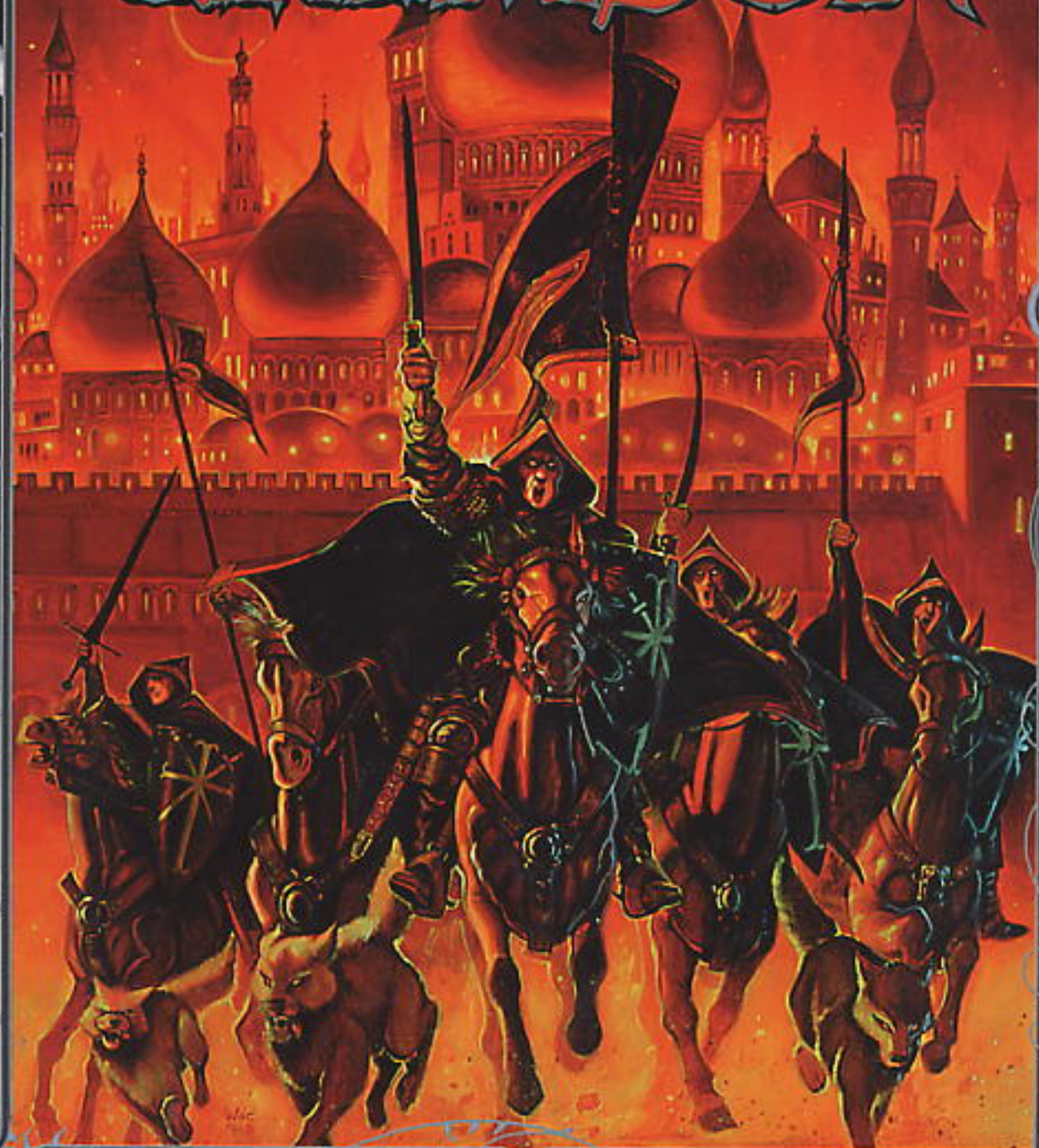


FOUNTAINSTM OF BRIGHT CRIMSON



A STORY FOR VAMPIRE: THE DARK AGES®

FOUNTAINS CRIMSON

*If I should forget thee, O
Jerusalem, may my right hand
forget its strength. May my
tongue cleave to the roof of my
mouth, if I do not set Jerusalem
above my highest joy.*

-Psalms 137:5-6

BY REE SOESBEE

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NOTE

Like *Jerusalem by Night*, *Fountains of Bright Crimson* deals with issues of faith and historicity, and has the potential to offend. Jerusalem has been the site of some of the most pivotal events in the spiritual history of the human race, and trying to integrate faith, historical accuracy and the demands of the game setting means that not everyone may be happy with the way things shook out in the end. This book was written and developed with all due respect for Judaism, Christianity and Islam, in the hope of producing a book that was entertaining, informative and respectful. If treatments of faith in the context of *Vampire: The Dark Ages* aren't your cup of tea, the developer and author suggest you put the book down and move on, rather than be offended.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Pauline "Umm, could you do something about those 26 pages?" **Benney**, for handing off the big scissors
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AUTHOR'S DEDICATION

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Peter "I don't care. Do whatever you want to, Rannulf." **Kusza**



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FOUNTAINS CRIMSON

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Introduction

Fountains of Bright Crimson is a story set in Dark Medieval Jerusalem in the year 1197. However, the action of the story looks back to one of the darkest episodes in that holy city's history. In 1099, the First Crusade breached the walls of Jerusalem, claiming the city in the name of Christendom. A great madness and fury overtook all those who entered the city, and conquest turned into slaughter. The streets overflowed with blood, as both mortal and Cainite hewed women, children and old men as well as the scattered defenders of the city. By the time the mysterious bloodlust ebbed, the city was an abbatoir and the Cainites who accompanied the invaders were either dead or vanished without a trace. Chroniclers called this time "The Weeks of Blood," and wrote it off as a dusty mystery. Years passed without any further revelations, and eventually the terror and panic were forgotten.

That was a century ago. In 1197, Jerusalem is prosperous, but uneasy. Christian pilgrims mingle with Muslim merchants and Jewish shopkeepers in a fragile truce, for the five year agreement between Salah al-Din and Richard I of England is about to end. And somewhere, beneath the city, the long-buried secrets of the Weeks of Blood begin to stir.

This is the tale of the First Crusade, and of the lost souls who endured the Weeks of Blood.

This is a story of madness incarnate. This is a story of Jerusalem.

How to Use This Book

Fountains of Bright Crimson is a stand-alone story for your **Vampire: The Dark Ages** chronicle. It works best in conjunction with **Jerusalem by Night**, though it can be run by itself. Those Storyteller characters from **Jerusalem by Night** whose presence are essential are reprinted here for the benefit of Storytellers who do not own the prior book, as are maps of the city. Storytellers are advised at least to familiarize themselves with the basic geography and history of Jerusalem before starting this story.

OVERVIEW

Fountains of Bright Crimson can be played with new characters, or pre-existing characters for the **Dark Ages** milieu may be integrated into the chronicle. Whether the story is played as a stand-alone or within a previously existing chronicle, characters generated for **Fountains of Bright Crimson** should be created per the normal character generation procedure with one alteration: The Storyteller should give players an additional 15 freebie points for their characters, the better to help them conquer the difficulties that lie in wait.

Remember, the Holy Land is most emphatically not "the Land of Milk and Honey" in 1197 — it is a place of heat, dust, blood and faith. While creating characters for **Fountains of Bright Crimson**, players should be reasonably conversant with the background material set out in this book, and perhaps in the **Book of Storyteller Secrets** as well. Furthermore, they should have a clear idea of why their characters are in Jerusalem, and at whose behest. The city is a hotbed of religious conflict, anger and barely suppressed violence, moreso in the Cainite world than in the mortal, and as such this is not a place to which Cainites venture without good reason.

STORY SYNOPSIS

The story begins in Jerusalem, just after the characters have been brought together at the haven of Brother Bernardus, a Malkavian who dwells in the Holy City. He has called them here to assist him with a mission; a hellish problem of the first water. It seems that a group of infernal theurges, known to be slayers of Cainites, has arrived in the city and seems intent on extirpating the local vampiric population.

Should any of the characters resist the "job," (perhaps because Bernardus himself appears none too stable, perhaps because they simply don't believe him) Bernardus will sweeten the deal with promises of wealth, land and title. The fact that Bernardus clearly has none of these to give should pique the characters' interest — what could possibly get the priest so riled up and so desperate? Once the characters accept and carry out their mission, they find themselves trapped. The "infernalists" were Tremere, about their own business in the city, and their deaths will be avenged.

Now that he's gotten the characters into trouble, however, Bernardus is willing to help them out — for a price. The characters have been caught, hook, line and sinker, and now they're going to have to go after the real problem. A vampire calling himself "Five" (dubbed such because it seems to be one of the very few words he's capable of speaking) has been seen howling through the lower chambers, sewers and catacombs of the city, screaming out loudly enough to raise the Truly Dead. Bernardus wants Five found and wants him handed over to his personal custody.

In the course of their investigations, characters find the wandering Cainite and realize that Five is a relic of the Weeks of Blood, in 1099. He babbles of diablerie, insanity and a lost soul, maniacally searching for something within the city's walls. As the characters bring him to Bernardus, they are attacked by the Assamite Rashid ibn Musafir, who is thirsting for vengeance over the events of 1099. Rashid plans his attack well and claims the unlife of the mysterious Five before fading back into the shadows.

MIDGAME

Next, the characters journey through the city, discovering holysites, meeting strange people and gathering information on Five's ravings. Their investigation carries them through desolate parts of Jerusalem and streets bearing the scars of hatred and religious persecution.

The story of the madman, screaming of blood, has spread through the mortal population of Jerusalem, and many of the kine are in a panic. The Cainites of the city believe that the blood Five cried out about was that of an Antediluvian and begin to plot accordingly. Rashid ibn Musafir is hungry for revenge against the last of the crusaders from the Weeks of Blood and decides that the characters may well lead him to more targets. And in a monastery near the city, a group of Baali begin experiments of their own....

It is within this turmoil that the characters are forced to search for the answers to the questions Five left behind: Who was he, and what meaning did his words carry? If Five carried secrets so great that Bernardus and the others are willing to

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sacrifice their immortal lives to possess them, it is already too late for the characters to back out. After talking to Adam the Cappadocian and gathering more information about how Five escaped into the city, the characters must then retrace the path of those lost to the Weeks of Blood. The characters are trapped in a web of ancient hatreds and misconceptions.

At last, to the north of the city, outside the Gate of Zion, they uncover the final secret of the riddle that Five posed. A spring in the city has been seen to run red with blood. From that well, a man has drawn five drops of what may well be the vitae of Malkav. At his hut, the characters will discover more of the truth about Malkav and his childer, come to an understanding about the nature of madness and perhaps take the first steps on their own search for peace.

CONCLUSIONS

In the final sequence of the story, the characters, having tracked Five's companions to the ruins beneath the city, must make a simple choice between their own desire for power and the fate of all Cainites. Ancient dangers beneath the Holy City threaten the characters' sanity and their lives. Another faction enters the game: the Baali, keepers of the Abbey of Mount Zion, a crumbling monastery that rests on a hilltop near Jerusalem.

The Baali, led by Father Giotto Verducci, are convinced that they have nearly obtained the secret of Malkav's disappearance, and have located the four other crusaders — the last of the survivors of the Weeks of Blood. Each of the four raves his part of an ancient riddle, and only with the addition of Five's maddening conclusion can true understanding be reached.

However, Five is dead, and only the characters know his secret.

With help from Adonijah, the characters make their way beneath the abbey, hunting to find the crusaders before they, in turn, are found by the Baali. With ingenuity and persistence, they find their way to the heart of the riddle, and face the final words of Malkav. The secret of a lost Antediluvian, at last revealed — or lost forever, to the greed and treachery of a Nosferatu. With enemies closing in from all sides, the characters enter a battle of wits and skill. If they are successful, they survive and Malkav's power stays out of Baali hands.

If they fail, the consequences are beyond terrifying.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Brother Bernardus, Malkavian

Brother Bernardus is a pious man who has everyone's best interests at heart — in his own fashion. He curses himself for performing the initial duplicity upon the characters, but will

stop at nothing to unravel the mystery of the Weeks of Blood. Like other Malkavians in the city, he is bound by an oath to the Nosferatu that he will not venture into the catacombs beneath the city. He will spur the characters on the path of adventure and offer rewards to them should they succeed.

Rannulf, Nosferatu

Rannulf is a relatively young Cainite, Embraced only recently, but with knowledge of the city's environs both above and below. He has great ambitions and a desire for power that has completely escaped his sire's notice. Rannulf considers himself "cursed" with the weakness of blood (he is only 11th generation), and will do anything to reduce his generation. He is trustworthy — so long as he is well paid and so long as he is watched.

Rashid ibn Musafir, Assamite

One of the most powerful Assamites in the city, Rashid is fanatically loyal to his clan and to his faith. He feels that the crusaders of 1099 were no better than animals, and deserve beasts' deaths. He will do anything to hunt the survivors of the massacre down and destroy them.

Adonijah, the Sage and Defender of the Holy Land

Adonijah, as he is called within the city, is an incredibly old man with sad eyes. He serves faithfully at King David's Tomb, near the Spring of Hezekiah. He knows much of Malkav's dreams and the curse of the crusaders. It is he who gives the characters the last piece of the puzzle, as well as the blood that flowed in the spring of Hezekiah when Five was destroyed.

Father Giotto Verducci, Baali

The Baali of the city have captured the other four crusaders who survived beneath the city, but do not realize that a fragment of Malkav's soul is trapped within their minds. They seek to understand what has changed their Cainites' state, and what power they can derive from that understanding. If possible, Verducci wishes to steal the power for his own ends, to crush the power of faith in the Holy City and begin a Purge of Sin — of mortals and of vampires.

A HISTORICAL NOTE

In the real world, the slaughter of innocents after the First Crusade took Jerusalem was quite real. Accounts from the time depict streets so thoroughly flooded with the blood of victims that men on horseback had trouble making their way through and piles of corpses were stacked like cordwood.

In other words, it occurred and needed no vampiric influence to make it happen. Though Malkav is given credit for assisting matters here, the truth is that the crusaders of 1099 didn't need any help.

They brought their own monsters with them.

ACT I: THE TROUBLE WITH TREMIERE

This story is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to Jerusalem or to encompass all of the plots and regions in and around the Holy City. Rather, **Fountains of Bright Crimson** is designed to touch upon many of the schemes and goals of Jerusalem's Cainite population and provide an introduction to the city for use in a much larger chronicle. Remember that this Jerusalem is not the Jerusalem with which we are familiar but a much darker, more dangerous place.

It is not necessary for characters to begin the story in the same coterie or even in the same country. A call for mercenaries will spread through the lower nobles of Britain, France and Spain, as well as many Moorish countries, and a faction could then direct the characters to the specific task. The notion of heading for the Holy Land for mercenary work is not an unrealistic one; everyone knows Richard's truce is ending, and there may be plenty of work ere long. On the other hand, there are other ways to get the characters to the Holy Land — commerce, orders from sires, prophetic dreams or even a summons from a Cainite versed in Presence.

If the characters are already in Jerusalem, or if the chronicle is established there, then they will already know of the Malkavian, called Brother Bernardus. He will contact them privately, through ghouls, messages or manifestations of his powers, and request their assistance "on a matter most dire." He is regarded as relatively harmless by the Cainite community, forgetful and strange, but not malicious, and the price he offers for assistance is — miraculously — something each character would be very, very interested in (it's good to Steal Secrets). The fact that Bernardus has no way of paying that price is, for the moment, irrelevant.

In any case, the characters all find themselves brought to Jerusalem, drawn to the burned-out husk of what was once a relatively sumptuous house and lost in a maze of twisting cobbled streets. The roof of the house, and the walls, are relatively intact, though in many places the plaster and stonework has crumbled, making it seem as if the building has been stricken with leprosy.

Within the house, a single torch flickers.

The building stands at the intersection of three streets, among the twisting and turning of the alleys of the oldest part of the city. It was once whitewashed and clean, but now is crumbling, its plaster shattered on the muddy ground. Around it, peasants scurry by in the starlight of a moonless night, hurrying to find shelter. On other streets, lamplight burns, and houses light the street outside. But here, only shadows cover the narrow path.

There is but a moment between the arrival of the last character and the beginning of the plot proper. As the Cainites stand on the doorstep of the sorrowful-looking building, the old wooden door creaks open before them, and a man steps from the dust and twilight of the home.

A young man (Auspex shows him to be a ghoul), slender and nervous, stands within the crumbling doorway as if to shelter himself from the bitter wind racing down the city streets. He wears simple brown robes, tied in the center with a merchant's cord. His head is not shaved, as a true monk's would be, and he

does not have the air of authority that one would expect of a man of the Church. Nevertheless, he introduces himself shyly as Brother Timothy, "assistant to your host." He looks from one character to another, attempting to size them up; this of course buys plenty of time for the characters to size him up as well. After he clears his throat several times and adjusts the papers he is holding, he speaks to the characters, his voice high-pitched and nervous. He greets each character by name, singly or in groups, at the door, checks their credentials — that's what the papers are for — and invites them inside. The building is tattered, the walls and floors bare, and in a shattered doorway stands a single man. He is dressed well, though not finely.

"I represent the purveyors of the request," the man says. "If you will come inside, I shall attempt to prove that what we have to offer you is worthy of your long travels. Please, come inside." The wreck of the door creaks open behind him, and he steps through into the hallway.

The furnishings of the house are non-existent, and empty corridors with water-stained walls open into a large meeting hall at the center of the once-prestigious home. In the single chair, placed precisely at the center of the room, a portly monk awaits the coterie, lacing his fingers together over and over again. "So good of you to come, so good, so thoughtful. Yes, yes, pull up a chair, do, make yourselves at home." There are no other chairs, but the monk seems too preoccupied to notice.

"Dear friends," he begins, although he doesn't know a soul in the room other than his ghoul. "It is I who brought you here, and I am so pleased you have come to aid me. I know the journey was long, and you are tired, but it is of utmost importance that I speak to you of this matter immediately. My name," he continues breathlessly, "is Brother Bernardus."

Some time ago, a group of strangers came to this Holy City, claiming to be students of faith. It was only a short time ago that we — my brothers in the city and I — discovered their true nature. Oh, but by then, it was too late. Too late." He sighs, and his girth shakes in echo. "They know my comings and goings; their infernal servants spy on me from sundown to sunup! You would not believe the things I have had to do to keep this meeting secret from them!"

"They are infernalists, you see. Beasts of Satan, and destroyers of our kind. Even now, they practice their foul arts on a Cainite sister, performing acts that would make your very souls start in rage. Oh, my friends," he whimpers, "You simply must help us, or the entire city will soon be wrapped in flames, and the Beast will take us all."

Bernardus continues to ramble on for quite some time, but the gist of his tale is this: The infernalists have arrived and intend to enact a dark rite in the Holy City. They have stolen something from Bernardus, and he wants it back. He has tried on numerous occasions to retrieve it himself, but has not been able to do so. Bernardus, and "others" whose identity he will not reveal, will pay a great deal if the characters succeed where they themselves failed. Bernardus will absolutely not let the characters get away without agreeing. If necessary he will use his Disciplines to bribe or sucker

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them into it; he's also quite willing to grovel. And, if worst comes to absolute worst, Bernardus will lose his temper and threaten the characters. Hopefully, however, things won't get that far.

Bernardus stresses to the characters that he doesn't want them tied to him — that's why he drew together a collection of utterly unknown, insignificant Cainites. It will be a lot easier for the characters to get close to the infernalists than it will for known quantities like Timothy. After all, the evil ones are powerful, and they know Bernardus and his minions well.

It should be obvious that the whole thing is a poorly-conceived ruse; the house definitely isn't Bernardus' and the promises he makes in exchange for assistance are clearly ones he can't keep, but the story is so urgent that the characters can't afford to dismiss it out of hand. If they ignore the possibilities of infernalists loose in the Holy City, and they dismiss Bernardus as simply a raving lunatic (he is a raving lunatic, mind you, but that doesn't mean he's not onto something), they risk the possibility of demonic powers destroying the most sacred city on earth — while they're standing in the middle of it. Bernardus has some "proof" of his tale — accounts of recent raids on holy sites, evidence of infernal rites performed outside the city gates, a plague of flies in certain quarters of the city and so on. In fact, everything he shows them does, indeed, point to an infernalist presence somewhere within the city's walls.

However, Bernardus does have his own scam going; he's sicking the characters on the wrong people. Bernardus does not know who the true infernalists are (which will be revealed in Acts III through V of this story) but he knows who they aren't, namely, the Cainites he is pointing the characters toward. He is using the proof that has risen in the city only to convince the characters that the infernalists do exist — and then, he is sending the characters after someone else.

Once the characters have agreed, even tacitly, to accept the responsibility of hunting down the infernalists, there is a disturbance at the door. A second ghoul, dressed in the same manner as Brother Timothy, comes running in, passing the characters and falling to his knees before Bernardus. "Brother," he pants, "There has been some... trouble."

"Speak." Bernardus takes no more notice of the characters, and though his ghoul seems uncomfortable, he begins to blurt out the following story.

"The woman from the hospice has been kidnapped by the infernalists, my lord!" The ghoul's story is brief: Apparently a Cainite who dwells in one of the hospitals toward the heart of the city has been assaulted and taken by the coven of infernalists. Bernardus becomes irate and turns to the characters. "Paul can show you the way. You must go immediately. We cannot allow them to continue their unholy works! Your debt will be paid, I swear on the bones of the saints, but go now." With that, Bernardus leaves the characters, heading back to the stables in which he actually resides. Any characters who follow are treated to the mad ramblings of a lunatic, lost in conversations with himself that seem to be mostly recitations of his failures.

Paul does indeed know the way, and although he does not lead the characters to the spot of the ritual, he leads them close enough, and arranges for them to find the rest of the way alone. "Please, remember—I was not here," he begs, scampering into the night. "Defend yourselves well. The horrors they perform..."

And with that, he is gone.

WANDERING THROUGH THE HOUSE

If any character takes advantage of Bernardus' absent mind and preoccupation and attempts to search the house, he's in for a disappointment. Obviously, neither Bernardus nor his manservants live here, and human hands have not touched the house in many years. The interior walls are somewhat crumbled, and only the right side of the building is untouched by decay. Beneath the house, however, there is a strong pantry with an open iron door, capable of being barred from the inside. It would make an excellent place to stay for an evening or two.

TIMOTHY — *servant of Bernardus*

Nature: Penitent

Demeanor: Caretaker

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

Talents: Alertness 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 1, Empathy 3, Subterfuge 1

Skills: Crafts 2, Herbalism 3, Music 2, Stealth 1, Survival 1

Knowledges: Academics 3, Hearth Wisdom 1, Law 1, Linguistics 2, Medicine 2, Occult 1, Seneschal 3

Disciplines: Auspex 1

Image: Slightly taller than average but frail, Timothy is a young man. His blond hair is cut into a sloppy tonsure, and he wears a rough approximation of a monk's robe.

Roleplaying Hints: Be shy and quiet, but forceful when carrying out Bernardus' commands. His whims make perfect sense to you, and you shake your head sadly at others who are so lacking in understanding as to be bewildered.

PAUL

Nature: Defender

Demeanor: Fanatic

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 1

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

Talents: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Intimidation 1, Larceny 2, Subterfuge 1

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Archery 2, Etiquette 1, Melee 2, Ride 2, Stealth 1, Survival 1

Knowledges: Academics 1, Hearth Wisdom 3, Linguistics 2, Medicine 2

Disciplines: None

Image: "Brother" Paul is an older version of Timothy, with a badly scarred face and the rough hands of a man used to physical labor. He is taller and thinner than his compatriot.

Roleplaying Hints: Be subservient in the extreme when Bernardus is around. On your own, you exhibit a bit more of a spine. You know your way around the streets of the city and how to handle yourself in tough situations. You wear the garb of a monk, but at heart you're a swordsman — and not a little bit of a thug.

BROTHER BERNARDUS - El Zumbao

Background: Poor Brother Bernardus is a large, burly man who usually just seems lost and confused. He's not sure where he's from — Dorset, perhaps? Or was it Dorestad? And he's not exactly sure how long he's been wandering God's earth, either. At some point in his past, however, he did join a group of monastic Christians, and he does know that he is affiliated with the Church. It seems unlikely, however, that the Church chooses to be affiliated any longer with Brother Bernardus. He was driven out of the monastery after losing his temper — in spite of numerous reprimands — and shrieking at his brother monks when they were not sufficiently penitent for sins he decided they had committed.

Brother Bernardus is, nonetheless, deeply spiritual in his own peculiar way. He believes that the Holy Spirit has blessed him with the gift of tongues, or glossolalia, so that he can speak with the language comprehensible to all others of God's children. His "gift" also drives him to preach (not always in a language understandable to mere mortals) in an attempt to convert unbelievers to the True Faith.

Brother Bernardus doesn't remember being Embraced, and he's not exactly sure when he came to Jerusalem, either. He is, however, quite sure that he came to the city with some other souls, most of whom had a remarkable preference for oddly shaped metal hats. Yes, he is quite sure about that part.

Bernardus is also very aware of the primal Beast that resides within him and the dark temptations to which his weak soul must often surrender. The teachings of the Church tell him that taking blood from others is bad, but that constantly conflicts with the demands of his unliving nature. In spite of Bernardus' best efforts to follow the teachings of the Church, sometimes the Beast gets away from him. In his feeble attempt at coherent thought, Bernardus concludes that he must save the souls of the unbelievers, lest they fall prey to a Cainite's feeding. It seems to escape his attention, however, that he is the Cainite who most endangers his listeners. Unfortunately, Bernardus tends to lose his temper with those who do not understand how very important it is that their souls be saved.

Oddly, time spent with Christian pilgrims in the hospitals seems to be the only thing that gives Bernardus solace. He appears undisturbed by the screams and agonized whimpering of the dying, sitting with them and comforting them in their distress. Bernardus says that he comprehends what the patients are saying in their screams and that they know that someone hears them and understands. The Salubri Aisha bint Wahiba says that the patients really do seem calmed by his presence, as her kind words and steady demeanor also serve to help calm his inner Beast. In return, burly Bernardus escorts Aisha's fugitive fellow Salubri to and from the city, though to him they are nothing more than friendly pilgrims that share his beliefs and thus must be protected to the best of his ability.

Along with those who are ill or disabled, Brother Bernardus deals well with innocent youths. He keeps an eye on Yasmina, the Ravnos girl, as well as Hannah, the crippled Nosferatu woman. He wishes he had healing powers so that he could be of more direct help, but for now, he tries to make sure they are safe as they wander the streets.

Brother Bernardus finds animals less confusing than humans, and he is almost able to relax where he hovers in the former Templars' stables. He is not so tempted to go against God's will with the gentler creatures and finds that caring for lost animals is a way to bring about moments of inner peace. Besides, it's



frequently easier to entice animals into coming within reach, even if their blood isn't quite so tasty or pleasant as human blood.

Image: Brother Bernardus doesn't pay much attention to his appearance. His feet are callused, and his body is covered with cast-off clothing that is warm enough or cool enough for the season. The city's rubbish heaps are the sources of his wardrobe.

Roleplaying Hints: You are simple-minded, straightforward, guileless — and extremely short tempered. Raving and gibbering are appropriate when the spirit takes you; violence is a more common reaction.

Haven: Brother Bernardus retreats to the stables that were once maintained by the Knights Templars.

Secrets: If he had any secrets, Brother Bernardus wouldn't remember them long enough to tell anyone. He is utterly ignorant of the Salubri underground he aids and abets, which serves their purposes perfectly.

Influence: None whatever... except for Brother Bernardus's tendency to show up in odd places at odder times, disrupting the orderly conduct of nightly existence with his ravings. Sometimes his ravings are comprehensible — but the fact that he has been heard doesn't necessarily imply that he has been believed.

Destiny: Brother Bernardus never regains his sanity, nor does he ever achieve any kind of balance between the competing demands his psyche places upon him. He is eventually destroyed, several centuries down the road, by a couple of Ravnos who are tired of him spooking the horses.

Clan: Malkavian

Sire: Unknown

Nature: Penitent

Demeanor: Fanatic

Generation: 9th

Embrace: Unknown

Apparent Age: mid-40s

Physical: Strength 4 (Broad Shoulders), Dexterity 1, Stamina 4 (Tireless)

Social: Charisma 4 (0 when raving), Manipulation 2, Appearance 1

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 1

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Talents: Brawl 4 (Grappling), Empathy 2, Intimidation 1
Skills: Animal Ken 2, Crafts 1, Herbalism 2
Knowledges: Academics 2, Linguistics 1, Occult 2, Politics 1, Theology 2
Disciplines: Animalism 2, Auspex 4, Dementation 4, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 2, Potence 2
Backgrounds: Allies 2, Herd 2, Retainers 2
Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 1, Courage 3

THE SENTRY

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3
Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2
Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 2
Talents: Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Intimidation 1, Subterfuge 3
Skills: Melee 3, Ride 1, Stealth 4, Survival 2
Possessions: short sword, two knives weighted for throwing

DENELEM OBFUSCO

Clan: Tremere
Sire: Mircea
Nature: Autocrat
Demeanor: Tyrant
Generation: 10th
Embrace: 1102
Apparent Age: mid-30s
Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3
Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2
Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4 (Sly), Wits 2
Talents: Acting 3, Alertness 2, Dodge 1, Empathy 3, Intimidation 4 (Subtle Hints), Leadership 2, Subterfuge 2
Skills: Etiquette 3, Melee 2, Ride 1, Stealth 3, Survival 1
Knowledges: Academics 4, Investigation 3, Linguistics 4 (Mystical), Law 1, Occult 3
Disciplines: Auspex 4, Dominate 3, Thaumaturgy 3
Thaumaturgical Path: Rego Vitae 3, Creo Ignem 2
Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Resources 4, Retainers 3
Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 3, Courage 5
Road: Road of Humanity 6
Willpower: 9

Image: Obfusco is a short, swarthy man in voluminous black robes. He looks the part of the stereotypical sorcerer; indeed, he does his best to play it up and adorns himself with all sorts of mystical-looking gewgaws. He has a round, florid face with a ferocious black moustache and a receding hairline, and he grips his knife in pudgy, soft hands.

Roleplaying Hints: You are the proverbial kid with his hand in the candy jar. Any fury you feel on being interrupted is redoubled by the fact that you're not supposed to be doing what you're doing. Witnesses must be eradicated so you can protect yourself.

Note: The other two Tremere follow Obfusco's orders to the letter, because they're in it as deep as he is and think he's their only way out. Neither is what you'd call a particularly deep thinker, and neither knows more than what Obfusco has told them.

Road: Road of Heaven 9
Willpower: 2

Note: At any given moment, Brother Bernardus may actually believe what he is saying; to the point where it almost seems as if some outside power is imposing these opinions on his tender psyche. This situation makes it nearly impossible to detect any of his deceptions with Auspex 2.

Then again, he may just be lying. It's up to you.

GRIGOR WALLACH

Clan: Tremere
Sire: Artur Beck
Nature: Innovator
Demeanor: Celebrant
Embrace: 1150
Generation: 10th
Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3
Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2
Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3
Talents: Acting 1, Alertness 1, Dodge 1, Intimidation 1, Subterfuge 1
Skills: Archery 1, Crafts 2, Etiquette 2, Herbalism 1, Ride 1, Stealth 2
Knowledges: Academics 3, Hearth Wisdom 1, Investigation 3, Linguistics 2, Medicine 1, Occult 3
Backgrounds: Mentor 1, Resources 1, Status 1
Disciplines: Auspex 2, Dominate 1, Thaumaturgy 2
Thaumaturgical Paths: Rego Vitae 2, Creo Ignem 1
Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 3, Courage 3
Road: Road of Humanity 7
Willpower: 6

PIETER BLUM

Clan: Tremere
Sire: Donal
Nature: Loner
Demeanor: Survivor
Embrace: 1177
Generation: 9th
Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4
Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3
Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2
Talents: Alertness 1, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 1, Empathy 1, Intimidation 1, Subterfuge 1
Skills: Animal Ken 3, Archery 2, Crafts 2, Melee 1, Ride 3, Survival 2
Knowledges: Academics 1, Hearth Wisdom 1, Linguistics 1, Occult 1, Seneschal 1
Backgrounds: Allies 1, Herd 1, Status 1
Disciplines: Auspex 1, Dominate 2, Thaumaturgy 1
Thaumaturgical Paths: Rego Vitae 1
Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 2, Courage 5
Road: Road of Humanity 6
Willpower: 6

"THE INFERNALISTS"

Inside a stable at the edge of town, a group of infernalists pauses in its ritual, preparing the sacrifice of a Cainite to the dark power that they serve. With each death, they grow more powerful, and with each murder, they take another step toward destroying the fragile peace of Jerusalem. The characters have agreed to exterminate the evil ones, before they can go further and plunge the entire city into bloody madness.

Or, at least, that's what the characters believe.

If the characters have some way of determining what is going on in the stable, they will discover the following: a trio of figures, chanting in some unknown language that sounds rough and snarling. (A successful Occult or Linguistics roll reveals it to be Coptic.) They wield bloody daggers, inscribing arcane sigils in the smooth dirt floor. In the center of the room lies a woman's body, encased in a silk shroud that has been spattered with blood.

Getting close to the stable, however, is a problem. The group of "infernalists" have posted a guard at the corner of the street, hidden in simple shadow. If he sees anyone peeping in the windows or gathering nearby, he will certainly inform those inside, to explosive effect.

The individuals inside the stable are ready for a problem and have been expecting an intrusion, so a fight is inevitable. Once the characters are in the right place, their targets leap to the attack. If the characters move swiftly, they may be able to surprise those inside the barn, but only if they are willing to commit to a fight as soon as they arrive. Otherwise, the trouble will be brought to them.

FIGHT?

The battle in the stable is liable to be short and bloody. While there's no one in the stable except for the participants (thankfully, all of the animals have been cleared out for the duration) there is one heck of a lot of straw around, meaning that Creol Ignem has the potential for disaster. Obfusco is not the best tactician the world has ever seen, and if the fight begins to go against him, he may well panic and try to use fire to cover his escape. Note that the two apprentices will fight to the finish. The three conveniently neglected to mention to Mara what they were doing this evening, and quietly draining a Salubri without going through proper channels is liable to have unpleasant repercussions. Even if they survive the fight, the chances for their continued existence are not necessarily good once their scheme comes to light. Indeed, the trio's continued presence in the city would come as something of a surprise to the local Chantry head; they were supposed to have moved on toward Damascus a week ago.

The sentry joins in the fight and will attempt to cut down from behind any of the characters who don't notice him. At the first sign that his side may lose, he will attempt to cut and run. If the characters capture and question him, he knows nothing; he is a soldier from Gascony who was part of the disastrous battle at Hattin, and he has been selling his sword and services ever since. The ritualists in the barn were just one more client, one he'll be happy to forget if the characters let him live.

(If the characters decide to ghoul the lookout, they're more than welcome to. He'll make an excellent scout and knows the city reasonably well.)

FOUNTAINS OF BRIGHT CRIMSON

AFTERMATH

Once the fight is over, and all the ritualists have been killed or escaped, the characters can take a look around and see what they have wrought. The symbols inscribed on the floor seem to indicate to characters with arcane knowledge that the combatants were performing the Ritual of the Bitter Rose, allowing many to diablerize a single target. Perhaps these were, after all, infernalists! However, beneath the shroud, the characters discover an unconscious woman, with a barely-visible third eye upon her forehead. (The woman is in fact Aisha bint Wahiba. See below for more information on her.)

The "infernalists" were Tremere.

If the coterie has a Tremere in their midst, he should be able to imagine (quite vividly) the repercussions that will be coming down upon them for interrupting the ritual and slaying the other members of his clan. There is nowhere to run. There is nowhere to hide. Even bringing the Salubri to the local Chantry won't appease the wrath sure to descend from above.

The implications are tremendous, and the characters have only one friend in the city — Brother Bernardus. The characters should be encouraged to return to the broken-down house and speak with Bernardus, for if the local Tremere find the newcomers first, they will certainly be destroyed without pity or remorse.

DEALING WITH THE VICTIM

If the characters choose to finish what the Tremere started, that's their business. If Bernardus or any of Aisha's other friends find out, however, then the characters are in for a devilish time. Their only allies against the Salubri's friends are already alienated, while those who might have protected them from the Tremere are now out for their blood. And at this point in the story, they're in too deep already to just abandon the affair. Greater powers have started to take notice.

AISHA BINT WAHIBA, THE NURSE

Background: Aisha was living a quiet life in Antioch, when Achmet the Dreamer wandered through on his extended tour of the region. As Achmet tells it, he recognized her inherent ability to heal and Embraced her. (The way others tell it, Achmet saw in Aisha something he lacked: a thorough pleasure in helping and nurturing other people.) Her life thus shattered, Aisha left her home and traveled with him for the better part of a century. Her relationship with Achmet changed drastically in 1133 when Tremere diablerized Saulot, causing Achmet to question his own purpose and methods. Nonetheless, Achmet and Aisha continued traveling until 1140, when the former decided to return to Constantinople. There he remains, dreaming as he searches for Golconda.

Aisha thinks Achmet betrayed God's calling. Further, she believes that Achmet has betrayed his clan in his rejection of more practical explorations on the pathway toward redemption. What can dreaming teach Cainites? It is an escape, a refusal to deal with the harsh realities of Caine's curse. No, Achmet's escape serves no purpose. His current dream state is entirely too self-centered for Aisha's liking.



There has to be a reason that God allows the Cainite curse to fall upon mere mortals, some higher reason for Aisha to continue beyond dreaming of Golconda. There must be another way... and the path Aisha feels most qualified to pursue is that of service to others. There might be safety in the hidden darkness of the hospital, even though there is none in a world that is no longer kind to Saulot's childer.

Aisha has therefore broken with Achmet and his Dream Circle in Constantinople and has made her way to Jerusalem. With the recent devastation of the Salubri population, she has begged the Lasombra in the al-Bimaristan al-Salahi Hospital to grant her succor. Pacifico has agreed to shelter her, but only so long as Aisha uses her skills to help him acquire information from the ailing pilgrims. While her situation is precarious (Aisha isn't sure Pacifico's sire knows he is allowing her to haven in the hospital), she survives, and she feeds, and she heals others. As far as the Lasombra are concerned, this arrangement serves to protect some of their best mortal assets should they fall ill and keeps at least one of the city's hostels from Boniface's controlling influence. All in all, everyone is happy for the moment.

The Malkavian, Brother Bernardus, has taken up stopping by the hospital on occasion. While his presence makes Aisha extremely uncomfortable, he seems to calm the patients. Nahum ben Enosh, a Salubri scholar who Aisha is trying to convince to stay in Jerusalem to help her, retreats deep into the hospital when Bernardus is there.

Image: Formerly beautiful, Aisha bint Wahiba now appears more maternal than magnificent. She exudes an aura of

calm cheerfulness that makes her pleasant to be around. Her attire is modest and simple, requiring no special care or particular thought.

Roleplaying Hints: You're competent and caring, and have a remarkable ability to sense the needs and aches of others. You are concerned without being obsequious.

Haven: Aisha has a small room deep in the interior of the hospital.

Secrets: The Lasombra may think that they are being charitable to Aisha, but she is also using them. While she works her way among the ailing citizens of Jerusalem, she is also serving as a contact point for surviving Salubri. Essentially, she is running a Salubri underground, getting others of her clan to safe places and passing information and messages as people drift through the city. Salubri are directed toward safety, friends and trustworthy allies. After all, who bothers to make sure that a pilgrim leaves the city traveling in the same direction from which he entered?

Influence: Aisha bint Wahiba is almost unnoticed by most of the Cainite community — which is exactly what she needs to be especially effective in sliding Salubri past the more watchful members of other clans.

Destiny: Aisha, for all of her good intentions, does not survive too much longer. Jerusalem has too many Cainites, too many wagging tongues, for her to go unnoticed by the Tremere. In 1216, they find her. Still, she manages to save many of her brethren, at least for a while.

Clan: Salubri

Sire: Achmet the Dreamer

Nature: Caretaker

Demeanor: Celebrant

Generation: 7th

Embrace: 1024

Apparent Age: late 20s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Leadership 1, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Crafts 2, Etiquette 1, Herbalism 4 (Medicinal), Ride 2, Stealth 2, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 1, Hearth Wisdom 3, Investigation 2, Linguistics 2, Medicine 4 (Disease), Occult 4 (Ancient Wisdom), Politics 2

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Fortitude 3, Obtenebration 2, Valeren 4

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 3, Status 2

Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 3, Courage 3

Road: Road of Chivalry 9

Willpower: 6

ACT II: THE MADMAN

Brother Bernardus is not in the house, but his ghoul, Timothy, will be waiting for the characters. Timothy tells them that dawn is coming soon, and they must wait here. Bernardus will contact them in the evening. He shows the characters to the hidden room beneath the house and encourages them to stay there for the day. He also offers to take any information they tell him directly to Bernardus, and if the characters tell him that the "infernalists" they have killed are Tremere, Timothy becomes notably concerned. He does, however, take pains to assure the characters that Bernardus will make sure they are safe from harm.

The next evening, Bernardus arrives at the ruined house shortly after darkness falls. He is filled with concern and "genuine" distress over the situation and repeatedly tells the characters that he had no idea their targets were Tremere. (He stands by the story that the diablerist Tremere were actually infernalists, and it's even money whether checking his aura reveals that he's lying. After all, he might actually believe what he's saying.)

However, Bernardus says, now there is another problem. His attention has become occupied with a rogue vampire who has been causing a dangerous amount of trouble in the city. The Tremere situation, he avers, is only a minor issue — he is more than willing to shelter the characters from the wrath of the Tremere, but he simply doesn't have the time with this other matter distracting him.

Of course, if the characters could assist him with this simple problem, he'd certainly be able to turn his attention to the Tremere.

Now the characters must attack the heart of the issue. A rogue vampire is loose in the city. The Nosferatu are unable to find the rogue's haven — and have threatened to destroy the invader as (quite literally) a bloody nuisance; for his own reasons, Bernardus is desperate to have the man brought to him alive.

CAUGHT

Now the trap has been sprung. The characters have been brought to the city in order to handle the rogue vampire (a creature who only responds to the word "Five"), not to deal with so-called infernalists. Bernardus set up the attack on the Tremere ritual, knowing that the characters would accept the job. He warned the Tremere ahead of time that their ritual was going to be disrupted and made sure the characters would be spotted on approach. Now, if the vampires do not do as he asks, he will turn them over, confident that the Tremere will never suspect his own involvement in the affair (he did, after all, warn them).

If the characters suspect that Bernardus has set them up, they will have to go through a great deal of trouble to prove it — and by wasting that time, they are allowing the Tremere time to hunt them down. If the characters leave the city, the Tremere will find them. If they are particularly unsuccessful, or if they refuse, Bernardus can simply tell the Tremere immediately. Wise characters will realize that they have been set up, and will comply for the moment — saving revenge for another night. If the characters kill Bernardus, both the Tremere and any allies Bernardus possessed will begin looking for the characters, intent on bloody vengeance.

Now the Bernardus of the earlier scene — the absentminded, thoughtless, preoccupied man — is gone, and in his place is a man with an iron will. He is calm, even polite, but completely unwilling to negotiate. If the characters threaten him, he reminds them that his ghouls (at least one of whom is not present) can tell the Tremere about them as easily as he can. Bernardus will be resolute, insistent and firm. The characters have no choice.

Once the shouting is over, Bernardus sends the characters to meet with a Cainite named Rannulf, a Nosferatu who has a fair bit of knowledge about the lunatic in question. He tells them to meet Rannulf at the Inn of the Dancing Lion, gives them a letter of introduction and warns them that there will, of course, be a price for the Nosferatu's information.

RANNULF

Clan: Nosferatu

Sire: Jean de Lyon

Nature: Rebel

Demeanor: Survivor

Embrace: 1181

Generation: 11th

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4 (Slippery), Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 4 (Smooth), Appearance 0

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Acting 1, Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 3, Larceny 3, Subterfuge 4 (Fast-Talk)

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Crafts 1, Etiquette 1, Herbalism 1, Stealth 4 (Vanish), Survival 1

Knowledges: Investigation 2, Linguistics 3, Politics 1, Seneschal 1

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 4, Herd 1

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Obfuscate 3, Potence 2

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

Road: Road of Humanity 7

Willpower: 7



Image: Rannulf is short and doughy, with a head like an unripe melon and a too-wide grin. He dresses to accentuate his breadth, possibly to make himself appear more imposing than he actually is. Of particular note are his fingers, which look more like a bird's claws than they do like anything remotely human.

Roleplaying Hints: Rannulf is crafty, clever and sly. He's also out for only one thing: the betterment of Rannulf. Although he has no desire to betray members of his own clan, he has no particular shared cause with the lepers of Hinnom, and he is quite willing to show others the foolishness of trying to outwit him. He is, at heart, a coward, but he covers that with an air of intelligence and streetwise daring.

If characters mistreat Rannulf, attempt to place a blood oath on him or otherwise make him unwilling to assist, they will have turned the entire Nosferatu clan in the city against them. Rannulf is not of great power, but he is reasonably loyal to his clan, and they to him.

Rannulf is a short, quiet man whose eyes speak of great cleverness and subtlety. Once the characters have found him (most likely at the Inn of the Dancing Lion, or near the hospitals), he will be suspicious and openly hostile unless they come with confirmation of their status as Bernardus' emissaries. After the letter is presented, his mood shifts and he uses pleasant words (and a vaguely French accent). Should no one do anything stupid, he eventually takes the characters to a private locale to speak about the issue. He is always willing to trade information for information, though bear in mind that he is a shrewd haggler and already knows a great deal of what's going on in the city. He also speaks many languages — although he may not reveal this information to the characters.

"The man," Rannulf whispers, his eyes darting about nervously, "continues to elude us. He appears anywhere he pleases in the city, howls and raves and then vanishes again. Many times, he escapes into the catacombs beneath the Temple Mount, but we can never find traces of his passage. Many of my brothers believe that he has been living in the ruins to the north, but we can find no way he could travel so far unseen.

"I can lead you to the places where he appears, but no more. He may come out tonight," Rannulf looks around, gauging the darkness out the window, "It is a new moon, and he prefers to avoid the brighter evenings."

Rannulf leads the characters to the South Wall, near a small ruined church. "Here is the place that the crusaders first went mad," he explains. "This Five has appeared here three times, always on the night of the new moon." Further attempts at conversation are discouraged.

Rannulf waits with them. As dawn approaches, a spine-chilling moan can be heard from several blocks away, followed by a heart-rending cry, "The blood! The blood!"

Soon, the author of the screams stumbles into sight. He wears a once-white cloak, covered in soot, grime and bloody tears. Characters with the proper Knowledges or historical backgrounds will recognize the emblem on the cloak, once they are able to get close enough to see it.

It is the badge of a group of the crusaders of 1099 — a red cross, entwined with a lily, on a white field.

The man responds to one word only — "Five." It seems to be his name and more, as he chants it almost incessantly

amidst his ravings and howls. As they observe, Rannulf warns the characters that the mortal guards of Jerusalem are sure to come and investigate the screaming if it is allowed to continue, but also whispers that Five is known to vanish, should any try to approach too closely.

As for Five himself, he's not making any sense. In addition to his name, he begins chanting the word "Requiesco," with no meaning or context attached to it. He may attempt to hold a screaming, raving conversation with the characters, bloody tears running down his cheeks as he clenches his fists in his hair. Several of the characters may be perceptive enough to notice that Five tries to enter their minds, (Auspex 4 — Steal Secrets) but that he fails. He babbles about the river of blood, the dead child he ate, prophecies, the caverns below the cities and the four others. If any of the characters are able to establish mental communication, they find themselves lost in a maelstrom of images, horrific vistas and echoing sounds; all entwined about a single vision. The central theme of Five's mania is the diablerie of a white-faced young man, in a deep cavern, lit by flickering torchlight. The scene is fevered, brutal and filled with faces that are distorted by the yellow glow of the torch. There are four other men (this is seen through Five's eyes), all crawling and screaming as Five drains the soul from the young man's body, which then crumbles into ash.

"Something is wrong. Something is wrong," howls Five, "Where are my men!" At this he begins to scream again, this time a long, drawn-out wail of hatred and insanity. Under his breath, he murmurs and sobs, then throws himself to his knees before the characters. "Five. Five!" he screams, and over and over again, "Requiesco!"

It is at this point that the Assamite Rashid ibn Musafir makes his presence known. Five is his target, and the attack is brutally swift and effective. If necessary, he is willing to start a fight with the characters, but with Five's destruction, his work is done and he fades back into the shadows.

RASHID IBN MUSAFIR

Background: Rashid was a young farmer and a Jerusalem native when the crusaders conquered the city in 1099. He hid outside the town as the screams of terror and death echoed across the plain. Being driven from their homes and having their brethren slain in bloodthirsty ways by invading Franks had a profound effect on all the survivors. For Rashid, it led to an immediate change of lifestyle, from barely tolerant to ideologically obsessed. He made an oath to himself and to Allah, that he might put his life to the task of recovering al-Quds. Surely the worshipers of the cross followed no Book of his people.

Taking up with other disenfranchised locals who were barred entry to the city by the Frankish military rule, Rashid bided his time for several months. One evening while investigating noises, he discovered the wounded Habiba outside her cave on the Mount of Olives. He tended her wounds, assuming she had been mauled and left for dead by marauding Franks, whereupon she asked to be taken inside her haven to safety.

The elaborate traps made it clear that this was no ordinary peasant, but a woman who might prove to be a valuable ally. He tended to her throughout that night and then through the following nights. When she became weaker, honor dictated that she explain her path and her mission to him. His memories of the night of horror came flooding back, and he eagerly



let her drink of his blood so that she might survive and recover. She instructed him as her ghoul and soon after that Embraced him, understanding that she would need allies of fierce faith for the battles ahead.

Since his Embrace, Rashid has concentrated his skills on repaying blood with blood. Using information gleaned from al-Ain, he operates as the vengeance of Allah and wreaks general havoc on supply lines — carefully concentrating his feeding on those who he has been told are supporting the Western Cainites. He works alone or in concert with Habiba when necessary, though he is also familiar with the animalistic ways of the Gangrel Canis. Rashid also empathizes with Aziz's desire to clean the city of Christians, but sees Aziz's hatred of Boniface as narrow-minded.

Rashid's Protean abilities make him a suitable assassin for countryside work, laying waste to entire caravans in his frenzy, the marks of his claws often confused with shredding by Lupines. Where Rashid learned this discipline in so short a time is a mystery, though rumors persist of him accompanying Canis on hunts, where they share a burning vengeance.

One of his few pleasures — and it is a pleasure that confuses him beyond all understanding — is his fascination with Shahara. Though he still owes Habiba a debt of blood, Shahara is much more indulgent and attentive, and she lures him with pleasures only known within the city. She does not seem to be bothered by aspects of his personality that annoy some other Cainites. His outcast nature rings with a defender instinct for the Holy City, his people and his homeland. Driving the Cainite infidels from the city and strengthening his own kind so the crusaders do not further molest them is his ultimate goal.

Image: Tall and burly, with dark skin, black hair and flashing, dark eyes, Rashid is common in his looks. It is his reclusive nature and solitary instinct that incite the disdain of others.

Roleplaying Hints: You can't much be bothered with anyone unless they're useful to your goal. People — other than Shahara and Canis — are either of the clan or potential targets. There is no third category.

FOUNTAINS OF BRIGHT CRIMSON

Haven: Rashid used to dwell in a cave in the hillside across the valley from the city, not far from Habiba's haven. Recently, however, he has taken up staying with Shahara inside the city.

Secrets: Rashid is beginning to suspect that he's more enthralled with Shahara than she is with him. He's not sure of that, however... and he's not sure that he really wants to know the truth.

Influence: Rashid relies on Gabriel and Habiba for information; he is their enforcer and primary operative on the roads outside the city. Rashid has little influence on his own.

Destiny: Rashid disappears at or about the same time Gabriel fades from Cainite awareness.

Clan: Assamite

Sire: Habiba al-Sikkeen

Nature: Defender

Demeanor: Loner

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1099

Apparent Age: early 20s

Physical: Strength 5 (Burly), Dexterity 4 (Swift), Stamina 4 (Tough)

Social: Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 4 (Sharp), Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 4 (Grappling), Dodge 2

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Archery 2, Herbalism 1, Melee 4 (Swords), Stealth 4 (Lurk), Survival 4 (Tracking)

Knowledges: Hearth Wisdom 2, Linguistics 1, Medicine 2

Disciplines: Celerity 3, Obfuscate 5 Protean 2, Quietude 4

Backgrounds: Allies 1, Contacts 2, Herd 2, Mentor 1, Resources 2, Retainers 1

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

Road: Road of Blood 8

Willpower: 7

POST-MORTEM

After Rashid kills Five, the characters have a very short time to attempt any interaction with the Assamite. It is possible that a short scuffle will break out, but Rashid has no interest in sticking around and will do what is necessary to vanish (using Obfuscate 4). The Assamite, operating on information bought from Rannulf (who takes the opportunity provided by the assassination to vanish) does not care about the mortals, the characters or anything else. If given the opportunity, Rashid sharply claims that the life of the "murdering heathen" is but partial payment for the thousands of innocent Muslims killed when the Crusade of 1099 swept through the Holy City.

Rashid is among the most devout Muslim Cainites in Jerusalem. At this time, serving Bernardus, the characters are working for the Christian cause — whether they want to or not. However, Rashid isn't quite ready for war, and killing the characters could start open warfare between the factions of the city. On the other hand, killing Five, a raving and dangerous lunatic, is a deed that will be ignored — or condoned.

If the characters search for Rannulf after the murder, they find him at the inn where they first met, savoring the blood of a drunken young man in the stables. Once he has finished with his meal the Nosferatu condescends to speak to the characters,

When Five dies, Malkav's soul cries out beneath the city, and the stream that Adonijah tends begins to bleed once more. Although the characters do not know this immediately, any Malkavian characters feel a great sadness overwhelming them for as long as they remain within the city's walls. The melancholy plagues them, possibly exacerbating any Derangements they possess, for the rest of the story, but will not be debilitating. It is just a reminder that their work is not yet finished.

but not before. Rannulf enjoys the delicacies of existence as a vampire and does not like to be disturbed; any character who interrupts his feeding makes a subtle and vicious enemy, though this may not become apparent for a while.

Speaking to the characters afterwards, he claims to know nothing of the attack (though, in truth, he sold Rashid the same information he sold the characters as to Five's probable location) and is sympathetic to the characters if they tell him what has occurred. If pressed, he plays on the idea that he is a coward and tells all sorts of fearsome tales about the city's Assamites to shift attention away from himself. Alternately, he may claim that he saw none of the matter and vanished early, once Five had begun speaking to the characters — whichever seems more likely to get him in the characters' good graces.

If the characters return to Bernardus' home, they find him weeping by a rotting window of the house. He holds Five's blood-stained cloak, given to him by a ghoul who followed the characters and saw the brutal murder occur. He obviously knows that Five is dead, but is willing to listen to the characters' version of events. If they tell him what has happened, or if they refuse to take the investigation any further, he comes clean and tells the characters what is really happening around them.

Bernardus stands at the window, a thin trail of blood drying on his cheeks as he holds the cloak of the dead man. In the shadows of the house, you hear faint creaks as his servants move past, wishing to comfort their master in his sorrow, but unable to be of service. "Nearly a hundred years ago," the Malkavian says, astonishingly lucid, "the First Crusade swept through Jerusalem. The man you found tonight was one of the few survivors, thought lost forever in the deepest caverns beneath the city. He was one of our kind, sane and rational, on the day I saw him last. He and four others participated in the slaughter and then vanished into the depths, screaming for more blood.

"Since that day, no man has seen or heard them. My clanmates and I would search for them, but are forbidden by ancient oath from entering the deepest labyrinth below the city. Even the Nosferatu speak of dangers that they will not face that dwell in those tunnels and ruins. Yet this man, this strange madman, survived beneath Jerusalem for a hundred years and more. *Something* sustained him.

"On the day that Jerusalem was destroyed by the Crusade, I stood outside its walls, forbidden by my sire from entering. It was all that saved me. The Weeks of Blood would have overwhelmed me otherwise. It is said that the holy springs ran scarlet with blood, and that these five men were seen, from time to time, as they emerged from the caverns, screaming, before being lost to time.

"Yet one has escaped, and he spoke of the others. Perhaps they, too, are alive. I do not know the meaning of 'Requiesco,' but perhaps it has something to do with the power that sustained this man. And the others must be found, for my dreams say that these men are the source of Jerusalem's hatred, its imminent destruction. They know the greatest secret of all time — and it is a secret I would give my unlfe to discover, and to protect. Malkav...."

The sound of the word echoes around the room oddly. The sounds of the ghouls moving around stop, and for an instant, everything else in the city is silent.

Any Malkavians in the room need a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 5), or they are unable to act, infused with eerie visions and conflicting impulses of fear and anger. A botched roll indicates that a frenzy check should be made as well. Bernardus' words, as he continues, seem absolute truth to them, and they have a feeling of immense urgency as he talks.

Other characters somehow feel the presence of an ancient mind brushing past them, and anyone who was telepathically linked with Five (even through his fumbling attempts at communication) recognizes some small part of Five's soul in the touch.

Bernardus continues, "If Malkav rests beneath the city, then these men know the secret of his lair. If they are captured or that secret is discovered, then Jerusalem itself may be destroyed by Malkav's wrath, or wicked men may seek to devour him. He burns, he screams in the night, and for a hundred years I have heard him. Now, my friends, it falls to you to unravel this mystery.

"You have asked, before, what I will pay you. This, I promise — all that you were offered and more. If you bring back to me the secret of the other four Knights of the Lily, and if you free them of the curse that drives them, then I offer to you my own life — my blood and soul — in payment."

Bernardus' offer is simple. Find and free the crusaders, and in exchange, the characters may diablerize him. If the characters refuse, then they are free to leave, but they will never be free of the screams in their minds and the feeling of loss and anguish that cuts to their very souls. Sooner or later this becomes a Derangement (Melancholia) that will inevitably drive the characters into a suicidal, apathetic gloom. No matter where they go, they will always be haunted by Malkav's dreams.

And there is still the matter of the Tremere....

Wise characters realize that they have nothing to lose, and much to gain, by accepting Bernardus' final offer. He can assist them to the best of his ability, but he is not allowed to travel beneath the city or to follow them on their quest (he still has to clear their name with the Tremere). He does know a few things more about the situation and will offer them in the following order, if questioned:

- The man whom they saw butchered was the leader of the Knights of the Lily. He was once known as Sir Gavriel DuBougniac — a Ventrue by blood and a Frenchman by birth.
- Five appeared a total of seven times during the last four months. Three times, the Nosferatu, Rannulf, was there to hear his ravings. Indeed, Bernardus strongly suggests that Rannulf may know more than he is telling.
- Bernardus gives the characters the blood-stained cloak, telling them that it may hold secrets as to Five's earlier haunts.

ACT III: RUNNING THROUGH THE HOLY CITY

Based on the limited information that they have been given about the other four crusaders — either by Five or by the Malkavian, the characters begin a tour of Jerusalem, piecing together various bits of information gathered in Act II. There is no linear path through the story, only scenes which can be enacted in any order, as the characters attempt to discover the truth behind the appearance of the madman known as Five.

After the meeting with Bernardus, the characters have a very limited idea of where to go next. At any time, they may haven within the basement of the rottinghouse that Bernardus has shared with them, but they will not see Bernardus again for much of the rest of the story.

One of the few advantages the characters have is their familiarity with Rannulf, who is privy to much of the information they will need to get started on their trek. Also, any knowledge the characters have in occult matters will no doubt guide them to the apothecary. An attempt to learn more from the cloak will lead them to the same place, as the apothecary may be capable of examining the mud and dirt (or the bloodstains) and discovering something about its nature. If they begin to look into the occult nature of the dreams and visions, any urchin on the street can show them the way to the false fortuneteller, Shunif, who may give them the strangest lead of all. Lastly, they may choose to investigate the history of strange happenings of the First Crusade, and therefore, they will swiftly find their way to the Rectory, a wealthy home along Jerusalem's walls, a place where rare books and records of the city are kept.

RANNULF

If the characters return to the inn, or if a Nosferatu in the group chooses to travel beneath the city and search out Rannulf, they will almost certainly find him. Rannulf is probably the best source of information that the characters have — but right now, they don't have a letter of introduction from Bernardus with which to clear the way into the Nosferatu's heart. If the characters offer him something interesting — money, hidden information or secrets (such as why they went hunting for Five in the first place, and why he is still so important) — then Rannulf is willing to barter what he knows about the situation, and about where Five had appeared earlier. On the other hand, if the characters are cheap, rude or otherwise unpleasant, he's under no obligation to tell them anything, and indeed, he may sell them bad info or even seek to do them a mischief.

Remember, Rannulf is not working for the characters or even in their best interest. He knows that Rashid has a standing bounty for any information about the lost crusaders of 1099. If the characters are so foolish as to tell him anything which the Assamite will find useful, the Nosferatu is certain to travel to see him as soon as possible without arousing undue suspicion.

FOUNTAINS OF BRIGHT CRIMSON

STAYING BOUGHT

Rannulf, as has been previously noted, is a clever and greedy man, in death as he was in life. He will do anything for the right price — work for anyone and perform any task, so long as it does not directly betray his clan. However, that doesn't mean that the characters are the only ones paying him, or that he'll stay bought once he's purchased. He is well aware of their encounter with Rashid, and if the characters abuse him, he will find a way to turn them over to the Assamite and smile as they die.

If the characters do not wish to rely on Rannulf, they can gain much of the following information through other sources in the town; Bernardus' ghouls, other Cainites in the city or even Rashid himself (assuming the coterie has an Assamite among them, of course). However, it is a more difficult path, and one that may waste a great deal of the characters' time.

Rannulf is able to tell the coterie a few pertinent things, if he so chooses.

► The important locations visited by Five in the months since his first appearance are:

- The Zion Graveyard — Occasionally one or another of the city's Cappadocians labors here, and they noticed Five when he appeared within their playground's confines. They did not at first reveal that they had seen or heard him, and it is only through sheer luck that Rannulf has discovered the Cappadocians know of Five and his rantings. As far as Rannulf can tell, the Cappadocians are unwilling to speak of the matter and consider it to be closed.

- Heretiah's Well — A primary source of water to Jerusalem, this was the second appearance within three months. Five not only spent much time here, wailing and weeping, but he also appeared obsessed with his appearance in the water. When he was discovered (by mortal authorities led by a man named Jurgen Gerhardt), he screamed about blood in the water and vanished. It was this visit that made Five well-known throughout the city, and has since caused a great deal of fuss at the site, as parishioners of the Christian faith insist that he was a holy prophet or an angel sent from God. Since then, there have been mortal guards at the shrine, and the water has been increasingly difficult to disperse through the city. Residents have turned to other sources of water, hoping that the disturbance will either be repeated (in God's name) or forgotten entirely. Flowers, incense and other tokens of faith are routinely left behind, cleared away by an ancient serving-man whose duty is to keep the well clear of debris and filth.

- The Zion Gate — The Zion Gate is located in the southwest portion of the city's wall and leads directly to Mount

BLISSFUL SLUMBER

Any time the characters rest for a day, they are haunted by dreams of twisting caverns dripping with blood, and of five sets of eyes drifting in a bloody mist. Their daily sleep is not restful, and the characters arise in the dusk with the feeling of a great presence preparing to bring horrors down upon the city itself. A feeling of hatred and anguish permeates the very air.

Any Malkavians in the group receive these dreams, and more. Waking visions guide them, visions of five men in long dark caves, slaughtering hundreds of children with glassy eyes who line the walls. They see through the eyes of first one, then another, of these men. As the visions go on, more and more of the crimes committed in the Weeks of Blood will play out — soldiers raping young women and old, children being butchered, entire buildings being set aflame with their inhabitants locked inside, chants and prayers rising with the foul smoke. One man, a man wearing a white cloak with the symbol of the Lily, recurs in these dreams, staring into the eyes of the character with both hatred and a strange compassion. Caverns, endless caverns, and a desperate fear of the absolute darkness are also common themes.

These visions continue until the characters have found the other four crusaders, growing stronger and worse by the day. At any time when the characters begin to leave the trail of the story, the visions can lead them back and hint at the truth. If there are no Malkavians in the coterie, then the visions target anyone who has a Derangement. Failing that, they target characters at Storyteller discretion.

Zion, another site considered sacred by both Jews and Christians. The Tomb of King David is believed to rest there, and there are many people who come to pay their respects to the founder of Jerusalem and one of the greatest leaders of the Jewish people. Not far away is the Coenaculum, the site where Jesus and his disciples gathered together for the Last Supper. Five screamed here for nearly an hour, and it was here that Rashid first saw him — recognized the symbol on his cloak, and declared that he would see the infidel dead.

THE APOTHECARY

Hameel ibn Fauydn, a devout Muslim and the local apothecary, can be found in the Hospitallers' section of the city. He makes available leeches, medicines and other assorted forms of wisdom and healing. Although many in the city laugh at his unusual theories, he makes his living by keeping his mouth shut and his shop open. He knows much of the city, for a mortal, and has been aware of the Cairite population of Jerusalem for some time (he knows of only one by name, however, and that is Aisha; if the characters rescued her, his help becomes much easier to obtain).

If approached properly (quietly, and with respect and caution), he is certainly able to aid the characters. The mud and grime, which spatters the cloak, are silty, he says after some observation. The soil seems to be of the sort found at one of many of the small wells outside the city gates, where residents of the city go for respite from the heat and dry weather.

Fauydn also considers himself quite the occultist (he has some minor magical talent, as well). He is a student of various

flavors of mystery and keeper of a small relic — the fingerbone of Saint Hannah. Unlike most of these "relics" that are sold in the street, this fingerbone is the real thing and has a Faith rating of 3. He will certainly be willing to engage in occult conversation with the characters if they cross his palm with silver, though it will become apparent that his knowledge is limited. Depending on how the characters get their information from Fauydn, he will either be most helpful or desperately lie about anything and everything they ask.

Violence terrifies Fauydn, and if threatened he answers every question, comment or offhand remark the characters make — mostly attempting to answer in the way that will be most acceptable to the characters, so they will leave him alone. Once he has told them anything they want, he swiftly heads through Herod's Gate to the noble portion of the city, seeking out the home of Jurgen Gerhardt (the mortal witch-hunter who is seeking information on Five and his ravings). Once there, he spills all the information that the characters mentioned in his presence.

If the characters use a more subtle method, such as Presence or Dominate powers (or revealing that they saved Aisha), Fauydn responds well. He also happily reveals the following:

- A mortal named Jurgen Gerhardt is also very interested in the raving madman — and Gerhardt is a man of no small substance, well-known in the city for his undying fanaticism and swift sword arm. Gerhardt is paying Fauydn to bring him information on the topic — surely the characters won't mind if he mentions them (and their questions) to Gerhardt?

- Gerhardt believes Five was a lost disciple of Jesus, possibly a mortal with knowledge of Joseph of Aramathea and the lost Blood of Christ. Surely, this is what the man (Five) was screaming of, and thus, it is the province of the Church to acquire such a powerful relic. Because of Gerhardt's interest, Christian soldiers constantly guard the well which Five visited.

HAMEEL IBN FAUYDN

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 4 (Attentive), Intelligence 4 (Knowledgeable), Wits 3

Talents: Acting 1, Alertness 2, Empathy 2, Subterfuge 1

Knowledges: Animal Ken 1, Crafts 2, Etiquette 1, Herbalism 4 (Medicinal), Melee 1, Stealth 1, Survival 2

Skills: Academics 1, Hearth Wisdom 4 (Cures), Law 1, Linguistics 3, Medicine 3, Occult 2, Science 1

Willpower: 5

Image: Hameel ibn Fauydn is in his early 40s, heavyset and bright-eyed. He has fast fingers that are never still, and he wears a dusty, stained robe that shows the signs many years of wear. His hair is mostly gray, streaked with black here and there, and he has a magnificent beard.

Roleplaying Hints: You seem quiet and thoughtful at first glance, but you're filled with a need to talk — once you get started, you'll talk anyone's ear off. Chatter while you work, call out to passersby — you name it. When you're particularly chipper, you sing, which does not endear you to anyone who's heard your singing voice.

SHUNIF, THE VISIONARY

If the characters choose to investigate the nature of the disturbing dreams that they have suffered, or if they wish to spend time unraveling the mystery of the visions that plague any Malkavians, they will most likely be guided to the false fortuneteller, Shunif. Shunif came to Jerusalem with his family "to die in the Holy City of David." He is an old man, bald and wrinkled, living in a ramshackle house with his daughter and her young son.

From the street, the characters will hear the weeping of a woman. A young boy who sits on the hearth-step of the hut will stare at them with huge brown eyes as they approach. He is no more than six, dirty, in a well-worn nightshirt, but he seems well-fed and cared for.

Within the house, a fight is going on. An elderly man's voice screeches obscenities, and a woman tries to calm him, her attempts are met by his slurs against her person and her home. If the young boy is questioned, he will reply haltingly in Hebrew, saying that his grandfather is Shunif, and his mother is inside, caring for him.

It is obvious that the woman inside the hut is being mistreated by her father, but the boy acts as if nothing is happening. If the characters approach the house, the woman (Yasmin) opens the door and greets them, covering her face with a linen head-wrap to cover the fresh bruises. If the characters ask to speak to her father, she attempts to turn them away. Only if the characters use some form of persuasion (supernatural or otherwise), or if they say that the matter is religious in nature, does she allow them inside.

Shunif is an ancient man, blind in one eye, and callous to a world that he considers to be uncaring. Yasmin will usher her son (Joseph) inside, keeping him far from the conversation which the characters have with his grandfather and feeding him a soft gruel paste as she begs him to return to bed. Shunif's balding pate is barely covered with wisps of hair, and his hands lace and unlace with the palsied shaking of the very old.

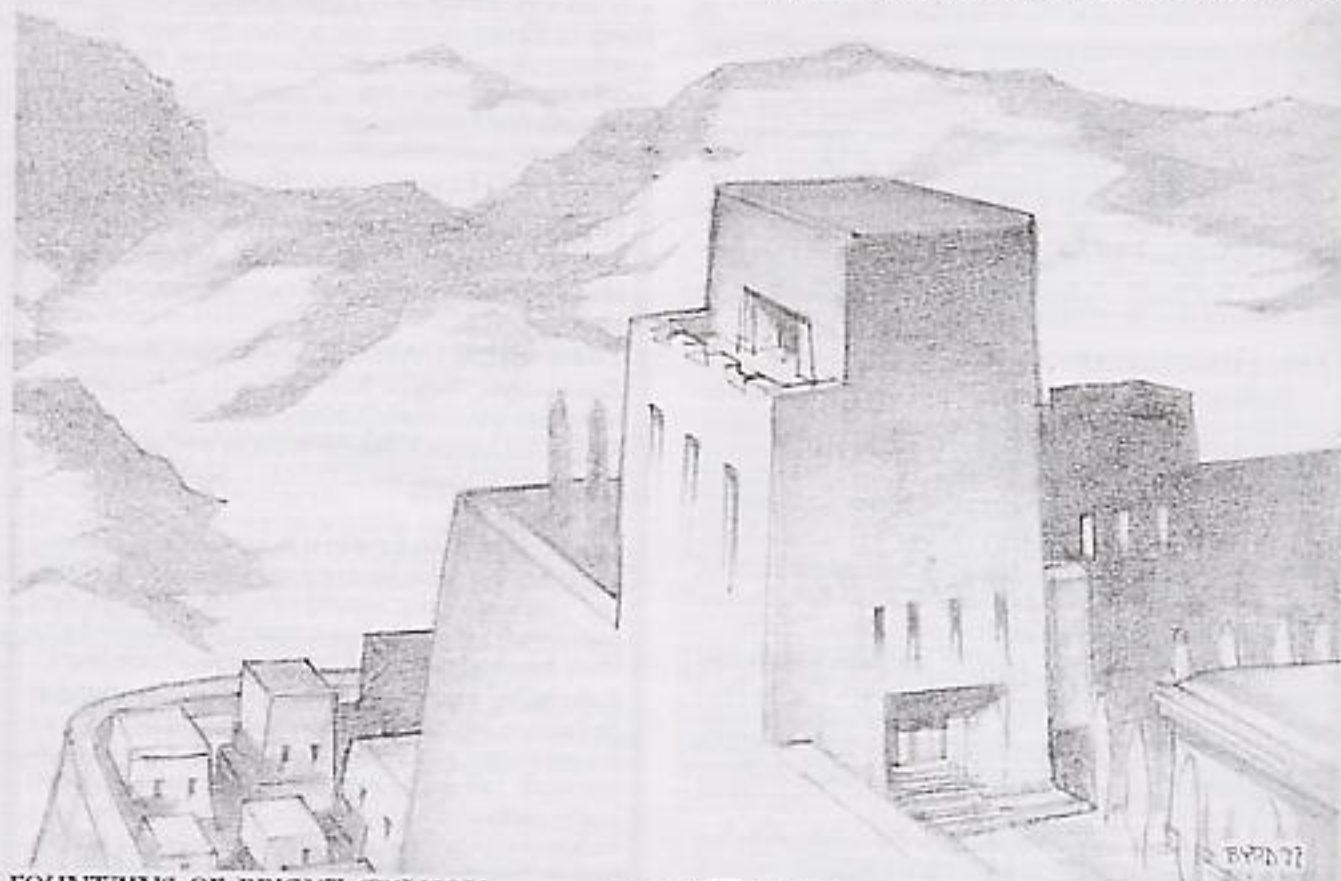
If the characters speak with Shunif, he replies only in Hebrew, though he understands Latin. He murmurs and mutters outlandishly, speaking in half-formed sentences and riddles. He holds a mirror (a poor one, but a mirror, nevertheless), turning it over and over in his hands as he speaks, and occasionally peering into it, the characters' eyes and the fire.

"Dark shadows have taken what you seek, and they will never give it up. I have seen your tale in a thousand dreams, and he is shattered, shattered. Until he is restored, Jerusalem's waters will run with blood. Blood and maggots."

"You must reach the deepest caverns before you ascend to the Temple Mount. Where there was one, there were five, there are four, and one must be alone. The Beast is within us all.... The stream-tender! The man to the north. His power rivals the darkness, makes bare the waste of night. Seek him outside the city walls, and you will find the shards you seek."

"Please," Yasmin says, pulling at the lead character's sleeve, "Leave him. He is old, and sick. Let him rest, I beg you."

After that, Shunif has nothing more to say except curses and hateful words for his daughter and grandson. Yasmin opens the door and sees the characters out again before entering the torchlit shack that serves as the family's home.



FOUNTAINS OF BRIGHT CRIMSON

THE RECTORY

If the characters seek more information on the men of the Crusade or the Weeks of Blood, they will have to go to the Rectory, a small house within the noble portion of the city. The Rectory houses a personal collection of books, owned by Jurgen Gerhardt, but open to those of taste and class. Only well-dressed and well-spoken characters will be allowed into the front hall of the Rectory and, even then, only under the greatest duress, for the Rectory is closed at night and tended by a small contingent of servants and guardsmen.

The books in the library focus on Christian myth and religion, and many of them center on the mystic legends of Joseph of Arimathea and the Blood of Christ that was taken from the body on the Cross. If the characters are literate and have any skills in history, academics or theology, they will rapidly be able to find the information which they seek amid the well-tended library. After all, the Rectory's collection is huge only in comparison to other libraries of the time: a staggering 124 volumes.

If any of the characters holds a position (even assumed) in the Church (authority in alternate sects like the Armenian may not prove impressive to the rather narrow-minded Jurgen), they are more easily admitted into the Rectory. Gerhardt is a Christian fanatic and will certainly come to greet any well-educated visitor, even in the depths of night.

In the books of the Rectory (after a successful Intelligence + History, Academics or Theology, difficulty 4), the characters find the following information about the sack of 1099. Though the mortal knowledge of the Weeks of Blood is vague, accounts that are read with a Cainite eye reveal more than one might suspect.

The Weeks of Blood are something of a legendary mystery, both to Cainites and mortals. Certainly, the bloodshed of a city's sack is often the subject of myth, but the massive and uncontrolled slaughter of 1099 holds a special place in the annals of brutality. The leaders of the assault on the Holy City were surprised by the lack of resistance within the city, but before the armies had taken ten paces inside the walls, the men went into a blood-frenzy (Cainite and mortal alike). The destruction was massive and spared no one. Men, women and children all fell to the sword, regardless of faith, age or station in life. In the end, much of the city was destroyed, while those who survived (along with the generals who had not entered the city) were left amid knee-high piles of corpses, wondering what scourge had befallen them amid the streets of Jerusalem.

The madness has never been explained.

Since then, many of the residents of Jerusalem have been plagued with nightmares and strange visions of blood — dreams similar to those any Malkavians in the group have begun to experience. Although these dreams are not limited to the Cainite residents of the city (and certainly not limited to Malkavians, though they suffer most from the trouble), the mortals have for the most part passed them off as spirits of the dead, risen to haunt those who murdered them. They may further discover that any who were previously insane (read: Malkavian) did not have such dreams until very recently. As a matter of fact, those new nightmares started the very night the characters arrived in the city (or heard of Bernardus' offer, if they were already residents).

JURGEN GERHARDT

Nature: Fanatic

Demeanor: Fanatic

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4 (Tireless)

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

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4 (Battle), Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Larceny 1, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Archery 3, Crafts 2, Herbalism 1, Melee 4 (Swords), Stealth 2

Knowledges: Academics 3, Hearth Wisdom 2, Investigation 2, Law 3, Linguistics 3, Medicine 1, Occult 2, Seneschal 3

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Contacts 4, Resources 4

Willpower: 7

Image: Jurgen dresses well; half his battles are won through sheer presence. He is balding, but has a neatly trimmed red beard and moustache and a hawk-lean face. His skin is tanned, as if he has spends a great deal of time in the sun, and he walks with the easy grace of a natural swordsman.

Roleplaying Hints: You are the epitome of grace and compassion — on the outside. You move with a courtly style and speak both French and Latin in polite company. If there are any ladies present, flatter them gently, using your natural presence and exceptional taste to encourage their trust.

On the inside, however, you're a very different man. You're bigoted, biased and self-fulfilled, and convinced that you alone have been chosen to do (the Christian) God's work in Jerusalem. You are a fanatic, and you are devoted to gaining the Blood of Jesus, the artifact which you believe the "prophet" (Five) envisioned.

JURGEN'S GUARDS

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Intimidation 1

Skills: Archery 2, Melee 3, Ride 1

Knowledges: Law 1, Politics 1

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 2, Resources 1

Willpower: 5

Note: The guards are generally armed with crossbows and short swords. They swagger and like showing off their authority, but won't get into an actual fray unless provoked or humiliated. They're used to throwing their weight around, primarily because there are a lot of them, and the local authorities haven't stepped on them yet, and so any loss of face is a serious matter. Jurgen has at least two guards with him at all times, can call upon up to 20 and never sends them out into the city in groups of less than four.

THE PATH OF MADNESS

Once the characters begin to establish the path which Five took through the city and the places he had visited, the following sites should attract their attention:

HEZIKIAH'S WELL

Rumors of blood in the stream, coupled with Five's notorious ranting spree, have caused this location to be quite a draw for the locals, and already pilgrims are starting to flock there as well, certain that the blood is that of a saint. Rumors are spreading as to the source of the disturbance; many say that the well is blessed by the Blood of Jesus and that the madman was given a holy vision from drinking the Blood. (Characters with Occult may well get drawn into debates with earnest scholars about the numerological significance of "Five," the most obvious connection being the five books of the Torah. The discussion is utterly spurious, of course, but it can serve to whip characters into veritable frenzy of paranoia, and that's always a good thing.)

These rumors, and wilder ones, circulate throughout the city. The Holy City is prone to loud and open devotions and acclaims of miracles, and this is only the most recent in a long string of religious fervors. The faithful come to the holy well at all hours of the night, bringing offerings and prayers in the hopes that the raving saint will show himself again. Urchins by the roadside along the way to the spring offer to take pilgrims to the location for "but a pittance" and wait by the spring even in the darkest night, selling torches, false relics and other religious items.

Four guardsmen, placed by Jurgen Gerhardt to protect and observe the site, will watch carefully to see anyone who approaches. No one seems to be challenging their authority, so they control access to the spring. If one of the characters does come near the water, the guards challenge them in French, Latin and possibly Arabic; however, the guards are simply exercising their authority and won't actually do anything stupid unless provoked. As for the well itself, it rises, pure and sweet, along a stone bank and trickles in a thin stream downhill, away from the city. Popular belief holds that its source is the water tunnel built by King Hezekiah. Even before the most recent turn of events, there were those who claimed that the well's waters had healing properties. Now their numbers have increased tenfold. Whatever the case may be, the waters are fresh and the pool is well known as a meeting place and a landmark.

The stream is well-tended by a man (some call him a monk, but he's not affiliated with any known order in the city) who comes

ACTION?

At any point during the following chapter of the story, it is likely that the characters will be attacked, either by the witch-hunter and his men or the vengeful Assamite. Such attacks are most likely if the pace of the session dawdles, amazingly enough. However, the attack(s) should serve to remind the characters that there is a certain urgency to their work, and that there are parties out there interested in stopping them. If necessary, the Tremere may also decide to look for the characters, as it is entirely possible that Bernardus forgot to — or chose not to — intercede on their behalf.

FOUNTAINS OF BRIGHT CRIMSON

TALES OF ADONIAH

One of the wilder rumors which is being spread throughout the city, and one which the characters may run across at any time, is the wild tale of the stream-tender. There are those who say he never ages, but has remained the same smiling old man for centuries. There are those who say he whispers to the stream, and that it answers his words with laughter. Some say that he stole past the guards somehow and tended the stream last night. And stranger still, it was not debris that he swept from the low pool of water, but a steady stream of blood.

to the site and sweeps all debris away, caring not only for the water and the pool, but also for the area around it. If the characters inquire, the guardsmen state that he has been removed from his position and that only they are allowed to tend the spring at this time.

If one of the characters uses Spirit's Touch (Auspex 3), they are overcome by a great sorrow which bubbles up from the stream. Visions of bloody water, tainted with a few drops of an almost radiant crimson, spill into their minds. They also see an ancient man, his face tormented by grief, coaxing those bloody drops from the greater mass of the waters and into a bucket.

The man who normally tends the stream (the guards, peasants or wandering pilgrims say) can be found at a small hut just north of Mount Zion. He lives alone and his hut is nearly three miles from the city itself. He comes into the city every few days at dawn, carrying his broom and a pail for water, and tends to the pool before walking back to his home. The guards can give only a general idea of the location of the hut, as they could care less about it or the man who lives there.

THE CAPPADOCIANS

A substantial Christian cemetery is growing outside the Zion Gate, and there are often disputes between the Christians who build here and those less tolerant of their beliefs. In the constantly changing political arena, the Christian cemetery is yet another point of contention that simply will not be ignored. Several cases of vandalism have occurred, and it is believed the Restless Dead themselves have begun to take notice. In three separate cases, those believed responsible for the destruction of the cemetery markers have been found dead and in advanced states of decay, only hours or even minutes after being seen alive and in good health.

The graveyard of the Cappadocians, and the sepulcher where they induct their new childer, lies only a few hundred yards from the Zion Gate. It is a place of winds and shadows, creeping grasses and twisting roots around low piles of raised sod. In the distance, across the numerous graves, a single lighted tomb stands above the faded ground, its light creeping around the outline of a solid stone door.

Though many of the Cappadocians live in houses within the city, the graveyard is a convenient meeting-place and the site of many of their rites and research.

As they enter the graveyard, the characters are greeted by a young-seeming man who introduces himself only as Adam (Perception, difficulty 5, to notice that he apparently has had some sort of wasting disease — multiple successes reveals that he is Cainite), one of the groundskeepers. If the characters opt

for the direct approach, avoiding Adam and going directly to the lighted tomb, they notice a great quantity of excavation materials placed near the tomb in neat piles — wood, wooden nails and thatching, as well as shovels and hammers.

Adam attempts to speak to the characters in Latin, requesting that they leave the cemetery, as it is closed for the evening. Once they introduce themselves, however, he immediately recognizes their true nature and become almost hostile. Adam is of the opinion that the characters are trespassing on private Cappadocian ground, and that if they do not choose to leave immediately, then they will be removed forcibly.

The Cappadocian graveyard serves as a focal point for their most sacred rituals, including the ritual of the Embrace (see *Clanbook: Cappadocian* for more information). If the characters gain his trust, Adam shares one tidbit with them: during a recent attempt at an Embrace, the ritual of the Cappadocians was interrupted by an assault by five howling madmen. They emerged from beneath the sepulcher through a wall that suddenly crumbled and destroyed the would-be child. Four of the men were driven back underground; the fifth escaped.

Since that night (which coincides with the first reports of Five's appearance), the Cappadocians have been taking great pains to restore the broken wall. They have no interest in further intrusions from below. Their repairs are not complete, however, and the characters can use the hole to gain entrance to the tunnels beneath the city.

Adam has also heard rumors of a band of infernalists now at work in the city and, indeed, in his graveyard. If the characters ask, they learn that several bodies have been stolen from the graveyard recently, their corpses dug up in the night and the empty graves filled with swarms of writhing bugs. Adam feels that the five lunatics were part and parcel of the infernalist plot and rants and raves against those who would defile his work. Beyond that, he has no useful information and notes that he is doing all he can to quell the rumors.

This is the first evidence that the characters have of the true infernalists that inhabit Jerusalem's walls. It is entirely likely that the characters will dismiss these stories after their run-in with the Tremere, but they do so at their peril.

If the characters so choose, they can pass through the half-filled hole in the tomb wall and enter the caverns beneath the city. As they do, hundreds of beetles scurry away, fleeing the light as it breaks from the torches in the tomb.

Adam does not recommend that anyone enter the caverns. Unless seduced, pressured or threatened, Adam firmly refuses to allow anyone within. He does have a certain point; even a Cainite should realize that going into the maze blindly is a bad idea. The ground is slippery and broken, and large patches of stone lean precariously, ready to fall at the slightest provocation. If the characters enter without assistance, they will certainly meet their doom. However, there are two people who may know the route through the caverns and would be able to help the characters.

One is Rannulf, who knows much of the passages beneath the city and has a certain amount of information about the space beneath the tomb.

Secondly, Adam suggests the characters contact Adonijah, who has been in Jerusalem since it was built by David. He knows many of Jerusalem's secrets — though the characters have most likely not been introduced to him at this time. The Cappadocians

SUSPICIONS

It is possible, at this point, that the characters should begin to suspect that not all of Bernardus' information was false. There is, indeed, an infernalist cult located just outside of Jerusalem, using dark powers to tear down the faith and dedication of the city and its inhabitants and sacrificing the innocent for their own dark purposes. However, these infernalists are not simply out for the destruction of mortal society and faith, but rather, on a quest to find, devour and destroy Malkav himself.

The Baali, explained in more detail later in this story, have captured the last survivors of Five's company and have been torturing them, trying to find the location of Malkav's slumbering body. The outbreak in the Cappadocian graveyard was the knights' attempt at an escape; unwittingly, the Graverobbers returned the crusaders to the hands of the servants of the Infernal. In the tunnels beneath the Abbey of Mount Zion, three of the four (the fourth has managed to escape again) suffer the Baali's tender ministrations.

If the characters go to the Abbey of Mount Zion, they are greeted and turned away by ghouls in service to Father Giotto Verducci, a Baali of great power. The ghouls do anything in their power to ensure that the characters leave — quietly and with a minimum of fuss.

have had dealings with him infrequently and are on at least passable terms with the man. Adam tells the characters that Adonijah's hut is to the north of Mount Zion (the location will match the locale of the stream-tender's hut, from *Hezekiah's Well*).

If the characters insist upon entering the blackened caverns, they will undoubtedly become lost beneath the city — possibly for hundreds of years. That leaves plenty of time for the Baali to complete their plot against Malkav and certainly enough to allow the characters to kill each other, one by one, as they frenzy from hunger. It is even possible that they will slip into torpor and never be heard from again — haunted forever by the dreams of the Antediluvian.

A generous Storyteller may have the characters return to the site of the Cappadocian tomb, little worse for wear, but frightened out of their immortal wits. Are your characters confident in their ability to live forever? What about the concept of living forever while trapped in a cave three miles beneath the Holy City?

THE ZION GATE

The Zion Gate is in the southwest portion of the city's wall and the road there leads several miles into the hills, directly to Mount Zion (and the Baali abbey). Not far away, the Coenaculum, the site where Jesus and his disciples gathered for the Last Supper, is found.

There's nothing at the site of the gate but a large and somewhat unsavory marketplace, but the road is all-important to the story, leading as it does to both the Baali and Adonijah.

THE STREAM-TENDER'S HUT (KING DAVID'S TOMB)

One of the final locations that the characters need to visit should be the stream-tender's hut. It requires a great deal of time to locate — either through rumors on the street or

ACT III

through an encompassing physical search of the area. The hut is hidden in a small valley within the hills near Mount Zion, covered by thickets and low-hanging cliffs of shale.

The characters should be searching for the hut for one of three reasons: first, on Adam's recommendation; secondly, to speak to the stream-tender, from Hezekiah's Well; and thirdly, on the advice given by Shunif, the ancient visionary.

The man who swept the blood from the stream is an ancient sage, known by many names: Adonijah, Re and Gideon, to name a few, and his sorrow is undying. He remains in his self-imposed guardianship to better watch the inhabitants of the Holy City and to allow himself to remain apart from the common troubles of man. He has enough troubles of his own to concern him.

Adonijah is ancient, wrinkled and tired, with deep-set, sparkling brown eyes beneath sparse white eyebrows. He speaks in a deep voice, and his hands are steady as he talks. His brown robes, not those of a monk, are simple and homespun, clean but threadbare. He does not ask the characters inside his hut, but offers them seats by the fire that he keeps burning on the ledge of the cliff. There are no animals here, and no dogs or birds make noise even in the distance. It is a quiet, peaceful place, filled with echoes of long ago things that have since been lost to the outside world. A pervading sorrow infuses the place, the hut and the man, though nothing seems overtly amiss. By the front door of the small thatched hut, a pail and a damp broom are visible.

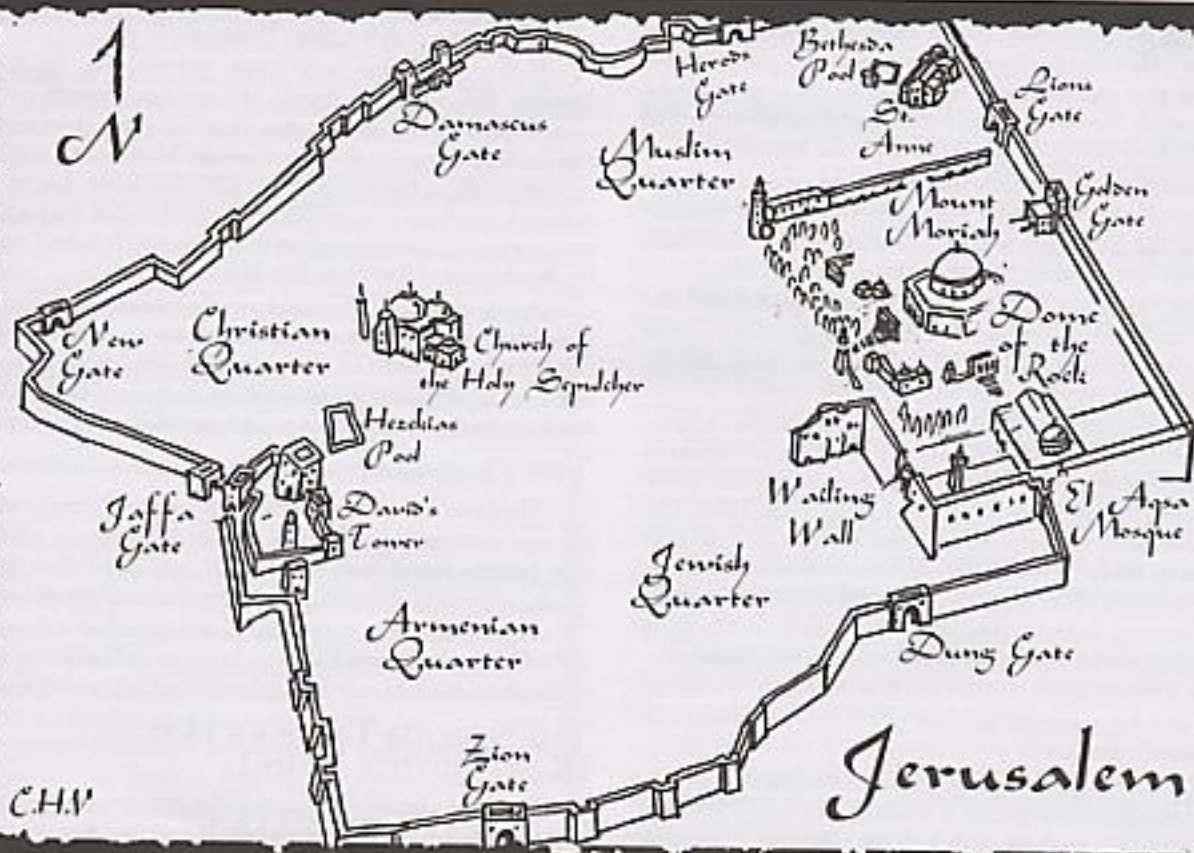
Although he seems to be no more than an ancient sage, Adonijah is far more than he appears. If the characters attack him, they run the risk of utter annihilation. If they approach with friendship and respect, he may well choose to aid them. He

has walked over most of the world, and seen many generations of men. He has witnessed displays of power unknown since the time of ancient legends, and he has been a friend to all-but-gods. These young striplings only serve to raise his interest because an old friend is involved in their affairs.

ADONIJAH

Adonijah is, and should remain, a mystery. He is a true immortal and may in fact be the legendary Wandering Jew (though if asked, he responds with derisive laughter and a comment of, "No, but I know him"). Attempts to Dominate or otherwise impinge on Adonijah with mental Disciplines automatically fail; he does not even acknowledge the attempt. Any physical assault on the man causes him to vanish; perceptive characters may, through their own devices, note that he has stepped into the Lands of the Dead. (Note: This happens even on a sneak attack of any sort; it's almost as if he has eyes in the back of his head — or ghostly allies protecting him.) Needless to say, any attempt to force information out of Adonijah or steal it from him is doomed to failure. If necessary, the ghosts of the dead will make a concerted effort to drive the intruders from Adonijah's hut, to spectacular effect.

Should the characters return to the site after an incident of this sort, they find the place abandoned and overgrown, as if the hut had never been there. Their next step is to find Adonijah — and he could be anywhere.



The old man tells the following tale, slowly and with great sadness.

"Long ago," he begins, "there was a mighty king, named David. Now, listen, young ones, for this tale is many stories in one, and you should know it better than you do. This king, David, had many sons, but none of them, in his eyes, were worthy to rule. Then, one day, the king returned from his council to find a stranger on his doorstep. The stranger spoke with idealism, words of peace for the great city that David had begun. That man would be called Solomon.

"David was as a father to Solomon, teaching him of the building of cities and of the ruling of men. Together, they created a Jerusalem that would stand through the ages." The old man pauses, as if struck by some painful memory.

"When David died, Solomon was proclaimed king above all. He began working to fulfill David's dream. He ordered an enlargement of the city, moved earth to create his royal palace and built the Temple where the Ark of the Covenant was housed. He built walls, homes and labyrinths of streets. It was ambitious... too ambitious. The treasury was emptied, David's carefully guarded stores were depleted, and the king had destroyed the future of the city he was trying to build."

The old man shakes his head. "Solomon was a fool."

Adonijah then tells the characters about the last few days of Solomon's reign, when the sage met Malkav — whom he calls "Micah," though if the characters press him, he evades their questions while yet allowing them to know exactly who he means. Adonijah was a friend of Malkav, back in the days when the Antediluvian still walked the earth. When Malkav felt the urge to retire into torpor, Adonijah made certain that his friend would be lost to time and hidden from any who would dare intrude on his slumber.

Adonijah, the peasant stream-sweeper, still lives in Jerusalem, protecting it, and his people, from the ravages of intruders. He tells the characters stories of the Crusade of 1099, a hundred years ago, as if it were yesterday. He tells bloody tales of mayhem and madness, and he tells them all with a sorrowful voice. He reveals, more or less, the following bits of information, allowing the characters to make assumptions of their own and never outright telling them the full tale. They must be content with the pieces, or they will receive nothing at all.

When the Crusade came, the blood of the slaughter ran down through the city, through the caverns and into the streams below. As the scent of blood reached him, Malkav stirred in his sleep and sent a great madness through the city. Cainites turned upon each other, ran screaming through the streets and committed atrocities upon both mortal and vampire kind.

But Malkav was not content. He stepped into the mind of an ancient Cainite to view the punishment of the crusaders of 1099 and to better instruct the Weeks of Blood that were to follow. Some of the Cainites fled the city. Many died. One small group fled into the ruins beneath the city, running down deeper, deeper into the madness that surrounded them. That was the last that Adonijah ever saw the men, though he says that shortly after they vanished the city became still and the madness ended abruptly. Malkav's presence still rests beneath Jerusalem, of this Adonijah is certain, but it has never again spoken in dreams or through wandering souls.

Then, a short time ago, the mysterious lunatics appeared in the Cappadocian-haunted graveyard. One of them escaped into the Holy City.

Five.

Adonijah recognized him, but was unable to contain or entrap him before the news was out. A mad prophet of blood, some called him, and they were right. But the blood within his veins was not his own. It was greater than the Cainite known as Sir Gavriel's had ever been before, and it was filled with a fractured sanity — some small piece of mind that had separated from the whole. And the voice — Five's voice — was that of Malkav.

Something had happened to those five men, deep in the labyrinth. When Five was killed — oh, yes, Adonijah knows all about it — the stream by Hezekiah's Well wept tears of blood. The peasants scattered, terrified, as Adonijah swept the blood from the stream into his pail. Rumors abounded, legends began, but only Adonijah knew the truth of it.

When Five died, some part of Malkav died with him, and even now, Malkav weeps beneath the city, bloody tears of rage and anguish.

If there are four more madmen, then they must surely know the truth of what occurred so long ago and of Malkav's broken mind. Some secret was contained within Five that he was unable to tell, and only his companions can answer the tale. The dreams that haunt Jerusalem's Cainites may be omens of Malkav's wrath, and the torturous visions are scenes of the Weeks of Blood. The blood that seeped into Hezekiah's Well is made of the tears which Malkav wept when Five was murdered by the Assamite. Should the other four also die, Malkav's revenge will no doubt be swift — yet where to find the men, and how to save them? Can their madness be cured?

Adonijah tells the characters that it can be done.

Drawing a circular glass vial the size of a fist from his robes, Adonijah holds it up to the firelight. It contains five drops of blood, floating like oil in the clear water. "This is the blood," he whispers reverently, as if remembering the passage of a friend, long ago. "The blood of my companion. It has many powers, young ones — powers to heal, to strengthen and possibly, to free the bound. I have seen it slake the Beast in one thought lost. I have known it to bring visions of the future, more powerful than any prophet's. If you can find these four madmen, and if you can give them this, then perhaps — perhaps — their madness will be cured." Adonijah shrugs. "I do not know, and it is no longer my concern. Take this, and be on your way."

"I have enough to do, taking care of my memories. And my people."

HIDDEN WAYS

If the characters ask for help, Adonijah gives them a map of the caverns beneath the city drawn on ancient parchment, as old as Jerusalem itself. It is worn and faded, and part of it has been torn away. It seems to have been drawn with deep brown ink, and many of its passages simply end, undrawn. It shows a clear path through the maze to Mount Zion, but, more to the player's interest at this point, it maps a section of the labyrinth of tunnels beneath Jerusalem. "If they came into the catacombs," Adonijah nods, "then they must have passed through here." He indicates the area where the Cappadocian tomb was built. "Search this area, and you may find some trace of their passage."

ACT IV: THE BYZANTINE RUINS

The caverns beneath the city are damp and slippery, marred by numerous cave-ins and twisting passages. In some places, it is obvious that the walls were once worked stone, but for the most part, collapses and fallen entryways make for a dangerously rough passage. The tunnels were abandoned long before Jerusalem expanded over them, and many of the once-solid caverns are now crumbling and worn.

The labyrinth is nearly impassable in places, with tall stone arches leading to cliffside drops that extend down into utter darkness. A series of feeble streams run through the caverns at irregular intervals, making echoes that haunt each step. Rats, beetles and other subterranean creatures run through the passages. In places, the balance holding a stone passageway open may be as fragile as bone. A single jarring impact, and a huge section of the corridor will fall. It is a dangerous place, and not one to be explored lightly. The passages weave in three dimensions, and there are many layers of structure beneath the first. One could truly wander here for eternity, feeding on rats and the blood of blind fish, and never again see the world.

Yet these myriad levels are where Five and his companions lived for a century, lost far beneath the city and driven by the dreams of an Antediluvian. It was only luck that brought them to the Cappadocian tomb; luck and the inspiration of Malkav.

It is impossible to map the ruins, though characters may try. Further, with the occasional cave-in behind the characters, it is certain that even those with perfect memories will have immense difficulty retracing their steps.

There are three important locations in the labyrinth, each with information that is vital to the characters' quest. As the vampires wander through the area, either following Rannulf's guidance or with the map provided by Adonijah, they will no doubt become lost several times. They may also have cave-ins seal off a tunnel and prevent their going back, keeping them from any action save the continuance of their quest—and their approach to the heart of the infernalist camp. The following locations should be used to mark the characters' progress, after they have entered the ruins beneath the city.

THE ENTRANCE

The entrance beneath the Cappadocian tomb leads to a long and twisting tunnel that connects to many others, eventually losing itself among the quiet corridors beneath the surface. At first, it seems almost a natural passage, but if any of the characters take a close look at the wall that intersects the tomb and the corridor, they will find it was worn down, slowly, by the scraping of clawed hands. It is possible that years of labor were responsible for the breach between the ruins and the underground sepulcher, years of clawing madly at the stone of the wall.

Bugs, and the corpses of bugs, litter the floor here. They crunch and scurry lightly underfoot at odd intervals—not as if the floor were covered in them, but as if they were about some bug-like business. A few of them are deliberately spiked to the wall with thin shards of stone, and appear to have been hanging there for some time.

FOUNTAINS OF BRIGHT CRIMSON

THE ROOM OF SCRAWLINGS

One of the most important chambers beneath the city lies deep within the ruins. The characters can eventually stumble upon this room if they proceed consistently downward through the passages or if they follow the trail of beetles which scurry through the maze. (Perception + Alertness, difficulty 7 to notice the trail of insects' purposeful movement)

The room is large and roughly circular, less an actual chamber than a conjunction between several corridors within the ruins. Half-locked arches, barely standing and covered with silt and grime, allow the characters entry to the chamber. The walls, once patterned with mosaic tiles and ornate carvings, are now covered in dark, chalky scrawlings. The tiles that once lined the walls have been torn down and broken into thousands of shards, patterned about the floor in bright colors, spelling hundreds of words. The walls are covered as well, but with letters hewn into the walls by fingers, scratching over and over against the stonework. Even the ceiling is crisscrossed with thousands of letters, and in some of the deeper marks, a thin trail of blood can be detected. Any Malkavians who enter this room are besieged by visions of a horrendous nature (Courage roll, difficulty 6, to avoid frenzy).

Anyone who looks specifically for the word "Requiesco" must succeed on an Intelligence + Investigation roll with a difficulty of 5 (three successes needed). If the roll is successful, the character recognizes that the word has indeed been written in many places, but that other things have been written so many times over it that it is nearly impossible to determine what any of the words actually say.

If a character uses Spirit's Touch (Auspex 3), he is completely overwhelmed by the madness that pervades every inch of this room. Five men have covered this room with their torment and their inherited madness. Images assault the poor fool who dares look into this chamber's past: images of diablerie, of a splintered mind, of ages long past, of immense sorrow and of five men, standing against the wall, each scrawling one separate word over and over again with bleeding fingers scraping against the stone. One of those men was the madman known to the coterie as Five. Anyone who uses Spirit's Touch

A TRAIL OF OFFAL

Where are the beetles going? If any character attempts to communicate with the insects (using Animalism), the beetles are completely unresponsive; the attempt is preemptively doomed to failure. The insects are searching the massive labyrinthine complex, searching for the body of Malkav. They are the animal emissaries of the Baali, endlessly looking for the secret of Malkav's resting-place. Once the characters enter the Room of Scrawlings, or if they harm any of the beetles, the Baali are informed immediately by the bugs. This will make for a very interesting (and unpleasant) welcome, once the characters finally reach the abbey.

on the room receives one permanent Derangement for opening himself to the agony that permeates this place.

It should be made clear to the characters that this chamber's carvings are the work of many hands working over many years. However, if there was a pattern to the writings, it was lost long ago.

THE RIVER OF BLOOD

At another point in the ruins, the characters should notice the floor of the caverns is covered with old, dried silt, as if a river once overflowed its banks and covered the ground here. The footsteps of the characters fall, deadened, upon the stone floor, and the sound of a roaring river echoes in the passage ahead. If the characters continue, whatever light they are using eventually shines through a thin crevice in the wall (only one man-sized individual may step through at a time), into a chamber that was once filled with the river's fury. There is now a small area between the passage and the roaring water, clear enough of debris for the characters to walk out on the thick ledge. Approximately 10 feet further on, the stream plunges down into the bowels of the earth.

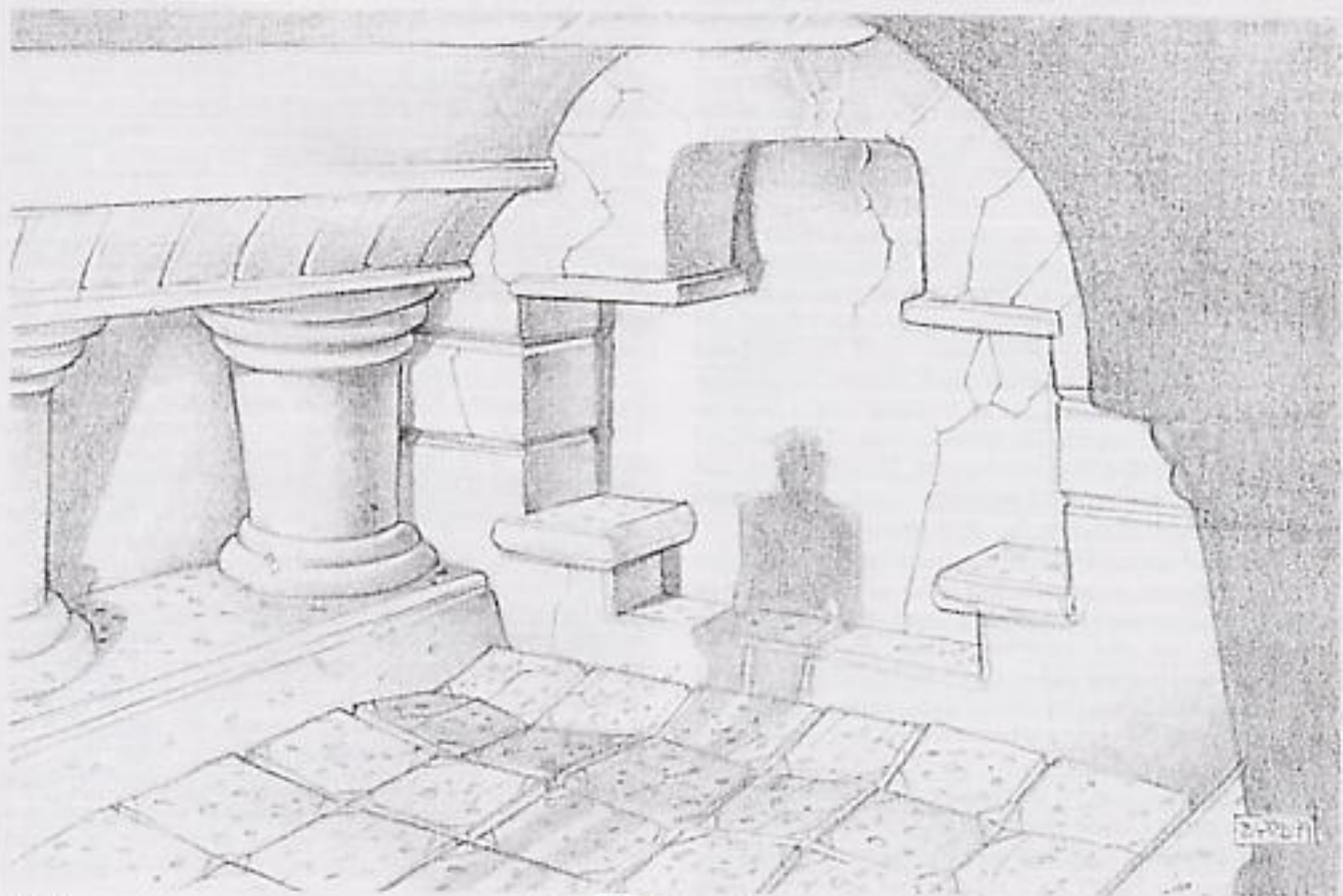
On the far side of the river, a man sits huddled in an alcove, dripping with water and murmuring to himself. He wears a cloak that is filthy with mud and river debris, but is emblazoned with the sign of the Knights of the Lily. The man responds only to the word "One" (his "name"), but only to start, wild-eyed at hearing it. He does not respond to any attempts to draw him into conversation, nor does he answer any hails or greetings. Instead, he merely sits rambling quietly, clutching his knees and staring into the river. It is obvious that he swam across, but the current is so fast that it seems amazing that he was not simply swept away into the lower caverns.

If any of the characters attempts to swim the river, she must make a Strength + Athletics roll (difficulty 8) to do so. Otherwise, the tremendous flow of water sweeps her away, and she becomes lost in the maze of caverns beneath Jerusalem. If she follows the river to its eventual destination, she will find herself in the Dead Sea (the nameless subterranean river eventually joins the Jordan), miles from the city of Jerusalem, nearly a month after being lost. Of course, this assumes the character doesn't fall into torpor from lack of blood, sink into the river's silty floor and thus become lost forever.

If Rannulf has led the characters into the caverns, they now get a particularly nasty surprise. He has sold them out to Rashid, and at the first sign of any of the other crusaders, he steps back, vanishes and allows Rashid ibn Musafir (who has been pacing the characters at a distance) to complete his task. The Assamite offers no quarter — he wants the crusader, and any other outcome is unacceptable. He may even mockingly thank the characters for assisting him in finding the "slaughterer of Muslim children," but he will not compromise. Regardless of what the characters do, Rashid now attempts to cross the river to deal with One. If they interfere, he moves to interpose the river between them and his prey; if they attack him he will deal with them as necessary. If he is wounded, he plunges into the river to escape, surfacing later only after the characters have gone.

ONE'S TALE

On the far side of the river, a single man weeps tears of blood, staring into the clear water with a haunted, obscenely tortured face. If characters attempt to contact him using Steal Secrets (Auspex 4), they discover that their power works even



ACT IV

without its usual cost of a point of Willpower. One is desperate for someone to communicate with and gladly uses his own powers in order to reach out to a seemingly friendly mind.

Unlike Five, One is vaguely sane, able to carry on a half-lucid conversation. He is paranoid, deranged beyond recovery and obsessed with the river — "The river that cries blood," he calls it. He begs the characters — or the Assamite, if Rashid gets to him first — to free his soul of the burden he carries. If asked, he eventually spins a horrible tale of the Weeks of Blood and his own part in them.

Part of the story he tells is the constant repetition of the word "et," Latin for "and." He does not seem aware of the fact that he is doing so, although his fingers trace the two letters over and over on the ground before him as he talks, in the air as he moves and even over his own body with his jagged nails cutting deep furrows in his flesh.

He babbles of bugs, bugs and terror, black crawling things that screamed for his soul. His men, he claims, are lost to the Devil, to the devils in the abbey and to their black bugs. He tells of the darkness that overcame the crusaders, of watching himself do horrible things to men and women within the city walls. The crusaders were not acting on orders, he swears, or even of their own volition. Some greater power usurped their minds and had driven them to the madness that made the blood run thick in the streets. He paints vivid images of slaughter and bloodshed, of watching the vitae of innocents drip down between cracks in the city streets, of burning buildings filled with inhabitants, of watching the flames roar higher than the city walls.

And then he speaks of the desire to kill — to slaughter his comrades and diablerize them until no man stood in the city streets. His troop fought against itself, each Cainite tearing the others apart in order to prove their strength. Only five men survived the madness. They fled into the open ruins of the Byzantine era — through a broken building's cellar, filled with water. The river swept them away, flowing beneath the city, depositing them deep within the caverns.

There they found a man. He was not a young man, nor an old man, but a man whose face was unreadable, untouched by time. He was not Malkav, but Malkav's best-loved descendant, keeping watch over his ancestor's sleep and conveying Malkav's thoughts to those participating in the slaughter above. For Malkav slumbered and, dreaming watched, the carnage above. Sleeping, he could not exercise his will as he wished, and so, to release horrors upon the crusaders that slaughtered the city, he placed some of his power (and some of his soul) within his beloved servant. Thus empowered and with such mandate bestowed upon him, the Cainite wreaked vengeance like no other upon the city of Jerusalem.

But he did not know that the river had taken five men or that fortune had thrown them at the feet of the one who had driven them mad. Consumed by Malkav's wrath, the five vampires attacked the one who stood before them, transfixed by the splendor of the slaughter above. They killed the child then and fed upon his soul. It was Five who actually committed the act of diablerie, and so the curse was heaviest upon him (for what it's worth, any attempt to diablerize Five after Rashid's attack fails; his soul and power are gone by the time the characters reach him), but all five partook of the blood, and all five paid the price.

Malkav was so overtaken with the torments that he was placing upon the Holy City that he did not notice the death

of his servant until it was too late — the fragment of his mind, and the mind of his servitor, vanished into the consciousness of the diablerist. But Malkav's mind, even a tiny part of it, had its own defenses. The splinter of the Antediluvian's consciousness fractured into five smaller parts, each lodging in the man who drank the blood of his minion. Malkav's body still rests safely, but a fragment of his soul is trapped in the men who had cut his agent down. The longer those bits of his essence are apart from him, the more erratic his dreams become and the more fitful is his slumber. What that portends, no man can say, but it surely cannot bode well for Jerusalem or its inhabitants. Malkav has already whipped the city into a frenzy of slaughter once; what horrors would he perpetrate now?

The only way to free the shards of Malkav's soul is to remind them of their place. A single drop of the blood of Malkav (such as that pulled from the stream by Adonijah) has the potential to free the shard of Malkav from its host, assuming the carrier ingests the blood. One does not know this, of course, and will not be able to assist the characters in reaching this conclusion. He only looks into the river, screaming that his tears are flowing there, and watches to see what he claims is "his soul floating by in the water."

And then, there are the other three. One knows where they are being held and will not go anywhere near the place. It is a place of filth, of corruption and anguish, where he was tortured and held for countless days. He escaped, but the others — all but Five — were kept there as the Baali (One refers to them as "the hosts of Hell," a play on the parasitic nature of their insect friends) tried to tear their secrets from them, and use them to trace the location of Malkav's body. If the Baali are allowed to continue, they may well succeed — although One is unable to make that connection. He simply falls into bloody tears, screaming at the pain and the thunder of insect footfalls he hears in his mind, desperately pleading for the coterie to assist his brethren. He knows the passages to the Baali-held abbey — though he does not know that is what the place is — and he certainly is willing to tell the characters how to get there, if convinced they wish to help his companions.

If One is killed, the earth again shakes, and all the tormented visions of the last several days flood the characters' minds. Malkav mourns the loss of another fragment of his soul, but even more, Malkav feels and shares One's pain. Unsurprisingly, Antediluvians do not enjoy such experiences, and Malkav is no exception. Wounded, he lashes out. The earth trembles (Dexterity roll, difficulty 7, to maintain footing, and at Storyteller discretion, portions of the chamber ceiling may collapse. Characters by the edge of the river fall in on a failed roll, to predictable and disastrous result.)

The river, once more, flows tainted with clotted blood — but this time, the vitae is salty and bitter. Any Cainite who so much as touches the foul stuff takes a level of aggravated damage from its sheer toxicity; anyone foolish enough to drink it takes two levels of aggravated damage and must roll Willpower (difficulty 8) to avoid Röttschreck. After that, the psychic howls of the injured Antediluvian become too much for any Malkavian among the characters to bear, and as a result, he is at a +1 difficulty on all Willpower, Wits and Intelligence rolls until Malkav's soul is freed in its entirety.

LET THE HEALING BEGIN

If the characters choose to feed One a drop of the blood that Adonijah drew from the stream, a miraculous change overcomes him. His back arches as his body shakes in the throes of a terrifying seizure. Screaming and panting, One falls to his knees and howls as if his very heart were being torn out.

Any characters with Heightened Senses (Auspex 1) see a strange ghostly figure waft up and out of One's protesting form. As One's eyes roll back in his head, they change color, from a bright blue to a faded hazel, as though they were becoming the eyes of someone else entirely. One, now simply a Baali Cainite named Montfey de Lyonesse, has no knowledge of where he is, how he came to be here or of any events that occurred after he entered the walls of Jerusalem in 1099. He speaks, confusedly, in the dialect of the Languedoc, asking who the people surrounding him are and where his commander, Gavriel DuBougniac, has gone.

He has no memory of the diablerie of Malkav's servant and no Derangements whatsoever.

Those standing around One as the ghostly form moves away feel a cold shiver and the caress of a vast, ancient, alien consciousness. Then, suddenly, it vanishes and leaves only an intense feeling of relief and ecstatic joy.

One, once more himself, retains only some vestigial memory of where the Baali are holding the others, feeling a sense of vague unease in the direction of the abbey. He does what he can to direct the characters toward the source of his worry, but should he attempt to stray from the caverns, the weight of years catches up with him and he instantly crumbles to a pile of dust and bone.

ACT V: THE ABBEY OF MOUNT ZION

The labyrinthine caverns beneath Jerusalem lead eventually to the Abbey of Mount Zion. A cold, secluded place on the swelling hilltop above Jerusalem, the abbey has long stood as an impenetrable bastion of faith.

But that's not the side of the abbey which the characters are about to witness.

The monks and scholars of the abbey were once holy men, confined by their scriptures and books to a life of contemplation. Left alone by the Muslim authorities, they kept to their own devices, at least until the first of the Baali infiltrators arrived. For two score years, now, agents of the infernal have wormed their way within the abbey walls, leading the monks down a twisted path to dark sacrifice and animalistic worship of darker powers.

Even now, deep beneath the abbey's virtuous outer face, the foulness of the Baali corrupts the city. Their monks travel through the streets, stealing young children for their foul purposes and laying traps for Cainites who might oppose them. Beneath the abbey, three captured men writhe in agony, infested with insects and tortured by the lost shards of Malkav's mind.

As the characters travel through the caverns, they are slowly led upwards again, following the directions given to them by One. If One was unable to give them directions (for whatever reason), the characters can also follow the trail of beetles, which grows thicker and more encompassing as they continue. [The mundane trail of One's journey is also a way to find the lower chambers of the abbey. Scraps of One's cloak, footprints and crushed bugs make a moderately discernible (Perception + Alertness, difficulty 7, one roll for each hour of travel time) path into the infernalists' deepest den.

The end of the trail is a long, thin passageway, over 50 feet in length and festering with bugs, maggots and a veritable wall of flies. They swarm down from above, carpeting the floor, ceiling and walls. Ahead, a faint firelight illuminates the crack in the painted wall, and the smell of rotted, burned flesh lingers in the hallway.

The voice of a man echoes in Latin, chanting horrifically as a scream erupts.

If the characters move down the corridor, they note that the scene goes dark again, and the scream continues. "Two! Two! I am Two!"

"Who are you? What is your true name?" asks the first voice.

"Two! In! In! Two!" Then there is more howling, more screaming and an increase in the stench of charred flesh.

If the characters peer through the crack, they inevitably spill the curtain of maggots onto the floor of the abbey's cellar, revealing their position to the Baali inside immediately. However, before anything else happens they receive a brief glimpse of three men in monastic robes, huddled over a fire into which a fourth man (naked, his skin horribly burned) is being lowered. Two prisoners, naked and chained with iron bolts through their shins, hang gruesomely from the wall. One has the obvious repulsiveness of a Nosferatu, but both are covered with blood, welts and burn-scars. They are writhing in pain, and their mouths have been stopped with a roiling mixture of maggots and worms to prevent them from speaking aloud. A third and fourth set of chains hang on the wall beside them. The first has been opened to allow Two to be led to his torture, the other hangs from the wall, shredded and torn.

The Baali respond to the intrusion with all due haste, leaving Two hanging in the fire. If the characters do not enter the abbey, the closest Baali calls the beetles to pour down on the people in the crevice, swarming them under in a matter of two turns unless some form of preventative measure is taken.

Intelligent characters hurry into the abbey's cellar, to face the Baali in open melee. Better the open ground of the abbey floor than the enclosed passage, after all. If they do not rescue Two immediately, he will certainly be burned to death in four turns.

FIGHTING SWARMS

A character overwhelmed by the beetles loses one Blood Point per turn after being overwhelmed, suffers the same penalties to all actions as if he were blind and deaf and must make a Courage roll each turn to keep from frenzying. It takes two Cainites working together (including the infested one) to clear an enfolded character of beetles, and the process takes two turns' worth of successful Dexterity rolls (difficulty 7). Any character who does not get the insects off in time is drained of blood and may well become a host for the swarm....

GIOTTO VERDUCCI

Clan: Baali
Sire: Antonio DeFigio
Nature: Fanatic
Demeanor: Monster
Embrace: 874 CE
Generation: 7th
Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3
Social: Charisma 4 (Smarmy), Manipulation 5 (Temptation), Appearance 2
Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3
Talents: Acting 1, Alertness 6 (Paranoid), Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 1, Intimidation 2, Larceny 1, Leadership 1, Subterfuge 2
Skills: Etiquette 1, Herbalism 1, Melee 1, Music 1, Stealth 4 (Sneak Attacks)
Knowledges: Academics 3, Hearth Wisdom 2, Investigation 1, Law 1, Linguistics 2, Medicine 1, Occult 4 (Infernal), Politics 1
Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 3, Herd 3, Resources 3
Disciplines: Celerity 2, Daimoinon 4, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 4, Potence 3, Presence 3
Virtues: Conviction 4, Instinct 3, Courage 4
Road: Road of the Hive 7
Willpower: 8



FOUNTAINS OF BRIGHT CRIMSON

Image: The not-so-good father is tall and thin, with an angular face and a Roman nose. He wears the vestments of a priest, but there's a sense of subtle wrongness about him. His hair is curly and graying, and he is clean-shaven.

Roleplaying Hints: You do not wish to be disturbed. Your work is important, more important than anyone knows, and you cannot stand interruption. Be polite, be fierce, be whatever you have to be in order to get interlopers to leave you alone so you can continue to ferret out the Antediluvian's secrets.

SARGON

Clan: Baali
Sire: K'thstl
Nature: Survivor
Demeanor: Monster
Embrace: 1100
Generation: 8th
Physical: Strength 4 (Maniacal), Dexterity 3, Stamina 4 (Inured to Pain)
Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2
Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2
Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 4 (Throttle), Dodge 4 (Sidestep), Intimidation 2, Subterfuge 1
Skills: Melee 3, Stealth 1, Survival 1
Knowledges: Linguistics 1, Occult 2
Backgrounds: Herd 2, Mentor 2
Disciplines: Celerity 3, Daimoinon 2, Obfuscate 2, Presence 3
Virtues: Conviction 3, Instinct 4, Courage 5
Road: Road of the Hive 7
Willpower: 5

ELIHU

Clan: Baali
Sire: Darak
Nature: Monster
Demeanor: Barbarian
Embrace: 1078
Generation: 8th
Physical: Strength 4 (Brutal), Dexterity 3, Stamina 4 (Burly)
Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3
Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3
Talents: Alertness 1, Athletics 3, Brawl 4 (Dirty Blows), Dodge 2, Intimidation 4 (Physical Threats)
Skills: Archery 1, Melee 5 (Knives), Survival 2
Knowledges: Hearth Wisdom 1, Investigation 1, Linguistics 1
Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Herd 2, Mentor 1
Disciplines: Daimoinon 2, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 1, Potence 4, Presence 3
Virtues: Conviction 2, Instinct 4, Courage 3
Road: Road of the Hive 6
Willpower: 4

Around the room, the characters may notice (after the fight, most likely, or from the manacles on the wall should they lose), four words carefully written on slates. In some cases, the letters have been shuffled, or their words arranged in different patterns. The Baali were attempting to make sense of some phrase containing the words "Et in Arcadia Ego." ("And in Arcadia I...") A

nonsensical phrase at best, but the Baali were unaware that they had not captured Malkav's entire 'mind'. Instead, they spent their time extracting the words, and the story, from One through Four. The closest phrase they have been able to reconcile, and the one which the Baali (if captured alive) will point to, is "I ego Arcania Dei" — "Begone, I conceal the secrets of God." It was the mystery of this phrase, and the captive's stories of the power beneath the walls, which the Baali sought to uncover.

Of course, if any characters add Five's ending word to the mixture, they will create the phrase "Et in Arcadia Ego Requiesco," or "And In Arcadia I Rest." It refers to Malkav's resting place, though offers less of a clue to finding it than one might think. On the other hand, any information in the hands of the Baali is a dangerous thing.

CLEANUP

Once the Baali have been defeated, the characters have several options (but not necessarily a lot of time — feel free to send hordes of Baali servitors and maybe even another Cainite or two at the vampires if they dawdle in the basement). Those choices include:

- **Freeing the crusaders and giving them some of Malkav's blood to drink**

Doing this frees the trapped fragment of Malkav in each of the crusaders, allowing a ghostly figure to waft upwards and away and returning the knights to their original selves. Like their compatriot, they will crumble to dust if they leave the confines of the tunnels and abbey. Their names are Leonardo Auseppi, Guillermo Dela Vesca and Samuel Oveleau, and they are all knights of the Order of the Lily. While they are well-versed in the niceties of the mortal and Cainite politics of the First Crusade, they know nothing of what has transpired since 1099. (Storyteller Note: They may well possess knowledge of any Cainites now in the city who were part of that crusade and may share that knowledge.)

The knights have no idea that they will be destroyed if they leave the abbey and its environs and are all for resuming their normal Cainite existences. If the characters manage to warn them, the knights will choose to remain in the tunnels and may well be useful resources for further chronicles set in the city.

- **Killing the knights themselves and drinking Malkav's blood**

Performing these actions is perhaps the most profound mistake the characters can make. By drinking the blood of the Antediluvian while fragments of his soul flutter around, looking for a new host, the characters essentially do all but jump up and down and volunteer for the position. A current Willpower roll (difficulty 9, Willpower cannot be spent to assist on this roll; if the characters attempt to diablerize the knights, the roll requires three successes) is required for each character who partakes of the blood of Malkav. Those who fail or botch find themselves lost in Malkav's highly personal and overwhelming dementia. Each begins chanting a single word and number, and each loses all sense of self from the moment he drinks the vitae. In short, they replace Five and his companions and must in turn be rescued, though Adonijah may not be quite so willing to lend his aid this time. Characters who succeed on their rolls instantly gain a permanent Derangement (Storyteller's discretion) and begin hearing the whispers of Malkav's subconscious mind. All Willpower rolls are henceforth at +2 difficulty, and for each month the character goes without rectifying the situation, he loses a die (cumulatively) from all rolls involving Mental Attributes.

In other words, if the characters make this mistake, they had best rectify it quickly, while they are still able to do so.

- **Giving the knights to Timothy and Paul**

If the characters free the crusaders and manage to escape with them, the two ghouls working with Bernardus are waiting to meet them wherever they emerge. ("Somehow we just knew," Timothy says). The ghouls will attempt to take custody of the knights. If the characters are foolish enough to let them do so, they vanish, and neither they nor Bernardus is ever seen again. The Malkavian, needless to say, has no interest in letting the characters diablerize him and goes to ground rather than keeping his end of the bargain. Of course, the characters can insist on escorting their prizes through whatever ambushes Bernardus has set up or even trailing the ghouls in secret....

- **Killing the knights without partaking of Malkav's blood**

While simply destroying the mad crusaders does pose an end to the immediate problem, there are long-term ramifications to consider. Malkav's mind is pained by the repeated shocks, and he lashes out at his tormentors. The earthquake that follows the knights' destruction is only the beginning.

In other words, the characters find themselves receiving some very unpleasant attention. Instantly, they acquire the enmity of any Malkavian they might run across. Malkavian characters plunge into a suicidal dementia and must be physically restrained from ending their own existences; the same suicidal mania overtakes them at random intervals (Storyteller discretion) and can only be staved off with expenditures of Willpower. Furthermore, all involved in the slaughter suffer the same consequences as those who succeed in drinking the blood but avoiding possession (see above).

As for the fragments of Malkav's soul, they, like the one (or ones) lost earlier, look for another host, but eventually settle down into the waters that rush beneath the city. From there, the fragments inevitably find their way into well water, which is taken into the city and imbibed by some poor mortals. Touched by madness, these humans somehow become irresistible prey for Cainites — and the cycle of death and madness begins again.

IF WORST COMES TO WORST .

If the characters fail to retrieve any portion of Malkav's soul, things start to go wrong. The soul shards work their way back into the city and into the Cainites of the city. Those vampires infected disappear into the tunnels, but meanwhile the clock begins ticking on a repeat of the Weeks of Blood. Slowly, Cainites grow more hostile toward one another. Religious differences in the city flare into violence more frequently. Arguments become fights become brawls to the death. And within a decade, the city is poised for another bloodbath — one that will leave no survivors.

If the characters simply leave the surviving knights in the tunnels, the madness builds, but more slowly. It may be centuries before things come to a head, but eventually, they will.

Five's soul is a curious case. Should the characters succeed in freeing the remainders of Malkav's soul, Adonijah manages to find and secure Five's fragment, and deal with it in his own way. If multiple fragments escape, Adonijah is unable to catch Five's, and the catastrophe unfolds as noted.

CONCLUSIONS AND AFTERMATH

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If the characters free Malkav's soul, he sinks into an easier slumber. Cainites returning to the city above notice a definite slackening of tensions; characters with Soulsight see fewer angry colors and more bright ones. While they have no luck finding Bernardus where he said he would be, the characters do gain an unexpected benefit: Adonijah's gratitude. While he won't go out of his way to let the characters know that he feels he owes them a favor, he may show up in a time of their need to repay his perceived debt.

Malkav himself is safely ensconced elsewhere; no matter how deep the characters delve into the tunnels they will not find the body of the Antediluvian. They may, however, notice that after a certain point, the tunnels look as if they were hewed, not downward, but from below. Characters who are too persistent find themselves in a maze of lunacy, never to escape — and with no inkling if Malkav himself still rests beneath the city or just remnants of his bloody madness....

The Baali's power is broken. A few, nearly impotent neonates, some ghouléd monks and a swarm of servitors lurk in the abbey, but that's all. The characters may seek to cleanse the place themselves or call the matter to the attention of a local potentate and earn his gratitude for bringing the threat to his attention.

Rannulf does his best to leave the city before the characters find him. His route takes him to the outskirts of Acre, but no closer, and then by sea to Venice. If the characters want to stop him, they'd best do it before he hits the open sea. Rannulf has many friends and acquaintances all up and down the Holy Land, and they are more than willing to cover his trail.

Rashid considers his work done for the moment, though he may now rank the characters among his enemies. Aisha returns to her work in the hospice, even more wary of the Tremere, but unwilling to leave the city quite yet. Bernardus' house stands empty; Timothy and Paul take the first opportunity they have to burn it to the ground.

ADDITIONAL STORIES

Depending on where and how the characters end up, there are a multitude of other stories that can flow from Fountains of Bright Crimson. Needless to say, if the characters fail partially or totally, there are reparations to be made and incipient crises to avert. Depending on what enemies the characters made along the way, they may have to deal with Rashid, Bernardus, Adonijah or any number of other denizens of Jerusalem. There may still be repercussions from their attack on the Tremere; Mara may seek vengeance, and Rusticus

is not a foe to be taken lightly. On the other hand, if word of what the characters have done gets out (and it always does seem to get out, doesn't it?) other Cainites may wish to learn what the characters know. Of course, some won't be happy with the answers they get and will attempt to take matters into their own hands....

There are other options, of course:

- Hunting down Bernardus, who wants nothing more to do with them and values his own safety
- Meeting Aisha, who owes them a debt of gratitude but who can be a dangerous ally to possess
- Finding and dealing with the traitor, who may line his clanmates up against the characters if their pursuit becomes too pressing

And so on. Should the characters decide to abandon Jerusalem after saving (or not saving) Malkav, they are certainly welcome to do so, but the echoes of what they have done can follow them for centuries.

MALKAV'S BLOOD

The blood in the vial has marvelous properties. Swallowing a single drop restores a Cainite's entire blood pool and can permanently cure all Derangements (save the final one possessed by a Malkavian), all wounds and all ailments. In addition, the lucky soul who drinks the blood gains a point of permanent Willpower and drops a single generation. A mortal drinking a drop of Malkav's blood becomes ghouléd but does not require blood except on an annual basis to maintain his state. Storytellers should note that these are the effects of these particular drops of Malkav's blood and not the effects of every drop of every Antediluvian's vitae. Even in his slumber and torment, Malkav breaks all the rules.

A single drop cannot be split between multiple individuals; it maintains its discrete status.

Should the characters decide to take Malkav's blood with them and leave the city, the consequences should be dire. Somehow, some way, word of what they are carrying will spread to every Malkavian along their route, and few of those worthies will take kindly to having their clan founder's blood toted off by strangers. As word spreads, no doubt Tremere anxious to experiment with the stuff will find out and make their best attempts to snatch or bargain for it. The concentrated foulness that is an Antediluvian's blood may draw other monsters out of the darkness, intent on destroying it or using it for their own purposes. Lupines in particular may not take kindly to its passage across their lands. And blood calls to blood, and wherever the vitae is taken, madness and sorrow will follow, as surely as dusk follows day.

FOUNTAINSTM OF BRIGHT CRIMSON

IN 1099, A CITY DROWNED IN BLOOD

A lunatic screams at midnight, by a well whose waters have gone red with blood. But whose blood is it, and why does a humble shepherd gather each precious drop? Why do tunnels that even the Nosferatu fear to explore now echo with inhuman footsteps and howls? And what of the plans of the mad Brother Bernardus, who swears that the hand of the infernal is upon Jerusalem?

All the seeds sown in 1099 and watered by the Weeks of Blood have finally begun to bear their unholy fruit....

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VAMPIRE
THE DARK AGES



You'd better have "Jerusalem by night" to play this story.

If anyone cares, this one is WW2825.

On page 16, you can read that Rashid Ibn-Musafir has Obfuscate 4. Originally, he had it at level 2, but I modified it as one of my PC had Auspex 4.

This is the start of my "Holy City Chronicles". Sorry to say for most of all, but they are written in Spanish. Hope to have enough time to translate them into English, and hope that all of you enjoy this Chronicle as much as I (as storyteller) and my friends (as player characters) have.

Enjoy.

Móstoles, September 8th, 2002, a cold summer day.

Myca Vykos, aka Koldun, aka Enrique.