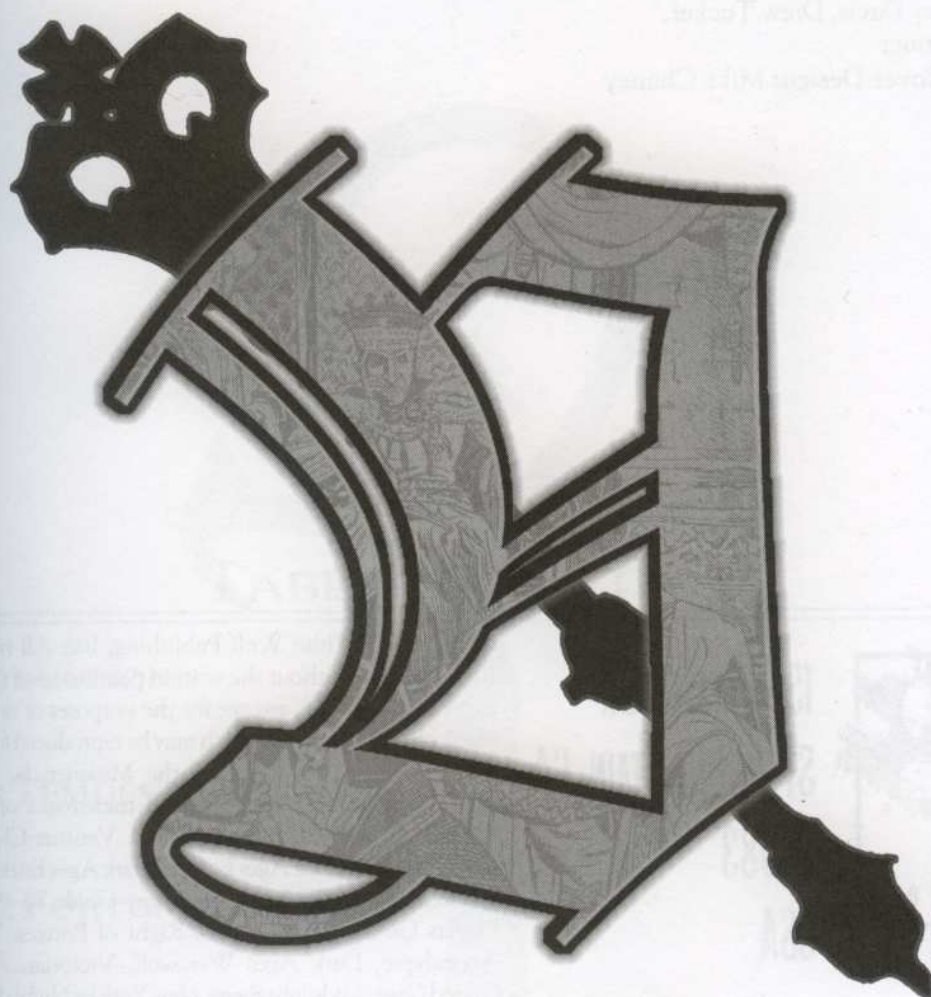


# THE VENTRUE CHRONICLE™



A chronicle book for vampire: the masquerade®

# THE VENTRUE CHRONICLE<sup>TM</sup>



BY CHRIS HARTFORD, JACOB KLUNDER AND MATTHEW ROURKE,  
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# INTRODUCTION

Clan Ventrue: Lords among vampires. The con-  
niving, scheming, politicking and commanding among  
the undead. The backbone of the Camarilla. The Blue  
Bloods are Cainites who seek influence, control and  
sway over mortals and their fellow Cainites, emerging  
as the warlords, business magnates, politicians and  
powerbrokers of their times, whether it's the Dark  
Ages or the Final Nights.

At least, these are the outward images of members  
of Clan Ventrue. While these stereotypes have founda-  
tion in truth, there is far more to these Kindred.  
Assuming self-appointed roles as leaders and visionar-  
ies speaks volumes of who the Ventrue are. Yes, there's  
domain, wealth and status to be had in rising above  
other undead to assume the reigns of power. But the  
burden of leadership can far outweigh all such ben-  
efits. Blue Blood existence can be summarized with  
one word, and it applies to every relationship they  
have: responsibility.

By plying their influence over others and emerg-  
ing as survivors of intrigue, cooperation and duplicity,  
the Ventrue put themselves in the Kindred limelight.  
They do not hide in havens or dark holes, avoiding the  
scrutiny of the nightlife. They immerse themselves in

Cainite affairs to give direction and meaning to noc-  
turnal existence. Such activities make clan members  
responsible for the quality of unlife that they influ-  
ence. By manipulating the shape of Kindred existence  
— who has control over what domain, which hunting  
grounds are available and which are not, who may  
Embrace childer and who may not — the Ventrue  
assume an obligation to ensure that their leadership is  
valuable and worthwhile (at least to the other Kindred  
who agree to support them). By accepting this respon-  
sibility, the Ventrue emerge as the leaders and spine of  
the Camarilla.

But Blue Blood responsibility doesn't stop with Cainite  
relationships in general. Duty strikes much closer to home.  
Every member of Clan Ventrue has a responsibility to  
himself and his lineage. These Kindred don't simply Em-  
brace childer and discard them to the whims of fate.  
Progency are carefully chosen and instructed with the aim  
of creating heirs and descendants who will carry on the  
pride and legacy of the Blood. Every Ventrue is "born" into  
obligation to his sire and grandsires (and in time, his own  
childer), carrying on the "family business" of status, realm  
and *dignitas*. At least, that's what expected of members of  
a bloodline. Whether an individual fulfills that responsi-  
bility is up to him or her.



The *Ventru*e Chronicle addresses the clan themes of family, lineage and responsibility. This book immerses you and your troupe in the full *Ventru*e experience, from establishing to carrying on a legacy, with all the attendant baggage of duty, obligation, expectation, loyalty, and perhaps resentment, abuse and even betrayal. The chronicle presents three stories set in different eras of Kindred prominence, each focusing on the goals and agendas of the Blue Bloods. The twist here is, players create characters sired into a legacy of damnation. Each character is the childe of a preceding character, whether of the same player or another member of the troupe. Players establish and then have the responsibility of maintaining prestige down through the generations, all the while juggling personal and "family" aspirations.

*Ventru*e Chronicle therefore operates over time and over a series of players' characters, capturing the essence of what it means to be a member of a lineage and the clan. You create a vampiric family tree, exploring the ins and outs of not just one character, but of sires and childer. The result is a complex story with multiple personalities and goals all held together by the commonality of the Blood.

Now, this is not to say that all characters who partake in this chronicle must belong to Clan *Ventru*e. While a strict *Ventru*e cabal might be a challenge and enjoyable to play, there is room for more. The Warlords themselves recognize the value of diversity. Members of other clans have their own strengths and therefore make useful allies (or agents). Players may create characters of various clans. They must understand, however, that the presiding thread of the chronicle is *Ventru*e scheming, cunning and descent. Players of other vampires may find their characters encouraged, cajoled or pressured to act in various ways, whether desirable or not. *That's what the Ventru*e do to other Cainites. The question is: Do characters of other clans have compelling reasons to accept or suffer the sometimes inscrutable machinations of the Blue Bloods? If they do, they may enjoy the rewards of their allies' meteoric rise. If they don't, members of other clans may find themselves discarded when their usefulness is at an end.

#### THEME

The primary focus of this book is family, which anyone can understand. We're all beholden to our parents for raising us. We feel familial bonds to grandparents, siblings, cousins, uncles, aunts. As parents, we feel protective toward our children yet recognize where they must be reigned in or allowed to make their own mistakes. As mortals, we inherit what our parents' accomplishments gained before us — good or bad, be it wealth, property, respect or humiliation. We work

with or against those legacies, either to improve or ruin them before we pass our own legacies on. And if family members are ever killed or lost, a distinct vacancy is left, whether emotional or resource-based.

The *Ventru*e experience much the same ties that we do. Sires create childer like parents create children. The various progeny of the same sire are like siblings. But these vampires are chosen and created to help extend the *Ventru*e web of influence, power and wealth. Kindred are selected to contribute to clan *dignitas* and sire-childer lines, to be princes and kings of the night. The *Ventru*e are united in leadership of the undead.

And yet, the *Ventru*e family bond is inherently flawed. Inheritance doesn't necessarily pass from parent to child, because the parent doesn't necessarily die. *Ventru*e childer are Embraced to fulfill roles in a sire's plans to claim influence and authority, but might never inherit the power they help build, because their "parents" persist indefinitely. Characters have a "birth-right" but are simultaneously denied it because their predecessors just don't die. How do you exist when you're groomed for power but aren't allowed any?

The family "tensions" that can result are obvious: jealousy, antagonism and perhaps even murder. Once again, phenomena that aren't necessarily foreign to mortal families. Dysfunctional ones, anyway. Imagine young, privileged, aristocratic heirs pitted against one another to claim the family fortune. What else might *Ventru*e family ties be but dysfunctional? They invite conniving, backbiting, suspicion and mistrust. How else can a childe claim any of his sire's status or standing?

Even a dysfunctional family can present a united front. Members might squabble, fight, deceive, blackmail or even kill amongst themselves, but should an exterior threat present itself, they rally. Mutual disagreements are put aside until the foreign threat is dealt with. Sire stands by childe, and "sibling" stands by "sibling." They remain united until the threat is past, at which time they're free to resume their personal agendas and disagreements. And should a family rival fall victim to the exterior threat while the family as a whole prevails, well, that's unfortunate.

This book presents a unique roleplaying opportunity: The chance to portray sires and childer within *Ventru*e lines. The players' characters are the parents and children of the family, all interested in the same goal of collective prestige and status, but also interested in personal achievement and acquisition, even at the expense of family members. Each act of this book is rife with motivations and opportunities for characters to work together to achieve goals, and to fall to infighting to claim individual favor and prominence. These are



stories about extended, failed families. Think the Bundys, the Bunkers, Hamlet, Lear and his daughters, Richard III and his court, the Corleone family or any tight-knit group whose members work with and against each other.

### MOOD

The passage of time in this chronicle puts emphasis on the rise and fall of Ventrue. Each is Embraced and schemes and plots toward her personal success. But as a stagnant creature, a being outside the natural order, the world moves on and she becomes dated, alienated and exiled. This phenomenon encourages a longing for "how things were." Sentimentality arises for what a Ventrue held when things once went her way. Those for whom the times have changed suffer melancholy or a sense of loss. The world has passed them by. In contrast, those who are in their prime — who win prestige *now* — are exultant. But even that tide must turn.

This sense of longing is perhaps best emphasized between the generations of players' characters. Vampires who were in their element in the Dark Ages seem to have outdated principles to the eyes of Victorian undead. In turn, movers and shakers in the Final Nights give sideways, condescending looks to elders who struggled for success in the Victorian Age. The irony is, however, sires from "out of date" eras are still around to impose their values on young characters. Childer might scoff at the urgency that elders assign to certain needs or accomplishments, but they have to do so quietly. They have to honor sires' outdated wishes and directives (at least for appearances' sake), because those elders still hold power. A sire might have Victorian sensibilities, but his command to have a neonate left out for the sun was as damning in the 19th century as it is in the 21st. Characters in each act should therefore seek contemporary means to power, but also chafe at the anachronistic constraints and limitations imposed upon them by their anachronistic elders.

### BLOOD TIES

The *Ventrue Chronicle* offers a unique manner in which to tell a Blue Blood story over time. Characters are invited to plot, scheme and squabble over centuries to bring renown to themselves and their lines.

Act 1, *Tempestuous Hearts*, is set in the Dark Medieval Age. Ventrue circulate in and around the court of John, Baron of York. As in any era, the characters must be careful. The shadows of old and dangerous vampires are cast far. Ventrue must step carefully if they are to gain esteem, yet not invoke the jealousy of their "betters."

Act 2, *Fortunes Abroad*, occurs in Victorian Age New York City. Ventrue descendants seek their for-

tunes in the New World. The influences of Europe cannot be escaped completely, though, as characters choose their path amid sect wars and the schemes of conniving elders.

Act 3, *Southern Nights*, takes place in Savannah, Georgia during the Final Nights. The war between Camarilla and Sabbat continues, posing opportunities and dangers to young Ventrue who dare to play both sides to their advantage. Ancient eyes watch, however, and characters must toe lines drawn by their progenitors or risk being abandoned.

### REFERENCES

Various World of Darkness and real-world books and resources have bearing on *The Ventrue Chronicle*. Most important is *Clanbook: Ventrue*, which sets the tone and flavor of all clan members. Also useful (but not necessary) are *Dark Ages: Vampire* and *Victorian Age: Vampire*.

Otherwise, this book's emphasis on responsibility, family, lineage and duty pervade various sources. Any of these can be inspiration for the direction in which you take the chronicle, and for players' choice of characters.

*The Shield*. The TV show on FX. The first seasons are available on DVD. Think of the department as a Ventrue coterie, with the captain and Mackie as rival elders, and the Strike Team as Mackie's collective childer.

Shakespeare. Take your pick of plays. Virtually every tragedy about kings, courts, and jealous or greedy courtiers is rife with politics, backstabbing and intrigue. Violence is a last, worst resort, because it means a break in the royal line, which is the source of power (or a weakness that plotters use to interject themselves into power). Alternatively, violence is the trigger for events and we watch characters struggle to hold the reigns or overthrow those who make bids for control.

*Fistful of Dollars*. Imagine Clint's character, The Man with No Name, as a Ventrue. He enters town, sees an opportunity to profit from events going on, and manipulates everyone to his favor by playing both sides. He wins on all counts and leaves the town better off than he found it. (Although that last development is incidental. He could've just as easily left it in ashes and not cared or gained a whit.)

*All in the Family*. Take out the comedy and you're left with the disturbing premise of a power struggle within a household. There's a patriarch and matriarch, squabbling children and neighbors who interfere with who's in charge and who is morally vindicated. Every episode presents a social issue over which the



characters contend, all seeking to have last word on what's right. Never forget that might makes right.

*Sandman.* A look at a family of immortal supernatural beings and what it means to be a part of it. "The Sound of Her Wings" and "Brief Lives" are particularly insightful when it comes to the themes of family and responsibility.

The King Arthur legends. A group of brothers are supposed to be equals. Some remain loyal to the cause. Others have a falling-out over personal desires. In the end, unity proves most important of all.

*The Business*, by Iain Banks. Our heroine is adopted into a company that has existed since Roman times, and it becomes her family. Then she is forced to examine her loyalties and the agenda of her "employers."

## LEGACY OF DAMNATION

Since *The Ventrue Chronicle* is based on an unusual premise — playing heirs in a line of characters — its subtleties and pitfalls need to be addressed. Players and Storytellers both have responsibilities in this kind of storytelling. While the majority of this book is for the Storyteller's eyes only, this section should be shared with players to help them establish characters, bloodline goals, family interests and rivals, and lineage weaknesses. These facets of the Blood and Ventrue genealogy set the tone for the chronicle and help guide characters in pursuits throughout the centuries. It's also important to explain the style of play at work here so players understand what they're getting into.

Basically, a legacy of damnation chronicle focuses on playing a vampire in different eras. You portray a particular character through a plotline, but instead of carrying that character into another age, you play that character's childe and then her childe and so on down the line. Previous characters sire(s) slowly fade into obscurity or torpor as childer take up the legacy. Or, sires' passing can be abrupt with torpor or Final Death, jumpstarting a childe's responsibility in the line.

## PRIMOGENITURE

A legacy chronicle requires considerably more time to create than a basic game, whether set in history or the modern nights. Your first character is like any other that you might invent. He has motivations and goals, but in time he does not stand alone. He sires an heir. Conventionally, storytelling is left behind when you create your character's first childe. You no longer focus on a single identity, but to a legacy. The easiest and most convenient time to perform the transition between characters is between stories, when you anticipate

## CHARACTERS OF CHARACTERS

While each of the acts in this book comes to an end, the protagonists of each do not have to. Sure, some may meet Final Death or fall into torpor, but most continue on. They profit from the successes won in previous events or bear the shame of past failures, and these benefits or black marks are passed onto progeny.

Players create new characters in each act, but sires (previous characters) are still out there. What happens to these vampires over the intervening years? How do they change or staunchly refuse to change? Does their star continue to rise or go plummeting to the earth? That's for you and the players to decide. Based on your needs for the next act or players' aspirations for succeeding characters, you can chart the course and progress of lingering sires. A new character who is already smiled upon may come from a sire who is in good standing after all this time. A player who craves a challenge might have a character who bears the humiliation of a sire fallen on hard times. Or maybe those are the situations that you, as Storyteller, impose on characters and their patrons.

Sires probably make only peripheral appearances in subsequent acts, but you can gauge how far they've gone. Vampires who spend their time merely subsisting, existing from night to night without drawing much attention to themselves, gain 15 freebie points every century. A dynamic Ventrue who takes part in plots and schemes may gain more per century, as many as 20, 25 or 30 points. It's your call.

moving from one era or focus to another. The laurels or failings of one character are transferred to the other while starting fresh in a new setting. The childe should inherit some of her sire's goals and plans to pursue in the next era, but that is more of a suggestion than a rule. Indeed, the childe may resent her sire and active work against his interests! Transitions between characters are also opportunities to make clean breaks — or to try to.

Once the transfer of control is finalized, sit down with your Storyteller and discuss what happens in the interim. What does a sire do in his "retirement"? Is torpor an option or does he continue to function in Kindred society? What about the childe? Is she prepared for the new era? What facets of the sire's unlifeline carry over to the childe? Do any enemies, artifacts or allies cross the generational gap? Is the childe pleased or apprehensive about her future?



As the childe becomes the main character, she may grow into her own, eventually shrugging off the shadow of her sire and forging her personal goals. In time she becomes a sire herself, arranging her own retirement and preparing to oversee a successor and new era. The cycle can repeat itself for as long as you have eras to play.

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

It's worth mentioning again that a legacy of damnation chronicle is not a standard **Vampire** game. Whereas a more traditional chronicle focuses on a particular character's development, a legacy story focuses on the development of multiple characters throughout diverse locales and times. Make no mistake: A legacy chronicle is not a light-hearted romp through the centuries of Kindred and kine society. Nor is it a story geared for new players or those who invest minimal time to their chronicles. It's no longer the Storyteller's sole responsibility to run the game. Players have a host of characters, and while they don't control them all at the same time, it's a good idea to think of the line in the same way the Storyteller looks at her characters, as coherent parts of a whole.

### HELPING THE STORYTELLER

Players can put in as much time in a legacy chronicle as the Storyteller. In fact, the epic requires players to act as interim Storytellers at times to manage their lineage. The Storyteller needs help keeping up with the many plots, personalities, supporting-cast members and settings at work. The more you can do to help alleviate that burden, the more he can focus on everyone's enjoyment of the game.

In a legacy story, you're part of a team. Instead of trying to maximize the play of any one particular character, you may have to juggle or make suggestions about two or three (that is, your sire and possibly grandsire). With such broadening of scope, the focus of stories shifts from a single ambition to team goals. Expand that mentality to encompass all the players, their characters and the Storyteller, and the end result is a literal community of characters interacting on multiple levels.

Players need to communicate with the Storyteller as much as possible. For him to develop personal and interesting plots over different eras, he needs input. Give him plenty of motivations and possible plot hooks for your character(s) to pursue. Say, your characters' lineage focuses on influencing mortal crime groups. It might be that these interests intersect — or conflict — with other players'. The results are goals to fulfill and contention in achieving them, whether with compelling antagonists or players' characters. Provide every opportunity for the Storyteller to act on

plot developments, especially when you're preparing to retire one character and create a new one. Relaying your line's intentions and goals helps make the transition between periods and protagonists easier to handle.

### A LITTLE TRUST

Another helpful requirement of a legacy chronicle is faith in fellow players. Just as you can help out the Storyteller, you can help other players enjoy the game. Exploration is one of the major themes of a legacy story, which often means feeding off other players' ideas for their characters. A common interest or enemy may turn into an alliance of characters to seize power, for example. "But who," a farseeing Storyteller wonders, "will be the one to claim power in the end?" Coordinating with other players helps establish story ideas tailored made for the coterie. The Storyteller doesn't have to come up with all the plots and subplots that Ventrue address.

Imagine you take a character from a Dark Ages story to a Victorian one. You want to emphasize how enamoured he is with the wonders of steam technology. The Storyteller, however, has to focus on laying the groundwork of the setting and upcoming events. You can communicate your desires to other players and, if they trust your roleplaying ability, they may help you set a scene in which you enact your character's fascination. Trust and initiative help you forge your character's identity in the legacy chronicle.

One thing to remember about trust between players, however, is that it doesn't necessarily translate into characters getting along. For example, centuries of static existence can alienate an aged vampire from the surrounding world. That alienation may manifest as frustration or pettiness, which may be turned on any undead associates. That is, on other players' characters. That's where trust between players is crucial. Tension initiates drama between characters, but it shouldn't between players. The ability to advance the overarching plot while also forming an interesting subplot about conflict between characters is a boon to any chronicle. When you trust other players, you're willing to inject stress into the relationship between characters. Ideally, doing so doesn't devolve into a bickering match.

### KEEP YOUR OPTIONS OPEN

Be flexible and willing to modify character and lineage goals. Different times and areas of the world make different demands of your roleplaying. They place various obstacles to your characters' ambitions. If you refuse to modify bloodline goals, characters may be stymied and you could be frustrated by lack of opportunities in the game. Imagine a Dark Ages character who obsessively clings to horse-and-carriage



travel as his domain. What does he have to show for it in the Victorian Age and Final Nights?

The Storyteller has a whole host of options open to him during the course of the chronicle. So many that he can take the game in all sorts of unexpected directions. Expect the unexpected and be willing to react to new situations. Think of your options as a Kindred does his own. Those vampires who are unwilling or unable to react to the passage of time are eventually driven to Final Death or torpor. It's only a matter of time before the world changes in a way that makes a vampire a threat to himself. The same principle applies to you. If you refuse to adapt with the changing chronicle, you and your characters will become a liability rather than an asset.

### STANDING THE SIGHT OF THEM

A legacy chronicle starts with your character in the distant past. Over time, he works his way into the future through persistence and progeny. How quickly time passes and which eras your various characters experience is up to you and your troupe. Still, a baseline is needed to develop characters and create common starting points for your group. As in any other story, you need to work with the Storyteller to create characters who are appropriate to any setting.

Play proceeds normally from there. The Storyteller presents plot elements and antagonists and you roleplay through your character's experiences. Some unique requirements become apparent in time, however. Characters are essentially in foreign lands at foreign times. They pursue personal goals. Then they have progeny who pick up the torch. So, what keeps these beings with diverse origins and interests together, potentially across the ages? They need a unifying force, a common bond, a reason for staying in contact through all the rivalries and conflicts that arise.

Get into the characters' heads and find reasons why they remain together. What brings them to the table to advance separate or common goals? It can be as simple as a shared lust for revenge or a collective ancestor, or as complicated as wanting to stay close to one's perceived enemies. An obstacle or enemy may be beyond individuals' power to overcome. It will take years of collective scheming and planning to emerge victorious over her. Characters need to cooperate to build influence and clout so that they can prevail. Succeeding at that goal is even more important than the individual differences that arise between the characters. If personal motives take precedent, individual characters may be preyed upon or the whole may collapse. In the end, a specific reason for characters to stick together defines personalities, encourages roleplaying and justifies the ongoing chronicle.

## UNFOLDING EVENTS

A fundamental legacy chronicle involves a single or multiple lines of Kindred, with considerable spans of time between progeny. The exact amount of time is less important than how the characters spend it. Characters experience (or disregard) ages of world evolution, while their unives are captured in comparatively small amounts of chronicle time. Consider the snippets of their existence roleplayed as of a "survey" of history. Eventually, it comes time for characters to Embrace childer and pass the legacy on, allowing you to play entirely new characters in different eras.

This is basically a variation on troupe-style play, but instead of trading characters, you move on to a specific time with a specific character. The biggest advantage to this kind of game is its simplicity. You get to enjoy fantastic roleplaying opportunities and get to advance a timeline, but you're not forced into anything radically different from traditional play. A childe may have a number of similar outlooks and desires as her master, and she's certainly a member of the same clan. The advancing setting offers change, but not so drastic change that you're constantly forced to re-evaluate any character's personality and worldview.

It's often useful to start your chronicle just before some major revelation or development in history occurs, such as the death of Christ, the Fall of the Roman Empire or the English Civil War. You play your character for a while and get a feel of the context. When a pivotal event occurs, you have roleplaying history from which to draw to portray your current characters and to create succeeding characters. Through this approach, the significant events in mortal history become the benchmarks of change in Kindred culture and your chronicle. You're offered closure and new story opportunities at the same time.

### THE HUNT PRELUDE

The linchpin of a legacy chronicle is the acquisition of childer. Whereas conventional character creation usually involves a simple explanation of who Embraced your character, you can now represent both sire and childe. You get to consider the creation act from both sides of the experience. Why does an elder choose a particular "victim"? What qualifications does he apply to the search? How does the new character feel about his new existence? Does he understand his sire's motives? In essence, one character's finale is another's prelude. Re-read the prelude section of *Vampire: The Masquerade* (p. 108) to re-acquaint yourself with what's suggested there. Even under your special circumstances, you want to work with the Storyteller to create a story that justifies the sire and gives meaning to the childe. As always, emphasis should be on roleplaying rather than on die rolls.

It's also possible that your previous character doesn't disappear just yet. He fades out of the picture gradually, indoctrinating his neonate into a new existence. Or he could throw the new character to the



wolves, so to speak, and make his exit almost immediately. The choice is yours and depends on the circumstances of your chronicle and the needs of your troupe. The Storyteller could adopt your old character for a time, or you could try your hand at depicting both characters simultaneously in a challenging display of schizophrenia. How intrusive is the sire in his childe's existence? Does he simply offer advice or meddle directly? Does he have specific expectations or allow free reign? When does he feel confident enough to pass his legacy on, or is he ever able to relinquish it?

## FAMILY OBLIGATIONS

The clans tend to invest varying degrees of importance in the process of creating a childe. There are different views on the relative usefulness of the sire-childe relationship. The

Ventrue usually select their childer very carefully and spend extensive time stressing the importance of the line. This period of instruction is known as the *agoge* among the tradition bound. A childe bears the (hopefully good) name of all her predecessors and is required to conduct herself appropriately, bringing no shame to her sire or the legacy. In this sire-childe relationship, the childe bears most responsibility. Her actions do not reflect on herself alone, and she will be held accountable for them. The neonate is made to realize that her station in unlife is exactly what is expected of her. Woe to the foolish childe who oversteps her bounds or embarrasses her lineage, especially considering that a great-great grandsire may be watching.



And yet, a character of a Ventrue legacy is often free to make or ruin her *own* fortunes. There's always another clanmate quick to prey upon a peer's weakness. Indeed, that predatory environment weeds out the feeble, rash and timid. And thus, Clan Ventrue is kept strong.











# ACT 1: TEMPESTUOUS HEARTS

What gift of the gods  
is held in glory like this:  
to hold your hand victorious  
over the heads of those you hate?  
Glory is precious forever.  
— Euripides

Leland raced through the burning halls of York Castle searching for the baron, steeling himself against the primal urge to flee. He could barely hear his own voice over the roar of the flames.

“Baron John! Can you hear me?”

Having delivered a message from Durham in the hours approaching dawn, the Tremere had accepted John’s hospitality to stay in the castle until dusk. He had been admiring the baron’s library when he smelled smoke, and the first wave of panic set in.

The Beast raged within his chest, recoiling from the flames that licked the timber walls, and Leland shielded his eyes from the brightness of the conflagration. Dawn approached quickly. He knew the sky must be purple over the moors. If Baron John could not escape the fire in time, he would run headlong into the morning sun — and Leland would lose a powerful contact. He had worked too hard to establish himself in York to let that happen.







"Baron J—"

A support beam fell against Leland's shoulder, setting his robes ablaze and nearly provoking the Red Fear. Clawing the garment from his body with shaking hands, the Warlock struggled to find something to set his mind to. Something logical, analytical. He forced himself to break down the situation to maintain his presence.

The city's Jewish population had congregated in the common room, seeking refuge from the abuses of their fellow mortals. There had been attacks on Jewish merchants and moneylenders in recent weeks. Maybe the fire was set to force them into the open. Or maybe one of John's rivals hoped to make it look that way.

Reaching John's chamber, Leland found the room a maelstrom of flames and smoke. Above the roar and creaking of timber walls, John's agonized screaming pierced Leland's dead heart. The baron's clothing was ablaze. His hair was a crown of flame.

Tearing a smoldering tapestry from the wall outside John's chamber, Leland charged into the room to cover the baron and pulled him to safety, dragging his trembling body down the stairs toward the front entrance.

The scene on the ground floor was gruesome. Piled bodies of Jewish men, women and children littered the floor in pools of blood, all seemingly killed by their own hand. Many against the walls of the common room had begun to burn. Standing in the doorway was a haggard woman dressed in a tattered tunic, brandishing what appeared to be a Viking axe. The fire reflected in her eyes as she stood unmoving amidst the blaze.

"I am Katla Thraddottir," she spoke using the Saxon tongue. "You have stolen my throne and land. Prepare yourself!"

Leland stopped on the stairs, his mind struggling between rushing back up into the inferno or facing this new threat. Behind the wild woman, he could see the quickly lightening sky. As Leland fought to control his fear, John stood up and threw back the tapestry. Despite his scorched skin and charred clothes, he displayed an overpowering majesty as he stared fiercely at the intruder.

"No," he said with power and authority, responding in the same language. "I am John, Baron of York, and I have stolen nothing. My sire warned of your coming, and it is you who should prepare... cousin."

As his lord descended the stair to meet this threat, Leland attempted to conjure dense cloud-cover through blood magic. It was a clear morning, making his work difficult, but any cover he could provide would give protection against the sun. As Leland stretched his mind's eye toward the heavens, Eyolf Ivarsson, John's warmaster, ran into the burning castle between the would-be combatants.

"Stop! This is madness!" Eyolf faced the enraged Katla, his back to Baron John. "The war is over and both Saxon and



Viking have lost! You stand before the childe of Julian Cerialis, the blood brother of your sire. He is not your enemy!"

Katla's eyes never left John, but Leland saw that the words affected her. After a moment, she spoke to Eyolf in a language the Tremere had to assume was native to them both, and the *einherjar* Gangrel responded in kind. Her eyes passed over Eyolf and Leland before letting the axe drop to her side.

She allowed Eyolf to escort her from the castle as the clouds thickened overhead, and John once again allowed Leland to bear his weight.

"You have done me a great service today," the Ventrue lord said. "It will not be forgotten."

## Introduction

The first act of **Ventrue Chronicle** takes place in the dark halls of medieval York, at the beginning of the 13th century. It has elements of a murder mystery, and a complex political tapestry in which characters can strive for personal advancement. The court of Baron John of York is beset by tragedy. Several important members have met an untimely end in the past months. Mithras, Prince of London, has used an agent within John's inner circle, a Tremere named Leland, to weaken his opponent's support in north England. The characters are asked to root out the source of York's woes, at the same time entangling themselves in complex webs of intrigue spun by John, Mithras and the Tremere Meerlinda of Durham.

For more detailed information on Cainites of the 13th century, it might be a good idea to reference **Dark Ages: Vampire**. For more information on the British Isles at this time, see **Dark Ages: Europe** and **Dark Ages: British Isles**.

## Theme and Mood

The Dark Medieval is a world dimly lit by candles and torches. Where curses, legends and monsters are all too real and mortals lock themselves behind heavy doors and castle walls as daylight wanes. Vampires of this period are the true rulers of the night, preying on the kine masses and serving as dark reflections of kings and feudal lords. The War of Princes rages across Europe as the children of Caine rise against each other in open conflict, seeking to expand their domains and conquer centuries-old enemies.

The conflicts of Europe are waged subtly in the British Isles, but lose none of their bitter intensity. A dark power has risen in London and forces the Cainites of England to his will — though many chafe under these newly forged chains. Specifically, Baron John of York seeks independence from the Methuselah Mithras, playing a dangerous game that could easily end in ruin or Final Death. Many secretly share John's desire to throw off Mithras' control, but John has both the power and support to pose a significant threat to the Methuselah's established order, the Baronies of Avalon.

**Ventrue Chronicle** explores the themes of loyalty and ambition, as characters find themselves embroiled in a conflict between Ventrue elders. Baron John looks for allies in his struggle against Mithras, and such friendship brings certain rewards. The patronage of such a notable Cainite has immense value, and may prove a stepping-stone to power or domain.

Beyond simple ambition, Ventrue characters are also bound by loyalty to their direct lineage and other close blood relations. The sins of the childe are visited upon the sire, and on entire bloodlines. Disgrace reflects badly not only on the individual, but on both previous and subsequent generations. Success can mean great prestige and respect — for both character and sire — while failure may lead to shame and loss of *dignitas*.

## Setting

The glory and splendor of Rome have come and gone, as have hundreds of difficult years as humanity has struggled to rebuild civilization. It is now A.D. 1230, and the medieval world is divided into kingdoms and empires governed by strong bonds between lord and vassal. Powerful kings and princes live off the toil of the nameless masses, while lesser nobles struggle to achieve influence of their own. This environment is well suited to the children of Caine as it closely parallels their own Tradition of Domain. As the castles of mortal nobility fall quiet for the night, a vampiric nobility arises from forgotten dungeons and locked towers to hold court, sometimes even in the very same chambers as their mortal counterparts.

Cainite society is divided rigidly between the High and Low Clans, separating the noble and powerful clans from the base, and from pretenders from foreign lands. The Ventrue consider themselves the rightful rulers of the night and have secured the lands of England and the Holy Roman Empire as their domains. These Warlord princes establish themselves in medieval cities with all the pomp and finery of the kings of kine, surrounded by entourages of servants and retainers, governing a network of vassals owing them oaths of fealty.

What follows are brief descriptions of some of the locations used in this act, along with ways for you to create a rich world.

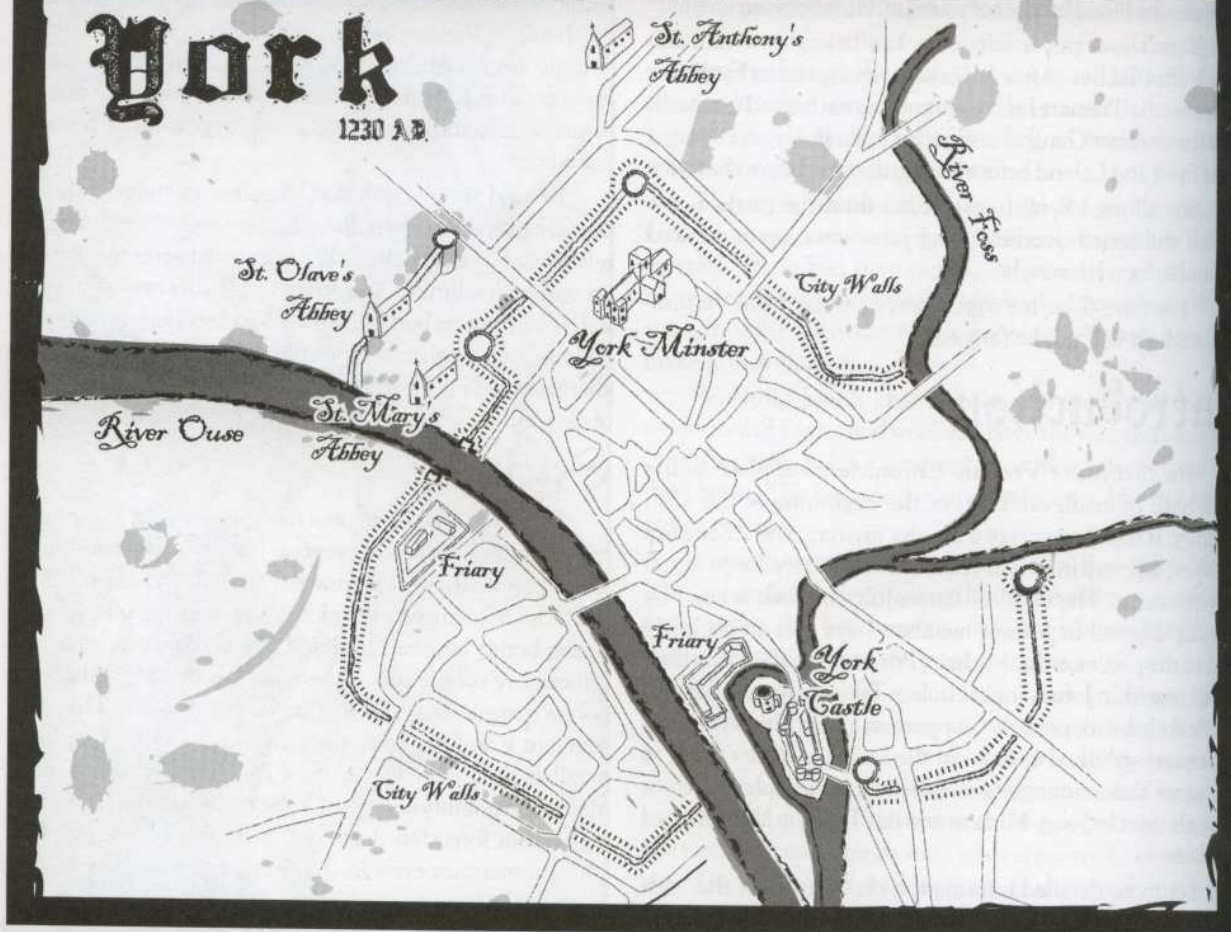
## York

Founded as the Roman city of Eboracum around the turn of the millennium, York has featured prominently in the history of the British Isles. Situated on a peninsula between the River Ouse and River Foss, the city is a major port and trading hub, with close ties to London and the Continent. York is surrounded by high banks and timber, all of which is periodically interrupted by large stone gates that were carved into the earth by the Normans when they seized the city in 1067. Those wishing to enter by land must pay a toll as they



# York

1230 A.D.



pass through these gates. Those wishing to enter by boat pay as they are stopped by chains strung across river access points.

## York Castle

The original castle was built in 1069 shortly after the Normans took the city, and Ventrué Julian Cerialis immediately claimed it as his haven. When Julian met Final Death, John assumed control of the haven and held court there. Built by William the Conqueror on a large earthen mound overlooking the southern approach on the River Ouse, the fortification was destroyed by fire in 1190 during an intense wave of persecution and violence toward the city's Jewish population, which had taken refuge in the tower. John barely escaped the conflagration with the help of Leland, a Tremere messenger from Durham who has since become a close advisor.

Rebuilt in timber shortly after its destruction, the castle was expanded to include a courtyard with an armory and residential buildings for guards and constables. Around the castle, the River Foss has been rerouted to provide a shallow moat, with two bridges connecting to the mainland. The tower itself has become less a fortification and more a residence and symbol of political power. The common room where John holds court is replete with hanging tapestries,

ornate silver and gold candelabra, and oil paintings. The second floor contains a small library and two bedchambers. John has established his haven within the castle, in the cellar of the constable's chambers (he retains the constable as a ghoul servant). He presides in the main tower while William de Stuteville, the Sheriff of Yorkshire, is abroad. The Baron also has another haven outside the city walls in St. Mary's Abbey.

## York Minster

Christians have congregated at the site of York Minster since the withdrawal of Roman forces in the 4th century. Several churches and cathedrals have been constructed and destroyed here over the last thousand years. The Saxon Minster was heavily damaged in the 11th century during skirmishes against Normans seeking to control the city. The Norman Minster was itself damaged extensively a century later due to fire. Lack of strong leadership and public support made repairs and renovations to the structure sporadic at best, until Walter de Gray ascended to archbishop in 1215.

In 1220, construction on the Minster began again in earnest, with the intention of building a rival to that of Canterbury. Cainite Aimery de Methuin takes credit for the ambitious plans, claiming to have no little influence over those close to the shrewd



and severe archbishop. He hopes to combat John's influence over the city with the power of the Church, seeking to take control of the barony should John falter.

Aimery's ambition of controlling the Minster has found opposition within the cathedral itself. Beneath the structure lie the foundations of an ancient Roman Legionary fortress that has been sealed for centuries. The *einherjar* Katla Thraddottir has only recently returned to these underground chambers originally used as a haven by her sire, Thrand, and her grandsire Julian Cerialis. Understanding the significance of the Minster, Katla has worked to undermine Aimery's influence over Walter de Gray and secure a measure of sway over this bastion of the Church. Aimery has accomplished little in response, yielding to these new pressures and showing his true lack of guile and ambition.

### The Walls

Sections of York's walls date back to the founding of the Roman fortress of Eboracum in A.D. 71, although the city has expanded considerably since that time. After the Roman Empire abandoned the fortress in the early 5th century, the Anglo-Saxons fortified the city by creating walls of mounded earth that enclosed a larger area. Over time, the walls were strengthened and expanded until the Normans began to construct walls of stone. The 13th century sees a period of further fortification as stone walls begin to fully encircle the city.

The walls are interrupted by several bars, many fortified, which are used as controlled access points to the city and for toll collection. Bootham Bar, also called Galmanlith, along the northwestern wall was rebuilt by the Normans on the site of an old Roman gateway and has come under the influence of Katla Thraddottir. The *einherjar* maintains the guard station and tower as a hidden, secondary entrance to her haven, as the structure is linked to the old Roman dungeons by a subterranean passage. Walmgate Bar at the southeast corner of the city and Mickelgate Bar along the southwestern wall mark two other major entrances into the city, covered by stone archways carved through the earthen walls.

Also of note is a 10-sided Roman tower between Bootham Bar and the River Ouse. While the tower has fallen mostly into disrepair, Aimery de Methuin uses an underground chamber within the structure as his haven. This is perhaps the most heavily fortified position in the city and it overlooks St. Mary's Abbey.

### St. Mary's Abbey

The first stone of St. Mary's Abbey was laid in 1088 when the former church of St. Olave's had become too small for the inhabiting Benedictine monks. The wealthiest and most influential abbey in the north of England, St. Mary's became the secondary haven of Baron John shortly after the destruction of his sire. Holding court in the now-neglected St. Olave's Church when York Castle is occupied by the Sheriff of Yorkshire, John has insinuated many agents into the abbey hierarchy and wields considerable sway within its power structure.

## BARS AND GATES

Owing to the Viking presence in the city in the 9th and 10th centuries, many roads and entranceways of York retain some of their Danish names. What would ordinarily be called a "road" is instead referred to as a "gate," while what would ordinarily be called a "gate" is instead called a "bar." For example, the southeastern avenue into the city is named "Walmgate" instead of "Walm Road," and the archway it passes under is called "Walmgate Bar" instead of "Walm Road Gate."

## Durham

Situated on a peninsula surrounded by the River Wear, the city of Durham boasts an impressive Norman castle and cathedral, and a Benedictine monastery. The previous Saxon structures were ordered destroyed by William the Conqueror shortly after the Normans gained control, and construction on the castle and cathedral commenced immediately afterward. In the mortal world, the walled city serves as a strategic defensive position for the Normans against the Saxons in the north of England, and against the rebellious Scots. For Cainites, Durham plays an important defensive role as one of the northernmost population centers in the Baronies of Avalon.

The Norman castle is of Romanesque design and has a layout similar to that of York Castle. There is a fortified tower at the top of a large earthen mound and an enclosed courtyard surrounded by walls, a large stone gateway, a chapel and other residential structures for constables and the bishop. The castle is home to the Earl of Northumbria and haven to Ventrue Eloise Marchand, John's representative in Durham.

### Cathedral of St. Cuthbert

The cathedral is mostly finished save for the main central tower. The twin West Towers were recently completed in 1226. A prominent holy site, the remains of St. Cuthbert are kept within a shrine inside the cathedral, as are the Lindisfarne gospels. The Benedictine monastery adjoining the cathedral is led by Prior Ralph Kermet, over whom Meerlinda has exerted some influence for over a decade.

Serving as Durham's Elysium, the cathedral has seen meetings between many of the city's most notable Cainites. Those wishing to meet within the cathedral speak in hushed tones while pretending to pray at one of the cathedral's many small chapel alcoves. The building itself has been constructed too recently to have developed a True Faith rating of its own, although the shrines containing holy relics at the front of the cathedral are repellant to Cainites. Meetings most often take place at the rear of the building, but those seeking exceptional privacy force them-



selves into proximity to the relics to limit interruption or eavesdropping by other undead.

#### Lion's Gate Chantry

At the northern base of the peninsula, near Milburngate Bridge, lies Lion's Gate Chantry, home of Meerlinda and base of Tremere operations in Britain. The local presence of the Lindisfarne gospels and remains of St. Cuthbert make Durham a prime location for the Usurpers. The area practically crackles with mystical energy.

The chantry is a tall stone tower, assumed by most to be the secondary manse of a wealthy noble from the country. Unwilling to expand the chantry beyond the tower, the vampires within are forced to conduct their magical experiments in four cramped laboratories with only one disorganized library among them. There are no torture chambers or detention cells, as Meerlinda rarely has need to confine her enemies. Captured foes are disposed of quickly, without lengthy confinement — or chance of escape.

The chantry is surrounded by a hedge maze and lavish garden, replete with magical wards and alarms. The mortal magi of the tower are free to come and go, though unwanted visitors or intruders are immediately recognized and dealt with. For more information on the Lion's Gate Chantry, see *House of Tremere*.

## Major Players

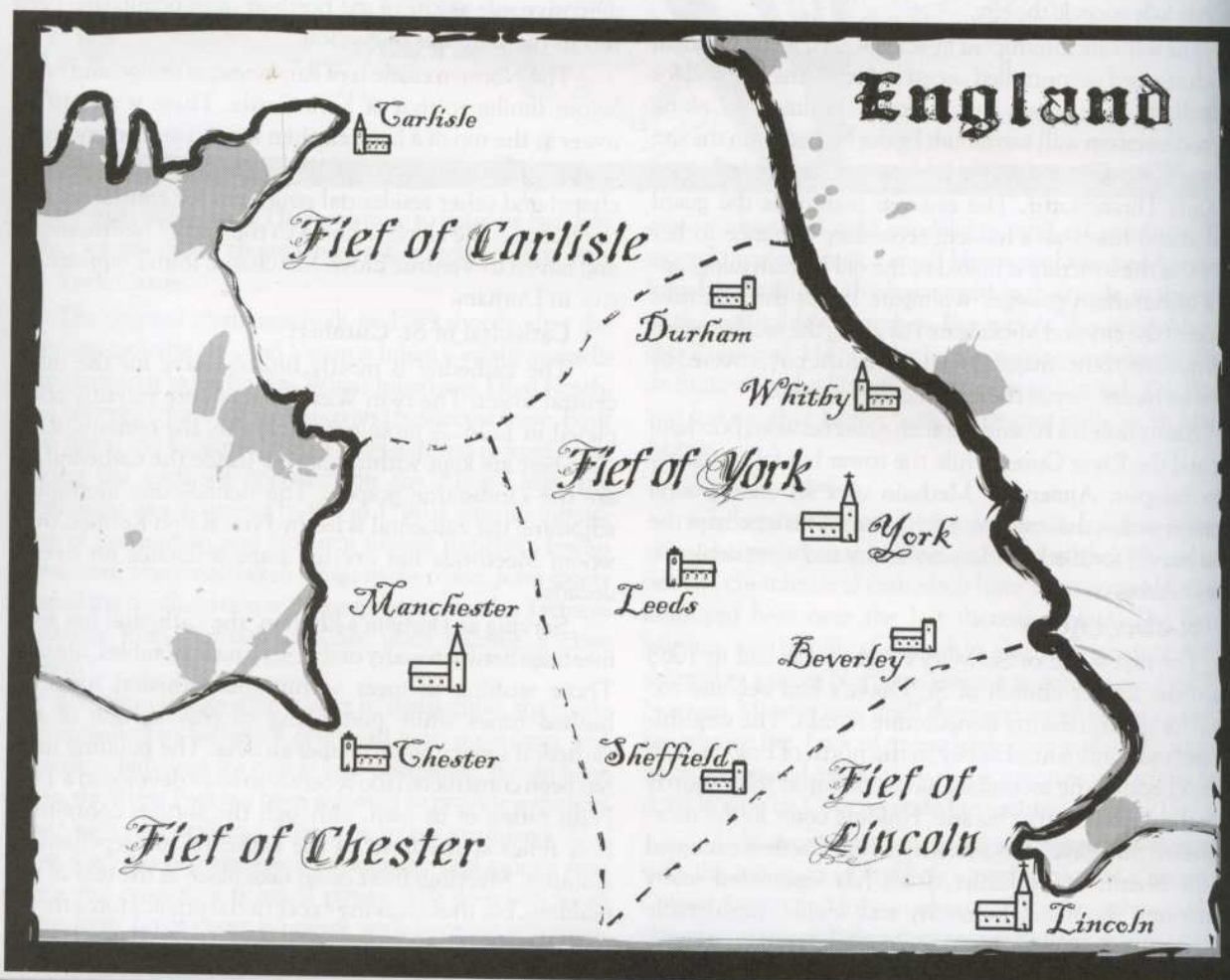
York is the focus of a major power play among England's Ventrue: Three scions of the clan seek ultimate control of the barony.

### Mithras

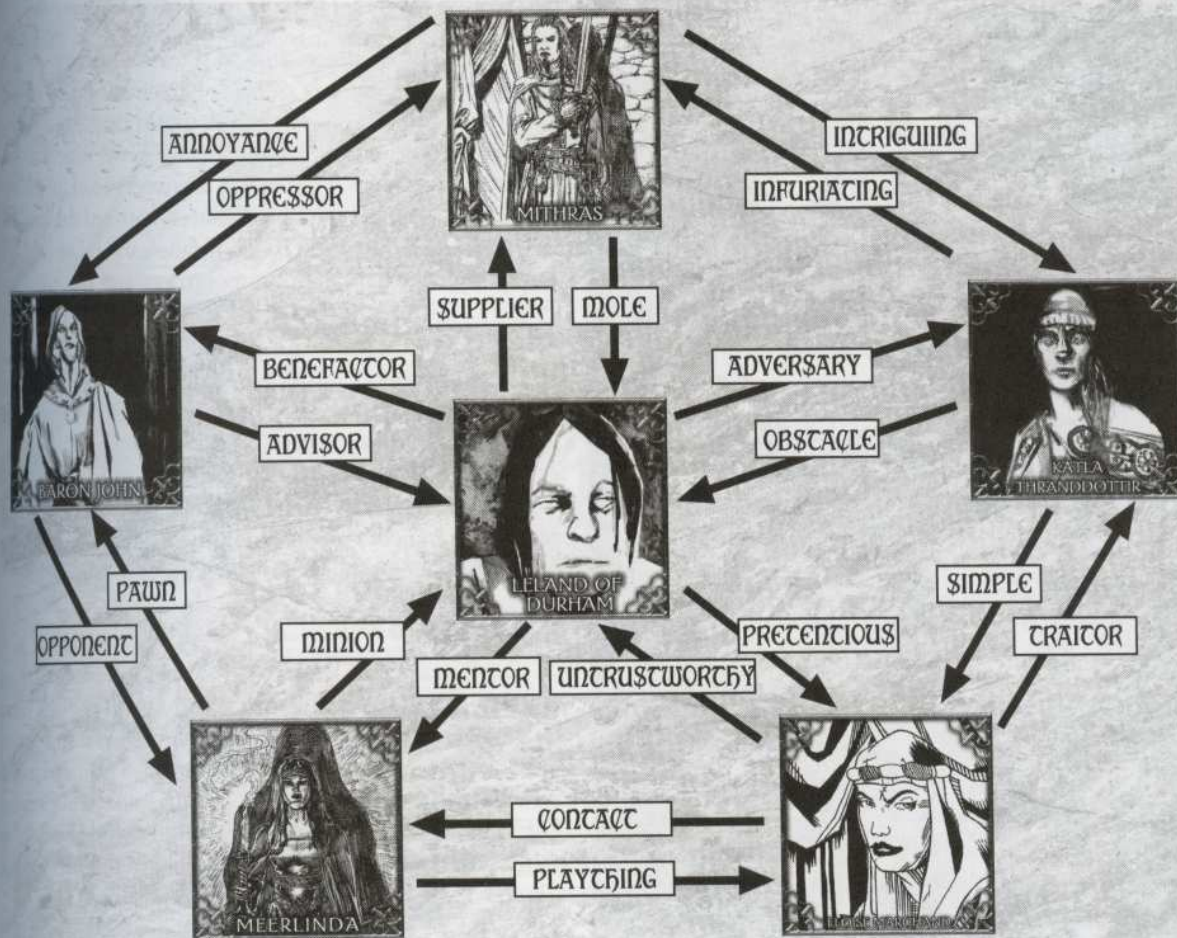
Ruling from a distance in London, Mithras achieved his present power through subtlety, guile and ruthlessness. Throughout his many centuries of unlife, this Methuselah has consistently managed to wrangle the odds to his favor, twice bending England to his indomitable will. Mithras has kept a close eye on events in York and is aware of John's independent nature. Direct confrontation between the two elders would spark further division across Avalon, however, and Mithras' position is not firm enough to risk such discord. This doesn't mean he isn't prepared to undermine John's influence, though, in hopes that a more malleable prince may assume the reigns in York.

### Baron John

The youngest baron in England, John quickly ascended to power through the machinations of his sire,







Julian Cerialis. John was Embraced at the close of the Norman Conquest of England after being used by Julian to retake York, which the ancient had previously ruled as prince. Rumor has it that John betrayed his sire and claimed the city as his own with the help of three powerful vampires called the Triumvirate. When Mithras rose from torpor and eliminated the Triumvirate, John's debt to the three was erased and he solidified his hold over the city.

In the past century, John has allied with many who oppose Mithras, but also acquired many enemies envious of his relative autonomy in the north. Any number of rivals seek to weaken his influence in York, some hoping to expand the territories of Chester and Lincoln and others merely to curry Mithras' favor.

### Katla Thranddottir

Herself once seneschal and childe of the prince of York, then called Jorvik and under Viking control, Katla resents the compliant role she is forced to play in John's court. Her *einherjar* sire, Thrand, was Embraced by Julian Cerialis under similar circumstances to John, though the elder sought Viking rather than Norman force to retake the city. Thrand turned on his sire and seized the reigns of

power, expelling Julian to the south of England and installing his childe Katla as seneschal.

Katla learned at her sire's side for close to a century before Julian's agents managed to incite civil strife among both Cainites and kine. During the conflict, Katla fell to torpor only to wake centuries later to find her sire and grandsire dead, and John in control of the city. She has played the loyal cousin and advisor only for fear that any destabilization of York would invite Mithras to tighten his grip. Her intention to rule her sire's city is known to all but the most recently Embraced in the barony.

### Meerlinda

One of Tremere's Inner Circle and among the most powerful magi in the Order of Hermes, Meerlinda participated in the ritual that created Ceoris in 980, and in the Great Becoming that transformed the Inner Circle from mortals into vampires 40 years later. She has established strong ties with Baron John through his representative in Durham, Eloise Marchand, and through her own representative in York, Leland of Gloucester. She works carefully but diligently to win John over while simultaneously concealing far greater ambitions from him.





## JULIAN CERALIS

Julian was Embraced early in the 3rd century by the prince of Eboracum, which would one day become York. His years serving his sire and learning the intrigues of the Roman government instilled in him a near limitless patience and tireless resolve. After Constantine was baptized into the Church in A.D. 306, Julian plotted against his sire and beheaded the Methuselah personally, thus assuming control over the city. As the Roman Empire lost its hold on Britain, Julian foolishly Embraced a promising Roman warrior named Dorian who longed to return to the Continent. Within a decade, the imperial government collapsed, Dorian fled with the retreating armies, and Julian was driven into torpor by younger Cainites who blamed him for the increasing political disorder.

Julian twice regained control over the city, first in the 9th century with the help of the Danish warrior Thrand (who later sired Katla and forced Julian into exile), and again in the 11th century with the assistance of the Norman Captain John (who eventually betrayed Julian to Final Death). Julian's bloodline continues in York through Katla and John, and through Evelyn de Rocherre, John's seneschal, who is three generations removed from Dorian.

## Minor Players

Aside from the major forces struggling for influence of York, other figures play prominent roles. These lesser players are pressured from many sides, moved about as pawns in the games of their elders.

## Aimery de Methuin

Embraced in the middle of the 10th century on the Continent, Aimery was already a prominent figure in the Cainite world when the Normans turned their eyes northward to the British Isles. He and his sire Olivier sought to use the Norman Conquest as a means to greater power, planning to secure control of York once William shattered the English defenses. It was not until York had fallen and Julian and his newly Embraced childe John took control of the city that Aimery and his sire discovered their own plots had been foiled.

Aimery resents John's hold on York, but his personal power base is not strong enough to topple John or resist Mithras. For now, he accepts John as his prince, but rumors persist of his attempts to curry Katla's favor in hopes that she will take the city and reward those who gave her aid. Katla recognizes Aimery's proffered loyalty as empty; he lacks the true ambition or influence to play a major role in the city.

## Eyolf Ivarsson

Serving as John's trusted warmaster, Eyolf was Embraced at the height of the conflict between John and Katla's sires. Originally serving as a scout for the *einherjar* seeking to regain Jorvik, the Gangrel saw the futility in such a plan and found comfort in the strength of Julian and his childe John. Serving first as Julian's warmaster, Eyolf has shown remarkable fidelity to John and has gained much territory from Lincoln and Chester. Katla's recent return to York divides Eyolf's loyalties, and he spends increasingly more time with his fellow *einherjar*.

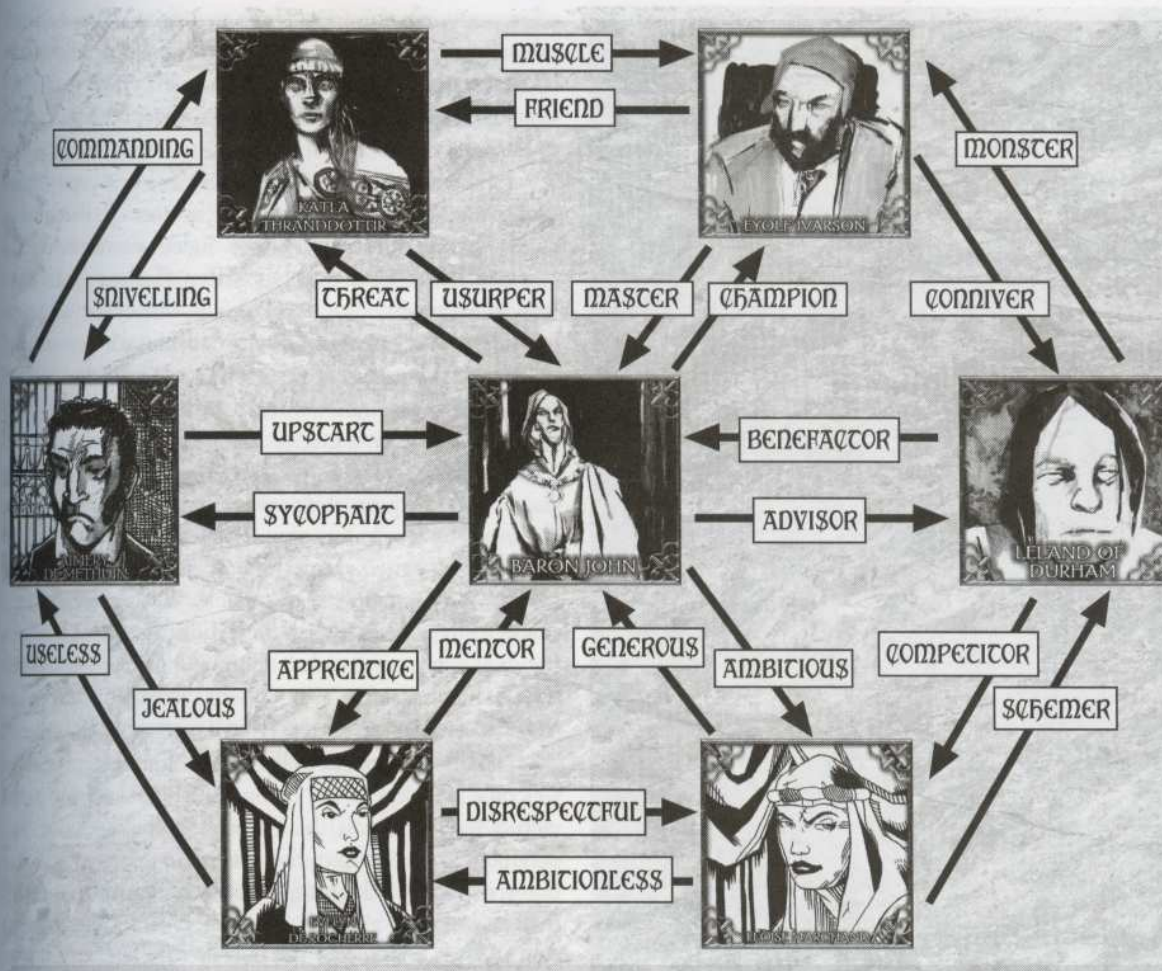
## Leland of Durham

John's Tremere keeper and close advisor, Leland wields considerable influence in John's court after saving the baron from the fire of 1190. He first came to York as a representative of Meerlinda from Lion's Gate Chantry in Durham, and had difficulty gaining the baron's trust, even after decades of faithful service. In 1190, while several Jews took shelter in York Castle, a fire broke out that almost brought Final Death to the baron. If not for Leland's intervention, John might not have survived. The fire was reportedly caused by the mass suicide of the Jews, but rumors persist of Cainite involvement — possibly by he or she who benefited most from the catastrophe. Leland is known for being something of an eccentric, believing in strange superstitions and creating small magical charms and trinkets that he parcels out to those he feels are in need.

## Simon of Whitby

Embraced at the turn of the 12th century, Simon is the younger childe of Olivier. (Thus, Aimery is his "sibling.") His sire recently "called to London" after openly opposing Mithras, Simon has only recently ascended to power in Whitby at Aimery's behest. Whatever hopes his sire had for placating





Mithras' anger must have gone awry, as Simon has not had any news. Aimery has practically abandoned his blood brother to his opponents in Whitby, having no true loyalty or desire to get involved in Simon's affairs. Aimery has forsaken his brother in favor of focusing his attention on John's court. Simon and others see this dismissal as weak and cowardly. Mithras' agents and other forces conspire to undermine Simon's influence in Whitby, and he is forced to rely upon John's patronage time and again.

Simon first met John in the nights before Julian's Final Death, and became involved in schemes he did not fully understand. Simon's involvement in Julian's betrayal would have gained him many enemies, but the newly installed Baron of York managed to conceal Simon's involvement. Since that time, Simon has remained secretly in John's debt, though he fears his troubles in Whitby make him more of a liability than an asset.

### Evelyn de Rocherre

Born in the countryside of Normandy, Evelyn became a ghoul servant to a Ventrue lord at the end of the 11th century. After several decades of faithful service, she showed enough

ambition and initiative to warrant her Embrace in 1113. Diligently tracing her lineage back through the centuries, Evelyn was puzzled why her great-grandsire Dorian abandoned his sire in England to return to the Continent. She resolved to return to her bloodline's roots and traveled to York with her sire's permission. Presenting herself before Baron John along with her austere lineage, she became a retainer in his court and was chosen as his seneschal.

### Eloise Marchand

One of John's most trusted retainers, Lady Eloise rose quickly through the vampire hierarchy. Embraced little more than a half-century ago, the young Ventrue maneuvered her way into John's good graces through a display of incredible political acumen. Assigned as John's representative to Durham over Cainites many decades her senior, Eloise made the best of the placement and further impressed the baron with her skill and savvy. She became an adopted child to John and soon found herself in the vanguard of a delicate political game with the Tremere Usurpers in Durham. Still potentially within a mortal lifespan, Eloise is less impressed with age and experience than she is with subtlety and guile. This youthful



## SIRES

Players should feel free to choose any of this act's minor participants as their characters' sires (or grandsires), as each adds some measure of intrigue to the story. Ventrué characters should know the political ramifications of their familial bloodlines, while non-Ventrué should understand just what alliances their sires have with each of the major players in York. A significant conflict arises for Tremere characters who were sired by Leland, one of the act's antagonists, which may cause difficulties down the line. While such a relationship is workable, it will cause you to make many accommodations over the course of events.

Primary participants in the story should be avoided as sires. John or Katla as possible sires make for incredibly powerful characters due to their low generation and vast political influence. Before you present a list of potential sires to players, consider just how powerful you want the characters to be.

Certain sires create specific alliances and conflicts for their childer. Players who seek a positive relationship with John may choose Evelyn, Simon or even Gerard (John's chamberlain) as sires. Gangrel with Eyolf for a sire likely have a fierce loyalty to the baron, though may also feel some connection to Katla. Those looking for more of an adversarial relationship with John, either secret or overt, may look to Aimery or possibly a childe or grandchilde of Katla. Tremere characters from the Lion's Gate Chantry in Durham might also provide some added intrigue, either as foils or allies for Leland, especially because they may be seen as agents or spies of Meerlinda.

arrogance lowers her in the eyes of elders such as Meerlinda. This lack of respect in turn affords Eloise the advantage of surprise, as she clearly possesses ability well beyond her years. She has become a success story for the neonate Ventrué of York, but wise elders warn that the candle that burns twice as brightly burns half as long.

## Schemes and Plans

The Cainites of York weave a complex tapestry of long-term ambitions and short-term goals. While elders engage in subtle intrigues and gradual development, younger Cainites see vast potential in the immediacy of the War of Princes, seeking to gain prestige and domain. There are two major Ventrué familial lines involved in this act, and a host of other undead that all seek to increase their influence.

Many complex schemes involve active support for John in the hopes of gaining his favor, or subtle machinations to limit or restrict his power. The act opens with the court in a panic over the sudden disappearance of several notable Cainites, and this anxiety

offers many opportunities. Those seeking to undermine John's rule may use the disorder to eliminate rivals, although such actions risk drawing blame for all the deaths. Those hoping to rise in John's esteem may strive to solve the mystery, or implicate a rival as the cause of the problem.

Characters involved in the political landscape stand to gain influence over the major players through blackmail or favors. Doing so risks drawing undue attention, though, specifically the kind that has gotten so many Cainites destroyed in recent months. Political maneuvering requires careful gathering of both vampire and mortal informants, and relies on an acute awareness of the social climate.

Other plots may center on the expansion of John's territory and new domains. Eyolf's raids on Lincoln and Chester have created numerous opportunities for young Cainites to acquire their own domains. Such boons are bestowed by the baron alone. Several domains, large and small, have opened along the borders of the barony. Those whom John deems loyal and capable may receive lucrative or strategically important domains, while those he mistrusts may watch as vampires decade their junior gain prestige. Worse, suspicious characters may inherit domains certain to be retaken by Chester or Lincoln in a matter of nights.

John has intimated to Eyolf that Manchester would be a welcome addition to the barony and would serve as a great victory for York over the Barony of Chester. While such conquest would be bitterly resisted by Marcus Verus, the Baron of Chester, the prospect of such a domain has kindled the fires of ambition in the unbeating hearts of many in John's court. While young Cainites may dream of such an opportunity, many elders harbor feelings of entitlement after the upstart John snatched York from them. The responsibility of securing Manchester would fall upon only the most trusted and capable of John's allies. This goal may be a driving force for the characters and their sires.

Of course, the choice between winning prestige for oneself or for one's sire may cause contention between sire and childe, especially if selfishness denies the bloodline standing or profit. Yet, a character may prefer to be prince of a small domain than settle for second place to a sire's ambitions. If a character is successful in bringing *dignitas* to his bloodline and boosting his sire in John's eyes, he may find himself a retainer or advisor to his sire in a major domain along York's border. Any ambitions of gaining a personal domain would be dashed for some time, though. Otherwise, a character may seek *dignitas* for himself, securing his own domains at the cost of betraying his bloodline and provoking his sire's anger.

Whitby is another major area of interest, as Simon's position becomes rapidly less secure. If he collapsed, any number of Cainites may seek to establish themselves in the city. Characters close to Simon would of course seek to keep the city under the influence of that bloodline, but Whitby's importance in the north makes it a prime target for the Cainites of York. Characters of other bloodlines may seek



Whitby for themselves or their sires, which may create tension with any members of the coterie in Olivier's line.

The following is a list of other possible realms of influence that characters may seek to adopt during their time in York. Those who have spent much of their unlife in the city may have already gained a measure of sway in one or more of these areas, while those new to the city may seek to insinuate themselves into the political fabric.

**Military** — York's strategic importance makes it the focal point of northern England. With the end of the crusades, many knights have returned home, bolstering the military might of the city and making it a formidable power. While both Eyolf and Katla have considerable influence in this area, there are numerous opportunities for other vampires. To the north, Durham is in an even more strategic position as the last outpost before Hadrian's Wall, and has drawn interest from more than one of York's Cainites, such as Eloise Marchand.

**City Guards** — Part of the standing army are the city guards who protect the bars and gates. Serving partially as a police force and as defenders, these men-at-arms control who comes and goes — most notably collecting tolls at the city's many entrances. Aimery has established himself among the guards, although Katla expands her influence into this arena as well.

**The Church** — York has literally dozens of churches and several prominent abbeys and monasteries both inside and outside the city walls. While York Minster is obviously the largest and most influential, the clergy extends well beyond that edifice. Aimery has lost influence at the Minster to Katla, and has begun to look elsewhere so as not to lose his foothold among the clergy. John, on the other hand, has considerable influence within St. Mary's Abbey, one of the most important abbeys in the north of England.

**Merchants** — Sitting on a fork between two rivers and serving as the last major stop between England and the cities of Scotland, York's merchants thrive. Caravans move through the major bars every day, trading with the considerable number of resident merchants, butchers, blacksmiths and other craftsmen. The area called the Shambles, just south of the Minster, is the center of a large commercial area and has become the domain of Evelyn de Rocherre. Countless opportunities exist among the various guilds and traveling merchants in the city, however, drawing Cainites — notably Leland of Durham — with the promise of wealth and influence.

**Tax Collectors** — Controlling a vast amount of the countryside of northern England, York collects a sizeable portion of the kingdom's taxes. Among the lands held by York Minster, St. Mary's Abbey and the local nobility, a complex system of tax collectors spans the region. While many have tried, no single vampire has established a significant presence among the tax collectors, though many of the city's Ventrue have at least some minor standing with them.

**Crime** — The criminal element in York is not so organized as to be easily influenced. While brigands roam the highways and cutpurses stalk the streets, there is no centralized structure in place. That doesn't mean a character can't try to establish a thieves' guild of sorts, or set herself up as a robber baron outside the city walls.

## Introducing the Characters

While this story allows for some freedom in character creation, remember that this is a *Ventrue*-based chronicle. Characters should also have some connection to Baron John — as presiding Ventrue in the area. It's suggested that they be somewhat sympathetic to his secessionist ideals. That doesn't necessarily mean open defiance of Mithras, as such flagrant disrespect of the Prince of London could be suicidal, but some resentment of the Methuselah's authority should find its way into the hearts and minds of each character. For example, a character's sire may have been forced from an important domain through Mithras' political scheming. Or a close friend or ally may have been co-opted or eliminated by agents from London. The Methuselah's influence is subtle but ever-present, and his shadow looms in the minds of all of York's vampires.

### Ventrue Characters

Players with Ventrue characters have many options open to them at the beginning of this act. For maximum political conflict, encourage characters to have close connections to either Baron John or his blood-cousin Katla. John's seneschal Evelyn could serve as a sire, creating a blood connection to both John and Katla. Julian, who sired John and Katla's sire (Thrand), features prominently in Evelyn's lineage, and establishes an "uncle" and "aunt" relationship between the two elders, along with the duties and responsibilities that such kinship brings.

Characters could also be childer of Simon, John's vassal in Whitby, who requests John's aid in Scene 1. Simon's loyalty to John is unquestioned, and the characters may often be sent to York as neonates to continue with their early training in the clan. Such characters could begin the chronicle in John's court as students of Ventrue tradition, or they could arrive as messengers from Whitby seeking the Baron's advice and aid.

Further, characters could be prominent figures in York unto themselves — possibly part of John or Katla's entourage. Or they could be Cainites from the south of England that somehow drew unwanted attention from Mithras and escaped to the Barony of York, where such dissidents may take refuge. It's important, though, that Ventrue characters in this act have some loyalty to John, be it through blood, favors or shared enemies.

### Non-Ventrue Characters

While *Ventrue Chronicle* is tailored to the struggles of the Ventrue in particular, characters of other clans may also play a role. The Tremere have a significant presence in the



## THE AGOGE AND FOSTERAGE

The Ventrue tradition of the *agoge*, the extended training of neonates in the ways of the clan, often culminates with the exposure of a childe to the views and opinions of "local" Cainites. In the 13th century, this tradition is blended with the medieval tradition of fosterage. When a childe's training nears completion, a sire calls upon a respected or influential member of the clan to serve as a foster sire for a time. Neonates privy to this type of fosterage may view a surrogate sire as a sort of uncle or aunt.

Players may choose to design their characters as "foster" children of Baron John, Katla Thraddottir or even Aimery de Methuin. Doing so may create an interesting dynamic between players' characters, as true childer and foster childer vie for attention and respect.

barony, particularly in Durham. Players may be prominent Warlocks who have developed close connections to John's court, or who have no desire to see Mithras' grip tighten. These Tremere may serve as advisors to Ventrue characters or to other members of John's court. Gangrel characters may also play a prominent role; the harsh moors of Yorkshire shelter several of the clan. Such characters may work Eyolf into their lineage, creating an even closer bond to John.

Players who choose to create Cainites of other clans may have a more difficult time establishing close ties to the storyline, and you may decide to set limits on what clans are available. The Cappadocians, Malkavians and Nosferatu may find havens in the many churches and underground vaults of the city. Assamites, Followers of Set, Ravnos and Tzimisce are all but nonexistent in York at this time. The Brujah and Toreador were mostly driven out with the Saxons in the 11th century, though these clans still maintain a presence in Edinburgh to the north.

This is not to say that Toreador envoys from the Courts of Love, Tzimisce from the *Voivodate*, Assamite wanderers from the Outremer, or Lasombra spies from Sicily are excluded from this act. Players may simply find

difficulty fitting them in. Pay close attention to the choices players make during character creation, and devise strategies to include foreign agents before allowing them. Again, bear in mind that this is a chronicle designed for Ventrue. Characters of other clans need very specific reasons for involving themselves in Ventrue affairs.

## Interests

There are several reasons why characters might get involved in the events of Act 1, before they even pursue "Schemes and Plans." You are encouraged to use those that best suit the characters or coterie, and are encouraged to develop your own to prompt character involvement.

### Loyalty

For Ventrue characters, loyalty to one's sire and bloodline is often paramount. There is a good chance that characters share a blood tie to one or more of the Ventrue in this act, either directly or indirectly, and the events that play out may force them to either reinforce or re-examine their loyalties. Those connected to York should have some affinity for or bond to one of the three major players in the city.

### Ambition

There are several opportunities for personal advancement in this act, ranging from acquiring *dignitas* to securing important territories. Recent events provide characters with the means of standing out from the crowd and making names for themselves, either in the hopes of filling vacant positions in John's court or inheriting domains along York's borders. Uncertainty in the city gives characters a chance to shine.

### Fear

Several Cainites have been destroyed or disappeared over past months, and it seems that those close to John have borne the brunt of these subtle attacks. Some of the characters consider themselves targets, potentially even better ones than some of the Cainites who have already gone missing. Fear is a great motivator, and characters who find their necks exposed are likely to seek out the threat and eliminate it. You may consider describing a failed attempt on the unlife of one or more characters before the chronicle begins, emphasizing the gravity of the situation.

While non-Ventrue characters may be motivated by the same factors, there isn't the same familial loyalty among other clans. Members of the Low Clans may be less likely to entertain thoughts of gaining domains of their own, for example. You may need to find more tangible reasons for non-Ventrue characters to engage themselves in the affairs of the Ventrue. Perhaps a character owes a Warlord a debt or is bound by an oath of fealty. A character could seek sanctuary from Mithras' agents, seeking harbor among York's Ventrue. A foreign character could hope to establish favorable relations between the Barony of York and a home court, with an eye toward future collaboration. There are vast possibilities for non-Ventrue characters to become entangled in the events of Act 1.

## PLAYING TREMERE

Players can have Tremere characters, ostensibly from the Lion's Gate Chantry in Durham. Baron John does not share Mithras' antipathy for Meerlinda and has forged a tentative alliance with the Usurpers. Leland of Gloucester is a powerful Tremere in York and advisor to John. He may be a contact for any characters originating in Durham. Be conscious of how a Tremere may fit into the plot, however, especially when blame for events falls on the Usurpers toward the climax.



## Sire Interference

Given the strong family ties between Ventrue and their childer, sires naturally provide aid or offer advice regarding challenging situations. More often than not, this assistance is not requested or welcome. Ventrue sires have a tendency to be overbearing and controlling masters, rather than protective and supportive parents. The Curse of Caine warps their parental instincts, alienating them from their childer while bonding to them.

As the War of Princes rages, sires use childer almost as sergeants-at-arms and captains in the fight to acquire domain and influence. The north of England is in flux as John presses his advantage outward, and a sire may pressure a childer to secure domains for the bloodline. Having trained childer in Ventrue traditions, sires often bear a sense of debt owed; fledglings must pay for their education. To sire eyes, it is better for a childer to spend a century or two as a seneschal or chamberlain to her parent than to acquire her own domain too quickly. A sire may strive to maintain the master-student relationship as long as possible.

Beyond merely using childer as pawns in schemes, many sires try to "help" their offspring to make the right political decisions in court and to establish proper connections. Should an unwary childer anger a distant power such as Mithras, retribution may visit the sire as well, forcing elders to closely monitor the actions of neonates. Not all

behaviors or decisions reflect poorly on a character's sire, however, and some Cainites grow frustrated with their masters' constant involvement, only to find no assistance when a matter of dire importance arises.

Certain situations lend themselves far better to sire interaction, or interference, than others. While at John's court, characters have the opportunity to petition the baron directly, likely to establish themselves and solidify positive relations with the prince. Sires who feel their childer overextend themselves or infringe on other interests may squash their progeny's requests, intercepting and redirecting efforts to their own ends. Such meddling is accepted in court, as Ventrue feel the actions of the childer reflect directly upon the sire, thus creating the need for sires to protect their interests. Other ways a sire may interfere include persuading the baron to assign unwanted missions, inviting characters to meetings with local and foreign potentates when they have other matters to attend to, or sending agents to shadow characters and report on their actions.

Of course, there are times when sires must get involved, such as when the *dignitas* of the entire bloodline is questioned. Blatant acts of disrespect against John or open hostility toward members of his court draws undue attention, not only to the offending character, but to that character's upbringing. Such transgressions lead from cloistered meetings designed to berate uncouth





offenders to sires calling upon vast resources to counter the actions of their childer — possibly even leading to a particularly bad seed's Final Death.

## The Plot

Act 1 is set in York, in January of 1230. An air of fear has settled on the city during the winter as prominent figures in the barony have mysteriously disappeared or met their untimely end. Those loyal to John are paranoid that his rivals are finally moving, slowly eliminating the baron's allies in an attempt to undermine his position in the north.

As a result, John has called all of those loyal to him to court, both to destroy any seeds of doubt regarding his station, and to gain a better understanding of the events of the past several months.

The characters sense Cainites' frayed nerves, and that John's influence in York may hinge on resolving the current crisis. Urged by the opportunity to fulfill personal goals, their sires' wishes, their loyalty to the baron or by their own fear of this unknown threat, the characters may assume the roles of knights and rooks in a chess game between John and some unknown aggressor.

Through investigation and careful observation of local Cainite activity, the characters uncover a plot that tests their loyalties and places their unlives in utter peril. No one can be trusted as the intrigues of John's court come into greater focus — and as the characters discover that they could be the next targets.

## Scene 1: Storm Clouds Gather

The characters are present in the court of Baron John in York Castle. Those familiar with York understand the importance of the gathering all too well. Fear has encroached upon the hearts of the city's vampires. Anxiety has grown for months. Rumors of an outside power subtly undermining York's stability spread among paranoid undead, becoming most pronounced of late.

In a week's time, two of John's most promising retainers have been destroyed. The first was a priest recently Embraced by Evelyn de Rocher who was a favorite of Archbishop of York. Late in the morning, three fellow priests arrived at his chambers after hearing rumors that the man was in danger of demon possession, and attempted to drag him across an open courtyard to purify his soul through prayer. His "saviors" managed to get him almost halfway there before he was reduced to ash. The archbishop has sent special investigators to resolve the situation, and the Cainite community fears that demon hunters now walk among them.

The second Cainite to disappear should be someone close to one of the characters, perhaps a friend or servant who was destroyed under suspicious circumstances. You are free to create such an individual or use a Background character developed by one of the players. This second disappearance should resonate with the characters as "too close for comfort."

## INQUISITORS

If you have access to **Dark Ages: Inquisitor**, feel free to create a group of Church inquisitors who have been charged with finding the cause of the young priest's unnatural demise. Such investigators could act as a foil to the players' characters, arriving at inopportune times and increasing the level of fear among York's Cainites. A haven may be discovered that leads the men to the characters, or even to John and York Castle. A careless neonate may cross paths with these individuals and meet an untimely fate — playing further into the general air of fear pervading John's court.

If you do not have access to **Dark Ages: Inquisitor**, you can create inquisitors of your own, or decide that these special investigators have not yet arrived. Including a group of mortal antagonists increases tension and creates opportunities for combat or diplomatic encounters.

The events of this act could also serve as the start of an **Inquisitor** chronicle, with the characters trying to get to the bottom of strange happenings in York. Such a game could also revolve around finding the mysterious force killing Cainites, though the inquisitors may view the murders as the supernatural deaths of mortals possessed by unholy forces.

One possibility is to have a court servant or retainer die in a way that appears as though one of the characters was the true target. A retainer is attacked while performing a duty normally handled by one of the characters, or a servant is destroyed in a character's haven while the character is away feeding. Another possibility is to use a friend or ally, ideally one with whom a character has spoken to about Mithras' grip on York. This second loss should show the characters just how precarious their existence is.

Vampires familiar with York (and who have Perception 3 or more) notice that several faces are missing in court. Those who are new to John's court may be able to gather from their surroundings that there is a definite lack of minor functionaries and servants (Perception 4+). While these absences are not mentioned openly, prominent attendees — John, Katla and Aimery — seem to take note of who is and is not present. Characters should have an opportunity at this point to mingle with the assembled Cainites and gather information, either on the political environment or on the recent deaths.

John opens court by welcoming any newcomers and apologizing for the tension in the air. He then relates the fate of the two Cainites discussed above to verify that something is amiss in York, warning attendees to be on their guard. Characters should be encouraged to voice their concerns regarding recent events. Katla and Aimery seem



intrigued that John confirms this news so publicly, and the mental state of the baron is best described as unsettled. Characters may notice that his chamberlain in York, Gerard, is not present (Perception 3+ for characters from York, 5 for those who are not).

Also at court are messengers from Simon of Whitby, asking for assistance from John in quelling the unrest plaguing the Cainites of that city. While Whitby may appear to be a tumultuous political environment or disorder caused by a weak leader, paranoid characters — or those directly connected to Simon — may rightly assume that Mithras has fomented the strife for many years.

If any of the characters are Simon's childer, the task of asking for the baron's aid can fall on them. This meeting may take place publicly or in private, but rumors abound in either case regarding Simon's ability to preside over Whitby. If none of the characters have any connection to Simon, this aspect of Scene 1 can be downplayed somewhat. Near the end of court, however, John dispatches one of his most trusted retainers, a Brujah named Connor, to deliver a message to Whitby promising to send aid as soon as York's own problems are settled.

Characters from York or Whitby recognize Connor and may have had positive experiences with him, knowing him to be a truly loyal servant of the baron. As Connor leaves, he is approached by John's keeper and advisor Leland for a short conference. The Tremere gives the messenger a small leather bag and wishes him well.

At some point while court is in session, it's pointed out that John's chamberlain, Gerard, is missing. You may choose to handle this in a number of ways. Coteries that respond more readily to political intrigue and social interaction may have noticed his absence already, but rumors begin to circulate as the night wears on. Coteries that seek more action and intensity might prefer a more direct approach, questioning John or even posing a challenge to the baron to produce his chamberlain or admit that he has met Final Death. John denies any allegations that Gerard has been destroyed and assures that his chamberlain had business to attend to. Characters have ample opportunity to gather rumors and information regarding Gerard's fate (Wits + Investigation, difficulty 7). Those who are particularly successful learn that the chamberlain was last seen walking with a priest from the Minster toward the River Ouse.

Court also presents an opportunity for characters to work toward personal or familial political goals. Cainites new to York may make their names known or show off their etiquette. Those with ties in the city might try to demonstrate their loyalty to the baron, undermine the efforts of others to do the same, or bring information or news to light that flaunts their connections. This scene is a good time for players to get a feel for what opportunities are available and, more importantly, what competition they face in winning the baron's favor. Sires

present at court may try to prompt their childer to speak or take action.

## Scene 2: Darkened Skies

After the business of court has been concluded, John retires to his chambers and the collected assembly begins to disperse. Characters may take this opportunity to gather information or make alliances that would have been unseemly during the more formal atmosphere of the meeting. Ventrue characters foreign to York may be approached by Aimery or Katla, while characters of other clans may be approached by non-Ventrue agents.

The local air of fear has turned to one of suspicion, as the assembled Cainites turn wary eyes upon one another to ascertain where loyalties lie. Conversations with Katla, Aimery or any others undoubtedly involve subtle questions intended to determine the characters' devotion to John's secessionist ideals — or to Mithras' control over the baronies of Avalon.

After court, each of the characters should be approached by one of John's servants and requested to attend a meeting in the library upstairs. These invitations can be kept secret if you want to add an element of intrigue to the scene, or they can be formally announced, causing rumors to stir about the characters' connection to John and recent events.

Characters can gather in the library as soon as they manage to extricate themselves from any lingering conversations. This delay provides the players' characters a chance to interact and coordinate — or meet for the first time. The library is sparse, with only two or three bookshelves, although even that may be more books than a character has seen in her existence. The library doubles as a study; there are quill pens, writing parchment and sealing wax arrayed on a table at the far end of the room. Candelabra line the walls.

Leland and Evelyn enter once all characters are present, and confirm the rumors regarding Gerard's destruction. John remains conspicuously absent, relying on his retainers to handle this meeting without him. From what the baron's sources have determined, the chamberlain had been hunting in the north of the city the previous night but didn't return to his haven before dawn. Further investigation by the baron discovered that Gerard was last seen walking southward away from the Minster, engaged in conversation with a priest. The search for the chamberlain has turned up little, though John's agents assume he disappeared in the center of the city, in a residential area just north of the River Ouse.

John fears that this is only the most recent incident in what has become a systematic attack on the stability of his domain, with this loss cutting closest to the bone. If none of the characters hail from Whitby, Evelyn informs them that the baron's vassal Simon sent word to John that Whitby is in danger of collapse. If the coterie includes a character close to Simon, Evelyn mentions the prince of Whitby's plight as a possible parallel to the situation in York, with as bleak an outlook. A messenger has been dispatched to Simon promis-



## WHY ME?

Because of the liberties available to players during character creation, there's no one reason why their characters' aid is requested. If all coterie members are Ventrue childer of Simon, Aimery or any other single sire, the reason can be linked to that blood relationship. But the characters may include two Ventrue of opposing lineage, a Gangrel courier, a Tzimisce envoy from the Voivodate and a Brujah warrior visiting from the north of Scotland. What then?

You're encouraged to devise your own reasons why each character is chosen to be John's eyes and ears, but trust is a key issue. Characters close to the baron may be chosen for their loyalty, while others may be chosen to learn where their true loyalties lie. Foreign characters may be selected for their fresh point of view, though they may also be chosen so that John can discern their true motivations.

It's also possible that players swear they know why their characters are chosen by John, and you're free to run with those explanations. Those who are confused as to their involvement or who actively resist should be taken aside by Leland or Evelyn after the private meeting. Either can explain the reason John requested their assistance in order to assuage any misunderstanding. Even characters adamantly opposed to the baron's rule would be foolish to refuse his request, as his focus is now firmly on them.

Players should feel that their characters have a vested interest in providing their services, and that they were selected from among all the court for their unique contributions. This is a chance to win John's respect and friendship — two highly valuable assets.

ing aid as soon as John can afford it, but the baron has to concern himself with bringing order to his own house first.

Which, Leland points out, is why the characters have been asked to this private meeting. John knows his hold over the city will break if suspicion and paranoia continue, and he needs to get to the bottom of things without showing public weakness. He requests the characters' aid in rooting out whoever is plotting against him in exchange for his thanks and patronage.

Both Leland and Evelyn are happy to answer any of the coterie's questions, although their information regarding the chamberlain's loss is based primarily on rumor and hearsay. Leland volunteers that Gerard apparently limited his feeding to the clergy, but Evelyn adds that such information is unsubstantiated. If pressed for further details, Leland insinuates that Katla Thranddottir may be involved, relating the story of the castle fire some decades earlier. While there is no proof that the *einherjar* set the fire, the Tremere knows for sure

that there is animosity between her and John. While Evelyn remains calm and controlled throughout the meeting, Leland grows impatient if questioned extensively, and unconsciously rubs at his left hand with a handkerchief. Characters may notice that the Tremere holds the handkerchief in his left hand only, and rubs his palm through the cloth when nervous.

If the characters question the interaction between Leland and Connor, the Tremere grows somewhat agitated, but explains that he gave the messenger a charm fashioned for swift travel. The leather bag contained several feathers from a peregrine falcon, a bird known for its speed while hunting. Leland calms down if allowed to continue in this vein, speaking of the potential magical power in common items and the energies present in the physical world. He further explains that the many amulets and rings he wears are each charms for various things. At some point, the characters will likely lose interest as the Tremere devolves into frivolous and mundane anecdotes of birch twigs bringing good luck, maple branches bringing long life and other unexciting remedies.

Evelyn cuts Leland off if the characters do not. When satisfied that the coterie has accepted John's request, she extends the baron's gratitude and information on how to find the area in which Gerard was last seen. She then apologizes that they cannot guide the coterie directly, and excuses Leland and herself to John's chambers.

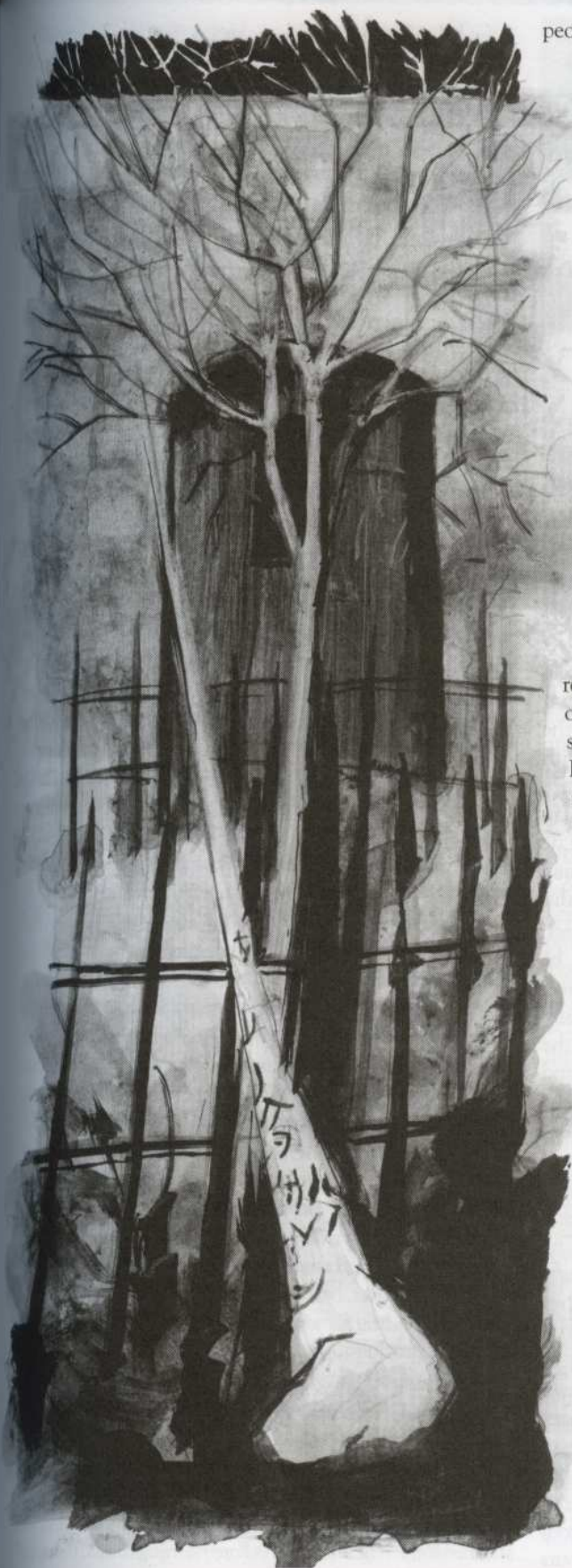
## Scene 3: The First Drops Fall

Characters have several options at this point, depending on what information they glean from Leland and Evelyn. At the very least, the coterie can piece together some details of the death of Gerard, including a determination of the general location of the courtyard in which he was attacked. Some rumors that characters may uncover include:

- Gerard was staked by his prey while he was attempting to feed and his victim ran off into the night.
- He was staked close to dawn, as no trace has been found of his body.
- Gerard had recently uncovered a plot to intercept messages sent between John and allies in Carlisle — a plot assumed to be the work of Mithras.
- Gerard had not been chamberlain long, only for the last decade, but had earned the position through fierce loyalty to John.
- Gerard preyed exclusively on the clergy, though conflicting reports claim that he simply had to feed within sight of a church.
- He had been seen walking south toward the River Ouse with a priest just before dawn.
- He distrusted Katla's motives and apparently conspired with Leland against her.

If the characters choose to investigate the location of Gerard's Final Death, they find a secluded courtyard off the main road, accessed by an alley barely wide enough for two





people to walk abreast. After a distance of 15 feet or so, the passage opens into a cobblestone yard. At the far side is a short staircase and a large, oaken door. A leafless dogwood tree stands in the center of the courtyard encircled by an iron fence. Empty, wooden, garden boxes line the walls leading to the staircase. Clouds have gathered; the only light in the courtyard comes from a sputtering torch in an iron hanger next to the wooden door.

Upon closer examination (Perception 3+ required to notice), the characters find a considerable amount of ash blown against the boxes, and the remains of what were once fine clothes. There is a signet ring, the charred leather of expensive boots and the blackened and melted mass of a cloak pin. Amidst the remains beside the tree are a string of rosary beads and a peculiar stake made from what looks to be sharpened bone. The bone has strange carved inscriptions along its shaft, though they are nearly indecipherable (Intelligence + Linguistics or Occult, difficulty 9 to glean anything). Best guess is that they're some form of cryptic rune-language, possibly inscribed as wards or identification marks. Characters with knowledge of the region's animal life (Survival 3+) recognize the bone as that of a large wolf, though it has been polished considerably and sharpened to a fine point. An attempt to use the Auspex Discipline: The Spirit Touch on the rosary beads conjures images of a young priest kneeling before the altar at York Minster. Use of the same power on the bone yields visions of blood and violence, and an angry, dark-haired man who may have believed it to have magical powers.

Alternatively, if the coterie learns about Katla's involvement in the fire of 1190, they may first seek her out to inquire about her involvement in the recent disappearances. Characters from York may have reservations about questioning the *einherjar's*, as she has a reputation for aggressive behavior and little patience for trivialities. Those who count Katla in their own bloodline may defend her in an attempt to remove her from suspicion. Characters from outside the city may be unaware of Katla's short temper and know very little regarding her history or connection to Baron John. In any event, Katla is still an unknown, re-establishing herself in the last four decades after close to 300 years of dormancy. Even characters close to her may not entirely trust her motives, or understand her methods.

Katla makes her haven beneath York Minster, in the foundations of the ancient Roman fortress on which the cathedral was built. Characters from the city can know her whereabouts, but coterie from outside the city need to question local Cainites. Any inquiries surely find their way back to Katla, who immediately sends a ghoul to invite the characters to an audience in her haven. If the characters arrive at the Minster looking for Katla, with or



without such invitation, they are greeted by another of her ghouls and then escorted to her haven.

The coterie may decide to delay speaking with Katla to inquire about the owner of the rosary beads, or seek to find out more regarding Gerard's last intended prey. Information on a priest present at the chamberlain's death is provided in Scene 4, while details about Katla's haven are in Scene 5.

Of course, characters may turn to their sires for advice at any time, or report back to their sires with details or intriguing leads. If a character's sire is part of John's court, you may have the coterie summoned to report at any time to keep the elder informed of progress. Some sires may even attempt to serve as mentor or master of the coterie, ordering their childer to return with information before proceeding at any time. Such overbearing behavior may breed resentment between sire and childer, or shape a player's decision to run to his sire later in the act.

## Scene 4: A Rising Gale

Already an impressive structure, York Minster undergoes a slow transformation into a truly awe-inspiring edifice. The cathedral is in various states of construction, as entire wings have been torn down and are being rebuilt in a far larger, more ornate style. The foundations for two massive towers at the front of the Minster have been laid, hinting at the grandeur of the architect's vision. The courtyard is piled with artfully crafted stone slabs and other raw materials slated for use. Several masons work by torchlight at night on small projects within the Minster. It is rumored that Aimery de Methuin hired a Toreador architect to design parts of the final cathedral, but no Artisan has stepped forward to claim credit.

Due to the state of disorder at the Minster, regular church services have been disrupted. The mass continues to be performed, but many parishioners attend small churches with more stable environments. As a result, Cainites have an easier time entering the Minster. Holy ground has receded to the sites of the purest faith: the altars, the small chapels and several of the vaults.

Information regarding the priest attacked the previous night is readily available to characters. Two masons work inside and a priest replaces candles. Any of these men can tell of Father Albert, who frantically shared a story of being attacked by monsters before dawn the previous morning. The masons' version is colorful and exaggerated, sounding more like a ghost story than any sort of realistic account, but they refer the coterie to the attending priest, Father Jacques, who they know is a friend of Albert's.

The characters learn from Jacques that Albert was known to rise early and walk to Monk Bar to the east of the Minster to watch the sun rise. Along the way, he reported meeting a strange gentleman who spoke of a sick daughter he wished the priest to bless. Walking him back toward the River Ouse, the man led Albert down a dark alley to a small courtyard. From what Albert said when he returned to the Minster some hours

later, he was attacked by the man, but then rescued by another strange gentleman with the same sickly pallor as the first. Looking down at the dead body of the first man, he saw what he assumed was a knife or dagger protruding from his back, but when he looked back toward his savior, the stranger was gone. In a panic, Albert rushed home to gather himself, and returned to the Minster only once the sun had risen and there were people on the streets.

Rumors inspired by the story circulated throughout the day, and Albert finally retired to his home again to escape the incessant questions. If characters press Father Jacques any further, he speculates on the incident with the neonate priest who met Final Death a week earlier, and claims that demons have come to York. While the priest does not willingly give up the location of Albert's home, characters can coerce the information out of him either through trickery or intimidation (successful Subterfuge or Intimidation rolls, difficulty 6, or simply ratings of 3+ required).

Other than rumors and speculation, Father Jacques and the masons have nothing more useful to add, although questions regarding Katla are answered with a mixture of fear and awe. The priest speaks of visions of a woman descending into the vaults late at night, only to disappear when he followed. One mason swears that she is the devil incarnate and is the source of all things unexplained and terrifying in the Minster. The other describes her as an angel descended from heaven who walks the cathedral at night, bestowing her grace on the faithful. Characters with the Presence Discipline may (Intelligence + Occult, difficulty 7) recognize these reactions as the results of repeated use of the power. Others undoubtedly believe the men overcome by superstition and fear.

The characters can learn from Jacques that Father Albert lives with two other priests and a housekeeper in a small home south of the Minster. When the Cainites arrive there, they find the door ajar and signs of a struggle in the common area and kitchen. The bodies of two priests lie stabbed to death, and the housekeeper sobs and bleeds to death on the pantry floor. Investigation (Perception 3+ required) suggests that the attacks were made by someone wielding a knife with his left hand. Characters may try to stop the bleeding (Intelligence + Medicine, difficulty 7), but that only buys an hour or two at best, as the wound is deep.

If questioned, the housekeeper tells the coterie that her name is Marta, and that she wishes for a priest to come and give her Last Rites. If the characters agree to honor her wishes, either by sending for a priest or promising to do so after they ask her some questions, she explains what happened.

Earlier in the night, a woman matching Katla's description came to see Father Albert. The two spoke privately in his quarters for some time before leaving suddenly. Marta asked where the priest was going so late at night, but Albert seemed focused wholly on the strange woman and did not respond. Soon afterward, a man in a dark cloak burst in the door and stabbed her in the stomach before running toward the priests'



quarters. Marta lost consciousness, and only awoke when she heard the characters enter.

Further questions agitate Marta, and she drifts in and out of consciousness. She doesn't know the other two priests are dead, and succumbs to uncontrollable sobbing if the characters relate their fate. Marta may alternately blame the strange woman for the attack or the man who saved Albert the night before, or both, but she continues to plead for a priest until she eventually fades completely.

A careful search of the house (Perception + Investigation, difficulty 8) reveals a small wooden trinket that appears to have fallen from an amulet of some kind, similar to those worn by Leland. A small diary is also found among the bedclothes in Albert's room. Written in Latin, the diary describes the events of the previous night. A brief description of the mysterious savior is begun, but stops mid-sentence as though Albert's writing was interrupted.

If some characters went to find a priest, most likely Father Jacques, he arrives after Marta has died or when she is too far gone to speak coherently. The priest is frightened of the characters, as if they murdered Marta and the two men. He becomes paranoid and runs from the house if the coterie doesn't manage to placate him and explain itself. No matter what the circumstances, the characters coerced the location of Father Albert's residence from Jacques, and three bodies are found there afterward. This reality should come back to haunt the characters later, if it does not set the city guard on their trail immediately. If special church investigators are in town, the coterie's movements could become uncomfortably circumspect.

## Scene 5: Lightning Strikes

With information gained in Scenes 3 or 4, the coterie seeks out Katla and is escorted to the elder's haven by a ghoulish servant. The encounter with Katla is decidedly different depending on the time at which the characters speak with her.

Katla shows considerable interest in the coterie's progress so far, and is even more curious as to why John chose the agents he did to investigate Gerard's death. She explains that she has been looking into events herself, and that her own agents have been investigating the mystery. Katla makes every effort to determine what the characters know, but volunteers little. She also attempts to endear herself to the coterie, playing on similarities in their respective situations. Characters from York may have been Embraced around the time of her return to the city and likely began to assert themselves on the political scene at the same time as she did, possibly making common allies or enemies in the process. Those who have blood connection to John or Evelyn also have some kinship to Katla, while foreign vampires may have similar feelings of distance — hers based on generation, theirs based on geography.

She requests that they bring any crucial information to her before troubling Baron John, hoping that whatever

## "DON'T WORRY, MY SIRE WILL BAIL US OUT"

Be careful not to allow characters to call upon their sires as "get out of jail free" cards in sticky situations. Yes, a character may be the childe of Aimery de Methuin, who has no small influence over church officials, but that doesn't mean the elder is willing to call in favors he has spent years cultivating to make unlife easier for his childe. While sires offer myriad game opportunities, they should not devolve into sympathetic parents who rescue their children. Sires are individuals in their own right, with plots and schemes older than their childer, and may become angry when called on for every trivial problem that arises.

Characters should be encouraged to seek out new connections outside their bloodlines, trading favors instead of looking for handouts. They should also be anxious to prove that they can exist without their sires' constant intervention. Sires should be looked to as advisors and counselors, not as meal tickets.

connections she forges, however slight, may result in alliances with the characters. The vampires may refuse her request, at which point she claims blood right to inform John herself; she is closer to him in blood than any of them. While Ventrue characters are not utterly bound by such etiquette, they may incur her wrath if they defy tradition. Coterie foolish enough to declare their intention not to keep her informed may rouse her legendary anger. She promises to ruin their bloodlines and have them exiled from York. Whether she has the power to accomplish this is up to you, but she uses these threats more as intimidation than actual plans of action. More likely, characters who have no interest in dealing with Katla are noncommittal or make vague promises to keep her informed. This approach also angers her, but the coterie hears of her displeasure through others rather than directly.

Katla's past, as mentioned by Leland, may come up in this meeting, at which point the elder denies any involvement in starting the fire. She explains that she arose from torpor and stumbled toward York Castle, intuitively drawn by the blood from the mass suicide. The city was strange to her, and she found a mob surrounding an unfamiliar castle. Hearing there was a pretender on her sire's throne, she kicked in the castle door in a rage. She admits to challenging the baron to combat, but claims she was unaware of her close blood ties to John, and her wits were confused by hunger. By the time she had entered the castle, it was already on fire, and she found a badly burned John being carried down the stairs by Leland. Her first thought was that the mob had set the building ablaze, but that didn't explain the dead inside, why



the second floor was engulfed before the first or why Leland was in the building when the disaster occurred.

Katla suggests that Leland set the fire so he could play hero and gain John's trust, which explains why the Tremere frequently paints the event as an attack staged by her. Characters close to John or Katla may debate points of this story. York's Cainites have speculated on real events for decades and all have their own suspicions. If pressed too hard, Katla grows angry and ends the discussion, announcing that there is nothing more to say on the matter short of insults.

If the characters have this meeting before they track down Father Albert, they may question Katla about her knowledge of Gerard's death. She is not very forthcoming with information, but can offer insight if they are entirely off track. For example, if the characters found nothing of interest at the courtyard, she may produce the evidence of the rosary for their inspection. She may also provide information that may have been missed earlier on, such as Gerard's need to prey on members of the clergy. Ultimately, the meeting results in the characters attempting to track down the priest who was present in the courtyard and experience the events of Scene 4, at which point it behooves them to return to the *einherjar* with more questions and suspicions.

If the coterie spoke with Albert's housekeeper Marta before their audience with Katla, the meeting with the vampire has a different tone. Characters undoubtedly ask about Father Albert's whereabouts and are told that the priest is "safe" in her care. Further questioning reveals what the characters already know about the events of previous night — that some unknown assailant staked Gerard in the back as he attempted to feed on Albert. Katla acknowledges that she has her suspicions, but has yet to ascertain the "savior's" motive. Until she has proof, she cannot point any fingers, but requests that any further evidence be brought to her so that she may inform John of the threat herself. She assures the coterie that they will feature prominently in her report, thus gaining even more respect and *dignitas* by deferring to the close blood relative as a go-between.

The characters may reveal to Katla the unfortunate events that led to the deaths of Marta and the two priests, which interests the elder greatly, but only implies that Gerard's killer was trying to eliminate the one witness who saw his face.

During this encounter, Eyolf Ivarsson arrives bearing unfortunate news. Connor, the Brujah messenger dispatched to Whitby, was ambushed by Lupines and destroyed along with two ghouls and a carriage, leaving nothing but tattered remains. John has called another session of court at dusk the next night, and all Cainites in the city are expected to attend. Katla tells the characters that Father Albert will be in attendance, and may be able to identify his strange savior.

The characters may question Katla further, but her patience grows thin. She has some measure of influence with the city guard, and characters may request help clearing themselves of three murders. Requests to placate the guards

## DANES OF A FEATHER

Eyolf's relationship with Katla may cause characters to wonder where his true allegiance lies. In truth, there is no simple answer. Eyolf was Embraced on the moors of Yorkshire just 20 years before Katla was forcibly Embraced. When the Gangrel first entered the city of Jorvik, his sire presented him before the prince, Julian Cerialis, and his seneschal, the *einherjar* Thrand. It was at this time that Eyolf first encountered the fiery tempered Katla, and the young Ventrue made a strong impression. When the age of the Vikings ended and Julian Cerialis returned to York with Norman support, he chose to make Eyolf his warmaster — a service the Gangrel continued faithfully for his master's successor and childe, John.

The return of Katla from torpor strains Eyolf's loyalties. He shares a great deal of kinship and understanding with his fellow *einherjar*, respecting her strength of will and survival instinct. But the years have also built a great respect for John, who has treated Eyolf with trust and fairness. He understands there is tension between the two Ventrue, both of which know that he would never willingly betray the other. Eyolf walks a fine line, trying to serve two masters in active opposition.

are honored so long as the characters have acted in the spirit of cooperation. Katla makes it clear that they owe her for her benevolence, though. Characters who anger her may find their troubles with the guard have only begun.

Finally, dawn approaches, and Eyolf suggests that the characters return to whatever haven they are using to regroup and consider the night's events. He warns that fear still pervades local Cainites and even the city, and urges the characters to be careful. As the coterie leaves, Eyolf stays behind with Katla.

As the characters exit the Minster, they notice that the sky has grown cloudy and the wind has picked up. At this point, the coterie comes under some sort of attack, be it an ambush or open challenge on the street. The easiest approach is to have a group of townspeople or city guards blame the characters for the death of the two priests, or for any number of unnatural events both real or imaginary. Another option is to have inquisitors catch up with the characters, again accusing them of the deaths and disappearances of priests.

It should be obvious that antagonists — whatever form they take — have some form of inside information about the characters. Maybe they are attacked just as they leave Katla's haven, or maybe they find a mob waiting for them at their own haven. The townsfolk could be inexplicably armed with torches, or know something personal about one character's history. Whatever the threat, the characters



should get the feeling that they were set up somehow, and by someone who knew they were investigating Gerard's death. No aggressors are specifically aware of being informed about the characters, though, as if any information was shared with them unconsciously.

The coterie has the option to fight or flee, but dawn quickly approaches. The heavy cloud cover affords some protection from the sun (see the table on p. 232 of *Vampire*), but there's no guarantee that storm clouds won't break and let the golden rays of dawn shower the city. The characters need to escape this threat and find protection.

## Scene 6: The Heavens Open

The journey to York Castle the next night is slowed by high winds and heavy rain. The people of the city shutter their windows and doors. Court assembles in the common room, but most prominent locals are absent except Aimery. He immediately approaches the characters and asks what they know about the Lupine attack. If the characters attempted to identify the strange bone stake with The Spirit's Touch, they may be able to guess that it's some magical Lupine relic (Intelligence + Occult, difficulty 9). Otherwise, they are hard-pressed to establish any definite connections.

The characters notice (Perception 3+) that Aimery's normally proper, formal demeanor thinly veils jangled nerves. His eyes dart around the room to measure who is present. He makes efforts to determine exactly what went on in the characters' private library meeting, and what new information the coterie may be able to shed on recent events. If any of the characters are childer of Aimery, he takes them aside and warns that there was a group of strange men lingering in the area of his haven when he returned before dawn. His first thought was to overpower them, but he reconsidered in light of the current situation and spent the day in hiding. If none of the characters have any close connection to Aimery, the coterie hears this information circulate around the room in hushed whispers with drastically conflicting details.

The men who took such an interest in Aimery were inquisitors. They received a tip from an unknown source (an agent of Leland) that Aimery was a practitioner of the "dark arts." While Aimery has no real evidence about who sent these men, he fears he is next on the list of "political eliminations." He's suddenly intent on discovering the source of the recent problems.

During this encounter with Aimery, John, displaying his usual confidence and poise, descends from his chambers on the second floor to call court to order. Leland follows the baron. Katla and Eyolf are conspicuously absent when John confirms that the messenger to Whitby was destroyed by Lupines after leaving the city walls. Alarmed discussion erupts throughout the assembly, and Aimery challenges John directly, asking what assurances the Cainites of York have that they won't be picked off one by one. Others echo the statement. John does his best to assuage their concerns,

explaining that the situation is under control, that several capable agents have nearly completed their investigation, and that no one is in any immediate danger.

The court's fear and frustration may be directed at the characters, especially after John refers to the investigation. Drawing upon any of the coterie's actions or conversations with other vampires from the previous night, feel free to create warped and twisted rumors that call the characters into suspicion. Be careful that conversations made in confidence remain secret, however, lest the characters immediately implicate other participants in some vast conspiracy. Why did John want to speak with the characters? What connection do the characters have to the murders? Aimery declares that sources witnessed the coterie entering Katla's haven the previous night — what went on in that meeting? This last question sets the entire court on edge, as Katla's loyalties have always been a concern. Such interrogation puts the characters at the center of attention. Essentially, the crowd searches for a scapegoat.

Concern over Katla's absence raises tensions to riotous levels, as the *einherjar* is likely plotting their destruction. Demands for her attendance call out above the rising din of conversation and accusation, and Aimery petitions John to send someone to find her and bring her before the court.

During the commotion, the wind outside the castle reaches fever pitch, with rumbling thunder and flashes of lightning competing with the words of the assembled Cainites. The walls creak, drawing the characters' attention to Leland and John. The Tremere whispers nervously in the baron's ear, still unconsciously rubbing at his left hand. Characters with the *Auspex* powers Heightened Senses or Steal Secrets hear Leland connecting the characters to Katla, and attributing her absence to dark motives. Otherwise, John calls court to order and reminds the assembly that no trial is underway. He does, however, ask the characters if they know Katla's whereabouts, and what business they had with her.

The characters may explain their connection to the *einherjar*, but before they can say anything of importance, they are cut short by the chamber doors crashing open. Katla, Eyolf and Father Albert stand in the doorway as the wind whips through the room. Candles are blown out, tapestries billow on the walls, and lightning and thunder crash. Katla announces that Albert is the priest on whom Gerard fed when the chamberlain was staked by another Cainite — and that the priest can identify the offender! If the characters achieved a positive outcome in the meeting at Katla's haven and agreed to come to her with any new information, she gives credit to them for their aid. If they refused her requests and decided to keep her in the dark, she claims all credit for herself — even pointing to the characters as obstacles if they were particularly stubborn.

Conversation turns to conspiratorial whispers as several members of court question the audacity of bringing a mortal to the proceedings. Characters should overhear hushed plots





to destroy Father Albert before dawn, lest he bring the church's investigators to their doorstep. The coterie may have similar plans. (Indeed, Katla herself plans to kill the priest once his usefulness is at an end.)

Of course, with the candles blown out, Father Albert has trouble identifying anyone. John's servants close the doors and go about restoring the lights. Leland is noticeably disturbed by the arrival of Albert and shifts his gaze around the room in a panic, which draws the attention of several present. Characters may use the *Auspex* powers *Steal Secrets* or *Soulsight* to read his immediate thoughts or view his aura, either of which implicates him in the recent murders. With his attention focused so intently on Father Albert, Leland neglects the handkerchief he normally carries in his left hand and reveals that his palm is badly burned. Indeed, it bears the branded inscriptions from the handle of the sharpened bone stake. Characters with combined *Perception* and *Awareness* scores of 7, or those with *Heightened Senses*, notice this connection to the murder weapon.

If the characters do not pick up on any of these signs, Leland questions Albert directly, claiming that Katla produces a false witness to protect herself or one of her agents. He asks the priest to point to the man whom he saw the other night. Albert looks over the crowd in confusion before pointing to Aimery de Methuin. At this point, Leland accuses Katla of trying to eliminate Aimery, while many in the court accuse Aimery of seeking to overthrow John. *Ventrue* characters (or other characters with the *Dominate* power) find the whole process circumspect, and (with *Occult* 4+) recognize Albert's actions as those of someone under the influence of the *Discipline*. Those with some knowledge of vampiric *Disciplines* (combined *Intelligence* and *Occult* score of 6+) can determine that Leland was the vampire who altered Albert's memories.

Whichever method the characters use to discover Leland's involvement, his guilt should be revealed in this scene. If at any time the Tremere feels directly threatened, he uses his *Thaumaturgy* powers to increase the intensity of the storm

## YOU CAN'T PREDICT THE WEATHER

We realize that events described here alter history somewhat. York Castle was indeed blown down in a gale, but we've altered the date of that event for dramatic effect. It actually happened in 1228, a scant 38 years after the castle's destruction by fire in 1190. Indeed, that fire occurred after a mass suicide by the city's Jewish population. Both events really occurred, though we assure you that vampires did not play a role in either tragedy. To be historically accurate, there was no castle on this site in 1230, the year of the *Dark Ages* setting.



outside until the castle walls collapse. The second floor crashes down upon the heads of the court, causing everyone to avoid falling debris (Dexterity + Athletics, difficulty 8) or risk injury (five bashing damage). In the commotion, at least one of the characters should witness Leland fleeing the wreckage.

## Scene 7: Into the Maelstrom

The Tremere runs north from the castle into the heart of the city, and characters who give chase face the full fury of the storm. The coterie may choose not to chase Leland, assuming he runs to his haven and they may seek him there. Even the most knowledgeable of characters in the coterie may not know exactly where Leland keeps his haven, though, other than the fact that it's outside the city's northern walls. Less impulsive or more conscientious characters may stay at the castle to ensure John's safety, or to help rescue members of the court. If the coterie has an opportunity to speak with John or Evelyn, they learn the location of Leland's haven. Of course, too much delay risks losing Leland completely and the baron urges the characters to pursue.

The ruined castle tower sits atop a high earthen mound and is surrounded by a sturdy wooden wall. Part of the wall is destroyed when the building collapses, creating an avenue of escape for Leland. The mound is slick with rain and made more difficult to navigate with the heavy winds, which may cause the characters to lose their footing. At the base of the hill is a moat some 50 feet across, with a bridge. An expanse of open area separates the castle grounds and a Franciscan Abbey, which marks the beginning of the city proper. Leland pauses at the abbey to see if he's being followed, and directs bolts of lightning to deter any pursuers (Perception + Occult, difficulty 8, to hit due to low visibility, dealing 10 dice of lethal damage). If pursuit continues, Leland flees into the city, possibly using Celerity to distance himself from his pursuers.

Leland heads northwest through the city to Bootham Bar before changing direction to the northeast and heading for his haven at St. Thomas' Chapel. Characters with a Perception + Survival total of 8 or more have no trouble keeping track of Leland. Otherwise, rolls to follow his flight through the city are made at difficulty 8. If the coterie does manage to lose track of its quarry, the characters may try to ask local townspeople if they saw Leland pass, which may put them back on his trail. Other clues for characters to follow are shreds of the Tremere's robe, or a talisman or amulet that he has dropped. Characters with poor tracking ability are best served asking someone in John's court about Leland's haven.

You have any number of obstacles to throw at the characters during this scene, making the chase a challenge; the storm causes chaos in the city. Some possibilities include:

### Flying Debris

The force of the storm turns harmless objects into lethal projectiles. Small pebbles and stones fly with the force of sling bullets, dealing five bashing damage. Medium-sized items

## REGO TEMPESTAS

Leland specialized in weather manipulation as a mortal sorcerer, so he was naturally drawn to the Rego Tempestas path of Thaumaturgic study. Through the use of blood, the Tremere may command the weather to his will, calling obscuring fog or gale-force winds to his aid. The most powerful Warlocks may even call bolts of lightning from the sky and direct them at enemies. Changes to weather conditions are localized, covering only three to four miles in diameter, and may take hours to achieve completely. The storm that struck York in the previous scene occurred naturally, though Leland increased its destructive power through use of blood magic. Specific details on this path can be found in *Dark Ages: Vampire* and *Guide to the Camarilla*.

Thaumaturgists may also command a vast array of rituals to enhance or focus their magic. Fearing that his transgressions against the baron were close to being revealed, Leland used a ritual called Suspension of Incantation, which allowed him to prepare his escape hours before his crimes were revealed. This ritual allowed him to secretly increase the vast destructive potential of the storm on a command. This ritual can be found in *Players Guide to Low Clans*.

such as horseshoes, roof tiles, hammers, cooking pots and wagon wheels may cause as much as 10 to 15 bashing damage, knocking characters off their feet. Larger items such as wagons or collapsing structures like walls or spires may deal lethal damage or trap characters against walls or beneath rubble. Beyond this, more lethal debris such as nails, glass shards, cutlery, pitch forks and broken shards of wood are all viable options, and you should adjust damage accordingly.

### Looters and Brigands

The storm smashes shop fronts, overturns wagons full of goods and forces people into their homes — providing a perfect opportunity for looters willing to brave the hazards of the weather. Watching a small cadre of characters running through the storm, presumably to find shelter, a group of cutthroats attempts to attack them for their valuables. This option is most likely if the majority of the characters are well dressed.

### City Guards

With looters roaming the streets, guards try in vain to maintain some degree of order. The characters may easily be mistaken for looters running through the city, especially if the coterie includes no nobles. Interference may be as simple as a guard yelling, "Halt!" or as complex as a group of aggressive guards attempting to subdue the characters, erring on the side of caution. The longer the vampires are delayed by guards, the more opportunity Leland has to



escape; combat may not be the most efficient option available to the coterie.

It's possible that the characters catch up with Leland before he can make it to his haven, and you should be prepared for that eventuality. Yes, some unexpected result of the storm can free the Tremere, but this robs the characters of their victory. A better option may be to have Leland convince them that he did not work alone, acting as Mithras' agent. He professes that he is simply a pawn and has documents to prove it in his haven.

The characters are justified in mistrusting the Tremere, but Leland is artful enough to play to the Ventrue desire for prestige and accomplishment. If the characters simply bring him back to John, there is *dignitas* in it. But if they bring back Leland and proof of Mithras' interference in John's affairs...

## Scene 8: Claps of Thunder

Leland's haven in St. Thomas' Chapel is across an open field called the Horse Fair, just north of Bowing Tower, at the northern corner of the city's defenses. The Tremere may or may not attempt to use lightning to deter the characters at this point, depending on how much blood he has used. The chapel itself is unassuming from the outside and seems to be abandoned at first glance. There appears to be a single congregation room and a spire that once housed a bell.

Any character who opens the door to the chapel suffers three points of lethal damage, as the door is protected by the Thaumaturgy ritual Ward Versus Cainites (see **Guide to the Camarilla** or **Dark Ages: Vampire**). The incantation is inscribed as a glyph on the inside of the frame. The main hall of the chapel is small, with seating for up to 40. The stairway to the spire collapses under any weight. There is also a stairway to a cellar that appears well kept and well used.

You have many options for the defenses of Leland's haven. The Tremere is versed in Thaumaturgy and has grown paranoid with his alliance with Mithras. The cellar has a hallway with three rooms that serve as library, study and bedchamber. Some possible encounters there involve:

### Ghouls

Leland has created two ghoul servants to aid him with rituals and defense of his haven. Either one, both or neither may be present when the characters arrive. The first, Brom, is a peasant who serves as Leland's manual laborer. He is large and muscular and has one level of Potence and Fortitude on which to draw. The second, Adele, is the runaway daughter of a merchant, and Leland grooms her for the Embrace. She is crafty and sly, and has studied many of her master's books to better assist him with his work. Adele has one level of Potence, but also knows two levels of Thaumaturgy (Creo Ignem), and defends her master to the death.

### Wards

Leland is quite accomplished with wards against ghouls and Cainites. Fear of discovery has led him to ward anything

from doors to books to floor tiles in an attempt to protect himself from spies and intruders. Feel free to determine just what objects are warded based on what characters might be interested in touching. Possibilities are scrolls, steps on the staircase, shelves in the library, drawers on the desk in the study, or any of the various magical trinkets adorning the place. Some wards may be similar to the one described above, while others may cause objects to burst into flame, to siphon blood through the skin or to incite frenzy. You can also create your own wards to surprise or frighten the players.

### Booby Traps

You can create your own your own booby traps, too, but spring-triggered swinging blades and falling axes can be used to great effect on the stairwell to the cellar. Such traps could be sprung by putting weight on certain steps or by standing on a particular floorboard. A sword trap inflicts four dice plus two automatic levels of lethal damage, while an axe inflicts five dice and two automatic levels. Details on these traps and others can be found in the **Right of Princes** sourcebook for **Dark Ages**.

Leland makes an effort to fight the characters if his wards and booby traps inflict any significant damage. Having little blood left at this point, he fights hand-to-hand, but only if he is confident of victory. Otherwise, his goal is to retrieve (or destroy) a diary from his study and to escape to his bedchamber at the far end of the cellar.

If Leland reaches his bedroom, he steps onto a circle of charred ground and speaks the name "Reginald of Durham" before disappearing from sight, using the Thaumaturgy ritual Escape to a True Friend detailed in **Dark Ages: Vampire** and **Guide to the Camarilla**. Characters may attempt to determine exactly what causes him to disappear (Intelligence + Occult, difficulty 9) or may search his library for a book detailing the ritual (Intelligence + Investigation, difficulty 8).

The characters may prevent Leland from reaching his diary, in which case they win documented evidence of his association with Mithras. The Methuselah had established contact with Leland five years earlier, offering rare and sought-after books of occult lore and ritual magic in return for information regarding those close to Baron John. At Leland's request, Mithras would spare the Tremere of Durham and John himself any direct harm. The diary contains a full account of the information the Tremere provided to Mithras and what occult tomes were received in return. In general, it implicates Leland as a killer and saboteur, documenting his progression from mere informant to assassin.

Details regarding the bone stake are also provided by the diary, explaining that Leland's research determined the weapon to be particularly painful and damaging to Cainites. After he used it to send Gerard into torpor, the bone itself became as hot as a brand and burned its inscribed runes into the Tremere's palm. While Leland was unsure as to what



happened, his best guess is that the weapon activated upon contact with vampire blood and burned with the fires of Hell itself, turning Gerard into ash.

If the diary is taken or destroyed, characters can search Leland's study. On a table, they find a letter written on behalf of Mithras proposing an alliance, but it lacks the hard-and-fast details found in the diary. Also in the study is an unfinished letter addressed to Mithras that details the characters' interference in Leland's affairs. The Tremere makes repeated mention of their meddling and states that he might not be able to wait for an answer from London before acting to remove the threat. There should be reference in the letter to earlier correspondence regarding local characters in the coterie, specifically that they need to be targeted "ahead of schedule." Characters should get the definite feeling that they have been on the list for some time.

Further investigation of the cellar may be hazardous, as there are multiple wards and booby traps throughout. The library contains an almost unequaled collection of occult texts, some of which are only rumored to exist. (These volumes are particularly warded and protected by a variety of other means.) If you wish to move the story along, you can intensify accidents and injury, though you may wish to allow characters time to explore and thus downplay remaining dangers.

## LEADING THE CAPTIVE

If the characters manage to capture Leland at any point, he leads them through his haven, pointing out specific traps and wards along the way. He describes a diary in his study that details Mithras' involvement in York, but his intention is still to retrieve the book and exit through his bedchamber. If he sees that there is no possibility of escaping with the book, he chooses to save himself and leave the diary. Characters may still prevent this from happening, but Leland is very sly. If the characters are vigilant, he tells of a second volume of the diary that he keeps in his bedchamber, he subtly steps on the charred circle on the floor, and mentions Reginald's name. If any character is on the circle with him at the time, you may choose to have her travel with him to Lion's Gate Chantry, which creates an undoubtedly dramatic twist. Of course, the characters may prevent Leland's escape altogether, either by restraining him physically, compelling him to stay through use of Disciplines, or cutting off any escape route to his bedchamber. In any of these cases, he attempts to fight to the death or commit suicide rather than face John's wrath.





## Scene 9: Eye of the Storm

As the characters leave St. Thomas' Chapel, they meet Eyolf Ivarsson, who immediately asks if they subdued Leland. If they have, he takes custody of the traitor in John's name and asks the characters to accompany him to St. Olave's Church in St. Mary's Abbey, the baron's secondary haven. If they have not, he demands to know why, and the methods by which the criminal escaped. If the characters try to dissemble or evade Eyolf's questions (or if they refuse to give up their captive), he tries to gain what he seeks through intimidation or force. They may notice that his Beast is very close to the surface and that he is extremely agitated after the night's events. Too much stalling incriminates the characters in Eyolf's eyes, and he labels them conspirators with Leland.

When Eyolf happens upon the coterie, he is near frenzy and intent on finding the betrayer. Seeing the characters emerge from the Tremere's haven startles and confuses him, prompting him to assume a hostile posture. The Gangrel has recently lost two men he considered friends, Gerard and Connor, and was nearly destroyed himself when York Castle collapsed. He paused only long enough to make sure Katla and John were safe before charging off into the storm to Leland's haven.

Eyolf's clothes are ragged and bloody, evidence of considerable wounds inflicted by flying debris, and he makes no effort to keep a growl out of his voice. Any action on the part of the coterie that he feels delays him from subduing Leland or aids the Tremere's escape makes him consider the characters enemies, or at the least, obstacles. His first instinct is to intimidate the coterie (roll nine dice for Charisma + Intimidation). Failing that, he may become physical with whatever character he perceives to be the leader. Feel free to develop Eyolf's capabilities to your liking, but remember that the Gangrel has been warmaster for one of the most influential fiefs in Britain for close to two centuries.

If the characters are forthcoming with information on Leland's escape and connection to Mithras, the Gangrel tells them of conversations with Katla regarding the Tremere's recent behavior. She fears that Leland is a small player in a greater scheme between Mithras and Meerlinda of the Lion's Gate Chantry in Durham, and that the two elders conspire to destroy John's influence in the region. If the characters mention the name "Reginald of Durham" in their explanation of Leland's escape, Eyolf recognizes it and informs the group that Reginald is one of Meerlinda's retainers.

Fighting Eyolf at any point should be discouraged, either through hints at his reputation throughout the chronicle, or physical descriptions that give the impression of a warrior not easily trifled with. Those coterie members that do engage Eyolf may have some chance of besting the Gangrel, despite his prowess. Such characters become suspect in the eyes of all in York, as Eyolf is John's most loyal retainer. Attitudes in John's court turn hostile, and the coterie could easily be blamed for all the

ills of the city, however unlikely members' involvement may be. Katla may find some interest in the characters' courage and warrior spirit, and could later negotiate an uneasy peace between the coterie and the Gangrel. A fight now delays the characters considerably and cuts off many available options, but information about Durham should still be available through Katla — who may be the coterie's only ally at this point.

If the situation is handled peacefully, the Gangrel answers questions regarding his knowledge of Durham and/or Mithras. He stresses the dangers of opposing either power, and fears that the coterie may be in danger of repercussions from Leland if he has escaped. Eyolf offers to escort the characters to St. Olave's Church for their own safety, explaining that John and his retainers have relocated there now that York Castle has been reduced to a pile of timber. Many of the city's Cainites have fled to their own havens, fearing to get too close to the baron lest another unfortunate disaster strike. Eyolf understands if the characters do not wish to travel to John's haven, but advises the coterie to stay together for its own safety.

The characters notice that the wind has calmed somewhat, though sudden gusts still toss debris into the air and the rain limits visibility to a few yards. They are faced with a crossroads of possibilities at this point as the events of the previous two nights have finally calmed. Standing outside the castle walls, the storm turns to hard rain, and the characters weigh their options.

Depending on how the characters have handled events so far, they should have arrived at certain conclusions. Several local Cainites have been destroyed, potentially including allies and close contacts. Leland was coerced by Mithras into betraying members of John's court. York Castle has been destroyed, throwing court into a panic and sending vampires scurrying for the safety of their havens. The characters may be implicated in mortal murders, and quite possibly other fabricated crimes. And the Lion's Gate Chantry, possibly at the direction of Meerlinda, is somehow involved in a scheme to undermine John's position in the barony. What to do about these conclusions, however, is another matter entirely.

This may also be a prime opportunity for the characters to seek out one or more of their sires for guidance. More than likely, local sires actively search for their childer to see how recent successes can be used to greater advantage or to control any damage that may have been done to the family reputation. Sires are especially interested in whether childer were destroyed in the castle's collapse, probably more to see if their investments and resources are still available than out of parental love.

Sires should be more interested in determining how the coterie's actions affect their own reputations than in trying to aid the characters selflessly. Avoid elders telling characters what to do or sires dictating characters' actions. A sire struggling to establish ties to the Tremere may



## VALUABLE INFORMATION

It may be possible at this point for savvy characters to use their knowledge and understanding of the local situation for personal gain, especially if they held out crucial information from Eyolf. They possess proof of Leland and Mithras' involvement, perhaps the Tremere's diary or even the traitor himself. Whatever their successes, the coterie has valuable information that could command a high price not only from John but from any number of his rivals.

Of course, attempting to sell information to the highest bidder is a dangerous game. Power and *dignitas* often stem from land ownership and feudal ties, rather than through the accumulation of pure wealth. Many nobles, among them many Ventrue, see the pursuit of money as beneath them, something handled by seneschals and scrabbled after by the Low Clans. While the information the coterie holds may be sold, it could easily lower their reputation in the eyes of peers.

Furthermore, with the exception of Mithras, Baron John is in the position to do the most for the characters in terms of personal favors, grants of land or domain, and placement within his court. Offending John by holding out on him engenders suspicion in the baron and does not bode well for future dealings in York.

The feudal system that supports John and the fief of York relies on some measure of loyalty and trust between lord and vassal. Over-ambitious neonates and ancillae who buck this tradition are beaten back into place by powerful elders. A world run by blackmail, information brokering, and the supreme importance of currency is still a ways off.

suggest that his child drag his heels in dealing with Leland and Lion's Gate, or may ask that a duty be performed that interferes in responding to the Usurper threat. Sires should attempt to use childer's successes or intentions as part of their own overarching plans.

### John

The characters may choose to follow Eyolf to St. Olave's Church and report what they have learned. If they have somehow managed to capture Leland, this could be the resolution of the act, though it is unlikely the Tremere would allow himself to be taken alive. If he did not survive the assault on his haven, the characters may be left with recovered documents. These circumstances could end the act as well, though you may use the possibility of Meerlinda's complicity in Leland's schemes as reason for John to send the coterie to Durham to learn more.

Most likely, Leland escaped from his haven and is hiding at Lion's Gate Chantry. This development is repugnant to John and any members of the court who learn of the traitor's escape. The baron seeks to retrieve his erstwhile advisor. This is an opportunity for the characters to gain considerable *dignitas* and John's gratitude. The local, lingering state of paranoia leaves the characters as the only ones willing or available to undertake such a dangerous errand.

If the characters are eager to head north, the baron may release them from any obligations. They have fulfilled their previous agreement with him, for example, rooting out the cause of York's troubles. Such willingness might get the characters out of other problems, too. Say, helping to alleviate pressure from mortal authorities.

If the characters are reluctant to help any further, John may posit that they have not yet fulfilled their responsibilities, having left York in total disarray with nothing to show for it but words on paper. The baron pressures the characters by dint of their personal honor (or implied shame) to retrieve Leland from Durham. John is the reigning Cainite of Ventrue blood, after all.

The characters may appeal for increasingly greater boons at this point, and John may agree within limits. The baron doesn't commit to parceling out specific domains, but could imply that the coterie will be high in his esteem and will feature prominently among those who are granted domain. John speaks in vagaries, refusing to be backed into a corner. It is still well within his power to use other agents — Evelyn and Eloise perhaps — to secure the return of Leland to York. While he may be inclined to put characters in contact with certain agents within his various realms of influence, he does not commit to specific rewards. Nor does he capitulate to unreasonable demands. The characters can win favor here, but they can't expect the world.

If the characters agree to help further, the baron presents them with a letter of introduction to his representative in Durham, Eloise Marchand. Their instructions are to seek her out and brief her before deciding on a course of action. Eloise has a fair knowledge of the Lion's Gate Chantry and good familiarity with Durham itself. Characters do well to enlist her aid once in the city if they wish to

## SENDING WORD AHEAD

In addition to letters of introduction for the characters, John or Katla may send word ahead to Eloise by carrier pigeon. While such communication is not entirely secure, brief coded messages are sent from time to time when information needs to be conveyed quickly. If you wish to use this option, Eloise may have agents looking for the characters as they arrive in Durham. A message may be intercepted and deciphered (or changed!), though, which may spell trouble for the coterie upon its arrival.



have any advantage when dealing with Meerlinda or the other Tremere of the city.

### Katla

The characters may also turn to Katla, depending on what sort of relationship has been developed with her over the course of the act. Those who agreed to work with her in Scene 5 may return and report events at Leland's haven. If the characters previously agreed to bring Katla information but never did, they may lose her trust and patronage, even rousing her formidable anger.

Katla seeks to send the characters north to retrieve Leland, but for her own purposes. The elder hopes to gain a better understanding of Mithras' mind, wishing to question the Tremere regarding his involvement with the Methuselah. His guilt has already been ascertained in the matter, but the methods of London's prince have yet to be examined. Katla requests that the characters bring her this prize in exchange for her further patronage and support. The *dignitas* gained from returning the traitor — performing far beyond their original agreement — would be inestimable.

Though Katla has no firm relationship to Eloise, she knows that John's representative has the most up-to-date information on Durham's political landscape. She writes a letter of introduction on behalf of the baron, though she has no definite information on how the characters may locate John's agent. Characters have a difficult time finding Eloise — Wits + Investigation, difficulty 7 — and an even harder time convincing her that they indeed act in the baron's best interests. Eloise recognizes the name Katla Thraddottir, although it invokes unspoken suspicions about the *einherjar*'s true motives.

### No Strings

It's possible that the characters set out for Durham under their own cognizance, pausing only to gather supplies and to feed. While such initiative is commendable, it provides the coterie with little support. Elders may view the characters' free spirit as an affront to their authority, and may harbor suspicions about the coterie's true motives, especially if there has been any speculation of collusion with Leland. Failing to return Leland ruins the characters' reputation; further attempts to extract the traitor are tainted by the initial blunderings of a cadre of neonates. Such lack of foresight condemns the characters' sires, as well, as they obviously didn't teach their childer patience or respect. Success garners great respect and glory for the coterie, along with accolades for their initiative and capacity to function without direct supervision.

Unless a character has direct ties to Durham, going there without assistance is exceedingly challenging. Characters with local ties in York know of Eloise Marchand's station in the northern city, but only those with in-depth knowledge of John's court (a Politics specialty for York, perhaps) know anything regarding her contacts or allies. Attempts to locate Eloise are incredibly difficult, and the characters' welcome is

exceedingly suspect. Convincing Eloise to aid the characters is demanding, made doubly so by their ignorance of her personal agenda. The characters probably have to prove their loyalty to John somehow.

## Scene 10: Flood Waters

Characters who leave with John's blessing likely set out directly from St. Mary's Abbey, exiting the city through Bootham Bar. Those departing without the baron's explicit knowledge are better served leaving through Monk Bar along the northeastern wall, as that route poses less risk of discovery by John's agents in the abbey.

The journey to Durham is roughly 80 miles and cannot be accomplished in one night, even if the characters push their horses to physical collapse. Some provision must be made to spend daytime hours in a safe and secure place. Local characters know of "traveler havens" that can be used along the road — inns, churches or caves. Otherwise, the coterie must spend time in a village or even a covered carriage. It may be a good idea to bring ghouls along for protection during the day, though that may not be possible.

On the road north, the coterie should have some form of encounter engineered to eliminate the characters. You're free to develop any form of plot by Leland, with any level of prior planning (the characters could have been targets for weeks before the outset of the chronicle, and the timing and setting of those plans is simply revised).

The characters are most vulnerable during the day. The daylight siege of an inn or church provides a level of anxiety or fear, even if the characters awake at dusk to find their impromptu haven under attack. While this approach may not be suitable for all chronicles, it reminds the characters of the ongoing danger posed to John's allies.

Some possible threats that draw from previous scenes include:

### Lupine Attack

If the characters held the strange bone stake in the courtyard of Gerard's murder, or if they picked up some other trinkets Leland dropped during his flight from York Castle, they are marked for Lupine assault. Even if the mystical objects are no longer in the characters' position, their scent persists.

As the coterie progresses north, observant characters notice that they're being watched from the depths of the woods and followed at a distance (Perception 4+). The Lupine observer stalks the shadows at a distance until the coterie strays out of earshot of settlements beyond the city walls. When the characters travel far enough from civilization, their pursuer engages them in combat.

A battle-starved coterie with competent warriors may call for two Lupines, while a group of diplomats and court retainers may call for an intelligent creature that may be susceptible to manipulation. In either case, the bone stake should play a major role.





Leland stole what he thought to be magical talismans from a Lupine on the Yorkshire moors at great risk to his own safety. He struck a lone Lupine with a lightning bolt and removed the crude items from the beast. But Leland was tracked back to the city. In time, the Tremere gave one item to Connor, John's messenger to Whitby, resulting in the Brujah's messy death. Leland's studies into the occult led him to believe that the items were powerful magical relics of great importance to Lupines, and that anyone bearing an artifact in open country would raise the monsters' ire.

In a combat-based encounter, the Lupine (or Lupines) target the character in possession of the bone stake or talisman, or the character that spent the most time carrying one of the items. The beast howls and snarls a challenge, demanding the return of "what was stolen." This demand may be as vague or specific as you wish, though misunderstanding and confusion increase the tension of the scene. References to the "dead wizard" or "lightning corpse" may feature prominently, as the Lupine tries to describe Leland and the interaction that led to the stake's theft.

The attacking beast may be the werewolf from which the Tremere stole, or one who knew the victim. No matter what,

the monster should have a fair knowledge of how the bone stake and talismans were stolen. It may indicate that a feathered bag was retrieved already, tying the beast to Connor's destruction. Characters who recognize that the creature is after the bone stake may try to reason with the beast, though such attempts at diplomacy are likely to fail. Even if the creature regains any relics, it may finish what it started and attack the coterie anyway, now wielding a weapon.

#### Special Investigators

Another option is to have the group of "special investigators" mentioned in Scene 1 catch up with the characters as they leave the city. This small, dedicated group of demon hunters has strong suspicions of an infernal element among the characters. Having investigated the initial story and subsequent disappearance of Father Albert, along with the deaths of two other priests and their housekeeper, the investigators have followed the clues to the characters.

You can design a combat encounter or a situation that can be resolved through diplomacy or subterfuge. In the first case, much like the Lupine attack, the group of investigators sets up an ambush outside the city gates or plans to launch a direct assault on their adversaries. The investigators are



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convinced of the characters' guilt. They may wield True Faith and have approximate knowledge of the common strengths and weaknesses of vampires. If combat occurs, the investigators are unlikely to rush headlong into it, preferring to use their minds and experience to outmaneuver their opponents.

An aggressive confrontation leaves the characters open to further repercussions down the line, as townspeople may witness the altercation. The characters' credibility is called into question at least, and they're publicly labeled demons at worst. To discourage combat, you may want to have passersby stop and watch the encounter. A crowd could gather to witness the interrogation, which raises the stakes on open violence.

For the second option, the investigators suspect the coterie's involvement in recent events, though they lack the proof or conviction to assault the group. The coterie is approached or even surrounded by investigators, who want to "get to the bottom" of the matter. While potentially volatile, the situation can be defused through communication and diplomacy.

This second approach is ideally suited to Ventrue characters; cunning and duplicity are their elements. The Warlords have long been masters of manipulating kine and swaying mortal minds, though this particular development should challenge even the most skilled negotiator. The investigators are suspicious of the characters' nighttime activities, their involvement in recent deaths, and seeming proximity to unnatural events. It may be difficult to convince the investigators that the coterie is not involved. Downplaying involvement or describing it in an innocuous way may ease the tensions of a gathered crowd. The investigators, however, are not so easily swayed.

Characters likely need to use mind-altering Disciplines in this situation, as mere explanations alone do not assuage the investigators. The mortals have a high resistance to Dominate and Presence, and may quickly turn on

the vampires if they sense anything amiss. Obvious use of blood in this situation may increase suspicions. The investigators suspect trickery if, for example, the most staunch accuser among them suddenly and inexplicably pardons the characters. Subtlety is vital. Overt displays of power likely lead to a violent resolution.

### Angry Mob

The characters are confronted by a large group of townspeople gathered outside York's walls. The commoners are determined to end the recent reign of terror at any cost. The mob is driven by fear and self-preservation, in search of the source of recent troubles, and is ready to eliminate it. The characters' involvement with the priests' murders is enough spark to light the fires of a mob mentality.

In the mob's eyes, the characters are capable of anything. They could be murderers, thieves, brigands, monsters, demons or worse. The characters' true nature is of little importance; the gang singles them out as scapegoats. An explosive situation is imminent and the coterie has only a narrow opportunity to calm or distract the crowd. Masterful orators may attempt to disperse the assembly, while less adept speakers may try to divert the mob's attention only long enough for the coterie to escape. You have the option of allowing the crowd to be pacified, though failure in such an attempt means the mob attacks the characters or forces them from the city. Cunning characters might even be able to sick the mob on a local rival or thorn in the side. If sufficient aspersions and "evidence" can be posed against another vampire, the mob may go off in search of him or her.

## Scene 11: The Storm Breaks

Arriving in Durham, the characters' ultimate goal is to retrieve Leland from Lion's Gate Chantry at the north end of the city. This is not easily accomplished, and the coterie likely knows little or nothing about the political situation of Durham. As discussed previously, their most likely contact is Eloise Marchand.

Lady Eloise could quite possibly be younger than the characters, though only those who have some knowledge of her origins have any knowledge of that fact. She carries herself with the air of a vampire several times her age, and possesses a keen mind and excellent political savvy. Her service to John has earned the baron's trust and won her the weighty duty of serving as liaison between Durham and York. Playing in the political games of Cainites centuries her elder, Eloise has managed to establish herself as a significant figure on the local scene.

Also of note, Eloise interacted extensively with Leland during her time as a retainer in John's court, and she secretly resents the Tremere's close connection to her lord. She embodies all the arrogance and elitism of the Ventrue, looking down on Cainites of the Low Clans. To her, they should stay to their roles as servants, leaving the station of trusted retainers to their betters. While she respects and understands



## CALLING DURHAM HOME

It's possible that one or more characters is from Durham, or has a contact or ally in the city. Such characters naturally have far more insight into the goings-on of the city, and likely have some way of contacting Eloise without introduction from John or Katla. A Durham native can assume a leadership role of the coterie, and may have any amount of local influence that you deem appropriate.

Tremere characters from Lion's Gate Chantry itself may also have a place in the coterie, providing a new set of complications. Aside from the very real questions of loyalty and the blood oath the Tremere force on neonates, such a character has to decide how to serve her own best interests. Defending Leland may gain her respect within the chantry itself, though returning him to York may provide far stronger contacts and greater influence with the Ventrue. A Tremere character is hard-pressed to convince fellow Usurpers to turn out one of their own for the good of the chantry. Yet, Tremere characters have no trouble making contact with agents of Lion's Gate, and enjoy relatively amicable relations there (at least to start).

the ties between John and Leland, a chance to remove the Tremere from the picture interests her greatly.

Making her haven inside Durham Castle, Eloise proves difficult to contact. Those with a letter of introduction from John or Katla know to look for a ghoul servant of hers named David who serves as a castle guard. He arranges entrance and announces the coterie's presence to Eloise, who gladly entertains envoys from York.

A letter from John puts the characters in Eloise's good graces, as they perform a direct service for her trusted lord. Understanding their mission as integral to the baron's stability, she avails the coterie of any knowledge she has of Lion's Gate and Meerlinda. She offers what assistance she can in putting the characters in contact with the Tremere, though she does not jeopardize her relationship with the Usurpers by speaking directly on the coterie's behalf. Information and indirect assistance are forthcoming, but intervention on her part is entirely out of the question.

A letter from Katla is met with far more scrutiny; Eloise does not trust the baron's blood cousin or understand her motives. Only recently Embraced when the *einherjar* re-emerged in York, Eloise has always been wary of Katla's subtle maneuvers and growing influence. A letter from Katla speaks entirely in terms of the coterie's intention of aiding John, but Eloise needs to be convinced of the veracity of the characters' outlandish claims. Gerard and Connor dead, York Castle

destroyed, and John's trusted advisor Leland a traitor and on the run? While she may wish nothing more but to aid the characters in eliminating Leland, she cannot take such stories at face value without endangering her own position.

Eloise wants to send her own envoy to John to confirm the characters' claims. And yet, her desire to see Leland's fall allows her to be convinced to aid the coterie without such affirmation. The characters can try to tempt Eloise if they sense her enmity of Leland, but she is a consummate politician who is not easily swayed by empty rhetoric or open intimidation. Playing to her sense of pride and ambition yields the best results, as Leland has long had John's ear. Though very young, Eloise has tremendous ambition, and Leland has often proved an obstacle in winning John's support. If the coterie convinces her that Leland's removal would improve her standing, she agrees to do what she can to further their cause.

Characters arriving entirely unannounced have a challenging time accessing the castle, or contacting Eloise. While vampires local to York know of her position in Durham, few know anything beyond her

## HOW CAN ELOISE HELP?

Having been John's representative in Durham for over a decade, Eloise has acquired a fair bit of information on Meerlinda and the Tremere of Lion's Gate. While she has not been inside the tower itself (she's always met Meerlinda or other functionaries in the Elysium of the nearly finished Cathedral of St. Cuthbert), the Ventrue has managed to gain a decent understanding of the Tremere presence in the city through agents and city guards.

The Usurpers originally settled in Glastonbury before being driven north to less hostile territory, fleeing the enmity of Mithras in London. Meerlinda has no love for the Methuselah and uses her tentative alliance with York as protection against his depredations, relying on Leland as her representative in John's court. The relationship between John and Leland has yielded quite favorable results for Meerlinda, and Eloise fears that the Tremere influence over the baron will ultimately result in disaster. Eloise suspects that Meerlinda seeks to use John as a pawn in a struggle against Mithras. In turn, Meerlinda harbors little respect for the young Ventrue, being polite to Eloise purely on pretense.

Eloise advises against a direct approach on Lion's Gate, citing the tower's formidable defenses, and that the characters would likely insult Meerlinda with their audacity. A meeting can be arranged between the coterie and a Tremere agent, giving the characters an opportunity to state their case. Such a meeting would take place in the cathedral, and would give Eloise time to confirm or refute the dismal news from York with her own agents.



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Lady Eloise could quite possibly be younger than the characters, though only those who have some knowledge of her origins have any knowledge of that fact. She carries herself with the air of a vampire several times her age, and possesses a keen mind and excellent political savvy. Her service to John has earned the baron's trust and won her the weighty duty of serving as liaison between Durham and York. Playing in the political games of Cainites centuries her elder, Eloise has managed to establish herself as a significant figure on the local scene.

Also of note, Eloise interacted extensively with Leland during her time as a retainer in John's court, and she secretly resents the Tremere's close connection to her lord. She embodies all the arrogance and elitism of the Ventrue, looking down on Cainites of the Low Clans. To her, they should stay to their roles as servants, leaving the station of trusted retainers to their betters. While she respects and understands



## CALLING DURHAM HOME

It's possible that one or more characters is from Durham, or has a contact or ally in the city. Such characters naturally have far more insight into the goings-on of the city, and likely have some way of contacting Eloise without introduction from John or Katla. A Durham native can assume a leadership role of the coterie, and may have any amount of local influence that you deem appropriate.

Tremere characters from Lion's Gate Chantry itself may also have a place in the coterie, providing a new set of complications. Aside from the very real questions of loyalty and the blood oath the Tremere force on neonates, such a character has to decide how to serve her own best interests. Defending Leland may gain her respect within the chantry itself, though returning him to York may provide far stronger contacts and greater influence with the Ventrue. A Tremere character is hard-pressed to convince fellow Usurpers to turn out one of their own for the good of the chantry. Yet, Tremere characters have no trouble making contact with agents of Lion's Gate, and enjoy relatively amicable relations there (at least to start).

the ties between John and Leland, a chance to remove the Tremere from the picture interests her greatly.

Making her haven inside Durham Castle, Eloise proves difficult to contact. Those with a letter of introduction from John or Katla know to look for a ghoul servant of hers named David who serves as a castle guard. He arranges entrance and announces the coterie's presence to Eloise, who gladly entertains envoys from York.

A letter from John puts the characters in Eloise's good graces, as they perform a direct service for her trusted lord. Understanding their mission as integral to the baron's stability, she avails the coterie of any knowledge she has of Lion's Gate and Meerlinda. She offers what assistance she can in putting the characters in contact with the Tremere, though she does not jeopardize her relationship with the Usurpers by speaking directly on the coterie's behalf. Information and indirect assistance are forthcoming, but intervention on her part is entirely out of the question.

A letter from Katla is met with far more scrutiny; Eloise does not trust the baron's blood cousin or understand her motives. Only recently Embraced when the *einherjar* re-emerged in York, Eloise has always been wary of Katla's subtle maneuvers and growing influence. A letter from Katla speaks entirely in terms of the coterie's intention of aiding John, but Eloise needs to be convinced of the veracity of the characters' outlandish claims. Gerard and Connor dead, York Castle

destroyed, and John's trusted advisor Leland a traitor and on the run? While she may wish nothing more but to aid the characters in eliminating Leland, she cannot take such stories at face value without endangering her own position.

Eloise wants to send her own envoy to John to confirm the characters' claims. And yet, her desire to see Leland's fall allows her to be convinced to aid the coterie without such affirmation. The characters can try to tempt Eloise if they sense her enmity of Leland, but she is a consummate politician who is not easily swayed by empty rhetoric or open intimidation. Playing to her sense of pride and ambition yields the best results, as Leland has long had John's ear. Though very young, Eloise has tremendous ambition, and Leland has often proved an obstacle in winning John's support. If the coterie convinces her that Leland's removal would improve her standing, she agrees to do what she can to further their cause.

Characters arriving entirely unannounced have a challenging time accessing the castle or contacting Eloise. While vampires local to York know of her position in Durham, few know anything beyond her

## HOW CAN ELOISE HELP?

Having been John's representative in Durham for over a decade, Eloise has acquired a fair bit of information on Meerlinda and the Tremere of Lion's Gate. While she has not been inside the tower itself (she's always met Meerlinda or other functionaries in the Elysium of the nearly finished Cathedral of St. Cuthbert), the Ventrue has managed to gain a decent understanding of the Tremere presence in the city through agents and city guards.

The Usurpers originally settled in Glastonbury before being driven north to less hostile territory, fleeing the enmity of Mithras in London. Meerlinda has no love for the Methuselah and uses her tentative alliance with York as protection against his depredations, relying on Leland as her representative in John's court. The relationship between John and Leland has yielded quite favorable results for Meerlinda, and Eloise fears that the Tremere influence over the baron will ultimately result in disaster. Eloise suspects that Meerlinda seeks to use John as a pawn in a struggle against Mithras. In turn, Meerlinda harbors little respect for the young Ventrue, being polite to Eloise purely on pretense.

Eloise advises against a direct approach on Lion's Gate, citing the tower's formidable defenses, and that the characters would likely insult Meerlinda with their audacity. A meeting can be arranged between the coterie and a Tremere agent, giving the characters an opportunity to state their case. Such a meeting would take place in the cathedral, and would give Eloise time to confirm or refute the dismal news from York with her own agents.



relationship with John and her rapid rise through the Cainite hierarchy. An attempt could be made to find a local vampire with more detailed information (Intelligence + Investigation, difficulty 7) and develop a relationship that might aid the coterie. Such efforts can put the characters in contact with the ghoul David. Word of the characters' endeavors undoubtedly makes its way to Eloise, and she contacts the coterie through an intermediary to ascertain their intentions.

Eloise is incredibly skeptical of unannounced characters' motives, even more than if the characters had been sent by Katla. Without introduction, the characters are entirely foreign to Durham, with no verifiable evidence that they have any connection to John or his court. For all Eloise knows, they could be agents trying to undermine Eloise's relationship with Meerlinda and the baron. Eloise requires proof of the coterie's stories before acting on their behalf—either from a third party or through direct correspondence from John.

Third-party confirmation can come in several forms, though information regarding Cainite affairs is sketchy at best. Since the characters were restricted to nighttime travel, merchants or other mortal travelers arrived in Durham earlier, bearing news of the terrible storm and the destruction of York Castle. Gossip about mysterious events surrounding the Minster has also spread north, along with word of special investigators being called to the city, but these reports are warped considerably through exaggeration. Alternatively, Eloise may use a carrier pigeon with a brief message or question for the baron.

Of course, characters do not need to seek Eloise and may not even know of her. The coterie may attempt to make contact with an agent of the Tremere (Intelligence + Investigation, difficulty 9) or somehow pass a message to a representative of the clan by mortal messenger. In either case, the characters enter the situation blind, without any information or aid from Eloise Marchand.

It's also possible that characters conduct a direct infiltration of or assault on Lion's Gate. These options are ill advised; they're suicidal. Both the chantry's defenses and defenders are formidable. While the tower itself is unassuming, the garden approaches are heavily warded with magic designed to deter intruders and alert the Tremere. The mortal magi and Cainite Warlocks who defend the tower are enough to destroy any force short of an invading Cainite army. Make these risks very clear to the players, stressing the number of low-generation vampires undoubtedly calling the tower home. Furthermore, any such lack of guile and cunning holds little *dignitas* or reward for the Ventrue, and may easily lead to the coterie being looked down on as "brutes" or "savages" by all local vampires.

Similarly, invading Eloise's haven or threatening her destroys any trust the characters could hope to engender in John's agent. If they succeed in forcing their way into the castle, they come under attack by mortal guards and Eloise's ghouls. The characters are branded criminals in Durham.

## Scene 12: Clearing the Mists

If the coterie secures Eloise's aid, she provides safe haven for the characters while setting up a meeting at the Cathedral of St. Cuthbert. You may choose to have this meeting immediately or wait several nights. The former moves the story along without further delay, allowing the characters to continue with the scene. The latter provides Leland with opportunities to eliminate the characters' threat, or to flee further. Leland has considerable influence among the city guard and merchants, having spent some time serving as a courier between Durham and York. He has access to muscle and money. Given time, he could hire assassins or mercenaries to eliminate the coterie, either all at once or one by one. These ties also avail Leland of many possible exit routes from the city, using the transportation of merchant caravans and the protection of city patrols.

If you choose to delay the meeting with Meerlinda several nights, you may want to use any of these options as obstacles for the coterie. Conversations with Eloise or other vampires in the city suggest Leland's realms of influence, which can reveal his plans before the characters are ready to close their net.

The cathedral itself is an impressive structure, with the central tower still under construction. Serving as the city's Elysium, it is frequently used as a meeting place by Eloise and Meerlinda, the two women kneeling as if to pray in one of the cathedral's small chapels. Characters are escorted by Eloise herself to the cathedral, where they are to meet with a representative of Lion's Gate and speak their minds. No violence is permitted in the Elysium, and the utmost decorum must be maintained among mortals at all times.

Eloise directs the coterie to a small chapel alcove where they are told to kneel while waiting for the Tremere to arrive. Not long afterward, Meerlinda herself enters with an entourage (Leland is not present). The Tremere pass by the kneeling characters as though ignoring them and move to a chapel on the opposite side of the building.

Eloise asks a single spokesperson from the coterie to accompany her to a meeting with Meerlinda, explaining that it is improper for the entire group to petition the elder vampire. The characters must choose who speaks for them. Meerlinda and a single retainer also stand and walk toward a chapel at the rear of the cathedral.

Introductions are made, and Meerlinda's retainer is revealed as Reginald of Durham, he whom Leland spoke of if he disappeared from York. Eloise introduces the chosen character to Meerlinda as a messenger from York seeking an audience, and then withdraws from conversation. It's up to the character to convince the elder to give up one of her own.

### Convincing Arguments

Meerlinda scoffs at the idea of handing Leland over, especially without solid evidence of his wrongdoing. Reginald seeks to protect his friend and undermine any



efforts by the Ventrue to "impose their will" on Meerlinda, or to "force her to bend knee." Fortunately for the characters, the Tremere of Durham know nothing of Leland's plots and are not co-conspirators. But if Leland proves to be a dangerous liability to the chantry, they have no choice but to give him up. What follows are possible strategies the characters could use (or combine) to get a positive outcome.

- If the characters secured Leland's diary outlining his alliance to Mithras, they may play on the disloyalty of Meerlinda's representative to York, and on her antipathy for the Prince of London.

- If the characters have the letters detailing covert involvement between Mithras and Leland, these can be used to support the evidence in the diary or used alone to throw Leland's allegiance to Lion's Gate into doubt.

- Leland's crimes have undermined John, and attempts to protect the criminal or delay his punishment would be seen as direct Tremere involvement in the conspiracy.

- Leland's actions have damaged the relationship between Durham and York, and an act of good faith might restore balance. Otherwise, Meerlinda could lose John's support and be vulnerable to her enemies, namely Mithras.

- Leland's traitorous nature has brought mistrust upon all Tremere of Durham. Only by turning over the criminal might their besmirched reputation be restored.

#### Unconvincing Arguments

While the use of evidence and logic may sway Meerlinda to give Leland up, the elder bristles at Ventrue who presume to order her around. Appealing to "Ventrue authority" does not further the characters' cause, nor does stereotypical Ventrue arrogance. Eloise may warn the characters against tacks such as the following.

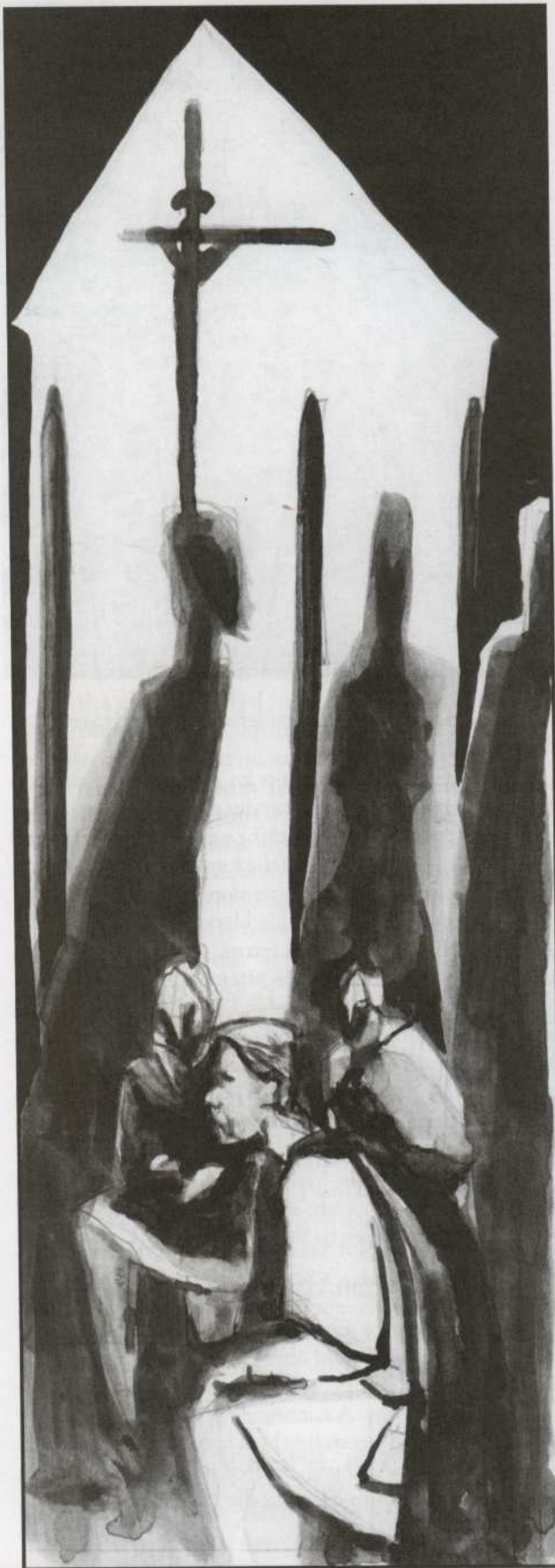
- Characters should not imply that Baron John has authority over Meerlinda, and that she should obey because she is a vassal in the Barony of York.

- Any recourse to intimidation or threats angers both Tremere and weakens the characters' case.

- Use of Disciplines such as Presence or Dominate is regarded as an underhanded Ventrue attempt to achieve their will by force rather than discussion, insulting Meerlinda and angering Reginald.

- Any disrespect or belittling of Meerlinda's position in Durham, especially any aspersions cast on the validity of her clan may end the meeting immediately. She has no time for insolence or contempt.

Convincing Meerlinda grants the coterie custody of Leland; he's handed over directly to the characters by members of the Tremere. Failure leaves Leland safe within the chantry, virtually untouchable. Particularly extreme failure might make Meerlinda an enemy of the characters, or possibly destroy the positive relationship enjoyed between York and





## NO ELOISE

Characters who do not contact Eloise or gain her aid find their time in Durham difficult. They need to secure a haven in which to spend the daytime hours, and need to establish some Cainite contacts in the city. Through some maneuvering, they can arrange a meeting at the cathedral Elysium, but they have no way of knowing the proper protocols to follow. Nor do they have any insight into Meerlinda's history, or to potentially successful arguments to make. Also, Meerlinda does not attend this meeting, sending an intermediary like Reginald or another agent, instead.

While this course is not impossible, unassisted characters find it very difficult to gain access to Leland and return him to York. Meetings between the coterie and Tremere agents take several nights as information is passed back and forth, and Meerlinda contacts Eloise to ascertain the true motives of the coterie. Feel free to make this approach as challenging as you like, although there should be at least some chance for success.

Durham. In any case, the characters are expected to return to York and report to John.

Leland probably attempts to escape along the trip back. Remember that the vampires must stop at least once during the day to rest and avoid the sun. Leland is a powerful Thaumaturgist with a sense of the surrounding countryside, not to mention possible contacts along the way who may be loyal to him. He could use his blood magic to effect his release or the death of his captors, or he may call upon outside agents. If the coterie attempts to transport him along major thoroughfares, Leland may have pre-arranged an ambush in hopes of escaping into the countryside to a hidden haven. Perhaps the characters' wisest course is to stake the Tremere through the heart to force him into torpor for the journey, and/or to take less traveled roads back to York to reduce the possibility of ambush.

Of course, you are free to make Leland as wily and unpredictable as you wish, making for a troublesome and frustrating journey back to York.

## Scene 13: Dawn Approaches

York is in various states of disrepair upon the characters' return. If Eloise sent word ahead by carrier pigeon, John's seneschal Evelyn de Rocherre meets the characters on the road north of the city. A contingent of ghouls takes custody of the criminal and escorts him back to the baron's secondary haven at St. Olave's Church. Even if no word was sent, you may use this option to expedite the conclusion of the act.

Alternatively, Leland can escape from custody into York and prompt another chase.

If Evelyn does not meet the characters, they can head for St. Olave's Church on their own. Approaching town, the characters draw the attention of the baron's agents, possibly including Eyolf, who meets the vampires to bring them before John.

Depending on the characters' actions over the course of the act, their reception may be cause for acclaim or shame. The possibilities in this scene are almost infinite and are entirely up to you, but some general possibilities apply.

### Success

If Leland has been brought back to John for judgment and punishment, or even if the coterie brings back considerable evidence pointing to the Tremere's guilt, the characters are probably in a better position than when the act began.

Coterie sent by John to Durham, and that return with their quarry, perhaps gain the most *dignitas* and tangible reward for their actions. The baron is greatly impressed by the loyalty and capability dis-

## RANSOM

The characters may choose not to return directly to York with Leland. They may hole up in some other place to ransom the Tremere back to John. While this may be a clever and ambitious decision in their minds, it probably leads to trouble.

John is outraged at the characters' presumptuousness, as is Katla and all other notable Cainites of York. Any deals made with John or Katla earlier in the act become void, as this affront proves the characters have no honor or nobility. The loss of *dignitas* is great, and the coterie may be outcast. In a worst-case scenario, John sends Eyolf and his soldiers to return the characters to York by force, declaring them traitors to his court and conspirators with his enemies.

The characters' sires undoubtedly get involved in this situation, angered by the actions of their childer. A prime opportunity for respect and status in John's court is turned sour through greed and lack of forethought. While ambition is valued among the Ventrue, the atmosphere of paranoia and fear that grips York means the characters are quickly demonized.

And yet, if the characters can't be found by John's agents, the baron may be willing to pay a price for Leland. How much is up to you, but the characters are fools to ever show their faces near York again.



played, and his good graces may extend to their bloodlines.

Coteries sent to Durham by Katla and that return with their quarry also gain *dignitas*, but rewards are shared with their benefactor. Katla rises in John's esteem, which trickles down to the characters and their sires.

Coteries that went to Durham of their own volition and return with their quarry may be rebuked for their temerity, but gain considerable *dignitas* for their initiative and strength of purpose, as well as loyalty. Sires may lose some *dignitas* for not training their childer to follow proper protocol.

Coteries that capture Leland before he can even escape to Durham are renowned for their skill, loyalty and efficiency in bringing the fugitive to justice within hours of his flight from York Castle. The characters are invited to join John's inner circle of advisors and trusted retainers.

Coteries that do not capture Leland at all, but that manage to bring his diary to John are rewarded. These characters do not enjoy the benefits that come with taking the Tremere himself into custody, though. Some *dignitas* and reward is offered.

#### Failure

The characters may fail to capture Leland or secure enough information to adequately incriminate him, and do not enjoy a warm welcome at St. Olave's. Beyond having a lack of faith in their abilities, John harbors suspicions of their loyalty. Without Leland, the focus of the court turns to the characters' unsuccessful tactics and questionable acts since the meeting with Evelyn in the library. John may wonder about the characters' connection to Katla, and how that may have allowed the traitor to escape. Or he may focus on how much scrutiny the Cainite population is under after the coterie's involvement in the deaths of the two priests.

John's irritation does not stop with the characters, but extends to their sires and even their potential childer. Failure begets failure, and the shame leveled at the coterie during their meeting with John is echoed by sires. Ambitions for domains or alliances may be set back decades or crushed utterly. Feel free to bring failure to a personal level for each of the characters, such as the elimination of key contacts in their respective areas of influence, or increased interest from John or Katla in taking over their networks of allies.

#### Ramifications

The potential long-term effects of this act are manifold, and should suit the characters' personal motivations and goals. Possible motivators are dis-

cussed under "Schemes and Plans" and "Interests," above. Immediate results and rewards can be measured in *dignitas* gained for bloodlines, and positions or domains parceled out by John. More far-reaching effects should be taken into account before the opening of Act 2.

#### Baron John's Favor

John survives into the Victorian Age as the powerful and influential Prince of York, and his favor can mean significant advantages for characters who earn it. Those who attain positions in John's court (possibly replacing Gerard or Leland) may become quite influential in Cainite affairs in the coming centuries, and can develop allies and contacts throughout Britain and the rest of Europe. Other characters may seek domains of their own rather than positions within John's court, and you may assign regions in small towns such as Leeds that grow to prominence over time. You may also place a character's sire as Prince of Manchester, assuming the Barony of York wrests the city from the Barony of Chester. Such a move could give vast influence to a bloodline, amassed over time into the Victorian Age.

If the characters fail John in some way or lose his favor, their situation becomes difficult in York, which may force them or their sires to seek greener pastures. If they stay, the baron likely passes them over for positions and domains (though he may instate a character in a border domain that's in danger of being overrun by enemies). In either case, opportunities for advancement are minimal. Bloodlines in this situation may try to regain status in the colonies of Victorian England.

#### Katla's Favor

Katla's thanks do not carry as much weight as John's do in the coming centuries. While she remains a prominent figure in York for some time, she never manages to oust John from his seat. Characters who gain her patronage enjoy some residual effects from John (as mentioned above), although they may lose his favor if they openly work to undermine him at Katla's behest.

Characters who displease Katla in this act may have a difficult time, even if under John's protection. The *einherjar* is a fierce rival who seeks to balance the scales. Bloodlines that manage to offend her may pay a dear price in the time before Act 2, or later in Act 3.

#### Mithras' Favor

Regardless of characters' success or failure in this act, it's likely that they make an enemy of Mithras. The Methuselah keeps a close eye on the Ventrue bloodlines involved in compromising his



Tremere plant, and he may make trouble for characters between Acts 1 and 2. He may find other agents like Leland to help keep the bloodlines' growth in check, or to directly undercut any efforts to gain wider influence in England. If you wish to eliminate characters between acts, you may want to use Mithras' ire to do so; the Prince of London has untold influence and numerous agents who gladly remove his rivals. By the Victorian Age, however, Mithras spends much of his time in torpor or away from London, which may diminish any ill effects caused by incurring his anger.

## Major Characters

The following are the prominent participants of this act. You may revise their profiles as best suits the players' characters and your vision of the ongoing Ventrue chronicle. Bear in mind that some supporting characters appear later and should reflect the changes that you make here.

### John, Baron of York

**Background:** Embraced just after the Norman Conquest, Baron John's rapid rise through the Cainite hierarchy has been remarkable. Persistent rumors suggest that John betrayed his sire, who was the former Baron of York, collaborating with a triumvirate of Norman vampires to remove threats to their power. With the return of Mithras to London and the destruction of his erstwhile patrons, John wisely chose to accept the Methuselah's reign for the time being. He resents Mithras' constant suspicion and watchfulness but has played along, all the while plotting to rid himself of the overlord. His schemes have brought him into close contact with the Tremere in Durham, though he fears this involvement may prove more trouble than it's worth. He has also sought those in other baronies who resent the prince and who can be counted as allies.

John faces resistance in his own city. Less than two centuries old, he has little respect among old Cainites, particularly those of Danish heritage. He has narrowly escaped several attacks. John believes his fellow Ventrue Aimery de Methuin to be the source of many of his woes, but knows that the Danish Ventrue Katla Thraddottir is his greatest foe, understanding that she feels York should be her domain by right of inheritance.

**Image:** John takes great care with his appearance, always dressing immaculately in the latest fashions. A small pre-Embrace scar mars his otherwise flawless visage. A warrior in life, he displays the airs of the perfect Norman lord, a role he most often



assumes when interacting with mortals. He is tall and well built, but not over-muscled.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You were born to rule and know it. You display supreme confidence, though inwardly you worry about the age and experience of the forces arrayed against you. You are suspicious of outsiders but rarely show it, placing small obstacles in their way to test their loyalty and honesty, and acting ruthlessly against those who threaten you.

**Influence:** Although one of the youngest barons in England, John commands the second largest domain in the country and wields greater power and influence than any other Cainite except Mithras and Melusine d'Anjou, the "Queen" of Winchester. He regards Meerlinda as a peer, which may ultimately be his undoing.

**Clan:** Ventrue

**Sire:** Julius Cerialis

**Nature:** Rebel

**Demeanor:** Caretaker

**Generation:** 6th

**Embrace:** 1070 (Born 1048)

**Apparent Age:** Early 20s

**Physical:** Strength (Reserves of Strength) 6, Dexterity (Lithe) 4, Stamina (Determined) 6

**Social:** Charisma (Genteel) 4, Manipulation (Persuasive) 4, Appearance (Commanding) 5

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence (Analytical) 5, Wits (Strategy) 5

**Talents:** Alertness (Court) 4, Athletics (Thrown Objects) 4, Brawl (Throws) 5, Dodge (Sidestep) 6, Intimidation (Politics) 6, Leadership (Noble) 7

**Skills:** Animal Ken 3, Archery (Horseback) 5, Commerce 2, Etiquette (Courtly Manners) 4, Melee



(Swords) 6, Ride (Combat) 5, Stealth 3, Survival (Hunting) 5

**Knowledge:** Academics (Rhetoric) 2, Law (Feudal Obligations) 5, Linguistics 3, Occult 3, Politics (City) 6, Seneschal (Urban Holdings) 6, Theology 3

**Disciplines:** Auspex 3, Celerity 4, Dominate 4, Potence 3

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Contacts 3, Domain 5, Herd 3\*, Influence 5, Resources 4, Retainers 4, Status 5

**Virtues:** Conviction 4, Self-Control 4, Courage 5

**Morality:** Humanity 5

**Road:** Kings (see **Dark Ages: Vampire**)

**Willpower:** 5

\* John feeds on only the nobility.

## Katla Thranddottir

**Background:** Born in Jorvik to a prominent Viking jarl, Katla quickly drew the attention of the prince's seneschal, Thrand. The *einherjar* saw in her a cunning intellect and a warrior's heart, as well as ties to one of the most important mortals in the city, Katla's father. Her Embrace was sudden and unwelcome, and she made vain attempts to resist. After a time she grew accustomed to her newfound abilities and vowed she would never be overpowered again. Katla's Embrace gave Thrand increased influence among the kine, and her keen mind provided him with a valuable political advisor. Shortly after her training was complete, Thrand moved against his sire Julian Cerialis and wrested control of the city from the elder. Katla became seneschal, and an ambition to one day become prince of Jorvik grew in her heart.

Julian did not give up so easily, however, and used his agents in the city to create civil disorder among mortals and Cainites. In 965, Jorvik fell to the Saxons and Thrand and Katla were forced out by an alliance of Brujah and Toreador insurgents. The subsequent decades saw fierce conflict between factions vying for the city, and Katla fell to torpor in 980.

More than two centuries later, she was shaken from her slumber by the mass suicide of the Jewish population in the city, and awoke in a shallow grave some distance to the south. Following the air of blood to the carnage, she made her way to York Castle to find an angry mob chanting in a language she did not understand. Her tattered Viking-era clothing and axe caught the eye of Eyolf Ivarsson who was attempting to placate the crowd. He approached warily, recognizing Katla from days when Danes ruled Jorvik.

Katla learned that much had changed in her absence, and that John was now prince of the city. The Beast raged within Katla, and she pushed through



the crowd toward the castle. The building was ablaze. She reached the door just as John and his servant Leland descended the staircase. Katla issued a challenge to John and intended to destroy the usurping prince, but Eyolf arrived just in time to ease the situation.

Learning that John was blood brother to her sire, and that Mithras had effectively taken control of England, Katla agreed to cooperate to topple the Methuselah and win York's independence. Her anger tempered, she resolved to accept John's rule until she could regain the city by less direct means.

**Image:** Katla is tall and muscular, with long black hair tied into a thick braid that trails down her back. Her face is cold and stern, with piercing blue eyes. She wears clothes that do not restrict her movement. Her fashion sense tends toward the masculine, as she rejects the weaknesses that society associates with femininity.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You revel in the power gained through your Embrace and the prestige of your Ventrue birthright. You command respect at all times and do not suffer fools lightly, often challenging your rivals directly in hopes of intimidating them into making mistakes. Those who spend time around you may sense that you are on the edge and likely to let your Beast loose at any moment. You quietly resent John's station in York and curse yourself for the weakness that allowed you to enter torpor.

**Influence:** Although she has only recently risen from torpor, Katla has managed to gain a measure of influence over key figures in the Church, especially those concerned with the construction of the new Minster. Her close connection to Eyolf Ivarsson gives her some contact with York's military and city guards,



which she has developed as both a herd and secondary means to power.

**Clan:** Ventrue

**Sire:** Thrand

**Nature:** Survivor

**Demeanor:** Rebel

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 920 (Born 898)

**Apparent Age:** Early 20s

**Physical:** Strength (Iron Grip) 5, Dexterity (Feline Grace) 4, Stamina (Tireless) 7

**Social:** Charisma (Forceful) 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance (Fierce) 4

**Mental:** Perception (Experienced) 4, Intelligence (Analytical) 4, Wits (Ambushes) 5

**Talents:** Alertness (Ambushes) 4, Athletics (Running) 4, Brawl (Grappling) 5, Dodge (Leap) 4, Intimidation (Overt Threats) 7, Leadership (Commands) 4

**Skills:** Animal Ken 3, Archery 3, Etiquette 3, Melee (Axes) 7, Ride (Combat) 5, Stealth 3, Survival (Tracking) 6

**Knowledge:** Academics (Rhetoric) 2, Hearth Wisdom (Norse and Saxon) 4, Linguistics 3, Occult 3, Politics (Religious) 6, Seneschal (Urban Holdings) 4

**Disciplines:** Dominate 3, Fortitude 3, Potence 4, Protean 3

**Backgrounds:** Allies 1, Contacts 2, Domain 2, Herd 2\*, Influence 3, Resources 1, Retainers 2, Status 5

**Morality:** Humanity 4

**Road:** Kings (see *Dark Ages: Vampire*)

**Willpower:** 5

\* Katla feeds on only men whom she has challenged and physically bested.

## Leland of Durham

**Background:** Leland was a potent magician of the hermetic order before his Embrace, concerning himself primarily with the study of Britain's often turbulent weather patterns. As he progressed in his studies, he developed a measure of control over the winds and storms sweeping the island, learning to turn misting rain into torrents and gray skies to blue.

In 1098, Leland and a fellow sorcerer Reginald met with the Tremere Meerlinda when she arrived in England, recognizing her as a magician of some skill and potency. Welcoming her into their chantry, the men listened to her tales of late-night rituals and the secrets of the universe. She spoke of immense power and the ability to shed the mortal coil, combined



with promises of untold knowledge and the expansion of magical horizons.

Reginald was immediately seduced by her words, and Leland warmed to her quickly. Always rash and impulsive, Reginald accepted Meerlinda's offer and was Embraced as her childe in 1100. He struggled to accept his new existence, but soon learned the ways of manipulating his blood to great effect. Power coursed through his body, and the curse of Caine filled him with a lust for more. Meerlinda attempted to establish herself in Glastonbury at the time and used Reginald and Leland as her primary contacts. Things did not go as planned, though.

An alliance of other mages and fae railed against the vampiric presence near such holy ground. Meerlinda, along with Reginald and several other newly Embraced magi, worked hard to convince the chantry of the benefits of the "new way," and Leland accepted the Embrace from Reginald in the second year of the conflict. Eventually forced to flee north to Durham, Leland became Meerlinda's representative from the newly established Lion's Gate Chantry. Struggling to find a place in Baron John's court, he finally earned respect and trust by saving the Ventrue from a fire that would have likely destroyed the lord.

Hearing of Leland's entry into the baron's inner circle, Mithras proposed an alliance with the Tremere. Leland accepted and became an agent provocateur, reporting on and eliminating Cainites in John's infrastructure who posed a threat to the Methuselah. Leland would never hurt John himself, though, nor report on any Tremere as part of the deal. In return, Mithras would provide Leland with extremely rare tomes and promised a place in his own court in



London once the Barony of York was sufficiently under control.

The first act on Leland's part was nearly innocuous, writing to his new lord of an overheard conversation between John and an agent of Carlisle. A month later, the agent was destroyed by an angry mob and Leland received the first installment in what would become a spectacular library of rare occult books. In 10 years, the Tremere has been responsible for the elimination of dozens of small players in York and Carlisle, and has taken a more active role in the agreement, relying less and less on Mithras' agents.

**Image:** Short with graying brown hair, Leland looks like a commoner. His association with John has brought him a modicum of wealth, which he has used to purchase fine clothes, but they hang on him like silk on a mule. He will never be beautiful or regal, but he has no difficulty blending into a crowd.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You gained status and success almost overnight and it has gone to your head. You feel more important than you really are, and are likely to overstep your bounds if given the opportunity. Even though you are of a Low Clan, your constant contact with the Ventrue has engendered a certain nobility — and arrogance. You are drawn to superstitions and stories of magical trinkets and amulets. You have amassed a collection of strange and mystical items through the years.

**Influence:** Leland has cultivated a measure of influence over John and York's court. Other members of John's court recognize this relationship and curry Leland's favor as an avenue to the baron. Beyond his Cainite influence, Leland has contacts among the merchants and caravans that move between York and Durham.

**Clan:** Tremere

**Sire:** Reginald of Durham

**Nature:** Rebel

**Demeanor:** Defender

**Generation:** 6th

**Embrace:** 1102 (Born 920)

**Apparent Age:** Mid-40s

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation (Persuasive) 4, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception (Insightful) 4, Intelligence (Occult Knowledge) 5, Wits (Foresight) 4

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Dodge (Find Cover) 4, Leadership 2, Legerdemain 3, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Commerce 3, Crafts (Talismans) 3, Etiquette 3, Melee 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2

**Knowledge:** Academics (Ancient Tomes) 5, Hearth Wisdom (British Isles) 4, Linguistics (Theology) 4, Occult (Sorcery) 6, Politics 3, Seneschal 2

**Disciplines:** Celerity 2, Dominate 3, Thaumaturgy 5 (Rego Tempestas 5, Creo Ignem 2)

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Contacts 3, Influence 2, Resources 1, Retainers 1, Status 2

**Morality:** Humanity 6

**Road:** Humanity (see Dark Ages: Vampire)

**Willpower:** 5

## Minor Characters

### Aimery de Methuin

8th generation, childe of Olivier

**Clan:** Ventrue

**Nature:** Pedagogue

**Demeanor:** Autocrat

**Embrace:** 950 (Born 924)

**Apparent Age:** Late 20s

Embraced in the middle of the 10th century in Normandy, Aimery began his unlife as his homeland asserted itself on the European political stage. When the assaults on England began, Aimery and his sire Olivier perceived another power working within the Norman armies. It wasn't until York fell and Julian Cerialis and his newly Embraced childe John took the city that Aimery and his sire realized that their own plot had been foiled.

While angered by Julian's actions, Olivier could not help but admire the intelligence and subtlety displayed by the Methuselah. Securing the ancient city of Whitby as his domain, Olivier resolved to watch Julian from afar to find some weakness to exploit. Aimery, however, was not as patient or wise as his sire and sought a haven within York's walls, hoping to either ride Julian's successes or profit from his failures. Establishing himself within Julian's court, Aimery developed a bitter rivalry with the prince's childe John — a rivalry that only intensified when John won the city after Julian's mysterious death.

Aimery sees little use in a small domain such as Whitby, especially while the upstart John rules York. Yet Aimery fears that any destabilization of John's influence would leave the city vulnerable to Mithras' total control. Aimery focuses his attention on York Minster, creating a web of contacts aimed at ultimately gaining direct sway over Archbishop Walter de Gray. Katla's return to York jeopardizes these plans, as Aimery does not have the charisma or resolve to truly protect his investments from her encroachment.



Olivier has Embraced another childe, Simon of Whitby, but Aimery has had little contact with his blood brother or father.

Aimery has stark features, with dark hair and a sharp cheek and jaw line. Bitter and resentful of John's position and influence, Aimery often wears a scowl when not actively trying to impress or cajole those around him. His actions are curt and formal, and he is likely to point out minor flaws in etiquette or social gaffes, especially in John or anyone who seeks power in York. Aimery has become more of a sycophant than anything else, feeding off the successes of others like a parasite. Instead of fighting Katla for influence in the Minster, he capitulates and seeks her favor. His ideas of fashion are not entirely up to date, but he makes every effort to appear the proper Norman noble. Raised as a warrior, Aimery is lean, muscular and of average height.

### Eyolf Ivarsson

9th generation, childe of Ivar

**Clan:** Gangrel

**Nature:** Survivor

**Demeanor:** Defender

**Embrace:** 900 (born 867)

**Apparent Age:** Mid-30s

Eyolf was Embraced at the height of Jorvik's glory, when Vikings dominated most of Yorkshire and the north of Britain. A scout for a Viking patrol defending the city, Eyolf was Embraced on the moors by a bestial, centuries-old Gangrel named Ivar. Abandoned to his fate just hours before sunrise, Eyolf attacked a fellow scout to feed his insatiable hunger and drained the man almost completely. The sunrise was hidden by dense storm clouds and caused the fledgling Gangrel great pain, but not death. He hid from the light and subsisted in the wilderness for a full month, coming to grips with his new nature and fighting the inexplicable rage boiling in his breast. At that point, his sire Ivar returned, claimed Eyolf as his childe and instructed him in the ways of the clan before bringing him before Julian Cerialis, the Baron of York. It was then that Eyolf first met the prince's childe Thrand, whom he later served in the civil strife with the Saxon Brujah, and served alongside Katla.

When Thrand fell to Final Death and Katla to torpor, Eyolf extricated himself from the conflict and watched as Julian Cerialis returned triumphant with the Norman conquerors. When the prince re-established himself in the city, he needed someone to placate the Danish population of the city, and called for Eyolf to attend him at court. Though he



thought the invitation a trap to punish him for helping Thrand, the Gangrel obeyed the new prince.

Julian showed no displeasure at Eyolf's actions, as the *einherjar* had not fought directly against the Ventrue nor worked toward his overthrow. The Gangrel simply served the prince of his city and fought for his territory and hunting grounds. These deeds were not to be punished, but rewarded. Eyolf was appointed warmaster and found some respect and status among the Cainites of York.

Occupied by conflict with Chester, Eyolf was not in York when Julian met Final Death. Recognizing the instability of John's new position, the Gangrel realized his support could mean the solidification of the Ventrue's claim. Eyolf remembered the troubled times of civil strife between the Gangrel, Brujah and Ventrue and felt that a stable leader was far more preferable to a violent power struggle. He thus supported John and remained warmaster for York.

Katla's re-emergence on the scene has tested Eyolf's loyalties, as his history and cultural connection to the *einherjar* Ventrue affects his judgment. Katla understands that the Gangrel will not betray his prince, and John has not yet tested his warmaster's loyalty by pitting him against Katla's interests. For the time being, Eyolf tries to serve two masters, though his conflict has become a point of discussion among the members of John's court.

### Lady Eloise Marchand

10th generation, childe of Harris Beauchamp

**Clan:** Ventrue

**Nature:** Survivor

**Demeanor:** Autocrat

**Embrace:** 1182 (born 1160)



**Apparent Age: Early 20s**

The daughter and only child of a noble in Carlisle, Eloise was destined to marry well and inherit her father's estate. Rebuking all suitors, she spent her time struggling to learn methods by which she could maintain her father's power for her own, rather than relinquish it to a husband. Ultimately, Eloise's mother gave birth to a son, and any inheritance immediately dissolved into a simple dowry.

Intelligence and ambition forced Eloise into a frustrated life, having no opportunity for success in a world dominated by wealth, and more importantly by men. After intimidating one potential husband with talk of philosophy, she drew the attention of Harris Beauchamp, her suitor's chief advisor. In the midst of Eloise's training, Harris was destroyed by a Cainite rival and the girl fled to York for sanctuary.

The newcomer's potential was immediately recognized by John, who adopted her as his own child and groomed her for greatness. Within a decade of exemplary service to the baron, Eloise rose to the position of seneschal, drawing the ire of many Cainites far her senior. Partly to see how she handled responsibility and partly to remove her from an increasingly hostile environment, John established Eloise as his representative to Meerlinda in Durham. Young and somewhat brash, she has played the fool to the Tremere in an attempt to deceive Meerlinda into complacency. Eloise's efforts to determine Meerlinda's true motives have been unsuccessful thus far, but vigilance gives the Ventrue considerable insight into the goings-on of Lion's Gate Chantry.







*W. G. Smith*



# Act 2:

## Fortunes Abroad

Down in front of Casey's old brown wooden stoop,  
On a summer's evening we formed a merry group,  
Boys and girls together we would sing and waltz,  
While Tony played the organ on the sidewalks of New York,  
East Side, West Side, all around the town,  
The tots sang "ring-around-rosie," "London Bridge is falling down."  
Boys and girls together, me and Mamie O'Rourke,  
Tripped the light fantastic on the sidewalks of New York,  
That's where Johnny Casey, little Jimmy Crowe,  
Jakey Krause, the baker, who always had the dough,  
Pretty Nellie Shannon with a dude as light as cork,  
She first picked up the waltz step on the sidewalks of New York,  
Things have changed since those times, some are up in "G,"  
Others they are wanderers but they all feel just like me,  
They'd part with all they've got, could they once more walk,  
With their best girl and have a swirl on the sidewalks of New York,  
- "Sidewalks of New York," Chap B. Lauler and James Blake, 1909



His namesake would have approved.

A thin smile crept over Joseph Arthur Wellesley's lips as he read the newspaper report and reclined in the deep, red leather chair that dominated his office. A tea service sat on the desk, fine china cups resting in front of the city's Camarilla "administrator." He was not so foolish as to claim the title of prince. The same had been served to his guest, although neither of them drank. Protocol had to be observed, even in a city so close to Sabbat domination. "Especially in such trying times," Wellesley thought.

While at first glance the article showed another of Theodore Roosevelt's victories over corruption in the city, Wellesley and his companion knew better. The crusading president of New York's Board of Police Commissioners cut into their influence, but hurt the Lasombra more. His rival Polonia had sought to use the police as a means of extending influence over the city, cutting into Camarilla domains and tightening the Sabbat stranglehold on the small enclave of Ventrue, Toreador and Nosferatu. Wellesley's Exploitation of Roosevelt's rise to power — and occasional helping hand — had been an inspired decision. A delicious irony that an anti-corruption politician unwittingly had the favor of the very powers he disdained.

"A veritable coup, Catherine," Wellesley purred, lowering the newspaper and turning his attention to his female visitor. "Your boy is earning his keep."

"Of course he is, Joseph." Her manners were old money and her speech English, but there was a faint touch of German in it. Wellesley wasn't sure exactly how old she was, but from things she'd said in the decades that he'd known her, he suspected that she pre-dated the Norman Conquest of England. Wellesley knew better than to ask, though. This Victorian age placed men at the head of households, but the Kindred knew better than to adopt that fallacy. Catherine looked demure and lady-like, yet the steel in her eyes betrayed age and power. Wellesley suffered no illusions. He nominally led the Camarilla of New York because she didn't want to, acting as her cat's paw and agent as much as his own man. Unlike some he could think of, however, Catherine knew when to leave him to his own devices, trusting his judgment.

"Did you doubt me?" Her voice was mocking and warning at the same time.

"One merely congratulates you on a predictably excellent result... of confusing Polonia's plight."

Her eyes narrowed slightly but she accepted the praise. "One endeavors to please. It is time to take my leave, I think." Catherine rose, adjusting her skirts before picking up her parasol, a strange accessory for one of the Kindred. She never walked under the sun, but it was still an item that no lady of proper breeding could be without. "I have a prior engagement."

"Ah yes, Lady Astor's soiree. I hear she might allow some of the new money to attend."

"Yes. Caroline changed her mind when the Vanderbilt woman refused to extend an invitation of her own. It's one thing

to snub others, but another altogether when you're the one being snubbed." She smiled as if privy to some secret joke.

\* \* \*

Francisco Domingo de Polonia glanced at his supplicant over steepled fingers, as if in prayer. His unblinking gaze drilled into the crown of the petitioner's down-turned head. "You are sure of this?" His pronunciation was clear and precise, but even so there was still a hint of Spanish to his words. "Can he be counted on, Thomas?"

"I believe so, Your Eminence." Albee kept his head bowed. "He seems willing to talk, and the veracity of the information he provided is beyond doubt." Polonia nodded, even though he knew the gesture was lost on the postulant. The information about the Board of Police Commissioners had born fruit and would come back to haunt the Camarilla. Hopefully soon.

"And you're sure it's not one of Catherine Trandor's games?" Polonia's lips curved upward slightly. Now, *there* was a real opponent. Vicious, manipulative and ruthless. Perfectly willing to throw away a pawn if it meant taking out a more powerful piece. "Ah, if only she had been a man...."

"His communiqués seem genuine, Your Eminence, as does his presence."

"Excellent. And his commitment?"

"He has expressed willingness to take part in the Vaulderie, and to provide whatever evidence you desire."

Polonia's eyebrows raised. Anything? This was almost too good to be true. Was their prospective convert that dissatisfied with his current position, or was he merely bait? The latter didn't seem right. He was too well placed to be a sacrificial offering, even by someone as ruthless as Trandor. Then again, for great gains one had to take great risks. He'd sacrifice a rook or a bishop, perhaps even a queen. A new line of action dropped into place. "Keep the lines of communication with your clanmate open. I want to hear as soon as he contacts you. Send Ecaterina to me as soon as she's back from Lady Astor's ball. I have a task for her... and for our friend." The tone of dismissal was clear in the cardinal's voice.

"Yes, Your Eminence." Albee backed from the room, his eyes still averted. Polonia sat in contemplation for a moment. Maybe it was time to clear the board and fill it with new pieces. He walked to the window and opened the heavy drapes, allowing him to look out over the city toward the distant Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. "Our new pawns," he thought.

## The New World

Welcome to New York, the former Dutch colony and one-time capital of the United States. Combining history, politics and wealth, 19th century New York is a springboard from which mortals and Kindred alike seek to make their fortune. Some succeed. The majority does not, falling to the city's filthy and crime-ridden underbelly. Despite endemic corruption, New York is at the cusp of greatness, and that imminent transformation compels the population — Kindred and kine — to greater and greater endeavors.



Victorian Age New York is the focal point of clashes between the Sabbat and Camarilla. The city is ostensibly dominated by the former, but offers footholds to the latter. The two sects spar continuously, their bloody clashes concealed by the brutality of mortal affairs. Until now, neither has side been able to bring matters to a conclusion. But now events unfold that threaten to upset the balance of power in the city, bringing it under the authority of a single faction. The question is will the Sabbat or Camarilla prevail? Either way, the characters will earn themselves powerful allies and enemies.

## Overview

The centuries since Act 1 have seen the Kindred of Europe consolidate their power. Although England fought a civil war between 1642 and 1650, its underlying structures remain unchanged and in the hands of ancient and powerful undead. Neonates are denied authority in favor of those who are centuries, and in some cases millennia, old. Many European mortals have sought to better themselves by journeying to the New World. Europe's neonates likewise see the expanse of the Americas as an opportunity to establish themselves, winning domains without competition from elders. Many, however, must do so with the assistance and approval of their sires, who seek to use this Diaspora as a means of expanding their own power and influence. The elders of Clan Ventrue in particular ensure that their progeny appreciate heritage and the bonds of debt and responsibility that exist between childe and sire. These lords aid neonates' efforts to establish themselves abroad through contacts, resources and alliances. There is always a price for such assistance, of course, though its nature and extent may not always be apparent.

While there are various routes between England and the United States in the Victorian Age, the main one is between Liverpool and New York. The latter city is the setting for Act 2 of **Ventrue Chronicle**.

Although the Sabbat dominates New York, the Camarilla has an unmistakable presence in the city. Ventrue Joseph Wellesley is de facto prince of the city, though he has neither the influence nor inclination to publicly claim the title, preferring the position of Dux Bellorum. Being any more brazen would get him destroyed by the Sabbat. Wellesley works in conjunction with several other ancient Ventrue, most notably the enigmatic Catherine Trandor and the sullen Aimery Methuin. The latter serves as a bridge to Act 1 — he was one of the main players in the Baron of York's court — as one or more characters' contact in the city. Aimery honors an old debt or alliance with the characters' sires. Catherine was also part of the baron's court, but is far older and more ruthless than Aimery, having once gone by the name Katla Thraddottir. She does not play a direct role in the events that transpire in New York, although her influence is certainly felt.

The focus of the story is the characters' effort to win respect for themselves, set against the conflict between the Sabbat and Camarilla. The ramifications of characters' choices may influence the fate of New York. Aimery, after hundreds of years of calling on Catherine and others for aid but never receiving (to his mind) full cooperation, resents the "upstart" Dux Bellorum, Joseph Wellesley. Thus, Aimery now contemplates a stunning defection to Polonia and the Sabbat cause. Such a move would ensure victory for the Sabbat in New York, but Polonia is wary of his prospective recruit and works through the aegis of Bishop Ecaterina to verify the turncoat's intentions. As erstwhile confidants of the Ventrue elder — indeed, they may be commended into his care by their sires — the characters find themselves in the thick of the conspiracy and are faced with the choice of aiding or hindering the defection. Aimery also takes care to implicate the newcomers in the plot, so they cannot simply call on Wellesley or Catherine to resolve the matter. In the end, the fate of the city's Cainite control rests in the characters' hands. Do they turn on Aimery and fight both he and Sabbat packs to maintain the Camarilla's presence, or do they change sides, too?

This act mixes politics with a detective story as the characters decide whom to trust, with encounters ranging from upper-class soirées to bloody clashes against Kindred-influenced street gangs. The balance between these two extremes is largely left in your hands. As you might expect from a Ventrue-based chronicle, the trading of favors and building of alliances can play a more central role than fisticuffs and rooftop pursuits.

## Theme

While a wide range of events take place during Act 2, one theme runs through them all: self-reliance. Though Ventrue can cooperate with each other, each member of the clan also contributes to the whole, serving their betters and themselves. Each is expected to exploit opportunities presented to him, for one's self but also for the good of blood relations. The characters' departure for New York can be one exercise in this role.

Whether the characters are European-born or American, they leave behind familiar haunts and contacts and are expected to survive and prosper on their own. While their sires may be able to offer some support — directly via the telegraph or through introductions to residents of the city — the characters decide if they sink or swim. New York is a crucible in which everyone must contribute or be left to the wolves. The city encourages vampires to follow the "Ventrue way" of building power bases and alliances if they are to survive, let alone prosper.

If the characters stand back and expect things to be handed to them on a platter, they are sorely disappointed. Doing so wins them disdain and reflects badly on their sires. That's why sires may commend childer into Aimery's care.



Although the old Ventrue can provide introductions to the Camarilla of New York, he is intended primarily as an object lesson. Despite his Ventrue heritage, Aimery demonstrates the worst traits that a clan member can possess — sloth, crippling greed and utter self-centeredness. He is the archetypal petulant child who expects everything to be done for him and who blames everyone else when things go wrong. His is proof that age does not automatically bring respect. Were he as powerful and influential as he believes he is, would a 900-year-old Cainite really be subservient to Wellesley, a man undead barely a century? Respect and power are earned through action and self-discipline. They're not given. Indeed, Aimery's planned defection has no ideological motive. He believes (in perhaps his greatest lapse of judgment) that the Sabbat will elevate him to the position of power and influence that he expects for himself. He fails to appreciate that despite all his failings, the Camarilla Ventrue have supported and protected him. The Sabbat are even more likely to expect action rather than words. Once Aimery's usefulness as a source of information on the Camarilla is exhausted, he will realize that the only thing he has to offer the Sabbat is his 8th-generation vitae.

Aimery does, however, see the new arrivals as a means of advancing his cause. In exchange for introducing them to New York society and giving them shelter during their first nights in the city — something that takes little time or effort — he believes the characters are beholden to him and calls on them for aid at every opportunity. To him, they are lackeys to be exploited. Such abuse puts the characters in a difficult position. They do owe Aimery some measure of gratitude, he is their elder, and he may be a peer of their sires. But they must balance these realities with their responsibility to themselves. Can they help Aimery and advance their own cause at the same time? Should they? The tenets of Ventrue existence call on clan members to support each other according to station and blood, but where do the characters draw the line?

## Getting Started

This act makes some assumptions about the characters' identities, while leaving specifics to player discretion. At least one character is the scion of one of the Ventrue lines from Act 1. The story assumes that the characters' sires are one or more of the characters from the events in *Dark Ages* York. You can also adapt events to have one of the supporting-cast Ventrue from York be a character's sire. There are two exceptions, though: Aimery de Methuin, who is an antagonist in this part of the chronicle, and Katla Thranddottir (now known as Catherine Trandor) who is a major, if largely off-screen, participant in events.

The 650 odd years that have passed since the previous act provide considerable scope for this part's characters. Perhaps they were Embraced in the English Civil War, some 200 years ago, which concealed a major confrontation between the Toreador and Ventrue. The Blue Bloods sired a new genera-

## Native Sons

An alternative to having the characters originate in England is to tie them to groups of European vampires already in the United States. Many Kindred migrated to America during the era of the 13 Colonies and remained in power in cities such as Philadelphia and Boston. Cainites with ties to the Fief of York could easily have formed part of these earlier movements. Distant elders simply give instructions (or encouragement or orders) to childe to relocate to New York. The characters could arrive from another American city with little adaptation of the story. The characters' voyage (detailed later) would no longer apply, but could be replaced by a scene on one of George Pullman's "hotels on rails." Nor would forthcoming events on Ellis Island occur. Scene 3 could still take place, though its rationale would need to be altered to suit the characters' origins.

tion of childe to serve as shock troops in the confrontation. They could also be of more recent vintage, brought into unlife during the Napoleonic Wars at the start of this century. Or even more recently in the relative anarchy that gripped England in the middle of the century during Prince Mithras' absence. Certainly, the burgeoning population of England, particularly in towns such as Leeds that rapidly becomes the focus of the Fief of York, has fostered the creation of new generations of childe who find their paths to power blocked by sires and other elders.

The Ventrue are notable in that they exploit this "glass ceiling," using it as a means of encouraging their progeny to move into new areas, extending the clan's reach via a network of patronage and favors. The characters' departure for New York is one such endeavor, expanding the influence of the Fief of York into its namesake in the Americas, a reward for those childe who show promise. Of course, such migrations also serve as a pressure valve for the Kindred of Europe, distancing potential troublemakers from barons and princes. If these expatriots fail, their sires lose little more than bothersome pawns. If neonates succeed, their influence and that of their blood grows — a win-win situation for childe and sires.

While some Kindred may see their dispatch to the New World as an exile, it is perhaps their best means of establishing personal domains. While they may resent the move, the prospect of power dangles before them like a carrot. Success and survival are challenging, of course. Newcomers have to come to grips with new geography and Camarilla politics, as well as a looming Sabbat threat. (The city's Camarilla turn a blind eye to the precise methods and motives of sires who send their progeny to New York, grateful for any reinforcements.) The characters may regard New York as their final destination, or it could be a stepping-stone on their paths elsewhere. In any case, the characters have to endure in the besieged city while they establish contacts, build their fortunes and extend



their influence. All are required to create an empire, or to move on to bigger and better things.

## Interests

Europe is the focus of the Victorian Age, and the heart of western culture and history. But for all the prestige associated with Europe and domains there, the Old World offers few opportunities for young Cainites seeking to prove themselves. Indeed, characters may feel stifled — perhaps even exploited. Britain in particular suffers from these conditions. It's a small land with a strict Kindred hierarchy; tradition and status frequently overrule ability and ambition.

Not even centuries of service are a guarantee of prosperity in Europe. Valerius of London has recently fallen afoul of Prince Mithras and been replaced by a younger and more dynamic seneschal, Anne Bowesley. While her ascent might suggest that relatively young Kindred can climb the rungs of power, Lady Anne is the exception rather than the rule. She's recognition that a *little* fresh perspective is needed to comprehend the changing world. Even in York, the population of elders is such that neonates are rarely afforded opportunities to advance. A number of millennia-old Kindred have chosen to leave Britain in favor of the Americas, becoming the main players in a developing Kindred society.

Europe is likewise the home of deeply ingrained rivalries and feuds, both within and without fiefs and cities. York, likely the original home of the characters' sires, remains an important city (as a focus of the railway industry), but is slowly eclipsed by its more industrialized western neighbor, Leeds, and the growing influence of Manchester. These burgeoning industrial centers have created corresponding conflicts between feudal Kindred, each competitor seeking advantages over the rest. As York steadily loses ground, its elders seek to build alliances to strengthen their position. New York — with perceived familiarity implicit in its very name — is a logical choice.

New York offers a host of possibilities for neonate Ventruue, be they fresh from their sire's care or having enjoyed decades of "freedom" in overseas courts. The characters' decision to make the journey may be largely for selfish reasons — personal advancement — but also out of loyalty to sire, blood and clan. The Ventruue do not have the same rigid organizational structure as do the Tremere, but they do believe strongly in duty and honor, the bond of loyalty and responsibility between sire and childe. That elders arrange the voyage and introductions may be sufficient motivation for many Ventruue characters. The clan stands to profit from actions that will also honor — or dishonor — sires. Indeed, winning and losing honor is central to the existence of some Blue Bloods, a form of point-scoring in a Great Game. Several generations of Ventruue may work together to advance the status of their lineage, competing against rival lines and their progenitors. It is conceivable that such competition runs contrary to the Camarilla's interests, pitting erstwhile allies against each other. It is also possible that





one of the characters, disheartened and envious of rivals' accomplishments, seeks to collapse the entire house of cards, bringing the "game" and its attendant political structures to an end. Such a move is an act of unparalleled cynicism, sacrificing whole lineages to the Sabbat, but one thing is certain — the vampire who does it will be assured notoriety and recognition among vampires worldwide. When ego overcomes responsibility, who can predict the results?

Aimery thus offers various opportunities to characters and their sires. He (and to a lesser extent Catherine Trandor) provide an ally/mentor in New York, smoothing characters' way in their first nights. The second opportunity, as mentioned previously, is the object lesson the elder poses to his "pupils" (as compared to the good examples set by Wellesley and Catherine). The third and final opportunity is abstract and something that characters may not immediately appreciate: It is possible to exploit weaknesses even when their possessors' seem useless.

## Characters

Unless you give express permission, the players should create new characters for Act 2, using **Vampire's** standard character-creation rules, modified by Chapter Three of **Victorian Age: Vampire**. The players may spend an additional 20 freebie points on their characters to represent unlife before journeying to New York.

Most character concepts work in this story. A Ventrue warrior is as useful in the city as a strategist or politician. Those with balanced physical, mental and social capabilities are able to adapt to many of the challenges ahead and have the best chance of success. Specialist characters can prevail, but may be reliant on other members of the coterie, something that may prove problematic for status-hungry Blue Bloods.

Some Abilities are vital for the Kindred to prevail in New York society. One or more characters should have at least one dot of Etiquette (preferably more) to allow them to navigate the social minefields of vampire and mortal society. Those without such training soon find themselves ostracized and cut off from social networks, an extremely dangerous position to be in within a Camarilla enclave. Leadership is also useful (depending on character concept), as is Politics.

Backgrounds pose an interesting problem for characters in this act, as they are new to the city. They may not have Traits (Allies, Contacts, Fame, Herd, Influence, Status) that apply to New York. They may cultivate such Backgrounds during play, though. Players may assign points to these Traits and then flesh them out during roleplaying, with your help in posing encounters and opportunities. There are no demands of characters' Backgrounds here, though Mentor is important. Each character should have at least one dot, representing their sire, while Resources and Retainers are useful in the Gilded Age society of New York. Players should also purchase Generation in accordance with characters' blood. (If a sire is 8th generation, a player should purchase three levels of Generation for his

character to be 9th, for example.) Characters of generation beyond the reckoning of their sires are branded diablerists and face social repercussions in New York.

## Schemes and Plans

Upon arriving in the New World, the characters face a succession of challenges, some of which need to be overcome quickly, while others can be dealt with when and how the coterie sees fit.

### Havens

One the characters' first tasks is to establish a haven (or havens). Aimery makes it clear that he accepts their presence for a short while, but cannot play host for a protracted stay. (Or more appropriately, one of his ghouls makes it clear, since a direct confrontation would go against the Laws of Decorum, even if Aimery's observation of such laws is erratic at best.) Indeed, the characters' sense of propriety may warn them not to outstay their welcome, endangering Aimery's goodwill when they need it most. The characters are probably eager fly the nest, though, and begin the long process of establishing their own domains, something they can hardly do effectively while they guest in Aimery's house.

How the characters go about establishing themselves is entirely up to them. Those with sufficient Resources may rent or purchase property, while the less affluent could search the city for suitable retreats. Their lack of familiarity with the city is a major stumbling block. Aimery offers pointers, at least in general terms such as regions to avoid, but his knowledge is far from perfect and is limited to a select few areas of interest. If the characters make the acquaintance of Aloisius Cahill or Alicia Durant (see below), they get a more comprehensive picture of the city.

### Domains

Relocation to New York divorces Victorian Age characters from the direct plans and resources of their sires. That means neonates must work to advance their own agendas (and their lineage), assuming they survive dealings with the Sabbat. While the story presented in this act is composed of several scenes and encounters, episodes are separated by nights and weeks. The characters certainly don't sit on their hands throughout this period. They work to integrate themselves into New York's Kindred and kine society and business. You are therefore encouraged to flesh out the characters' "free time" with subplots and stories that interweave with those of this chapter. Presented here are numerous avenues through which characters — particularly Ventrue — can seek power, prestige and influence. Feel free to turn them into scenarios and chapters for players to roleplay.

The principal aim of Ventrue is probably to establish a solid and recognized presence in the city. Once they have been presented to Wellesley, they are free to act within reason and not to the detriment of the Camarilla's position. They may thus seek to gain influence in a wide range of the city's interests.



Many are already under the influence of Camarilla vampires, and others are claimed by the Sabbat. The characters have to scheme, connive and fight to establish a foothold, or seek out new avenues to exploit. Ironically, the war between sects means that new openings emerge when vampires perish. The question is can the characters seize these opportunities and then maintain their grip against competitors and enemies?

Sabbat numbers are so great and their influence so pervasive outside lower Manhattan that Camarilla characters must be ever vigilant for attacks, against their interests or themselves. The likelihood of such challenges increases in the outer boroughs, but they may be subject to harassment — and worse — by Polonia's forces even in Manhattan. The characters are faced with a quandary: If they are too aggressive in expanding their domains, they draw Sabbat attention. Yet if they're too cautious, fellow Camarilla may regard them as weak. Likewise, seizing domains from the Sabbat is guaranteed to attract the attention of Ecaterina or Turlev (see below), inviting a predictably bloody response. Characters may therefore focus their attention on neutral factions or even fellow Camarilla rather than antagonize the more numerous foe.

Wellesley's lieutenants can also help characters establish domains, a primary means by which the newcomers can flesh out dots in their Backgrounds. Local vampires can point out existing domains (in general, a very fragmented makeup), and may provide insight into who is weak and who strong. The Second Tradition is in effect in New York, but Wellesley and his lieutenants are ever watchful for those whose grip slips, presenting openings for the Sabbat to exploit. In such cases, the *de facto* primogen are not above "helping the process along" if it means stabilizes the situation and installing a stronger (and loyal) authority.

Two kinds of cannibalization of Camarilla territory can occur. Those sanctioned or initiated by Wellesley, and those carried out under the characters' own initiative. Wellesley doles out the former as "rewards," the incumbent commonly encouraged to step down or his removal is overlooked. While Wellesley is unlikely to assign territory to the characters when they are still fresh off the boat, he may do so later if they prove their strength or determination. (Of course, characters assisting the prince in this way anger Aimery, and he's careful to cite Wellesley's "clear bias" and "deliberate slighting" of older Ventrue.) The latter approach is much more risky, but has great potential for the characters. They are less constrained in their targets and the very act of removing an incumbent demonstrates their worthiness to hold the post — the adage of "might makes right" in action.

Usurping a domain without Wellesley's authority risks drawing his ire if the effort fails. The Dux Bellorum has to maintain order or will be overthrown himself. Would-be perpetrators may be labeled enemies of the Camarilla and hunted down. If the characters are successful in their takeover, repercussions are unlikely. Overall sect preservation is more important than the domain of any single vampire.

Whether the characters earn respect for their actions is another matter entirely. If their victim had few alliances and his overthrow didn't harm other domains, the newcomers are likely to gain acceptance with few comments. If, however, their victim had ties to numerous other domains and the removal causes problems for the sect, the coterie may face censure from Wellesley and find it difficult to gain assistance from other New York Kindred.

Domain is measured by more than mere turf. It also comprises mortal and Cainite structures and affairs which vampires can parasitize. The following are other interests and avenues into which ambitious Ventrue may delve, whether on their own territory or in that of rival vampires.

- **Politics:** Gaining political influence in the city is without a doubt the primary goal of most Blue Bloods, be it at a local level or citywide. Tammany Hall — the mortal executive committee of the Democratic Party — maintains a tight grip on local politics though endemic corruption, and continues to do so to some degree for the next half-century. Various Kindred hold sway over this nest of kine vipers, most notably Joseph Wellesley. The present "boss" of Tammany Hall, Irish-born Richard Croker, is solidly in his pocket. Indeed, Wellesley wields political influence through a succession of mayors (Thomas Gilroy between 1892 and 1897 and Robert Van Wyck from 1897).

The Ventrue-anarch Douglas Callihan is Wellesley's primary rival in the political arena. They compete for the ear of the city's senior politicians. The very Consolidation Act (the amalgamation of Manhattan with the surrounding boroughs of Brooklyn, Queens, The Bronx and Richmond to form Greater New York) may itself be a part of the "game" between these two elders. Neither tolerates Cainite interference in their affairs. Should one or the other fall or be seriously undermined, other Kindred could insinuate themselves into political institutions.

Of course, political influence need not be solely on the citywide level. It could be more focused, perhaps managed through ward bosses, individual councilors or immigrant groups. Wellesley and Callihan may dismiss such "table scraps." Conniving characters can use small-scale tactics to place their pawns on a collision course with senior figures in the city. Being patron to an up-and-coming candidate, for example, can result in a subtle shift of powers that elevates characters and deposes targets in a relatively quiet *coup d'état*.

- **Crime and Law Enforcement:** Thanks to Tammany Hall, crime is inextricably linked to the political process in New York; control of criminal groups presents an alternative political hierarchy. On one side is the police, and on the other are the gangs and related institutions. Many of the police are little better than those they're supposed to oppose. The gangs (see below for more detail on the major groups) dominate street society for the next decade, but their influence wanes in the early 20th century when organized crime syndicates succeed them. The characters may create a legacy on either side of the



criminal divide, perhaps working with a single officer and precinct before moving up to citywide influence, or gaining control of particular "business" interests. Possible domains include the opium dens near the docks (though much of this falls to the Setite Lenore), the brothels that dot the city or gambling and drinking establishments. Control of the last proves a decisive factor in the city's power struggle when the 18th Amendment — Prohibition — comes into force in 1920.

• **Business:** Economics is another field on which the battle for New York wages, among mortals and Kindred. At the pinnacle of kine society stand the "old money" families, the Astors and the like, who have been involved in the city for years. Beneath them (according to old-money families, anyway) but less cultured is the "new money" of the Vanderbilts and Goulds, who made their fortunes through a host of business ventures such as railroads. Below all these elite rich are the financiers and speculators who crowd Wall Street, already acknowledged as America's financial heart. Under them are businessmen of all shapes and moralities.

Victorian New York is America's largest port and the focus of freight shipment and immigration, two areas that an unbreathing businessman can manipulate to make his fortune. The Giovanni already wield considerable hold over this aspect of society, but their grip is not yet so strong that others can't build their own trade empires.

Real estate also presents a means by which characters can establish power and create a legacy. At one extreme, characters could ape the Vanderbilts and Astors with sweeping control over land, leading to massive and spectacular property developments. At the other extreme — and likely of more interest to Kindred characters — is renting property to rich and poor alike. Slum landlords may not be the most respected figures in Manhattan, but they're typically wealthy and have access to a wide variety of unfortunates who are little missed. Ownership of numerous properties across New York also affords Kindred "landlords" with a plethora of secondary havens, which may save them from the depredations of Sabbat agents.

• **The Arts:** Although traditionally considered the purview of the Toreador, New York's burgeoning arts scene provides opportunities for Ventruue seeking to diversify. Numerous venues on the "Great White Way," as Broadway is often called, are fertile ground for profit and can be used to establish a herd. Associations with evening entertainment mean this is a society in which Kindred can mingle and hunt with few worries. Patrons of Broadway lack the influence of peers, but reach a broad audience, manipulating or preying upon a wide range of social groups and possibly using them to support (or limit) the influence of other domains. Music hall songs can help influence mortals, for example, ridiculing an enemy or praising an ally. Or plays can provide object lessons or parables.

Other artistic venues offer access to less comprehensive but more influential elements of society — the Academy of Music (a favored haunt of the old-money families), the Metropolitan Opera House (the new-money response to their

exclusion from the academy), and Carnegie Hall. Here, the worlds of art mingle with the factionalism of high society, placing Ventruue squarely at odds with Toreador for leverage over the city's upper echelons. Opera houses and art galleries are common meeting places for Kindred. They're public venues and thus somewhat safe from attack, while still offering privacy.

• **The Media:** The 19th century has seen a major growth in U.S. media, with both national and regional publications based in New York City. Newspapers such as the *New York Evening Post*, *The New York Tribune*, *New York Times* and *National Police Gazette* are major objectives of Cainites who seek to expand their social and political reach. Patronage of these interests is a major source of conflict between the city's elders, overseen by Wellesley himself. While he has no desire to influence the newspapers directly, Wellesley has no wish to see the Masquerade broken and thus presides over any Camarilla effort to manipulate the media. He would, in fact, prefer that newspapers were left completely alone, but knows that proscription would open the institutions of the Sabbat. Characters who seek to manipulate the press must do so carefully — and ideally with Wellesley's permission — or else risk a backlash from both New Yorkers and the wider Camarilla.

In addition to manipulating news, Kindred who secure influence in the media wield formidable influence over society columns, a devastating tool for commentary and slander in New York.

Major newspapers are not, however, the only media available. There are dozens of publications across the city and state, catering to communities and interests. Many work together under the aegis of the New York Press Association, founded in 1853 as an alliance of 32 state newspapers. Influencing such publishers provides less return than does the major press, but it means less interference by Wellesley and his associates.

Magazine and book publishing offers a less immediate but valuable source of influence. People of the Victorian Age devour stories. Few Kindred probably pay much attention to fiction like that published in the *New York Mirror*. Kindred seeking to use these publishers as a means of expanding their reach can do so more freely than they can with newspapers. Wellesley and his associates, like so many Kindred, feel they have nothing to fear from tall tales. This naiveté is revealed in 1897 with the publication of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Doubleday & McClure of New York publish the first U.S. edition in 1899.

• **Communications:** Two inventions make the world a smaller place and facilitate the growth of mortal and Kindred influence across the oceans: the telegraph and telephone. The former allows near-instantaneous communication anywhere on the continent and across the Atlantic Ocean. Although quickly outstripped in local areas by the telephone, and in particular AT&T, the telegraph plays a central role in long-distance contact. Kindred may seek influence over the system. Indeed, telegraph and telephone networks are a cornerstone of so many other domains — the media and finance in particular — that any success in those fields



requires some presence in communications. If nothing else, an accommodation made with those who claim domain over communications earns greater rewards.

- **Construction:** Although New York has yet to have the "skyscrapers" that adorn Chicago (only the World Building near Brooklyn Bridge comes close), construction is a boom industry. Influence over building and planning allows Kindred to protect their own havens and domains (and threaten those of rivals). By plying planners and builders, crafty vampires can establish a host of havens across the city, some palatial residences and others little more than boltholes. Knowing the right people can reveal the havens of others, and ensure that one's own retreats remain hidden. Dominate and Presence provide obvious means of ensuring loyalty and discretion, as does murder, but characters should not forget matters as simple as blackmail and bribery. As mentioned previously, acting as a landlord offers numerous opportunities to establish a herd, in addition to havens. The mortals likely to live in such places are typically the lower echelons of society, though, and may not accommodate a Ventrue's feeding restrictions. Still, inhabitants may form the herds of other Cainites — Camarilla and Sabbat — who owe vampiric landlords due favor.

- **High Society:** New York's upper crust is synonymous with the Gilded Age. Recognition among the social elite corresponds to political and economic power in the city. Stereotypes suggest that this mortal group falls solidly under the sway of the Ventrue — and many do — but the Toreador also build ties to high society. The refinement and social mores of the upper class appeals to the Toreador aesthetic. While some artistic extravagances of kine society trace back to the Toreador, many are wholly human concepts. The horseback dinners at Sherry's Restaurant, for example. The formal rules of parties and social occasions among moneyed families so closely parallel those of Kindred society that the two are almost indistinguishable. A Ventrue might move among the upper class of human society with only minor changes in manner, while a young miss might be swept into a Toreador ball hardly realizing the change in her environment. At first glance, the divides between old and new money would seem an ideal division of interests between Ventrue and Toreador, but the presence of other clans, Sabbat and independent, complicates matters. As a very general rule, old-money families are likely to be under the influence of the Camarilla and in particular the Ventrue. New money such as the Goulds and Vanderbilts fall under the sway of the Sabbat, specifically the Lasombra. There are exceptions, of course, with Ventrue seeking to establish ties to financiers and tycoons of the nouveau riche, while some Sabbat regard individual old money as their domain.

- **Low Society:** A corollary to the gentility and excess of the upper class, New York's low class are diverse and numerous. They lack wealth and political power, but more than make up for it in vibrancy and tenacity. In Europe, these people might





be regarded as beneath Ventrué attention and abandoned to the Brujah, Giovanni and Tzimisce. The Ventrué of New York cannot afford to be so picky. The city's "low society" number in the millions, a phenomenal force. Influencing them by whatever means is accepted as a valid domain. New York Ventrué see no shame in manipulating the people of the streets (unlike the Toreador who regard such affairs as uncouth). Local Blue Bloods thus come into direct conflict with some Camarilla allies, neutrals and Sabbat. A few clans wield distinct sway over the lower classes — the Giovanni over the Italians, the Tzimisce over Eastern Europeans, and the Brujah over the Irish. Other clans focus on specific interests. New York's opium dens fall to the Setites (with some competition from strange Cathayan vampires), while its sewers are the purview of the Nosferatu, as in so many cities.

• **Transportation:** As awareness of the world has grown, so mortals and Kindred have sought means of crossing it quickly and efficiently. The steamship has revolutionized ocean travel. It now takes only six days to cross the Atlantic from Liverpool to New York. Likewise, railways have drastically reduced land travel times. In addition to the vast sums that can be made from such endeavors — many of New York's new money made their fortunes in railways — Kindred with fingers in the travel industry can monitor (and help or hinder) the movements of others. The Prince of Liverpool wields considerable clout in the Transatlantic transportation of Kindred, going so far as to have ghouls who chaperone vampires in transit. Kindred-influence in railways helps to organize closed carriages and even special trains when Cainites wish to travel long distances. Someone needs to make sure that no one disturbs undead guests at inopportune times or opens boxes they shouldn't (or does in the case of sleeping enemies). Also, no record of Kindred passengers can be made (or can survive).

New York's siege makes transportation a major target of Sabbat concern. If they can cut the flow of experienced Kindred to the city, the Camarilla has to rely on newly Embraced neophytes to maintain its numbers. Wellesley understandably allows only those who demonstrate their cunning and tenacity to hold such domains against the Sabbat. In truth, the city is simply too large for anyone to manage all transportation. Some docks fall under the sway of the anarchs and others the Giovanni, while "loyal" Ventrué like Aimery are allowed holdings out of necessity.

• **Immigration:** Related to but distinct from transportation is immigration. Ellis Island is the single largest point of entry for immigrants to the United States. Since 1891, oversight of immigration has been under federal jurisdiction, with agents having the right to inspect and if needed refuse entry to anyone. Just as kine authorities use these controls to weed out undesirables, so the Kindred employ them in their shadow wars, identifying, tracking and acting against enemies. Immigration is Wellesley's purview. He uses his contacts to monitor comings and goings from Europe and tolerates no

interference. With the Dux Bellorum's cooperation, Kindred arrivals sidestep the potentially embarrassing protocols of Ellis Island, but receiving assistance brings newcomers to Wellesley's attention. Sabbat and neutral Cainites have their own protocols for avoiding immigration. Canny characters may create a lucrative domain for themselves to avoid "official entanglements."

• **Religion and Spiritualism:** Although best known for its secular history and financial achievements, New York also plays a substantial role in several major religions. Catholicism and Protestantism clash, each ingrained in different elements of the population. Judaism also has a substantial representation among the immigrant community. While only a few Kindred take a direct role in the Church's activities, they do watch over places such as the Jesuit St. Francis Xavier School, particularly after its recent (1880) adoption of military drill and protocols. Wellesley tolerates no interference in the city's religious affairs, which he considers an automatic breach of the First Tradition. He does appoint several trustworthy individuals to monitor mortal religious activity, though. The characters may earn Wellesley's trust and gain such an appointment, or may interfere in such affairs and invoke his wrath.

An alternative to mainstream religions, the craze of spirituality sweeping the civilized world opens numerous doors for vampires. For every acknowledged fake, such as the Fox sisters of Rochester, there are other "mysterious happenings" seized upon by believers. As elsewhere in the Victorian Age, the Tremere are the main exploiters of this phenomenon, using numerous groups to advance their agendas in all levels of society.

• **Academia:** In addition to culture, the Victorian Age is known for its learning. While lacking the sophistication of London or Paris, New York has more than its fair share of prestigious educational establishments. New York University near Washington Square, and Columbia University near 5th and 15th Street are among the most prestigious colleges in the United States. Lecturers and attendees represent a rich resource, ripe for the picking by interested Cainites. Kindred can shape the direction of teaching by manipulating lecturers, or direct research toward (or away from) areas of concern. A lecturer in medieval history might "loan" a valuable manuscript or follow a particular line of research in exchange for the opportunity to peruse an item from a Kindred's private collection.

• **Medicine and Sanitation:** The subject of much interest and research in the Victorian Age, medicine is a relatively new area of attention for Cainites. While disease and sanitation have little direct impact on the undead, they are essential to maintaining a healthy herd and helping the population grow. The increasing number of hospitals in the city is one manifestation of mortal efforts to stamp out diseases such as typhoid, cholera and TB. The increasing importance of garbage collection and efforts to ensure potable water reflect a commitment to dealing with New York's health problems. The city's Health



### Modern References

Although it focuses on the modern nights, the Vampire book **Gilded Cage** provides a detailed treatise on building and maintaining influence in a city, while **Midnight Siege** details inter-factional conflict. These books are ideal references on the perils and pitfalls that await characters as they build their own domains in New York. Likewise, **Succubus Club: Dead Man's Party** provides a host of information on Kindred social affairs, including details on Ventrue ceremonies and Sabbat ritae, as well as systems for social "combat." Of course, there's **New York by Night**. The book discusses some of the Victorian Age's activities and nocturnal inhabitants, and suggests ways in which the city may change between Acts 2 and 3.

Police have far-reaching powers and can quarantine individuals on suspicion of infection. They can condemn buildings without recourse to a higher jurisdiction, save the City Health Commissioner. Major social issues govern the application of this health policy, though. In 1892, an outbreak of cholera aboard a ship in harbor sees poor passengers confined below decks while the rich are allowed to continue on unimpeded. Old Kindred are unlikely to understand the significance of these mortal endeavors. How does washing one's hands prevent ill humors from affecting the kine? This an area in which relatively young Kindred can succeed.

### Other Clans

New York is a city at war. While the Ventrue would like nothing more than to claim it as their own, they must rely on the other clans if they are to maintain even the status quo. Brujah muscle and Tremere sorcery are essential to the Camarilla defense. Notables from these clans may have significant roles in Act 2, as supporting characters or as players' characters, and have their own reasons for going to New York and working with the Ventrue.

Tremere sired in the Fief of York probably have strong ties to Durham Chantry, but unlike for blood mages is still a challenge thanks to Mithras' antipathy. Escape may be a welcome option for young Usurpers. Wellesley welcomes Tremere support in New York, combining thaumaturgy and politics in defense of the city. For their part, Tremere opposed by their old enemies the Tzimisce may find security in alliances with New York's Ventrue.

New York's Brujah operate on multiple levels. Some work with the Camarilla in defense of the city, serving as foot soldiers and warlords in nightly battles. They can accept the authority of the Ventrue and even become embroiled in Blue Blood schemes, either out of loyalty to the Camarilla or to change the system from within. Other Brujah can be in the city for their own reasons, particularly those affiliated with the anarchists. Arrivals with these connections may seek to

expand their own power at the expense of the major factions, or may simply wish to use local chaos to spike others' plans.

Gilded Age New York, with its gaudy overindulgence of the upper class and densely packed immigrant population, is a magnet for the Toreador. Whereas other clans may be drawn to the city because of the opportunities it presents, the Toreador are attracted to New York — particularly Manhattan — by the combined effects of self-indulgence and shattered dreams. They may become enmeshed in Kindred and mortal politics, but care as much for the patterns of response that their actions trigger as they do for actual power. Toreador may stir up friction between old- and new-money families, for example. A new-money family "neglects" to invite an old-money daughter to a soiree, or an old-money family lowers itself to work with social inferiors. The artists enjoy the shifting social dynamics that ensue.

Like most large cities, New York is a haven for Nosferatu. Its docks and squalid tenements teem with impoverished immigrants — ideal havens for sewer rats. Massive immigration over the last century has seen radical changes in the city's structure. Nosferatu can thrive on the impoverished have-nots. Under the leadership of Augustin, clan members are an invaluable part of New York's Camarilla infrastructure. They're the sect's eyes and ears and the city's principal information brokers. Some stand aloof from Ventrue schemes, simply observing the interplay of personalities and influence. Others enjoy a "hands on" approach, gaining intimate access to the plans and secrets of fellow Kindred.

The emergence of new-money families in New York, combined with substantial immigration from the Mediterranean, bolsters the presence of both the Lasombra and Giovanni. Meanwhile, the poor from abroad help establish Setite and Assamite populations. The Tzimisce likewise prosper among immigrants from the Balkans and eastern Europe. Racial antipathy toward immigrant groups fuels tensions and plays to the Sabbat-Camarilla war, exacerbating feuds between Cainite groups.

### Sire Interference

This act assumes that characters' sires remain in England, either York or London, although some may have already relocated to the New World as discussed above. In any case, they may still be reached by telegraph or through the more regional telephone. This assumes, of course, that elders aren't so hidebound or traditional that such modern inventions aren't completely alien to them or their agents. Calling upon sires may also be considered a sign of personal weakness. Benefactors can provide occasional pearls of wisdom and introductions to relevant people in New York, but may otherwise remain aloof from childer affairs. To them, America may still be little more than a rogue colony. While they have heard stories of New York, they could regard the city as an uncivilized den of iniquity that may soon rival London in size but will never achieve the same height of culture.



The only reliable involvement that sires may have is their introduction to Aimery Methuin, whom they could have known in Dark Medieval York. Each applicable character has a personalized letter to Aimery (and he may have also been contacted in advance by telegraph). Through their sires' graces, the characters are presented to Aimery, and through him to Wellesley and the city's Camarilla. The characters also receive more than they bargained for when Aimery uses them as unwitting intermediaries with the Sabbat. The elder Ventrué exploits their naiveté and unfamiliarity with New York to advance his own plans. (He also interferes with plans of York-based sires in response to any snubs he suffered from them in the past.) Progenitors may provide characters with some of Aimery's history, but probably reserve his dubious merit for childer to discover — and learn from — themselves.

Thus, if and when characters run into trouble in New York, they have to save themselves. Sires get involved only under desperate circumstances, or when threat of humiliation by association is immense. If sires must play their hand, it's undoubtedly turned on foolish or rogue neonates afterward.

## The Gilded Age

Mark Twain dubbed the setting of this act the "Gilded Age." The story assumes that events take place in 1897. The historical fire at Ellis Island (June 15, 1897) figures into Scene 3, although the act can be adapted to any time in the period that supports your game.

It is an era of immense social change in the United States. The Civil War is a quarter-century past, but still looms large in people's memories. In the years since, the rich have grown richer and they display their wealth ostentatiously. They host lavish parties and fill their homes with the latest appliances — telephones, phonographs and electric lights! In stark contrast, the vast majority live below the poverty line and eke out harsh lives from day to day in New York's numerous tenement blocks. Immigrants in particular suffer, forced into de facto ghettos and working in factories, mills and sweatshops to line the pockets of the rich. Corruption and crime are endemic, from the gangs who rule the streets to the institutional corruption of Tammany Hall. The two social strata entwine through the patronage of political parties that extend their tendrils into the lower classes, seeking to better the workers' lot while expanding their own power and wealth. The result is the rise of labor movements and unions. And strikes are common until the early 1890s when deployed troops shatter the movement, keeping rich and poor separated. These disparate factions prove ideal for the Kindred, allowing them to influence mortal society at a variety of levels as outlined under "Interests."

## A Cast of Thousands

New York and its boroughs can support some 40 Cainites with ease. In practice, the city is home to many more, a number of whom use it as an entry point into the United States. Numerous supporting cast members appear in Act 2, most for the first time in this chronicle. Two others reprise their roles from Act 1. Many appear in *New York by Night*, as well. More information on those marked with an asterisk appears in that book.

## The Sabbat

New York is arguably in the hands of the Sabbat, who revel in its mix of anarchy, corruption and poverty. The Sabbat powers in the five boroughs — not yet a unified city — fall under the authority of Cardinal Polonia whose "war parties" range far and wide, targeting Camarilla Kindred and their domains. Sabbat agents even operate in the so-called enclave. Their province over several new-money families demonstrates the sect's presence in the Camarilla's core territories. Only the Dux Bellorum's vigilance prevents the sect from expanding.

Numbers are the Sabbat's biggest disadvantage. They are much more numerous than the Camarilla due to the size of the regions they hold and the absence of any traditions to put

## References and Inspirations

This chapter can provide only a cursory overview of life in New York at the end of the 19th century. There are a host of other works on the period that players and Storytellers may consult. Four books stand out. *The Gilded Age* by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner satires the goings-on of society in the 1870s. *The Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton explores the social minefield of New York's upper crust in the 1880s. *How the Other Half Lives* by Jacob Riis explores life among the city's tenements in 1890. And Herbert Asbury's famed *The Gangs of New York* details gangs and criminal organizations in the city into the early 20th century. Of more recent provenance, Erik Larson's *The Devil in the White City* provides a very readable account of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, together with the murders carried out at the same time by H. H. Holmes (Herman Webster Mudgett).

Martin Scorsese's film *The Gangs of New York* is well worth watching for atmosphere, though most of its characters and events are fictitious, and it culminates rather early in the Victorian Era. Its finale is the Draft Riots of 1863. Also by Scorsese, *The Age of Innocence* deftly adapts the book of the same name. Terence Davies' adaptation of another Edith Wharton novel, *The House of Mirth*, charts the riches-to-rags tragedy of Lilly Bart in 1890s New York.



creation rites in check. Their "hordes" lack age and experience, but are still *hordes*. Sabbat leaders are both experienced and calculating.

**Cardinal Francisco Domingo de Polonia\*** is Trandor's opposite, the meticulous planner behind Sabbat activity who leaves hands-on management of packs to Ecaterina and Turlev. Although his position is far from absolute — the Camarilla's presence in Manhattan is a major thorn in his side — Polonia's authority extends over the outlying boroughs, in particular The Bronx and Brooklyn, placing him in a much stronger position than the Camarilla "prince." His greatest challenge is cutting off Camarilla reinforcements, such as the characters. He also works to destroy the Camarilla's influence and to undermine its relationship with neutral parties such as the Giovanni.

**Ecaterina\*** (the Wise) has served as Bishop of Manhattan since the War of Independence, but her role is threatened by the installation of Turlev. The Brujah presumes that Polonia's decisions are intended to curb her power and ensure her loyalty to the Sabbat, but they have only triggered a series of confrontations with Turlev. The core of her domain is Harlem, though Ecaterina's influence extends into the Upper East Side, with pockets across Manhattan and the Lower East Side.

**Turlev\*** is a fanatical adherent to the Sabbat's philosophies and has been rewarded with the rank of Bishop of Brooklyn. Polonia has charged the Lasombra with assaulting Camarilla domains, placing the bishop in direct competition with Ecaterina. Completion of the Brooklyn Bridge has eased Turlev's role considerably, allowing direct access to the heart of the Camarilla domain. The crossing has become a major point of conflict between the sects.

**Thomas Albee\*** is the most senior Ventrue *antitribu* in the city, but he is disdained by both the Sabbat and the true Ventrue of Manhattan, making him bitter and vindictive. Albee reserves his greatest enmity for his childe Douglas Callihan, whose defection from the Sabbat has undermined his own position. Now Albee recognizes Aimery's defection — for which he serves as facilitator — as a means of restoring his standing.

## The Camarilla

While the Sabbat dominates New York, many city inhabitants are members of the Camarilla and operate openly and in secret.

**Joseph Wellesley** serves as de facto Prince of New York (he takes the title *Dux Bellorum*). His position is threatened by the Sabbat and by rivals within the Camarilla; not all acknowledge his position. The Ventrue lord wields immense political power through ties to Tammany Hall. Wellesley chairs the "War Council" that oversees the defense of the Camarilla's enclave.

**Catherine Trandor**, formerly known as Katla Thraddottir, is undoubtedly the oldest Cainite involved in New York's affairs. She is not a full-time resident, preferring to remain in her Albany haven, influencing matters through agents. Although important to this act, Catherine has only a small role. Instead, her importance

is as behind-the-scenes manipulator and potential advisor to the characters and Aimery. It is she who plants the seed of defection in Aimery's mind. Her goal is to gauge the reaction of both Wellesley and the Sabbat, notably Polonia and Ecaterina. Her actions and reasons may not be clear in this act, though they become so when the focus turns to Savannah in Act 3.

**Aimery de Methuin** competes with both Wellesley and Catherine for power in the city. His relationship with the "upstart" Wellesley is cold and antagonistic, while that with Catherine combines rivalry and dependence. Aimery has sought to use Catherine as his means of gaining station, constantly calling on her for favors and assistance. She has complied to some extent, but never as much as Aimery would like, leaving him embittered but beholden to her. Aimery's willingness to aid the characters stems from his desire to use them as pawns in the way that Catherine has used him. Feeling that the Camarilla has not accorded him the status and respect he deserves, Aimery has made contacts with the Sabbat via Thomas Albee, a Ventrue *antitribu*, with the intent to defect.

**The Trinity** comprises three Nosferatu: **Augustin**, his childe **Calebros\***, and **Radcliffe with Teeth**. Together they are the Camarilla's information brokers in the city, infiltrating the lowest strata of society and learning its darkest secrets. Most of New York's Ventrue show nothing but disdain for these Nosferatu, but remain reliant on the information they provide. Wellesley, whose past gives him an appreciation for the Trinity's actions, is a notable exception. Characters seeking to expand their influence in the city do well to consult with the Trinity. Augustin is the most approachable, frequently appearing at Wellesley's court and sitting on the War Council. Calebros is the most organized and knowledgeable, responsible for collating much of the information gathered by the three. Radcliffe lacks the openness of Augustin and the systematic nature of Calebros, but makes up for it with a hyperactive schedule and an apparent love of danger. Radcliffe handles contact between the Trinity and clanmates in the Sabbat. Indeed, some among the Camarilla accuse the Nosferatu — but not the Trinity directly — of maintaining close contacts with the enemy, an affront that Augustin shrugs off nonchalantly.

**Yvette Krupinski\*** (The Hopeless) is the confused childe of the famed Toreador Tamoszius Kuszleika. She has wandered Manhattan since her Embrace in 1891, attempting to come to terms with her nature. She presently lairs near Grand Central Terminal, part of Aimery's domain, and has an accommodation with him. Yvette provides Aimery with details of Kindred passing through the station. Yvette's reports are far from enlightening — she is too self-involved to be a good observer — and Aimery is so disinterested that he frequently forgets she exists. That's not to say, however, that Yvette doesn't see things, in particular things she shouldn't. More details on Yvette and her involvement with Aimery are presented in Scene 4.

**Eleanor Van Hasen** oversees the main Tremere chantry in the city, and sits on Wellesley's "War Council." She maintains an uneasy relationship with Manhattan's Ventrue,



resisting the incursions of Turlev and his Lasombra and Tzimisce hordes. While Eleanor has only a minor role in the main part of the chronicle, she is one of the most powerful Kindred in the city, courted by Ventrue and Toreador alike and the target of frequent Sabbat attacks. Any attempt by the characters to establish themselves in New York brings them to Eleanor's attention, or they may seek her or the chantry out.

## Independents

New York's size — the city and its satellites are home to 3,400,000 souls — means that Kindred may avoid entanglements with the Camarilla and Sabbat. Some anarchists consider the city, its gang culture and lawlessness on the streets ideal for their endeavors. (California's significance doesn't become apparent a few more years.) Such interests have raised tensions with the Sabbat, though, who exploit the same mortal conditions.

**Douglas Callihan\*** once worked with Boss Tweed to dominate the city's affairs through Tammany Hall. His Embrace by Ventrue *antitribu* Thomas Albee allowed Callihan to exceed his former associate's influence, but Callihan quickly became disillusioned with the Sabbat and foreswore Polonia's cause, choosing to take up with the city's anarchists. Callihan still craves power and influence, going so far as to negotiate with Wellesley, Aimery and other notables, offering his influence to advance their efforts. Of course, such formidable business and political sway comes at a price.

**Donatello Giovanni\*** commands his clan's growing position among New York's Italian population. Courted by both sects, Donatello wields formidable influence among the city's dockworkers, granting him a stranglehold on the importation of goods and a vast source of information. Polonia offers the Giovanni numerous incentives to leave the Camarilla alone, including sparing clan interests from Turlev and Ecaterina's wrath. Donatello is a businessman first and foremost, and is unwilling to forswear the income he gains from aiding the Camarilla, preferring to play the factions against each other and profiting from both.

**Lenore** revels in the city's dark side, in particular the drug dens of the Lower East Side. She works to corrupt the city's lower classes to serve the Followers of Set. She cares little for the factional politics of other Kindred, putting her own clan's interests first. Her influence extends into both Camarilla and Sabbat territories and she negotiates with both groups to her own advantage. In particular, she exploits the conflict to move goods, people and information, though the price of her services is rarely cheap and usually involves some twist. She has accessed Ventrue influence among the police to protect Setite opium dens and brothels, for example.

## New York in the Gilded Age

While *New York by Night* provides a detailed examination of the city in the modern nights, much has changed over the last century. The following is a brief overview of the city in the late 19th century, recapping some historical details for those who do not have access to *New York by Night* and providing additional material on the city in the Victorian Age.

## Mortal History

New York's pedigree is as muddled as that of the people who call the city home. The region was originally inhabited by the Algonquin tribe. The first European to visit the island was Italian Giovanni de Verrazano, but it was another century before the establishment of a European settlement. The Dutch founded New Amsterdam on land purchased from the Algonquin. Englishman Henry Hudson surveyed the land for the Dutch East India Company. The colony's success attracted British interest, leading to the seizure of New Amsterdam in 1664, after which it was named New York. The town prospered and soon became prominent in the 13 Colonies. It remained in British hands during the Revolutionary War, but was handed over to the newly formed United States upon the British withdrawal. New York was the new nation's first capital, albeit for only seven years, until the government relocated to Philadelphia in 1790.

New York remained an important settlement and became the east coast's principal port, a position strengthened by the opening of the Erie Canal in 1826, which allowed vessels to cross from Lake Erie to Albany, and down the Hudson River to Manhattan. A mercantile elite emerged, becoming established as the city's "old money." In the early 19th century, however, an alternative — and ultimately dominant — power structure formed in Tammany Hall, the Democratic Party's executive committee. Founded less than a decade after the birth of the United States, Tammany Hall grew in power as the city's immigrant population increased. (Newcomers reciprocated the assistance provided them by the Democratic machine.) The rising immigrant population also led to increasing tensions in the city, resulting in gangs that would dominate the city into the 20th century. Tensions between the rich and poor reached their height in the Draft Riots of July 1863, which left 2000 dead and 8000 injured. Fighting broke out after the Union's imposition of the draft, something that the wealthy could escape by paying \$300.

In the 1870s, a series of corruption scandals rocked Tammany Hall, then under the leadership of "Boss" Tweed. But rather than undermine Democratic footing, the scandals forced the party to adapt, taking on a less overt and more regimented approach that solidified control over city politics.



## A Timeline of Recent Events

- 1885 AT&T founded in New York
- 1886 (Oct. 12) Bloomingdale's opens at 59th and 3rd Avenue; (Oct. 28) The Statue of Liberty is assembled in Fort Wood on Bledsoe's Island (later "Liberty Island")
- 1887 Electricity becomes available in the Bronx
- 1890 (Jun. 16) The first Madison Square Gardens opens; Jacob Riis' *How the Other Half Lives* is published
- 1891 (May 5) New York City Music Hall opens (later known as Carnegie Hall)
- 1892 (Jan 2) Ellis Island opens as a processing center for immigrants; (Aug. 29) Cholera arrives in the U.S. via NYC and the steamship *Moravia*
- 1893 Hotel Netherland completed; Broadway becomes known as the "Great White Way"
- 1894 Opening of the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design
- 1895 Theodore Roosevelt becomes head of the Board of Police Commissions
- 1896 (Apr. 30) The world's first automobile accident occurs in New York
- 1897 (Jun. 15) A fire sweeps through the Ellis Island facility, destroying all records; (Dec. 31) Fireworks and parades celebrate the consolidation of New York City
- 1898 (Jan. 1) The Act of Consolidation merges the Five Boroughs (Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Richmond) to form Greater New York under Democratic Mayor Robert Van Wyck. Their combined population is 3.4 million

The Democrats have yet to regain the political heights they enjoyed before Tweed's fall, but do so in November of 1897 with the election of Judge Robert Van Wyck as the first Mayor of Greater New York.

## The Five Boroughs

Modern New York (comprising the five boroughs of Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Staten Island) does not come into existence until 1898, but all of the boroughs exist in the Victorian Age (Staten Island is called Richmond). All told, they're home to some 3.4 million people and their attendant vampires. Each part of the city encompasses a broad variety of districts, ranging from the depraved to the ultra-wealthy. Dinky tenements stand only a few blocks from the brownstones and Gothic palaces of the rich and famous. Criminals of all types roam the streets: droppers who con people by selling "lost" wallets, anglers who use hooks on sticks to rob houses, the women known as bludgers who lure men into alleys and then rob them, and star gazers (prostitutes). Add to these the well-to-do who exploit the poor with pitiful wages and harsh conditions,

or who charge extortionate rents for rooms in slum tenements. The city's government and industry are virtually inseparable from its dark underbelly. Graft and corruption are endemic, with political power in the hands (or functioning at the sufferance) of groups such as Tammany Hall. Efforts have been made to stamp out crime and corruption, but it's a drop in the bucket. In many cases the police are as guilty as the criminals. Many police organize extortion rackets of their own or are utterly disregarded by gangs. One such gang, the Gophers, makes a fashion of mugging police officers for their coats.

At present, the five boroughs remain independent entities.

## Manhattan

In the Victorian Age, New York is synonymous with the island of Manhattan. It is home to the city's elite, mostly on 5th Avenue, and poor, particularly in the tenements of the Lower East Side. Wall Street, once the site of a Dutch fortification on the southern part of the island, is already a major financial center and is at the heart of a jumble of streets that pre-date America's independence. Further north, more thorough planning affords the city a grid pattern of streets.

Central Park provides residents with an escape from the urban sprawl. The land was purchased by the state in 1856 in response to popular appeal, and then landscaped to suit a plan selected in a public competition. This process required the dismantling of numerous farms and slums, causing friction between former residents and the well to do. That did not prevent the park's opening in 1876, though.

Known locally as the Great White Way because of its gas and electric signs, Broadway is the heart of the theatre district and has been since the mid-19th century. The region steadily gains in popularity and magnificence (though its height is still a decade or more away). Long Acre Square (which will be renamed Times Square in 1904 when the *New York Times* relocates there) was formerly a horse-trading center, but has become the focus of the Broadway area with the opening of the Olympia Theater in 1895.

Further north, at the junction of 7th Avenue and 57th Street, the music hall founded by Andrew Carnegie adopts its builder-financier's name and hosts numerous events, including concerts by Tchaikovsky and lectures about voyages to the moon. It is home to both the Symphony Society and its rival the Philharmonic Society. Two sites dominate sports in the city: the Polo Grounds of the New York Giants baseball team, situated between 157th and 159th Streets, and Madison Square Garden on West 33rd Street, opened in 1891 and used most often for boxing.

One of the greatest contrasts in the city exists between the mansions of the wealthy and the tenements of the poor. Fifth Avenue, particularly the stretch known as Millionaire's Row, is adorned by the palatial homes of both old and new money. These include the ostentatious Vanderbilt "chateau" at 52nd Street, the technological marvels of Andrew Carnegie's home at 91st Street, and Mrs. Astor's Renaissance



mansion at 65th Street. Likewise, there are grand hotels like the New Netherland, the Savoy and the Waldorf-Astoria, the world's largest. Competition between New York families is best epitomized by the construction of the Metropolitan Opera House on 39th Street in 1883, when the old money refused the new money boxes.

Much of Manhattan's western side comprises slum tenements and rundown houses occupied by multiple families. The most common are brick buildings between four and six stories tall, often with a store on the ground floor and a dark central stairwell for access and ventilation. Many have an accompanying building on the rear half of the lot, accessed via a passageway. The worst such structures house 200 people and are breeding grounds for crime and disease.

Manhattan is the core of Camarilla domains in New York, with Ventrue and Toreador holdings being strongest around Wall Street and 5th Avenue. There is little organized Camarilla presence north of 50th Street, though individuals' influence extends as far as 96th Street. The city's few Gangrel roam Central Park, but face stiff competition with some Lupines that lair there. Both the Sabbat and independent vampires have made inroads into Manhattan, and the precise boundaries of their turf are unclear. Indeed, Sabbat influence permeates the gangs of Lower Manhattan.

Most of characters' opportunities to gain status, influence and domain are posed in Manhattan. Rivalries among Camarilla Kindred are most intense here. Daring — or foolhardy — newcomers may look further a field, to the outer boroughs or even New Jersey. Wellesley maintains several havens, but the one he uses most is on 5th Avenue near the confluence with Broadway. Ecaterina maintains only a single haven in Upper Manhattan, in a mansion once used by George Washington.

## Brooklyn

Like Manhattan, Brooklyn was once under Dutch authority and stands as both an independent city and commuter suburb, particularly for the well to do. Historically, a ferry service provided the main link to Manhattan until the Brooklyn Bridge opened. In recent years, Brooklyn has outdone its rival as a port, but its interests have converged with those of its island neighbor, leading to consolidation. Coney Island, at Brooklyn's southernmost tip, is home to several racetracks and hotels that serve as out-of-town retreats for the city's elite, though much of the area has sunk into vice (attracting various Tzimisce and Toreador *antitribu*, as well as some Setite). Brooklyn falls solidly under the Sabbat's aegis, with the Lasombra dominating affluent districts and the Tzimisce overseeing immigrants. Although Brooklyn lacks the political and financial centers of Manhattan, its role as port and industrial center make it vital to the Sabbat war effort. Daring Camarilla members might challenge this authority directly or through the neutral clans, but doing so draws the attention of the merciless Bishop Turlev.

## Queens

The largest borough of New York, Queens is home to numerous racetracks that combine with its open spaces to attract the wealthy. The absence of a physical connection to Manhattan has slowed the borough's growth, but hasn't dampened residents' enthusiasm for consolidation. The region doesn't have the extremes of Manhattan — there are no ultra-wealthy homes, but neither are there extensive slums. It's the site of many summer homes. The Sabbat presence in Queens is less focused than in the Bronx or Brooklyn — the rural nature of the area is of little interest — although the communities of Queens County afford numerous opportunities for establishing localized domains. Fort Totten in the northeast corner of the borough serves as a haven for at least one adventurous Ventrue, and New York's Gangrel maintain havens across the region that serve as refuges en route to Nassau County and Long Island.

## The Bronx

The only part of New York to be part of the American mainland, the Bronx was once a farming community that has become the site of summer homes for the middle classes, politicians and merchants in particular. A succession of bridges and railway lines links the Bronx to Manhattan and binds the two cities' fates. The New York Botanical Garden opened in 1891 and is a favored destination of the well to do. The garden was formerly part of the Camarilla Elysium but is now solidly a Sabbat domain as Polonia seeks to cut off Manhattan's links to the outside world. Sabbat war parties are most active in the area near the Hudson River, monitoring overland access to Upper Manhattan. (The railways have thus far escaped party attention, though.) Polonia himself resides in the Bronx, his haven on the edge of the Van Cortland Park, site of a Revolutionary War skirmish. Despite the Sabbat prevalence in the area and in Upper Manhattan, Wellesley encourages newcomers to explore the Bronx as a means of probing Sabbat positions. Few take up the challenge, and even fewer survive, but the testing allows the Dux Bellorum to identify Sabbat weaknesses and forces the enemy to be somewhat on the defensive.

## Richmond (Staten Island)

Separated from the rest of New York by a long ferry ride, Richmond is scarcely more than a rural community with a population of only 65,000. It has a very low immigrant habitation, despite the presence of quarantine stations and homes for elderly sailors and orphans. Richmond has been spared the growing pains experienced by the rest of the city. It's ostensibly part of the Camarilla domain, but no Kindred reside there on a permanent basis. Unbeknownst to Wellesley, Polonia has called on his bishops to bring Richmond under Sabbat control. Any effort to establish domains or havens on the island lead to confrontations with the Sabbat.



## Ellis and Bledsoe's Islands

Although not boroughs in their own right, Ellis and Bledsoe's Island are distinct and important parts of New York. Ellis Island was initially a fort and powder magazine. Since 1892 it has been the site of America's main immigration station. New arrivals undergo processing here, their health and possessions checked before they're allowed entry into the country. Of course, the rich circumvented most of these restrictions and usually disembark in Manhattan. A fire in the summer of 1897 destroys all immigration records stored here.

Dedicated by President Grover Cleveland in 1886, the massive statue on Bledsoe's (now Liberty) Island is synonymous with both New York and the United States. The 150-foot-tall statue stands atop a pedestal of similar height in the former Fort Wood and may be climbed to its torch or crown by those of sufficient endurance.

## Gangs

Street gangs are an integral part of New York's history, involved in many of the city's major events such as the Draft Riots of the Civil War. The 1890s are no exception, and much of Lower Manhattan falls under the sway of a plethora of gangs, some small, others virtual armies. Many work hand-in-hand with political authorities. Tammany Hall is inextricably linked with several gangs, for example, and others are occasional pawns of local politicians, used to

## Transportation

While lacking the refinements of London or Paris, New York rapidly gains a reputation as a center of modern transportation. Noisy elevated train lines (El's) crisscross the city and allow rapid travel up and down Manhattan's long axis. Brooklyn, the Bronx and Queens have their own El systems. More widespread are streetcars, running along rails and pulled by buried cables.

The most recent addition to New York's transportation system is the automobile, with vehicles produced by more than 50 companies. In the Victorian Age, automobiles are expensive and largely custom made — the mass produced Model T of Henry Ford will not appear until 1908. Their use is largely restricted to entertainment by the wealthy. Yet, New York has the distinction of being home to the first automobile accident in 1896.

intimidate opponents and voters. Still other gangs serve their own agendas. Constant conflict between gangs provides cover for the Sabbat-Camarilla conflict. Some "gangs" are comprised solely of vampires staking out territory for their factions.

And yet, the Bowery has become a caricature of its former self, its lowlife vice and corruption becoming geared toward "slumming" uptowners. In gang territory, even those not directly involved in confrontations can play a role. Women and





children throw rocks and trash at members of rival groups, a practice known as "Irish confetti."

Many gangs accept "contracts" with outsiders — some even have established rates — and the mobs are prime territory for Kindred influence. Characters can establish themselves as "patrons" of such groups, buying their services with money and favors as needed, or can take a more direct role in directing their actions. Ghoul agents within a gang are a long-term means of influence, though this approach may place different vampires in competition with each other, each seeking to exploit the same group with vying pawns. There may be room for negotiation and compromise if competing Kindred belong to the same sect. In most cases the result is bitter and bloody infighting within the gang. Characters may stir up trouble in gangs influenced by rivals, disrupting leadership from the shadows.

The most notable gangs of the period, together with their territories and leaders, are as follows.

- **The Five Pointers:** Lead by Paul Kelly (AKA Paul Vaccarelli), this 1500-member gang dominates the territory between Broadway, the Bowery, 14th Street and City Hall Park. It meets at the New Brighton Dance Hall on Great Jones Street and is involved in a wide range of criminal activities, including the manufacture and sale of weapons and thieving tools. The Five Pointers nominally fall under the domain of Wellesley's lieutenant, Alicia Durant, although her grip on the sprawling gang is tenuous and she faces stiff competition from Turlev's Sabbat who seek to secure the Manhattan end of the Brooklyn Bridge.

- **The Eastmans:** Named for their leader, Monk Eastman (AKA Edward Osterman), this gang feuds with the Five Pointers over boundaries — the Bowery, 14th Street and the East River. The Eastmans call upon 1200 members and are both ruthless and efficient, with members filing reports on their activities. Turlev's ghoul agents operate within the Eastmans, but fight amongst themselves and with agents of Ecaterina.

- **Gophers:** The smallest of the major gangs with only 500 members, the Gophers have a reputation as unparalleled fighters. Named for their habit of hiding in basements, the gang dominates the Hell's Kitchen area — 7th to 11th Avenues, and 14th Street to 42nd Street. Their "headquarters" is on Battle Row (39th Street between 10th and 11th Avenues). They frequently clash with the police and excel as brawlers and muggers. The Gophers have numerous subordinate gangs such as the Gorillas, the Rhodes Gang and the Battle Row Ladies Social and Athletic Club (AKA The Lady Gophers). Several Gopher senior members are ghouls of Bishop Ecaterina, and they influence the gang to advance the Sabbat agenda. Furthermore, the gang's abodes serve as havens for Sabbat war parties in Lower Manhattan.

- **Hudson Dusters:** Dominating the west side of Manhattan between the Battery and 14th Street, and from the Hudson River to Broadway, the Dusters stand aloof from many of the gang conflicts that wrack Manhattan. They

concentrate on thievery, drug trade and self-publicity. They do, however, fight the Marginals and Pearl Buttons for control of the Hudson River docks (the last manipulated by the Ventrue *antitribu* Thomas Albee as a means of increasing his sway over the docks). The Dusters' leaders are Kid Yorke, Circular Jack and Goo Goo Knox, though there is no overall commander. Nor is there a single headquarters for the gang. The Ventrue *antitribu* Douglas Callihan wields considerable influence over the Dusters and uses them as his own private army when the need arises.

## Prelude — Ship of Fools

For characters journeying from England to the United States, steamship from Liverpool to New York is the most common means. It's also possible that characters could enter via another port, such as Boston, and then make their way overland to the city. The following scene assumes that characters take the direct route and do so with the assistance of their sires. Consult the "Alternative Arrivals" sidebar if characters insist on other forms or routes of travel, and their own means of undertaking the journey.

The journey from Liverpool to New York via Queenstown in Cork takes approximately six days. The vessel taken — the Cunard Steamship Company's *Campania* — is one of the fastest. Characters with sire assistance are presented to agents of the Prince of Liverpool (who oversees Kindred passage through the port). These proxies arrange accommodation for the characters. Ventrue get first-class cabins, as do characters of significant status — most likely Toreador and Tremere. "Lesser" Kindred (Malkavians, Gangrel and the like) aren't as fortunate, being found accommodation in steerage or (in the case of Nosferatu) in the ship's hold. Agents of Liverpool oversee those in first class for the journey, catering to guests' needs and explaining daytime absences. Those on the lower decks have to look out for their own interests, but Liverpool's agents still keep a watchful eye out, offering "advice" to Kindred traveling to the New World.

Many people suffer seasickness and take to their beds for the voyage; characters' absence during the day arouses few comments. Conversely, first-class travelers out for an evening stroll around the deck can interact with various kine, building relationships with New Yorkers that may serve as the basis for domains.

The journey may be short enough for characters to abstain from feeding. Before boarding, Liverpool's agents warn against any attempt to do so except in the gravest of emergencies. The *Campania* is too small for attacks, injuries or deaths to be concealed easily. The first obstacle to feeding is privacy. Unless characters lure victims to their cabins, vampires are unlikely to be able to drink without attracting notice. The second pitfall is the after-effect of feeding. New York's Health Police monitor



table event in the early part of the crossing is a storm on the second and third days that causes minor flooding in the third-

class decks.

In the wee hours of the fourth night, worrying news circulates: There may be cholera among the steerage passengers. The characters may discount the news and go about their business. Such outbreaks are not unheard of; events do not reach a head until the last night. Or the characters may investigate, perhaps on the pretense of having medical expertise. Many of cholera's symptoms are similar to those of a mortal who has been fed upon: cold and clammy skin, a drawn face, low blood pressure, cramps and intense thirst, followed by insensibility, coma and death. Is this a genuine outbreak, has one of the characters been feeding, or is there a more insidious problem? Any close examination of the "cholera victim"—a middle-aged Irish woman—shows that she has been used as a vessel, and carelessly drained to the brink of death with little concern for the Masquerade. Auspex shows the weakness of the victim's aura, but the most damning signs are glaring puncture wounds at various points on her body, notably her forearms. There is little question that she has been subject to the kiss, but by whom? Are any of the characters so reckless? They may suspect one another of the attack, particularly if some travel on the lower decks. Suspicion naturally falls on any character who shows signs of recent feeding (even if he is innocent of the act).

The characters may suspect that there are other Cainites aboard—though Liverpool's agents deny it. That means a hunt to discover whom. Several hours of observing upper-class passengers shows who partakes of normal refreshment and who does not, and Auspex may be used to examine them. None seem to be vampires. The characters' attention may then turn to the steerage passengers (and anyone concealed in the hold). Mundane observation is unlikely to reveal any culprits. There are simply too many people onboard for characters to observe in the time available. The presence of any "upper deck" passengers down below also draws considerable attention. Characters can hone their search with Auspex. The aura of a vampire is distinct from that of a mortal, while telepathy provides a means of looking into the victims' minds to identify her attacker.

The culprit is in fact a Tzimisce named Yaroslav who is one of several Sabbat traveling aboard the *Campagna* (but he's the only one prowling the ship). He already knows of the characters and their identities (thanks to information Aimery has passed to Thomas Albee, though Yaroslav does not know the source of this information). The Tzimisce actively seeks to attract the characters' attention to deliver a message. He makes no effort to hide, and upon encountering the Camarilla, he leers arrogantly and addresses them on their last night at sea, delivering the take any action onboard, Yaroslav tracks the characters down and doffs his cap before addressing them by name. (If they do not introduce to the frictions and politics of New York, Monroe and his daughter representing the new money, Madame de Winters the old money, and steerage passengers the underclass of the city. Play up the awkwardness of confinement on the characters, particularly if they are split between first class and steerage, two very different experiences. Indeed, the only no-

## Contacts

Notables on the voyage with whom the characters

may interact include:

Miss Cecily Monroe (17), the naive daughter of a new-money family returning to New York after a season in London.

Mister Andrew Monroe (48), Cecily's father and a railroad magnate who has had numerous run-ins with the labor movement.

Madame Page de Winter (71), an aging doyen who detests Monroe and all he stands for.

Master Lucius Cole (14), Madame de Winters' grandson and ward, a priggish and reprehensible youth.

Mister Andrew McFadden (27), a charismatic speculator, gambler and corrupter of young women. An absolute cad.

Lord Albert Weston (64), famed British architect traveling to see the wonders of the New World in his last years.

new arrivals and are watchful for any signs of disease or infection, which feeding may seem to manifest as. Liverpool's agents recommend that if characters must feed, they restrict their attention to first-class passengers who are both more likely to be encountered in (or lured into) private, and who are spared the rigorous medical inspections suffered by the lower class. Steerage passengers, though anonymous, are more likely to be examined, which could lead to the quarantining of the ship or those passengers below. Should any victims show signs of being unwell after feeding, they should be "disposed of" (most likely killed and thrown overboard).

## The Sickness

After taking on the majority of its rich passengers at Liverpool, the *Campagna* makes the overnight trip across the Irish Sea and docks briefly at Queenstown in Cork. Many of its steerage passengers board there, along with the mail and boxes of cargo that are immediately stowed below decks. The vessel then puts out to sea and begins the remaining five-and-a-half-day crossing. The characters may spend the first three nights as they see fit—mingling with other passengers and hearing tales of New York, keeping to themselves or perhaps even "slumming" with the Irish below. Indeed, discourse with other passengers is one of the few activities in which the characters can indulge during their confinement onboard. It's a gentle introduction to the frictions and politics of New York, Monroe and his daughter representing the new money, Madame de Winters the old money, and steerage passengers the underclass of the city. Play up the awkwardness of confinement on the characters, particularly if they are split between first class and steerage, two very different experiences. Indeed, the only no-





THE VENTRUE CHRONICLE

### Alternative Arrivals

While the Liverpool-New York line is the easiest route from England to the United States, it's not the only option. Characters may travel directly from other ports (such as Bristol or Glasgow) to New York without changing the events that occur en route. If characters opt to head to a different port — say, Boston or Baltimore — they are unlikely to encounter Yaroslav on the boat. They may, however, benefit from the expertise of local princes and the information of fellow travelers in the same manner as traveling via Liverpool. They just have to make their own way from their point of entry to New York.

While overland travel by carriage is possible, the train offers the easiest and most secure means into the city, either as regular passengers or as "freight." Of all the ways into the city, the route into Grand Central Terminal poses the least chance of interference from the Sabbat. You may, however, still have Yaroslav issue his warning to the characters on the train journey to the city.

The riskiest proposition is for characters to arrive by carriage or wagon. They are unlikely to receive a "friendly" warning from Yaroslav, but may fall foul of Sabbat war parties who attempt to send newcomers to Final Death. Sabbat under Ecaterina watch traffic heading into New York from the north, and while they can't catch every member of the Camarilla sneaking in overland, they have an uncanny success rate (thanks to their use of Feral Whispers to employ the local animal population as spies). The characters are less likely to be caught if they travel incommunicado, hidden in boxes or the like, though doing so is hardly an auspicious start to their unlives in New York. Ventrue might perceive it as a weakness, as could those already in the enclave.

willing to fight if they attack him, and does not hold back. Are the characters willing to break the Masquerade and reveal their presence to passengers simply to take this Tzimisce down? He believes the characters will hold back and he decries them as lily-livered, cowed by precedent and the opinions of others. That is why, he states, the Camarilla will lose the war. They lack the spine to stand up to the Sabbat, let alone their own masters:

*"You see, we knew you were coming. We know who you are and why you are going to New York. We know how weak Wellesley is, and why he must send to England for help. But we also know that you are young and misled by those who style themselves your betters. So, we offer you a choice. You can join that nest of fools and share their fate or you can move onward with the blessing of the magnanimous Cardinal Polonia. Either way, tell Wellesley that we will see his ashes and those of his lackeys spread across the East River."*

If the characters fight Yaroslav, they more than likely win but face a disaster of horrendous proportions as their battle rages before the ship's kine. Can they kill the entire company to preserve the Masquerade? If they try, Liverpool's agents do not



help in any way. If the characters don't fight, Yaroslav departs after delivering his messages, heading into the bowels of the ship, taking a convoluted path until the characters lose track of him or are forced to abandon their pursuit by the approaching dawn. If the characters do not pursue Yaroslav, there is no repeat of the "cholera" incident and the remainder of the voyage passes without incident. Yaroslav is not present at Ellis Island or Manhattan. He leaves the ship in the same manner he arrived — concealed in a box, together with other hidden Sabbat.

## Yaroslav

Yaroslav is a 10th-generation Tzimisce with the following statistics: Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4, Wits 3, Alertness 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 3, Firearms 3, Potence 3, Vicissitude 4, and a blood pool of 13. He carries a Colt "Peacemaker" (see p. 173 of *Victorian Age Companion*).

## Scene 1 — Arrivals and Omissions

The *Campania* arrives in New York late in the evening on the sixth day, docking first at Ellis Island and then at Pier 40 on the Hudson. Steerage passengers depart at Ellis, undergoing medical exams and immigration controls, while the upper classes fill out routine paperwork before completing their journey into the city. If some characters travel via steerage (or as cargo), they need to make arrangements with Liverpool's people to remain aboard or must make their own way from Ellis to Manhattan (including, if they are so inclined, swimming the mile or so across the bay, which takes around an hour).

## Ellis Island

The biggest challenge facing characters who depart the *Campania* here is avoiding immigration and health checks. Any documents the characters have may be valid, but it's unlikely that a vampire willingly undergoes — let alone, passes — health checks. (Disciplines such as Obfuscate and Dominate can be used to escape the formalities, as can sufficient stealth and cunning — rolls are made at difficulty 7.) Characters who arrive at Ellis (or any other point of entry) without the assistance of Liverpool's agents have to circumvent the entry process on their own and make subsequent travel arrangements.

Liverpool's employees smooth the passage of first-class passengers and handle the requisite paperwork, but the characters must still present themselves in the Registry Room. The agents assure them that special provisions exist for "people of their position." Indeed, no sooner do they arrive in the imposing wooden structure (the present red-brick building is not built until 1900) than they are swept to a side room,

ostensibly to deal with the paperwork, but in reality to be handed into the care of the local Camarilla.

An aged and well-presented man with a distinct English accent — a ghoul for those who examine his aura — introduces himself as William Samuels, an agent of Joseph Wellesley, the administrator of New York. Samuels is very solicitous toward the characters and assures that he will "take care of things." He asks a few questions — port of embarkation, expected stay in America, names as Wellesley or their sponsor would know them. Samuels assures the coterie that this information will go no further than Wellesley and is solely to prevent infiltration by "antagonistic" agents. If the characters ask about their passage on the *Campania*, Samuels assures that Cunard's records will be amended to conceal their passing (something the characters may try to arrange for themselves if they travel independently). With that, he ushers them out of the chamber and back into the hands of the Liverpool agents, who escort the characters back on board the steamship. Less than two hours later, the ship slips its moorings and journeys the last mile to Manhattan.

## Manhattan

The huge vessel docks at the foot of Clarkson Street as night begins to wane. The agents hurry the characters into waiting, darkened carriages that quickly rattle uptown. These transports are sent by Aimery. Characters who dare to look out en route see the waking city — its traders, vagabonds and streetwalkers; its Elevated trains and omnibuses; the rough area down by the river quickly giving way to the gentility of midtown. When they arrive at their destination, a dark imposing building south of Central Park, their drivers bustle them inside. Dawn is not far off. The arrivals are shown to a series of darkened rooms in the heart of the building. They may sleep there while the staff attends to their luggage. Any questions can be answered the following night.

Characters arriving in New York unaccompanied need to make their own way to Aimery's house (their sires may have given them his address). They can use one of the many cabs that meet arriving ships (and trains). Drivers have no difficulty finding the manor. Those who arrive overland in their own wagons or carriages may have a more difficult time finding the house unless they are familiar with New York. They also run the risk of straying into the rough districts of the city.

When the characters awake, their luggage has been brought in and unpacked, with clothes appropriate to a formal occasion laid out. Such clothes may be provided if a character doesn't already own them. Furthermore, the staff brings news that the master awaits in the parlor at the guests' convenience. Descending the stairs of the old building reveals details not readily apparent in the rush of the previous dawn. There are numerous Old World artifacts — suits of armor, swords. The décor is distinctly outmoded, at best dating from the American Civil War but most likely from an earlier vintage. The building is cold and imposing, reminiscent of the gloomy castles of Europe.



The parlor contrasts with the rest of the house. It's warm, well lit and fitted with the latest conveniences, including electric lighting and — likely to the characters' amazement, as such things are rare in England — a telephone. A tall, gaunt figure stands by the room's single large bookcase, browsing through a book, his old-fashioned clothes an odd juxtaposition to the room. The characters are unlikely to have ever encountered Aimery de Methuin before, but they should know his name and perhaps some of his reputation.

Aimery's reaction is cool but polite as he welcomes the vampires to New York. He peruses any letters of introduction before inviting them to sit. Non-Ventrué in the group receive a cursory nod and "welcome," but Aimery seems disinterested in them and focuses on any Ventrué. He inquires after their sires with slightly forced politeness. This behavior may seem odd to the characters, particularly as he is their "sponsor" in the city. He goes on to explain that while he has had differences with the Prince of York and his entourage (he does not use the traditional term of "baron"), he has a certain fondness for the city and is honored by his former associates' request for aid. "Without the Ethic of Succor," he explains, "I would have stumbled upon my arrival in the New World. Instead, I found clanmates willing to aid me to gain my footing." Aimery considers sponsoring the characters his opportunity to return the favor, or so he says. He refers to the arrangement as a second *agoge* for the characters, an initiation into the politics and practices of New York.

Aimery inquires after the journey and seems amused by any account of Yaroslav. He explains that the Sabbat has staged similar stunts in the past, provoking Kindred travelers to action or (quite literally) getting away with murder. It may have been a coincidence that Sabbat and Camarilla were traveling aboard the same ship, but Yaroslav's knowledge of the characters implies that someone leaked their plans. Aimery suggests as much if the characters don't say it themselves. "Have you told

anyone you shouldn't about the voyage?" he asks forcibly. "Would your sires reveal this information?"

That Yaroslav delivered a message from Polonia suggests that the leak was in New York, and that the characters have become unwitting pawns in the "game," as Aimery calls it. He offers to look into the situation on their behalf. Wellesley will surely want to find the underlying cause of the matter. (Aimery's true motivation here isn't altruistic. He wants to conceal his own role in the leak. He shared word of the characters' arrival with Thomas Albee to demonstrate his commitment to the Sabbat.)

If the ship docked at Ellis Island, Aimery suggests that an investigation into Yaroslav could begin with Samuels, the Camarilla's agent at the immigration center. Wellesley's pawn knows of vampire comings and goings at the port. "That is, however, a task for another time," he announces, "as we have a prior engagement."

## Scene 2 — Prestation

Dark carriages appear again to whisk the group across town, this time to the elegance of "Millionaires Row" on 5th Avenue. Hidden behind the glitter of an old-money soiree, the administrator of New York hosts a gathering of New York's Camarilla elite. Everyone in attendance is immaculately dressed, even those whose raiment is illusory, such as that of the three Nosferatu lurking in the corner of the dining room. A dozen Kindred attend the function, a substantial proportion of the city's Camarilla. (More than Manhattan might support were allowances not made for the Sabbat threat.) An equal number of ghouls and assistants are here as well, but the focus of the night is clearly the tall figure of Joseph Wellesley. Aimery strides into the room as if he is lord of the domain, blatantly ignoring other guests.

With little preamble, Aimery butts into Wellesley's conversation with three others: a tall black man, a stern-looking European woman with red hair, and a tall, dark-haired woman who is dressed in European finery but is of Amerindian heritage. "Newcomers to see you, Wellesley," Aimery states gruffly, locking eyes with the nominal prince. Wellesley seems unphased; a smile tugs at the corners of his mouth. "Well, bring them forward, Mister Methuin," his civility is obvious compared to Aimery's barely concealed disdain.

Aimery waves each of the characters forward in turn, naming them and their sires. Wellesley shakes the hand of any male Kindred and kisses the any ladies' hands, welcoming each. He asks why they have come to New York and what they feel they can offer to the beleaguered enclave. "We cannot tolerate freeloaders," he states pointedly, glancing at Aimery as he does. "Nor those who think only of their own interests. Support the Camarilla and you will reap the re-

### Aimery and the Telephone

If the characters ask after the telephone in Aimery's library, the elder takes pleasure in explaining how it works. (Young characters who are in touch with modern society recognize that Aimery himself is not entirely comfortable or familiar with the device, only seeming to revel in the ability to speak to someone miles away.) Indeed, if the characters don't ask about it, he points it out and loosely explains how it works. To Aimery, it's a tool that gives him an edge over his rivals, allowing him to communicate quickly and easily with allies and associates. He believes — and he explains at length if given the chance — that this device will help him establish his position in the city, reacting quickly and decisively. Others may not regard the device in the same manner. While it speeds communication, it's no substitute for personal contact. It's just a status symbol and a possible hint that Aimery craves power but doesn't really possess it.



wards. Fail to do so and you dishonor not only yourselves, but your sires. Cause harm and you will answer to me or Lady Catherine. Understand?"

Once this is done, Wellesley addresses the crowd. "Today, in addition to our usual business, we welcome cousins from the Old World who have decided to chance their futures in this, the New World and our war against the Sabbat. I welcome them as brothers and sisters and call upon all of us to welcome them."

With that, Wellesley introduces the characters to his companions. The black man is a Brujah by the name of Aloisius Cahill. The redhead is Alicia Durant, a Ventrué. Both are muscular and ever watchful; Wellesley calls them his "lieutenants." He introduces the Amerindian woman as Eleanor Van Hasen, the head of the city's Tremere. He also identifies the leader of the sewer rats in the corner as Augustin, who, together with his childe Calebros and their fellow Radcliffe, serve as the Camarilla's eyes and ears throughout the Five Boroughs. Before Wellesley can identify any of the other Kindred present, something catches his eye and he begs their pardon before heading to the entrance to speak to an attendant. "She arrives," Van Hasen says cryptically, her eyes following Wellesley.

Before any of the characters can ask what Eleanor means, a tall blonde woman glides into the room. Although dressed in modern fashion and appearing every bit the Victorian lady, her manner suggests royalty and power. Wellesley bows to her, as do the other guests, though none as effusively as Aimery, whose cocky edge vanishes. "Lady Catherine," he almost simpers as he sketches a florid bow. Catherine ignores him and approaches Wellesley, offering her hand.

She fixes the characters with a steely glare. "Our guests, Joseph?"

"Our kin from York, my lady," Aimery states, interjecting in an effort to gain attention. He starts to name the characters' sires, but is cut short.

"I know who they are, Aimery," Catherine states coolly, gliding toward the coterie. She holds out a hand for each to kiss, calmly gauging their reaction. "Your sires take great risk in sending you to us." Her voice is measured. "But then I recall when they were young and impetuous. One word of advice for you: Never assume our enemy is stupid. Yes, they believe that power lies in strength, but they are old and cunning. Ecaterina and Polonia are worthy adversaries, players of a game in which they control most of the board and can make new pawns almost at will. Be careful not to play by their rules." She asks briefly after the characters' sires, and after a few minutes, Wellesley asks if she can speak privately. The characters are left to mingle with the other guests. Throughout this time, Aimery's eyes remain locked on the woman, a look of petulance coming over him when Wellesley departs with Catherine.

## Small Talk

The guests at Wellesley's party offer up a host of information and advice. You may mention any or all of the following in characters' conversations:

- Catherine once ruled New York directly but in recent years has distanced herself from the city, residing in Albany. Her reasons for moving are unclear.
- Aimery feels that he should be prince and resents Wellesley's position as Catherine's agent. The characters shouldn't rely on Aimery too much.
- Catherine is old and knew Aimery when both lived in England long before America's discovery. Her name then was Katla, but she Anglicized it following her relocation. The characters may have heard stories of her from their sires or other elders in Europe. (The players, of course, know exactly who she is.)
- The Sabbat fight amongst themselves for control of the Eastmans gang, which might provide an opening for daring Kindred.
- The Nosferatu Radcliffe with Teeth maintains regular contact with Sabbat Nosferatu, but remains a close confidant of Wellesley.
- The local Setites work for anyone who can pay their price.
- Anarchs in the city have love for neither the Sabbat nor the Camarilla, but make deals to advance their own positions.

Cahill, Durant and Van Hasen engage the characters in pleasantries for a little while and can provide the characters with insights into local Kindred and New York. If the characters don't do so of their own accord, Durant suggests that they mingle. "Such gatherings are rare and such opportunities shouldn't be wasted." If the characters bring up the matter of Yaroslav and a possible informant in the Camarilla, Wellesley or his lieutenants seem surprised but say little, no one committing to help the characters nor revealing what they might know of the situation.

## Scene 3 — Burning Time

While returning from Wellesley's gathering or back at the house, Aimery brings the characters' attention back to William Samuels. He is the only lead they have on the local leak, other than Wellesley and Catherine who might have other, private information. Aimery assures that the two elders are beyond reach, though, which leaves Samuels. He could inform the characters of vampire comings and goings, and give the characters insights into Yaroslav or who might have known about the newcomers' journey. According to Aimery,



Samuels resides almost permanently on Ellis Island, where even the Trinity struggles to gain information. If the characters are to investigate their discovery further, they can travel to the island and talk to Samuels. Aimery offers to provide a boat and helpers if needed, but does not aid the characters directly.

## Ellis Island Redux

Returning to Ellis Island — the characters either making their own way or with Aimery's assistance — is not difficult. Immigrants are asleep in the middle of the night and only a handful of mortal guards patrol the complex. The Hudson stops people escaping the island and the authorities have little reason to fear people sneaking onto the island. If intruders do encounter any guards, each has the following statistics: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Perception 2, Wits 1, Alertness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Firearms 2 and Willpower 4, and each carries a truncheon and an army revolver.

Provided they do nothing stupid (like talking loudly or using firearms), characters with at least one dot of Stealth can avoid guards and reach the immigration center. Entering the records hall requires a Perception + Security total of 3 or more. Once in the hall, the characters may turn on the main gaslights (although doing so likely attracts guards) or they may work using the small oil lanterns that dot the site.

Samuels is probably asleep on a cot in a back office. He rents an apartment but spends most of his waking and sleeping hours at work. If the characters have met him before, he recognizes them and is polite, but unless they have spoken to Wellesley beforehand and obtained his permission to interview him, the man is cool and uncooperative. He claims that information on who enters and leaves the city is a matter for the Dux Bellorum. At best, he assures the group that he has not leaked information about their arrival (the veracity of which is evident from his aura). Nor is he aware of who Yaroslav is, who else might have known about the characters' journey, or who else might have been aboard the ship. Ultimately, Samuels does not allow the characters access to his records or to those of mortal immigrants.

## Native Sons

If the characters did not arrive in New York aboard the *Campania*, their rationale for visiting Ellis Island may still be the same: the need to talk to Samuels as a first step toward identifying who has betrayed their arrival. The agent can have information on traveling vampires no matter the transport they use. Alternatively, Aimery might call on the characters to act as intermediaries with Samuels concerning the arrival of "other Kindred" whose actions need covering up. Aimery tells the truth when he says this, though not completely, which becomes apparent later.

If the vampires have secured Wellesley's authority (or convince Samuels that they have), he confesses that only three local Kindred should have known of their coming: Wellesley, Catherine and Aimery. He points out that any of them might have told others, Kindred or mortal associates. He assumes the Trinity — Augustin and his gang — knew too. If they want to dig deeper, he suggests that the characters deal with Augustin (if they haven't done so already). If anything of note happens in New York, the Nosferatu know of it and Samuels has heard that their influence spans factional lines.

Any effort to intimidate (or torture) Samuels draws Wellesley's ire. Punishment ranges from political isolation for threatening Samuels to a blood hunt if the characters try to kill him (but he escapes to report).

## Searching the Records

The characters may search Ellis Islands' records for more clues, whether the files are maintained by Samuels or the mortal authorities. Samuels is loath to allow this without Wellesley's authority. He doesn't prevent the characters from searching without permission, knowing he lacks the strength to do that, so promises Wellesley's retribution.

Finding Samuels' records on the characters' arrival is relatively easy if they win his cooperation. Even without his assistance, a cursory search of his office uncovers the documents. They're in code (Intelligence + Enigmas, difficulty 9, to decipher without Samuel's help). The records contain only the information provided to Samuels, the identity of their sponsor (Aimery), and who was notified of their arrival (Aimery and Wellesley). In short, there's little here that aids the characters' investigation. Nothing is mentioned of Yaroslav, and no other vampires seem to have traveled through Ellis in weeks.

The characters may also wish to search the mortal records of the *Campania*, which is a somewhat more challenging proposition. There are thousands of files in the immigration center. (In one day in 1907, 11,750 people will pass through the facility.) It requires an extended, teamwork Perception + Investigation role (difficulty 8, 6 with Samuels' help). Twenty successes are required. Each roll represents one hour of searching. The difficulty rises to 9 if the characters are careful (i.e., they re-pack boxes).

An obstacle is posed in this task: time (the characters have about five hours, assuming they start the search an hour or so after sunset) and the sheer volume of un-indexed records to sift through. The only way they can carry out the task successfully in the available time is to be brutal and not care about the state in which they leave documents. Assuming the characters do find the relevant *Campania* records, they discover little of interest in the passenger manifest. A close examination of the cargo manifest might be more enlightening. Thomas Albee (whom the newcomers or Samuels may have heard of as a Ventrue *antitribu*) or one of





his mortal agents is the consignee for six boxes loaded at Queenstown. What is he shipping into the city? Equipment? More Sabbat? The characters may put the pieces together and realize that this is how Yaroslav and perhaps other vampires traveled to New York.

### The Fire

Whether they search the records and realize what is buried there or not, the characters have only one chance to examine the information at Ellis Island. Shortly after their visit, a fire breaks out that consumes the entire complex. Officially, the fire is labeled an accident, but the characters may suspect arson. Is the timing a coincidence or is it linked to their visit? With whom have they discussed their search and shouldn't have? Is someone trying to cover their tracks — or incriminate them?

The fire is actually set by the Sabbat, tipped off by Aimery. (The sect wants the arrival of its vampires covered up, and the characters' interest in the site is enough to prompt Polonia to have the place destroyed.) Alternatively, the characters could set the fire themselves as means of hiding their actions — in particular if they kill Samuels and need to dispose of the body. Risks are posed if the characters set the fire. The most immediate is dealing with the Red Fear during the conflagration, but if their presence on Ellis becomes known, Wellesley may accuse them of endangering (or breaking) the Masquerade.

## Scene 4 — First Blood

About a month after the Ellis Island incident — time undoubtedly spent by the characters establishing themselves — Aimery calls upon them. Their sense of respect for elders may compel them to see him, as might the debt owed him for fostering their arrival. If neither of these pressures works, he hints at information that may be of use to them in further entrenching themselves. To outward appearances, he doesn't want to impose, but he does beg their assistance in a matter that causes him grief. To emphasize any obligation that the characters may feel toward Aimery, his call may interfere with or interrupt their own efforts to win domain, position or wealth. They have to stop what they're doing to help him. Ventrue duty supercedes Ventrue ambition... for now.

Part of Aimery's influence extends over the cramped Grand Central Terminal, built by Cornelius Vanderbilt in 1871. In recent weeks, another vampire seems to have been hunting in this part of his domain. The elder has been unable to identify the culprit and lacks the time to find the offender. He could call upon the prince for assistance, but that would be an intrusion, so he asks the coterie for help. (The characters, of course, may recognize the request as its own form of intrusion — and weakness.) Do they grant this favor? If he has promised them information for their help, he offers to keep them in-



formed of any major comings and goings through the station. That might give them insight into rivals' activities. In truth, Aimery doesn't plan to tell the characters anything given the identity of his "spy" in the station.

This is not a difficult task, just a time-consuming one. The culprit is Yvette Krupinski, the Toreador Embraced and then abandoned by Tamoszius Kuszleika. Her sire gave her little education in the ways of the Kindred. Over the handful of years since her Embrace, she has eked out an existence in Manhattan, hunting wherever and whenever she needs to. Although Aimery claims she is a "trespasser," she did in fact reach an agreement with her, trading information for the right to feed. Yvette is not, however, the most reliable informant and rarely remembers to report about the Kindred or agents she observes. She has broken her side of the deal by not communicating with Aimery, but not out of malice. Of course, malice is exactly what Aimery has in mind in setting the characters on Yvette.

Finding the intruder isn't difficult. She lingers in out-of-the-way corners of the terminal by night, reliving the crimes of her past. By day, she takes shelter in the tunnels. Confronting the girl with her infractions may present the characters with an interesting quandary. She protests accusations, claiming that she and Aimery had a deal amid her other ramblings. Are the characters hard-hearted enough to persecute this "innocent"? If they bully her, she flees to another part of Manhattan. Or do they attempt to educate her? The latter is by far the hardest option, but may provide the characters with an ally whose knowledge of the city streets is matched only by her insanity.

Sorting through the details of the encounter suggests that Aimery uses the characters to solve his problems. He doesn't want to dirty his own hands by dealing with Yvette, probably realizing that his deal with her is more of a liability than an asset. Indeed, if questioned about the arrangement he claims, "I assumed her silence meant that she had moved on," and that, "She didn't keep her end of the bargain, why should I?"

In truth, Aimery's association with the Sabbat makes Yvette a problem. The Sabbat have long sought oversight over the rail routes into the city. Although Yvette cares little for politics, her presence at Grand Central might reveal Aimery's connections to the enemy. Best that the problem is dealt with, and by hands other than his own. Yvette doesn't recognize Sabbat involvement in any scheme, but if asked about the Cainites on whom she has reported to Aimery, she mentions a handful of anonymous undead and lingers over one: a tall, veiled woman whose description matches Bishop Ecaterina. If the characters check with Wellesley or his lieutenants, they learn that no such report has been made. Since the station is Aimery's domain, reporting the information would have been his duty. Apparently Aimery forgot or is covering up the Sabbat's passage.

Do the characters go to Wellesley with this information? If so, he denies equating the "veiled woman" to Ecaterina, putting it all down to the ramblings of a deranged girl. Or the characters could keep the knowledge to themselves and watch what

## If They Say No

If the characters refuse to help Aimery in this task, he storms away, muttering about "ungrateful whelps." Two nights later when the characters rise, telegrams await from their sires who are "disheartened by this lack of decorum in dealing with elders." Even if the characters' sires were bitter foes of Aimery back in York, he is still Ventrue and deserves respect. The characters' refusal reflects badly on their sires, who suggest that the coterie should apologize to Aimery and assist him. If they still refuse, decorum goes out the window and the characters face the consequences of ignoring Ventrue protocol. Rumors soon circulate throughout the city — spread by Aimery — that the characters do not honor their betters or fellow Ventrue, and that they are concerned only with their own position, not that of the clan or Camarilla.

Aimery does. This is one of his steps on the road to joining the Sabbat, though the direction of his path is not yet apparent.

It's also possible that the characters ask why Aimery doesn't deal with Yvette himself. The obvious answer — and the one he gives if challenged — is that hunting down a street urchin is beneath his station. He would rather the coterie acted on his behalf. In truth, that's likely a Blue Blood approach to the problem.

Yvette herself is not yet important to the fate of New York in the Gilded Age, but the coterie's actions are. If the characters drive Yvette off, find her other hunting grounds or try to teach her about her undead nature, Aimery wins. She is no longer a spy at Grand Central Terminal and he can secretly hand over control of the station to the Sabbat.

Yvette is a 10th-generation Toreador with the following statistics: Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Wits 2, Performance (Violin) 4, Survival (Urban) 4, Auspex 2, Celerity 2, a blood pool of 13 and a Willpower of 3. She is unarmed.

## Scene 5 — Building Bridges

Nights after resolving the situation at Grand Central Terminal, Aimery calls on the coterie to join him at a suite of the Waldorf-Astoria on 34th Street. Provided they dress appropriately and do not cause a ruckus, the characters have no trouble entering the hotel. Some of the staff is under the influence of the city's prominent Toreador, who maintain a series of rooms for "special clients." Aimery has rented one such suite for several weeks while his own staff carries out work on his haven near Central Park.

If the characters helped Aimery in the previous scene, he claims to be impressed by their diligence and dedication, so



much so that he wonders if they might help him with another matter. If they did not assist him with Yvette (or did so under duress), he appears to be magnanimous and offers them a second chance to prove their loyalty to the Ventrue.

This time, he seeks help with another of the city's powerful Kindred, a Ventrue named Douglas Callihan, who "eschews the traditional power structure" (a polite phrase for him being that most unusual form of Ventrue, an anarch). Aimery neglects to mention that Callihan is actually *antitribu* (although the characters may already know this, along with Callihan's former ties to the Sabbat). Thanks to his one-time position in Tammany Hall, Callihan wields formidable political power and competes with Joseph Wellesley for dominion over New York's Democrats. If the coterie has had any dealings with the city's gangs, they may already have encountered some of Callihan's cronies. His haven is located in the Dusters' territory, and several senior gang members are under his influence. They have not all met Callihan himself, though.

Aimery states that he has had unfortunate run-ins with Callihan in the past and therefore requires their services as neutral intermediaries for negotiation. He wants to secure Callihan's political support for a candidate in the upcoming city election in exchange for a stabilization of some domain borders. As incentive for the characters, Aimery states that should they secure any more concessions from Callihan, they can keep them. If the characters hesitate, he sweetens the pot more, perhaps offering to grant part or all of the contested domain (part of the city docks) in exchange for winning Callihan's support. Aimery seems fixated on the idea of installing his own political candidate (but still with the characters' and Callihan's assistance).

Aimery thinks this political move is a means to bolstering his power base, gaining influence in the city's mortal politics as the unification of the boroughs approaches. He also seeks to establish Callihan as an associate if not a full ally. Aimery is prepared to barter away domains under nominal personal and Camarilla influence to win the anarch's support. To accomplish all this, Aimery needs to repair the damage done by his earlier heavy-handed attempts to dislodge Callihan. The characters' role as middlemen is intended to placate Callihan so that he doesn't refuse the deal outright. Aimery provides a letter to be delivered to Callihan, but authorizes the characters to "negotiate as needed."

Aimery and Callihan compete over the Hudson River docks. Callihan dominates much of the area through the

Dusters and other agents. The remainder is under Aimery's tenuous influence. But the docks as a whole are threatened by Sabbat-manipulated gangs such as the Marginals and by Wellesley's immigration authorities. Aimery offers to defend Callihan's claim, saying that he will ask Wellesley to leave Callihan in place as a buffer against the Sabbat. In return, Aimery wants to exploit Callihan's Tammany Hall connections. He's willing to negotiate what exactly constitutes Callihan's claim on the Hudson. Callihan wants all of the docks, but Aimery suggests that the area between 10th and 25th Streets should be the boss'. Callihan wants active assistance against Sabbat incursions (which Aimery will not provide, though members of the coterie are free to volunteer their own services). It should be noted that nowhere does Aimery specifically pledge the Camarilla to recognizing Callihan's domain — a deliberate omission.

Callihan is easy to find by those who know where to look. Daring to enter Dusters territory soon puts characters face to face with gang members. None of them know what Callihan really is, of course, but they know enough to be afraid of him; he's in charge, no questions asked. Characters who insist on being taken to Callihan quickly get their way if the coterie suggests that "the boss will be upset" if they're not. Word is sent ahead to the anarch and he prepares to receive the characters in a remote warehouse.

Callihan is not a typical Venture. He doesn't adhere to any of the clan conventions and addresses the characters in a familiar and aggressive manner. He doesn't call them "Mister X" or "Miss Y," but simply by their surnames and doesn't hesitate to interrupt and talk over them. His leadership isn't a question based on what the characters see of his Hudson domain, but he eschews established social mores, making him a very unusual clan member. If questioned, he demonstrates that he *does* know accepted etiquette. He just ignores it, just as he does Ventrue society. If the characters are so gauche as to inquire after Callihan's sire — and he certainly probes them for details on theirs — he spits and denounces "that rat bastard Albee." The characters may be aware of Thomas Albee from the episode on Ellis Island. They may have also learned that Albee is Callihan's main Sabbat opponent in the shadow war for the docks. Any suggestion that the characters are opposed to Albee counts in their favor with Callihan. Promises of aid against the Sabbat Ventrue are a sure way of winning the anarch's temporary allegiance.

If the characters facilitate an accord between Aimery and Callihan, the former is pleased and extols their virtues. Despite what he said previously, however, he is jealous of any additional concessions they acquire for themselves. If no accord is reached, Aimery is reserved but inwardly no less pleased. The characters continue to act as his pawns in Cainite circles and may yet facilitate his "great victory."

*In exchange for supporting a candidate of my choosing in the city legislature, I, Aimery Methuin, will do all in my power to ensure the docks between 10th Street and 25th on the Hudson River go uncontested.*

*Aimery de Methuin*





## Scene 6 — The War Party

Nights after the meeting with Callihan, events in the city take a turn for the worse as the Sabbat stages a series of attacks on the Camarilla heartland of Manhattan. The characters go about their own business when they hear reports that the premises of one of their interests is on fire. If they approach the site, the characters are attacked (individually or *en masse* depending on their circumstances) by a number of vampires they have never seen before. The attackers are weak and have little grasp of their Disciplines, but are confident — overconfident. The aggressors probably have little hope of winning a fight, though they may keep characters occupied for a while.

Indeed, the characters may wonder why such paltry forces engage them. A miscalculation? A distraction? A warning? And why now? The Camarilla is no weaker than it was before, so have the Sabbat received reinforcements? The characters may already know the answer if they have investigated Ellis Island — Sabbat vampires have been "imported" into the city. Perhaps many have been brought in over time.

If the characters do not investigate the first fire, they receive a succession of reports about blazes across the city. Most sites are not connected to the characters, but a few fall under their domain.

These attacks are staged by imported and newly Embraced Sabbat, intended to sow confusion and draw attention away from the main objectives: Wall Street and the city's Tremere. The repercussions of both main attacks are learned of as the night progresses.

Diversionary attacks are targeted specifically at the characters' interests by information provided by Aimery. The characters' ties to Aimery mean that the attacks on them are half-hearted, though (the elder Ventrue has told the Sabbat that the characters are his pawns and should be spared the worst). And yet, complacency in responding can mean the loss of these holdings.

## The Incursion

Characters with access to a telephone get a call about the fire(s). Others are visited by a mortal agent. Word spreads quickly among the Kindred. The Sabbat focus on Camarilla holdings under cover of a mortal gang war. Several prominent Kindred might also be missing, feared engaged by the Sabbat. Among them are Eleanor Van Hasen, Aloisius Cahill and Aimery. Wellesley has called for every available Kindred to come to the sect's defense. The characters are free to respond as they please. Characters with vulnerable domains may try to protect them, or may ally with other Camarilla to protect certain locales, such as Wall Street. Do the characters answer the call immediately or do they wait a while to see how events pan out? A cold and clinical — and perhaps typically Ventrue



—approach is to look for rewards in the attack. "If I wait, will the Sabbat destroy my rivals before I destroy them?"

The Sabbat have two distinct advantages in this raid: They outnumber Camarilla defenders (despite attackers being young), and they have no care for any Masquerade. Camarilla vampires may make an effort to conceal their powers, but Wellesley recognizes the limits on such endeavors. He doesn't punish any characters who can justify their actions in the nights that follow. Using Disciplines overtly to take down a Sabbat vampire is permissible. Dominating a crowd of mortals and using them to take down the Cainite is not. Characters with media (and related) influence find their services needed as the Camarilla conceals events later.

About an hour before dawn, the attacks diminish as the invaders withdraw to their havens. The characters may do likewise, but before they get too far they become aware of a major commotion. A pack of between six and a dozen vampires harries an individual, who in turn actively engages his tormentors. It's Aimery, clearly injured but defiant. If the characters move to aid him, the war party withdraws after losing a member or two, cursing as it goes.

The pack leader is Yaroslav, who targets the characters directly. This time the coterie probably has no compunction about fighting him. (The characters may even seek to capture him to extract information about events on their journey.) Yaroslav has no intention of being captured. If he can't escape, he fights to the bitter end. Captured, Yaroslav can reveal little more than the characters already know—that he and a handful of other Sabbat were carried aboard the *Campania* as cargo. He can't identify the informant in the Camarilla, though he believes it's someone in Wellesley's inner circle. He has looked for the characters since and hoped that he might run into them this night to finish the fight he picked.

Aimery is bloody (most of it not his own) but seems energetic, almost hyperactive, his eyes gleaming. If the characters examine him with *Auspex*, they see his aura is shot through with black. He has committed diablerie at some point during the night. He acknowledges his "indiscretion" if confronted, but answers that feeding on Sabbat isn't an offense. Under the circumstances of the attack, the characters should realize that Aimery is unlikely to be punished.

Ultimately, there is little time for chitchat. With dawn approaching, the characters must return to their havens (if any survived the arson attacks) or find temporary refuge.

## Bitter Victory

The night after the Sabbat incursion, Wellesley summons a number of Kindred (including the characters) to the same 5th Avenue venue where they were presented to him. He applauds their efforts on the Camarilla's behalf (or berates their inaction, depending on their choices and whether word of them could have spread). The characters learn of the

casualties of the attack. "Known" elders such as Aimery and Alicia Durant seem to have been targeted by whole packs. Aimery and Alicia prevailed, but Aloisius Cahill is missing, presumed to have met Final Death or having been driven into torpor. Eleanor Van Hasen, Manhattan's senior Tremere, is believed destroyed, slain in her lair near the Astor Library, allegedly by Bishop Ecaterina herself. The Camarilla enclave has weathered the attack, but the long-term repercussions are distressing.

Unbeknownst to Wellesley and the characters, rumors of Ecaterina's involvement are just that, rumors. The true culprit was Aimery, who diablerized Van Hasen after gaining access to her haven on the pretense of delivering news about the attack. Characters somehow in possession of Necromancy (or who can persuade Donatello Giovanni to aid an investigation, perhaps proposing a deal similar to any made with Callihan) may be able to uncover some discrepancies in Aimery's story. Perhaps they summon a ghost who witnessed the slaying. As Van Hasen was diablerized, her soul cannot be summoned via Necromancy. That absence, combined with Aimery's diablerie, may be a clue to investigators. There were no mortal or Kindred witnesses to the attack.

## Sabbat Licks

Each of the Sabbat neonates fought by the characters is a 12th-generation Tzimisce with the following statistics: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Wits 2, Alertness 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Firearms 3, Potence 2, Vicissitude 2, and a blood pool of 12. Each carries a club and knife, though about half also wield army pistols.

## Scene 7 — The Devil's Den

Weeks pass after the Sabbat assault and the city appears to return to its usual routine. The enclave mourns the loss of Eleanor Van Hasen, a cornerstone in the city's defense. Her deputy, Cornelius Eckhart, rises to the head of the chantry, but as a European-born Tremere he seems to lack Eleanor's affinity for the city and its inhabitants. Wellesley reminds the Kindred to be vigilant—the enemy clearly knew precisely where Eleanor and other notables laired. He privately warns that not only may Sabbat agents be active in the city, probing for weaknesses, but some Camarilla members may try to exploit the situation. General suspicion falls on the Nosferatu, whose contacts with their Sabbat counterparts are an open secret. (Wellesley refuses to believe any wrongdoing of Augustin and his brood.) As newcomers, characters might also come under suspicion, unless they've comported themselves well. They may have proved aggressive in the attack or were complacent. The characters may be concerned about public opinion or may disregard it. After all, the incursion destroyed a few Kindred. Former domains are up for grabs, and whoever claims them wields real power.



The city's independents take on greater significance in this period of phony war. The characters already know Callihan and may seek further deals with him. They may also turn to Donatello Giovanni in the aftermath of Scene 6. Other Camarilla advocate making alliances with independents to hold off the Sabbat, or they simply approach the neutrals to shore up their individual defenses.

### Mixed Messages

Now ensconced back in his own mansion, Aimery once more calls on the characters for assistance. Since the Sabbat incursion, some Kindred have tested the domains of rivals (and allies) in search of newly developed weaknesses. Now that word of his victimization has spread, Aimery's scattered influences have been threatened by anarchs, Sabbat and even some Camarilla. He feels it's time to make his position clear, to "push back." He could do so himself — and has in some cases, in his own ineffectual way — but he needs to make a significant impression. Thus, he requests the characters' aid. He calls on them to "deal with" his rivals, offering any territory or prizes that they gain. Several individuals threaten Aimery and he'd like to see them "brought into line" or replaced with allies.

Aimery's plan to use the characters as "muscle" does not improve his position as much as he expects. While it demon-

### Aimery's List

Aimery provides the characters with a number of "targets" in the upper-midtown area surrounding his domain. Most are neutrals or Sabbat-controlled, but some are fellow Camarilla members. The characters may decide whom they visit, intimidate, pressure or assault, with varying results.

- A Lasombra lairs somewhere near St. Thomas' Church (east 53rd Street) and preys upon the upper-crust congregation. Whoever controls St. Thomas' (regardless of Wellesley's proscription against influencing the church) has a hold over the moneyed families of 5th Avenue.

- A feral Kindred — presumably a Gangrel — roams Blackwell Island in the East River. He appears to stand aloof from the factional conflict. Could he be persuaded to take a more active role?

- The tenements along the East River, in particular around Sutton Place, seem to be the focus of numerous unsavory dealings such as prostitution and drug dealing, all under the influence of the Setite Lenore. Her influence this close to the "heart" of genteel society is a threat. Perhaps she could be persuaded to turn her attention elsewhere (see "The Serpent's Den," below).

- A Ventruë neonate has installed himself in newly built mansions on 51st Street, assuming the role of a reclusive aristocrat and preying on his neighbors. Aimery claims some of this interloper's victims are part of his herd and he wishes to discourage the newcomer.

strates his ability to rally others to his cause, it demonstrates personal weakness. He himself doesn't make the rounds, or his own point. So who has the real power? Aimery's mindset is distinctly feudal. He regards the characters' service as akin to calling upon vassals to do their duty. To more modern minds, it's a delegation of responsibility. Do the characters exploit the opportunity at Aimery's expense? Can they afford not to?

There are few repercussions to "dealing" with anarch and Sabbat figures — the characters may have been doing so for some time now — but this may be their first effort to directly counteract other Camarilla vampires. Do they "encourage" domain incumbents to accept Aimery (or their) authority, or do they seek to replace targets, perhaps earning Wellesley's wrath? Or do the characters leave Camarilla domains alone, forcing Aimery to contend with them himself? (The last option infuriates Aimery, of course, making the characters targets of his manipulation and abuse now more so than ever.)

### The Serpent's Lair

Most of the targets provided by Aimery are straightforward, demanding persuasion or force for resolution. Lenore's opium den is more problematic.

Characters who have sought dominion over the drug trade may already be familiar with such locales (and with Lenore). Most sites are on the Lower East Side, but some can be found throughout the city. The Sutton Place establishment in particular has gained notoriety because of the range of drugs available there. Rumors abound of something more potent than opium, and of certain "physical pleasures" available to visitors. Some of the mortal upper class already indulge themselves there.

Lenore herself presently oversees the establishment and greets the coterie civilly if not warmly, listening to what they have to say. She claims to "provide a service" and has no intention of abandoning the den or of tolerating any outside interference. That is, at least not without some form of recompense. "I give people what they want," she explains. "I serve as a facilitator of diverse interests, as Aimery and his lady know. What do *you* offer me? What do you want?" Lenore is seductive and beguiling, seeking to manipulate the characters rather than be their victim. "Ask that bastard Aimery what he's willing to exchange. Be back swiftly and we can *all* deal."

If the characters attempt to use force — not a wise course in a building full of drug-fueled lackeys and ghouls — Lenore fights back. She's an 8th-generation Setite with the following statistics: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2, Wits 3, Alertness 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Firearms 2, Celerity 2, Obfuscate 3, Presence 2, Serpents 4, and a blood pool of 15. She's unarmed. Aiding Lenore are a dozen ghouls, each with the following statistics: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Wits 1, Alertness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Firearms 3, Potence 1. Ten carry .44 single-action pistols while two wield 12-gauge shotguns. The ghouls fight to the death while Lenore seeks to escape if the battle goes against her.



## Scene 8 — Final Bid

It's late when the characters approach Aimery's mansion. The characters may pursue any form of business, perhaps returning with word from Lenore or information on any progress in their efforts to deal with his opponents. An unfamiliar black carriage stands outside the home. The driver sits, unblinking, and doesn't respond to questions. When they ring the doorbell, a retainer answers and invites them in, ushering them into a parlor — not the one in which they first met Aimery. "The Master has guests," the ghoul explains, "but he will be with you momentarily." Ten minutes later, the characters hear voices in the hall outside. Aimery then opens the parlor door and strolls in, surprisingly casual and animated, as if some great weight has been lifted from his shoulders. He stands in the doorway and looks the characters over. "Well, out with it."

Regardless of what the characters have to say, Aimery laughs and steps to one side to reveal his guest: a tall, graceful woman dressed head to toe in black. She wears a veil that fails to hide her piecing eyes. Nor does it contain her chestnut hair, her one touch of color. Aimery pointedly *does not* introduce her, but she speaks: "Soon you won't have to deal with such problems, Aimery." She lifts her hand and he kisses

it. Not the chivalrous kiss of a gentleman to a lady, but that of an obsequious vassal to his liege. Outside, two black-dressed figures have emerged and wait. One may be recognizable from the Sabbat raid nights before. One could even be Yaroslav.

Finally, Aimery announces, "Good night, Lady Ecaterina."

### Journey of the Damned

The characters — even the most decorous ladies — may "give oaths" at this scene, assuming that they hadn't already guessed that Aimery was betraying the Camarilla. He turns calmly to address them and makes no aggressive moves, but is ready to act if the characters strike.

Aimery counters any physical violence with his formidable Disciplines. Presence and Dominate are his first choices, but he resorts to more physical powers if need be. If fighting does break out, he is quickly joined by a half-dozen ghouls (use the same stats as for Lenore's assistants, save that they have Dexterity 3 and Dodge 3). They defend their master but neither they nor Aimery seem to want to cause lasting harm to the characters, and take steps to calm the combatants.

In the meantime, Ecaterina departs in her coach with her guards. Should the characters pursue her, Aimery comes to her defense and seeks to delay the coterie.

If the characters do not attack Aimery (or if he survives the assault and calms them down), he invites them to sit and listen, referring to them as "my loyal companions." How the conver-





sation develops depends on the questions asked, but the following points are likely.

- **Is he truly dealing with the Sabbat?** Yes, he has been speaking to several of them, Ecaterina and Thomas Albee among them. While such relations are a breach of the Masquerade, they're hardly worthy of a blood hunt. If they were, Augustin and his fellow Nosferatu would have met Final Death long ago.

- **Is he Sabbat?** Not in so many words. He's frustrated by the Camarilla's denial of his power and potency. He believes that the Sabbat will show him the respect he deserves

- **Is he working with the Sabbat?** "Bien sur." As he may have said, they recognize power and offer him the opportunity to realize his potential rather than elevating brats such as Wellesley to the city's highest office.

- **Was he involved with the slaying of the Tremere Eleanor Van Hasen?** He smiles. "On that one thing I bow to the old bastard of London town. The Warlocks are not to be trusted, but they make fine dining." The characters may recall Aimery's black-shot aura.

- **What about his loyalty to Clan Ventrue?** "Noblesse oblige is supposed to run both ways." Catherine has overlooked him and he has little compunction about dismissing her.

- **Will he betray the city?** That depends on the definition of "betray." Will he unseat Wellesley and the Camarilla? Yes. That's not, however, the same as betraying the city or its Kindred. The Camarilla is already rotten, "manipulated by arrogant elders like that bitch Katla" for their own ends and even their masters'. He has met Mithras and knows how inscrutable the most ancient Kindred are. He certainly does not believe Wellesley has earned or warrants his current position.

- **Will he stop them from telling Wellesley?** "Why should I? You stand to gain as much from this as I do." He points out that the characters could turn him in to Wellesley and get a pat on the head, or they could work with him, exploiting the situation to build their own standing.

- **What if they do tell Wellesley?** Aimery is confident that nothing can stop his rise now, and feels generous. He suggests that if they don't interfere he would owe them a major boon. He has influence and knows things that would be useful. He'll give it all to them, provided they don't turn him in.

- **Or Catherine?** "Who do you think gave me the idea to forsake the Camarilla? She cares little for sects; she looks out for herself. Katla sees how dangerous the situation here is and follows her own path. Why do you think she stepped down from power and retreated to the country, putting a puppet in her place? Why shouldn't I do the same?"

There is actually more truth here than Aimery realizes. Catherine really does care little for the Camarilla and sees Aimery's planned defection as a test for her own possible change of allegiance.

- **Would he abandon his defection plans?** If the characters blackmail him, he'll profess undying loyalty to the Camarilla.

Public scrutiny directed against Aimery actually puts him in a difficult position, though. If Ecaterina (or Polonia) hears of Aimery's "protests of loyalty" to the Camarilla and ever believes that he will renege on their deal, he fears that the Sabbat will turn on him.

## Aftermath

Ultimately, Aimery's scheming puts the characters in a dangerous position. He leaves them to make their own decisions without force or threats. His departure is almost complete, after all. That, and he has cards of his own left to play.

If the characters accept his invitation to join the Sabbat, they accompany him in a brutal induction ceremony (see pp. 41-42 of *Guide to the Sabbat*). They are also assigned "minders" until their loyalty to their new sect is beyond question. Maybe they try to join the Sabbat and spy for the Camarilla. A valiant effort, but the Vaulderie rites they undergo severely hamper any such espionage, particularly as the characters' "minders" participate in the vinculum. Getting in is the easy part. Escaping is where the fun is. The characters' association with weak-willed Aimery doesn't count in their favor (particularly once Polonia exhausts Aimery's somewhat limited knowledge of New York). The coterie does have one major advantage if it joins the Sabbat, however. Members are fully educated in their powers rather than being foot soldiers created *en masse* for conflict in the city. They could go far on their own merits, regardless of Aimery.

The characters could try to interfere with Aimery's betrayal by one of several methods. They could inform Wellesley, but as Aimery suggests, that earns them only praise, not real power. The Dux Bellorum investigates their accusations and maybe even acts on them, but has little more than thanks for the characters. Besides, the characters have publicly served Aimery since their arrival. He can accuse them of complicity in his betrayal. Alternatively, the characters could try to destroy Aimery, but his Final Death would benefit them little, save in creating a power vacuum that they might struggle to fill. Murder also condemns the characters of a crime against the Camarilla. After all, no one else in the sect knows of Aimery's alleged offenses.

The third option — perhaps the riskiest but most profitable — is to blackmail the elder, exploiting him as a combination of captive resource and mentor. Actually, both sides might blackmail each other (again, for appearances' sake the characters aided Aimery's intrigue with the enemy). Coterie members could use his existing influence to its full potential and perhaps even expand on it in conjunction with their own, all of them working together as feuding bedfellows. All participants could profit from their mutual antipathy. And yet, Ecaterina and Polonia would be angered if Aimery suddenly cheated on his deal with them, and might seek to blackmail, disgrace or destroy him on their own. If the Sabbat discover the characters' involvement in Aimery's reversion, the coterie becomes a target, too.



Another course involves the characters being complicit in Aimery's betrayal. They can pressure him to "ride the fence" for as long as possible, using him to extract information from the Sabbat and feed false information back. This "double agent" strategy is dangerous. It could go wrong at any time, say when false information is traced back to the coterie, when the characters themselves are fed false information, or when Aimery arranges personal protection and goes over completely, planting evidence of the characters' involvement. Using Aimery as a double agent could win the characters personal gains, such as knowledge of who will be targeted by the Sabbat next and how their domains can be absorbed. Or Aimery could be used for the benefit of the Camarilla, gaining information about the enemy that preserves the standoff in the city.

A final possibility is the head-in-the-sand approach. The characters feign ignorance of Aimery's plans, or move to another city before matters become public. This tack probably isn't high on the characters' list, but if they can't dig up much dirt on Aimery or his blackmail leverage is stronger than theirs, playing dumb may be the only option short of joining the Sabbat. When Aimery changes sides, the characters have to account for themselves and any seeming alliance between them and their erstwhile patron. They can certainly claim to have been "under orders" and merely honored their elder by doing his bidding, but such claims don't win the characters any esteem. In fact, the characters humiliate themselves and their bloodlines, proving that they lack the sense, insight and keen minds of respectable Ventrue.

## Ramifications

So, what happens after Aimery abandons the Camarilla or the characters intercept or join him? A Camarilla enclave survives in New York until the end of the 20th century (when Polonia slays Prince Michaela).

The characters' actions in the Victorian Age can impact the size of that enclave, though. Aimery's betrayal (and possibly that of the coterie) hastens a collapse, leading to Wellesley and his successors overseeing a much-reduced bastion. Indeed, the Camarilla barely maintains a hold on Manhattan. The characters are probably condemned as the "Betrayers of New York," a stigma that's impossible to shake, no matter where they journey or how much time passes. The character's legacy is that of a "failed bloodline," the shame of their actions passed onto their childer and grandchilder. The Camarilla doesn't trust them or members of their lineage. Nor do other Ventrue accept the lines, treating them as rogues and cutting them off from the networks in which clan members operate. The characters' childer have to prove themselves under any circumstances. The "sins of the fathers," indeed. The characters' sires likewise suffer for producing such treacherous progeny. Were the neonates ever taught values and traditions? Was their Embrace a mistake?

If the characters persuade Aimery to remain outwardly loyal to the Camarilla, they may be able to strengthen the sect's

position in New York, or at least prolong the status quo. While not likely to be hailed as the "Saviors of New York," the characters may win the respect of any peers who learn the truth of how Aimery is handled. Certainly going public with Aimery's intended betrayal, and the characters' arguable contribution to it, is a dubious option. Ultimately, Catherine Trandor perceives the reality of what has transpired. She encouraged Aimery to change sides, and when it doesn't happen she quietly investigates. She gains some respect for younger generations in New York as a result. Wellesley and the characters have all impressed her. That doesn't change her attitude toward the Camarilla, however, or its vulnerability in New York and abroad. Catherine smiles distantly upon the characters and their childer, opening doors for them and occasionally testing their mettle. Yet that favor carries responsibility with it. The characters and their progeny are expected to perform superlatively in her eyes.

No matter whether the characters go to the Sabbat or remain true to the Camarilla, Catherine watches them and their childer. The bloodlines could help her join the Sabbat when the time is right, or she could seek to parry their strikes if they try to stop her betrayal. If the characters' efforts on behalf of the Camarilla in New York are particularly productive, she may even go elsewhere, biding her time till she's ready to cross over. In some ways, she grooms the very opposition she faces in Act 3, creating a fitting challenge for herself when she's ready to defect.

## Major Characters

The following are the prominent players of this act. You may revise their profiles as best suits the players' characters and your vision of the ongoing chronicle.

### Joseph Wellesley, Dux Bellorum

**Background:** Joseph Wellesley was born into an English mercantile family in New York in the decades before the Revolutionary War. He thus grew up with privilege and power. He was a willing convert to the patriot banner and took part in the Battle of Harlem Heights (fought roughly between modern 96th and 110th Streets). His knowledge of the city made him an ideal spy, relaying news of troop movements and morale to the Continentals, and exploiting his family connections. Eventually, he fell foul of a greedy "friend." Captured in September, 1776, he received summary justice and was hanged. The execution was botched and Wellesley was left to choke to death, but not for long. His activities had been observed by the warriors of another conflict. As night fell, Wellesley was cut down and Embraced into Clan Ventrue. His neck still bears the scar of his abortive execution.

Wellesley had little time to adapt to his new circumstances, finding himself flung into another war, against which the revolution was a mere skirmish. He learned that two groups contested the night, the Camarilla that sought to hide





Joseph Wellesley

in the shadows and the Sabbat that desired open dominance. New York had for much of its history been under the control of the latter, but the bolstering of British forces in the colonies gave the Old World Ventrue an opportunity to strike back. In the chaos of the mortal war, Wellesley, his sire and a coterie of Kindred beat back their enemy and established a domain that, while small, was a thorn in the side of the Sabbat.

As before, Wellesley quickly established himself as spymaster, utilizing what remained of his mortal network. By the early 1780s, Camarilla influence extended throughout the southern half of Manhattan Island, and the shadow war wound down along with the mortal conflict. The Treaty of Paris saw the British withdraw from America, and left the Camarilla in an awkward position. The ability of the European Ventrue to support their colony was sorely limited. While the Sabbat lacked the forces to eject the invaders, the Camarilla barely had enough strength to maintain its domain, at least if the Traditions were to be upheld.

Wellesley's martial skill and political insight brought him to the attention of Catherine Trandor, who sought a young and dynamic warlord to oversee the long siege against the Sabbat. Few questioned his appointment. His ability outweighed his "youth" and few dared to challenge Trandor, then the prince pro-tem of the city. When Trandor chose to relocate to Albany in upstate New York,

placing herself outside the Sabbat cordon, she left Wellesley in command of Manhattan, much to the chagrin of older Kindred.

Wellesley is well aware of Aimery's jealousy, but hopes to exploit the elder vampire's power and prestige to advance the Camarilla cause. Indeed, the plan already seems to be burgeoning with the arrival of new Kindred from the Fief of York. It remains to be seen if these newcomers will aid the Camarilla's cause or merely Aimery's.

**Image:** Wellesley is tall, clean-shaven and immaculately presented as befits a gentleman of breeding in New York. His manners are likewise impeccable and he always dresses in the most elegant fashions of the period, complete with a high collar and necktie that hides his scar. His demeanor is always formal and correct, his manners unquestionable. Yet, emphasis on doing things the correct way lends him a cold and aloof air that hinders interactions with the "foot soldiers" in his war against the Sabbat.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You constantly strive to give off a presence of civility, all the while battling your inner demons. Honor and status compel you to stay in New York and defend the Camarilla's holdings. You are stoic, pledged to defend New York to your last drop of blood.

**Clan:** Ventrue

**Sire:** Lord James

**Nature:** Architect

**Demeanor:** Traditionalist

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 1777 (born 1749)

**Apparent Age:** Late 20s

**Physical:** Strength (Reserves of Strength) 5, Dexterity (Swift) 4, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma (Genteel) 5, Manipulation (Persuasive) 5, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception (Careful) 4, Intelligence (Analytical) 5, Wits (Ambushes) 4

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Athletics (Dancing) 5, Brawl 3, Dodge (Cover) 5, Empathy 3, Expression 2, Intimidation (Pulling Rank) 6, Leadership (Military) 5, Streetwise (Gangs) 5, Subterfuge (Feigning Mortality) 4

**Skills:** Animal Ken 3, Etiquette (Business) 6, Firearms (Pistols) 5, Melee (Sabre) 4, Ride (Races) 5, Security 3, Survival 3

**Knowledges:** Academics (American Revolution) 3, Enigmas (Code Breaking) 4, Finance (Accounting) 5, Investigation (Shadowing) 4, Law (contracts) 5, Occult 3, Politics (City) 5, Science 3

**Disciplines:** Celerity 3, Dominate 4, Fortitude 5, Potence 4, Presence 4

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Contacts 3, Herd 4\*, Influence 4, Resources 5, Retainers 3, Status 3



**Virtues:** Conscience 4, Self-Control 3, Courage 3

**Morality:** Humanity 5

**Willpower:** 6

\* Wellesley feeds only from vessels whose families lived in America before the Revolution.

## Aimery Methuin

**Background:** In the 900 years since his Embrace, Aimery has sought to extend his power but has met repeated setbacks. The denial of his ambition has led to a darkening of his demeanor, and to anger at others who have "cost him what is his by right." Spite and vindictiveness now temper his drive and competitiveness, and he's likely to undertake endeavors simply to spoil the plans of rivals.

After his failures to advance his position in York, he sought to gain power elsewhere, at first joining the coalition that fought Prince Mithras in the mid-13th century and then playing an active (but ultimately unrewarding) role in the War of the Roses in the 15th century. The last straw was the English Civil War, which pitted Ventrue against Toreador, further solidifying power in the hands of those who already had it. Realizing that he would have little hope of success in Europe, Aimery opted to take a great risk and hid himself away among mortals voyaging to the New World.

At first, he settled in Boston building up his power base, but when the Ventrue's hold over the city collapsed in 1783, he escaped the bloody purges that followed and moved south, residing in Hartford for a decade, then Philadelphia, and finally New York. His old acquaintance Katla Thrandottir — Catherine Trandor as she now called herself — offered him refuge in "her" city, at first using him as a pawn and later as a guinea pig for her own plans. Aimery thus found himself under the authority of Ventrue who were not only his social inferiors, but hundreds of years younger. In particular, he resented the young warlord Joseph Wellesley, whose position Aimery felt should be his. After all, had he not been fighting Christ's enemies before the end of the first millennium? Wellesley claimed that Aimery had little comprehension of modern tactics or the impact of firearms, but surely that was just an excuse by the upstart to maintain power. Regardless, Wellesley entwined himself with the Camarilla apparatus and ensured that any attempt to unseat him would doom the Camarilla domain in the city. Of course, that assumed plotters cared about sect politics.

**Image:** Aimery's gaunt appearance fits well in the Victorian Age, as does his martial demeanor. Still, his antiquated manners, arrogance and outmoded fashion sense make him stand out among both mortals and Kindred. He barely conceals his disdain for the undead of New York and is openly scornful of many, Wellesley in particular, whom he regards as inferiors. His speech is crisp and distinctly English, but occasionally his pronunciation hints of a foreign birth, especially when he's angry.



**Roleplaying Hints:** They deny you your birthright and have done so repeatedly over the centuries. They fear that once you gain power their weaknesses will become apparent. The Camarilla is the tool of those who keep you down. While you once saw the benefits of the sect, now it's an albatross around your neck, preventing you from reaching your full potential and keeping fools in power. What should you care for its fate?

**Clan:** Ventrue

**Sire:** Olivier

**Nature:** Pedagogue

**Demeanor:** Autocrat

**Generation:** 8th

**Embrace:** 950 (born 924)

**Apparent Age:** Late 20s

**Physical:** Strength (Iron Grip) 4, Dexterity (Lithe) 4, Stamina (Determined) 4

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance (Dignified) 4

**Mental:** Perception (Careful) 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness (Ambushes) 4, Athletics (Acrobatics) 6, Brawl (Wrestling) 5, Dodge (Sidestep) 5, Empathy 2, Intimidation (Veiled Threats) 5, Leadership (Noble) 4, Streetwise (Gangs) 4, Subterfuge (Impeccable Lies) 4



**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Etiquette (Kindred Society) 4, Firearms 3, Melee (Swords) 6, Ride (Mounted Combat) 6, Security 3, Survival (Hunting) 4

**Knowledges:** Academics (History) 3, Enigmas 2, Finance 3, Investigation (Search) 5, Law (Contracts) 4, Occult (Kindred Lore) 4, Politics (Camarilla) 4, Science 3

**Disciplines:** Animalism 3, Auspex 4, Celerity 3, Dominate 4, Fortitude 4, Potence 3, Presence 2

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Contacts 3, Herd 3\*, Influence 2, Resources 3, Retainers 3, Status 3

**Virtues:** Conviction 4, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

**Morality:** Humanity 4

**Willpower:** 3

\* Aimery feeds only on soldiers.

### Ecaterina the Wise, Bishop of New York

7th generation, childe of Marhuel

**Clan:** Brujah

**Nature:** Rogue

**Demeanor:** Traditionalist

**Embrace:** 1150 (born circa 1135)

**Apparent Age:** Mid-teens

Embraced after an attack by mercenaries in the employ of Prague's oppressive Ventrue lord, Ecaterina quickly gained power among the Kindred. She turned her formidable abili-



Ecaterina the Wise

ties against the Ventrue prince. When that gambit failed, she had little choice but to flee the city. She eventually threw her lot in with the nascent Anarch Movement, seeking to undermine the rigid hierarchy of vampire society. When the Camarilla formed, she pledged herself to the Sabbat, whose openness and honesty about their condition appealed to her. As the Camarilla extended its grip over Europe, Sabbat domains dwindled and Ecaterina chose to abandon her homeland in favor of the New World. She was one of the first immigrant Kindred in America, becoming the Bishop of New Amsterdam in 1661. When the English Ventrue sought to seize the new colonies for themselves, Ecaterina led the defense. Although mortal authority passed to the English, she rebuffed Camarilla pawns and the city — now called New York — remained a Sabbat domain.

In the years that followed, numerous challenges to her authority arose, both from the Sabbat and Camarilla. Ecaterina's fist challenge was her rival for bishop of the city, the Tzimisce Otahyoni, against whom she fought for two decades before the fleshcrafter's disappearance. Subsequent challengers were generally less confrontational in their approach, preferring to muddy the political waters. The growth of the city led to the establishment of multiple bishops, and later an archbishop, to oversee their actions.

Ecaterina does not contest the establishment of multiple domains — New York is huge — but is less appreciative of the Sabbat's efforts to reduce her influence by making her subservient to the younger (albeit talented) Polonia. She acknowledges his capabilities as a politician and leader, but feels that her experience would have made her a better archbishop, particularly given Polonia's methods of "encouraging" his subordinates by stirring up rivalries. In this modern Sabbat, Ecaterina sees many of the political games that turned her against the Camarilla half a millennium ago. In particular, the elevation of Turlev to the post of Bishop of Brooklyn smacks of efforts to intrude on her power. Yet she is unsure whether the architect of this plot is Polonia or some hitherto unknown faction of the Sabbat. Indeed, only her desire to shatter what little remains of the Camarilla in New York keeps her faithful to the Sabbat. It's thus ironic that as her own faith wavers, she has been assigned to bring over one of the Camarilla whose own faith has collapsed.

### Eleanor Van Hasen

9th generation, childe of Van Hasen

**Clan:** Tremere

**Nature:** Competitor

**Demeanor:** Judge

**Embrace:** 1715 (Born 1650)

**Apparent Age:** Mid-20s

When Dutch settlers founded New Amsterdam, they purchased land from the local tribes, many of whom continued to live on Manhattan Island. Among the colonists was a





Eleanor Van Hasen

Tremere named Van Hasen who found the Iroquois natives fascinating, and who believed the Indians had links to magic long forgotten by Europeans. He sought to learn their secrets but found them incomprehensible. He realized that to truly

merge Thaumaturgy with local magic he would have to Embrace one of the natives. Using an adult for this grand experiment would be a major risk. He would be set in his ways and loyal to the tribe rather than to the clan. Thus Van Hasen adopted an intelligent young girl whom he named Eleanor, educating her in European science and culture, while inviting her to explore her mortal people's shamanic traditions.

Van Hasen allowed Eleanor to grow into womanhood before making her a ghoul, but it was another two decades before she was Embraced. The sire was pleased by Eleanor's intelligence and ability with blood magic, but was disappointed that she showed no unique insight into the art and was no more potent than any of his other childer. She spent another four decades in the chantry learning Thaumaturgy, but as the English and French clashed for dominion over northeastern America, the Tremere were drawn into the conflict as peacemakers between the Toreador and Ventrue. The two clans fought during the mortal struggle, despite the growing threat of the Sabbat.

In the late-18th century, numerous Tzimisce assaults targeted the Manhattan chantry but it withstood the fleshcrafters' spite. Van Hasen wasn't so lucky. When he fell to the Fiends' talons, Eleanor was elevated to leader of the cabal, charged with fostering links to her fellow Camarilla in New York and to Tremere elders in Vienna, the latter of whom looked on the foreign regent with scorn.

Eleanor has a grudging respect for Wellesley — as much as a Tremere can have for any Ventrue — but sees the hand of Catherine Trandor in much of what he does. The Tremere wonders how long the Camarilla hold on the city might last were Trandor to withdraw completely.











# ACT 3: SOUTHERN NIGHTS

*For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the height of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the supreme excellence.*

— Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

Welcome to Savannah. Founded at the same time as the colony of Georgia, and serving as state capital until 1786, Savannah is true Southern Gothic. Set apart from the young, bustling metropolis of Atlanta, old-money Savannah appears to be a wealthy and cultured city with a strong connection to its past, having the largest urban historic district in the country.

Until recently, Savannah was secondary to Atlanta to the Camarilla's Kindred. Real power was held in the modern state capital, and Savannah was at best considered an Elysium where Kindred could go to enjoy culture and discuss matters away from Atlanta's prying ears.

All of that changed in 1999.

Since Atlanta's fall to the Sabbat, Camarilla presence in Georgia focuses on Savannah. During the Sabbat's east coast campaign, Savannah was spared because other domains were considered more important. The leaders of the crusade believed, and rightly so, that the Kindred of Savannah would not be able to threaten Atlanta, so they concentrated on

other cities. It seemed inevitable, however, that Savannah would be subjected to Sabbat attention.

Then New York was taken by the Camarilla. The ramifications of the successful Camarilla siege echoed throughout undead society. Suddenly, Sabbat dominance of the east coast was not absolute. The Ivory Tower then looked to Savannah as a staging point for retaking Atlanta, while the Sword of Caine focused on securing its grip on states other than New York. Savannah has thus become a center of attention for the feuding sects. And the characters of this chapter are caught in the middle of it all.

Such "opportunity" offers Ventrue characters a chance to not only claim glory and reward for themselves, but to expand on the *dignitas* of their lines. As (relatively) young Kindred, the characters can approach the situation in Savannah with a fresh perspective and have a chance to gain a great deal of influence and status. As members of the preeminent clan in the Camarilla, others likely look to Ventrue characters for leadership — as long as they themselves are willing to



step forward and claim it. Of course, with such opportunity comes the chance of spectacular failure, but that's always the risk of a bold undertaking.

## OVERVIEW

This act takes place in Savannah in the modern nights. The characters are in the city to help prepare for a siege on Atlanta, or because they see opportunities presented by the stagnant domain itself.

Although the Camarilla has aspirations for Atlanta, the sect has spent little time preparing. This is mainly due to the fact that Savannah and Atlanta are not as prestigious as New York. After that prize was won, the Camarilla was flushed with success. The retaking of Atlanta seemed a logical next step. In time, however, the realities of the New York siege asserted themselves. Maintaining a hold on the city had an enormous cost in manpower, money and time. The campaign for Atlanta became little more than a theory. In addition, many of the most prominent Kindred involved in New York have little or no interest in Savannah. While the plans to move against Atlanta have not been scrapped, they're on the back burner and it takes an exceptional event to get a siege underway.

Given the Camarilla's lethargy, the Sabbat has decided to move on Savannah. The city is the last Camarilla stronghold in Georgia, and the Sabbat is well aware of the city's strategic importance. It's a port city with a population large enough to support a number of vampires, at least for a while. Also, taking Savannah will help prevent the Camarilla from doing to Atlanta what it did to New York.

Chosen to spearhead the crusade on Savannah is a Tzimisce named Jane Sims, a warlord who showed her mettle in the east coast crusades. Sims has a number of packs at her disposal, native Atlantan, nomad and scout packs that she gathered during the Atlantic war. She plans to sneak these groups into Savannah and establish a base of operations. This is where the players' characters come in. They hear rumors and gain information suggesting that the Sabbat targets the city. Savannah's prince and elders don't seem concerned about a possible invasion, playing their own ongoing games. So it falls to the characters, possibly along with a few Kindred allies, to stop the Sabbat. Success wins the characters and their lines prestige, or may erase black marks carried by any lineage.

In the struggle to protect Savannah, some housecleaning also becomes necessary. Katla Thraddottir, our Ventrue elder from Acts 1 and 2, has come to Savannah to participate in the anticipated siege of Atlanta. Longing for earlier nights when vampires

were feudal lords and the Masquerade was an afterthought, Katla's self-control and sense of reality slips until she finally falls to Wassail, that state in which the Beast reigns supreme and there is no Humanity left. In her feral state, Katla threatens to not only breach the Masquerade but also damage the characters' areas of interest. In addition to this threat, she contemplates shifting allegiance to the Sabbat in her few moments of relative lucidity, hoping to return to the ways of her "youth." Katla must be stopped, but how to stop such a powerful being?

In the end, the characters' efforts against the Sabbat (directly by stopping an invasion and indirectly by denying the sect Katla) may pay off. The characters might trick the enemy into believing that Savannah is too strong to be taken. Such a victory may even wake the Camarilla and finally initiate the long-anticipated siege of Atlanta.

Despite this premise, this is not an action-packed story. The plan is to stop the Sabbat *before* it comes down to uzis and broadswords in the streets. To put it in movie terms, this is more of a suspense-thriller than an action-adventure. Certainly, there's room for fights against Sabbat packs, but in the end it comes down to how clever and conniving the characters are.

As such, timing and pacing is critical. The Sabbat is in town to gather information for a raid and possibly a full-blown crusade. Stopping scouts before they return to Atlanta with information is the stuff this act is made of. It's also important that characters have opportunities to contend with the Sabbat in ways other than just physical. Using influence and contacts can shut down Sabbat efforts to establish a base in Savannah. And politics, business double-dealing and subterfuge all just happen to be the Ventrue purview.

## GETTING STARTED

As in the other chapters, the characters here are the childer of the previous act's characters (or supporting cast members). The current characters were likely Embraced in New York. Without a doubt, the most important event in the characters' existence thus far has been the battle for New York. Perhaps they were even created to fight the war. Ghouls may have been "rewarded" with the Embrace with all the planning and plots going on. Another nasty option is that one or more of the characters are "Camarilla shovelheads" — cannon fodder created to be street soldiers and never meant to survive. Or the characters can be decades old, trusted childer who were given important roles in the battle for the city.

Regardless of the characters' origins, the struggle was a great opportunity for bloodlines to earn status and influence.



While fighting on the front lines might have awarded characters a reputation as powerful (and possibly insane) warriors, that's not where real status lay. (Few Ventrue are frontline fighters, anyway.) Coordinating forces, providing resources or overseeing the myriad operations needed to win New York offered much more recognition. At the end of the siege, characters may have proved surprisingly capable for their age, real up-and-comers. That assumes, of course, that they didn't fail in their tasks, in which case their reputations are a disadvantage in events to come.

Also, remember that elder Kindred are always somewhat wary of the young who excel. If the characters did exceptionally well in New York, they are sure to have some status, but are also watched closely and may be the targets of strikes from elders who fear the competent newcomers. Such maneuvers are likely to be social or influential in nature, to discredit the characters with false rumors or to strike at their areas of income or status. As Ventrue, characters always walk a fine line between fulfilling their sires' expectations and being too good for their own good.

If they remained in New York, the characters of Act 2 would already be well entrenched by the time of the siege. Their contribution would be invaluable... and rewarding. These characters are probably in positions of power and influence. If the characters from Act 2 have established huge spheres of influence, current characters may have been put in charge of parts of those empires. Or the battles may have destroyed one or more of the previous characters. One option is to play the battle (see *New York by Night* for a night-to-night description of the siege) and let the dice fall where they may. You can also run the battle freeform, letting the players make some tough decisions with knowledge that the survival of their elder characters is at stake. The death of a sire is wonderful motivation for the characters of this chapter to really hate the Sabbat. On the other hand, a lost sire means that family and bloodline is interrupted. While one or more dead sires means less support for the characters, it also means they have even more opportunities. Childer no longer have a parent making demands or keeping them down (though grandsires might suddenly take more interest). Should one of the characters from Act 2 meet Final Death or even just go into torpor, her influence and resources are probably targeted by rival vampires. Current characters can seek to maintain the holdings of the lineage while other Kindred, even other characters from Act 2, try to get a piece of the pie.

Now, for events of this act to take place characters need to journey to Savannah and take up residence after the battle for New York. Just how much time passes before the characters leave depends on their

### BUT WE DIDN'T!

The siege of New York figures prominently in the foundation of this act. It's generally assumed that the characters participated in the battles, or that they were made as a result of the struggle. This generalization is made not only because the characters' sires are most likely based in New York, or because of the importance of the siege, but also because the struggle is a great opportunity to unite the coterie and establish the characters.

We don't have to force that history on the characters, though. They could have been elsewhere or have been Embraced afterward (maybe to compensate for childer lost in the battles). Yet, given the importance of New York, not only to the Kindred of the city but also to the Camarilla as a whole (to say nothing of the Sabbat), a good deal of explanation is required if the characters were not involved. They might have attended to grandsires in Europe, perhaps on a mission or as part of their education as Ventrue. Their sires might have sent them off before the battles begun, not wanting to lose precious childer in the chaos. (Isn't *that* a recipe for resentment from young, glory-hungry childer?) Or the characters might have been chosen for some secret mission somewhere else, entrusted to handle a delicate affair while the war for New York was waged.

motives. The longer they are established in Savannah, the longer they develop interests, allies, contacts and a power base — and to be annoyed that nothing is happening in the South and that they are away from the free-for-all that is New York.

There are a variety of reasons why characters would go to Savannah. Getting out of New York means getting out from under the thumb and scrutiny of sires, and allows for characters to build their own domains. But why Savannah? Why would the characters decide to travel to a relatively small city that's so far away from New York that established allies can't grant immediate assistance?

- The characters' sires have heard (correctly or incorrectly, based on the timing) that the siege of Atlanta is about to get underway. Or they have covert information that the Sabbat is about to stage a pre-emptive strike on Savannah. Sires therefore encourage their childer to go south. They hint at the status possible in winning a siege. They may point to Sabbat activity, exploiting any antipathy the characters have for the Sword of Caine. Or they could tell characters about the complacency that seems to plague Savannah's





elders, suggesting that the city is ripe for the picking by young, hungry Ventrue.

- Refugees from Atlanta tell the characters about the malaise and ennui infecting the elders of Savannah. The characters recognize that this domain might become a power base of their own, away from the masses of ambitious Kindred who flock to New York.

- The characters have axes to grind against the Sabbat, possibly a result of events during the siege, a grudge inherited from their sires or due to events back when the characters were mortals. (A character's brother might have been found drained of blood, something later connected to the Sabbat. Or a character could have been driven out of work after Sabbat saboteurs ruined the Ventrue-backed company for which he worked.) Savannah seems like a good base from which to strike against the sect in its relatively new realm of Atlanta. Perhaps the characters could even spearhead the faltering assault on Atlanta.

- Having proved themselves in the siege of New York, the characters win a reputation for martial prowess or planning. The Camarilla looks (if not applies pressure) to them to use those skills elsewhere. Atlanta and the staging point of Savannah are natural choices. Agreeing to the continuing war effort might win the characters reward before they even arrive in the South, or all their rewards could be contingent upon further victory. (Prince and primogen of Atlanta, anyone?) Alternatively, the characters didn't participate in the war for New York and seek to get involved in a similar movement in Georgia to win prestige missed before.

#### RACE AGAINST THE CLOCK

One option for initiating this story is to send the characters to Savannah just before the events of the chapter unfold. Spies report that the Sabbat is about to make a move against Savannah. Sires or elders send the characters to avert the crusade. The characters can earn glory in the process and pave the way for the conquest of Atlanta. Indeed, the characters can play a pivotal role in the Camarilla-staged attack and earn positions in the new hierarchy.

If you go this route, the characters arrive pretty much at square one. They have no influence in Savannah and none of the local Kindred may know them. Their only likely ally is Katla, who remembers the characters' sires and grandsires, and she snaps halfway through the act.... The characters have their work cut out for them.

#### WHAT ARE WE MADE OF?

Having possibly participated in the siege of New York, the characters are not just rank neonates. When the players create their characters, consider giving them some extra freebie points. If the characters have



been Embraced in the last 100 years, 15 extra freebie points is about right. Should they be more than 100 years old as vampires, 20 is a good amount. (Since the battle of New York is likely the pivotal event in the characters' existence, most of the freebie points are earned from it.) You can certainly start the characters off with less or more. If you want powerful characters (a good idea if you plan to run this act as action-oriented or you foresee that players are likely to take events in that direction), you could double the amount of extra freebie points. If you desire an even spread of advances, using the character-creation rules presented in **Archons and Templars** might work (two Attribute dots, three Ability dots, five dots of Disciplines, eight dots of Backgrounds and 18 freebie points). If you start the characters off as basic neonates, understand that they'll have few supports on which to operate. Starting characters must be very clever to come out on top.

The role characters played in New York is likely to determine how their Attributes, Abilities and Disciplines are modified. A frontline fighter (say, a leader of a coterie assigned to be in the thick of it) probably gains Physical Attributes. Someone in charge of leading ghouls might develop high Charisma and Manipulation. A character serving as a coordinator at headquarters is likely to be advanced in Mental Attributes. A fighter may have learned combat Abilities, along with Alertness, Streetwise, Drive and Stealth, with the Fortitude, Celerity and/or Potence Disciplines. A character given the task of leading a group probably learns Empathy and Leadership, along with combat Abilities and Presence, Majesty and/or Dominate. Someone dealing in information and possible interrogation might have learned Intimidation and Subterfuge along with Dominate. Let the players describe what roles their characters took in the siege and work with them on any resulting advancement.

As for Backgrounds, this act poses the possibility that characters are of equal (or possibly even lower) generation than their sires. During the battles, it was made clear that anyone who returned with black veins in her aura would not be punished; players can decide if characters have bettered their generation through diablerie. Of course, diablerie could have interesting repercussions during the characters' early nights in Savannah. While it's considered the height of bad form to examine another Kindred's aura, it still happens, especially if a vampire's behavior merits the invasion. While diablerie may have been accepted in New York, it's still frowned upon in tradition-bound Savannah. Characters could suffer Social penalties there for some time. Should characters present their entire lineage during their introduction in the South, a genealogically inclined Ventrue (or Katla, who might

have known the characters' progenitors) might notice a discrepancy between sires mentioned and any known in a line.

Other Backgrounds can be established for characters in New York or elsewhere, but take care that characters aren't hamstrung when they relocate to Savannah. Remote ties may be severed and of no use to vampires abroad, possibly endangering characters' efforts in this act. The vampires could possibly call upon a Mentor from afar, but far-flung Influence may be no good to them. It's therefore wise to allow some, if not all of the characters' Backgrounds to be based in Savannah, assuming they spend enough time there to establish themselves. Even if the characters are newcomers to the city at the beginning of the act, their Background scores could manifest after they spend some nights in the South.

Established Kindred have considerable leeway in Savannah. While it may be difficult for them to exert direct sway over the politics and bureaucracy of the city, county or state (as represented by the Influence Background), they might still be able to develop some pull (one to three dots). More than this is a challenge, however. Local bureaucracy is the sphere of Prince Huxley, who retains some of her former political savvy. Moving in on her territory can also rouse her to action, a mistake if characters seek to keep her dormant.

Contacts and Allies among city officials, bureaucrats and prestigious families give characters a presence in local affairs. While it isn't easy, it's possible to amass Contacts and Allies rated as high as 5 by focusing on the *nouveau riche*.

## SCHEMES AND PLANS

By now, the legacies to which the characters belong have become quite old and powerful, likely with interests all over the world and some substantial holdings. Savannah, however, is an established domain and it's hard for characters to achieve the level of influence and power for which their sires might hope. The established Kindred of Savannah already pervade most high-level affairs such as banking, shipping and paper production, and hold the most prestigious domains such as hotels, old-money families and the financial district. That doesn't mean characters can't establish themselves, just that they need to be clever and think outside the box. The established order's hold is in place, but is slipping thanks to complacency.

Servants and informants come quite easily. While the most important mortals in Savannah such as the mayor, chief of police and board members are already considered the "domain" of established Kindred, characters can reach clerks at City Hall or blackmail police captains. As noted above, Influence is severely limited



due to Huxley's past work. But inroads and research show that her holdings exceed her energy these nights. (None of the city's established Kindred have noticed this slip, as they too have fallen sway to the status quo.) With Atlanta in Sabbat hands, the characters have a hard time influencing affairs on a state level. Money is somewhat easy to come by, though, especially if characters manage to place themselves in some of the businesses discussed below.

While there are vampire political matters to attend to in Savannah, the city offers rewards to the ambitious. Ventrue — or any — characters can pursue personal agendas in town to gain leverage, wealth and standing. Feel free to run stories and subplots throughout the events of Act 3 to capture the Ventrue unlifestyle. Indeed, interests in the mortal world can be used to motivate characters to act and react in Kindred affairs. A business investment is threatened by the competition? Then a character is inspired to act against the undead patron of that other company. A mortal gang gets too close to the truth about the undead? Thug contacts could deal with the gang — and maybe burn down the haven of the Masquerade-breaching vampire. The point being, the events of this act represent only part of the characters' existence. You can show the rest by exploring characters' empire building.

- **Real Estate:** Communities around Savannah expand constantly, and new ones are chartered every few years. Many of these, like the Landings, are upper-middle to high-class communities. Holdings in this field allow characters to exist in style. They might get involved with the developments of Dutch Island or initiate their own in the prestigious Southside area of the city. Such a lucrative field can make characters quite high profile. While any Ventrue worth his blood knows how to do business without threatening the Masquerade, infiltrating Sabbat take a close look at who is behind expensive developments. This is a popular area of interest for some of city's young Ventrue and Toreador; characters could easily make rivals here. Real estate also offers characters the possibility of establishing havens. They do have to exist somewhere and, being Ventrue, a proper, impressive haven can be important to maintaining appearances.

- **Restoration:** Several houses in the historic downtown, Victorian district and Gordonston area are old and in need of renovation. A fixer-upper can be bought for less than \$100,000 and, when restored, be sold for upward of one million. Should one decide to split the house into apartments (which is likely to require a contact at City Hall, as many of the houses are protected), even more money can be made in the long term. Alternatively, if characters are willing to stoop they can become slumlords in the dilapidated neighborhoods south of downtown and in Victorian.

Backing restoration is a simple and easy way to make money, as long as the characters have enough money to buy a building, and the patience to wait until it's finished. But the enterprise might put them in trouble with Miranda Jones, Huxley's Malkavian advisor, who considers the city's historical buildings her responsibility. At the very least, getting her "permission" could save some trouble later.

Characters (or their sires) might already have owned such buildings for quite some time, having either bought them earlier with an eye for restoration or as part of their business empires, without knowing about them before moving to Savannah. ("According to this, our company owns three dilapidated mansions in Savannah? A tax write-off.") Such holdings make for ready-made havens.

- **Weapon Smuggling:** Fort Stewart is outside Savannah. All it takes is a crooked supply sergeant and a clerk or two on the take to get one's hands on several cases of military hardware. One option is to send them north. What New York gang or mob wouldn't pay for advanced weapons? Another option is to go south. Revolutionary armies in Middle and South American might compete to acquire the characters' goods. Of course, this sort of venture requires a lot of contacts and security. A great deal of money can be made, but if gunrunning goes wrong, it can *really* blow up in the characters' faces.

Access to weapons is also useful when the siege of Atlanta gets underway. While elders know that noisy and messy weapons lead to all sorts of questions, they also acknowledge that the big guns are necessary at times. The characters might be prepared to outfit Camarilla troops as they move against Atlanta — for a suitable price, of course. And as this act gets underway, military contacts can supply the characters and their allies if open conflict with the Sabbat seems imminent.

- **Military Supply:** Among resident Kindred, Fort Stewart is virtually ignored as part of the Savannah economy. It's not considered all that prestigious. The military base demands lots of supplies, however, and several businesses cater to its needs. If the characters are willing, good money can be made from supplying consumables, office supplies and cleaning materials to the base. Perhaps even better, money can be made by supplying drugs and hookers to soldiers.

- **Police and Court:** While the highest ranking members of the city police and court system are already "taken," a foolish Ventrue ignores the possibility of contact with or influence over low-ranking members of the system. While not exactly an avenue of revenue, having a member of the DA's office or a homicide detective at one's disposal can pay off in terms of information and leverage. The main problem here is that gaining such influence is never easy, especially when trying to maintain the Masquerade.



The city's elders take offense if the characters go after this area heavy-handedly. Such influence can be acquired by blackmail, bribery or supporting a covert drug habit. While investigation of key persons might yield dark secrets, the characters also have supernatural powers on which to draw. While blood bonding a police officer or viciously Dominating a court clerk is crude and dangerous, surreptitious use of supernatural powers can manufacture situations that can be used for blackmail. Characters could use Presence to lure someone into a compromising situation and take some pictures, for example. Remember that this is the World of Darkness — people have skeletons in their closets.

- **Influential People:** The old saying, "It's not what you know, it's who you know" is true in Savannah. The city has a lot of old-money families as well as several *nouveau riche*. Ventrue can rub elbows with the equivalent of modern-day nobility. If the characters' sires have established contacts with the premier families of New York, they can probably secure childer invitations to just the right parties. While Savannah's established Kindred don't like newcomers moving in on "their" old-money families, they do disdainfully ignore the city's "new money" (and sometimes Kindred who strike up relationships with them).

The city also has a number of minority community leaders who, through the strong sense of kinship promoted by Savannah's subtle racism, have a great deal of sway over a large number of people. And while organized crime (at least in the sense of the Mafia and other big organizations) is absent from the city, a number of prominent fences and gang leaders are in town.

The interests that characters pursue can settle them once the act gets started. For example, influence at Fort Stewart might help vampires equip select bodyguard ghouls with military-grade weapons. Contacts within the police force can give characters a heads-up when Sabbat raiders try to get into town. Allies in City Hall can provide the blueprints of buildings that the Sabbat might use as havens. And if the characters have a stake in the court system, mortals under Sabbat sway may be locked up or "lost" in the judicial system.

Extensive influence in Savannah might also bring the characters to the prince's attention. If the characters prove to be movers and shakers compared to resident vampires, and some lifeblood needs to be brought to town, Huxley may instate the characters to positions of power. Alternatively, she may learn that punishing the characters compromises the city, and that's bad business. She might be forced to go easy on presumptuous newcomers who have a large stake in town.

In the big picture, the standing that characters assemble makes them prestigious when the conquest of Atlanta is launched. As was demonstrated in New York, taking a city involves more than just sending in





a bunch of gun-toting thugs. A large number of Kindred must be housed in Savannah before the siege gets underway. Savannah will be the Camarilla headquarters. Vampires with local influence will be instrumental to facilitating the campaign. In short, the sect would be indebted to well-placed Ventrue.

### OTHER CLANS

Integrating members of non-Ventrue clans into this act is relatively easy. Events in Savannah concern the entire Camarilla, after all. Alliances between clans to get a counterattack underway are to be expected. Just look at how well the siege of New York went (especially when headed by the Ventrue). Members of any clan with a stake in Camarilla interests have reason to be concerned with developments in Savannah, and reason to work with the Ventrue in the city. The Blue Bloods weren't the only ones rewarded for taking New York. Any member of any clan can profit by helping capture another town from the enemy.

It's also possible that one or more non-Ventrue characters act as mercenaries. Whether they work for money, status or influence, association with Ventrue offers it all. In turn, a foolish Ventrue ignores the chance to have other vampires by his side (or at least in his sight).

A common enemy can ally characters of different clans and give them a collective purpose. Sure, the Sabbat threat posed in Atlanta makes traveling to Georgia appealing. But characters can also have a subtler foe such as Katla. Perhaps she has embarrassed all of their bloodlines in the past, or she left New York with something that all of the characters want to claim. They might even agree to work together to get it, but all agreements are off afterward and it's survival of the fittest.

Then there's the old faithful way of relying on the familiarity of the characters' sires. They all knew or know of each other and pass any connections or alliances down to their childer. The players' current characters are expected to cooperate — at least superficially. And that may mean characters of various clans working with the Ventrue.

Indeed, members of other clans probably have to accept Ventrue leadership, at least at first. While any preparations made against Atlanta involve members of all Camarilla clans, the Ventrue stand as planners and generals. As it becomes clear that the Sabbat has designs on Savannah, however, Ventrue leadership is not guaranteed. Certainly, stopping a Lasombra from buying up a number of businesses and lots is something one might expect of a Ventrue, but meeting Sabbat packs on the streets might be best addressed by Brujah. Meanwhile, gathering intelligence on the Sabbat's havens is a job for a Nosferatu. All characters find a role and become partners rather than officers and soldiers.

## SIRE INTERFERENCE

While the characters of this act are in Savannah, their sires are back in New York or are abroad. Modern means of travel and communication can reduce this distance to almost nothing, however. So how much do sires get involved in their underlings' unlives?

First off, the characters' sires probably don't arrange or endorse the characters' departure to Savannah if they need or plan to get involved personally. They expect the characters to build a suitable power base in preparation for the siege of Atlanta, or to achieve other goals. At that point, sires *might* join their childer or they might remain in New York, ready to see how their progeny handle the situation.

Sires may help with resources and what little influence they can bring to bear in Savannah in order to get their childer started. Characters are expected to stand on their own fairly quickly thereafter. Elders have their own agendas and ventures to attend to. With the ease of communication that cellphones and the Internet offers (assuming that sires are even interested in such modern contrivances), progenitors might check in for progress reports every month or so (maybe every week once it becomes known that the Sabbat is active).

One thing that characters should be able to rely on from their sires is information — on business matters that might affect them, on Camarilla Kindred, on the current political situation in New York and among the American Camarilla, and on whatever other matters that the elders might be informed or immersed. The characters might also receive information that the Camarilla has gathered on Sabbat operations and presence in Atlanta. Finally, childer could be provided with letters of introduction and contacts to various specialists if, say, the characters need to talk to an expert in real-estate legislation.

When it comes to the problem of Katla, sires may adopt a very hands-off approach. This is one situation where characters might be completely on their own. Handling the ancient is a great test of the characters' ingenuity and mettle. The fall of a Ventrue elder to Wassail, especially one who has been an associate of the characters' blood, is extremely embarrassing. Sires can try to divorce themselves from the situation as much as possible. Add to such pressure sires' desire to want to avoid collusion with Katla. If her intentions to switch over to the Sabbat become known, other elder Kindred may remember that similar betrayal occurred with Aimery... "and wasn't that coterie involved"? Sires hope to distance themselves in case they come under scrutiny as possible turncoats or double agents working within the Camarilla. It's bad enough that their progeny are now affiliated with Katla. Hopefully suspicions of betrayal won't filter upward.



For their part, the characters' grandsires are likely to be all but invisible in this act. The characters may know of them and could have met them, but the ancients could be back in the Old World and the characters don't necessarily know how to contact them. Sires acts as intermediaries if it seems that the old vampires might have information or influence that could help the characters in their current situation.

When it comes to portraying what were players' former characters, be consistent and true to the players' vision. While people (even Kindred to some degree) change over time, don't make sweeping alterations. Don't alter how a character acts, what her motivations are or how she treats others simply to make this act flow smoothly. Try to mesh established personalities with the demands of this act instead.

## THE MODERN NIGHTS

Act 3 is set in the modern nights. There's a sense of frenzied east coast activity (as far as that can be said for the undead), with the Sabbat crusade and the Camarilla capture of New York still fresh in memory. Savannah has connections to older times, though. Local Kindred are extremely conservative and set in their ways. The realities of sect developments have not yet shaken local vampires out of their complacency. They remain immune to the pervading sense that *something is about to happen*.

You're encouraged to play up the differences between now and then, new and old. In Act 1, cities were dark and smelly. In Act 2, they were lit by flickering gaslight and, well, were still smelly. Now, streetlights and neon signs turn night into day. Phones, fast travel by car and plane, information available on the net, the global community and weapons of mass destruction all offset modern times from the Dark Medieval and Victorian Age. And yet, some things never seem to change. The smell of the Savannah River, long a dumping ground for factories and city sewage, is akin to the odor of medieval York and Victorian New York. Make the setting hyper-modern and then contrast it with, say, Regency-style buildings, the renaissance revival of City Hall, and with the slow, almost sensual Old South manners of local Kindred who still exist in the past.

Also remember the power of technology. The characters' connections are but a phone call away. Sufficient bribes and/or influence allow access to a wealth of information about almost anyone or anything. That said, be prepared for when characters call contacts, agents or underlings to pull strings or to have a suspicious-looking car checked on. Sometimes such quick

actions and answers move the characters' plans and the chronicle along. Other times, you don't want characters to get what they need so easily. Maybe they get only part of what they hope for. That car is registered to someone in Savannah, but was reported stolen last week. Or quick answers are inconclusive. That plate should be on a vehicle of a completely different make and model. And don't forget that the cellphone net is often overloaded and email services suffer glitches. Contacts might desire face-to-face meetings or might not be available at the moment. The characters might not always get all the answers they want with the push of a button. Maybe it seems as if the blasé existence of Savannah's Kindred virtually permeates the very spirit of the city, slowing everyone and everything down around them.

## PROMINENT VAMPIRES

This is a short introduction to the most important vampires featured in this act. Some of them are given complete write-ups later, but they're all addressed here so you have a quick overview of who they are.

### CAMARILLA

Savannah is home to roughly 20 Kindred — about 10 local and 10 newcomers, whether refugees from Atlanta or Kindred who have arrived for the anticipated siege of Atlanta. (These numbers do not include the players' characters, but do include Lillian and her coterie.) The Kindred detailed below are the most important.

**Penelope Huxley** is prince of Savannah. She is a strong-willed, ambitious woman who was once determined to hold onto her city, but who has lost her focus to the slow poison of complacency. She maintains a secret haven in the Riverstreet area, and meets with advisors and those seeking audience in a suite in the DeSoto Hotel. She can often be found in one of the city's social Elysiums, enjoying conversation with one or more of the city's prominent Kindred.

**Jason Bishop** is one of Huxley's advisors and the closest thing to a Keeper of Elysium that Savannah has. An exceptionally handsome Toreador, he is hedonistic, slightly depraved and somewhat arrogant and petty. His complete disregard for rumors of trouble perpetuates the prince's indifference to building events. Jason represents the worst of Savannah's Kindred and the problems that the characters must overcome if they are to rally the city. He has a weakness for beautiful women. Having already been rejected by Victoria Ash, he does his best to seduce any pretty



female vampires in the coterie. He has already tired of the city's female Kindred. Jason's haven is on Dutch Island. Most nights, he's available at one of the city's Elysiums.

**Daniel Parker** is Huxley's chief rival for the throne. While he is more interested in taking her position than in battling the Sabbat, he is smart enough to see an opportunity when it presents itself. He's more than willing to help the characters, provided they support him should he move against Huxley. If the characters have their own designs on control, he may be a rival to them, too. Daniel has a haven in the downtown area.

**Tarrence Moore** is a Tremere survivor from Atlanta, and the newest addition to Huxley's advisors. He was offered the position because neither of the city's other two Tremere were willing, and Huxley very much wanted closer ties to Clan Tremere. Events in Atlanta inspire Tarrence's hatred for the Sabbat, which could make him an ally of the characters. Tarrence resides in an apartment in Vernonburg.

**Miranda Jones** is one of Huxley's advisors, an elder Malkavian. She has fanatical interest in the restoration of the historical sections of Savannah. She combines an obsessive/compulsive nature with fond childhood memories of the city. She considers the old buildings her domain. Characters might come into conflict with her if they get involved with restoration or decide to acquire an old mansion as a haven. She maintains a lavish haven of her own, the site of several parties in the Victorian district.

**Lillian** is a Gangrel and the leader of a coterie of relatively young Kindred who patrols Savannah's borders. While Lillian is technically not Camarilla, having left the sect when most of her clan did, she is still among the city's Kindred and is loosely considered one of Huxley's advisors. If the characters present a strong front, Lillian works with them to protect the city; she prefers proactive leaders to Huxley's increasingly dismissive attitude.

**Katla Thraddottir** is a relatively recent arrival in Savannah. She came to the city when she learned of plans to retake Atlanta, and intends to become prince and make that city a domain after her own liking. Huxley is less than thrilled about Katla's presence, seeing her as a threat. Age affects Katla. She has all but lost her grip on sanity and self-control, acting increasingly erratically. During the course of this act, she loses herself completely to the Beast and becomes a dangerous enemy who must be stopped. Katla maintains a haven in the Landings. She resumes going by her old name, rather than by Catherine Trandor, out of a desire to return to the old ways.

By this time, Katla has the following Traits in addition to those in Act 1: Subterfuge 4, Finance 3,

Law 3, Resources 5, Retainers 3 and Presence 3. Her Humanity has dropped to 1 at the beginning of this Act as a result of her decline, and her Charisma is reduced to 2.

**Victoria Ash** is a famous and wealthy Toreador, renowned (or notorious) for rejecting an offer to become prince of New York. She has taken up residence at a plantation outside Savannah. Before Atlanta fell, Ash was one of the primogen of that city, with plans to become its prince. She has decided to support the impending siege of Atlanta in an attempt to rekindle those plans. She is a rival of Katla's, but involves herself in Savannah's politics less than the ancient Ventrue. Ash is a possible silent ally of the characters. She has no interest in seeing Savannah fall and has good reason to hate and fear the Sabbat after her experience with the Sword of Caine during the east coast crusade.

### CLANS IN SAVANNAH

Clans Ventrue and Toreador are premiere in Savannah, both in number and influence. Members tend to be old, decadent and overconfident, and have deep, strong ties with mortal upper classes and important businesses. Jason Bishop is recognized as the preeminent Toreador in the city, which speaks volumes for how depraved and self-centered the clan, local Kindred and Savannah have become.

Clans Brujah and Malkavian are runners-up. Each has a few young members who generally follow the lead of the local Ventrue and Toreador. Clan Brujah has interests in Savannah colleges, while the city's Malkavians are scattered and unfocused.

Clan Nosferatu is all but ignored in Savannah — only two members of the clan reside in the area. They keep to themselves, lacking representation even among Huxley's advisors.

Besides Tarrence Moore, Clan Tremere has two resident members: Ezra Hawthorne and Rebecca Call. Neither has any interest in what happens in the city, as they are deeply involved in a major ritual effort.

Besides Lillian's coterie, Savannah has no Gangrel or Caitiff, and no Assamite has taken up residence. Of the independent clans, only the Giovanni are represented, with Stephen Milliner overseeing interests in Georgia.

### SABBAT

A number of packs and infiltrators have been assigned to or have volunteered for the Savannah effort. The exact number of packs is up to you — it depends on how much you want to challenge the characters. Most packs have four to five members; larger groups are too visible.



Jane Sims is the warlord in charge of taking Savannah. She is somewhat haughty, having won a number of easy victories in the east coast crusades. Sims makes her haven in Atlanta, only coming to Savannah when it seems the situation demands it.

Nicolas is Sims' bodyguard, a revenant of the Bratovich family. He is loyal and strong, if not too bright, and seldom leaves Sims' side.

Marcus Williams is the Lasombra ductus of one of the packs at Sims' disposal. He and his group are in charge of securing bases of operation for the Sabbat, as well as disrupting Camarilla influence, buying up real estate and moving in on businesses.

Dr. Sutphen is the Lasombra archbishop of Atlanta. It was he who orchestrated the crusade on the city, for which he was originally given the title of bishop. Recently, he was made archbishop and as such the powers that be believe his hands are too full to plan the assault on Savannah. Sutphen is less than happy about turning over the operation to Sims, but is overtaxed.

## SAVANNAH HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

The following is a short overview of Savannah's history, both Kindred and kine, as well as a brief survey of the city's geography.

### HISTORY

Savannah's early history is inexorably linked to England. It may come as little surprise that Clan Ventrue has dominated the city since Kindred first arrived.

#### FOUNDING

On April 21, 1732, King George II granted the charter for Georgia to a group of Trustees. On February 12, 1733, a group of pioneers, led by one James Oglethorpe, landed in the New World, founding the city of Savannah and the colony of Georgia in the name of the king. The idea was to strengthen the colonies, increase trade and navigation, and protect Carolina from Spanish Florida. The city's military connection has continued unbroken for over 250 years, the latest incarnation of which is Fort Stewart. Not surprisingly, this New World venture garnered a good deal of interest from Kindred in the Old World. Several British vampires, some of which might have been the characters from Act 1, kept an eye on the new colony.

Savannah was laid out according to plans that Oglethorpe had made back in England. Thanks to a friendship struck between he and Tomochichi, the King of the Yamacraws (the local Native Americans), Savannah flourished. New settlers came over surprisingly quickly, with a large number of Jews arriving in

July 1733 and founding the Temple Mickve Israel. Evangelical Lutherans from Salzburg arrived in March of '34, while Scots and Moravians arrived in '35 and '36. Later, Dutch, Welsh and especially Irish immigrants came to the new colony.

With this influx of kine, Kindred in the Old World reacted. Elder Ventrue sent Franklin Chase, a neonate with a celebrated lineage. Another group, composed mainly of a number of ancillae Ventrue with Brujah allies, sent a Gangrel called Chester. Both groups wanted to know more about Savannah before investing further.

In true Ventrue fashion, Franklin went about securing contacts and influence with the leaders of the community, whereas Chester scouted out the city and surrounding lands. The two eventually crossed paths and, knowing about the enmity between their patrons back home, became enemies. Unfortunately for Franklin, the Gangrel preferred the direct approach. Franklin's ashes were scattered across the Savannah River from Yamacraw Bluff.

The loss of his childe angered the leader of the elder faction, a Ventrue named Sabert. Eschewing the safety offered by his native country, Sabert traveled to Savannah to secure it and the entire colony as his domain. He quickly met Chester and although the Gangrel was a fierce warrior, he had no defense against Sabert's mental powers and was quickly disposed of. Sabert declared himself Prince of Savannah and all Georgia. He also established a level of animosity toward Clan Gangrel that persisted throughout his existence. Since he could feed from only orphans, Sabert was instrumental in the founding of Bethesda, the first orphanage in the Americas, in 1740. (Rumors abound that he was also behind a number of adult deaths, resulting in an increased number of orphans.) A few other Kindred, mainly neonates from the Old World, soon arrived in Savannah. Sabert declined to Embrace a new childe and successor.

Ultimately, Savannah did not fare as well as Sabert hoped. The population declined and crime was prevalent. The trustees gave back their charter to the king a year earlier than planned and the colony became a province headed by royal governors, with Savannah at its center.

### WARS

Georgia delayed longer than any other colony before joining the revolutionary movement. Sabert used his influence to withhold support until he could receive word from his allies back in England. Unfortunately, the elder fell to age-induced torpor and was unable to continue his stalling tactics. Thus, Georgia signed the Declaration, much to the delight of the Brujah of the colony who supported the movement.





During the War of Independence, royal troops supported by British Kindred attacked and took Savannah, but American forces were joined by French soldiers and fought to retake the city. The extremely bloody siege of Savannah awoke Sabert in 1799. He soon realized that independence was inevitable and lent his support to the rebels. He also began looking for a childe, as he acknowledged that he would not be able to remain awake. He chose Nathaniel Summerton, a British officer. Sabert influenced Summerton, who bought a plantation near Savannah for his retirement. Sabert then spent a great deal of time observing and speaking with his prospective childe, making him a ghoul in 1784 and finally Embracing him in 1786, covering up Summerton's disappearance. Shortly afterward, Sabert sank into final torpor, possibly in disappointment after he learned that Augusta was to become the new capital city of Georgia.

Summerton assumed the position of Prince of Savannah, ruling in his sire's place. When Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1793, Summerton was quick to act, and his shrewd manipulations, coupled with slavery (in which Summerton had extensive interests), helped to make Savannah's cotton industry the premier of the world. Summerton also took a childe in 1793, more or less impulsively Embracing Penelope Huxley, daughter of one of the city's wealthiest men, and renowned as a great beauty.

In 1796, Savannah was ravaged by fire, which left half the city in ashes and one third of its Cainites dead. After the fire, Summerton allied with the city's Treador and brought architect William Jay over from England. Jay introduced Regency style to Savannah and designed such magnificent buildings as the Richardson-Owens-Thomas House, Scarborough House and the Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences. Science marched along with art when the city became homeport of the *S. S. Savannah*, the first steam-powered vessel to cross the Atlantic.

In 1820, another fire swept the city, along with a yellow fever epidemic. This time, Sabert met Final Death when his resting place went up in flames. Several other prominent Kindred also perished. A few months later, Penelope Huxley shocked Savannah Kindred by producing evidence that the fire was actually set by Summerton, who allegedly feared that his sire was waking. The city's most prominent Kindred declared their support of Huxley, who declared a blood hunt on the prince. He was destroyed while protesting his innocence. After that, Kindred "life" in Savannah all but stagnated. There were very few Embraces and almost no newcomers. Rumor spread that the yellow fever could be transmitted to the undead. While this proved untrue, it kept new vampires out of Savannah and the city retained an inexplicable stigma



that discouraged new arrivals. Conservative stability became the order of the night among the few who lingered there.

Savannah continued to grow in finance and importance, despite not being the state capital. In the 1830's, the railroad linked inland plantations to the port, increasing cotton trade revenues and the income of several Kindred. Huxley and others backed the Central Railroad Banking Company, and along with the city Toreador became involved in the Georgia Historical Society.

In early 1861, three months before the attack on Fort Sumter, Confederates seized Savannah's Fort Pulaski only to lose it again in 1862. During the Civil War, Savannah was blockaded and the city suffered. The Kindred felt the impact of the war and the Sabbat used the chaos to launch a few raids, but they were primarily interested in Atlanta. When General Sherman burned Atlanta and cut a swath to the coast, Savannah was evacuated (by mortals and Kindred who followed the kine example), and thus avoided destruction. On December 22, 1864, Sherman sent a telegram to Washington offering Savannah to Lincoln as a Christmas present.

After the war, large numbers of freed slaves sought work in Savannah, and were herded into slum-like communities by housing prices and social pressure. Most of the city's Kindred saw this mass of destitute as prime feeding stock and did their best to maintain segregation. In 1878, however, the first public school for blacks was established, and the first public college for blacks opened in 1891.

Cotton remained the primary commodity of the city. The Cotton Exchange was built and, much to the pride of the city's Ventrué, the world price of cotton was set in Savannah. Although the city suffered more fires, yellow fever and hurricanes, it grew in size and splendor. The elegant DeSoto Hotel opened and became the official meeting place of the prince and her advisors. The Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences was one of the South's first public museums, to the delight of Toreador and Brujah alike. And yet, racial tension marred the city's beauty, and the Ku Klux Klan was prominent. While crosses are rarely ever burned publicly any longer, the Klan is still a power to be reckoned with in Savannah. From time to time, an important member of the community is revealed to have ties to the group. The city's Kindred have all but ignored the Klan. Only the Tremere have shown any interest.

After WWI, Savannah faced disaster when the state's cotton fell victim to the boll weevil. By the 1920s, half of Georgia's crop had been destroyed. The wealthy and influential Kindred of the city fought to bring it out of the Depression. Paper industry and WWII came along to help the effort. Fort Stewart, with Hunter Field, was established and the 8th Air Force was founded there. To this day, the armed forces play an important part in Savannah's economy. Many of the city's Ventrué, led by Prince Huxley, invested heavily in this

restoration. All of them lost dearly when the cotton market collapsed, but most had diverse interests (some out of the city) that they were able to draw upon. The establishment of Fort Stewart, in particular, bolstered the city, although the city's Ventrué largely ignored the base after working to bring it to Savannah. The influx of people and government resources was all that mattered to the Blue Bloods. No one among them cultivated the same kinds of contacts in the base that they did in the paper industry.

### MODERN TIMES

After WWII, Savannah's reputation as a preserved and beautiful city grew by leaps and bounds. Such landmarks as the Pink House, the Pirates' House and the Richardson-Owens-Thomas House were all saved from being condemned, and the Toreador became involved in restoration. In 1955, several society ladies founded the Historic Savannah Foundation, further cementing the city's reputation for historical importance. Among Kindred, it became a running joke that Savannah had the largest amount of Elysium space of any Camarilla city.

On the Kindred side, Savannah was a stagnant domain. Being secondary to Atlanta in importance, there was little of the fierce, fast-moving political infighting that marked America's other Kindred. Indeed, the political battles of Savannah were slow, akin to those of European elders. The city's vampires enjoyed the status quo and remained generally conservative, suppressing any attempts at change from the (few) young among them. Indeed, Savannah seemed like the picture-perfect, modern-Gothic Camarilla domain. Much of this status stemmed from the prince's lethargy, which infected most of the city. Established elders rarely bothered to maintain their areas of influence and almost never expanded them. Their domains have slowly crumbled as a result. None of them, least of all the prince, realizes how out of touch they have become.

In 1999, Atlanta fell to the Sabbat, and the Sword of Caine swept across the east coast, taking city after city. Refugees from Atlanta arrived in Savannah and while most of them moved on, mainly to New York, some stayed. The Gangrel left the Camarilla, although the separation had little impact on Savannah; the city had never had much of a Gangrel presence, anyway.

In the new millennium, the Kindred of Savannah are confronted with the world around them. Some try to throw off their lethargy and actually take action, while others simply ignore word of trouble, hoping that it will pass and the old serenity will be restored.

### GEOGRAPHY

Savannah lies on the south bank of the Savannah River, reaching south and east. The river forms the border between the states of Georgia and South Carolina. The greater metropolitan area has a population of around half a million. Dotted around the countryside



## ON FEEDING

Even by the most generous Camarilla standards, Savannah is able to support only six or seven Kindred. The city's current undead population is more than three times that due to refugees from Atlanta and forces arriving in anticipation of a retake of that city. This overcrowding means trouble, especially with the characters' arrival, which stretches available resources dangerously thin.

Most of the established Kindred have herds. Those who do not have well-established hunting grounds and methods. Resources are taxed, patience is exhausted and the Masquerade is endangered. The prince has enacted some strict laws concerning feeding, and has distributed hunting grounds in an attempt to alleviate the problem. The fact remains, however, that Savannah is grossly overpopulated. A siege on Atlanta would solve the problem, but feeding is risky business until then.

There are several ways to emphasize this tension. If the characters are established Kindred, having been in town for a few years, newcomers impose upon them. If they have herds, demand more explanation than ever on who comprises them and how they're formed. If established characters do not have herds, players need to detail hunting methods, taking pains to explain how Masquerade breaches are avoided. Have any herd members or grounds been commandeered by the prince to be doled out temporarily? How does such loss impact characters' existence, holdings and pride?

The prince warns newcomers to feed subtly and responsibly. She lays out the hunting grounds of other

vampires (most of downtown) and indicates what's "public domain."

Beyond observing the Masquerade, crowded vampires run the risk of imposing on each other. That may mean hunting on someone's turf or protecting one's grounds against "poachers." Ventrue might enter short-term alliances in which they share "tastes of choice" and keep an eye out for suitable victims. If one Ventrue can feed on only scholars and another can feed from only trophy wives, the two might point out candidates in each other's territory. Of course, revealing one's feeding restriction can lead to vulnerability later, but troubled times call for such desperate measures.

Don't be afraid to roleplay hunting rather than relegating it to downtime. Special care and thought must be given to feeding, especially if a Kindred is low on blood. One cannot simply drain a human dry and dump him in the river. Never mind any repercussions on a vampire's humanity. The act raises the ire of other Kindred and the prince. Dominate and Presence are quite useful under these circumstances, allowing vampires — especially Ventrue — to feed discreetly without fatalities. Should a few of the city's more well-connected or elite die, a massive investigation probably results, with news coverage and general uproar. Some deaths among the city's poor largely go unnoticed unless numbers become unmistakable. Alarming murders or disappearances result in vigilante squads and a neighborhood watch, assuming the police themselves are encouraged to do nothing.

are several colonial mansions and plantations, and the larger city area includes a number of islands. To the southwest lies Fort Stewart with Hunter Field, a community somewhat apart from the rest of Savannah, with its own school, church and stores.

### CORE SAVANNAH

The central part of Savannah is the historical downtown area, which includes the city's business district, as well as a large number of restored houses. Just south of downtown is the Victorian district, which is slowly being restored to match its northern neighbor. These two areas are the most expensive in central Savannah, and are home to not only several of the city's most prestigious Kindred, but also to most of the city's Elysiums. These regions are of prime interest to Ventrue. There's the business district, of course, but also ideal haven sites for Blue Bloods.

As one heads south from downtown and Victorian, the old restored houses give way to houses that

are just old. Some look like they're held up with little more than hope, while others have been repaired somewhat by tenants. Stenciled "No Loitering" signs are prevalent, as are gaudy colors, probably in an attempt to hide just how bad the situation really is. The transition is surprisingly abrupt. In some places, mere steps lead from million-dollar homes to slums. During the day, drug deals take place more or less openly in rundown neighborhoods. At night, prostitutes, gangs and other criminals hit the streets. A few neighborhoods are almost exclusively black. Due to poverty and racial tensions in the city, outsiders are not welcome, especially at night. Such neighborhoods are ideal for Ventrue who don't mind getting their hands dirty. None of the refined Kindred of Savannah want to even acknowledge that these places exist.

Gordonston is a small neighborhood on Savannah's eastside, adjacent to the Victorian district, with tree-lined streets. South of Victorian and Gordonston is



Ardsley Park, a rural neighborhood that is also a National Historic District. Ardsley Park is popular with professionals who work downtown. Many Ventrue and Toreador maintain herds there. South of Ardsley Park, bordering Southside, is Kenningston Park, a middle-class community. Ventrue interested in cultivating contacts among professionals of the middle and upper-middle class find plenty of opportunity here.

East of Ardsley and Kenningston lies Thunderbolt, which is an incorporated town. Set slightly apart from Savannah, it is nonetheless considered part of the greater metropolitan area. The established Kindred of Savannah have yet to really notice Thunderbolt, so it poses a great domain opportunity to newcomers.

### DOWNTOWN FLAVOR

Downtown Savannah, which is shown on the map, is the most important region of Savannah for Kindred of the city. Many buildings and landmarks are considered Elysium, including all churches, museums, labeled houses (such as Pirate's House), the Savannah Visitor's Center, Emmet Park (which is also considered the domain of Lillian and her coterie when they are in town), City Hall (which is the personal domain of the prince, although it's not really enforced), Forsyth Park and the Colonial Park Cemetery. Kindred congregate downtown nightly. Many have herds here, others hunt and everyone attends the various Elysiums.

The Hilton DeSoto overlooks Madison Square and is known as the meeting place of the prince and her advisors. She receives visitors in a spacious suite on an upper floor. Should the need arise, the prince can call a meeting of all the city's Kindred in one of the hotel's conference rooms. The hotel dates back to 1890 and has the distinction of having been used by the prince and her advisors since its completion.

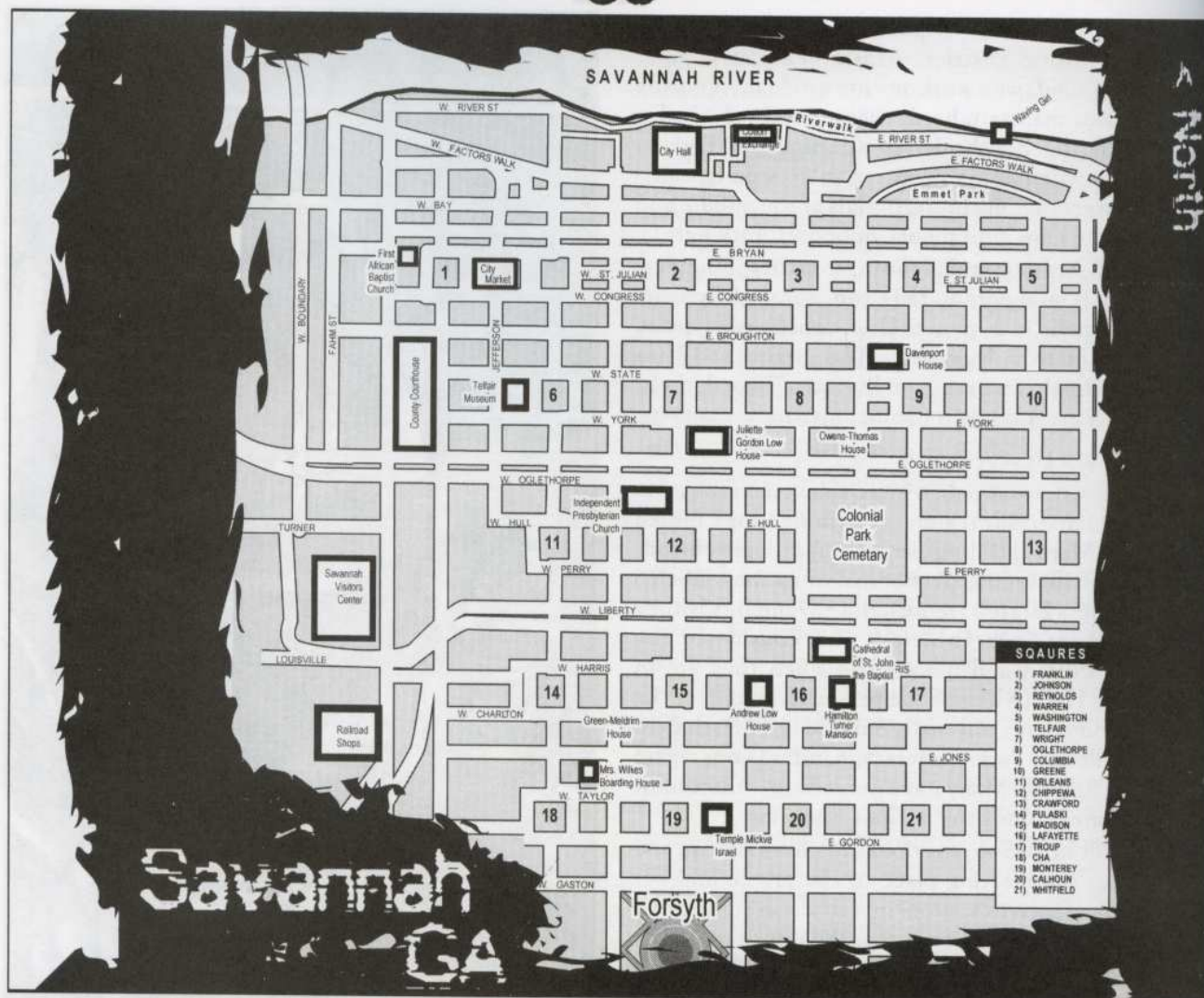
The fabulous City Hall, which opened in 1906, is the personal domain of the prince. This is not to say that others can't hold influence over people working there, merely that the building is generally associated with her. (In truth, Huxley's claim to City Hall is symbolic. Her lethargy means that there are few or no repercussions for vampires who dabble there, though none of the city's established elders have tested her claim in a long time.)

### SOUTHSIDE

Southside communities include Windsor Forest, which borders Armstrong Atlantic State University and is home to many school staff; Coffee Bluff, with its marches and boating marinas on the Hall and Vernonburg Rivers; and Georgetown, which is located approximately three miles west of Savannah city limits. Lillian's coterie patrols Southside communities, especially Georgetown. Also located in Southside is Vernonburg and Beaulieu, two former plantations turned







suburbs. The plantation buildings that still stand make for grand havens for a coterie of Ventrie, and the university could be of interest to scholarly Kindred. While Savannah's Brujah have some influence with most of the city's colleges, they're focused mainly on the Humanities departments, ignoring the potential of Natural Science faculties. The university laboratories have both the equipment and the people to make designer drugs, should the characters decide to become suppliers.

### ISLAND COMMUNITIES

Several islands to the east and southeast are considered part of Savannah. The southside islands include Skidaway, the last in Georgia's chain of Golden Isles, the Isle of Hope and Dutch Island. Skidaway Island is located approximately 12 miles southeast of downtown and is host to one of the city's premier planned golf communities. The Landings is a private residential community owned and operated by resident property owners (who could include Kindred or their contacts). The Isle of Hope was originally plantation land

and now features oak-lined streets with white picket fences and classical cottages. Dutch Island is a relatively new community, which was begun in the early 1980s. These areas are not only great places to set up havens, but ideal places to meet the "right" people — the rich, famous and influential.

The eastside islands include Long Point, Wilmington, Talahi and Tybee Island. Long Point is a new, gated development on the southwest side of Wilmington Island. Wilmington and Talahi are both suburban, with well-developed business areas that have yet to be snatched up by Savannah's established vampires. Tybee Island, one of the largest suburbs of Savannah, has a small-town feel. Its growing community of artists and painters attracts some of the city's Toreador. Tybee is also a good place to establish a prestigious haven and to meet affluent people.

### OTHER AREAS OF NOTE

Approximately 10 miles west of the historic district lies the suburb of Richmond Hill. This area was originally bought and developed by Henry Ford and is



considered one of Savannah's premier communities. It's home to many of the city's young Kindred. This area is full of bored, jaded, upper-middle-class teenagers. Characters in drug ventures find a ready market here.

The city also has a large number of graveyards, many of them quite old, and one filled with children's graves from a past epidemic. While these graveyards may not offer resources to the characters (save perhaps to any of their Giovanni allies), these locales make suitable settings for undead rendezvous.

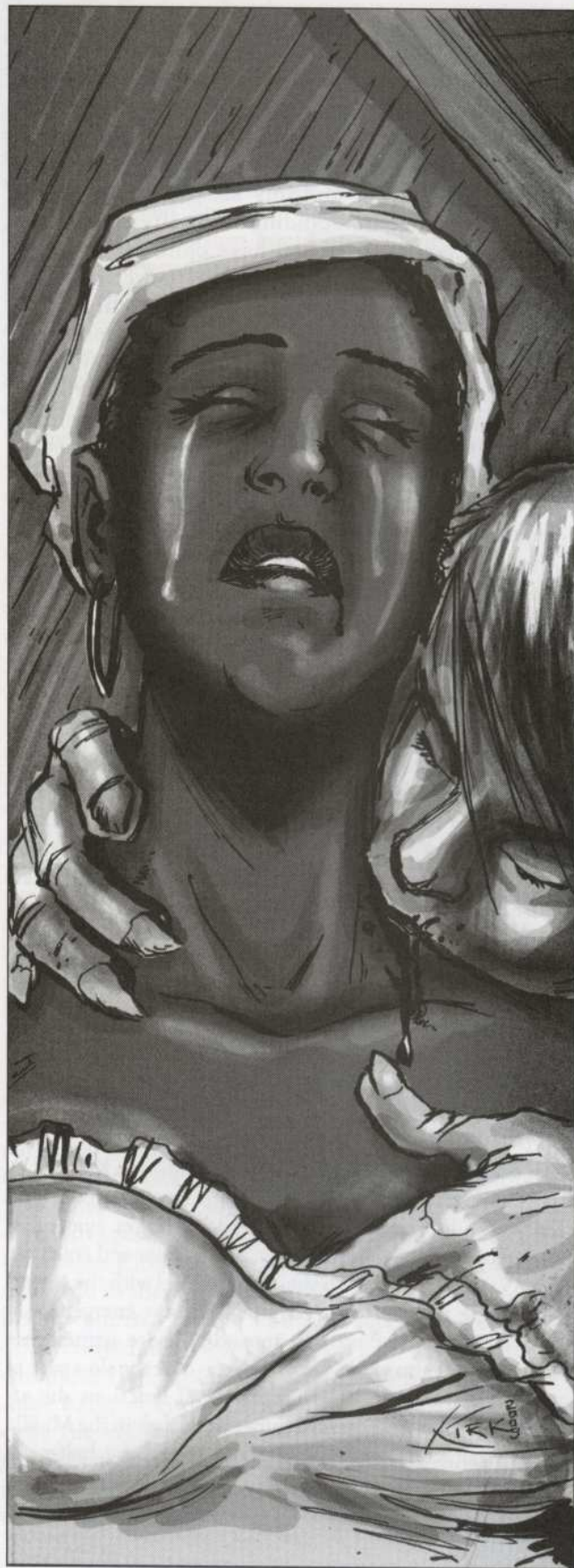
## THE FEEL OF SAVANNAH

On the surface, Savannah seems the epitome of genteel Southern hospitality. Marvelously restored Victorian mansions and historical houses are national treasures. Parks and riverside streets are beautiful to behold and wander. Yet hospitality is extended only if one has money. The mansions and houses were restored with wealth that could have been better spent helping the city's poor and curtailing crime. Parks and riverside streets should be walked only by day. Their artificial beauty is lost by night, when people not mentioned in tourist brochures come out. Despite itself, Savannah strives to regain its place as America's per capita murder capital. Street crime is pervasive, especially in middle-class suburbs (courtesy of bored teenagers) and areas bordering downtown slums.

Savannah is a city of stark contrasts. The rich are very rich and the poor are very poor. The middle class tend to be upper-middle class; highly trained professionals aspiring to become true upper class, working long hours and ignoring their families. The rich look down upon such pretenders, and all frown upon the poor, who in turn resent the rich. Hate crimes perpetrated by the less fortunate are frequent, even with brutal response to such acts from police.

The city's mortal upper class demonstrates the same complacency as local Kindred. These people just can't be bothered with anything beyond their own lives, pleasure and money. Then there's the frantic desperation of the city's poor, and the energy that the city's young often channel into destruction or violence. SCAD (Savannah College of Art and Design) is the city's suicide center, with too many students jumping from rooftops in macabre artistic statements.

All this is not to say that Savannah is rotten to the core. There are still a few gems in the rough, a few honest people working to create friendly communities instead of walled townships, a few who believe that skin color doesn't matter. Yet these people are rarely found when one scratches the city's gilded surface.





## PRELUDE

Before Act 3 starts, spend some time establishing the characters, the setting and the mood. The vampires may have been in Savannah for two to four years (unless you choose to send them there just as events unfold). They have probably accrued at least some level of influence and standing in the city. In addition, the characters know of and have opinions about the most important Kindred there. The "newcomers" can be annoyed that absolutely nothing is happening. They might have been told that the Camarilla was preparing an assault on Atlanta and that they could play a vital role in it, yet it seems that the sect has all but forgotten about Atlanta. Apart from characters' personal pursuits and sires' possible requests for status reports, nothing interesting seems to be happening. This is in part due to the sluggishness of Huxley and the city's elders, but also because Atlanta just can't seem to unite the Camarilla as New York did. With no east coast crusade to force things to ahead, the siege of Atlanta has become bogged down in endless discussions and plans with no follow through.

If you want, you can play out some of the early events that happen before this act. For example, you could see how the characters react to being confronted by Lillian's coterie on their way into the city, and how they handle their first meeting with the prince. These events may set the tone for the challenges characters' face thereafter, whether paving the way to the newcomers' success or posing hurdles to cross in all their subsequent endeavors.

Before the act begins, you can also capture what the characters' existence is like in Savannah. You might establish what routines they follow. How does a normal night unfold? What do they do? Where do they go? Whom do they meet? Where are the characters' havens and how do they travel? Do they take cabs, drive themselves or do they have a chauffeur and private limo?

You should also introduce the significant Kindred of Savannah. Particularly important are Prince Huxley and Katla. While Katla's impending fall is not yet evident, it should be obvious that she is not a cool, calm and collected elder Ventrue, but nor has she been infected with the lethargic malaise that pervades Savannah. She is energetic, yet unfocused. Mentioning the impending siege garners her attention, but also sparks her frustration over the slow pace at which plans advance. During the social functions she attends, she comments on how things were back in the Middle Ages. Characters might be shocked to see the half-mad, hungry glances she sends mortals from time to time. Should the characters strike up a private conversation with Katla, she

## RUMORS

Like any other Kindred, the vampires of Savannah are a gossipy lot; rumors fly at Elysiums and other gatherings. Before opening Scene 1, characters can learn some or all of the following rumors. If you want, players can roll Charisma or Manipulation + Etiquette (or Status), difficulty 6. Each success yields one rumor. While most rumors are marked as true or untrue, you can decide for sure. Maybe an "untrue" rumor would initiate an entertaining sub-plot for a character or two and is worth pursuing.

- Theo Bell, hero of New York, has been spotted in Savannah. Just what he's here for is unknown. (This rumor is true. Theo Bell was in Savannah briefly, although he has now moved on.)

- The Camarilla intends to send Jan Pieterzoon to Savannah. (Not true.)

- The prince considers limiting the creation of ghouls. (May or may not be true, at your discretion.)

- The prince considers new strictures on hunting, beyond those already in place and discussed previously. (Quite true, though nothing specific has been decided as yet.)

- Real ghosts have been spotted on several of the ghost walks that are organized throughout the city. It's believed the Giovanni are behind this as part of a plot to gain power in Savannah. (Not true.)

- The prince considers extending an invitation to Daniel Parker or possibly one of the city's Nosferatu to become one of her advisors. (Not true.)

- The Camarilla has all but given up on the siege of Atlanta and will not support any such move. (Not true. Several prominent Kindred are willing to contribute once a siege gets underway.)

- Karsh, the Camarilla warlord, has been invited to help plan the attack on Atlanta and is considering the offer, which is why nothing is being done. (Not true.)

- Several prominent Camarilla Kindred argue over how to divide the spoils of Atlanta before the city is even taken. Nothing will be accomplished until they settle their grievances. (Your call.)

might let slip that she considers Huxley a weak, spineless fool and has little but contempt left for most of Savannah's residents. She longs for the good old nights where vampires were the lords of humanity (she romanticizes her memories), and she drifts into her native tongue from time to time.

During this prelude, you can also establish the mood of both the modern nights and Savannah. As previously discussed, the tone is set by frantic action and technophilia, which clashes with the sluggish, cultured, Gothic atmosphere of the city.



## SCENE 1: RUMBLINGS

The Sabbat begin their effort to infiltrate Savannah. The characters become aware of the incursion and may work against the invaders. When the act opens, the characters are undoubtedly involved in whatever domains they have operating in Savannah. These schemes may continue, business interests can be managed and social functions are attended, but all the while the characters may have feelers out for a growing Sabbat threat in the city.

Sims has sent a few packs into Savannah. They're intended to lay the groundwork for the arrival of yet more, including Williams' pack. The invaders know Savannah's borders are patrolled, but they also know guards can't be everywhere. Still, infiltrators manage to raise enough of a ruckus that the characters learn of their presence.

Just how the coterie becomes aware that the Sabbat depends on what holdings and contacts members have. If the vampires have connections with the police, they may hear of a group of violent drifters who were picked up on the outskirts of the city and who seem to have immolated themselves in some sort of cult ritual before they were to stand trial. Investigation shows that the drifters immolated themselves at sunrise.

Characters with contacts at the Savannah airport may learn of a group of passengers who looked sickly and created something of a stir. Other passengers feared SARS or some other disease. This was, of course, a Sabbat pack, whose lack of Humanity shone through. Characters with allies in some of the waterfront communities may learn of strange, unmarked boats that sail up the rivers at night.

Should the characters have business connections, they might learn of a wealthy new developer based in Atlanta who seems to have taken an interest in Savannah and is making inquiries. This is Marcus Williams making his initial moves, trying to find out where other vampires might have influence. Investigation yields his name, which the characters might recognize as a Sabbat vampire. They could have had previous run-ins with Williams, have heard about him through their sires, characters' allies may have been the vampires who trounced Williams and his pack in New York, or the characters may have heard stories of this "corporate warrior" from other Ventrue. (See Williams' write-up on p. 128.)

If the characters have contacts at Fort Stewart, they may hear about people trying to bribe supply personnel to sell military weapons. Inquiries reveal that these intruders are new arrivals. When no one comes before the prince or is announced to the city's

Camarilla Kindred, the characters may suspect fellow sect members working undercover — or enemy invaders.

Virtually any options are possible for discovering the Sabbat incursion. They all depend on where the characters' interests lie. Ideally, the information that characters receive is enough to encourage them to investigate, and doing so suggests Sabbat involvement. Enemy invasion could be evident from small groups of newcomers having an unusual amount of backing and resources (which can be traced back to Atlanta). Intruders may leave telltale signs of Discipline use. (Many Ventrue can recognize the aftereffects of Dominate, for example, and the Sabbat unconcerned about using their Disciplines overtly.) Or intruders could leave drained corpses in their wake, in direct defiance of the prince's strictures. Such killings suggest someone opposed to the prince, someone whose Beast is dangerously near the surface — or, once again, the arrival of the Sabbat. A possible encounter between Lillian's patrol coterie and enemy invaders could clinch characters' assessment of the situation (or possible cover up feeding by someone like Katla).

If the characters are not inclined to investigate matters or do not make the connection with the Sabbat, their sires contact them with rumors that Savannah is targeted. Or Lillian could come to the characters directly with a warning of recent incursions, assuming she and the characters have a close relationship. She might even ask the coterie for help in tracking down a group of vampires who managed to elude her. Maybe the characters owe her a favor, or she has enough trust in them to help her save face before the rest of Savannah's Kindred. Lillian could even barter for the characters' help, perhaps promising increased protection of their holdings if a Sabbat invasion is imminent.

## SCENE 2: NEXT STEPS

The characters discover that one or more Sabbat packs have entrenched themselves in Savannah, and the Kindred must decide what to do with this information. Once again, the characters do not have to hunt down invaders or make wartime deals and preparations with other Kindred exclusively. They should continue to attend to their own personal agendas, perhaps combining efforts. Should the characters be generally disinterested in Sabbat incursions into Savannah, you can pique their interest by having the intruders cause some harm or encroach upon local domains, specifically the characters'. Whether by intent or chance, the Sabbat target some of the characters' holdings. If the Ventrue intend to maintain control, they need to take action. Cases of arson, assault and extortion



against characters' mortal concerns are certain to alarm the undead. Indeed, that may well be the ideal means by which characters learn that some Sabbat have made it in and planted roots. More such evidence can be found under "Gathering Information," below.

Characters may respond to the threat with direct action. They can search out and confront the invaders. They can pick a straight-up fight, ambush a pack or contrive to have mortals, ghouls or other agents face the intruders. Alternatively, a construction crew might be fed a false address for work, compromising the invaders' lair. Or a Sabbat hideout might be "mistaken" as a drug den by police. Such tactics have short-term gains; packs are destroyed, driven out or hamstrung. The Sabbat invasion plan is extensive, however. More packs arrive and may tax the characters' physical, supernatural or influential capabilities. That means seeking other, more organized and grand means of counteracting the invasion. Indeed, if packs are repeatedly defeated Sabbat warlord Jane Sims might send in some Black Hand in response.

Other options available to the characters include contacting sires to let them know what's happening. Elders are likely disturbed, fearing that their legacy is in danger, and instruct the characters to handle the situation and offer help with gathering information.

Perhaps the most promising response is to seek an audience with the prince, one or all of the primogen, or with another elder in the city. What happens depends on to whom the characters turn.

- **The Prince:** Huxley is initially skeptical of characters' claims of landed invaders. She demands hard evidence and insists that the coterie investigates further if it can't provide what she considers sufficient proof. If the characters have evidence, Huxley protests that she is too busy to handle the affair; the existing needs of the city demand all her time. She asks the characters to deal with the matter, offering them a reward if they seem hesitant (possibly resources, domain, hunting grounds, a boon or even permission to sire a childe). Huxley offers the assistance of her contacts and can provide information about and influence in local political, bureaucratic and business affairs. (She is hesitant to just turn over assets, however, for fear of revealing how much her control has slipped.)

Huxley's longstanding tenure as prince makes her doubtful of a Sabbat raid now, after so many years of relative peace. If penitent vampires are so distressed about an incursion, let them deal with the "problem." While there are others she trusts more, she considers the characters expendable. She can disassociate herself from them easily should events go bad. If the characters fail tragically, she has reason to get rid of

#### DEFECTING AND BACKSTABBING

With the Sabbat arrived, two options are available to characters that are not explored in the main text. The coterie could defect to the enemy or try to manipulate the Sabbat to take out Huxley and/or several Camarilla elders of the city, hoping to fill the vacancies.

Either is a loaded plan, rife with danger. Going over to the Sabbat or playing both sides in anticipation of going over to the winner of Savannah makes enemies either way. Ventrue characters stand to win considerable rewards by helping the Sabbat if the invasion is successful, but also stand to lose everything — including existence — if they're found out and the Camarilla remains standing. Defecting characters may have to run to Atlanta, but must also flee from there once the Camarilla siege of that city gets underway (assuming the characters can escape anywhere). Then there's the reality of the Sabbat's intentions for the characters. The sect sees value in the newcomers only as long as they have something to offer. Once that resource is exhausted, the characters can expect to be cast aside or destroyed unless they have the personal power to make a stand in the sect.

Defecting characters are almost certainly disowned by their sires and bloodlines. It would be interesting, however, if Katla used the coterie as a go-between with the Sabbat in her own plans to change sides. Or she might ally with the characters to coordinate a mass betrayal.

The characters' other possible course of using the Sabbat to take out Huxley and other key locals has its own inherent challenges. The plan requires setting the prince or primogen up without playing one's hand and revealing collusion or betrayal. Should targets survive an attack, the characters might be left holding the bag. Removing a standing Kindred also endangers the city. A rising newcomer probably doesn't get respect from other resident vampires, which breaks any united front that the Camarilla must show the Sabbat. Do the characters have the station or command to bring the fight to the invaders, or do they make the situation worse? And what rivals might the upstarts have to the throne? Does infighting among Kindred damn them all to the invaders at the door?

them, eliminating a threat. And should the characters succeed, well, they can be properly rewarded and shuffled off to Atlanta once the siege gets underway.

- **The Primogen Council:** Should the characters seek an audience with the assembled prince and



primogen, they have to wait at least one night, more if they are not able to impress the severity of the problem upon the elders. The council is almost as skeptical as the prince herself. Jason does not truly believe that the Sabbat is moving against Savannah, and Miranda is lost in her own thoughts. Tarrence Moore is willing to listen to the characters, though, and asks that the council consider the information. Should the characters provide compelling evidence of a full assault (say, the testimony of Lillian or the remains of a member of the Black Hand), Tarrence pushes to have the characters put in charge of stopping the Sabbat, with the council's support. Unless the characters completely botch their presentation of the facts or offend everyone, this course is eventually agreed upon. Tarrence is appointed the characters' contact within the council and becomes a staunch supporter of their cause.

- **A Single Councilor:** With the exception of Tarrence, none of the councilors take the characters completely serious. Like Huxley, they demand more evidence before going further. Upon receiving such proof, they call a meeting of the council, in which the characters can present the situation. Tarrence calls for a meeting immediately, with the same results as above.

- **Lillian:** It's logical to consult Lillian on the matter of invasion; she faces pack attacks but doesn't yet know what they add up to. She has fears, but knows that she needs conclusive proof of a Sabbat onslaught before going to the prince. She is willing to back the characters if they seek an audience. While Huxley is less dubious of causes supported by Lillian, she still demands evidence before making decisions.

- **Victoria Ash or Daniel Parker:** These two react strongly to rumors of the Sabbat entrenchment. Victoria suggests an audience with the prince and council. While the council is more disposed to listen to the characters when accompanied by such a respected elder, the patronage does nothing to endear them to Huxley, who thinks it all some plot directed at her. Daniel also suggests a meeting with the council, but tries to involve the characters in his plans to take over the city at the same time. He's willing to offer the characters positions as primogen, seneschal, Keeper of Elysium and sheriff, as well as boons in exchange for support. His plan is to use the Sabbat incursion to demonstrate that Huxley is weak and unfit to rule. Parker is a prime rival of any character who also seeks personal control of the city.

- **Katla:** The ancient responds with interest to the characters' news. She expertly questions the characters about their information, drawing out details and considering them at some length. She then asks what the characters know of the Sabbat, especially the sect's beliefs. She talks about the Sabbat's philosophy,

that vampires should lord over humans and have the freedom to act however they want. It's almost as if she sounds out the characters on their stance (knowing their sires and the history of their lineage as she does). The characters may get the impression that she actually sympathizes with the enemy. If called on the point, her position changes completely as she encourages the characters to defend their domains by force, perhaps by equipping a small force of ghouls. In the end, the characters can come away as shocked at Katla's behavior as by the urgency of the matters at hand.

No matter what happens in meetings, the characters get the impression that Savannah is weak and hardly prepared to stand up to a Sabbat crusade. The Kindred are fractious, the prince is disinterested or focused on retaining her power, and most elders are complacent and slow to react. Getting the Kindred of Savannah to react will take some doing. At the same time, the characters draw attention to themselves. The Sabbat may already know of them. Now Camarilla elders may suspect the newcomers of "crying wolf" or fear-mongering, perhaps to further their own ends.

## GATHERING INFORMATION

Either spurred on by others or on their own initiative, the characters gather evidence on Sabbat establishment. A number of approaches are available — the characters know invaders need to feed and have places to crash during the day. Once again, areas of influence are important, though a certain amount of legwork is useful.

So far, only one or two packs have made it fully into Savannah. They try to keep out of sight, but look for opportunities to gain a toehold in town and to bring more packs in. They squat in ruined houses, making the slums of the Victorian district (which is also close to downtown) an ideal option. The characters can sense their arrival through the police, who receive reports of violence or disturbances among indigents. Housing inspectors and developers can experience an upsurge in trespassing. Or sending agents to check on dilapidated houses that have been sun-proofed can give the characters an idea of where packs are holed up.

Sabbat vampires understand they're in enemy territory. Yet, there will always be a few who think pulling a random person off the street, draining her and dumping her body is acceptable (or necessary). Contacts in the sanitation industry or along the waterfront might inform characters of bodies found.

Investigation may also suggest that Sabbat packs are not strictly raiders, but information gatherers. The characters might spot suspicious-looking individuals



loitering around popular nightspots, various museums and the DeSoto Hotel, surveying crowds and taking pictures. Or they may learn about people requesting records of old building permits at City Hall. These spies seek to find out which buildings seem to have been renovated for vampiric tastes or needs.

If the characters have not yet encountered Marcus Williams, information gathering might reveal his efforts. The Lasombra buys run-down houses in the Victorian district and rents cheap apartments in Thunderbolt (all to serve as housing for Sabbat packs). He also buys his way into local businesses and starts up a few new ones. He's doing his best to get an overview of Savannah's financial sector, trying to figure out where Kindred interests lie. While the characters might not realize that a developer from Atlanta is a Sabbat vampire, signs might clue them in. Maybe they overhear contractors talking about the extreme fireproofing they had to perform after they finished a job. Or maybe a building inspector relates that a new developer is offering bribes to have building-code violations such as boarded-up windows overlooked.

### IN CHARGE

Characters assigned the duty of investigating and counteracting the Sabbat raid have their work cut out for them. One of the biggest hurdles they face is gathering support and rallying local Camarilla vampires. They, like Huxley, are doubtful that Sabbat appearances are more than the intrusions of a few individuals, not the beginning of a crusade. "This is Savannah," they protest, "not New York." They also balk at being issued orders by relative newcomers to the city, no matter what authority Huxley has assigned the characters. Convincing residents to lend aid may require political maneuvering, deal making and/or cajoling. Trading favors, boons and areas of influence is one way to buy cooperation. Threats are another if the characters have (or seem to have) the clout to back them up.

But even if locals agree to help, they contribute as little as they can. Maybe some money, access to certain buildings or businesses, the aid of mortal agents or contacts, or the service of ghouls who may have fallen out of favor. If some elders have childer who have acted up lately or who need some hard lessons in the way of the night, they might be "volunteered" for the cause.

Lillian's coterie is willing to work with the characters, whether willingly or out of obligation to the prince. That group's main job remains patrolling Savannah's borders, however. Tarrence lends a hand and even defers to the characters' requests if the vampires seem competent. He is no front-line fighter, though, and does have other responsibilities (working with the city's other Tremere), so he cannot help the characters every night. Victoria Ash is amenable to assisting, but doesn't take orders and has no interest in

compromising herself. Her help comes in resources (in addition to her wealth, Victoria has nationwide contacts in high society and the entertainment industry, and a few informants still in place in Atlanta). She can also lend her name to the effort. She is a renowned Kindred. If she announces her support of the characters, others (those who seek to win her favor or support) take notice.

Katla suddenly becomes quite willing to work with the coterie. She has a good deal of influence and wealth, supporting the characters as long as they keep her well informed. If the characters do share information, she uses it to make aggressive and Masquerade-threatening strikes against the Sabbat, forcing the characters to clean up her mess. If confronted on such instances, she insists that a domain should be protected through strength. She seems dismissive of any Masquerade breaches. In truth, Katla seeks to test the invaders personally to see if they're worthy of her alliance.

## SCENE 3: MOVES AND COUNTERMOVES

The characters are in charge of resisting the Sabbat incursion and must fortify their position as well as strike at the enemy. With information gathered by advance scouts in the previous scene, the Sabbat now sends war parties into Savannah to set the field for battle. Jane Sims knows that parties can't just waltz into town. They must sneak in. Connected characters can arrange to have spotters such as road workers, longshoremen and truckers along transportation routes watch for trouble. Likewise, an information ring among taxi drivers might alert characters to threats.

The following are encounters and scenarios that may occur over a period of a couple weeks while the characters are vigilant.

- A truckload of sewer pipes is transported into Savannah. The vehicle passes through a weigh station on a routine check and stowaways are discovered hidden in the pipes. The vampires assault anyone who finds them. By day, they seek cover immediately. By night, they try to escape into town on foot. Frantic communications erupt among Department of Transportation workers and/or police. Chosen confidants could dare to wake characters by day or report some kind of police standoff that lingers into night.

- If the characters post some kind of lookout at the Savannah River, they get various reports, most disinteresting, but one comes in of a boat discovered beached and abandoned. A pack has used it to arrive in town and the characters may rush to intercept the invaders.



• Contacts in a shoreline community report that lights can be seen every night on one of the small, supposedly uninhabited islands. A Sabbat pack could have taken up residence on the island. Then again, it could be campers, fishermen or kids making trouble.

• Watching Savannah International Airport is a good idea. While most packs know the airport will be monitored and it's dangerous to use planes to get into the city, a pack does have itself shipped into Savannah in large crates supposedly containing electronics equipment. If the characters keep an eye on Marcus Williams' businesses, they may learn that his people are scheduled to pick up or receive these crates.

• Lillian and her coterie are on constant lookout and may intercept a pack coming in by back roads. They might engage the intruders, but if the pack is too large they report to the characters, who must find a way to deal with the invasion.

• Contacts at the Coffee Bluff Marina report that a boat is trying to dock without permission, and that the crew seems quite unwilling to pay the docking fee.

• Reports come in of a youth gang raising hell in one of the Southside suburbs. Investigation reveals them to be bored middle-class teenagers.

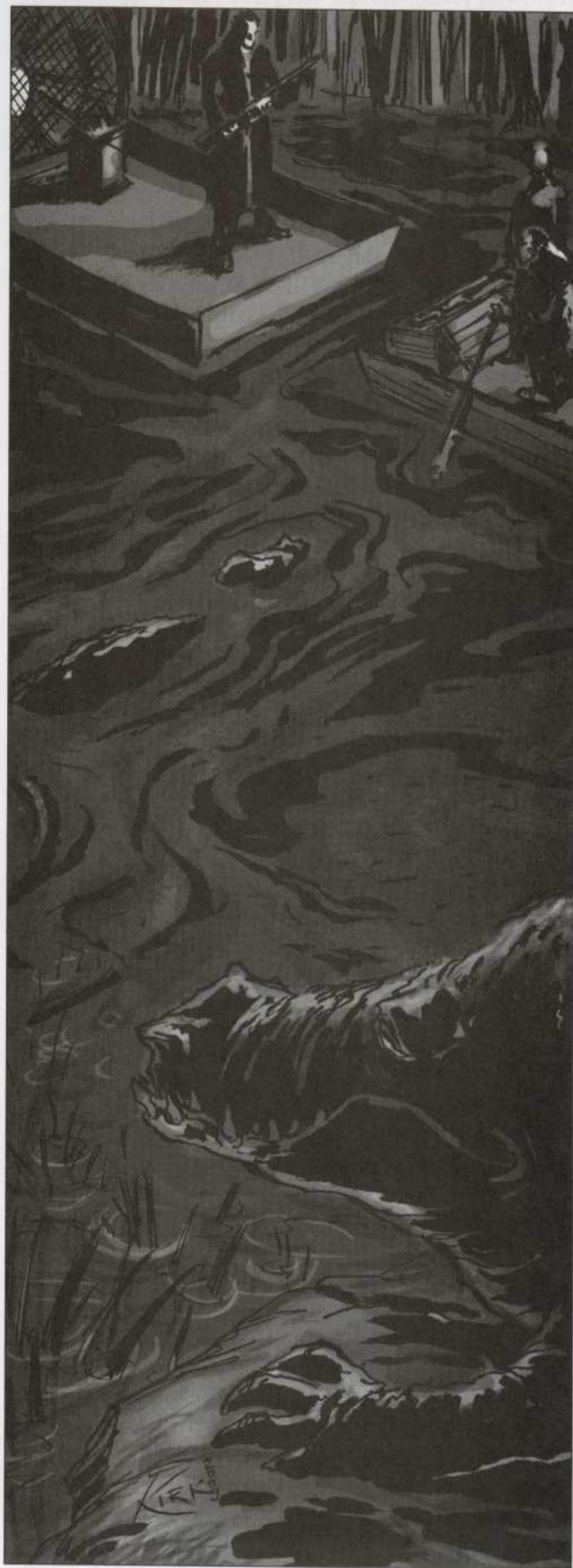
• The Sabbat has cultivated contacts with the Klan and has arranged for "incidents" on Savannah's outskirts — arson, drive-by shootings or assault. A pack tries to slip in amid the chaos of firefighters, police, reporters, onlookers and angry protestors.

All in all, maybe half a dozen parties hope to make their way into the city. While the characters might be able to intercept all of them, it's highly unlikely. Information gatherers sent in first probably find holes in the Camarilla defenses. Successful arrivals go to ground in anticipation of war.

## WHAT TO DO WITH THE ENEMY?

Intercepting or rooting out Sabbat packs is one thing, but deciding what to do with them is another. Destroying them seems like the best option, but they don't have to be exterminated immediately. They might have their uses. Characters could decide to feed packs false information or to watch them in hopes that they lead observers to other groups or give away vital information.

Feeding disinformation to intruders is tricky. Invading packs trying to identify important Kindred, locate havens and Elysiums, and generally get an idea of the Kindred presence in Savannah in anticipation of war. Tricking a pack into thinking a young vampire is an elder might be plausible. Other known elders may be requested to seem to defer to the poser, and he may give orders when observed. Or the characters might make a specific place seem like an important Elysium.





Either tactic can fool the Sabbat into staging useless attacks when hostilities break out. Or impetuous packs may be drawn out of hiding in the belief that they can make an easy kill.

In general, packs have their own orders and don't unite. They might do so, however, if each loses members and needs to bolster its strength. Picking off solitary targets might encourage packs to cooperate and provide larger targets.

Eventually, packs invading Savannah have to be dealt with. Sure, attacking them directly or sending in ghouls armed with stakes and axes during the day is a possible strategy. The attrition rate is likely to be high in either case, however. Far better to eliminate the enemy at a distance by having havens opened to the sun or burned down. See Scene 4 for what problems such efforts entail.

Characters can also try to drive off the Sabbat in nonviolent ways. While it's not easy — the packs are determined to stay — cunning characters might be able to use their influence in subtle ways. Invaders may not have backup havens, so arranging for structures to be condemned is a possibility. While the Sabbat cares little for the Masquerade, intruders don't want trouble with the police before all-out war. If characters manage to frame one or more members of a pack and give their descriptions to the police, they could convince a pack to leave rather than deal with interference. The characters could play on poverty or racism and set Sabbat agents up to be the targets of mobs. Maybe a Sabbat is pointed to the killer of a little girl and citizens seek their own justice. Or Marcus Williams is accused of conducting biased hiring practices and equal-rights organizations investigate him. By these means, packs are neutralized for fear of playing their hand, or are forced to flee the pressures imposed on them.

### MISSIONS

The following are some of the assignments that packs have been given in Savannah. The characters can intercept these vampires, stop their missions, or at least interrupt invaders' efforts to get the war underway.

- Knowing about the city's vampires, habits, haunts and havens is paramount to the Sabbat. A pack skilled in surveillance and stealth is assigned this duty. The invaders know that Savannah's elders are caught in the past and mingle with mortal high society. They therefore focus on the cultural attractions of downtown and the Victorian district, as well as on the business quarter. Once a target is identified as undead, the pack follows her, trying to establish her allies and haven.

Characters can spot these spies by the same means used to identify Camarilla vampires: by who spends a lot of time observing, without mingling, or who talks

### KATLA

While characters are immersed in the shadow war with the Sabbat, it's important to give them glimmers of developing events. Katla grows closer to snapping. Her observation of Sabbat activities in the city incites her. Not to anger, but to cast off the pretensions of the Camarilla once and for all and join the enemy. These invaders are closer in spirit to her than the undead whom she currently tolerates.

During characters' strategies against the Sabbat packs established in town, any encounters with Katla are alarming. She is erratic, one moment energetic and willing to take the fight to the Sabbat (as per to her long-standing oath to the Camarilla). The next, she is morose and contemplative, bemoaning the Masquerade and Traditions, half in English and half in a foreign language. At the least, they hear that she's losing her grip on her domains and that she has killed at least one of her ghouls in a fit of rage.

but never eats or drinks. Use of Auspex can also reveal unknown vampires. Such cat-and-mouse games allow characters an opportunity to mislead observers, perhaps feeding them false information about elders, havens and meeting places as suggested previously. Or characters can plan an elaborate ambush once a pack shadows them.

- In an effort to gather information about holdings, business interests and havens, one pack is assigned to go through deeds, building-inspector reports and other kinds of paperwork. Characters with interests in these forums can learn of the intrusion (or elders who are involved can report it). The characters might counter-bribe clerks to deny access to certain records, arrange for false information to become available, or confound pack members with more bureaucracy and red tape than they can cut through.

- While packs are armed they have foregone heavy gear to get into the city. One pack has therefore been instructed to break into Fort Stewart and make off with some ordnance to distribute. If the characters have contacts at the base, the break-in might coincide with a meeting with these people. Or the military might try to cover up the loss, but the characters learn of it "through the grapevine." A clash with these Sabbat has the potential to be high action; the invaders are willing to use their gear. If the characters have no such contacts, they can read about the theft in the paper and word of the weapons might spread on the street. The characters could try to get in on the goods or have agents do so on their behalf.



• The packs need cash. While Williams is able to make considerable resources available, one pack is assigned the task of cultivating contacts with drug dealers. The invaders bring in contraband from Atlanta, which is then converted into cash in Savannah. Characters with contacts among drug dealers, people in the slums or the police can learn of these new players. Characters without such contacts might hear about a bust or the discovery of a major Atlanta-Savannah supply line.

The characters have a number of ways to interfere with this mission. They could tip off the police, convince locals that the Atlanta dealers are trying to double-cross them, rally neighborhoods against the dealers or move into the market themselves and undercut the Sabbat's efforts.

### SABBAT STRENGTHS

If you foresee a lot of fighting between the characters and Sabbat packs, it might be a good idea to draw up a few packs, complete with Attributes, Abilities and Disciplines.

Most groups sent into Savannah have three to five members. More would mean visibility, while fewer would mean a pack couldn't cover ground. Members are primarily rank-and-file foot soldiers (created with normal character-creation rules), while a few are a bit more experienced. Some might even match the characters in experience. Of course, you can tailor packs to characters' interests. If the characters are combat experts commanding a small ghoul army, then the Sabbat enemies should be powerful enough to present a challenge. But if the characters are investment bankers, you probably want to downscale opponents' physical capabilities.

Profiles for various Sabbat opponents are provided at the end of this act.

### TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

While packs sneak into and get to work in town, Marcus Williams and his pack do their best to learn of Kindred-influenced businesses. Connected Ventrue probably sense Williams' intrusion and may work to counteract him with their own influence.

Keeping an eye on the business section of the local paper might let characters know where Williams focuses his attention. Contacts with local developers and in City Hall can help characters identify Williams' people, learn when they are coming to town, who they see, and what ventures they pursue. Legal and bureaucratic contacts might help delay Williams' projects, while the police can pick up his people (ghouls and normal mortals) for various violations, interfering with their activities.

Such dalliances comprise a mere game, however. Tit-for-tat strikes accomplish little against the larger threat of Sabbat invasion. Some characters might therefore decide to head into Atlanta to find Williams and eliminate or kidnap him. That is a bold move and requires a lot of planning. While the characters might be able to determine the addresses of Williams' holdings in Atlanta, there's no guarantee that he will be present — or that his private retreats can be discovered at all. Add to that the fact that Atlanta is a Sabbat stronghold and going there becomes an extremely dangerous proposition.

An alternative is to lure Williams to Savannah. His people could be used to bait him with urgent matters that "he must attend to." A seemingly innocuous deal with mortals — characters' agents — might be too tempting for him to resist. The characters' back-and-forth game with him might turn more overt, with Ventrue revealing themselves and inviting Williams to a negotiation in person — a battle of wits and business acumen. In fact, Williams and his pack might be eager to come to Savannah to do hands-on work, especially if the characters have seriously stalled their operations.

Capturing or killing Williams is not easy. He's no neonate, and while no other members of his pack match his age, they are all capable and experienced. On the other hand, none of them are fighters. Lillian's coterie or a number of ghouls may overwhelm Williams and his allies.

## SCENE 4: A DOMESTIC PROBLEM

Katla has finally decided to create her own realm, modeled after her romanticized recollection of how things were back in the Dark Medieval. She sees herself as a mistress of humanity, unfettered by such silly notions as the Masquerade. The result is a potent elder endangering local vampires, the unified front of the Camarilla and, perhaps most important to the characters, their own holdings.

Just how her madness unfolds depends on the characters' interests. It's important that her decline threatens their domains and interests to involve them personally in the trouble she causes.

Hit the characters' strengths. If they sell drugs to suburban teenagers, Katla's wanton feeding and abuses attract police attention to that arena. If the characters have extensive contacts at Fort Stewart, Katla abducts a number of soldiers to serve as ghouls in her private guard. If characters have allies among the wealthy,



Katla sires a few childer among the elite and lets them roam free in these neighborhoods.

When the characters investigate disturbances, they soon realize that the source of their problems is Katla. In accordance with her feeding restriction, which she only partially observes any longer, she has picked fights with the strongest or most dangerous men she can find — drug dealers, bodyguards, trained soldiers. Characters who know her or who have heard of her in the past may recognize her feeding habits. Witnesses may also describe someone who sounds like Katla, but unlike the vampire whom the characters have ever known. It sounds as if she's lost control, gone feral like a mad woman. Accounts may also speak of a woman raging in German or some language like it. (Note that while Katla certainly kills and feeds from anyone in her bestial state, she gains no sustenance from victims who do not fit her feeding restriction.)

If the characters have had cordial relations with Katla before, they might wonder why she acts against them now. If they've been in conflict with her, they may wonder why she's being so overt and heavy-handed, especially in the face of Sabbat incursion. Katla's actions may only threaten the characters' holdings by coincidence, but as soon as they protect their domains she takes it as an attack and regards the characters as enemies.

## MEETING WITH KATLA

When the characters learn that their troubles stem from Katla, they likely want to meet with her. She receives them in her haven in the Landings, the interior of which has been given a distinct medieval look. Partly because of her desire to return to her past, and partly to demonstrate her courage, Katla lights her haven with only fire and has purchased great wooden tables and high-backed chairs. Modern devices such as telephones and computers have been banished.

Katla is haughty and self-confident. She considers the characters to be hopelessly rooted in the weak modern age and derides them for it. Her behavior marks her as borderline insane. The dangerous gleam in her eye warns characters that she is close to snapping altogether. Reasoning with her is almost impossible unless the characters are willing to put away their modern manner of thinking — or pretend to do so.

If the characters try to intimidate, bully or threaten Katla, she laughs and has them thrown out, possibly even doing so herself. Adopting a medieval mindset, however — calling upon the power of legacy (as the characters' sires and grandsires knew Katla) and possibly throwing in some words of respect or pretending to have the same kind of disregard for modern weakness

— allows characters to have a somewhat civil conversation. Doing so requires some shrewd acting (Manipulation + Subterfuge, difficulty 9 if characters know nothing about the medieval era; difficulty 8 if they possess at least Academics 1; difficulty 7 if one has listened to his sire's and grandsire's tales). Katla's current mindset doesn't make her all that alert to lies. She knows that she's right; it's only natural that others would come around to her way of thinking.

If the characters establish a civil conversation with Katla, they learn that she's decided to make Georgia her own domain, ruled in the old style, and that she contemplates striking a deal with the Sabbat. If that isn't enough to earn her the characters' contempt, she refuses to stop jeopardizing their domains. If the characters convince her that they share her beliefs, she may offer them a chance to become her vassals, but she won't alter her plans or behavior. In the end, the characters probably leave the meeting with a sense that a final confrontation is at hand.

Should the characters go to the prince after meeting with Katla, Huxley, predictably puts the characters in charge of dealing with the ancient. She claims that she's too busy attending to other matters critical to the defense of the city. In truth, she hopes to avoid direct confrontation with Katla, using the characters as proxies just as in the war effort.

See the "Defecting and Backstabbing" sidebar if characters contemplate joining her.

## THE FINAL STRAW

Katla decides to meet with the Sabbat, using either information given to her earlier by the characters to locate a pack, or simply by acting in a way that attracts invader attention. (Her recent assaults and violations fit the bill.) If the characters keep Katla or a Sabbat pack under surveillance, either by themselves or through agents, they learn about the meeting and can do something about it. If they don't keep tabs, the meeting is held somewhere close to the one of the characters' domains, allowing them to learn of it. Alternatively, Lillian and her coterie or another of the characters' allies alerts them.

An ideal option, especially if Williams and his pack have not yet come to Savannah or if Williams has not been captured, is to have Katla meet with him. Williams is the de facto second-in-command of the invaders. It makes sense that he should meet with a potential defector, especially of this caliber. Such a meeting may allow the characters to capture Williams, and possibly even save him from death at Katla's hands.

The Sabbat pack is naturally edgy, suspecting a trap. Katla is overconfident and comes alone, secure in



## WASSAIL

Being in Wassail is not the same as being in a permanent state of frenzy, but it's close. The subject is completely under the control of her Beast, who adopts a fight, flight or feed attitude. Katla is not totally lost, however. She still has moments of lucidity — times when she is able to think straight, though her behavior is still affected by the Beast. These moments slowly fade over a few months, reducing the woman to a completely feral state, though she can hopefully be dealt with before then. A vampire in Wassail is called a wight. The condition is given a thorough treatment in **Sins of the Blood**. Here is a quick rundown of the technical effects (these do not apply to Katla during her moments of lucidity):

A wight soaks bashing and lethal damage at -1 difficulty and suffers wound penalties only from damage inflicted by fire and sunlight.

All uses of Dominate and Presence (except Dread Gaze) on her are at +2 difficulty.

Appearance is automatically 1. Wights look inhuman.

The only Abilities that remain at normal levels are Athletics, Brawl, Dodge, Intimidation and Stealth. Wights have no Empathy, and Abilities that require social interaction, contemplation or a delicate touch such as Academics and Finance are off limits. Other Abilities might be retained; a wight holds onto one dot of remaining Abilities for every Willpower point she has over 3.

Wights resist frenzy and Rötschreck at +3 difficulty when they bother to resist at all. They normally flee fire and sunlight, and enter frenzy in any serious combat.

the knowledge that she is the most powerful Cainite in the city. Disrupting the meeting is quite easy. The characters have a number of options. They can take matters into their own hands, possibly backed up by Lillian and/or Tarrence, and attack the pack as it meets with Katla. Or they can have ghouls do similarly, possibly sniping Katla or the pack from far away. Or they can use their influence to have the police arrive on a tip that the meeting is a drug deal. They can alert neighborhood gangs that others are muscling in on their turf. Or characters can inform hostile racial groups that intruders encroach upon their presumed territory.

No matter how the meeting is disrupted, one of the Sabbat panics and shots are fired (much to the detriment of the Masquerade, especially if mortals are

involved). Katla snaps, losing her last shred of self-control and plunging into Wassail. If the characters are present, they witness her transformation. You could have players roll Courage, difficulty 4, for characters to avoid frenzy and flight as their own Beasts are confronted with a superior predator. Katla fights for a while, but if she meets determined resistance she flees to her haven (where she regains composure... for now).

If the characters take absolutely no action at the meeting, purely observing, they overhear initial terms discussed for Katla's betrayal. Williams' is in a position to offer nothing, but hears the defector's terms with the promise of a future meeting. Katla's demands are the same expectations that she might have shared with the characters before — personal control of the city and Atlanta to preside over them as she likes, in the "old way." During this conversation, Katla takes offense to even the slightest thing, but barely controls herself. The Sabbat agents recognize their danger and quickly behave obligingly. Meanwhile, the characters recognize how close the ancient is to falling to the Beast completely.

## WE HAVE A PROBLEM

The characters probably realize that Katla is lost, whether they know of the condition of Wassail or not. Informing the other Kindred of the city, or at least the prince and other luminaries, is probably wise. Huxley, Victoria Ash and Jason Bishop all recognize the signs of Wassail, although they are unable to tell the characters anything more than what happens when a Kindred loses her struggle with the Beast. The characters' sires also know about Wassail and can furnish additional information: A vampire in Wassail seems to be unhindered by wounds, flees from fire and sunlight, and behaves more like an animal than a person.

The characters may decide that Katla is not their problem; they're supposed to deal with the Sabbat. In that case, the prince has others take care of it. That deferral of responsibility proves frustrating, though. Others have trouble tracking, finding and dealing with the ancient. If she has decided that the characters are enemies, she continues to commit abuses and cause trouble in their domains, being a major thorn in their sides. If the characters remain dedicated to the fight against the Sabbat, it's out of sheer determination and focus, possibly at the cost of holdings lost to the bestial elder. Katla calls the characters out. Left to her own devices, she is brought down in the end, probably by Lillian and her coterie. But that effort directs attention away from the fight against the Sabbat, strains the Masquerade and results in the death of multiple Kindred.



Katla's state presents a moral from which characters can learn. Wassail afflicts complete neonates who cannot handle the transition into a vampire, and elders who feel the weight of the ages. Katla is a contemporary of the characters' grandsires, which raises the question of whether grandsires themselves are falling to the Beast. What would become of the characters' legacy should their forebears end up as ravening monsters?

## WAR COUNCIL

Katla's behavior and intended defection adds to the trouble already posed by the Sabbat invasion. Calling some sort of meeting of other Kindred might be a good idea. If the characters don't hit upon the idea themselves, the prince decides to call a council. (After all, this is a great way for her to eliminate a powerful rival in Katla.) She asks the characters as managers of the war effort to arrange the meeting, putting the conference hall in the DeSoto Hotel at their disposal. She suggests that only the most prominent Kindred of the city be invited, but doesn't protest if the characters decide that all the city's vampires should attend.

Organizing the council, especially with Sabbat packs still out there, is not easy. Some local Kindred fear being exposed to the invaders. Calling upon the help of Jason Bishop is an option. Not even he can discount the threat of Sabbat incursion at this point, and being prominent in organizing a response to Katla's threat poses opportunities for him. He proves surprisingly helpful, though takes credit for everything that goes right and blames the characters for everything that goes wrong. The characters or other organizers also need to take care that word of the event doesn't get back to Katla. The sooner it's held the better, but quick action may leave slow or waffling Kindred out.

Most residents are willing to meet as long as security is guaranteed. Putting all local vampires in one room makes for a tempting target, after all. Victoria Ash is less than happy to leave her plantation, and some young vampires blow off the meeting believing that the elders will ignore them anyway.

## DISCUSSIONS

Once the council is underway, the characters have a great opportunity to present their recent achievements. They're asked to lay out all the information they have, so everyone can discuss how to prevent a full crusade, and how to deal with Katla. The characters can brag or be humble, adding even further depths to their cunning, but this is their moment of glory. Of course, that presumes the characters have had the upper hand throughout events. If they've botched operations they may be less than willing to report it, or rivals may point fingers at them.

It quickly made clear once again that the Kindred of Savannah are factious, self-centered, lethargic and willing to let old grudges get in the way, even in the face of a Sabbat threat and a rogue elder. They're disinterested in each other's losses of domain to the Sabbat. They see little danger in Katla's tirade as long as it doesn't affect them directly. The characters need to tread a fine line when asking for opinions, as some vampires resent even the most polite requests to put assets at the characters' disposal or to set differences aside. Also, some of the city's Kindred are unwilling to defer to the characters, even after hearing what they've accomplished and knowing that the prince supports the "upstarts."

In the end, however, some plans should be formulated. This is a good opportunity to suggest ways of dealing with Katla and the Sabbat that have not yet occurred to the characters.

## ONE FELL SWOOP

Should any of the Sabbat packs learn of it, the war council is too good of an opportunity to pass up and they attack. If the characters are smart enough to post guards, they are rewarded for their foresight. If not, they are punished. Ironically, cunning and cold-hearted characters may even consider the meeting a good way to draw out any Sabbat packs. They may intentionally allow word of the council to spread, or simply assume that the information will get to the enemy. Individual characters may therefore have contingency plans in place for their own or group survival at the hotel. Maybe they prearrange an escape route. It's a daring ploy, but brilliant if it can be pulled off.

With all the Kindred of the city — or just the most prestigious — gathered in one place, no pack is crazy enough to just burst in. An attack likely takes the form of a firebombing or ambush on one of more attendees as they leave the hotel. If the Sabbat successfully bomb the meeting, at least one of the city's important Kindred may meet Final Death. One could even be Huxley. Should the prince die, Daniel Parker does his best to claim the position (possibly backed by the characters who can then demand payment for their support). The demise of other elders also opens up different possibilities for the characters to occupy available areas of influence.

The capture or destruction of the attackers is a setback for the Sabbat right now, but not an insurmountable one. There are probably other packs in town or on the way. Assuming most attendees survive the meeting, they could be galvanized by the attack, willing to support the characters, or rallied by the martyrdom of one or more of their number.



## TAKING KATLA DOWN

Hopefully the players (and characters) realize that taking on Katla in a straight fight is sheer folly. She's an ancient on par with the characters' grandsires, and has only become more fearsome after succumbing to the Beast. Any previous confrontation, either with the coterie or the Sabbat, should give the characters a sense of what she's capable of doing. The characters may also consider the Traditions, especially the Masquerade. Disregard for these very laws is what makes Katla so offensive. If the characters trample the Masquerade in dealing with her, are they any different, or worse, in danger of falling to the Beast themselves?

In her arrogant and feral state, Katla is motivated by one basic instinct: survival, be it hunger, flight or aggression. Her base mentality can be used to maneuver her into a situation in which she can be captured or destroyed. Her craving to return to the old ways is also a weapon to be turned against her. She believes that might makes right. She believes in personal accomplishment. She therefore deals with problems directly and personally, making a trap possible.

### HAVEN SCOUTING

Characters or agents may survey Katla's haven in the Landings. She probably continues to use it, the core of her domain. What does she have to fear? She has destroyed all of her ghouls in bestial episodes, but has Embraced a few childer without permission. Many are as raging as she is, having received little indoctrination. Though untrained, these vampires are quite dangerous as childer of someone of such low generation.

The characters likely know where Katla's haven is; they may have gone there before. Getting in to talk to or defeat her is not easy, at least at night. There are always active Cainites on the prowl, and some might wake up by daylight if disturbed. It's difficult to open the haven to daylight, because Katla has done her best to proof the building against the sun and she sleeps in the deepest, most secure part along with her childer. Setting fire to the building (and ensuring that firefighters arrive late) is an option, but can result in widespread destruction and might put the characters' Humanity in doubt.

Katla's return to an old existence can be played against her by young, savvy characters. They could manipulate a wrecking crew to smash down the wrong building, perhaps through a falsified work order. They might try to buy her haven and can then do with it as they please. They could have power and water cut off to the entire block so that repair crews arrive during the day. The city historical society could push hard to have the building renovated. Eschewing connections

to such modern establishments and systems, Katla may be powerless to fight back and could be driven from shelter.

The primary advantage of striking during the day is that Katla cannot act due to her lack of Humanity. Are the characters aware of that facet of Wassail, though? Do sires share that kind of information, or are they fearful that childer might turn it against them one night? Does research into the condition reveal such a delicate aspect of it? If not, the characters are left believing they have an incredibly powerful elder on their hands at all times.

### DARLEY

Should the characters get the crazy idea of talking to Katla, they might get an audience if they're careful and play their cards right. She's quick to dismiss intruders to the whims of her childer if she has clashed with the characters before. Appeals to grandsires' relationships with Katla may buy the coterie some time, as might offers of serving her according to her feudal style.

To test characters' sincerity, she insists that they set up another meeting with the Sabbat. She believes their complicity in her plans means they have as much to lose as she does. The characters, meanwhile, may see an opportunity to apologize to the Camarilla later rather than ask permission now. They could arrange a trap for the ancient or intend to pit the Sabbat against her and kill two birds with one stone.

### AMBUSH

While a straight-up fight may be out of the question, an ambush involving several allies, Kindred and ghouls, might work. It's a crude solution with the potential to go horribly wrong, breaking the Masquerade and getting individuals killed, but it could succeed.

The hard part is gathering allies willing to fight Katla. The characters' own ghouls might be willing, forced or tricked into it. Huxley might sacrifice one of her retainers if the characters present a solid plan. Victoria Ash might be persuaded to donate one of her ghouls, though he or she doesn't come cheap.

Few Kindred are willing to put themselves in harm's way. Lillian and her coterie lend a hand if ordered to by the prince. While they are capable fighters, they're young and not used to facing vampires of Katla's stature. Tarrence can be persuaded to contribute if he and the characters have had an affable relationship thus far, though he insists on keeping his distance, using his Thaumaturgy to deplete Katla's blood supply. Strong enough ties persuade him to perform a ritual or two. Daniel Parker adds his name if he sees opportunity to make a play for power, but may just as quickly flee once a fight gets underway.



Katla generally does her best to escape numerical superiority (unless defending her haven or a fresh kill). The characters need to devise a plan to trap her, or be prepared to pursue her. They can scout out an area where Katla moves and prepare their course. Maybe she can be cornered in a tenement or hemmed into a construction yard.

Characters have to consider the Masquerade, too. Any fight needs to take place out of sight (or witnesses need to be dealt with). Arrangements could be made to distract police elsewhere, or to have them overlook calls from a certain area at a certain time.

### HERDING KATLA

Characters could try to direct Katla into a trap or a situation in which she'll be destroyed. Say, in an open field at sunrise. This approach works best when Katla is totally in the grip of Wassail, which is often. Indeed, she could be lucid one moment and provoked into a rage the next.

Herd Katla can be done in several ways. If the characters do enough research (and call upon their grandsires) they might learn Katla's feeding preference if they don't already know it. She hunts men whom she has bested in contest. With her Beast risen so high, she might be able to dismiss her preference from time to time, but she comes back to it. Characters could prepare a victim with mental Disciplines, eliminating fear in him or causing him to be deranged, and put him in harm's way. When Katla goes to feed, she can be interrupted, which allows her victim to escape. He runs a prearranged route that brings Katla right into the characters' hands. Of course, the bait is mentally, emotionally and perhaps physically destroyed — a blow to characters' Humanity.

Characters could also herd her in a desired direction with fire. She might be drawn into a warehouse that is set ablaze, for example, flames pushing her in the characters' desired direction.

Vampires could even be so brazen as to pick a fight with her and then retreat in small steps, egging her on.

Where to herd Katla depends on what characters intend to accomplish. Maybe they can lure her onto one of the fort's airstrips, as far from any hangars as possible. She could be drawn into the salt marches or to the middle of a big golf course. An abandoned factory could work. The main problem is that Katla possesses Earth Meld, so if she's trapped somewhere near earth, she can escape. She definitely uses the power to avoid the sun. Characters might learn of her capability from sires, local rumor or even from members of the Sabbat who have studied the ancient. An initial trap could go wrong because of this power, forcing characters to set another (and necessarily more crafty one). They might even play their influence with construction crews and have a backhoe at their disposal.

Characters with foresight seek to exhaust Katla of blood. Tarrence can help with Thaumaturgy, but the coterie can strike

at the ancient before she has fed and harry her, tricking her into using Disciplines before their trap is set. Characters also need to be prepared to escape the sun themselves if immolation is their goal. Having loyal ghouls ready with blankets and a van (and possibly a fire extinguisher) is a good idea.

Any trap needs to be strong enough to hold Katla. Getting her into a normal room or building doesn't work. She can smash through brick walls. Some sort of heavy metal cage with inch-thick bars and heavy-duty welding might hold her long enough for the characters to douse her in gasoline and set her on fire. An abandoned chemical factory might have a laboratory designed to be sealed. A bomb shelter or bank vault might accomplish the same. Fort Stewart definitely has various rooms that are virtually impossible to escape, though leading Katla in a chase around the base may be a tremendous violation of the Masquerade. Or maybe the characters know of an old, dilapidated house where a section of floor just waits to collapse, dumping anyone into the basement where the stairs are out.

Once the characters have Katla, they need a means of doing horrific harm to her. Fire has been mentioned. Explosives are a possibility. A massive amount of scrap iron could be dumped on her in an old factory. Heavy weapons might be turned on her. It all comes down to character ingenuity and access.

### ENEMY VS. ENEMY

Characters might decide to pit Katla against Sabbat agents whom they know of. If the coterie knows where a particularly dangerous Sabbat pack is holed up, Katla might be lured into the lair or the war party might be drawn to her, allowing the characters to pick up the pieces. The ancient and the Sabbat both need to be manipulated to ensure that neither flees immediately. Again, fire dissuades Katla from going in certain directions.

In her ongoing plan to set herself up as lord and ally of the Sabbat, Katla arranges other meetings with the sect (or has the characters arrange them for her). Both parties are wary of each other. Any small thing going wrong could incite someone to violence, particularly the defector. Or the characters might have the meeting place set on fire, driving Katla into frenzy.

The main problem with this plan, aside from setting up the encounter, is that neither Katla nor the Sabbat care about the Masquerade once a battle is underway. Characters need to handle the police, witnesses and possibly even journalists and camera crews. Then again, such subtlety is a classic Ventrue forte.

### OTHER OPTIONS?

The preceding ideas are just possibilities for handling Katla. If your players come up with another plan, go with it. If they seem stuck, allies could suggest one or more ideas and leave the characters to do all the rest.



## SCENE 5: KNOW YOUR ENEMY

With Katla out of the picture one way or another, it's time for the characters to return their attention to the Sabbat. In their initial struggles against packs, the characters may have acquired clues as to how the incursion is organized. Indeed, they may have captured a few Sabbat and have Williams in custody, maybe as a direct result of dealing with Katla.

If the characters had a lot of trouble dealing with Katla and have been distracted from their main effort, the packs stand strong and the characters' struggle is all the tougher. If the fight to take Katla down dragged on and caused a lot of collateral damage, a pack might return to Atlanta (unless stopped by the characters) to report that the Camarilla can't even control its own, setting off a full crusade. Preserving the city becomes all but impossible if Katla defects. She's the Sabbat's main weapon, giving them all the information they need.

If the characters dealt quickly, decisively and — most important — ruthlessly with Katla, the Sabbat may be shaken. Packs could decide that they don't want to tangle with the coterie. Others might return to Atlanta and report that Savannah is too difficult a target, with powerful Kindred willing and able to take down their own elders. Jane Sims may even be motivated to come to Savannah herself to take care of the situation rather than lose face.

### INTERROGATION

Most crusade soldiers are fanatics. They're the type who try to gouge out their own eyes to avoid Dominate, or who seek Final Death rather than capture. Interrogating them doesn't yield a lot, even if characters get their hands on some of the less extreme Cainites. Dominate reveals little because soldiers know very little. On the other hand, should the characters gain a reputation from their clash with Katla, soldiers might be intimidated.

Williams is *not* a crazy fanatic, and he knows a great deal about the operation. Characters can buy his information or even offer him amnesty in return for his help. Threats don't make him spill his guts; he knows he could be destroyed once his usefulness is exhausted. Promises of protection and access to domains abroad appeal to his sensibilities.

Some invading packs might even be interested in cutting deals. Should the characters offer them wealth or influence away from Savannah, one might be willing to change allegiance. That's especially true if the characters handled Katla





brutally. The coterie might be more frightening in person than Sabbat leaders are from afar.

Given time, use of Disciplines, pressure and wheeling and dealing, the characters can discover the following bits of information. The first four points are known by soldiers. The rest can be learned from Williams or members of his pack.

- The infiltration is led by a warlord named Jane Sims. The characters can get a description of her, though they may realize that appearance is relative among some clan members. If the characters have contacts among important Kindred in New York, they can learn that Jane was involved in some east coast battles and that she is considered dangerous.

- The preliminary infiltration effort involves about a half-dozen to a dozen packs. Neither soldiers nor Williams knows the exact number. Most soldiers know of at least one other pack, while Williams is aware of the names of a few, but not their size or membership. Still, this should give the characters some idea of whether or not they have intercepted some or most of the enemy's initial wave.

- The Sabbat is still in the information-gathering step of the crusade, planting moles. *Everyone* will know when the full crusade begins.

- Jane is not member of a pack, but has a single bodyguard. She has been known to join packs to ensure that specific missions are accomplished, and is respected as a result. Thus far she has remained in Atlanta to oversee efforts.

- Archbishop Sutphen has expressed interest in leading the crusade on Savannah, but has been too busy handling affairs in Atlanta. Should Jane be eliminated, he might seize the opportunity.

In addition to information about the invasion, characters can learn valuable details about Atlanta's Sabbat, including Sutphen's official haven, who bishops are, a rough estimate of the number of Sabbat in town, what businesses they have interests in, and where pack members gather. This information might not be of much use right now, but comes in very handy when the Camarilla is ready to assault Atlanta. Characters armed with this information gain recognition and reward for it.

## SCENE 6: THE FINAL SOLUTION

By now, the characters may be able to stop the crusade before it begins in earnest, or they have failed in their efforts and the enemy is poised to attack.

There are various means by which the characters can stop the Sabbat once and for all. They could try to

lure Jane Sims to Savannah and take her down. While she's eager to come to the city to oversee the action personally, she only does so from a position of strength or desperation. She needs to believe that all-out war is about to erupt, or something drastic needs to be done before the effort dies completely. Reports of pack successes convince her of the first. Sabbat invaders could genuinely make headway in Savannah, or the characters feed Sims inflated news of success. Information on packs being captured or bought off, or loss of all contact with infiltrators could also lure her in.

A barrage of discouraging information, including reports of the Camarilla being ruthless enough to dispose of its own elders, could be enough for Sims to give up the campaign altogether. Tactics such as sending a trash bag full of Sabbat ashes to Atlanta delivers a clear message and makes for a character victory.

If Jane feels it's time to go to Savannah, characters need to subdue her to contain her. Simply killing her certainly slows the Sabbat's effort, but with Jane gone, Archbishop Sutphen takes over. That could mean even bigger trouble for Savannah. While Sutphen is not as subtle as Sims, he is ruthlessly efficient.

Sims can be lured into a snare. She is wary, even if the characters manage to get Williams and/or other pack members to draw her in. She seeks to meet anyone in the suburbs, away from known Camarilla holdings. Sims uses *Auspex* to examine groups who approach. She doesn't surrender and is a fearsome opponent. Staking her doesn't work, either. Her heart is encased in bone. Attackers must subdue her without the luxury of sending her into torpor. That means Final Death or some other means of containing her.

## WINNING

Alternatively, characters can simply try to speak with Sims directly, without all the mess of a fight. Characters can be straightforward about it, approaching her without intent to attack. Or they can open a dialogue with her after they've subdued her. As stated previously, killing her just delays the attack on Savannah. A better course is to convince her that an attack on Savannah is folly. The characters might show evidence of having disposed of all war parties (again, that bag of ash is compelling). They might point to Katla who dared go over to the other side and who was destroyed as a message to all offenders. Seeking a dialogue with Sims also suggests a position of strength. Letting her into Savannah to communicate without attack shows that the Camarilla isn't afraid of her or her crusade. Letting her leave unmolested sends an even stronger message.

Dominating Sims is a possibility, albeit a sloppy one. Use of Disciplines could go wrong. She could



## NICOLAS

Nicolas is Sims' Cainite bodyguard. He fights to the death to protect his charge. Nicolas has Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Wits 3, Alertness 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Firearms 2, Animalism 1, Potence 2, Vicissitude 2 and a blood pool of 12. He is armed with a machete and a .44 revolver.

resist and the characters have few cards left to play thereafter. Successful Domination might make the warlord a double agent, or characters may fill her with a conviction that any attack on Savannah is a waste. If the characters are particularly devious, they may erase her memory of being captured and replace it with a memory of meeting a single, surviving scout pack that explains how taking the city is impossible.

Confirmation of the characters' success may come from Camarilla observers. Reports come in that Sims has been recalled to Mexico City and the crusade has been called off.

Should the characters botch attempts at handling problems, stopping Katla, dealing with Williams, and preventing scout packs from carrying out their missions and getting word back to Atlanta, Savannah comes under siege. If Katla hasn't been dealt with, she remains a fearsome enemy, working for the Sabbat or herself. She could seek revenge against the characters for ruining her plans of domain and independence. If Williams survives and remains antagonistic to the characters, he continues to interfere with their influence in the mortal world. If invading packs succeeded in their missions, the crusade is informed about Savannah and its Kindred.

## RAMIFICATIONS

So, the characters have either foiled the Sabbat's efforts to start a crusade or they've failed and now the Sword of Caine stands ready to strike.

## SUCCESS

The Sabbat decides that a war for Savannah is too risky at the moment. That allows the Camarilla to prepare itself for a siege of Atlanta, hopefully retaking the city for the Ivory Tower. Should bureaucracy bog preparations down again, the characters need only point to how close the Sabbat came to seizing Savannah. Depending on the role they play and how determined they are to receive their laurels, the characters may be acknowledged as instrumental in stopping the Sabbat. While Prince Huxley doesn't like it, she nods to their efforts. If the characters do not defend their efforts, other vampires such as Daniel Parker

claim responsibility in a bid for status and power. Shrewd political Kindred turn the opportunity into a station in Savannah, possibly as prince, primogen member or Keeper of Elysium.

Word of events in Savannah reinvigorates the reclamation of Atlanta. The characters are turned to as pivotal in the battle. While this means they're expected to contribute heavily from their own resources, it also allows them to take a leading role in the siege and in establishing any hierarchy that might form. With Katla potentially gone, the characters' chief rival for power in Atlanta is Victoria Ash.

You can make the battle for Atlanta and subsequent restoration the focus of a new chronicle, or you can end it all here. Addressing the battle for Atlanta does bring closure to this story, however. With all the struggles that the characters have been through to secure Savannah, it would be anticlimactic if the players never learn what happens. You can decide whether the city is returned to the Camarilla or remains in Sabbat hands.

Success in Savannah also means characters' bloodlines receive further recognition (or former black marks might be erased). The characters' sires can brag about their childer in New York Elysiums, and grandsires can mention their names in elder salons around Europe. A worthy end to a legacy begun almost 800 years ago.

## FAILURE

Maybe the characters didn't stop all the scouts. Maybe they didn't prevent the Sabbat from uncovering the havens of the most important Kindred of Savannah. Maybe they accidentally killed Sims and were unable to use her to send a message to Atlanta. Whatever the reason, the crusade is on, led by Warlord Jane Sims or Archbishop Sutphen.

This does not mean the end for the characters, though. They might still be a force to be reckoned with. At least they know that the Sabbat is coming. The characters can continue their roles as wartime leaders — Huxley has trouble dislodging them now. Preserving the city is more important than ever, because if it's lost, the characters face the much more dreaded fate of losing status, name and honor. The Kindred of Savannah may remain a fractured lot. It takes all the characters' political and social savvy to pull the city together to resist a full-scale invasion. Calling in favors from other Kindred and help from sires can go a long way when the shit finally hits the fan. In the end, success might rise like a phoenix from the ashes of failure. But should the characters falter, arrivals from New York and other Camarilla citadels may step in and take over, brushing the characters aside with the political clout they carry.



Or maybe the characters know when they're beaten. They stick their tails between their legs and turn to New York or elsewhere. Such a strategic retreat, while not prestigious, is tolerable. Sires are not pleased and the characters lose much of their status, especially in the eyes of other Ventrue, but at least they aren't destroyed by frenzied Sabbat warriors. The characters survive to plot and scheme another night. It's unlikely that Savannah can withstand a determined assault, with the resident Kindred as divided as they are.

If sires believe that affairs in Savannah have been utterly botched, they might also call characters home before the Sabbat strikes, hoping that the characters' absence will disconnect them from the loss. Of course, such an end hardly befits the image that an ambitious young Ventrue sees for himself.

## THE END?

This is the end of *Ventrue Chronicle*. It need not be the end for the characters or their bloodlines, though. As mentioned above, an attack on Atlanta can be imminent. The characters might find Savannah rewarding and decide to stay and build a seat of power there. They could return to New York with the renown earned for stopping the Sabbat, or they may decide to visit their grandsires in the old country. Whatever they decide, the legacy can continue.

## MAJOR CHARACTERS

The following are the prominent figures of this act. You may revise their profiles as best suits the players' characters and your vision of the chronicle.

### PENELOPE HUXLEY, PRINCE OF SAVANNAH

**Background:** Born the second daughter of Ambrocious Huxley, one of Savannah's cotton millionaires, Penelope was the darling of Savannah's social scene thanks to her beauty. She resented it, however, as she was an intelligent and ambitious woman. She felt that if she had been homely, her mother would not have paraded her around like some sort of prized possession. Whenever possible, Huxley borrowed books from her brothers and managed to expand on her meager education. At the same time — much to her mother's dismay — she fended off marriage proposals from all over the country and even from visiting European nobility.

Huxley met her sire-to-be at yet another ball. The elderly gentleman impressed her with his presence and quiet, self-confident manner. She dazzled the Kin-



dred, who was still young enough to feel the echoes of human emotion. Nathaniel Summerton was smitten and, being the de facto prince of the city, granted himself permission to Embrace Huxley.

The young woman took to undead existence with surprising adaptability, though she found the act of drinking blood repulsive. (That might explain why her flavor of choice is blood with alcohol in it.) Summerton thought he had Embraced a socialite, but what he got was an ally and asset. Huxley was intelligent and had learned enough from observing her father's business that she could assist Nathaniel in managing his estates. She also had contacts in the mortal world, and all the social occasions that her mother forced her to attend served as preparation for the city's Elysium.

Huxley acted as Summerton's seneschal for 20 years and was privy to all of his secrets. The prince thought his childe completely loyal, so made no effort to hide the fact that the fire of 1820 was a plot to eliminate his own sleeping sire, ensuring that Sabert would never rise to reclaim Savannah. Much to Summerton's surprise, Huxley betrayed him — or at least, that's how he saw it. For her part, Huxley believed that Summerton's act, which resulted in widespread death and destruction, showed that he was more interested in his own ambition than in the welfare of Savannah. She was shrewd enough to make backroom deals with other vampires and became prince.

Huxley dedicated her reign to the city. While she ensured that she had a comfortable power base and sufficient influence over affairs in her domain, she was not above



sharing power and influence with other Kindred, especially the Toreador, to secure Savannah's safety, prosperity and cultural development. Slowly but surely, however, she was affected by the same sense of conservative traditionalism that seemed to affect all Kindred who dwelled in Savannah. The latter half of her rule was marked by a dedication to the status quo and slow change — if any — in the way things were.

The crusade against Atlanta took Huxley and all other Kindred of Savannah by surprise. Indeed, the prince has yet to shake off the lethargy of years of relative peace and prosperity. Huxley has become complacent, since Savannah was never really a domain of great importance during her reign. Now she is forced to reckon not only with the Sabbat, but also with newcomers to her city. Huxley fears for her domain and has become somewhat entrenched. Even though her city is under threat, old habits die hard. Huxley is highly resistant to change, quick to dismiss warnings and has a tendency to delegate tasks, even in situations where a strong executive figure is needed.

**Image:** The most remarkable thing about Huxley is her long black hair, which tumbles past her shoulders in luxurious curls. She has a voluptuous figure, wears fashionable eveningwear, and has deep, dark eyes. She walks with a confident stride and speaks with a subtle southern accent. She strives to seem physically older than she is, having been Embraced at 23.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are the prince of Savannah. Never let anyone, especially yourself, forget that. You realize that your position is precarious — with Atlanta fallen, Savannah is a primary domain in Georgia. Yet you cannot accept that the threat is as dire as some claim. You care little for new ideas and modern thoughts, preferring the ways you've long known. They've worked for you and your kind this long. You have become paranoid and do not trust outsiders, even after they have proved themselves.

**Clan:** Ventrue

**Sire:** Nathaniel Summerton

**Nature:** Director

**Demeanor:** Traditionalist

**Generation:** 8th

**Embrace:** 1793

**Apparent Age:** Mid-to-late 20s

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma (Graceful) 4, Manipulation (Persuasive) 4, Appearance (Captivating) 4

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness 1, Dodge 1, Empathy 3, Intimidation 3, Leadership 3, Subterfuge (Keeping a Straight Face) 4

**Skills:** Etiquette (Old Fashioned) 4, Firearms 1, Performance (Piano) 2

**Knowledges:** Academics (Literature) 2, Finance 3, Investigation 1, Law 1, Linguistics (French) 1, Occult 1, Politics (City of Savannah) 5

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1, Dominate 4, Fortitude 3, Potence 1, Presence 5

**Backgrounds:** Allies 1, Contacts 5, Herd 3\*, Influence 2, Resources 5, Retainers 5, Status 5

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

**Morality:** Humanity 6

**Willpower:** 8

\* Huxley drinks from only those who are drunk.

### JANE SIMS, SABBAT WARLORD

**Background:** Despite her gender, Sims had a first-rate education as an MD, courtesy of a wealthy father with no sons. She went on to serve at the prestigious Johns Hopkins hospital, and married a renowned surgeon. Through her career, she came into contact with scientists working in the relatively new biochemistry field, using it to study ailments such as cancer. Sims' interest was aroused and she dedicated herself to the study of disease. Ten years later, Sims was considered one of the country's top experts in virology and biochemistry. She traveled extensively, giving lectures at universities and hospitals. It was during one of these trips that she was Embraced by Yuri Kerezinski, a Tzimisce bishop.

Sims' sire took her with a specific purpose in mind. The Sabbat Vaulderie had the potential to spread disease. Yuri decided that Sims' expertise would benefit the sect, which it did. Unfortunately, Sims became somewhat unhinged because of her Embrace, and her sire sent her to allies in Mexico City where she could recover some of her sanity.





Sims made a number of allies among Mexico's top-ranking sect members. She was invited to help coordinate the east coast crusades and accepted, deciding to help further the glory of the Sabbat. During the crusades, Sims acquitted herself admirably and was recognized as a warlord. In truth, she was probably more lucky than skilled, though she firmly believes in her own capabilities. When it was decided that the Sabbat should move on Savannah, Sims' patrons assigned her to the task.

**Image:** While Sims would like to use Vicissitude to make herself look beautiful (she believes that Tzimisce who use their powers to look like monsters are childish, crying out for attention), she is far too busy to keep up with the shifting trends in modern beauty. She therefore goes for a plain look, with medium-length brown hair, green eyes and an average build. She wears comfortable, practical clothes, although she maintains a stylish wardrobe for special occasions.

**Roleplaying Hints:** On the surface, you are a skilled and successful warlord who is to be obeyed and feared. In reality, you hide your insecurity and nervousness. So far, everything has gone your way, but should your plans fall apart, you might too. You do your best to hide your weakness from others, projecting an image as a tough-as-nails bitch.

**Clan:** Tzimisce

**Sire:** Yuri Kerezinski

**Nature:** Visionary

**Demeanor:** Director

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1952

**Apparent Age:** Late 20s

**Physical:** Strength 3, Dexterity (Manual Dexterity) 4, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence (Good Memory) 4, Wits 2

**Talents:** Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 1, Intimidation 3, Leadership 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 1

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Body Crafts 3, Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Firearms 1, Melee 3, Stealth 1, Survival 1

**Knowledges:** Academics 3, Investigation 1, Linguistics (French, German, Latin, Spanish) 3, Medicine (Virology) 4, Occult 3, Science (Biochemistry) 4

**Disciplines:** Animalism 2, Auspex 2, Fortitude 1, Protean 1, Vicissitude 4

**Backgrounds:** Fame 1, Mentor 5, Resources 1, Retainers 1, Status 3

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

**Morality:** Humanity 1

**Willpower:** 6

## MARCUS WILLIAMS, THE BUSINESSMAN

**Background:** Williams was born in El Paso, the son of a wealthy businessman. He followed in his father's footsteps, entering the business world with an excellent education. At his own request, he started at the lowest levels and worked his way up without the benefit of nepotism. His natural skill at making money and managing affairs quickly made him a wealthy man — he was a millionaire by 30.

Williams' business acumen attracted the attention of the conservative Lasombra of El Paso. While they supported the idea that the Sabbat should, in general, not bother itself with mortal affairs, they recognized that the Sword of Caine does need money. Thus, the city's Bishop of Finance Embraced Williams. The neonate took to the vampiric condition like a fish to water, although he resented his sire for taking business holdings away.

Without direct control of his assets, Williams decided to leave El Paso rather than work under his creator. He soon hooked up with a few other Cainites with interests in the business world and formed the pack he now leads. This group was dedicated to fighting the Camarilla where it really hurt — the wallet. Currently numbering four members and led by Williams, the pack wields a great deal of business influence in the United States and Mexico. The pack became involved in the Savannah effort after being brutally rebuffed by the Camarilla's Ventrue in New York, so headed south to rebuild. Eager for a chance to stick it to the Ventrue, Williams placed himself under Sims' command.

Williams' packmates are Andreas (a fellow Lasombra who is the pack's priest and who has contacts in organized crime), Rachel (a Jewish Tzimisce with contacts among jewelers and bankers), and Patrick (a Brujah *antitribu* who serves mainly as muscles and bodyguard).

**Image:** Williams is short and thin. His hair is short and dirty blond. His pale blue eyes are hidden behind stylish sunglasses whenever the situation permits. Williams is somewhat unattractive and tries to make up for it by wearing expensive clothes.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Too many members of the Sabbat are psychotics, fanatics or idiots. You're different. You have intelligence, education and breeding, and you're willing to put them at the sect's service — as long as you receive a certain level of compensation. Your skills lie not with claws and guns, but with words and money. You're careful to maintain your smooth, confident manner at all times. Showing emotion means showing weakness. Whatever else you are, you're not weak.

**Clan:** Lasombra

**Sire:** José Chavez

**Nature:** Autocrat

**Demeanor:** Competitor

**Generation:** 11th

**Embrace:** 1970





**Apparent Age:** Mid-40s

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation (Smooth) 4, Appearance 1

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits (Level-headed) 4

**Talents:** Alertness 1, Dodge 1, Empathy 3, Intimidation 3, Leadership 3, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 3, Style 3

**Skills:** Drive 1, Etiquette (Corporate) 5, Firearms 2, Security 1

**Knowledges:** Computer 2, Finance (Financial Combat) 4, Investigation 2, Law 2, Linguistics (English, French) 2, Politics 3, Science 1

**Disciplines:** Dominate 3, Potence 1, Presence 2

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Alternate Identity 1, Contacts 5, Resources 4, Status 1

**Virtues:** Conviction 4, Instincts 5, Courage 2

**Morality:** Power and the Inner Voice 6

**Willpower:** 7

### LILLIAN, BORDER GUARD

12th generation, childe of Adam Carter

**Clan:** Gangrel

**Nature:** Conformist

**Demeanor:** Loner

**Embrace:** 1973

**Apparent Age:** Late 30s

Lillian was never meant to be Kindred. The wife of an Air Force officer, she spent her time taking care of her family and organizing the local Women's

Shooting Club. She had a normal life and one would think there was nothing about her that could attract the attention of a vampire.

Unfortunately for Lillian, she was in the wrong place at the wrong time. On her way home from the shooting range, she crossed paths with Adam Carter, a Gangrel fleeing from a Lupine. When Lillian saw the animal that leapt upon what seemed to be a poor, defenseless man, she reacted on pure, panicked instinct, pulled out her gun and fired. Her aim was true and it distracted the Lupine enough that Carter was able to finish it off. Then, lost to his bloodlust, Carter drained Lillian. When he was able to control himself, he was overcome by grief and Embraced the woman, obtaining the permission of the prince afterward.

Lillian did not adapt well to being a vampire. She spent most of her time with her sire who felt responsible for her. Only gradually did she become a part of Savannah's Kindred society, eventually going so far as to Embrace a childe of her own when given the opportunity, a soldier named Robert Price. Just when Lillian thought she had regained a stable existence, Clan Gangrel left the Camarilla. Lillian felt that she had to follow her sire, but couldn't bring herself to leave the Savannah area. With Atlanta under the control of the Sabbat, Prince Huxley approached Lillian and asked that she and her childe patrol Savannah's borders. Offered some direction, Lillian accepted, expanding her coterie with a fugitive Gangrel from Atlanta named Roger, and later with Savannah's only Caitiff, Johan Wrede. Lillian's coterie now





prowls the borders of Huxley's domain, looking for Cainites trying to sneak in.

Robert Price is a tall, athletic young man with a buzzcut. He's Lillian's second in command and quite loyal. Roger Goldman is a former biker and looks the part, with long hair and a beard. He joined Lillian's coterie to get revenge on the Sabbat, whom he fought during the crusade on Atlanta. Johan Wrede is a normal-looking man who has the distinction of being Savannah's only Caitiff. A Swedish immigrant, Johan is actually the oldest member of the coterie and joined because he thought it might grant him some recognition.

Lillian is tall and slender, with graying hair and blue eyes. Her brushes with frenzy have left her with ridges of fur running up her arms, as well as paw-like feet (usually hidden, painfully, in big boots). She dresses in dark, heavy-duty clothes and carries a hunting rifle and a 9mm automatic. Her coterie dresses in practical clothes and is armed like Lillian.

#### **TARRENCE MOORE, THE SURVIVOR**

10th generation, childe of Claus Wegener

**Clan:** Tremere

**Nature:** Judge

**Demeanor:** Traditionalist

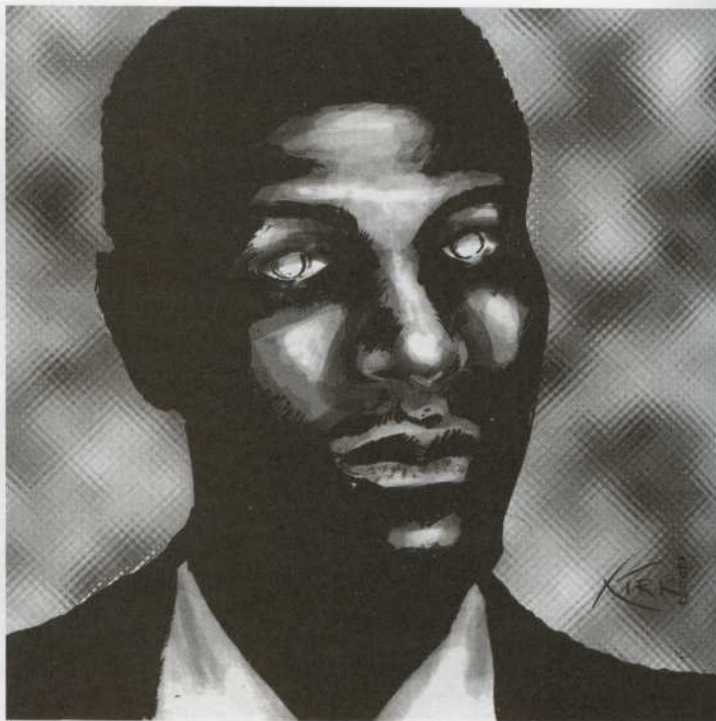
**Embrace:** 1932

**Apparent Age:** Mid-30s

Things weren't easy for a "colored" family in Atlanta during the Depression. They were even harder for an intelligent boy with a desire to learn. Tarrence's father worked at a factory and his mother was a serving woman. Tarrence did well in school, but college seemed like nothing more than a dream. That's when Claus Wegener stepped in. Tarrence's parents never knew how or why the wealthy old bookseller took an interest in their son, but from that day onward, the family was no longer poor. Claus managed to get Tarrence into college and paid his tuition, at the same time making sure that the Moore family didn't go hungry. When Tarrence graduated with honors, Claus offered him a job at the bookstore, the oldest and most prestigious in Atlanta. Tarrence accepted.

Claus was a member of Clan Tremere who had spotted Tarrence one evening as the boy looked through the shop window. The Tremere saw talent in the boy and decided to make him his childe. During his work in the bookstore, Claus tested Tarrence and came to the conclusion that the young man did indeed have potential. He obtained permission to create a childe and Embraced Tarrence, who took to the transition surprisingly well. As it turned out, Claus was right. Tarrence displayed a natural aptitude for Thaumaturgy and became a valued member of the Atlanta chantry.

Unfortunately for Tarrence, his mentor died when the Sabbat attacked the city. In fact, every other Tremere was



destroyed. Tarrence, surviving only because he had been visiting his small herd, fled to Savannah. Shortly after his arrival, Prince Huxley offered Tarrence a position as her advisor, a surprising move for someone so adverse to change. The only other two Tremere in Savannah had turned down similar offers and Huxley was anxious to have more contact with Clan Tremere. Tarrence accepted and has served ever since.

Tarrence is a plain-looking black man, a bit under average height, but with a broad chest and athletic build. He keeps his hair cut short and wears glasses. He has a friendly smile and a deep, ready laugh.

#### **DANIEL PARKER, RIVAL TO THE THRONE**

9th generation, childe of Robert Parkhurst

**Clan:** Ventrue

**Nature:** Competitor

**Demeanor:** Traditionalist

**Embrace:** 1889

**Apparent Age:** Mid-30s

Daniel's father was one of Atlanta's wealthiest bankers and Daniel was expected to follow in his father's footsteps. The boy did so grudgingly; he preferred to get others to work for him. He did the bare minimum needed to maintain his position and spent the rest of the time enjoying himself. Daniel was still a wealthy and influential man, though, which attracted the attention of his would-be sire.

Robert Parkhurst was an Atlanta Ventrue with an interest in banking and a desire to expand his horizons. Since Daniel's bank did a lot of business with those in





Savannah, Robert saw him as the perfect childe. When it became clear that Daniel was lazy and got by more on the skill of his subordinates than on his own capabilities, his sire cut him off from his support system, forcing Daniel to work to survive. After a while, Daniel discovered that he enjoyed the challenge — or at least that he enjoyed the fruits of his labor. Properly prepared, Daniel was sent off to Savannah.

Daniel quickly clashed with Huxley, who herself had a good deal of interest in Savannah's banking. Still, Daniel's backing in Atlanta allowed him to gain substantial influence. The rivalry with Huxley continued for years and Daniel has since decided to pursue the position of prince. So far, he has done nothing but subtly undermine Huxley's authority, acting as the "loyal opposition." Though not one of Huxley's advisors, Daniel is nonetheless recognized as one of the connected and esteemed Kindred of Savannah. His deepest, darkest secret is his choice of feeding; he preys on children under the age of 15.

Daniel is tall and slender, almost thin. He has a long face that looks slightly comical, with a pointy nose and a full beard. He dresses in fine clothes and speaks with a very pronounced southern accent.

## SABBAT TEMPLATES

Characters undoubtedly have several run-ins with Sabbat packs in this story. The following are short templates that you can use to run packs.

### RECENT EMBRACE

**Overview:** This is a very new Cainite, having been Embraced no longer than a year ago. She is somewhat confused and unused to being a vampire. She is out to prove herself to the rest of her pack and is likely to take foolish risks. She dresses in ordinary clothes, dirty and ragged, and carries a knife or club as a weapon.

**Clan:** 13th-generation Lasombra

**Attributes:** Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Academics 1, Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Computer 1, Crafts 2, Dodge 1, Empathy 1, Melee 1, Science 1, Stealth 1, Survival 1

**Disciplines:** Obtenebation 1, Potence 2

**Virtues:** Conscience 1, Self-Control 3, Courage 4

**Morality:** Humanity 3

**Willpower:** 5

### BRAWLER

**Overview:** Most packs have at least one dedicated warrior. She is aggressive and violent, but probably kept on a tight leash by the pack's ductus. She dresses in leather and black denim, and carries a machete and a 9mm.

**Clan:** 12th-generation Brujah *antitribu*

**Attributes:** Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Crafts 1, Dodge 3, Firearms 2, Intimidation 2, Linguistics 1, Melee 3, Stealth 1, Streetwise 1

**Disciplines:** Celerity 2, Potence 2

**Virtues:** Conscience 1, Self-Control 2, Courage 5

**Morality:** Humanity 1

**Willpower:** 6

### SCOUT EXPERT

**Overview:** This is a Cainite trained in scouting and infiltration to the degree required in Savannah. He dresses in ordinary clothes, is armed with a knife and has a shotgun or hunting rifle stashed in a car.

**Clan:** 13th-generation Ravnos *antitribu*

**Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Animal Ken 1, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 1, Drive 1, Empathy 2, Firearms 1, Intimidation 1, Investigation 2, Linguistics 2, Melee 1, Occult 1, Security 1, Stealth 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2, Survival 2



**Disciplines:** Animalism 1, Chimerstry 2, Fortitude 1, Obfuscate 1

**Virtues:** Conscience 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 3

**Morality:** Honorable Accord 4

**Willpower:** 6

### RANGER

**Overview:** This Cainite is an expert in approaching and entering cities. She knows how to avoid Lupines and how to cheat border guards. She dresses in rugged outdoor clothing and is armed with a hunting knife and heavy revolver, and has a rifle stashed somewhere.

**Clan:** 10th-generation Country Gangrel

**Attributes:** Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4, Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Animal Ken 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Drive 1, Firearms 2, Linguistics 1, Melee 1, Occult 1, Stealth 3, Streetwise 1, Survival 3

**Disciplines:** Animalism 1, Protean 2, Fortitude 2

**Virtues:** Conviction 3, Instincts 5, Courage 2

**Morality:** Feral Heart 5

**Willpower:** 6

### DUCTUS

**Overview:** This is the leader of the pack, a hard and capable Cainite. He dresses in practical clothes and is armed with a machete and .45 pistol.

**Clan:** 9th-generation Lasombra

**Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Academics 1, Alertness 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 1, Empathy 2, Etiquette 2, Leadership 2, Linguistics 2, Melee 3, Occult 2, Politics 2, Stealth 1, Subterfuge 2

**Disciplines:** Dominate 1, Potence 2, Obfuscate 3

**Virtues:** Conviction 3, Instincts 5, Courage 4

**Morality:** Power and the Inner Voice 5

**Willpower:** 7





GEHENNA

THE APOCALYPSE

ASCENSION

This is the

TIME OF  
JUDGMENT

01140/4



# Know By These Signs That The TIME OF JUDGMENT Is Upon Us

## In the First Sign, Dawn Wars with Dusk...

A great struggle has raged between the unliving Kindred of the East and West. In the midst of it, an ancient of the Third Generation rose in the Indian subcontinent, laying waste to a clan, destroying many elders and leading to a terrible detonation before it was brought low. This was The Week of Nightmares.

## ...And A Great Conflagration Ensues.

## In the Second Sign, the Blood Runs Thin...

Soon thereafter, reports of previously unknown generations of Kindred swept through the cities of the Camarilla and Sabbat. The youngest of vampires were able to sire, giving rise to half-undead freaks able to resist the sun and even mate with the living. This was The Time of Thin Blood.

## ...And Creatures Unknown Rise.

## In the Third Sign, the Grave Gives Up the Dead...

Then, the Sixth Maelstrom swept the underworld, scouring away all that had been built by the restless dead and sweeping them into oblivion. The angriest and most hateful rose in the flesh of their own corpses as the walking dead. They faced a motley group defending the living, imbued with the power to see the unnatural and the outrage to hunt it. This was The Reckoning.

## ...To Fight a War with the Quick.



## In the Fourth Sign, the Sky Grows Red...

Those who knew the spirit worlds trembled as the Maelstrom spread with a new hellish object as its herald. A terrible red star appeared in the sky, growing brighter and brighter, and those who wore the skin of wolves called it Anthelios, the Anti-Sun, and despaired. Those who knew the ways of magic flocked to uncover its secrets and the Maelstrom ravaged them, eroding their souls and destroying their spirit-shelters. This was the time of Revelations.

...And the Wisest Fall.

## In the Fifth Sign, the Dead God Rises...

The Maelstrom swept through all the lands of the dead, even far-off Amenti, stronghold of the Egyptian dead. Osiris, who had slumbered for uncounted millennia, rose to see all he had built destroyed. He rose to the lands of the living, only to become ensnared in a mighty web. Those dead souls he carried with him—of those properly mummified according to the old rites—merged with others more freshly dead, together gaining the strength to complete the journey to see the ruined lands of the living. This was The Resurrection.

...And Begets His Children

## In the Sixth Sign, the Damned Are Loosed...

Finally, the Maelstrom grew so powerful as to crack and rend the gates of Hell itself. The devils and abominations of the Pit rose to Earth to fight their wars anew. In so doing they sparked an earthquake and terrible riots in Los Angeles, calling Lucifer himself out of his millennia of hiding. This was The Devil's Night.

...And the City of Angels Trembles and Burns.

When These Signs Have Passed  
The End Will Come.



# TIME OF JUDGMENT

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## THE APOCALYPSE

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Wyrml's greatest weapon.*

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mages may be their only hope.*



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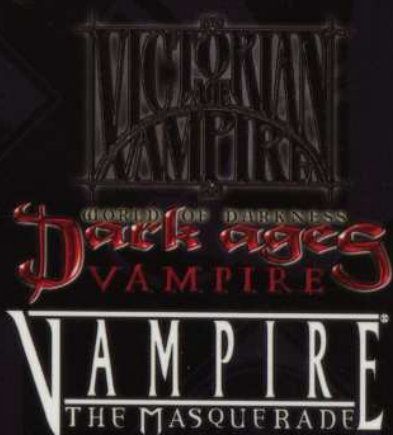
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