchers have heard rumor of the Giovanni family's odd proclivities, and they may wish to investigate. The Arcanum traditionally watches and does not interfere, but what if one of them is caught and brought to Andreas? Would Andreas try to control the man? Might he simply kill him, perhaps after torturing him for information? Or maybe he would ask a ghoul (one of the characters, perhaps) to attempt to infiltrate the Arcanum on some level.

CHANGELING

Freeholds and Hidden Glens details a Boston Freehold. It tells of a tavern called "The Fool's Gambit," which opened in 1839 in the Combat Zone. An annual riddle contest is held there on the Fourth of July. A Malkavian named Elizabeth Whitt hides in the tavern, and has even come to believe that she is a changeling. All kithain are welcome at the tavern — seelie, unseelie, noble and commoner. The sidhe lord of the area, Duke Tymon, who arrived in 1969, wants control of the tavern, but High King David has ordered him to coexist peacefully with its commoner owners. For the moment, Tymon acquiesces, although resentfully. The characters could run into a mysterious Malkavian they've never met before, or even get caught up in the riddle contest somehow.

WRAITH

The significant Giovanni population in Boston makes existence as a wraith dangerous. Any wraith who knows

what's good for him stays well away from the North End. Other than that, there is a thriving wraith community in the area — after all, everyone dies, even if not everyone ends up sticking around afterward. And Boston is a big city. Because Boston is so large, there is a decent Hierarchy presence here; Legionnaires patrol the streets. Wraiths who interfere in the mortal world on behalf of the Giovanni need to watch their backs as much as any other Renegades. Some of the possibilities for wraith involvement in this chronicle are obvious. But what if there are wraiths out there who want to stop the Giovanni? Perhaps a wraith's dead mother is under Giovanni control, and they want her back. Maybe the Hierarchy is just barely becoming aware that some of the supposed "renegade" activity in the area may be caused by outside influences, and they've sent someone to investigate.

In the modern nights (Act IV), the Shadowlands will have been blasted by the last Great Maelstrom, leaving very little left of former wraith society. Boston will, however, remain an outpost of fallen Hierarchy prominence. Like soldiers abandoned abroad after the collapse of the Roman Empire, the Stygian wraiths who claimed Boston as a Necropolis will desperately cling to their crumbling city. Amid marauding bands of rogue wraiths and the desperate individuals who find themselves bound to immobile Fetters, the memory of the former grandeur of Boston will remain strong. For more details on modern wraiths, see **Ends of Empire**.

GIOVANNI CHRONICLES IV

Nuova Malattia



A new sickness

An unhealthy development is taking place in Boston, Massachusetts — the ascension of the Milliner family of Clan Giovanni. From their surreptitious beginnings in the shadow of the Kennedy empire to their sinister prominence at the end of the 20th century, the Milliner history is one of treachery and cunning manipulation. Can the characters carve their own place out of Boston's dwindling resources, or will they be swept along with the tide of the Giovanni's inexorable conquest?

An old, unbeating heart

The final installment of the Giovanni Chronicles resolves the mysterious ending of *The Sun Has Set*, including the significance of the sought-after *Sargon Fragment*. The story takes place in some of the most memorable and exciting periods of American history, from the Roaring '20s to the looming terror of the modern nights. Players get a chance to help or hinder the newest machinations of Clan Giovanni, including participating in Boston's desperate attempt to remain independent of Camarilla and Sabbat influence.

Giovanni chronicles IV includes:

- The culmination of the popular Giovanni Chronicles
- An in-depth crime story spanning nine decades
- A chance to participate in one of the critical sect battles of the final nights

VAMPIRE
THE MASQUERADE

