

# JERUSALEM

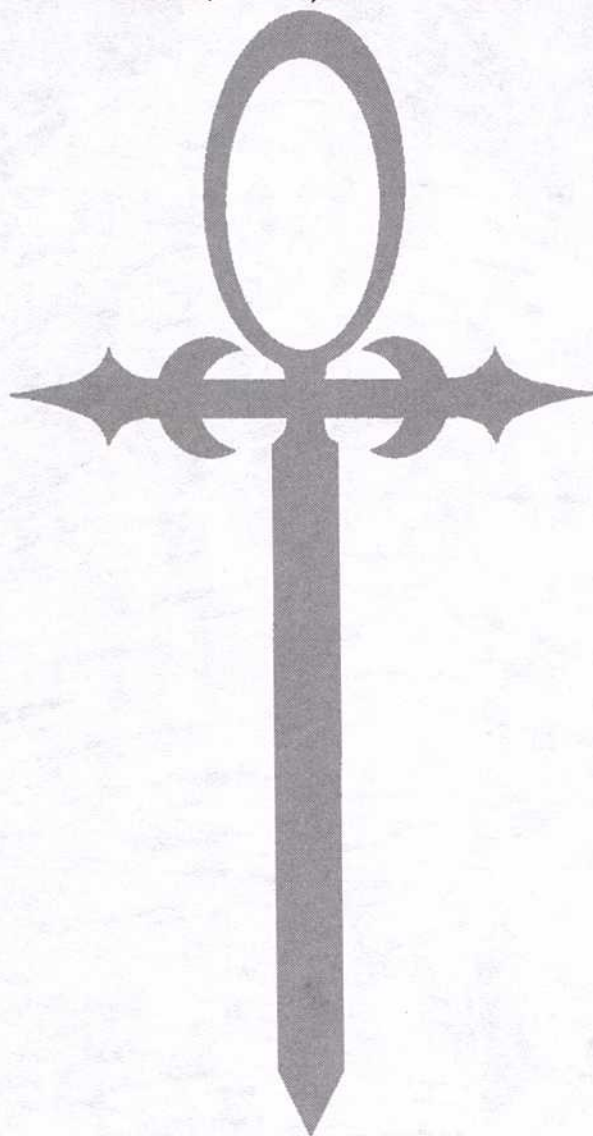
## BY NIGHT



A CITY SOURCEBOOK FOR VAMPIRE: THE DARK AGES®

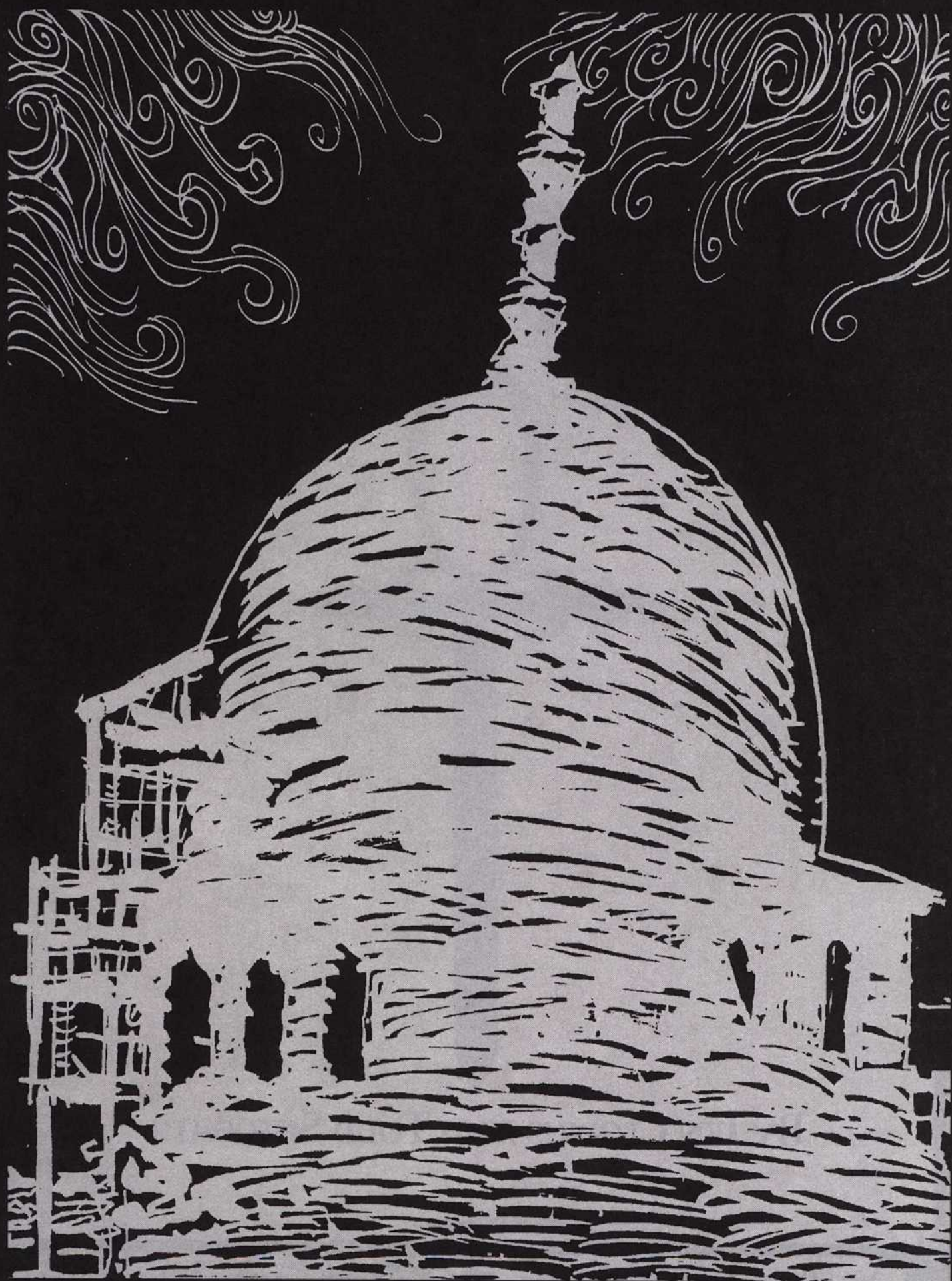


# JERUSALEM BY NIGHT™

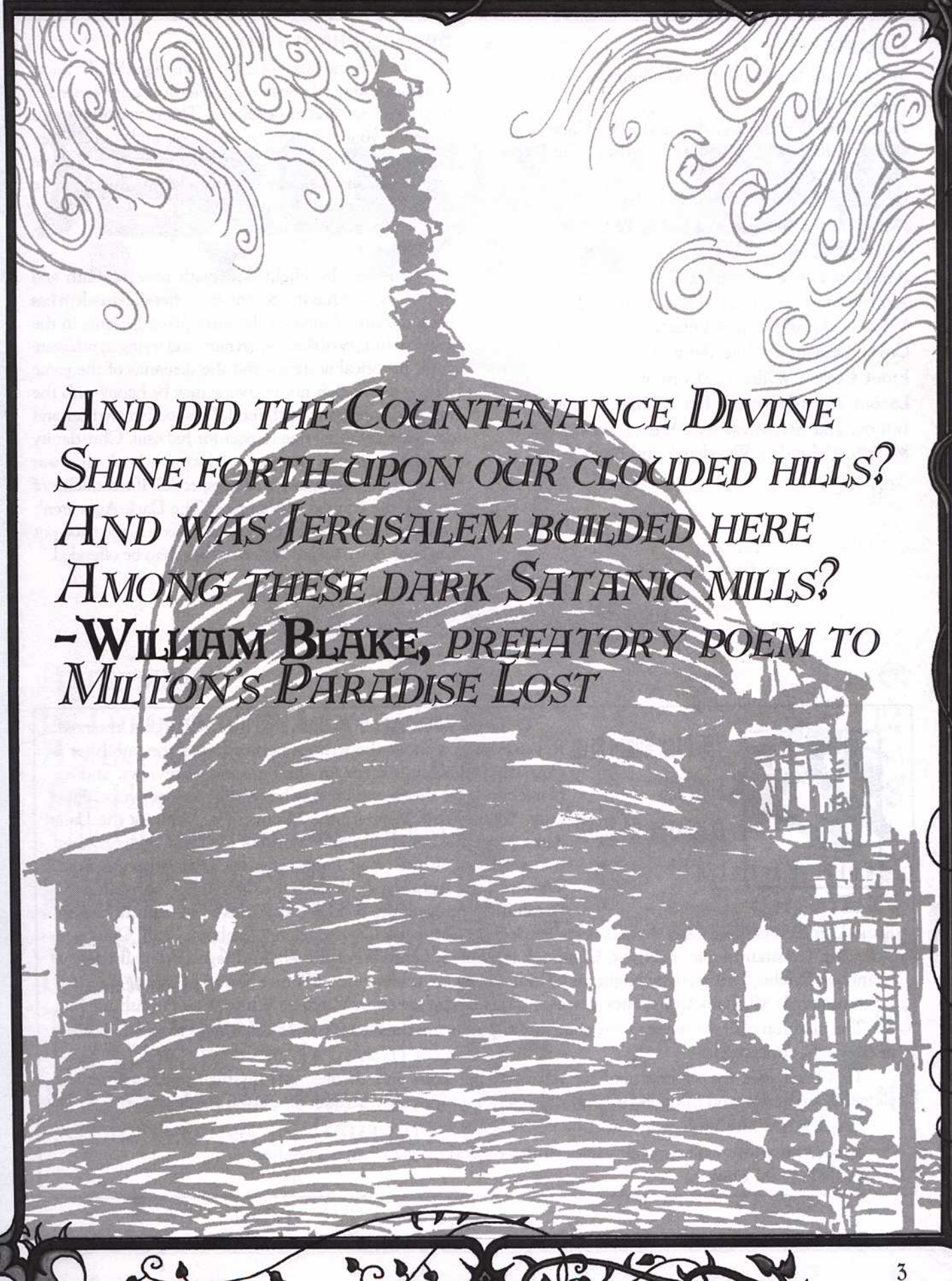


BY JEN CLODIUS AND TODD SATOGATA









*AND DID THE COUNTENANCE DIVINE  
SHINE FORTH UPON OUR CLOUDED HILLS?  
AND WAS JERUSALEM BUILT HERE  
AMONG THESE DARK SATANIC MILLS?  
-WILLIAM BLAKE, PREFATORY POEM TO  
MILTON'S PARADISE LOST*



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## NOTE

**Jerusalem by Night** 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 writers suggest you put the book down and move on, rather than be offended.



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## BY NIGHT

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# Aftermath

BY JANET BERLINER

In Canaan, which was also known as the land of Israel, in the spring of the year Christians called 1197, Muslims prayed openly but with a sense of unease. Jews, for whom the spring coincided with the celebration of Passover, called the year 4957. They prayed, too, in secret and with no less nervousness. Muslims and Jews alike were people whose families had endured and survived the injustices and cruelties of three Crusades. They knew, to a man and to a woman, that this brief respite from war would not last; a fourth Crusade would follow the third as surely as camels carried their own water across the desert.





The first three Crusades had been devastating. Entire Muslim families had been decimated; Jews, falsely accused of engaging in blood rites too horrific to contemplate, refused to convert to Christianity, to deny *ha-rachamim*, their Merciful Father, and laid down their lives for the sanctification of His name.

The Crusades denied fathers the pleasure of seeing their sons grow up; they denuded both communities of single men who could marry their daughters, so that they could no longer obey the Lord's or Allah's instruction to go forth and multiply.

And so it was that Meyer ben Joseph and Hamid al-Faisir, who were the leaders of their communities and knew that they all needed protection against the evil to come, befriended each other. "If we are destroyed, it will not matter to the few survivors which God we worshiped," Meyer said.

Hamid assented.

On the first night of Passover, in the same spirit of cooperation, Hamid agreed to be present at the religious meal, which his new friend Meyer called the Seder. "In this way," Hamid told his people, "I shall be an eye witness to their rituals. If they do not drink of the blood of Christian children, as has been reported, then

we shall defend our city together against the soldiers when they come."

And so it came to be that Hamid and his family joined Meyer, his wife, Rose, and their only surviving child Devora on the first night of Passover. They reclined and listened with respect as Meyer told the story of his people's journey across the desert in search of the Promised Land, they enjoyed the melodic songs, and they bowed their heads respectfully during the prayers.

"Pour the last of the wine, Meyer," Rose said, finally. "I sense that our guests are growing hungry."

Meyer poured a small amount of prayer wine for each person, though he knew that his Muslim guests did not drink. He was emptying the last of the carafe's contents into a large goblet set aside for the Prophet Elijah when there came a knock at the door. Meyer's hand jerked in surprise and a few drops missed the large goblet and landed on his wife's handwoven tablecloth. He grimaced; there was little more where that had come from. The extra glass of wine they poured each year — the extra place setting at the table — was a tradition he would never have ignored. But for a stranger to know the exact moment in the Seder when that glass was poured, well, it bordered on miraculous.



"Timing is everything," he said, thinking, *the Prophet has a good nose*. "Go, Devora. Open the door for our visitor."

The girl was not surprised, for each year at Passover her father had not so subtly knocked under the table and instructed her youngest brother to open the door and welcome the Prophet Elijah. Of course, there had never been anyone there, though her father said that Elijah's spirit had entered.

Not so this time.

Standing at the door in the darkness was a robed stranger, a tall man whose handsome face spoke of unbearable weariness. Slightly behind him stood a second man whose appearance and bearing cast him in the role of manservant.

"Welcome to our home," Meyer said, beckoning the strangers to the table and thinking that Rose would have to set yet another place. "It may not be much, but it is one of the best in Mea Shearim."

Gesturing first to his manservant in such a manner that it was apparent he would remain outside, the stranger entered Meyer's house. He did not remove his robe, nor did he look into the eyes of his host.

"Will you pray with us over the wine?" Meyer asked, thinking that he must remember later to have Devora take food and wine outside to the manservant.

The man sat but did not speak, neither did he eat or drink, even after the prayers were done. He was dark and swarthy, but did not seem to be of Jerusalem.

"What road have you traveled, stranger?" Meyer asked, wondering if the man had been sent to observe the blood rites of which the Jews were accused. If so, he would leave disappointed.

"I travel the Via Humanitatis," the man said, and gave a weary laugh.

Those were all the words he spoke. Meyer shrugged. If the stranger wanted to be cryptic and claim he traveled the road of mankind, then it was not his place, as host, to argue — at least not on Pesach.

When the meal was over, there was one more tradition to be observed before the final song could be sung. Earlier, Devora — both the oldest and the youngest daughter — had hidden a piece of unleavened bread known as the *Afikomen*. Now she was sent to retrieve it.

"Let our daughter also take food and wine to the man who is outside in the moonlight," Meyer said to Rose. "She will be rewarded for returning the *Afikomen* to the table," Meyer explained to his guests, "for without it the Seder cannot be completed. It will not take long for her to find it. Rose and I watched her hide it in the garden."

After a few moments, when Devora had not returned, the stranger stood as if to leave. Meyer bade him Godspeed and glanced at the family of Hamid al-Faisir, wishing they too would depart. Despite his best efforts it had been a strained night; he wanted it to be over.

When their daughter still did not return with the *Afikomen*, which fairly translated meant "Aftermath," Rose said, "I am worried about our daughter. It is that time of the month for her. She should not be outside alone and in the dark for so long."

Meyer excused himself and went to find his daughter.

He found her in the small arbor that stood permanently in the garden, ready to be decorated each autumn in thanks for God's bounty. She held the *Afikomen* in her hand. Silently, she gave it to her father.

Silently, he took it.

"We have been waiting for you," Meyer said. "All but the stranger, who came out of the night and has returned to it."

"I have been with him," Devora responded. "And I have fed his manservant."



Devora, daughter of Rose and of Meyer ben Joseph, never spoke again of the two men or even of the child of the manservant, conceived that Passover during her time of bleeding and growing in her womb. More and more, she became morose. Each time she passed a mirror, it was spotted with droplets of blood and she was shamed before her father, the remaining man of her family. Soon she ceased to be obedient to him or to any man. As if she wished to die in childbirth, she baked challahs and deliberately neglected to take from the dough and give what she had taken to a priest in tithing.

Meyer did not like his daughter's behavior but he accepted it as part of the changes wrought by childbearing, a process he did not pretend to understand. Rose was more frightened than angered. Though it was the word of God and of Allah that Their followers go forth and multiply, it was also His word that no child be conceived during *niddah* — menstruation — and for good reason.

She feared for the life of her daughter and trembled for her daughter's child, lest that child — conceived in blood — be claimed by the demon queen, Lilith.





The child, a girl, grew strong inside the womb of her mother, Devora. Like all unborn children growing into the fullness of their heritage, this one saw the history of her people by the light of a candle which burned in the womb, a white glow which allowed her to see the beginning and the end of the universe.

Inside the womb, an angel kept watch over her, teaching her the Torah; outside the womb, Lilith — overpowered by the remembrance of her own childless and unhappy marriage — watched the angel and seethed with jealousy of Devora's motherhood. She bided her time, smiling evilly as Rose constructed an amulet from the *Sefer Raziel* to protect the mother and child after birth and hung amulets aplenty around the walls and on the birth-bed to discourage the demonic queen from claiming the child.

Just before birth, when — as it was written — the angel readied itself to touch the child lightly on her top lip so that the cleavage on her upper lip could be formed and she could forget all she had learned, Lilith interfered. Dousing the light in the womb, she pushed the infant into the birth canal.

In that moment, Devora's soul took leave of its earthly body. In that moment, Marisa was born. She emerged from her mother's womb with a collective consciousness and with an arrogance that, in combination with her facial flaw, set her apart from the other children in Mea Shearim.

Rose told her husband, much later, that things must have happened that way.



Of the 613 Laws of the Torah, *Rekhilus* — the first, though the least prohibitive, law against bad-of-mouth gossip — was the most frequently disobeyed in the quarter where Marisa was born. In the case of this girl-child, the gossip derived more from fear than from any intent to do harm. It was no secret that she had been conceived during *niddah*, nor could it be kept secret that the child had no cleavage on her upper lip. Since her mother had died in childbirth, it was logical to assume that she had been claimed as

the daughter and servant of Lilith. But the greatest fear was the one spoken in whispers, that because of the circumstances of her conception and birth, Marisa could be infected with the most dreaded of all diseases, leprosy.

Meyer and Rose showered all of their love upon their granddaughter, whom they called Marisa Devora and who was the last of their living kin. Unfortunately, no amount of their goodwill could ease the nervousness of a community which had been so badly hurt by the passage of the years that it feared anything which might bring more trouble into its midst. Again, Hamid al-Faisir, who had reported favorably on the household ben Joseph, came together with Meyer. This time they joined forces to try to protect Marisa from those whom, driven by unreasoned anxiety, threatened harm to the fatherless child.

The strength of the two proved to be sadly insufficient against the many. One evening, when it was almost sundown, Marisa was wrested from them and taken into the desert. There, a dried water hole had been filled with the blood of several lambs and a meager shelter had been built to shield the child from the last rays of the desert sun.

As if she were being baptized in blood, the little girl was immersed and held at the site until nightfall. Being barely six years old, she could certainly not fight her way out of the grasp of strong adults. She could have cried out, but she did not even do that, appearing, instead, to submit herself to the wishes of the good people of Jerusalem.

In the house in the district of Mea Shearim, Hamid said in an anguished voice, "Surely they intend to dry her off and carry her home at the rise of the moon."

"Surely they do," Meyer agreed, his eyes filled with tears for his granddaughter. "What do you say, Rose?"

Rose said nothing. She left the house and walked into the desert. Even had she wanted to speak, her anger and foreboding would have prevented the words from forming on her tongue. As the rim of the moon appeared on the horizon, she came upon the child.

She stood at a distance, her gaze riveted upon the little girl.

The child had never looked more content. She dabbled happily in the red pond, drinking from her cupped hand with an eagerness she had never shown for her grandmother's cooking.

Looking up, Rose saw the stranger, tall and hooded, riding a camel led by his manservant. "No," she cried out, as the townsfolk stepped aside and he laid claim unto Marisa Devora.



The child raised her arms and the manservant lifted her up. The stranger took her, seated her astride the camel with him, and rode away.

Rose wept, but she did nothing to try to stop him.



At dawn, the people of Jerusalem returned to their daily business and to gossiping of other things. Only then did Rose cease her weeping and tell her tale to

Meyer ben Joseph and Hamid al-Faisir. She did not tell them that she had heard a female voice, calling the man and the child to join her. She did not say that Lilith (for that is surely who it must have been) had taken the man and the child to her bosom.

Meyer and his friend Hamid embraced each other. Now it was their turn to weep. Then they dried their tears and waited as the tale of Marisa Devora and the dark stranger traveled to Cyprus and reached the ears of Amalric; "Beware," the messenger said. "In the land of Canaan, there is a daughter of Lilith who is loved by man and God and Allah and marked by the Devil. Do not cause her to be angry, for her anger could devour you all."









# Introduction

Welcome to the holiest of cities, and peace be upon you. The city is being rebuilt, yet again. The Knights Templars have been ousted from Temple Mount, and the site has been resanctified. The Dome of the Rock is centered on the temple platform, and al-Aqsa Mosque is slightly to the south.

If we start on Temple Mount, we can walk west on Temple Street. First we cross the bridge near the cattle market, then Surrier Street, then the Street of the Germans. Once we dogleg past the produce markets, we cross Armenian Street, pass the grain markets, and that quickly, we're out David's Gate on the city hillside.

Just past the produce markets on Temple Street, off to the right, you'll see the former Hospitaller's quarters. Salah al-Din turned the building into the governor's palace, a mosque, and a hospital. A bit further to the right is the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, now an elaborate building enclosing the tomb of Jesus, Golgotha, and the cave where it is claimed that Helena discovered the True Cross.



North of the Temple Mount, across the Gate of Jehosaphat Street is St. Anna's, or Sand Hannah's. Originally a church and convent built by the crusaders to honor Mary's mother, Salah al-Din endowed it as a law school. Rumor has it that al-Din chose to do this not only to overwrite Christian building with a Muslim institution, but to out-endow the Shi'i.

So here we are in 1197. The Muslims are back in control, and the Jews are back in the city safe and sound. There's a constant parade of Christians of all sorts drifting through, some of whom claim that it is only a matter of time before the Europeans retake Jerusalem. Muslims are terrified that the crusaders will follow through on that threat, recalling the massacre of 1099. Jews, even though they're prospering under Muslim rule, are trying to figure out why Christians and Muslims insist on claiming their city. The Karaites are arguing with the Rabbinites about the authority of the Torah over any oral law. The Greek Orthodox hold the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in spite of the Latin Church's militant claim to that privilege (and their greater numbers). Splinter sects, new and old, challenge the established Christian authorities. Salah al-Din is dead, and his heirs are fighting among themselves for control. Shi'i and Sunni bickering falls along traditional lines of conflict.

### DESTINY

In fact, no European nation possesses Jerusalem until 1917, in spite of several half-hearted attempts at Crusades. After the Third, however, the Crusades deteriorated into typical escapades of land grabbing. Europe then had to turn some attention to the threat of the Turkish invasions, which put all thoughts of a counterinvasion on hold. Moreover, the Europeans really didn't want to settle the Middle East, which is what it would have taken to hold Jerusalem permanently. Once the Catholic Church lost its total grip on Christianity in the Reformation, the divisions between the Christian sects was such that no serious attempt to retake Jerusalem — for religious reasons, anyway — could be mounted.

And the five-year truce between the crusaders and the Muslims is about to end.

So welcome to Jerusalem. Watch carefully where you tread, for sometimes it seems as if each block is holy ground to one faith or another. Be careful with whom you speak, for trust is a fragile thing here, washed away by centuries of blood. Be careful where



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you haven, for there are Cainites here who have laid claim to the city for years beyond counting, and they do not take kindly to intruders.

And how do I know all this? Careful observation, my friend, and long study. How long? Long enough, my friend, long enough. I wish you a pleasant stay, and a safe one.

Alas, even here wishes so seldom come true....

## AN INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **Jerusalem by Night**, the comprehensive guide to the holiest of cities in the Dark Medieval world. In 1197, Jerusalem is a deceptively calm place in the World of Darkness; Muslim rule of the city seems reasonably secure, with Christians allowed to make pilgrimage and Jews permitted to live in the city. Still, there are problems for mortal and immortal alike here. Salah al-Din's successors squabble amongst themselves, and the threat of a resurgent Crusade looms as the end of the peace negotiated with Richard the Lion-Hearted looms. Sectarian violence also flares with uncomfortable frequency: Christians, Jews and Muslims all have sects that are at violent odds with one another. The memory of the slaughter of 1099 still lives in Muslim memory, while the bitter sting of the defeat at Hattin and other indignities inflame Christian passions.

With mortals on the verge of such bitter conflict, how much more vicious can the conflicts between Cainites be? Jerusalem holds too many of Caine's childer. While the steady flow of pilgrims and merchants allows Cainites to sustain themselves—barely—without triggering a bloody hunt of extermination, there are still too many vampires here, all intent on possessing at least a part of Jerusalem. From the tunnels beneath the Temple Mount to the Valley of Hinnom where lepers dwell, the city is infested with Cainites like a plague galley is infested with rats. Their influence is inescapable, even if they themselves are invisible. The only question is, with so many vampires here, nursing so many ancient hatreds, how long will it be before their rivalries explode in the faith-haunted streets—and will any of the city survive?

## WHAT IS THIS BOOK?

**Jerusalem by Night** is a comprehensive guide to Jerusalem for **Vampire: The Dark Ages**. It is first, last and always a book for **Vampire: The Dark Ages**—only the faintest mention of other supernatural entities grace the pages, and the roster of characters is comprised entirely of Cainites. There may be Garou, wraiths,

images and other, less identifiable entities roaming the streets of David's City, but if so, they are not the province of this book.

Instead, **Jerusalem by Night** is a guide to the city, its wonders and, most importantly, its denizens. What you will find in these pages is a complete source for setting chronicles in Jerusalem in 1197, with an eye toward Cainite politics and society. While not every street is mapped (the weight of history makes doing so somewhat problematic), all of Jerusalem is here, waiting for you.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is intended for Storytellers to use as a background setting for chronicles in and around Jerusalem. Chapter by chapter, it contains the following:

**The Holy City: The History of Jerusalem** is an overview of the mortal and Cainite histories of the city, which are inextricably intertwined. The tale starts with the very beginnings of the city and moves forward through Biblical, Roman and historical times, and winding up in 1197. Salah al-Din's heirs hold the city as part of their sultanate, and the last fraying months of a five-year truce with the Crusaders are fading away....

**Faith and Fervor: Society and Culture** is a brief breakdown of the three faiths that hold Jerusalem sacred, their sects and their practices. Also included is a short overview of medieval Islam, and a section on those verses from the Torah and Qu'ran that might make unlife a little easier for an observant vampire.

**The Streets of the Holy City: Geography** takes a look at the physical layout of the city, from the surrounding regions to the tunnels underneath the Temple Mount. Also included are maps to make understanding the layout of the city easier, and an overview map for the whole region.

**The Swarming Hosts: The Cainites of Jerusalem** is the largest chapter of the book, looking as it does at the vast number of Cainites who dwell in or near the city. The history, ambitions and secrets of each of the dozens of vampires who take haven here are also included, spinning a web of intrigue, fealty and hatred that serves as suitable backdrop for any chronicle.

**Builted Among These Dark Satanic Mills: Storytelling in Jerusalem** is a guide for Storytellers as to moods and themes for Jerusalem games. Also included is a list of chronicle ideas, some or all of which can be woven into both new games and existing ones.

## WHAT THIS BOOK IS NOT

**Jerusalem by Night** is expressly not intended to be pro- or anti- any particular religion, nor is it intended to tweak notions of faith by insinuating that religious



figure X was a Cainite, a ghoul or anything other than what the historical record suggests. While there is one character running around the book claiming to be Allah incarnate, there's substantial proof that his historical analog did so as well. Remember, this is a game book, not a history or religious text. Have fun with it. That's what it's here for.

## LEXICON

What follows is a brief lexicon of Arabic phrases that appear throughout *Jerusalem by Night*.

ahl al-kitab:	"People of the Book"
ayatollah:	"sign of God," title of a Shi'i religious leader
caliph:	successor to Muhammad as religious leader (Sunni)
dhimmi:	"protected," usually used for Jews and Christians
din:	"religion"
hadith:	literally "report", but more accurately, "tradition," that is, reports of how Muhammad acted, lending interpretation to the Qur'an
hajj:	the pilgrimage to Mecca, one of the Five Pillars
ibn:	"son of"
Islam:	"submission" to the will of Allah
jihad:	"struggle" to follow Islam, can be moral or physical
jizya:	tax on <i>dhimmi</i>
madrassa:	religious school
mosque:	English corruption of " <i>masjid</i> ," or "place of prostration"
Muslim:	"one who submits," a follower of Islam
qadi:	Islamic judge
Qur'an:	"recitation," the Muslim holy text
Ramada:	the month of fasting, one of the Five Pillars
salat:	prayer or worship, one of the Five Pillars
sawm:	fasting, especially during Ramadan, one of the Five Pillars
shahada:	profession of faith: "There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet," one of the Five Pillars
sharia:	Islamic law, based on the Qur'an and <i>Sunna</i>
sultan:	ruler or military commander
talaq:	pronouncement of repudiation; divorce
'ulama:	religious scholars (singular: <i>'alim</i> )

umma:	religious community
waqf:	endowment of moneys or property, usually to a religious or charitable institution
zakat:	annual alms tax, usually 2.5 percent of total wealth

## REFERENCES AND RECOMMENDED READING

There is a wealth of material available on Jerusalem and the religions and societies that have woven its history. Needless to say, there's a lot more out there than any sane Storyteller has time to read, much less digest or integrate. Still, for those players and Storytellers who want more depth than is provided in this book, the following titles can provide additional information that may prove useful.

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# Chapter One: The History of Jerusalem

History, Culture, Religion...

...they all blend together to create Jerusalem  
Bismallah, ar-rahmaan, ar-rahmeen

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the  
Compassionate

Kushalimum, Shalem, Yerashalayim, Ir  
David, Aelia Capitolina, Bayt al-Maqdis, al-  
Quds... no matter how the name changed  
over time, there has always been a Jerusalem

Legend has it that the name is ancient  
Hebrew, "Yerashalayim," for "City of Peace" - an  
unlikely name for a city so often a battlefield.  
The Hebrew origin of "Jerusalem" is unlikely,  
too; Jerusalem was the name of this hilltop  
village long before the Hebrews first moved  
into the neighborhood.

Another legend has it that the name is reli-  
gious, meaning "the foundation of the God  
Shalem." If so, Shalem's city long outlived  
Shalem himself and any of his worshippers.



## A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

"BCE" and "CE" are terms used to create a more neutral history, rather than privileging the Christian tradition. These terms stand, respectively, for "before the common era" and "common era," and they directly correlate to the more familiar "BC" and "AD."

Regardless of what it has been called, people have been living on that particular hill a very long time. In the 14th century BCE, when Akhenaton and Nefertiti ruled Egypt, the village chief of Jerusalem sent written homage. He pledged his allegiance to his lord and master, but also explained why there was no contribution from his territory to the annual tribute caravan that year.

Like other cities in the area, Jerusalem was built with walls surrounding the town. Some cities — Jerusalem was fortunate enough to be among them — not only had reasonable drainage which prevented flooding inside the walls, they also had shafts sunk through the underlying rock down into the springs beneath the city. Jerusalem had access, in case of siege, to a reliable source of water.

Various groups occupied the hilltop for varying amounts of time, leaving little trace of their existence. No strong evidence of trade or manufacture exists, no pottery shards have been found and no distinctive stonework has been unearthed to tell us anything about those who dwelt there. The only evidence of the settlement comes from the occasional mention of the place in distant records. Jerusalem may have been around for a long time, but for a long time Jerusalem was also in the far reaches of nowhere.

All of that changed when, sometime around the 13th century BCE, the followers of a god named Yahweh escaped from Egypt after 430 years of slavery. Directed by Yahweh, they wandered northeast into a land called Canaan. Yahweh defined the geographic boundaries of the region being granted to his followers, but told his followers that conquering the land was up to them. Forty years later, Yahweh's followers arrived in their promised lands and warred upon the local tribes. They won much of the land, enslaving or killing most of those who opposed their occupation, but their forces were continuously frustrated by the walls of Jerusalem and several other walled enclaves.

## THE CITY OF DAVID

It is truly unknown how the city of Jerusalem fell to Yahweh's followers. Religious tales told by the victors tell of a peaceful occupation, and of gentle conversion after years of resistance. Others whisper

of mystic forces powerful enough to sunder the walls and sow the seeds of dust in the city's protected wells, giving leaders of the few thousand Jebusites within no choice but surrender. History, as we know all too well, is written by the victors.

However the fall of Jerusalem had come about, the city was captured by David's forces. In future conquests, city residents would be slaughtered or banished, but this time, David's people and the captured Jebusites lived together in harmony. The transition was so peaceful that David's advisors took over large portions of the already-functioning bureaucracy rather than institute a new city government of their own. The prophet Ezekial's comment on Jerusalem, "Your origins and birth were of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite," seems entirely cogent, and a likely assessment of the way the city functioned. While Jerusalem (and the followers of Yahweh, for that matter) certainly didn't start out as the center of monotheism, political and economic forces — as well as sheer repetition — led the population in that direction.

Not long after the capture of Jerusalem, David led a unified Israel as its king, and moved his palace and throne from Hebron to Jerusalem — a city that would become *'Ir David*, the City of David. David and the followers of Yahweh also moved the Ark of the Covenant, their holiest possession, to Jerusalem; this established the city as the center of Israel's political and religious power. The growing population attracted Nosferatu and the occasional Gangrel to the outskirts of the city to feed.

## SOLOMON AND THE TEMPLE

David's eldest son expected to become king after his father's death. However, it was Solomon who became king instead, about 960 BCE. Demonstrating his power, wealth and idealism, Solomon embarked on a building

### THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

The Ark of the Covenant was a (probably wooden) chest, containing the stone tablets upon which Yahweh had written the Ten Commandments; Moses received the tablets from Yahweh on Mount Sinai. The Ark of the Covenant symbolized Yahweh's presence among his followers. Numerous supernatural powers were attributed to the Ark, and numerous forgeries have been presented over the centuries. The actual Ark (if such a thing still does, or indeed ever did exist) would radiate a level of True Faith that would be literally unquantifiable, rendering it beyond the reach of any Cainite. Indeed, some elders speculate that the city of Acre must be the Ark's final resting place for just this reason.



spree using the substantial treasury (mostly tribute from subjugated territories) left by David.

Solomon ordered an enlargement of the perimeter of the city to make room for new buildings. His workers and slaves moved earth to create a level area for his royal palace, and leveled Temple Mount, whereupon was built the Temple where the Ark of the Covenant was housed. Solomon made pacts with the king of Tyre for rare materials and the help of Tyre's skilled artisans, many of whom — including the Toredor Elsh — traveled from Tyre to join the construction of what would become the Temple of Solomon. All of this building, however, ran Solomon's coffers dry, and he was forced to cede territories to the Tyrian king to help pay the debts of contract.

Over the course of the next two millennia, several different structures would occupy Temple Mount. Most of those structures were consecrated to a specific deity or deities, and Temple Mount would become over time the most sought-after site for two of the world's three monotheistic religions. Initially, however, Yahweh wasn't the only deity in residence in Jerusalem, and other deities also received offerings and sacrifices. While Solomon's Temple carefully avoided any deific image, it did include seraphim and cherubim, as well as other

local pagan symbols. Solomon also appeased the Jebusites by allowing the construction of temples to the numerous other local gods.

Solomon's ambitious construction programs thoroughly depleted the governing treasury. His successor, Rehoboam, was faced with the choice of reducing the standard of living of the royal court, or increasing the already-burdensome taxes to create income. Not wanting the former (one must keep up appearances, after all), he attempted the latter — causing the northern portion of the territory to secede entirely and form a new nation, Israel, while Rehoboam ruled only over Judah (later called Judea) and Jerusalem. After shaking his fist at Israel, he fled back to Jerusalem when the new Israeli army stoned the master of his *corvée* to death and threatened to advance.

Separating the once unified territory into two smaller nations made each nation more vulnerable to outside attack. There were, however, a number of other nation-states in the area, and occasionally these states would band together to resist invaders.

## KINGS AND COUNTRIES

When the Assyrians tried to take the city a century later (about 724 BCE), Ahaz, then the king of Judah and Jerusalem, decided not to join the defensive coalition of





small states. He mysteriously ignored the insistent counsel of Isaiah, his high priest and prophet, and voluntarily submitted Jerusalem to Assyrian rule. Ahaz further demonstrated his capitulation to the invaders by defiling the Temple of Solomon, placing symbols of the Assyrian cults on the Temple altar even though Assyria had no tradition of inflicting their religious practices even on willing vassals. Still, while Israel and their fellow conspirators were overcome and conquered, Ahaz's kingdom of Judah remained intact.

After Ahaz's death, his son Hezekiah came to power. Hezekiah, ashamed of his father's religious transgressions, worked to reinstate the tenets of Yahweh and removed the idolatrous statuary from the Temple altar. While Jerusalem itself stayed safe, the Assyrian armies quashed rebellions within the fractious northern territories, and deported tens of thousands of Israelites. People from nearby regions moved in to replace the deportees, while some of the conquered Israelites migrated south to Jerusalem. As a result, Jerusalem grew rapidly, tripling its size in the next two decades. The expansion came primarily in two areas, one on the west side of the Temple, the other to the southwest.

The population of Cainites prospered too. Not only did this influx of new residents expand the local herd, but they also brought new ideas with them. New ideas mean new opportunities, and power bases expanded.

Within a decade, however, Jerusalem's Hezekiah was at the center of a coalition (including neighboring Israel to the north) preparing yet another attempt to break away from Assyrian rule. He went so far as to improve the city's water supply by digging a tunnel through bedrock and reinforced city walls — and only then realized that there was no way possible that Jerusalem could stand up to the entire Assyrian army. As the Assyrians and their allies assembled outside of the city, Hezekiah sent gifts out to them in a feeble attempt to appease the Assyrian rage at his defiance. The Assyrians weren't impressed, and got ready to attack.

With the growing threat of extermination, the first coalition of Cainites within Jerusalem put aside their differences and convened under the leadership of a Ventrue swordmaker. With the stealth and knowledge of the ancient Nosferatu, they gathered their forces and prepared to decimate the overconfident Assyrians camped outside the walls. The prophet Isaiah (who'd been so thoroughly ignored by Hezekiah's father) had been predicting all along that Yahweh would protect his fortress this time — if Jerusalem relied on Yahweh instead of military might or political intrigue. And Yahweh did protect the city: he sent an angel to destroy the Assyrian army. The angel was so successful that the few surviving Assyrians went home.

## JERUSALEM BY NIGHT

### AN ANGEL OF DEATH

The "angel" Yahweh sent wasn't angelic at all. The threat to the still-unstable local power base was greater than any inter-Cainite rivalry could ever be. A coalition of Caine's brood decided that the threat outside of the city walls could not be tolerated. Leaving the city, they methodically annihilated Assyrian troops, leaving behind bloody carnage where once there had been a proud army. The few Assyrian soldiers left alive to tell the tale of Yahweh's powerful defense of the city tended to be those who had been sitting closest to the campfires that night, but all witnesses on both sides of the conflict attributed the slaughter to Yahweh and not Cainites. Tales told of that bloody night gave future attackers cause to ponder the wisdom of their plans.

Of course, there is a school of thought among the more devout Nosferatu that they acted as the agents of the Lord that night, and not of their own volition. Other Cainites denigrate this viewpoint as superstitious claptrap, but the beauty of such a hypothesis is that it can never be disproved....

Hezekiah was a hero for the moment, but the long-term effects were hazardous: rather than attempt to defend themselves against future invaders, Jerusalem's residents came to believe that they could rely on miraculous intervention. Hezekiah had succeeded in "saving" Jerusalem, but he had also lost most of his influence over the territory surrounding the city. Jerusalem was no longer the capital city of Judah; it was relegated to existence as yet another city-state perched precariously on a back road.

Hezekiah's son, Manasseh, was 12 when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for 55 years. Annoyed by his reduced status as the ruler of a mere city instead of a great nation, he turned away from his father's traditions and instead began to explore the Antagonist tradition of Baal. He built shrines and erected altars to Baal and, just to be safe, any other deities and demons he discovered. Manasseh practiced soothsaying and divination, and consorted with demons and spirits. He made an image of the goddess Asherah, and set it up in the Temple of Yahweh.

As Baal demanded blood sacrifices for the bonding contracts of diabolism, the now influential Baali priests chose to purge the city of rival Cainites, and those unseen avengers of Yahweh that did not flee or go into hiding (such as the reclusive Nosferatu) were hunted and destroyed. Manasseh's attempts to sum-



mon demons were so excessive that the innocent blood he shed filled Jerusalem's streets from one end of the city to the other. It is possible that Manasseh thought the breadth and intensity of this religious worship might appease the Assyrians, but apparently he wasn't sufficiently competent. Yahweh, however, was extremely displeased and announced that he would wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a plate and then turns it upside down to dry.

## BANISHED TO BABYLON

In 605 BCE, Babylon, led by King Nebuchadnezzar, defeated both Egypt and Assyria, and Judah and Jerusalem became vassal states along with everyone else in the region. Jerusalem's Jehoiakim tried switching allegiances from Babylon back to Egypt, with disastrous results. Jehoiakim thought that Yahweh would come through with another miracle on demand if the people kept chanting "This is the Temple of Yahweh!" Unfortunately the surviving Cainites were not inclined to sacrifice themselves for the king again, and Jehoiakim hadn't timed his request for a miracle as well as Hezekiah had. No avenging "angels" appeared to demolish the Babylonians.

Jehoiakim died conveniently before he could see the outcome of this defiance, and left his son, Jehoiachin, to face the outraged Babylonian army. Jerusalem managed to hold out for three entire months, then capitulated in 597 BCE. Rather than destroy the city, Nebuchadnezzar gathered some treasure and then decided that military personnel, those who were in the trade of making arms, and those in the city administration (a total of about 10,000 people) should all be taken captive and shipped off to Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar left Jehoiachin's uncle, Zedekiah, on the throne of Jerusalem, and, about eight years later, he tried his own rebellion. By this point, Nebuchadnezzar had run out of patience. Jerusalem was put under siege and, after 18 months, the wall was breached. Nebuchadnezzar decided to destroy the city entirely, lest the locals rally and take up arms yet again. The conquering army burned the city to the ground and most of the remaining citizens were deported to Babylon. As an historical sidenote, it was at this point that the Ark of the Covenant disappeared without note and without a trace.

Jerusalem was empty in 586 BCE. The city walls had been pulled down, while the ground was covered with rubble and pieces of charred bodies. The Temple had been razed to the ground. The fields on the hills outside of the city were burned and sere, while surrounding villages had been abandoned. Those Cainites who had not fled at the outset of the siege were forced to take sheltering haven in nearby caves.

## REBUILDING THE CITY

Slowly, slowly, people tricked back into the area. Then, through a series of brilliant political moves and decisive military victories, Cyrus, the king of Persia, entered Babylon. He decreed that the Temple of Jerusalem should be rebuilt and its glory restored. As a result, in 538 BCE, 42,360 citizens, 7,337 slaves, 200 temple singers, 736 horses, 245 mules, 435 camels and 6,720 donkeys left Babylon to return to Jerusalem. The number of vampires included is unknown, though several Ravnos surely joined the returning exiles on their trek.

Unfortunately, conditions in and around Jerusalem didn't provide the returning Hebrews with a terribly optimistic or joyful return. The region was still virtually uninhabited, so after initial sacrifices and prayer offerings, the next order of business was to get on with the practical aspects of survival. There was, of course, exultation at being back in Jerusalem. Still, there wasn't much to Jerusalem at that point, and most of the returnees lived outside of the city, in the regions to the south. Establishing crops, building homes, and figuring out trade agreements with neighboring villages became the priority. The land, however, was still devastated from Nebuchadnezzar's retaliation. Crops were thin, there was little game and survival continued to be precarious.

The charge from King Cyrus, however, had been to rebuild the Temple. Early in 520 BCE, the returnees gathered to build a new altar on the site of the old one. They performed the appropriate rituals, prayers and sacrifices on the new altar... and then the rebuilding project stalled again. People went back to their fields, still trying to nurture meager crops from the unenthusiastic soil. There just wasn't the spare time or energy to put into a community building project yet.

August, however, brought a new voice. Haggai, one of the prophets who seem to arise whenever Jerusalem seems directionless, pointed out that folks had things backward. Of course the crops were bad and life was hard. Unless and until the Temple was finished, things would remain the same. First Yahweh needed to have a Temple, then Yahweh would bring sustenance back to the land. Jerusalem's residents had their priorities reversed: Yahweh's house of worship should be built first. Only after that should people worry about their own homes.

The foundations for the Second Temple were in place only months later. As the Temple went up, however, there was concern among people old enough to remember the first pre-exilic Temple. How could this new, poorly financed effort come anywhere close to the glories of its predecessor?



Nonetheless, the returnees guarded their Temple and its construction closely. They were approached by representatives of the local population (not everyone was exiled to Babylon, after all) who offered their help. They, too, worshipped Yahweh, and were every bit as enthusiastic about the reconstruction of the Temple. Moreover, they'd been stuck in Judea on impoverished land, keeping the faith alive locally whilst their apparently more fortunate neighbors had been off having adventures in Babylon.

The returnees bore the charges and goodwill of Cyrus of Persia, and they had been well treated at the hands of the Babylonians. They were organized, confrontational and confident, and they did not greet the locals as fellow residents and co-worshippers. Instead they informed the undisciplined locals that they could not help with the Temple's reconstruction. Furthermore, the local faith had undoubtedly been tarnished by their separation from the larger body of worshippers in Babylon — they could not enter or worship at the Temple once it was restored to its former glory. In hindsight, excluding the local people — people with whom the returnees would be living — may not have been wise. According to Haggai's vision, Jerusalem was to have been an open city. Haggai went so far as to suggest that the city walls be left unrepaired so that people could enter and leave at will.

Besides, the city was still mostly in ruins. What harm could there have been in allowing the locals to have a hand in the Temple reconstruction? The locals retaliated against the high-handed arrogance of the newcomers, throwing stones at both priests and farmers as they worked. The returnees seriously feared that the locals might attack.

News of the local unrest was carried back to Babylon; the reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon was in jeopardy. Just before 444 BCE, the cupbearer to the king of Babylon, who happened to be a Jew named Nehemiah, asked permission to go to Jerusalem to help rebuild the city walls. Permission was granted, and Nehemiah set out with a very small retinue, which included Abraham, a Cappadocian Cainite. Nehemiah got into the city without announcing his presence or being noticed, and for three days and nights, Nehemiah wandered around the unofficial site of Jerusalem.

It had been almost 100 years since King Cyrus had provided funding and permission for the Yahweh cult to return to Jerusalem. After a century of return to their city, much of it still consisted of piles of rubble. The fortifications were non-existent, the marketplace was a shambles and Temple artisans lived in hovels. The Temple priests had set up camp among the ruins of the old fortress, hoping that it

would provide some protection against the raids of the still-rejected local population.

Once Nehemiah announced himself to the priests and expressed the Babylonian king's disappointment with their progress, the priests were embarrassed into putting a massive effort into finally fortifying the city. In 52 days, with everyone (including the priests) working together, the walls were rebuilt — even though the workers wore their swords for protection from the locals while they laid the stones. The new walls were dedicated in 444 BCE.

Jerusalem still wasn't much of a city, though. No one was interested in moving inside the walls to rehabilitate the pile of rubble. The task of restoring Jerusalem itself seemed overwhelming — there remained nearly everything to rebuild, on top of the constant fear of attack from the locals. Why would anyone bother moving from a (relatively) comfortable village or farm to take up residence in a half-built city with fractious neighbors?

Nehemiah believed that a city dedicated to the worship of Yahweh ought to have a populace. He organized a regional "lottery," where every tenth man "won" and was required to move to the city. While he did manage to enforce this lottery as a religious duty, it seems safe to assume that the "winners" and their families were somewhat less than delighted with this honor.

Still, Nehemiah obviously wielded a considerable amount of power as the governor of the region. Not only could he make his "lottery" notion stick, but he then forced the local nobles to stop charging interest — a move that was quite popular with the poorer folks, but also undoubtedly antagonized the upper classes. Nehemiah then took the radical step of forbidding marriages between followers of Yahweh and non-believers. Those who did not comply — even to the point of renouncing long-established marriages — were expelled from the city. Former spouses that followed a deity other than Yahweh were cast out, and became members of the rebellious communities outside the city walls. All of these actions may have helped create a sacred city and a sense of unity, but it certainly could not have aided in the possibility of ever having a harmonious relationship with neighboring communities. Cainites also found themselves on opposite sides of the city walls, with vampire pitted against vampire, and feeding privileges divided by caveat rather than consensus.

By 400 BCE, Jerusalem was finally beginning to look something like a religious center again, with a viable — though shaky — economy and a slowly growing population.

## JERUSALEM BY NIGHT



## ANTIOCHIA IN JUDEA

In spite of the fact that he never set foot in the city, Alexander the Great had a profound effect on Jerusalem. As emperor, he had a series of dreams that told him to allow Jerusalem (and by extension all Jews, regardless of where they lived), to be governed by their own laws. This special exemption for an apparently insignificant religious cult was to have repercussions for centuries to come.

When Alexander died in 323 BCE, distant Judea and Israel suffered under competing expansion efforts by the Mesopotamians and the Egyptians. These waves of half-hearted military conquest by familiar antagonists dismayed the populace of Jerusalem, Cainite and kine alike, though the traditional laws granted by Alexander were always maintained. Over time, a more civilized influence pervaded the city from the west, and the Greeks gained titular ownership of the eastern Mediterranean.

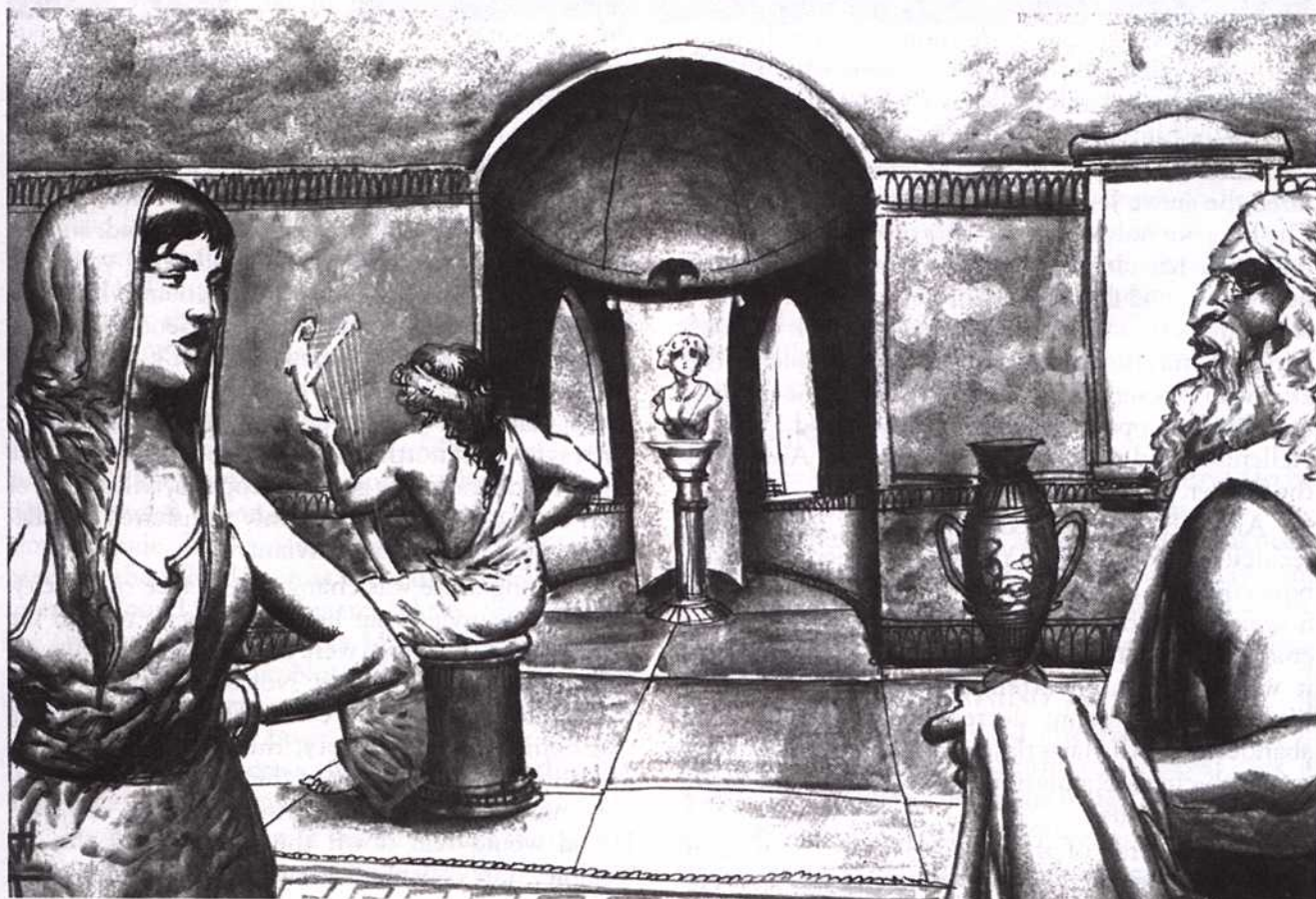
As the Toreador and Ventrué clans expanded, the Grecian influence began to gradually spread throughout the Middle East. Rather than the closed-in, insular, traditional Jewish worldview, the Greek philosophy seemed to encourage the validity of other ideas, other ways of doing things. People began to rethink what was

“proper” behavior, what was “beautiful,” and what was the “right” way of perceiving the world. Tolerance and intellectual enlightenment were preached along with servitude and prayer.

Jerusalem didn't have to be coerced into the Hellenistic tradition; rather, the residents of the city welcomed the new ways of thinking and the civilized indulgences that accompanied them. Gods began to have shrines in

### CONSEQUENCES

Antiochus's defilement of the Temple brought about, for the first time, an apocalyptic edge to Jewish doctrine. Yahweh had, on various occasions, warned his followers that he'd wipe them out if they disobeyed him. After the latest indignity inflicted upon them, however, there arose a sense that Jews were going to face multiple earthly trials regardless. If, however, the Jews obeyed Yahweh in spite of the persecutions, they would eventually be saved from whatever tribulations might occur. The world might subject the Jews to fire, famine, floods, cruel overlords, plague and persecution — but if they continued to obey Yahweh, the Jewish people would survive.





town, and children were given Greek names. A movement to build a gymnasium where men could study Greek literature — and exercise nude in Greek fashion — gathered support even among the more moderate Jews. Moreover, it was felt that developing a more “Greek” flavor in the city might well help improve trade, the economy, and the power of the city.

Antiochus IV ascended the throne in 175 BCE; as king of Judea, he owed a substantial annual tribute to the Romans. A couple of citizens who wanted the post of high priest got into a bidding war, and Antiochus was only too happy to accept the first’s money, name him high priest... and then when the second contender offered more money, deport (and cause to be murdered) the first, thus allowing Antiochus to name a new high priest and keep both bribes.

Antiochus filled his treasury by treacheries such as this. When the Roman tribute caravans rode through, Antiochus had some extra money floating around. He decided to pay some extra tribute so that he could rename the city, and in honor of the regional overlords and king, he named Jerusalem “Antiochia in Judea.”

Antiochus also possessed a suspicious streak, and reports led him to suspect that an exiled priest’s attempt to regain his religious position was really an attempt at open rebellion. (One supposes that the army the rejected priest had gathered may have been a factor in Antiochus’s opinion.) In retaliation, Antiochus raided the Temple’s treasures in 169 BCE, then tore down the city walls so he could build a fortress for himself and his troops out of the stones.

Antiochus then performed another act that galvanized the entire Jewish populace into open rebellion. The king not only sacrificed a pig on the Temple altar (which he had already quietly dedicated to Zeus), but he erected an idolatrous standing stone in the Temple courtyard. This was no act of tolerant Greek wisdom, but the betrayal of faith and the holy Temple by the king who was supposed to guard both. In the ensuing months, Jews openly rejected the ideas and ideals of Hellenism, and tensions mounted around Antiochus the Defiler.

Antiochus, in his continued rage against the recalcitrant followers of Yahweh, decreed that baby boys could no longer be circumcised. Circumcision, however, was the physical manifestation of the Covenant between Yahweh and the Jews, and forbidding it was in effect an attempt to sunder the faith. Moreover, Antiochus decreed that Jews were to abandon all of the laws that separated them from the rest of the local population. “One people, one law,” Antiochus decided.

In the words of the original texts, “This evil onslaught bore hard on the people and was a severe  
**JERUSALEM BY NIGHT**

trial, for the Gentiles filled the temple with licentious revelry; they took their pleasure with prostitutes and had intercourse with women in the sacred places.... No one was allowed to observe the Sabbath or to keep the traditional festivals or even to admit to being a Jew at all.”

Unsurprisingly, this did not sit well with Antiochus’ subjects.

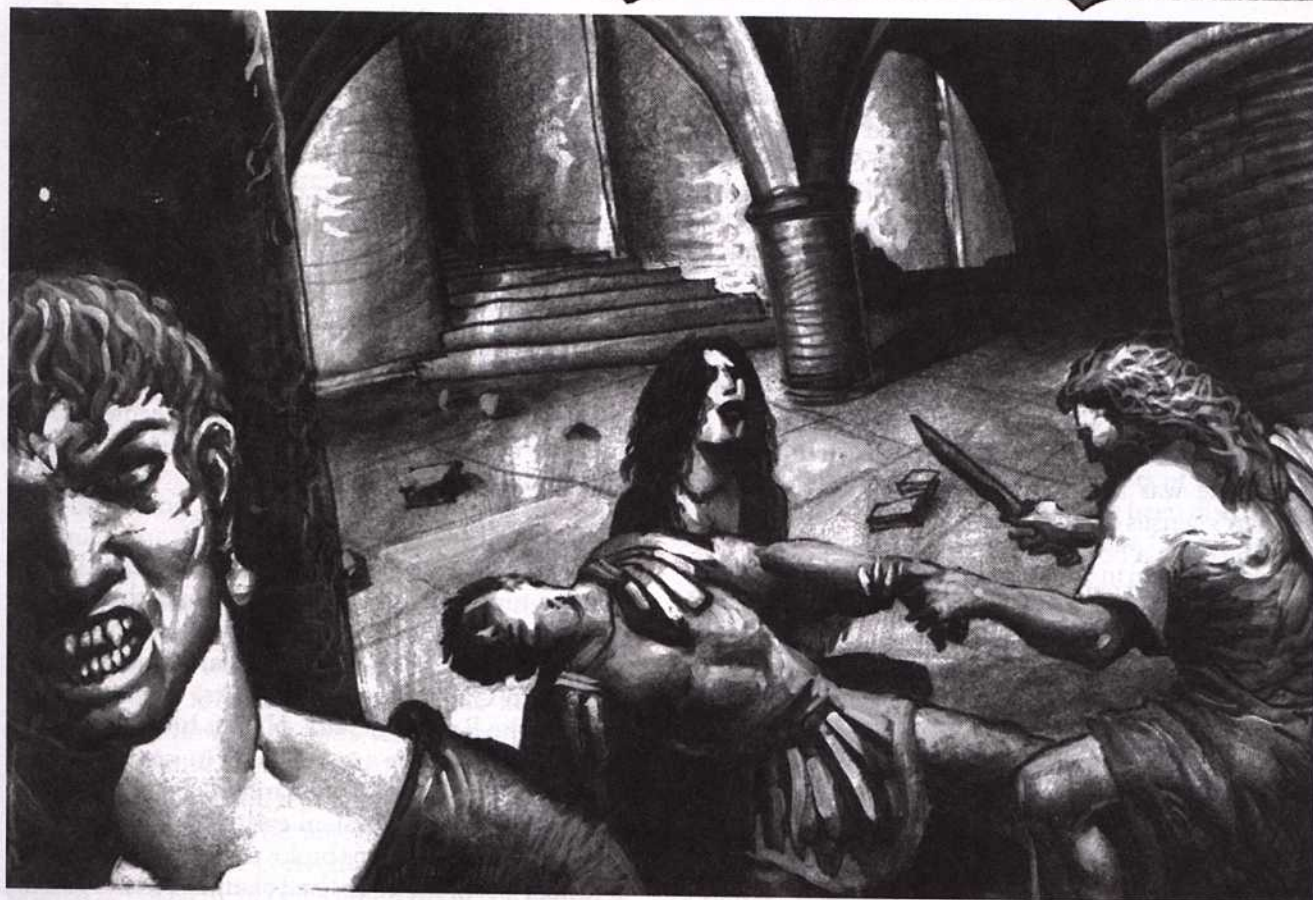
In 166 BCE, Judah, who bore the nickname “Maccabeus,” or “Hammer-headed,” organized his first attacks on the Greeks. Originating as just guerrilla attacks, the rebellion was also aided by early Assamites, who were angered over the intrusion of decadent Western Europeans into the holy lands. The raids were sufficiently persistent and effective that Antiochus rescinded his anti-circumcision decree two years later. By then it was too late to halt the avalanche, however. The Maccabees managed to defeat the Greeks in 165 BCE. Only then did Maccabeus and his followers enter the Temple to begin the long process of cleansing it from the defiling idols.

The Maccabees won the city from the Greeks by force, but they were not organized and strong enough to maintain rule against outside armies. The local city-states struggled between themselves, then fell to Roman garrisons over the following years. Refugees from the Punic Wars, particularly Brujah, may have arrived in the region at this time. Regional politics were in a state of transition yet again, and Judea (of which, technically, Jerusalem was still a part) and the rest of Palestine joined the Roman Empire in 63 BCE.

Being a part of the Roman Empire did not mean that the political climate was without turmoil, however. In 44 BCE, Julius Caesar was murdered, and the ruler of Judea was murdered the following year. The murdered Judean ruler’s son — a man named Herod — bribed Mark Antony and the Roman Senate into confirming him as king of Judea in 37 BCE. For several years, Herod continued to bribe Antony, adding the occasional bit of obvious flattery, such as naming the fortress he built north of the Temple “Antonia.” Once Antony and the Setite ghouls, Cleopatra, fell from favor with their gods, Herod smoothly transferred his allegiance (and bribes) to Octavian.

As long as he was changing the face of the city, Herod announced that he was going to rebuild the Temple. City residents were more than a little skeptical; they were incredulous. Not only did they doubt that Herod could restore the Temple to anything resembling its former glory, they doubted that he’d actually finish the project in the end. It was considerably more likely, ran the consensus of the city, that Herod would tear down the remnants of the old Temple, start construction on the new building, and





then die, get bored, run out of money, go off to wage war or in some other fashion leave the city without a Temple at all.

Unpopular though he was, Herod responded to the residents' concerns by assembling and paying for all of the building materials before hiring the work crews to remove the old foundations. He then trained a thousand Temple priests to be carpenters and masons, so that the Temple would be raised using the most sanctified methods possible. And so Temple reconstruction got under way yet again. The new Temple platform was huge, covering about 35 acres. A labyrinth of supporting structures and buttresses were built under the platform foundations where construction extended beyond the actual terraces of the mountainside. Malkavians who had been living in caves on the hillside across the valley from the city promptly found that the buttressed catacombs under the southeast end of Temple Mount were considerably more comfortable. Not only did the twists and turns of the catacombs provide better protection from sunlight than had the caves, but being under Temple Mount, instead of across the valley, made the city more accessible to their predations.

Herod's resurrection of the city didn't stop there. He also built a theater and a hippodrome in the city,

even though those kinds of entertainments were not common to the region. All of this building certainly benefited Jerusalem; the city grew to about 120,000 residents during Herod's rule.

By 10 BCE, however, Herod began to be concerned — with considerable justification, as it turned out — about whom his successor might be. When he died in four BCE, the Romans appointed his son, Archelas, as ethnarch instead of king of Judea. Archelas was told he might be appointed king someday, if he proved himself worthy.

### THE KING OF THE JEWS

Archelas was not worthy; he rapidly proved to be a cruel, vicious and greedy ruler. He was also arrogantly careless in devising his accounting practices, and misjudged the amount of tax he could safely skim before forwarding the remainder to Rome. In 6 CE, the

#### CONCERNING JESUS

"Jesus" is an awkward attempt to turn the Semitic name "Joshua" into a more palatable Greek moniker. As for the rest of the matter, we make no judgements one way or the other.



local governor sent troops to Judea to sell off some of Archelas's properties to repay tributes owed, and to conduct a census to see how many people actually lived in the region. This was intended to be a kind of audit, to see how much tax money was collected, then compare that with how many taxpayers Archelas said there were. This tax-reconciliation audit begins the story of the second of the three monotheistic religions that drive current Jerusalem.

Because the terms of the audit stipulated that everyone had to return to their ancestral home in order to be properly tallied, a carpenter named Joseph departed Nazareth and traveled back to Bethlehem, taking his pregnant wife with him. It was while she was in Bethlehem at the behest of the Roman's census of Archelas that Joseph's wife, Mary, gave birth to a boy child.

For the most part, the Romans tried not to interfere too much with the local religions, but there were some notable exceptions. In 26 CE, a newly arrived procurator—one Pontius Pilate—sent his troops into Jerusalem carrying huge pictures of Caesar. These were mounted in such a way that they infringed on the residents' view of the Temple. Normally there were so many political and religious sects within the population that it was difficult to garner agreement on which direction was north. However, any threat to the Temple prompted a unified front of resistance. The standards bearing Caesar's likeness were removed when the Jews bared their necks to soldiers' swords, rather than tolerate the defilement of the Temple.

About four years later, a prophet from Galilee named Joshua arrived in Jerusalem on a religious pilgrimage. Dismayed that the vendors of sacrificial animals and changers of foreign money were operating within the Temple compound instead of outside, Joshua physically threw them out. This vandalism was viewed as a potential physical threat to the other religious pilgrims in town for Passover, as well as a potential threat to the sanctity of the Temple. The local population responded just as they had when the threat to the Temple had come from Pontius Pilate: They protested the defilement of the Temple, and Joshua was arrested.

After political discourse over whether this was a religious or civil crime, Pontius Pilate ceded authority on the matter to the religious authorities. One pilgrim's outrage meant little to the procurator when compared to the possible uprising that might result from the disruption of the Passover rituals. Taunted by the Romans for being the "King of the Jews," Joshua (peace be upon him) was crucified, and, because the Sabbath was rapidly approaching, his body was temporarily placed into a cave. Ravnos

tales have been passed through the generations that a young Charlatan stole a nail from Joshua's Cross. As a result, the Ravnos thief and his Clan were granted freedom from one of the Ten Commandments: "Thou shalt not steal."

When Joshua was seen on the city's streets three days later, word traveled among the spiritual believers, and his following grew rapidly. After Joshua reportedly ascended into heaven, most of his disciples left the city, leaving only a few to proselytize the locals. (The Malkavians still claim that this was one of their best pranks ever. The entire "resurrection" incident was just a clever and successful grave robbery. Needless to say, there are millions upon millions of souls who disagree with this interpretation.)

## THE TEMPLE DESTROYED

Jerusalem (and surrounding Judea) went through another rapid succession of rulers, and the Jews fomented the occasional rebellion against the Roman regime as well. In 70 CE Vespasian, who had been fighting in Galilee for several years, was named emperor by the Roman Senate. He left his son, Titus, in charge of the Galilee armies, and Titus proved to be a particularly effective commander. Titus began his campaign against Jerusalem early in the year, and by May of 70 CE, his troops broke through the city walls. Within a week, his troops had claimed territory all the way to the markets built by Herod. By July, they had the Temple surrounded, and on August 8th, Titus's army controlled the Temple itself.

With control of the city in his hands, Titus kept his armies in Jerusalem for another month and ordered them to level the rebellious city. He spared only a portion of the city's west wall to provide shelter for his troops. A dispassionate Roman soldier named Marcus joined in the destruction of the Temple and the crucifixion of rebellious Jews; he was Embraced by Theophiles of the Cappadocians before the Romans departed the city a month later.

A single month was not sufficient even for an army to completely level a city as large as Jerusalem, and an outline of foundations remained. The Temple, however, was utterly destroyed — ransacked, burned and then torn apart. Only a few survivors stayed in the city, devoted to rebuilding once again.

### PATRIARCHS

The patriarchs, or bishops, were the religious leaders of the centers of the Christ cult. Originally they were situated in Rome, Jerusalem (or Aelia), Antioch and Alexandria. Eventually Constantinople was allowed to have its own patriarch.



Jerusalem, by this point, had been through any number of names, rulers, political manipulations, and religious variations. Every time the city had been left in ruins, it had eventually been rebuilt, and the destruction by Titus was no exception. This time, however, there was no great leader and no influx of riches, and the Temple was not reconstructed to greater glory. There has been no Temple to Yahweh on Temple Mount since the year 70 CE, when Titus destroyed it, and there remains none to this day, more than 11 centuries later. There is a bright note: as devastating as the loss of the Temple was, the Jewish people have survived, just as Yahweh promised.

## AELIA CAPITOLINA

Continuing in their struggles to escape from Roman rule, the Jews tried to organize another revolt against it in 132 CE. That uprising was rapidly squashed, and the Romans decided to start rebuilding the city of Jerusalem themselves. This time, however, they would name the city "Aelia Capitolina" for the emperor at that time, and for the city's new deific benefactor: Jupiter Capitolinus. The Jews remaining in the city were expelled and not allowed to return.

The politics of the region began to change when Emperor Constantine became interested in the Christian cause. When he convened the patriarchs of the Church in Nicea in 325 CE (reputedly at the behest of the Ventrue), special provision was made to include the patriarch of the city still known as Aelia. This was, however, a courtesy to the historical importance of that city, not in honor of the city's economic or logistic importance at that time. Aelia, formerly Jerusalem, looked pretty much as it had looked two centuries earlier: dated, far from commercial routes, and of neither political nor commercial importance. There was some trade in religious tourism, but not much else to commend it.

Constantine ordered that the churches of Jerusalem be rebuilt at his expense. Determined to rebuild the city as a Christian one, he decided that Jews would only be allowed inside the gates on one day of the year, so that they could mourn the destruction of the Temple. Of particular concern to Constantine was that the cave tomb in which Joshua's body had rested be found and uncovered. From local history and the stories told (it had been less than 300 years, after all, in an age when oral tradition was considerably more reliable than anything written), the location of his tomb was known and easily identified. The site was, in fact, under the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. The first church built with Constantine's money rose on that site: the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Constantine's mother, Helena Augusta, was entrusted with the responsibility of making a grand tour through the region, complete with huge entourage, to demonstrate the benevolence of her son's reign. She commissioned churches to be built wherever a site that might be holy to the Christians could be found. However, one piece of "common knowledge" about Helena's progress through the Holy Land is difficult to confirm. The chronicler who accompanied her doesn't seem to mention anything about her having found the True Cross. Nor, for that matter, does he indicate that Helena was particularly driven to find this relic. Nonetheless, by 390 CE the True Cross had supposedly been identified, with credit for the discovery given to Helena. Slivers of wood purported to be from the True Cross have been distributed across the Christian world. The True Cross and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher continued to be important to Jerusalem's history and, indeed, were pivotal factors in more recent events.

Christian pilgrimages continued, in spite of the difficulties of travel. Etheria of Clan Brujah was Embroaced on pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the year 395 CE. Presumably her journey had at its root rumors of Helena's finds and the heightened publicity of pilgrimages to the eastern Holy Lands.

The turn of the century saw more unrest within the Church. The Nestorians split off, and a chasm began to grow between Christians who were anti-Jew and Christians who remembered that Joshua (peace be upon him) was Jewish. In 438 CE, there was rumor that Jews would be allowed to return to Jerusalem, but when they entered the city, rocks fell on them. It is difficult to tell whether this was one of Jerusalem's periodic earthquakes, or if inimical Christians arranged an ambush.

That same year a woman who'd been visiting Jerusalem had a falling-out with her husband, Theodosius, who just happened to be emperor. Eudocia returned to Jerusalem in 444 CE, building a hospice for pilgrims and a home for the Patriarch of Jerusalem. She extended the city walls to enclose the areas thriving to the south, and financed the enlargement of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. This rebuilding of the city was supported by the Toreador Elsh, who'd been in the region since the days of the first Temple of Solomon, and attracted Italian and Byzantine Cainites fleeing the fall of Rome.

### Surah 2:193

*Fight them till sedition comes to end,  
and the law of God prevails.  
If they desist, then cease to be hostile,  
except against those who oppress.*



## PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

Qur'anic law teaches that all "People of the Book" must be honored. This puts Jews and Christians in a special position in terms of religious freedom. While non-believers are encouraged to convert to Islam, Jews and Christians are considered exempt; they are already "of the Book." Islam explicitly acknowledges that its roots are firmly entwined with Judaism and Christianity. The Qur'an expresses Allah's puzzlement why Christians and Jews don't see the necessity of Islam, but that's the extent of the Qur'anic commentary on the matter. Yahweh, God, or Allah; in the Muslim view all three religions worship the same deity, regardless of the name invoked. All three learn from the same texts. Jews and Christians are welcome in al-Quds.

*Surah 3:64 Tell them: "O people of the Book, let us come to an agreement on that which is common between us, that we worship no one but God, and make none his compeer, and that none of us take any others for lord apart from God."*

*If they turn away, you tell them:*

*"Bear witness that we submit to Him."*

With changes in the politics of the region and the growing threat of Persian expansion in the early seventh century, Abraham of the Cappadocians departed Jerusalem. Persia had taken huge swaths of territory from the Byzantines, and though the Persians at first intended to peacefully subjugate the Christians and Jews, they decided to take Jerusalem by military force when physical altercations made it clear that these two groups could not coexist peacefully under Persian rule. Etheria of Brujah also departed, bound for Bethlehem, when Persian armies readied to lay siege to the city.

After 40 days of siege, the Persians took Jerusalem. Christian prisoners who were likely to be useful, including the Patriarch of Jerusalem (who carried the True Cross), were taken to the Persian capital city. The Jews

## CALIPHS

"Caliph," which means "successor" or "deputy," is the title given to a Muslim religious, military or political leader. There is an underlying sense that leaders thus titled are specifically chosen by Allah for their clear vision and wisdom.



## JERUSALEM BY NIGHT



### TALES OF JERUSALEM: THE NIGHT JOURNEY

One night in 620 CE, the archangel Gabriel brought Muhammad (peace be upon him) to Jerusalem, flying through the night on Burag, a winged horse. When they reached the city, they landed on Temple Mount. There they were met by a large crowd of prophets, Muhammad's predecessors, including Adam, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, John the Baptist and others. Muhammad and Gabriel climbed a ladder that extended from a rock on Temple Mount, through the seven heavens, to the Throne of Allah, where Muhammad received the final revelation, which so far surpassed human understanding that Muhammad was incapable of putting it into mere words. At the end of the Night Journey, Gabriel returned Muhammad to Mecca.

were left to rule Jerusalem for the first time in centuries. They resumed their traditional worship in their traditional places, and made sacrifices on (as best as they could tell) the site of the old Temple altar.

For reasons still unknown, the Persians changed their mind. Less than three years after allowing the Jews into Jerusalem, they expelled the Jews yet again, and retook the city to rule, themselves.

### AL-QUDS

Things were about to change quickly, however. By 634 CE, the Muslims would be camped around Bethlehem, with their gaze firmly set on Jerusalem.

It has been suggested that Etheria of the Brujah may have been a significant influence in this Muslim path of conquest, opening Bethlehem and its resources for Jerusalem's conquest. After all, the current regime offered few opportunities for Cainites (particularly ones with overtly Christian agendas, like Etheria), while certain tendencies in the Muslim conquests suggested that a change of rulership might benefit Cainite interests. While there is no proof for this theory (and indeed, Etheria herself has the antipathy of many of the city's Muslim vampires), there are a few tantalizing hints that Etheria was at least indirectly involved in turning the Muslim advance toward the city.

The Muslims took Jerusalem in 635 CE, apparently with little or no bloodshed (or supernatural assistance) whatsoever. The city may have asked for the same terms of surrender that had been granted Damascus: that the residents be guaranteed continued possession of their lives, goods, domiciles and churches (which would be

### THE LIZARD

There was one notable exception to these centuries of peace: al-Hakim. Succeeding his father as Caliph of Cairo, al-Hakim, nicknamed "The Lizard," became a vicious persecutor of Jews and Christians, particularly those in Jerusalem. In 1009, he ordered troops to demolish the city's churches and synagogues. He especially targeted the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Al-Hakim demanded that the actual rocks of the tomb be demolished and the ground leveled.

In a move that directly contradicted the teachings of the Qur'an, al-Hakim next decided that Jews and Christians, who are protected from conversion under Islamic law, must convert to Islam. Christians who refused were forced to wear a heavy cross around their necks; Jews who refused wore large blocks of wood.

Then al-Hakim turned on his fellow Muslims. He declared that he was the new incarnation of Allah, and had returned to earth to bring revelation to his followers. He ordered that his name be substituted for Allah's name in the daily prayers. Muslims rioted rather than comply. That his own people would turn against his decrees enraged al-Hakim even further. In retaliation, al-Hakim lifted the restrictions against Jews and Christians in 1017, and Jewish and Christian property was restored.

The restrictions against Muslims, however, were broadened. Muslims were forbidden to observe Ramadan. Neither were they allowed to go on *hajj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca that each devout Muslim is supposed to perform at least once in their life. This meant that two of the Five Pillars of Islam were forbidden to Muslims under al-Hakim's rule. Those who disobeyed the caliph were tortured. Under al-Hakim's reign of terror anyone — noble or common — could be killed at his whim. It is recorded that a general once happened to come across al-Hakim as he was cutting up a child. The general fled, and barely had time to get his own affairs in order before al-Hakim's executioner arrived to kill the general.

Fortunately, al-Hakim couldn't live forever. In 1021, he rode out of Cairo into the desert, and was never seen again — at least not by mortal eyes.

neither occupied or destroyed) as long as the conquered people did nothing untoward. The terms were granted, and Jerusalem passed into Muslim hands.

The Muslims did change the city's name again, however. Henceforth, the decree ran, the city would be



## FRANJ AND SARACENS

Humans have a remarkable need to name things, including other groups of humans. Rarely, however, does one group get another group's name right. The Muslims came close: The Europeans called themselves Franks, and the Muslims mispronounced it as "Franj." The Christians, however, called the Muslims "Saracens," a word that seems to have been created by fourth century Christians to describe Arab peoples. By the next century, Christian polemicists argued that Arabs called themselves "people of Sarah" to claim lineage through Sarah, Abraham's wife, rather than through Hagar, Abraham's slave. There is no evidence that Muslims (or other Arabs) ever made such a claim, nor that they ever called themselves "Saracen."

known as "Bayt al-Maqdis," or "the Holy House." Within a couple of decades, the name became colloquially shortened to "the Holy," or "al-Quds." It once again became an open city for Jews and Muslims at this point, and Christians were allowed to travel through the territory as fellow "People of the Book."

Muslims certainly were well aware of the sanctity of the city, and of its importance to Judaism. Records show that Jews were welcomed back into the city almost as quickly as the Muslims could open the gates after taking possession. Moreover, the Jews were immediately allowed access to the Temple site, and Caliph Umar had the Temple Mount cleared of rubbish. The Christians had never built on the site, following Joshua's prophecy that no Temple stone would be left on top of another.

Instead, the Christians had turned Temple Mount into a trash heap.

After the mount was cleared, Umar built an unimpressive mosque at one end. Jews were allowed to pray at the one piece of the Temple that remained, which became known as the Wailing Wall, while the mosque was situated opposite, in a spot that would not interfere with the Jewish worship. On a more practical note, the Mount was a flat spot, high enough to be visible to most of the city, and the perfect place for a muezzin's voice to be heard calling the faithful to prayer. Finally, as fellow children of Abraham, Muslims considered the site sacred as well.

Several years later, in 691 CE, the Dome of the Rock was built by Abd al-Malik to commemorate and protect the site from which the Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven. Various improvements were made to all the holy sites of the city over the next several years, with the involvement of the Toreador Elsh and

his temple builders. Charlemagne had also decided that something should be done for the pilgrims who traveled to Jerusalem, and endowed the building of a hospice, church and convent, which became part of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher complex. Monasteries appeared outside of the city, away from the urban sprawl and crowded conditions within.

Oddly enough, the city somehow avoided becoming a battlefield during the next couple of regional uprisings. The Abbasids and Fatimids fought over leadership of the Muslim world, but the differences in theology were minor enough that al-Quds simply remained a growing and thriving city. Jews and Christians, according to records from all sides, did not suffer under Muslim rule, and pilgrims, merchants, and traders continued to travel to and from the city without restriction.

Jews also took advantage of the relative calm to expand their numbers and their holdings within the city. When the Muslims took Jerusalem, the council of Jewish elders, then called a "Yeshiva," moved back to Jerusalem. From this group emerged the religious calendar, ritual liturgies and legal decisions. Over the next several hundred years, Jews again owned shops, built schools and synagogues, and thrived.

Abraham of the Cappadocians embraced Adam, a Jewish scholar, to assist him in the studies of the sacred mysteries sometime near 815 CE. Boniface the Brudah also rose from torpor at this time and returned to Jerusalem. He took personal responsibility for the safety of pilgrims who stayed in the hostels built by Charlemagne's donations, and personally destroyed several of the more indiscriminate feeders among the local Cainite population for daring to threaten his herd.

Meanwhile, back in Europe, Pope Urban II became angered past endurance with all of the petty infighting among the European states. In 1095, he decided that a religious quest might convince some of these barons and kings and dukes to work together instead of constantly being at each other's throats. Of course, this idea required one essential ingredient: a foe against whom Christian Europe would feel compelled to unify. The choice was obvious. With the 11th century drawing to a close, Pope Urban II called for the rescue of Jerusalem from the hands of the infidel Saracens.

## THE ROAD TO CRUSADE

The pope had previously declared that the religious pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem and other holy sites would be free from road tolls and taxes on their way through Europe. Islamic law, however, doesn't necessarily follow European rules. Once they got to Muslim lands, ostentatiously dressed pilgrims, especially those traveling in large groups, were usually given the choice of forfeiting their goods or their lives. Word of these incidents got



How clever of the Brufah and Salubri, to control the shelters in the middle of the city for a constantly changing population of pilgrims... people who might expect to feel a little weak after a long journey to a foreign land. And then to convince the pilgrims to gather in the shelter before night falls — for their own "safety"! Ha!

— Varsik

back to Europe, and provoked a predictable response. Outrage was not limited to the mortal sphere, as Cainites (most notably the Christian Lasombra) took this as evidence that perhaps their interests in the region were worth protecting more vigorously.

#### Deuteronomy 30:15

Today I offer you the choice of life and good, or death and evil.

William of Tyre suggests that the First Crusade was retaliation for the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher ordered by al-Hakim — which had occurred some 90 years before the First Crusade got to Jerusalem. Interestingly, William's account also makes it perfectly obvious that there had been no reduction in the number of pilgrims headed to Jerusalem, in spite of the church's destruction. In fact, the number of pilgrims was constantly increasing (in part due to Boniface's efforts), and it was taking a larger and larger amount of Jerusalem's resources to keep these people sheltered and fed. Jerusalem's rulers finally realized that they had a potential source of income on their hands: religious tourism.

Moreover, it wasn't only the Church of the Holy Sepulcher that had been destroyed by al-Hakim. Hakim the Mad also had a number of other Christian churches, and Jewish synagogues, and even Muslim mosques destroyed. That particular round of destruction, however, may well have been caused by what eyewitness reports called the Descent of Holy Fire, which al-Hakim regarded as blasphemous magic.

The destruction of the Christian churches, in particular the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, did have a significant impact on the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church and on the Lasombra — Paliuro, in particular. The wide-flung churches that had been sponsored by Constantine in his expansion were worldly symbols of the power and order of Roman Catholicism and the

#### John 8:51

In very truth I tell you, if anyone obeys my teaching he will never see death.



CHAPTER ONE: HISTORY OF JERUSALEM



power of the patriarchs, and their destruction could not be tolerated. Financed by Constantine IX Monomachus, reconstruction of the Holy Sepulcher was begun in 1030 and completed by 1048. The Muslim rulers were a bit disturbed by the images of Joshua (peace be upon him) inside, because graphic images are idolatry under Islamic law, but had no real objections to the reconstruction of the church on Christianity's holy site.

William of Tyre offers a few other possible motivations for the Crusades: fear of servitude (from whom?), that non-believers were sitting on the altar of the Temple (difficult to prove), that holy statues were broken (this seems possible considering Islam's prohibition on idolatry, but hardly a reason to trek thousands of miles to lay siege to a walled city), and that the Christian residents of city were ordered to help restore walls and towers of city.

The last excuse seems feasible — considering that *all* residents of the city had helped restore the walls in the last century. Apparently the Christians were assigned to repair a quarter of the city walls. The assignment could not have been disproportionately onerous, since the city's population was more than 25 percent Christian at the time. The local Christians claimed, however,

**Surah 3: 185**

*Every soul will know the taste of death.*

that they were so destitute from taxes that they could only afford to repair one, perhaps two, of the towers. They sent gifts to Constantine IX to apply for relief. (The question of how they could afford gifts suitable for the emperor while not being able to afford to rebuild a wall remains unanswered, though it is a source of amusement to Cainite observers who remember the incident.) Constantine IX, in turn, made the Christians living on Cyprus pay for the materials, then extracted a promise from the Muslim leaders that if the Christians rebuilt their assigned quarter of the wall, only Christians would be allowed to live in that section of the city. In 1063, the Christians finished the walls around what was now the Christian Quarter, and Muslims who'd lived in that area for generation upon generation were forced to move out.

In spite of the grumbling of the resident Christians, Islamic rule was reasonably gracious to the Christian pilgrims. Hospitals were built in the center of the city to house and care for the Christian pilgrims, lest they be found wandering in the streets at night; the safety of the pilgrims within their walls was assured by a pact between Salubri healers and their Brujah allies, though pilgrims remained a prime source of vitae for the city's Cainite population. In addition, the Matimid government began paying a subsidy to the Jewish Yeshiva, which had been destroyed by Hakim the Mad.



JERUSALEM BY NIGHT



In spite of the relatively benign government by the Islamic regime, Pope Urban II called for the recovery of Jerusalem in 1095. There had been no public outcry demanding this action, no one in Jerusalem had asked to be rescued and no one had been persecuting the followers of Joshua. Still, justification had to be found to get the fractious European nobles occupied with something other than bashing on each other and invading each other's territory, and so the armies of the kings of Europe marched. Once they got to Jerusalem, the crusaders mounted a siege against the city.

There was some discord among Muslim princes, who had the will — but not capacity — to defend the city from the fanatics outside of the walls. As the Muslims squandered their preparation time and resources and the crusader armies mounted their siege, Etheria of Bethlehem sent envoys to the city offering refuge to Jerusalem's Cainites. Some left the city and survived the coming onslaught, and still remain indebted to her. To this night, Etheria guards those debts scrupulously.

## CRUSADER VICTORY

The city was taken from the north on the morning of July 15, 1099. The fortifications were breached, and the crusaders flooded into the city. The Christians were brutal in their victory. The city's population, without regard to religious conviction, was put to the sword or the fire; about 70,000 residents were slaughtered in seven days and nights of butchery. According to one report, men rode in blood up to their knees and bridle reins. Disembodied heads were stacked in haphazard piles at the intersections of the city's main streets. Christian, Muslim or Jew — Cainite or kine — if you were found inside the walls when the crusaders stormed

*These two groups of crusaders, both built on the concept of Christian charity, rapidly developed a mutual antipathy that could only tangentially be blamed on Cainite influence. The Hospitallers built a tower on one corner of their hospital compound that turned out to be taller than the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The Knights Templars protested that any building in Jerusalem taller than the Holy Sepulcher dishonored God. The Hospitallers began sabotaging services at the church by ringing their steeple bells as the patriarch began to speak. When the Templars objected to the lack of respect the Hospitallers were showing the patriarch, the Hospitallers retaliated by stomping into the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and letting their arrows fly.*

*The titters of laughter from certain hovels and catacombs at this behavior surely must have been a product of the wind.*

into Jerusalem, you were put to death. The streets, walls, and buildings dripped with blood, and body fragments were strewn about everywhere.

The crusaders had a unique means of claiming occupation of the city. As an individual came across a house he thought he might like, he only had to slay the residents, then mount his shield on the door to claim ownership. The first crusader to enter a house, then, owned it. Whatever could be "owned" — which included most of the structures of the city — was possessed by merely slaughtering the object's rightful owner. In the meantime, Godfrey of Bouillon was set up as king of Jerusalem. He was followed by his brother, Baldwin, when Godfrey died of typhoid in 1100.

The problem was, who would live in the city?

The conquest had destroyed or dispersed the entire population, and few newcomers came to replace them. The city was deep in hostile territory, but according to the crusader rules, any new citizens would have to be Christian.

But the Christians currently in residence wanted to go home to their estates and lands in Europe. Their glorious Crusade had been accomplished, Jerusalem had been wrested from the Muslims, and now it was time to return to wives and lands and familiar political struggles. Even the lowly foot soldiers, who had no particular reason to return to Europe, weren't interested in staying in Jerusalem. There was more wealth to be had in the nearby coastal cities.

Still, after winning the city, the crusaders couldn't just walk away. Some kind of presence — preferably military — had to be maintained. The established Catholic patriarchy of the city was influential but indulgent, and could hardly be expected to hold such an important city as Jerusalem without the power of the sword.

While there was a fairly fast resurgence of the Christian population, one of the problems was the very diversity of that population. All sorts of Christians gradually moved to Jerusalem — Greek Orthodox, Syrians (who were generally conceded to be useless in war), Armenians (in spite of an irreconcilable hatred between them and the Greek Orthodox), Georgians, Jacobites, Nestorians — not to mention the divisions among the Latin peoples: Germans, Spaniards, Gauls, Italians and others. Every sect was, for some thoroughly justifiable reason, jealous and quarrelsome. Political and religious tensions mounted, and that was just during the daylight hours. The tensions of the night were no less complex, and traffic between the religiously divided neighborhoods was difficult for all Cainites, particularly those still clinging to their mortal allegiances of faith or nationality. Such quarrels among the Cainites grew bloody, though as usual it was mortals who suffered; Armenian vampires wrought havoc in Greek Orthodox neighborhoods when they fed, and vice versa.



## DIN

"Din" is a tricky word to translate from Arabic into English. It can be a general term for religion, but can also mean Islam specifically. In different contexts, however, "din" can also mean "divine judgment." "Al-" is a definite pronoun, however, so in this case, Salah was most likely defined as "the Religious."

The crusaders left the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque standing on Temple Mount, although the mosque was heavily damaged. It seems that the crusaders were aware that the buildings couldn't have been parts of Solomon's Temple — and probably weren't of Jewish origin at all — but apparently they thought that al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock had been Christian buildings subverted to Muslim use. Based on this erroneous assumption, the crusaders set about turning the mosque "back" into a church.

The conversion began in about 1114, and the site was formally consecrated to God in 1142. The primary Muslim objection (the church was still a place of worship, after all, and God is Allah is Yahweh), was that the Christians, in their feeble human way, had attempted to render God's image as they decorated the interior. Interestingly, the crusaders left the Islamic dedicatory inscriptions intact — perhaps not realizing that the ornate curved lines were Arabic calligraphic script.

(Much of the preservation of the mosques' interiors can be traced to an uneasy arrangement between Christian and Muslim Lasombra in the city. As the Christians held the upper hand for the moment, they drove a harder bargain than they might have been able to otherwise. However, the threat made by the then-itinerant elder Ibrahim to settle in the city and watch matters himself was enough to extract some concessions.)

This still didn't solve the problem of creating a permanent Christian presence in Jerusalem. One possible solution appealed to those individuals who were still filled with crusader zeal: an organization dedicated to the service of God. As William of Tyre reports, "In that year [1119], certain pious and God-fearing nobles of knightly rank, devoted to the Lord, professed the wish to live perpetually in poverty, chastity, and obedience." King Baldwin II, various nobles, and church officials provided this new organization with holdings of land and other gifts, some limited, some in perpetuity, to provide for their maintenance in the city. Thus began the Order of the Knights Templars. Shortly after their foundation, the Templars also attracted the attention of enterprising Ventrue, and it was not long before the order had been infiltrated.

The organization started so small that there were still only nine members a decade later. It was the

**JERUSALEM BY NIGHT**

Knights Templars that originated the practice of sewing a red cross onto their white habits, a symbol that became known as the "crusader cross." In the beginning, the Knights Templars held to their noble purpose. But their wealth increased, and their numbers increased — and before long, they withdrew their support from the Patriarch of Jerusalem when things got contentious. The Templars became a troublesome lot. Somehow, too, possession of the Dome of the Rock passed into their hands as well. The Christians didn't particular care; the church (or mosque) on Temple Mount wasn't part of the religious pilgrimage tradition yet. In fact, the significance of the Temple Mount was mostly negative: it was the place where Joshua was betrayed. However, the Muslim Lasombra saw the act as a blow against them by their archrivals, and again tensions heightened.

The Templars turned the mosque into a storeroom, and stabled their horses under Temple Mount. Whereas violence has been forbidden on Temple Mount by both the Jews and the Muslims, the crusaders turned the mosque into an arsenal, storing armor and weapons there. This was the last straw, and several of the Islamic Lasombra decided to remove the insult personally. Their Christian counterparts made no move to stop them (but did not assist their efforts), and the result was a bloody battle beneath the Temple Mount. Unfortunately for the Lasombra, the lone Ventrue in residence was able to survive the assault long enough to call for help from his mortal compatriots, and the end result was a bloody slaughter of almost all concerned. Direct Venture influence and the Islamic faction of Lasombra faded from the city simultaneously. The Templars themselves were too strong to uproot, however, and the remaining Lasombra endured their existence gracelessly.

At about the same time, the Hospital of St. John was founded. Like the Knights Templars, the Knights Hospitallers were taken with the idea of holy charity. However, where the Templars became wealthy and militant, the Hospitallers managed to become militant and charitable. While developing a reputation as fierce warriors, they also managed to care for over a thousand Christian pilgrims a year.

## THE TRUE CROSS

The True Cross is said to have been enclosed in a gold casing, and adorned with pearls and jewels. Furthermore, over the centuries it became an object of veneration in and of itself, with people prostrating themselves before it and fainting upon seeing it. Worshipers are reported to have defended it with their lives, prayed to it for comfort and made replicas of it.



Like the Knights Templars, the Hospitallers were more or less exempt from the legal and fiscal jurisdiction of the patriarch. These two military/ monastic orders, the Knights of the Temple and of the Hospital, were authentic crusader inventions, owing their loyalty to the pope, not to any secular king. Their presence was a thorn in the side of Father Paliuro, who viewed his influence over the patriarch as the final arbitration in Christian control of the city.

## THE CAINITE INFLUX

Azif of the Brujah arrived in 1120 and began undermining Christian mortal institutions, intent on corrupting them and toppling the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Hannah, a crippled waif, was Embraced by the Nosferatu Ephraim in approximately 1180. Refugees from Etheria's Bethlehem began returning to Jerusalem after the crusader capture of the city as well; their return was simpler if they were Christian than if they were Jewish or Muslim; the weight of mortal institution leveraged Cainite politics toward the Christian. It was difficult, if not impossible, for Jewish or Muslim Cainites to infiltrate Christian organizations (at least, not without a healthy dose of Obfuscate, and the city's Nosferatu had other concerns); the cultural differences made their efforts obvious and easily thwarted. With astonishing rapidity, Christian Cainites settled into positions behind most of the city's most important mortal institutions.

## NON-CHRISTIANS IN THE CITY

The Jewish presence in the newly opened city was minimal, with an entire post-slaughter population of perhaps 200 individuals. They lived near the Tower of David, reputed to be the strongest structure in the city. Legitimately, they seemed to be a bit tentative about their safety in the city under Christian rule.

The official Muslim perspective was a bit different. Few Muslims bothered to try to remain in the city. They felt that the Franj would soon get bored, miss their families and estates in Europe, and before much longer, would just go away. Jerusalem would return to Muslim hands when the Franj got tired of it; it just wasn't worth spending the lives to mount a military campaign to regain what would be theirs again in a few years.

That attitude began to change, however, as the Christians became more and more arrogant. Muslims and Jews living in or near the city were subjected to a constant barrage of religious slogans, and were often the victims and targets of assaults. They garnered considerable sympathy from the Nosferatu and Gangrel of the city, who had been residents for as long as the Jews. Moreover, the crusaders had absolutely no toleration for any belief system outside of Christianity as the crusaders preached it, and the threat of forced conversion under Paliuro's control loomed large.

In 1169, Nur al-Din wrote of his intention to banish the worshipers of the cross from the al-Aqsa Mosque, and recover Jerusalem. Enough was enough.

It was his nephew, Salah al-Din ibn Ayyub, who finally did it, though.

Salah al-Din (who came to be known as "Saladin" in Western accounts) was actually Kurdish, not Arabic. While he was remarkably cultured and humane, that's not what got him the command of the counter-Crusade. Salah al-Din was a man of firm faith, free from heterodoxy, theological error or heresy. He had little tolerance for any Muslim innovation, although he looked benevolently on the ideas of other religions. He was a traditionalist in his interpretation of Qur'anic law — and that may well have saved many Christian lives. In fact, Salah al-Din intended to go preach to the Franj, once the current dispute was settled.

Salah al-Din gathered his armies and brought them to the Holy Land to meet the crusader forces. The armies met in Hattin in Galilee on July 4, 1187 against the better judgement of many Christian strategists, and the crusader forces were crushed. The Saracens captured the Frank king (Guy of Lusignan), his brother (Godfrey), and several others. Salah al-Din's troops also captured the True Cross, which the crusaders had carried into battle with them. (One is tempted to believe this might have been smart thinking on the crusaders' part. They lugged the True Cross from Jerusalem into battle in Galilee, and now the Muslim troops — who, although victorious, had to be a little tired after the battle — had to lug it back to Jerusalem.)

As the Christians tell the next bit of the story, Salah al-Din's troops rounded up King Guy and the rest of the nobles and sent them off to Damascus. The Knights Templars and Hospitallers were scheduled to be executed. Salah al-Din's troops, however, hoped to ransom the Templars and Hospitallers, and would not release their prisoners. Salah al-Din offered his own troops fifty Egyptian dinars for each Templar and Hospitaller prisoner. He paid for two hundred, and those were immediately decapitated. According to the Christians, the Knights Templars and Hospitallers were the fiercest fighters and the most dangerous opponents, and killing them outright would prevent those particular individuals from ever again raising arms against the Muslim people. Salah al-Din went so far as to send messages throughout the land, stating that any Templars or Hospitallers in custody must be executed immediately. According to the Christian version of the tale, Salah al-Din's orders were carried out.

*Regard the Franj! Behold with what  
obstinacy they fight for their religion, while we, the  
Muslims, show no enthusiasm for waging holy war.  
— Salah al-Din*



From the Muslim side, Salah al-Din justified the few killings that were carried out after the battle as wiping out disbelief. He was attempting to destroy polytheism to reinstate monotheism. One must, after all, cut down the enemy in defense of one's friends! Moreover, only 200 of the most militant warriors were killed. That's an example, not a massacre, and surely had no comparison to the crusader eradication of Jerusalem's residents in 1099. Moreover, the Templars and Hospitallers were soldiers and by necessity and definition might find their lives forfeit, unlike the slaughter of the city's innocent dwellers.

Regardless, the incident became a banner that the supporters of the various orders — living and otherwise — rallied behind in Europe.

Days later, the Muslim army marched back into Jerusalem and took the city with little fuss. One of their first actions was to remove the gilded cross from atop the Dome of the Rock. The Muslims were jubilant at their return to Jerusalem. They had been excluded entirely from the city since the Franks took it in 1099. Unlike the bewilderment of the invading Crusaders (who had taken the city, but had no organized plans beyond the conquest), the Muslims had evicted their enemy and were now returning home.

Crusader prisoners were given the opportunity to purchase their freedom at the ransom of 10 dinar per man, five per woman, and two for each child. If ransom was paid within 40 days of the Muslim conquest of the city, those individuals were free to collect all of their possessions and leave. One leader of the Latin Church left loaded down with money and treasures he'd "collected" from the Dome of the Rock, al-Aqsa Mosque, and even the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. His officers advised Salah al-Din to keep the treasure, but al-Din merely collected the required 10 dinar, and let the man leave. It was a matter of honor, after all, to keep his word about the price of a man's ransom.

Salah al-Din also sent the Frank military prisoners who could not afford ransom off to Tyre. There is a great deal of debate among scholars about why precisely he did this, as essentially he was reinforcing Tyre's armed forces with an infusion of 15,000 troops. Supernatural influence has been suggested more than once as an explanation, though the question of precisely which of the city's Cainites had both motive and access is a thorny one.

Once in possession of the city, the Muslims began restoring religious buildings and areas to their original state. Since no Muslims had lived in the city for almost 90 years, the majority of their religious sites had been Christianized. Now that the Muslims had returned home, the Knights Templars' living quarters were removed from al-Aqsa, and the prayer niche was uncovered. Courtyards were cleared, and all of the idolatrous images and statues were removed from religious places.

## JERUSALEM BY NIGHT

Meanwhile, Salah al-Din began reinforcing the walls surrounding the city. A Toreador, Duyal al-Malatya, arrived somewhere in this time, and began to work with Elsh on various secular and religious projects.

A debate arose — part philosophical, part religious, part military — about what to do with sites that were explicitly Christian. Jewish sites weren't contested: They were Jewish, and, at the invitation of the Muslims, Jews began returning to Jerusalem immediately after the crusaders had been ousted.

The Christian sites, however, were a different matter. By Qur'anic law, a city that has been won by arms may be treated differently than a city that surrenders, as Jerusalem had surrendered when the Muslims first arrived in 638. According to the Qur'an, the Muslims were free to treat crusader properties as they pleased. Considering that the crusaders had slaughtered thousands of Jews and Muslims in their taking of the city and had grabbed as much property as possible in the process, what response to take was a serious question.

It was eventually decided that, rather than treat the crusaders as the crusaders had treated the Muslims, the Muslims would grant the Christians the ownership of the shrines that seemed to be most important to them, including the critical Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Less important shrines were torn down or converted to Muslim uses.

Meanwhile Richard I of England, better known as the Lion-Hearted, continued trying to figure out a way to seize Jerusalem. He suggested a meeting with Salah al-Din to discuss the conditions for the release of the prisoners at Acre. Salah al-Din refused however — not because of any military strategy, but again, because of Muslim law. The Qur'an directs that Muslims only eat together after a conflict has ended. If Richard and Salah met and supped, Salah contended, they would become friends — and it is against Muslim law to wage war upon friends. Once a truce agreement was settled, Salah continued, he would be happy to meet Richard of the Lion's Heart.

There were three issues between Richard the Lion-Hearted and Salah al-Din: Jerusalem, territory and the True Cross.

Richard argued that Jerusalem was non-negotiable. It is the Christian Holy City, a place of worship, and the crusaders would fight to the last man to win it back. Richard also wanted the territory west of Jordan, to provide safe access to Jerusalem. And while the True Cross was only a chunk of wood to the Muslims, Richard pointed out that it is holy and of inestimable value to the Christians.

Salah al-Din countered with the fact that Jerusalem is even more holy to Muslims, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) made his Night Journey to the city, and the entire Muslim community will be reunited there on Judgment Day. Additionally, the territory west of Jordan had belonged to the Muslims for hundreds of years. The



Franj were mere visitors, and their occupation was temporary. About the True Cross, however, Salah conceded that Richard was right. It really didn't matter to the Muslims as it didn't fit into their religious teachings at all. It was, however, a trump, and would only be returned to the Christians in exchange for some concession to Islam.

Richard's counteroffer was odd, but did reflect the European nobles' habit of building dynasty through their women. Richard suggested that his sister marry Salah's brother, and that the new couple could jointly rule the lands. Suspecting that it was a bluff, Salah accepted. Richard, who did not expect to have his bluff called, hastily claimed that his sister had fled, screaming that she would never have anything to do with an infidel.

Al-Din countered with a proposal that was simple and straightforward: Everyone would keep what they currently held, there would be peace for five years, and the Franj would have free access to Jerusalem without paying the *jizya* and without restriction, so long as they entered the city unarmed. Not seeing victory on the horizon (and having a considerable amount to lose, as Phillip of France was becoming more and more of a problem) Richard agreed, and five years ago, in September 1192, a five-year peace treaty was signed.

Since that time, the Christian pilgrimages have continued. And while it was Salah al-Din who wrote into the truce treaty the stipulation that Christian pilgrims could come into city without restriction, he did keep track of who was visiting, and for how long. Salah al-Din prided himself on his beneficence toward the Christians and on his religious tolerance for all People of the Book, and he invited the more interesting and distinguished visitors to

join him for dinner. Interestingly, Richard the Lion-Hearted has never come to Jerusalem; he can not bring himself to visit in peace a city he'd intended to win in war.

Salah al-Din died four years ago (may peace be upon him). One of his sons ruled this region at first, but knowing courtiers whisper that Salah al-Din's brother, al-Adil (the one who almost became Richard the Lion-Hearted's brother-in-law) will end up in command.

Meanwhile, Richard and his nobles mostly stay out near the coast, honoring the truce. The newest incarnation of the city is a growing, changing amalgamation of ideas and influences. After all, Jerusalem had been a thriving Muslim city before the Christians invaded, so the populace has no interest in trying to create a whole new entity. Neither, however, can they simply recreate the old Jerusalem, not after the place was stripped of most of its population when the crusaders took the city in 1099.

There's a sense of wariness, now that the Muslims have had their first taste of Christian cruelty. Neither Jews nor Muslims can quite figure out why the Christians have any claim to the city and surrounding territory at all. Coming to Jerusalem to worship is one thing — permitted and even encouraged by the residents — but claiming the right to own and rule the region is another matter entirely. Jewish and Muslim Cainites are particularly wary. The bright flame of Christian faith is painful enough, and wedded to military might it becomes a fearful thing indeed. The endless destruction and rebuilding has wrecked havens and destroyed treasures, unearthed slumbering Cainites and rendered the ancient city a strange place to returning wanderers. The city still exerts an irresistible pull, but those who respond to its call now find no peace there.

### THE WEEKS OF BLOOD

The capture of Jerusalem in 1099 was followed by some of the most brutal carnage in recorded history. Upon breaching the city's walls, the invading crusaders went berserk, indulging in an orgy of chaos and blood the likes of which hadn't been seen in the region since Alexander the Great's sack of Tyre. Observers noted that some streets ran with blood so deep that it was literally chest-high on crusaders' mounts. No one was spared.

The effect of the madness on the Cainites either resident in Jerusalem or advancing with the victorious troops was even more severe. The blood madness struck them as well, and they descended into a murderous frenzy that dwarfed that of the mortals around them. Cainites tore victims limb from limb, then moved on to new targets without bothering to drink from those they'd just slain. Vampires warred openly in the streets, clawed each other to shreds and stumbled off to find new conflicts. Most were so far gone in their rage that they failed to seek shelter from the sun save by accident, and almost all (Rustucci being one of the very few exceptions) perished.

The source of this extraordinary fury has never been adequately explained. Most Cainites who fled the city and then returned after its destruction refuse even to discuss the matter, possibly because of a fear that mentioning evil invites its return. A few of the city's vampires have suspicions, rarely spoken, that such immense horror shows the hand of a greater power at work. There are fevered speculations as to what — or who — that power might be, though the spectre of one name in particular causes even Cainites like Nahum to fear.

The name is that of Malkav.

Those interested in discovering the truth behind the Weeks of Blood can see **Fountains of Bright Crimson**. For others, it can remain just a terrifying mystery.









## Chapter Two: Society and Culture

What follows here is a brief guide to the social and religious structures extant in Jerusalem in 1197. There is little or no vampiric material here, so if you've got a good grasp on what the Karaites' big beef with the Rabbinites was, feel free to skip it and move on to the next chapter. On a more serious note, faith is the dominant theme of Jerusalem by Night, and understanding its specific expressions in the city is the best route to understanding why individuals who profess those faiths (such as the Storyteller characters in Chapter 4) act the way they do.

Bear with us here. It's worth it.



# RELIGIOUS POLITICS IN JERUSALEM

At this particular moment in time, Jerusalem is a city sacred to three religions that, despite the fact that they each worship the same deity, are fundamentally different in how they perceive Yahweh/ God/ Allah. Moreover, in quite a few cases, the religions aren't only trying to worship the same deity, they're frequently trying to do it on the same exact pieces of real estate. Each is utterly convinced that how they worship is ordained by Yahweh, God or Allah, and each group is convinced that their rights will be upheld when Yahweh/ God/ Allah calls the righteous to heaven.

The claims and counterclaims can become bewildering. Yahweh granted the land to His children, but all three religions claim to be His children. Unlike most other religious systems, all three religions worship only Yahweh/ God/ Allah. The Jews were the first claimants, and the Christians held the city most recently... but the Muslims hold it now. Until the upstart crusaders rolled in (and they've only even been in the neighborhood for a hundred years), the Muslims had held the city for almost 400 years under one of the most benevolent and peaceful regimes in the city's history. ("Benevolent and peaceful" is subject to interpretation, of course, depending on one's station in life.) On the other hand, even though their occupation of the city has been amazingly sporadic, the Jews probably have accumulated the greatest number of actual years of residence. Whose claim is strongest? And who decides whose claim to the land is the most valid?

But things are even more complicated. Within each of the three major religious divisions, there are sects that not only disagree, but disagree violently. It is not only possible, but more likely, that a Christian will kill another Christian (in, of course, God's name), than kill a Jew or Muslim. Internecine bickering, after all, could be interpreted as an act of war. Internecine sniping... well, that's a different matter.

## HISTORICITY AND RELIGION

At the risk of stating the obvious, the reader is reminded that our modern view of religion is considerably different than what was common in 1197. While we incorporate religious aspects into our lives, in earlier centuries every aspect of life was regulated by religious rules. Where we (hopefully!) tolerate diverse philosophies, minor theological differences — should yeast be used in communion bread or not? — were once, quite literally, life and death issues.

## JERUSALEM BY NIGHT

# JEWS DIVIDED

Among the Jews there are — at this time and in this place — two major sects: the Karaites and the Rabbinites. It should be noted that the descriptions that follow are broad generalizations; it would be difficult to find any two people who believe exactly the same thing regardless of the system of beliefs to which they claim to belong.

## KARAITES

Their name derived from the word for "scripture," the Karaites split from the traditional forms of Judaism a little over 300 years ago, in 880 CE. Anan ben David immigrated to Jerusalem from Khursan, and found the strict rule of the Jerusalem rabbis oppressive and narrow. While the Karaites follow the Torah, al-Qumusi and his followers reject the authority of the Talmud, including the food restrictions and the laws regarding purity. They devoutly follow the written text of the Torah, but the Talmud is, in their opinion, simply oral law accreted by humans onto the divine teachings. To escape the wrath of the rabbis, the Karaites live outside of the city walls, having built their quarters on the east slopes.

## RABBINITES

The Rabbinites follow traditional rabbinic law, including Torah, Talmud and Mishnah. To the majority of Jews, the Rabbinites are correct and recognizably observant in their practices. Every year during Sukkot, however, the Rabbinite Gaon would make sure to bring the Torah scrolls with him and, during the festivals, would ritually excommunicate the Karaites camped on the opposite hills.

The Karaites, as might be expected, reciprocated by excommunicating the Rabbinites every year.

When the Muslims took Jerusalem back from the Christians, they insisted that these reciprocal, ritual excommunications be stopped. Under Islamic law, both groups had equal rights and equal access to Jewish holy

## ON TERMINOLOGY

Sukkot, Hebrew for "booths" or "tabernacles" is a seven-day festival in autumn, beginning on Tishri 15 each year. It commemorates the huts in which the followers of Yahweh lived while they were wandering in the wilderness before getting to The Holy Land. During Sukkot, city dwellers built small shelters outside of Jerusalem's walls, where worshipers lived during the festival week.

"Gaon" is the title given to a distinguished academic. The Gaon is not only learned, but he also may well be the leader of the Talmudic scholars in the region.



sites in the city. Tensions still run high, however, with the Rabbinites claiming that the Karaites defame the Jewish Covenant with Yahweh, and the Karaites claiming that the Rabbinites place the laws between humans and the Covenant.

## CHRISTIANS DIVIDED

The first great schism had been building between the Latin, or Roman Catholic, Christians and the Eastern Orthodox Christians, culminating in mutual excommunications in 1054. Of course, minor theological variations had occurred previously and further segmentation continued to occur. Again, the descriptions that follow are generalizations.

### LATIN (ROMAN) CATHOLICS

The largest of the Christian sects, the Latin Catholics claim to be the "pure" Church. They are fierce warriors, and tolerate no dissension from the teachings of the Church's Patriarch of Rome. When they got to Jerusalem, they took possession of all of the Christian shrines that had been built by other Christian sects, including wresting possession of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher from the Greek Orthodox.

The Latin Church isn't as unified as they'd like others to believe, however. There are three major subsects — the Genoese, the Venetian, and the Pisan — who quarrel fiercely among themselves.

### NESTORIANS

One of the first groups to splinter off of the main body of Christianity became known as the Nestorians. Nestorius taught that Joshua had two natures, human and divine, and that Mary had been mother to the human Jesus. In 431 CE, this was sufficient to cause the Latin Church to condemn this group, causing them to break away from the established Church.

The Nestorians were banished from Jerusalem along with other small Christian groups when the crusaders took Jerusalem. Nestorians are fairly tolerant of other monotheistic traditions, neither do they persecute people who profess faiths other than their own.

### GREEK ORTHODOX

The Eastern Orthodox, or Greek, Church separated from the Latin Church in 1054. Its followers

#### ON TERMINOLOGY

"Catholic" is Greek for "universal" or "worldwide." It seems likely that early Christians declared their church to be "catholic" in an attempt to create the sense that the church was larger than issues caused by factionalism. Over time, however, the capitalized word came to reference a specific sect.

believe that the third segment of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit, emanates solely from God, not from God and Jesus. Moreover, they use leavening when they bake their communion bread.

Like the Nestorians, the Greek Orthodox is tolerant of other religious beliefs, and known for being relatively even-handed. Salah al-Din entrusted the Church of the Holy Sepulcher to their care after taking Jerusalem back from the crusaders.

### ARMENIANS

The Armenian Christians came to Jerusalem in 1030. They've been slowly expanding since, and have become a sizable community with a separate quarter in the city. They maintain their own traditions and their own language, and do not accept converts.

Unlike the Nestorians, the Armenians believe that Jesus is wholly divine, with no humanity to his characteristics. They celebrate festivals out of sync with other Christian groups, including the celebration of Lent at Jesus' birth. They reportedly have an irreconcilable hatred of the Greeks.

### SPLINTERS OF SPLINTERS

Several small Christian groups are also in Jerusalem. The Syrians are similar to the Greeks in their worship and religious traditions, but maintain a separate culture because of language differences. It is said that they pay tribute to other groups in order to be left alone. The Georgians are also similar to the Greeks, but they venerate St. George in addition to standard Greek practices.

## MUSLIMS DIVIDED

Again, the descriptions that follow are generalizations; variations occur within each subsect. The Shi'i, in particular, are known for being extremely factionalized within their subsect.

### SUNNI

Sunni Muslims form the majority of Islam and follow the teachings of the Qur'an, the sharia, and the Sunna. The community itself is important to Sunnis, and there is a strong tendency to try to reach agreement by consensus rather than legal rulings.

Sunnis do not credit their religious leaders with any special wisdom; rather, they believe that any pious Muslim is qualified to be a leader. Sunnis tend to be egalitarian and tolerant of other religious ideas.

### SHI'ITE

Shi'i Muslims differ with the Sunni on several levels. The most divisive theological issue is over the importance of the Sunna; Shi'i do not feel compelled



to follow all of the habits of the Prophet (peace be upon him) who was, after all, only a human and therefore fallible.

Shi'i, however, tend to be more rigid in their interpretation of the Qur'an. They imbue their religious leaders with sacred wisdom, and tend to be a bit fanatical in their devotion.

### SUFIS

Not a truly a separate belief system of Islam, "Sufi" is a general term for a Muslim mystic. Sufism doesn't follow any particular tradition or denomination. Sufis walk a fine line between worship and being accused of pretending to be divine; one ought not to take credit for performing miracles and healings when one does so in the name of Allah.

### KHARIJITES

Never a huge force in Islam, the Kharijites are still a factor in 1197. They believe, as do the Jewish Karaites, that the religious structure has put laws between humans and Allah. They militantly follow the teachings of the Qur'an, and just as the Karaites reject the authority of the Mishnah and Talmud, the Kharijites reject the authority of the Sunna and sharia.

## MEDIEVAL ISLAM: AN OVERVIEW

According to the revelations Muhammad received from Allah through the archangel Gabriel, the Jews had been, and continued to be, the children of Abraham.

But Abraham had two sons. While the Jews were descendants of Isaac, the Arab communities were Ismael's descendants. Jews (and their reformer descendants, the Christians), and Muslims were cousins, then.

The common themes and teachings of each group's religious texts further enhance this kinship. The Christians built on the teachings of the Jewish Torah. The Qur'an rejects the Christian text (Jesus, in the Muslim view, is a mortal prophet) but still builds on the Torah. In fact, the Qur'an assumes that the reader knows the Torah stories, referencing and expanding them without actually repeating them. The similarities in the underlying teachings are so strong that Muslims call Jews and Christian *dhimmi* (which means "protected") because they are *ahl al-kitab* or "People of the Book."

Islam, which means "submission (to the will of Allah)," is based on five basic precepts, the Five Pillars.

## THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

The first pillar is a simple profession of faith, the shahada. This consists of saying (and, of course, believing) the statement "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His Prophet." While the first part of the statement acknowledges that Allah is Allah, the second affirms that Muhammad is a prophet — and only a prophet. This statement is also a subtle differentiation between Islam and Christianity. God is sufficient unto Himself, in the Muslim view. There is no need for sons or trinities or mothers, as Surah 4:171 points out:

*O people of the Book,  
do not be fanatical in your faith,  
and say nothing but the truth about God.  
The Messiah who is Joshua, son of Mary,  
was only an apostle of God, and a command of His  
which He sent to Mary, as a mercy from Him.  
So believe in God and His apostles,  
and do not call Him 'Trinity.'  
Abstain from this for your own good;  
for God is only one God,  
and far from His glory is it  
to beget a son.  
All that is in the heavens and the earth  
belongs to Him;  
and sufficient is God for all help.*

The second pillar is prayer, or *salat*. Five times a day, Muslims are called to worship. There are as many rules and exceptions to this ritual as there are to Jewish prayer or Christian communion; the critical point (as with Jewish and Christian ritual), is intention. The rituals that precede prayer put one into a state that is mindful of Allah, and expresses the worshiper's intent to worship.

The third pillar is almsgiving, or the *zakat*. This isn't quite the same as a tithe. The *zakat* is an annual tax on one's total accumulated wealth and assets, usually about 2.5 percent of an individual's total worth. This isn't generally considered to be charity, nor is it begrudged. The sense is that one receives wealth from the bounty of Allah, and that the wealth is held partially in trust for the less fortunate. The *zakat* is sometimes redistributed through government offices and sometimes through religious organizations, and its distribution is heavily slanted toward widows and orphans.

Ramadan is the fourth pillar. It is a series of daily fasts that last for one lunar month. Muslims who are able to withstand the rigors of Ramadan abstain from food, all liquids (including water), and sexual activities from sunrise to sunset during the month. Because the Islamic calendar is lunar, Ramadan gradually moves

### JERUSALEM BY NIGHT



throughout the solar year, making Ramadans that fall during the summer more difficult than those that fall during the cooler seasons. As with Jewish fasts, there are dispensations from the fast for those who are ill, for the young and the elderly.

The fifth pillar is the *hajj*. Every Muslim who is physically and financially capable is expected to go to Mecca at least once in their lifetime. Again, there are a series of religious rituals that are to be performed and prayers to be said.

## SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

In spite of protestations to the contrary, there are strong similarities between the three monotheistic religions above and beyond their worship of the same deity. There are also some striking differences.

Jews and Muslims have strict (and similar) dietary laws. Both are prohibited from eating pork, and both are prohibited from consuming carrion or blood. Jews may not combine milk and meat, Muslims may not consume alcohol. In contrast, Christians have no dietary prohibitions (although there are some strong traditions) and may eat or drink anything.

The Jewish Sabbath is Saturday, the Christians moved their holy day to Sunday, Muslims went the opposite direction and worship on Friday. The Christian holy book incorporates the Jewish text; the Muslim holy text references the Jewish book.

Muhammad's dealings with Jews were both complex and comprehensive. Originally, he told his followers to face Jerusalem when they prayed. While living in Medina, he told Muslims to observe the Jewish Day of Atonement as a solemn fast. After rabbis taunted him for his incomplete knowledge of the Torah, he one-upped the rabbis by turning the Day of Atonement into an entire month of fasting and worship, instituting Ramadan.

## RELIGIOUS TEXTS

The overlap and borrowing between Jews, Christians and Muslims is subtle, but pervasive. Some of the greatest similarities can be found in the format of their religious texts and, yet again, the Christians stand separate from the Jews and Muslims. All three texts, however, are the definitive, final, authoritative Word of Yahweh/ God/ Allah — or so they each claim.

The Jews have the Torah, meaning “teaching” or “instruction.” Also known as the Pentateuch, it comprises the first five books of the Christian “Old Testament.” In addition to the Torah, however, Jews also have the Mishnah, which is the codification of the normative Jewish law, habits, customs and practices of everyday life. Along with

the Mishnah is the Talmud, the discussion and legal commentary on the Mishnah.

The Christians only have the Bible, or “book.” That’s an oversimplification, of course: The truth is that even in 1197, Christianity is so segmented and fractured that the variations on Christian law are almost impossible to understand. Minor disagreements are sufficient to splinter off another faction, and often to incur serious dispute.

The Muslims have the Qur’an, or “recitation.” Of primary help in the interpretation of the Qur’an is the Sunna, which records the practices and habits of the Prophet. The *sharia*, similar to the Jewish Mishnah, is a description of the “way” of Islam, defining habit, customs and the practices of daily life.

## ARABIC NAMING CONVENTIONS

Arabs, at this time, don’t use patronyms in the European sense. Occasionally someone will be defined by the region or town he’s from (“the Moroccan” or “the Meccan”). Occasionally, one will be given a nickname that describes a character trait or physical characteristic (“the Trustworthy,” or “the Handsome”). It is, however, rare for a person to be identified by his trade. How you comport yourself is more noteworthy than how you earn a living.

Generally, however, an individual has a given name, followed by “son of” and his father’s name, or “daughter of” and her mother’s name. Abdullah ibn Yusef, then, is Abdullah, the son of Yusef. Miram bint Aisha is Miram, the daughter of Aisha.

However, as soon as one becomes a parent, his name changes. At that point, he loses both his given name (except to his closest friends) and his parental name — the child has become the parent. If the first child is male and named Rashid, then the name by which the parent is most commonly known is Abu (father of) Rashid or Om (mother of) Rashid. (Just to complicate things, little Rashid is known as Rashid ibn Abdullah, or Rashid, Abdullah’s son).

If the first child is female, then the same rule holds (Abu Salah or Om Salah) until a son comes along. At that point one’s name changes again (regardless of whether an individual is male or female), and one become known as the father or mother of your eldest son. The gender of your children — and how many of them you have — is Allah’s will:

## THE PEACE OF ISLAM

Arab conquests politically unified big swaths of territory. This worked for several reasons, primarily the untranslated Qur’an. The numerous regions ruled by the Muslim Empire had a huge variety of languages, but also had one language in common: Arabic. The



**Surah 42:49-50:**

*To Allah belongs  
the kingdom of the heavens and the earth.  
He creates whatsoever He wills,  
bestows daughters on whosoever He will,  
and gives sons to whom He choose.  
On some he bestows both sons and daughters,  
and some He leaves issueless.  
He is all-knowing and all-powerful.*

ease of communication this allowed played a large part in sustaining governance and trade. Moreover, Muhammad maintained friendly relations with the countries he conquered early. He kept low-level administrators and bureaucracies in place, putting policy-makers over the already-functioning and familiar government systems instead of replacing them whole cloth.

Furthermore, existence was generally peaceful, once an area was conquered. The Peace of Islam created a huge free-trade area with safe and rapid transit across large distances. This helped develop a middle class, and sufficient wealth to support artisans and scholars.

Finally, Islam assumes a multi-racial, multi-cultural population, and is highly tolerant of and calls for the protection of differing religions. While the fact does not live up to the ideal in all cases, there certainly is at least basis for peaceful coexistence and mutual respect.

## OBSERVANT VAMPIRES

The biggest issue facing Jewish and Muslim vampires is the prohibition against consuming blood. (Christian Cainites, oddly enough, have no such prohibitions, and may lay about themselves without guilt on this particular issue.) Unfortunately, just because Allah or Adonai has prohibited one from drinking blood does not mean one can control the compulsion to do so, leaving observant Cainites of two faiths in something of a bind. While each individual Cainite must make her own peace with Yahweh or Allah over his violation of holy writ, it is worth taking a brief look at the relevant texts and, perhaps, suggesting ways to justify and juxtapose "devout" and "vampire."

### JEWISH LAW SAYS:

**Leviticus 7:26:** *You are not to consume any of the blood, whether of bird or of beast, wherever you may live. (27) Anyone consuming any of the blood is cut off from his father's kin.*

Certain Cainites claim that this particular passage does not apply to them, since, technically, they are no longer "alive." Being cut off from one's mortal father's kin is of little moment if one is a vampire, but there is always the concern that among Cainites, the "father" referred to may be Caine.

**Leviticus 17:13:** *Any Israelite or alien settled in Israel who hunts beasts or birds that may lawfully be eaten must drain out the blood and cover it with earth (14) because the life of every living creature is its blood, and I have forbidden the Israelites to consume the blood of any creature, because the life of every creature is its blood: whoever eats it is to be cut off.*

Justifications for feeding that arise from interpretations of this passage rely on rather slender logic. In theory, this prohibition does not apply, since humans technically aren't lawful to eat anyhow. A case can therefore be made that humans aren't "creatures," and so are exempt from prohibitions against consuming the blood of such.

**Deuteronomy 12:23:** *But you must strictly refrain from partaking of the blood, because the blood is the life; you may not eat the life with the flesh. (24) You must not consume it; you must pour it out on the ground like water. (25) If you abstain from it, all will be well with you and your children after you; for you will be doing what is right in the eyes of the Lord.*

This prohibition says that blood and flesh are not to be consumed together. Since the vampire does not consume flesh, the prohibition can be seen as inapplicable to the Cainite condition. Moreover, unlike other passages of this ilk, the verses don't outline an explicit punishment for failure to comply. (Textual literalists note that one is certainly implied, but in these matters, the distinction is all-important.)

### MUSLIM LAW SAYS:

**Surah 2:173:** *Forbidden to you are carrion and blood, and the flesh of the swine, and that which has been consecrated (or killed) in the name of any other than Allah.*

This Surah clearly prohibits devouring forbidden foodstuffs that have been consecrated in any name other than Allah's. However, nothing is said about carrion, blood and whatnot that has been consecrated or killed in the name of Allah.

**Surah 5:3:** *Forbidden you is carrion and blood, and the flesh of the swine, and whatsoever has been killed in the name of some other than Allah, and whatever has been strangled, or killed by a blow or a fall, or by going, or that which has been mauled by wild beasts unless slaughtered while still alive; and that which has been slaughtered at altars is forbidden, and also dividing the meat by casting lots with arrows. All this is sinful.*



There's no easy way around this passage, unfortunately. It does help to know, however, that Allah is both merciful and forgiving.

**Surah 6:145:** *You tell them: "In all the commands revealed to me I find nothing which men have been forbidden to eat except carrion and running blood and flesh of the swine for it is unclean, or meat consecrated in the name of some other than Allah, which is profane. But if one is constrained to eat of these without craving or reverting to it, then surely your Lord is forgiving and kind."*

Similarly, **Surah 16:115:** *He has forbidden carrion and blood and the flesh of the swine, and that has been killed in*

*the name of any other but Allah; but if one is driven by necessity to eat it without craving or reverting to it, then Allah is forgiving and kind.*

As in other areas of Muslim life, Allah allows for human foibles, and He will forgive. If a vampire asks forgiveness sincerely every time she feeds, perhaps she could also intend not to crave blood again. It is also possible to make a case that the first surah is written explicitly to men and so doesn't include women, since portions of the Qur'an are explicitly directed to women. The absence of a specific instruction in this case does leave the door open for female Cainites to sidestep the ban, as it were.









## Chapter Three: Geography

Jerusalem rests roughly 35 miles from the Mediterranean Sea, along a path through the Judean Hills, and thus along a major trade route. Jerusalem itself is located between the Mount of Olives and Mount Zion, which are each a few hundred feet higher than the land where the city sits. The elevation of the city is 2,440 feet above sea level, in terrain that the Kidron River roughened over the course of centuries. The average rainfall in the city is around 20 inches, and the temperature ranges from 48 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter to around 75 degrees in the summer.

Jerusalem is an ancient city, and its survival has come at a heavy price. Through the years the city has been destroyed and rebuilt on several occasions. There are layers of history in the city, and there are levels of Jerusalem that are lost to mankind. Mosque has been built upon Temple upon Temple, building upon building. There is no one Jerusalem, but rather a series of them, layered over and intertwining with one another. Houses raised by crusaders stand next to ruins that have squatted in silence since Roman times.



Adding to the chaos, at least for Cainites, is the fact that the city is liberally spattered with sites holy to Muslim, Christian and Jew. Each of these places — and there are many — radiates a palpable expression of True Faith that is painful (sometimes fatal) to vampires. Those of Caine's childer who are not driven by religious need give such places a wide berth. This, combined with the results of centuries of invasion and sack, makes Jerusalem often difficult to navigate for Cainites used to having free rein to wander wherever they wish. On the other hand, the heritage of destruction and rebuilding has created any number of catacombs and tunnels, most notably beneath the Temple Mount, wherein vampires can dwell, sleep and search for the legacy of the ancients.

## THE LAY OF THE LAND

In 1197, Jerusalem rests well within the borders of the sultanate founded by Salah al-Din. The lands east of the Jordan River, formerly controlled by the Atabegs of Mosul, fell during Salah al-Din's campaign of 1174, and the crusaders' Kingdom of Jerusalem collapsed between 1187 and 1189. Salah al-din's successor lacks his genius but can at least maintain (for the time being) his conquests. A consistent law holds sway over almost all of the contested Holy Land. The second "Kingdom of Jerusalem" doesn't actually include Jerusalem: It consists only of the cities of the coast that Richard I managed to conquer in the Third Crusade.

### THE COAST

The route from Jerusalem to the coast runs through Lydda to Jaffa. It's 50 miles, angling a bit north of due west from Jerusalem. From there, the coastal road heads north through Caesarea, Tyre and Sidon to what had been the northern border of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. It enters the former Kingdom of Tripoli, passing through Tripoli to the Hospitaller stronghold at Marqab (Margate, as the Hospitallers call it).

The coast road also leads south. Gaza marks where the old border of Fatimid territory lay, before Salah al-Din's conquests. The road continues to Farama and Damietta at the eastern edge of the Nile River delta, then turns south along the banks of the Nile to Cairo. It's 40 miles from Jaffa to Gaza; it's also about 40 miles from Lydda, where a side road curves southwest away from the main road to Jaffa, to Gaza. Then the traveler faces 150 miles of desert coast before getting to Farama, and another 50 to reach Damietta.

### THE JORDAN

Another major road heads north from Jerusalem through the valley of the Jordan River. The small contemporary settlement of Jericho, built on the ruins of the famous Biblical site, lies just a few miles north of Jerusalem, at the northern end of the Dead Sea and at the foot of the steep hills leading up to Jerusalem. Farmland and

villages occupy the 50-odd miles from Jericho to Tiberias. Before Salah al-Din, Tiberias stood at the northeastern edge of the Kingdom of the Jerusalem, and even though the lands on both sides of the river now belong to the same sultan, Tiberias remains a well-fortified site. It oversees fishing and other traffic on the Sea of Galilee.

A side road leads to Nazareth. Only devout pilgrims make the trip over barren hills, however; apart from its fame as Jesus' hometown, nothing distinguishes Nazareth from any other hard-pressed minor village of the region. The trip from Tiberias covers less than 20 miles as the crow flies, but meanders for 50 miles to find decent terrain and adequate pavement.

The northern road curves to the northeast, into the rugged interior along the edges of the Fertile Crescent, to Damascus and Baalbek. It's 75 miles in a straight line from Tiberias to Damascus, but the road curves and meanders enough so that the actual distance traveled is just under 100 miles. 40 miles separate Damascus from Baalbek. The road north out of Baalbek curves to the northwest, and returns to the Mediterranean coast at Arqa, a little north of Tripoli, after another 45 miles.

From the coast, travelers can proceed by ship to Cyprus and Byzantium, and overland to Asia Minor.

### THE RED SEA

A trade route leads south from Jerusalem, through canyons and badlands, to the gulf of the Red Sea between the Sinai and Arabian Peninsulas. The town of Bethlehem is only three miles south of Jerusalem, and shares the same physical conditions. The road gets rougher as it comes around the Dead Sea, through al-Karak and al-Showbak in the interior to Ayla on the coast. If it weren't for Ayla's position as a prominent port, few travelers would bother with 130 miles of inhospitable rocky wilderness, punctuated only by occasional springs and oases. As it is, bandit gangs flourish on the rich pickings from the merchants who use the route with insufficient attention to personal security.

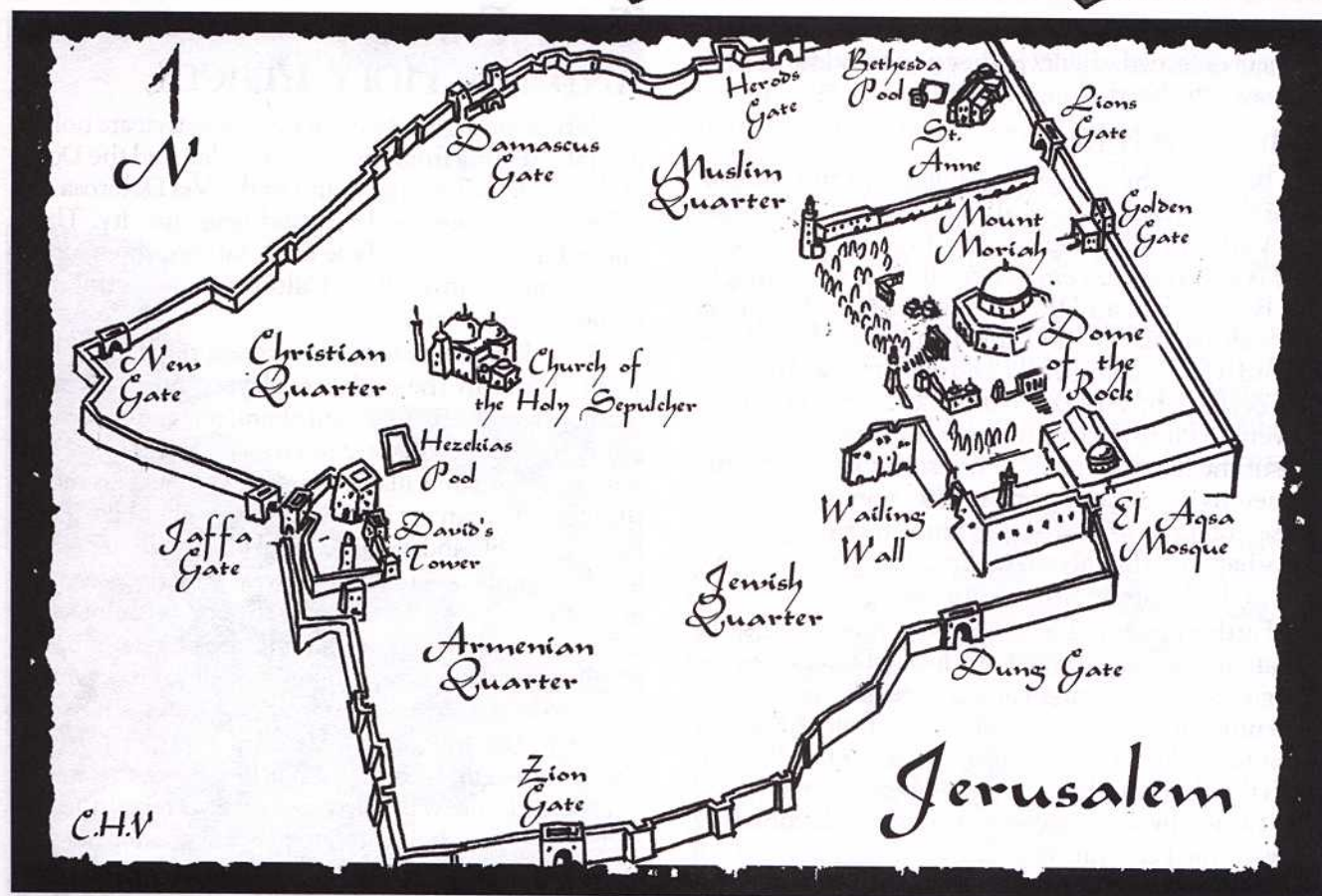
An even rougher road heads west from Ayla through the interior of the Sinai Peninsula to Qulzum, 140 miles away. That trip requires extensive preparations and stores, as Sinai offers almost nothing to support the hungry or thirsty traveler.

### EAST

Beyond the Jordan Valley and a few tributaries, there's nothing but desert for hundreds of miles. Nobody goes due east to the Tigris and Euphrates; they follow the Fertile Crescent north around the Syrian Desert to the upper reaches of the two rivers' valleys. Even supernatural creatures fare badly in the wastes, where winds gust at over 100 miles an hour and temperatures can change up to 50 degrees in minutes.

### JERUSALEM BY NIGHT





## THE CLIMATE

The coast and the Jordan River Valley support farming well. They get adequate rain and offer rich, productive soil. Between them the land is mostly steep slopes and barren, little valleys, which support sheep-herders (not very well) and little else. South of the Dead Sea, it's desert all the way down to the Red Sea.

In the north the land becomes increasingly well-watered and fertile, even in the interior. The famous cedars of Lebanon are only the most visible members of a very diverse ecology. Otters flourish in the streams that cascade through forested mountains, preying on fish, frogs and other animals. (In later centuries, over-farming and neglect will turn much of this fertile land to desert, and it will be reclaimed only in the 20th century.)

Strangers to the Holy Land almost always comment on the abrupt changes of climate. Around a corner, over a hill, and suddenly the whole landscape seems different. The sharp slopes create very effective rain barriers, blocking interior valleys from most of the storm clouds coming off the Mediterranean. Only the highest and strongest make it over the initial hills, so that when rain comes at all to the interior, it comes as pounding downpours followed by flash flooding.

Summer and winter are both severe everywhere, though tempered at the coast and along the Jordan.

Winter piles up deep snowfalls everywhere there's enough precipitation (and chill winds make the dryer regions just as miserable). In summer, the daytime temperature in the low interior valleys can rise to more than 110 degrees Fahrenheit only to fall nearly to freezing at night. The major cities don't get quite so extreme — population gathers in those spots precisely because the climate isn't so harsh — but it's still often uncomfortably hot during most of the day, all summer. Hot interior winds carry sand and dust that makes it even worse. Spring and autumn each flash by in a few weeks, or even less.

## SOUTH OF JERUSALEM—THE CITY OF DAVID

With the exception of the Temple Mount, most of Jerusalem's original site is hidden beneath the debris of years of violence and destruction. The original City of David actually rests to the south of Jerusalem proper, almost directly south of the Dung Gate. The City of David once rested atop Mount Ophel close to the Gihon Spring, the only source of fresh water in the area. As the city grew larger and then smaller, time and again, the original site became a dumping ground for ruined materials from previous construction and was eventually abandoned as the city itself had moved over the centuries. Some believe that the true Tomb of King David is actually buried beneath the sands, hidden under tons of dirt and debris. Whatever the case may be, Cainites tend

## CHAPTER THREE: GEOGRAPHY



to avoid the area. There is something that leaves many of them unsettled whenever they pass too close to what was once the heart of the City of David.

## VALLEY OF KIDRON

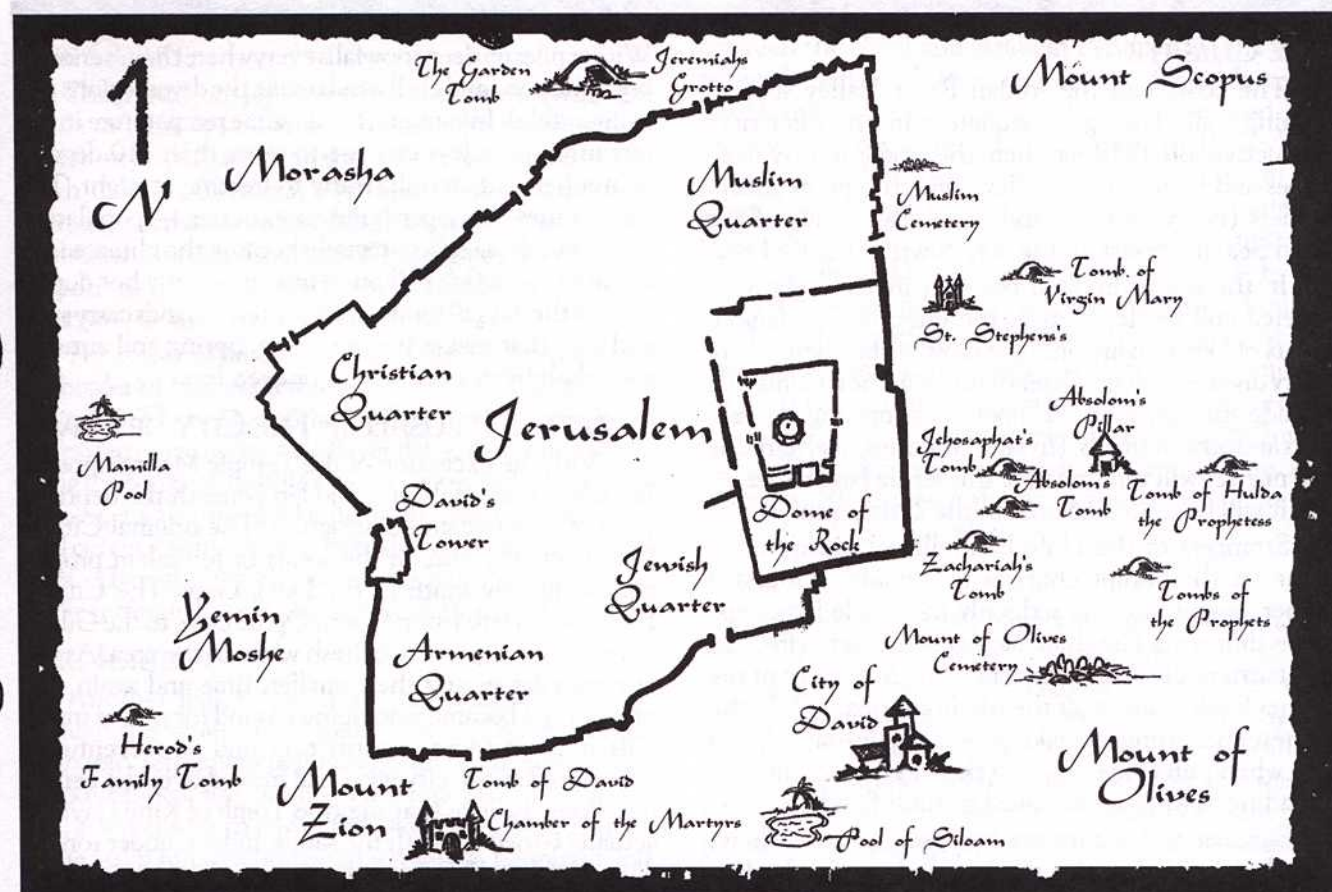
Between the Mount of Olives and the walls of Jerusalem proper is the Valley of Kidron, also called the Valley of Jehoshaphat. It is here that Judgment Day is supposed to commence, at least according to the Book of Joel and the Muslim faith. Just beneath the wall in this area lies the Tombs of Absalom — toward which Jews still occasionally throw stones — and Zechariah. The Tomb of Absalom has become a powerful Haunt for wraiths over the centuries, and is one of the few structures in Jerusalem to survive the numerous destructions of the city. Somewhere near these tombs is the reported final resting place of Jehoshaphat, though searchers after the site have had no luck through the centuries.

Further down in the valley, the Gihon Spring spills its waters into Hezekiah's Aqueduct, which carries the life-giving fluid to Jerusalem and provides the water for the entire city in times of siege. Water from this spring anointed Solomon the King, and was used by Mary to wash the clothes of Jesus. Waters taken from the spring and carried by a righteous man in a clean container have a True Faith rating of 2.

## TRUE FAITH AND THE HOLY PLACES

Jerusalem is gifted with many places that are holy to mortals, ranging from the Western Wall and the Dome of the Rock on Temple Mount to the Via Dolorosa and other, less famous locales in and near the city. These places have their own True Faith ratings, though they do not necessarily affect Cainites as a mortal who radiates Faith does.

Each location listed, when appropriate, has a True Faith rating. In these places, players must roll Willpower as required before their characters can enter. The difficulty of the Willpower roll is equal to the True Faith rating of that particular shrine of God. Success means the character can get into the location, but he will not be comfortable and will likely feel ill — a rare sensation for the Cainite — until he leaves. Failure means the character cannot gain access to the area without being in extreme physical pain. Should the character opt to stay in the area anyway, the cost is one Health Level per scene. A botch when attempting to enter a holy site results in the loss of one Health Level per turn the character attempts to stay. Additionally, the character must spend one Willpower per turn to remain in the area as the pain builds to greater and greater heights.



JERUSALEM BY NIGHT





Should the character opt to stay for more than three turns after botching, a second Willpower roll is required against a difficulty of 7. Failure means the character falls victim to frenzy. A botch means the character actually catches fire, suffering three Health Levels of damage per turn. Such a character should also make a Courage roll (difficulty 8) to avoid Rötschreck. All damage caused by the True Faith within such locales is considered aggravated, and may not be soaked.

It is important to remember that not all of these locations are actually buildings. Many of them are in the open, and an unwary vampire can suddenly find herself walking into a situation that is uncomfortable at

### HOLY SITES

Listed below are a selection of sites around Jerusalem and their Faith ratings:

Name of Site	Ambient Faith Rating
The City Wall	None
The Golden Gate	3
The Lion's Gate	1
Herod's Gate	1
The Damascus Gate	None
The Dung Gate	1
The Zion Gate	2
The Jaffa Gate	None
Coenaculum	4
David's Tomb	5
The Tower of David	2
Temple Mount (Haram es Sharif)	
and the Dome of the Rock	7
The Wailing Wall	7
Via Dolorosa	
(The Way of Sorrows)	5
Church of the Holy Sepulcher	7
The Pool of Hezekiah	1
The Muristan Bazaar	None
The Church of St. Hannah	2
The Pool of Bethesda	4

**Note:** The ambient Faith of these sites radiates in odd directions; the catacombs beneath the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, for example, are painful for Cainites to endure, while the tunnels beneath the Temple Mount are almost discomfort free. Some Cainites theorize that this is due to the nature of the Faith each site engenders; the Temple Mount encourages worshipers to look to the heavens, while the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was built on the site of a most significant cave.



best, lethal at worst. A few of the local vampires have made it a point to not only know the location of all the holy sites in the city, but have also worked out elaborate escape routes using them to confound and trap foes who might pursue them. A working knowledge of the city has saved more than a few resident Cainites from pursuers who were stronger, faster, more powerful — and more ignorant of the true nature of Jerusalem.

**Note:** The manifestations of the damage done to Cainites by the holy places of the city are in keeping with their status and legendry. Common forms of suffering experienced by Cainites at these places include stigmata, leprosy, boils, blindness and the withering of limbs.

## THE LAY OF THE LAND

The finest homes in Jerusalem are found near the eastern half of the city, until they meet up with the Temple Mount. From that point on the dwellings of the wealthy and powerful veer north until they reach Herod's Gate. The houses closest to the gate reach sizes that make them seem like palaces when compared with the hovels found to the southwest. Towards the northeastern quarter of the city there are often walls around individual homes, and many residences are guarded by personal servants and well-paid mercenaries. While the daylight hours are seldom a problem for passersby, the nights can be downright dangerous for the wrong sort of people. There are a few landowners who believe the best way to keep the criminal element away is to have their guards kill or maim any potential threats to their domiciles.

In stark contrast to this elegance and wealth, the western side of the city demonstrates stark poverty. There are many buildings that remain empty of all but the most desperate souls, dwellings that have not been repaired or rebuilt from the last round of devastation and conquest and homes emptied by the plague. Such neighborhoods are not safe for travelers, at least not living ones, though Cainites visiting the city are encouraged to hunt there.

## POLITICAL STRUCTURES WITHIN JERUSALEM

Segregation of neighborhoods by religion is a fact of life (and unlife) as well. Even in the worst parts of Jerusalem the unseen boundaries exist, and just as with the unwritten rules of wealth, there are certain elements of danger when walking through the wrong parts of the city. Though the division between wealthy and poor is fairly obvious, the territories of the devout are not as clearly marked. Only a person who has dwelt in Jerusalem for an extended period is likely to know which parts of the area near the Damascus Gate are safe for Muslims, or which neighborhoods near the Dung Gate are dangerous for the Christians. Those who don't know the city well travel at their own risk, especially after the sun has set.

## JERUSALEM BY NIGHT

Politically speaking, the city breaks into three separate areas: The Jewish Sector, which runs along the southern section of the city; the Christian Sector, which runs throughout the northwestern part of the city and along the western wall, and the Muslim Sector, which covers the eastern portion of Jerusalem. These lines of demarcation are not drawn on maps, but they are very real nonetheless. Blurring of the boundaries is minimal; only areas held as sacred by one faction or another have something of neutrality to them. Such locations are left untouched except in rare situations where tempers get too hot.

## THE WALL

The wall surrounding Jerusalem is relatively new, and strong enough to resist all but the most determined of assaults. Surrounding the entire city, the wall towers 40 feet above the ground, and is wide enough to hold several people walking side by side. In addition to protecting Jerusalem from hostile assaults, the wall also gives an excellent view of both what is happening within the city and what is occurring along all the roads leading into the city. Officially, only the city guards are permitted on the wall at night. Unofficially, many of the vampires have gained access, and most still traverse it with great regularity. The violent history of Jerusalem has convinced most of the Cainites that knowing who or what is approaching from any given direction can mean the difference between unlife and Final Death.

## THE GATES

As does any walled city, Jerusalem possesses gates in the barrier separating it from the world beyond. To the north is the Damascus Gate, the largest and perhaps the most significant of the entrances. To the east of Damascus is Herod's Gate. On the eastern wall, the Lion's Gate is the main point of entrance, and remains well defended but far more open than the Golden Gate to the south, which is both the closest of the gates to the Temple Mount and the most heavily fortified. Both of these gates open on a sprawling cemetery where those of the Muslim faith have buried their dead for several decades. Failure to show the proper respect while traveling through this area can be extremely hazardous to one's health. On the southern wall there are two more gates: the Dung Gate to the east and the Zion Gate to the west. These gates are more accessible than most, as both lead into the ruins of old Jerusalem and there is little that most humans feel they have to fear in that direction. Caine's childer know better, of course, but encourage the lax attitude among mortals for obvious reasons. Two more gates are present on the western wall: the Jaffa Gate, one of the larger and more important entrances to the city, and the New Gate, which is a recent addition to the wall. Very few people are permitted through the New Gate, though the official reasons for this remain a mystery.



All of the gates are easily closed off and well defended. Anyone wishing to enter the city after sunset must convince the guards to let them enter, and most of the guards require a substantial bribe from anyone who doesn't look important enough to be worth the effort. Once the gates close for dusk, it is almost impossible to get back inside the city under any circumstances, and even bribery is no sure thing. There's nothing to prevent a guard from taking a bribe to open the gate and failing to carry out his part of the bargain; corpses outside the city walls tell no tales.

## THE DAMASCUS GATE

Just to the north of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is the Damascus Gate, the largest of the gates leading into Jerusalem and one of the main trade routes to the city. Unsurprisingly, the gate is heavily fortified and easily defended.

Once past the gate, the road is surrounded by numerous buildings, many of them little more than shells, leaving a dangerous and confusing alley of darkness once the sun sets. Those who travel the road until it branches — becoming the Street of the Damascus Gate to the west and the Street of the Valley to the east — find themselves in the largest bazaar in Jerusalem.

The Damascus Bazaar deals in everything from imported wares to livestock, and is the financial heart of the city. Whatever may be purchased legally can be found in the bazaar, and the city's guards are known to frequent the area throughout the day, keeping the peace and making certain that any crimes committed are of the most trivial nature. Petty theft might be forgiven, but harsher offenses are normally punished very quickly. Visitors to the bazaar are generally safe from everything but pickpocketing and their own greed, albeit only while the bazaar itself is still open.

Mortals in the area may have complete control during the daylight hours, but things change at night. Most of the guards have learned to turn a blind eye to almost anything after the sun has set, provided they are paid off regularly by the perpetrators. Failure to pay often means being noticed while "committing a crime." Of all the city's Cainites, it is Hannah who tends most often to make her presence known to unwary travelers who wander too far from the bazaar, especially if they creep too close to the derelict buildings near the Damascus Gate proper where she makes her home.

## HEROD'S GATE

Herod's Gate is one of the oldest gates in the wall, and is normally very well defended, as the families living in the area are among the wealthiest and most powerful in the city. Though no one has seen any evidence to prove the rumors one way or another, there are many





who believe the gate has a special defense. It's thought by some that anyone attempting to do harm to the city that tries to enter by Herod's Gate will die within one night of passing through the entrance to the city.

### THE LION'S GATE

The Lion's Gate is considered a lucky place to enter the city by the devout of almost every faith, but most especially by the Christians. Nestled between the Temple Mount and the Pool of Bethesda, where Jesus is believed to have healed a paralytic, the area is so well thought of that the crusaders have recently erected the Church of Saint Hannah, the mother of the Virgin Mary. The Church of Saint Hannah is an acoustic masterpiece, and the sounds of Gregorian chants coming from the building are powerful enough to carry for several hundred yards beyond the actual confines of the building. The church is still new, but the faith of the local Christian population is strong.

The Lion's Gate Road leads directly to the Via Dolorosa, the Way of Sorrows, where Jesus Christ took his last journey among the mortals.

### THE GOLDEN GATE

The Golden Gate leads directly to the Temple Mount and the Dome of the Rock, two of the holiest sites in the city of Jerusalem. A Muslim cemetery and

several smaller churches of the Christian faith dot the road leading to the entrance to the city, but there are few conflicts in the area despite the constant presence of opposing faiths. Most who enter here do so seeking entrance to the Dome of the Rock or the Temple Mount, not trade or trouble. Commerce through the gate is permitted, but heavily frowned upon. Merchants who wish a peaceful time in Jerusalem know better than to try their luck here. Those who remain ignorant of the social error learn quickly enough once word spreads of their foolishness. While the slight of traveling through the Golden Gate is not a crime per se, it is regarded that way by many of Jerusalem's devout. Passing through on business once will only hurt a merchant's profits for the journey; more devout customers will shun him, and rivals will gladly seize on his foolishness as a way to snatch customers away. Doing so more than once can lead to far harsher punishments at the hands of the devout.

### THE DUNG GATE

The Dung Gate leads to the hidden remains of Silwan, the City of David and the Gihon Springs. Most vampires prefer to avoid this area, though few could say exactly why. Most simply claim that the area holds no interest to them, though a few are known to gaze fearfully into the darkness beyond the gate when saying so.



JERUSALEM BY NIGHT



In truth, the Dung Gate earned its name for being the route by which nightsoil and other trash was removed from the city. It is inauspicious as an entry route and humiliating as a means of departure. Unsurprisingly, it is also a favorite haunt of the local Nosferatu, who use it as a way station when meeting traveling clanmates. Much of the site's bad reputation among Cainites comes from the displeasure Nosferatu have expressed on eavesdroppers.

## THE ZION GATE

The Zion Gate is in the southwest quarter of the city's wall and leads directly to Mount Zion, another site considered sacred by both Jews and Christians. The Tomb of King David is believed to rest there, and many people come to pay their respects to the supposed 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 the Last Supper. Though the reasons for these places being celebrated are very different, both have a Faith rating of 5.

A substantial Christian cemetery is growing outside the Zion Gate, and there are often disputes between the Christians who bury their dead 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 superstitious locals whisper that the ghosts of those whose tombs have been disturbed are angry. In three separate cases, those believed responsible for the destruction of 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. Cainites suspect Cappadocian involvement, even though Abraham himself is rarely seen away from his beloved library.

A large marketplace opens up almost immediately after one enters the Zion Gate. This market is not as heavily guarded as others are, and many of the unwary that venture here return without their wealth — if they return at all. The market by the Zion Gate is also the unofficial center of the city's traffic in human beings, and often ghouls can be seen here appraising possibilities for their masters. The slave trade is of course illicit, but then again, so is much of the other traffic here as well.

## THE JAFFA GATE

The Jaffa Gate is situated in the center of Jerusalem's western wall. There is a long and bloody history associated with the wall, going back at least to 70 CE, when the Tenth Legion came into the city and destroyed everything they could get their hands on. For 67 years the legion remained posted near the Jaffa Gate and killed any Jews who attempted to gain entry to the city. Local superstition holds that the site is haunted as a

result, with the ghosts of the slaughtered waiting for the chance to avenge themselves on their long-dead killers. That is just speculation; what is known for a fact is that the city's Cappadocians never, ever walk through the Jaffa Gate, and Elsh avoids it as well.

## THE TOWER OF DAVID

Depending on whom one asks, the Tower of David (also called the Citadel) was either built by David to oversee and protect the city, or built much later and named in his honor for the same purpose.

In any event, the Tower of David is one of the few structures in the city that has survived in one form or another over the centuries. The Citadel has been damaged and rebuilt on numerous occasions, losing a little of its height as time has gone on, but none of its grandeur. In King Herod's time there were three massive towers near the Jaffa Gate, but the various wars and sieges have seen them fall into disrepair. When the Romans took control of the city they ordered that everything there be leveled except the remaining foundations of the towers, which were left to remind any who came through the area that a city of formidable strength had fallen before them.

It's safe to say the tower has its significance in the history of the city, not the least of which is as a place of defense. During many of the attacks on Jerusalem, the tower was used to hold supplies and as a last ditch effort to keep the citizens of the city safe from invaders.

The tower has known blood and grief for centuries, and many believe it remembers every injustice. The Cappadocian named Marcus dwells in the substructures of the Towers of Herod, long lost from mortal sight but accessible to a few knowledgeable Cainites. Though he has never seen anything, Marcus has heard sounds coming from even further below the Tower of David, and on several occasions he's received visions of a figure trapped in the darkness, clawing slowly but patiently at a heavy stone barrier. He believes the sounds are coming from something that is not quite dead and not exactly alive, but beyond that the voices of the Restless Dead prevent his learning any more. Marcus has not mentioned these nightmarish images that haunt his daily rests, even to Paliuro, but there is a growing unease about the Cappadocian in the limited circles he moves in.

### UNDERPINNINGS

The Dome of the Rock rests over the ruins of what was once called Antonia's Fortress. The latter was a tower added to the site by the Hasmoneans and fortified by Herod, who then renamed it after Mark Anthony. Titus destroyed it in 70 CE when he took the city.



## TEMPLE MOUNT (HARAM ES SHARIF) AND THE DOME OF THE ROCK

The Temple Mount has been a place of power, in one form or another, since 1004 BCE. Even now it remains one of the holiest places in Jerusalem. The Temple Mount was the site of King David's palace and once held the Ark of the Covenant. Later, Solomon built his great Temple on the site, along with a larger palace.

### THE DOME OF THE ROCK

Also known as the Furthest Mosque, the Dome of the Rock itself is one of only three mosques to which Muslims may make pilgrimage (along with the Sacred Mosque in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque in Medina). It sits on the northeast side of the Temple Mount, north of the al-Aqsa Mosque. The dome itself rises over 105 feet and stretches 60 feet wide over the Noble Rock, the stone from which the Prophet ascended to Heaven. Built up around the Noble Rock (which was not disturbed in the construction), the mosque was initiated by the Umayyad Caliph Albdul Malik ibn Marwan in 685 CE to commemorate the Prophet's Night Journey.

### AL-AQSA MOSQUE

Rebuilt in 1033 by Caliph al-Dhahir, the al-Aqsa Mosque has been a center of learning for centuries. It is said that the reconstruction hewed faithful to the earlier incarnations of the building, except that it was made narrower. In truth, the entire area is considered part of al-Aqsa, and the courtyard regularly fills with the devout when the Noble Sanctuary itself overflows.

### THE WAILING WALL

*For our destroyed Temple — Here we come and weep.  
For our fallen glory — Here we come and weep.  
For our exterminated people — Here we come  
and weep.*

The Wailing Wall is the single remaining piece of the Temple, and as such is of profound importance to

those who follow the Jewish faith. The wall stands 66.5 feet in height and just over 90 feet in length, and is a part of the Western Wall of the Temple Mount. The closest buildings are only a dozen feet away, leaving remarkably little room for gatherings of worshipers who often make pilgrimages to the last remaining section of the Temple. Ironically enough, the Wailing Wall was not a part of the Temple proper; instead, it served as a portion of the retaining wall that supported and enclosed Herod's structural changes to the Temple Mount.

The crevices between the massive stones that form the wall are filled with paper scraps upon which prayers have been written, and the ground before the wall has been worn smooth by centuries of pilgrims coming to pray at the site. There are very specific rules for praying at the Wailing Wall, which include the segregation of men and women — women must always move to the extreme right of the wall, following the Jewish belief that women should not pray where men pray — the wearing of appropriate attire and so on.

Behind the Wailing Wall, within the ground beneath the Temple Mount is a dark labyrinthine sprawl of chambers, pitfalls and passages, most of which are unknown to the people of Jerusalem. Some Cainites believe that something very powerful is hidden within the darkness, though most simply take advantage of the superb possibilities for havening that the site offer. Mortals still enter the area from time to time, rebuilding the supports that hold the Temple Mount aloft.

### VIA DOLOROSA (THE WAY OF SORROWS) AND THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER

The Way of Sorrows follows what is believed to be the route that Jesus Christ took through Jerusalem on his way from the praetorium to the place of his crucifixion in Calvary. Part of Constantine's mother Helena's trip to the region was a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. There she carefully studied the locations where tradition, various writings and visions told her Jesus had walked during his last days. Since that time the Way of Sorrows has become a well-traveled series of locations where many pilgrims come to contemplate the sacrifice the Son of God made for them.

The Way of Sorrows is also famous in Jerusalem as the main stretch of road for vendors of every imaginable product. From the mundane to the allegedly arcane, there is little a person cannot purchase if they know whom to speak with. Most of the stock sold in the "Night Market" is either illegal or stolen. The largest difference is that the vendors in this area do not need a bazaar to hock their wares. They are the shady figures in

Ya Sin.  
By the wise Qur'an.  
Surely you are among those sent on a straight path.  
A revelation of the Mighty, the Compassionate.  
That you might warn a people whose fathers  
were never warned, so they are heedless.  
Qur'an, Surah 36:1-6

### JERUSALEM BY NIGHT



The stations are as follows:

**Station One:** Jesus is condemned to death after suffering extreme tortures, including a crown of thorns that cuts his flesh and makes him bleed heavily.

**Station Two:** Jesus receives the Cross at the foot of the Antonia.

**Station Three:** Jesus stumbles and falls, blood from his wounds falling upon the ground.

**Station Four:** Jesus meets again with his mother.

**Station Five:** Simon the Cyrene helps Jesus bear the weight of the Cross.

**Station Six:** Veronica wipes Jesus' face clean of blood and dirt.

**Station Seven:** Jesus falls a second time.

**Station Eight:** Jesus consoles the women of Jerusalem.

**Station Nine:** Jesus falls to the ground a third time.

**Station Ten:** Jesus is stripped of his garments.

**Station Eleven:** Jesus is nailed to the Cross.

**Station Twelve:** Jesus dies on the Cross.

**Station Thirteen:** Jesus is taken down from the Cross and presented to his grieving mother.

**Station Fourteen:** Jesus is laid in the chamber of the Sepulcher and later resurrected.

These stations are considered sacred by Christians, and are among the holiest of sites because of their connection with the Son of God. The last five stations are all located within the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

the darkened corners, and the loiterers whom only the locals can tell from the faithful who pay homage at the stations of Jesus' last walk through the city. Boniface is often found in this area, and his intense dislike of those who would sell forged relics of the saints and other frauds is very well known. Those who would stay on his good side do their best to avoid being seen speaking to the "wrong" vendors in the area.

The Church of the Holy Sepulcher has been built and destroyed several times. Its latest incarnation is by far the largest and most elaborate structure of them all, and comes close to rivaling the Temple Mount in both its scope and its grandeur.

### THE POOL OF HEZEKIAH

This low pool of pure, sweet water is believed to come from the water tunnel built by Hezekiah. Though few believe the claims, there are a number of people who state emphatically that the waters have healing properties. Whatever the case may be, the waters are fresh and the pool is often used as a meeting place and a landmark.

### THE MURISTAN BAZAAR

Just east of the Pool of Hezekiah is the Muristan Bazaar, one of the better areas for traders to make a profit and purchasers to avoid being swindled... too badly. The open air and easy access of the bazaar make the area feel less claustrophobic than many other parts of the city, and also make the jobs of the local muggers a bit more difficult. Far away from the city walls, the bazaar is less well defended by the guards, but just as safe as most of the more reputable marketplaces in Jerusalem. There are many things available for purchase or trade in the bazaar, and most of them are legitimate; the traders cater willingly to all faiths and nationalities.

The atmosphere of friendliness vanishes with the vendors, however, and they all fade away before sunset. On several occasions the bodies of badly mutilated animals have been dumped in this vicinity. Once the body of a woman was left in the same way. None of the city's Cainites know what happened, but a few have their suspicions, particularly regarding the mysterious figure of Mandalay.









# Chapter Four: The Cainites of Jerusalem

There are too many Cainites in Jerusalem. Normally the childer of Caine dwell in relative solitude; too many in one place leads to mortal suspicions and conflict over limited resources. So, like any other predators, Cainites establish territories with sufficient room for them to hunt comfortably. It is not a perfect system, but in most cases it works well enough.

And then there is Jerusalem. Too many Cainites seek to possess it. Too many pilgrims who can vanish and never be missed enter the gates. Too many merchant caravans can afford to lose a few guards here and there. There are too many holy sites, religious icons, places of power - all of these draw the childer of Caine like a corpse draws flies. So while the mortal city settles into an uneasy peace, the immortal one seethes with barely-restrained conflict. While the constant influx of pilgrims, mercenaries, merchants and vagabonds means that there is almost enough for everyone to feed upon in relative safety, no one is comfortable with things as they stand. No one feels safe.

The streets of the Holy City have run red with blood before. They may yet do so again.



# ASSAMITES

If vampirism is proof that Allah can curse humans, then it is in the holy places — the places that Allah has blessed — that Assamites can hope to regain Allah's favor. Now that control of Jerusalem has been won back from the crusading Europeans, the Assamites are not about to relinquish the chance to extract vengeance.

After the atrocities of the First Crusade's capture of Jerusalem in 1099 and the True Deaths of several members of the clan, the Assamites have gathered their spies and recruited locals, honing the focused edge of their hatred. One powerful Assamite of Berber and Iberian blood, a childe of Tariq who was recently involved in Fatimid Cairo intrigue, is actively infiltrating the crusader organizations of Jerusalem. Al-Ain, the "Eyes of Alamut," is quite new to the city, but he is learning the secrets of all sides quickly. He is joined by the female assassin Habiba and a young, Muslim road killer named Rashid, who was torn from his homeland by the crusaders and is now thirsty for revenge.

## GABRIEL CHAVEZ / AL-AIN, THE EYES OF ALAMUT

**Background:** Gabriel Chavez was born in Sitges, just outside of Barcelona, in 699 CE, the bastard son of an Iberian mother he grew to despise and an unknown Berber Muslim father. Watching his mother's allegiance swing like leaves on the wind with the regional struggles of the Muslim Umayyads and Christian Visigoths, Gabriel grew to reject his maternal heritage. He left home at his first opportunity, and sought to join the Umayyads' so that he could learn the true ways of honor and of the Book.



JERUSALEM BY NIGHT

The Muslim leaders, ever practical, soon decided that Allah had not blessed Gabriel with a warrior's strength. He instead expressed the subtlety and alertness of a cat and the idealistic loyalty of a hound. Gabriel was used as a native Iberian infiltrator, gracefully gathering information and dispatching slumbering enemies, framing the innocent and creating enemy unrest at every opportunity. He became more confident in this role as his faith in Qur'anic ways grew — Allah had blessed him with powers to punish the oppressive and unenlightened Visigoths, and he spared no sympathy for the Iberian locals who did not gladly welcome the civilized rule of the Muslims. Gabriel's skillful ear and blade and his loyal heart of stone soon attracted the notice of Tariq, an assassin master of the Umayyad Caliphate in Cordoba.

Eight years passed before a stunned Gabriel discovered certain evidence of his own caliph's collusion with the Goths to divide the region based on crude capital gains rather than ideology. The truth was clear: The caliph and his advisors had become weak and soft, indulgent of the ways of the West, and Gabriel's years of service in Allah's name were now nothing more than hollow actions without meaning. His visions of a grand Muslim occupation of Iberia crumbled to barren dust. Knowing that reports of what he had discovered would only be seen as treacherous, yet still unwilling to contribute to the deceit, Gabriel had already prepared to end his own life when he was approached by Tariq.

Tariq spoke to Gabriel of Allah, of Mohammad, of Haqim and the spiritual path of the Cainites of Alamut. With Tariq's steely and confident words, Gabriel rediscovered his purpose, and vowed his service and his life to the clan. After the customary Assamite training and Embrace by Tariq, Gabriel's education continued through the next 250 years as he ascended to become rafiq and blood childe of his clan. He readily absorbed the languages of the region, still admiring the nobility of the scholars of al-Andalus even as he scorned the petty infighting of the mortal Moors.

In 975 CE, superbly restrained and loyal Assamites were required to infiltrate the upstart Fatimid Caliphate in Cairo. The Fatimids and their Pharaonic culture reeked of Setite manipulations, and Gabriel's Berber Moorish heritage put him below the threshold of suspicion among the Egyptians. He learned how to gather information in cities and to infiltrate the Fatimid palaces, and his contracts included renegade Setite and Muslim alike. It was here that Gabriel's subtlety, loyalty and honor in dealing with the childer of the Serpent earned him the title of the "Eyes of Alamut."

Understanding the threat and the barbarian mentality of the familiar Christian forces of the First Crusade — and of Iberian mercenaries in particular — Gabriel trav-



eled to Jerusalem in 1107. Elimination of a suitable target was simple, and he traveled into Jerusalem in Christian pilgrim guise. In the ensuing years he traded information with other Cainites when it suited him, learning what secrets he could of the crusaders and their princes.

However, the recent defeat of the crusaders by Salah al-Din's forces did not have the galvanizing effect that Gabriel had expected. Though 200 Templars and Hospitallers were ritually slain by Muslim forces, the religious concessions and continued Christian presence within the city gnaw at him. He cannot help but question the motives of even one as pious as Salah al-Din, and he finds his faith in the ways of the Qur'an and the Muslim leadership wavering, while only the roads of blood and vengeance remain strong in his heart. His clanmates Habiba and Rashid sympathize with his views, but only share a glimmer of the fire in Gabriel's eyes.

And so Gabriel has assumed the role implied by his epithet once again, creating unrest and mistrust among crusader Lasombra, Ventrue and Toreador houses. He has ghouled Don Marco, a highly placed Italian scribe, and through him has uncovered important information about Christian Cainite pilgrims and their travels. He has also killed a Toreador pilgrim and saved the blood for Habiba. The presence of an Assamite spy somewhere within the crusader forces has not escaped the eyes of Father Paliuro, who carefully and indirectly feeds Gabriel damning information on those he views as his Cainite enemies. This information has recently focused on the Narsean Lasombra Magdalena, implicating her family in numerous collusions with the crusaders.

**Image:** Gabriel's mixed blood is only apparent to those that have seen his true form; his subtle applications of Obfuscate, combined with knowledge of disguise and language, make him difficult to uncover by even the subtlest of inquiries. When he appears at gatherings, he is seen but not observed, ever the common face in the crowd.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are clever and cautious. When you exchange information, you somehow manage to come away with more than you gave while giving the impression of equanimity. Be focused and deliberate, and never flinch.

**Haven:** Gabriel sometimes finds refuge in the dwelling of Don Marco. At other times he joins Habiba in her caves outside of town, for he is refreshed by her singular Muslim devotion and her strong character.

**Secrets:** Gabriel is tiring of the duplicity of his life, of infiltration instead of action — as if maintaining the fragile existence of a Cainite were not enough, he also must pretend to be Lasombra or Toreador on demand. He wishes to strike the blows that balance the betrayal, to wash the streets with crusader blood and restore Allah to glory. He's thinking about forming an alliance with Azif, the Brujah, to just that end.

**Influence:** Gabriel is rapidly working his way up through the clan hierarchy and has considerable influence over Habiba, his occasional lover — but his mixed heritage makes the Silsila Assamite elders nervous. Still, he keeps his word of honor, his information is invaluable, and he shows definite promise.

**Destiny:** Gabriel wisely avoids returning to his native region, and thereby avoids the Inquisition. He will eventually be betrayed to the Ottomans early in the 16th century, sacrificed by the Assamites for his increasingly insubordinate temperament.

**Clan:** Assamite

**Sire:** Tariq

**Nature:** Fanatic

**Demeanor:** Survivor

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 729 CE

**Apparent Age:** mid-20s

**Physical:** Strength 3, Dexterity 6 (Catlike Reflexes), Stamina 5 (Enduring)

**Social:** Charisma 4 (Charming), Manipulation 5 (Smooth), Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 5 (Insightful), Intelligence 4 (Clever), Wits 6 (Combat Nerves)

**Talents:** Acting 3, Alertness 5 (Traps), Athletics 4 (Thrown Objects), Brawl 3, Dodge 5 (Sidestep), Subterfuge 4 (Changing the Subject)

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Archery 4 (Moving Target), Etiquette 4 (Foreign Customs), Melee 4 (Knives), Stealth 4 (Hide), Survival 3

**Knowledges:** Academics 3, Investigation 4 (Locate Informant), Linguistics 4 (Diplomatic), Occult 2, Politics 4 (Vampiric Hierarchy)

**Disciplines:** Auspex 4, Celerity 5, Dominate 4, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 5, Potence 3, Quietus 5

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

**Virtues:** Conviction 4, Self-Control 5, Courage 7

**Road:** Road of Blood 7

**Willpower:** 8

## HABIBA AL-SIKKEEN

**Background:** Habiba al-Sikkeen is proof that the Embrace of Shabah (the first woman Assamite) was no mistake. However, unlike Shabah, who used her woman's wiles to lure victims into her grasp, Habiba uses another trait frequently attributed to women: vindictiveness.

Habiba is a devout Muslim, and was also blessed by Allah as a natural and talented assassin. Being a Muslim, a female and an assassin may be an unusual combination of traits, but Habiba is determined to prove that she is as capable (and as devout) as any man. To those who do not know her well —





and there are few that do — these attributes combine to create an impression of arrogance and defiance. It is possible that time and association with Gabriel will temper her attitude into one of quiet competence.

Habiba was born into a tribe of desert nomads in early 9th century Arabia. The only child of the tribe's butcher, she acquired much of her skill with a knife from her father, severing tendon from bone and expertly slitting the throats of lambs. Her father is also to blame for a large portion of Habiba's unbecoming self-confidence, which annoys those Muslim men who expect women to be politely subservient. The Prophet Muhammad, her father taught her, expected women to think for themselves, just as he did men. If that meant questioning traditional patriarchal lines of authority, then so be it.

As her father grew older and the strength slipped from his fingers, Habiba took over the butchery duties herself. During a night of Ramadan in her 16th year, she was expertly dissecting a carcass and quietly chanting Qur'anic verses to herself in preparation for another hot day's fasting. The scene attracted an amused old man that she did not recognize, and he dutifully explained to her that she would make no man a fit wife in her current state. Habiba's fingers gave no moment of pause as she eyed him confidently, explaining that her knife could very easily carve him into a suitable wife instead.

The insolence of the girl amused the Cainite as much as her skill impressed him, and he made it his business to monitor her tribe's trades and paths through the desert. She remained steady in her faith and grew to defend her tribe, taking the lives of raiders with expert knife throws. It was not until her blade also found the

throat of one of her own tribesmen, a vicious misogynist whose continued torments developed into physical abuse, that her sire decided she had the strength and will for the Embrace and the Road of Blood.

Through her Embrace and training at Alamut, Habiba's faith remained unshaken, and she incorporated the Road of Blood and her Muslim practice into her own unique set of beliefs. The Muslim childer of Haqim, men and women such as Habiba herself, are Allah's powers throughout the material world. They purge the mortals that follow the Book — Muslim, Jew and Christian alike — of those cursed by Allah. They and their henchmen are now her clan's lambs for the slaughter.

After serving her apprenticeship, Habiba was placed in the territories of Jerusalem sometime near 850 CE. Since then, she has mainly worked as a contract assassin. She views her place within the city as an example of how a woman may be empowered by Allah, and she respects the Jews of the city as cousins of the Book, understanding both the Rabbinic traditions and the differing views of the Karaites. All of this, however, holds a secondary place to her honor and the necessary fulfillment of her contracts.

Habiba's nomadic heritage gives her the confidence to travel the outskirts of Jerusalem by night. She survived the crusader massacre of the city in 1099 by setting lethal traps in a cave on the Mount of Olives to the west and establishing this as her haven. Habiba chose the site because it overlooks the plain of al-Sahira, where Muslims will gather before Resurrection Day. She is one of the few pre-invasion Jerusalem Cainites who owe Etheria no debt of refuge. In fact, not only is Etheria's haughty presence outside of the city in Bethlehem an annoyance, but Habiba also believes that the Cainite's urban political games are devious and misguided. If Habiba ever confirms that Etheria helped instigate the Crusades, she will meet her Final Death by Habiba's blade.

In the chaos and oppression of the following years, Habiba was injured and had immediate need of an ally — and so Embraced Rashid, a local contact of hers who knew the valleys and roads surrounding Jerusalem almost as well as she. Though not particularly attractive, he was a strong man, and Habiba took secret delight in instructing the vengeful youth on the Blood Road until Gabriel and other Assamite forces arrived years later.

Now Habiba continues her contract work and sometimes beds with Gabriel, arguing over faith and freedoms. Though the foreigner's distant ways and mysterious, mixed blood intrigue her, and the two have a grudging but affectionate respect, Habiba also believes in the Muslim order, the traditions of Qur'an and the wisdom of the caliph, and she does not share his misgivings about the Muslim leadership. Gabriel also understands that he needs Habiba and her remaining control over Rashid to

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infiltrate or destroy Frankish crusader caravans on the open road, and he uses charismatic flattery to bend her will to this end.

Who Habiba kills doesn't matter much to her — a contract is a contract — but she thinks it's more interesting to go after the elite members of the crusader forces. They are so convinced of their invulnerability (and of the competence of their guards) that they're always nicely surprised when they see the sharp gleam of Habiba's blade approaching; she appreciates their voiceless screams of Final Death that fail to alert their comrades. The now-vulnerable Ventrue crusaders are particularly tempting targets, with their naive assumption that battles of honor are waged only on the battlefield. In particular, Habiba's informants carefully track the movements of Lucius and his two childer.

**Image:** Habiba's dark hair is kept shorter than most women's; it doesn't get in her eyes when it's loose. Devout as she is, Habiba finds the traditional veils cumbersome when she is about her business. She prefers the practicality of masculine dress when she works alone, wearing a simple shirt and loose trousers that can be bound close to the leg when necessary. In the shadowed recesses of Jerusalem's streets she easily passes for a man to those who do not look too closely.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are watchful, and usually silent. A nod or a shrug serves for most communication. When you do speak, it is in a deliberate whisper.

**Haven:** Habiba havens in a small cave set well into the hillside on the Mount of Olives, across the valley from the city. She has crafted several deadly traps within to assure that those who intrude do not survive the experience.

**Secrets:** On rare occasions, Habiba regrets that she's not more alluring. But Allah has blessed her with the talent of an assassin along with the slyness of a woman, so she must use those blessings to bring glory to Him.

**Influence:** Habiba does not have much influence, yet. But word about her skills is spreading among the Assamites.

**Destiny:** Habiba will become one of the all-time great assassins. Her suspicions about Etheria will be confirmed, and Habiba will track down and diablerize Etheria as a result. No one is quite sure where Habiba eventually comes to rest, but over the centuries, rumors have placed her in Cairo, Tobruk and Munich.

**Clan:** Assamite

**Sire:** Qusay ibn Namdar

**Nature:** Fanatic

**Demeanor:** Survivor

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 842 CE

**Apparent Age:** mid-20s

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 4 (Supple), Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Intimidation 2, Subterfuge 2

**Skills:** Archery 2, Crafts 1, Herbalism 2, Melee 5 (Knives), Ride 2, Stealth 4 (Lurk), Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 2, Investigation 3, Linguistics 1, Occult 2, Science 1

**Disciplines:** Celerity 5, Obfuscate 4, Obtenebration 2, Quietude 5, Potence 2

**Backgrounds:** Allies 1, Resources 1, Status 1

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

**Road:** Road of Blood 8

**Willpower:** 6

## 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 blood-thirsty 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



CHAPTER FOUR: CAINITES OF JERUSALEM



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 Azif's desire to clean the city of Christians, but sees Azif'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.

**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)

**Knowledge:** Hearth Wisdom 2, Linguistics 1, Medicine 2

**Disciplines:** Celerity 3, Obfuscate 2, 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

## BRUJAH

The Brujah in Jerusalem are divided along classic lines: Etheria and Boniface strive for harmony and protection, and Azif and his childer take the more militant role. Add into the mix favors owed and not yet repaid and differing fervent religious beliefs, and the Jerusalem Brujah cannot agree about much of anything.

### BONIFACE

**Background:** Boniface was born into a prominent Roman Senatorial family amid a maelstrom of confusion and terror — a mere two days before the sack of Rome in 410 CE. During the chaos, Visigoth invaders allowed the stunned Romans to take refuge in three of the largest Christian churches in the city. Boniface's

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mother took shelter there with thousands of others; his father was killed trying to save their house from being burned in the ensuing conflagration. Alone, frightened, but still thankful for her survival, his mother left Boniface with the Christian clergy and returned to her own family in Umbria.

Boniface studied letters and numbers under monastic tutelage, and learned Greek from a visiting scholar in addition to his native Latin. In his early 20s, he came to the attention of Pope Celestine, and was fortunate enough to become one of the Bishop of Rome's secretaries. A devout, earnest young man, Boniface earned the trust of Celestine, and was sent on several important theological missions: to southern Gaul, Carthage and even to Constantinople with letters to the emperor. Celestine died, and Boniface continued in the service of Pope Sixtus, and then Pope Leo. In 442 CE Boniface was made one of the archdeacons of Rome before becoming a priest two years later. He had the career opportunity of his life in 451 CE when Leo chose him to be one of his envoys to the Council of Chalcedon in Asia Minor along with a bishop from southern Italy. Leo and Boniface drafted the Papal Tome quite carefully, although naturally only Leo signed it. Still, Boniface was certain that his career in the Church was now assured.

The work was quite successful at the Council, and Boniface was pleased at its reception. His authorship was even acknowledged, quietly; he was invited to an evening gathering at the summer palace of the Emperor Marcian to celebrate the creation of the Patriarchies of Constantinople and Jerusalem. As was appropriate for a member of the monastic clergy, he had avoided women all his life; yet Boniface found himself strangely drawn to

a pale older woman of the court named Etheria. She praised his words in the Council and spoke of the strong promise of his career in the Church. Etheria hinted that she could have him assigned to Jerusalem, perhaps to become the new patriarch of the city when the current fool in that office died in a few years.

Boniface believed her. He delayed his return to Rome, and spent more and more time with Etheria, first at the palace, then alone at a private house in the evenings. In 452 CE, the letter he had been waiting for finally arrived from Rome: Leo told him to go to Jerusalem. He and Etheria traveled there separately, he by road, she by ship and then horse and sedan chair. Boniface joined the clergy of the Nea Church, and became secretary to the patriarch, and then chief priest of the Church of the Anastasis (which would, in a few centuries, be better known as the Church of the Holy Sepulcher). All the time, Etheria used her apparently deep influence within the local Church structure to win him favor. Boniface continued to visit her every evening, transfixed by her beauty. He successfully ignored the look of barely contained hunger in her eyes during these visits, perhaps shielded by his Faith.

Both Etheria and Boniface overestimated how far a Latin could rise in the Eastern Church, though. Boniface was not elected to succeed the dead Patriarch of Jerusalem; a prominent preacher from Antioch was chosen by the emperor instead. The following year, Pope Leo died and Boniface was left without patrons in the world.

Despairing of his life's work in the Church, Boniface took a more pragmatic view of sacred politics. He accepted the Embrace when Etheria offered it to him in 462 CE. If he could not be patriarch himself, Boniface reasoned, he could still be influential in the patriarch's organization. This proved to be neither challenging nor satisfying, and as the decades passed he grew to question his role in God's order, the meaning of his power. When no answers were forthcoming, the Cainite made a swift journey by night out into the Judean wilderness and closed himself in a cave, where he sank into torpor.

Boniface returned to Jerusalem near 800 CE, tremendously changed by his wilderness experiences. He has been renewed in his faith and sees God's role for him as that of a holy protector of the non-militant Christian pilgrims of Jerusalem. This has been his mission for years. The senseless slaughter of the First Crusade both angered and horrified him, and many believe Boniface is secretly relieved that the city is once again open and at relative peace in Muslim hands. He respected the ideals of Salah al-Din, and is deeply concerned that his death will ignite another firestorm of destruction in the region.



After the First Crusade, Boniface took up residence beneath the Hospitaller's Quarters; he primarily feeds on Hospitallers and militants who steal and misguide the Christian pilgrims in order to line their own pockets. He knows that the Lasombra and Ventrue use the crusaders' zeal to their own ends, and so has worked to undermine their direct influence among the politically powerful Hospitallers and Knights Templars in the past. From time to time, he has even made journeys outward from Jerusalem, notably to Rome in 1091 with Etheria, to urge the five-year treaty of peace on behalf of Christians in the Holy Land.

One of the matters that Boniface takes very seriously is Cainite predation in the four Christian hospitals currently under his protection: Saint Mary Zion, the Provencal Hostel, Saint Mark Hostel and the Hostel of St. Stephen. He forbids vampires from preying in them without his permission, and he has hunted down and staked more than one Cainite who has ignored his edict.

**Image:** Boniface is a small man with a narrow face framed by tonsured black hair. He appears to be in his late forties or early fifties. He is fit and thin, just as a monastic ascetic should be, and his strong fingers are often spotted with ink.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are an intense man with an unswerving mission to protect pilgrims in the city of Jerusalem. You can be rude and short-tempered. From time to time you can be drawn into theological discussions, although you tend to be more inclined to follow Greek rather than Roman theology these days.

**Haven:** A half-ruined crypt beneath the Hospitaller's Quarters is where Boniface rests.

**Secrets:** Boniface cares more about mortal politics than he suspects he should. After all, he's a scholar and a religious man, not a petty politician. He finds, however, that being able to see events over hundreds of years provides a fascinating perspective that is difficult to ignore.

**Influence:** Boniface completely and directly controls the hospitals under his care. This gives him influence throughout the city.

**Destiny:** Boniface survives Azif's plots. He maintains his close ties with Etheria, although eventually he tires of Jerusalem and falls into torpor under Etheria's watchful eye.

**Clan:** Brujah

**Sire:** Etheria

**Nature:** Fanatic

**Demeanor:** Defender

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 462 CE

**Apparent Age:** late 40s, early 50s

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**Physical:** Strength 4 (Wiry), Dexterity 2, Stamina 4 (Determined)

**Social:** Charisma 4 (Eloquent), Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 4 (Insightful), Intelligence 4 (Knowledgeable), Wits 4 (Practiced)

**Talents:** Alertness 4 (Ambushes), Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 4 (Find Cover), Intimidation 4 (Subtle)

**Skills:** Etiquette 2, Melee 3, Ride 2, Stealth 2, Survival 3

**Knowledges:** Academics 4 (Theology), History 4 (Roman), Investigation 2, Linguistics 2, Politics 4 (Religious)

**Disciplines:** Auspex 2, Celerity 5, Dominate 3, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 2, Potence 5, Presence 6

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 2, Influence 3, Mentor 3, Resources 2, Status 3

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

**Road:** Road of Heaven 8

**Willpower:** 6

## AZIF

**Background:** Azif was a vicious, devious and rich merchant of spices and frankincense in Alexandria when he was Embraced sometime around 230 BCE. Knowing from prior dealings with Cainites that his sire would surely demand a blood oath from him, Azif treacherously turned and diablerized the Cainite instead, choosing to be hunted rather than to serve. His flight from the ensuing hunt dragged him into poverty, returning him home to his extended family in southern Arabia, narrowly escaping both shapechangers and sunlight.

Azif took control of his family's business through proxies and dominated relatives, and proceeded to





rebuild his wealth. As a Cainite among kine this life soon bored him, however. He became a student of folklore, a collector of fabled tales with which he could enchant small, midnight audiences. The stories that passed the ears and lips of Azif and his ghouls included the roots of Christianity and Islam, for knowing the faiths of the merchants and traders is yet another power one can use to strike a favorable bargain. As the years passed and borders changed, he shifted his operations from southern Arabia to Medina, and then to Palestine: first to Ceasarea, then up the coast. When the crusaders came, he moved east into Damascus.

Sometime around 1120, Azif came to Jerusalem intent on finding ways to undermine the crusader state and to restore the city to its rightful Muslim overlords. After decades of hiding his true loyalties by carefully working with Boniface to weaken the Hospitallers and Templars, he turned his supply lines and support to the armies of Salah al-Din after the Battle of Hattin in 1187. Though they share Brujah blood, he views Boniface's idealistic protector spirit as weak, and knows that Boniface is a pawn of Etheria and the infidel crusaders. He therefore seeks to turn on them and destroy them as he did his own sire; Azif has sired several childer in this effort, one of whom, Jared, he controls more completely with a blood oath.

**Image:** Azif is a dark-skinned for a Cainite. His curly hair is very short, and he dresses in black and gray. He is obviously used to attention and income, and carries himself with an air of charismatic affluence.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are a merchant storyteller like Varsik, the Ravnos. However, you are now firmly anti-Christian and staunchly militant Muslim, and the promise of extirpating the infidels burns dark in your spirit. You are a crafty and resourceful negotiator with a wealth of knowledge concerning customs and faiths.

**Haven:** A side chamber in the rock-cut halls below the Temple Mount forms Azif's haven.

**Secrets:** Azif is just about ready to start bringing down Boniface... and when he does, the Brujah presence in Jerusalem is going to change!

**Influence:** Azif has a growing group of partially educated childer over whom he exerts total control, as well as a substantial network of friends and allies among his Muslim brothers.

**Destiny:** Azif's plots against Boniface do not succeed. His hold on his childer is too tenuous, his moves are too bold. He flees Jerusalem when the situation becomes untenable and heads — with what childer he can gather around him on short notice — back to Alexandria.

**Clan:** Brujah

**Sire:** Unknown

**Nature:** Rogue

**Demeanor:** Innovator

**Generation:** 4th

**Embrace:** 230 BCE

**Apparent Age:** late 30s

**Physical:** Strength 4 (Wiry), Dexterity 5 (Slippery), Stamina 6 (Stubborn)

**Social:** Charisma 4 (Eloquent), Manipulation 4 (Persuasive), Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4 (Quick)

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 4 (Business Negotiations), Leadership 3, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Etiquette 3, Melee 4 (Daggers), Ride 2, Stealth 4 (Crowds)

**Knowledges:** Investigation 4 (Appraisal), Law 4 (Commerce), Linguistics 4 (Business), Occult 2, Politics 4 (Vampiric Hierarchies)

**Disciplines:** Auspex 3, Celerity 4, Dominate 3, Fortitude 3, Obfuscate 4, Potence 4, Presence 4, Protean 2

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Contacts 4, Herd 1, Influence 3, Resources 3, Retainers, Status 2

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

**Road:** Road of Heaven 4

**Willpower:** 7

## JARED

**Background:** Jared was born Christian and entered into the Hospitaller order at a young age, showing promise with his healing skills before being Embraced and blood oathed by Azif, who desired a military pawn





near Boniface's haven. Jared rages against Boniface's idealistic blindness, while at the same time doing Azif's bidding and contending with his own fading Christian principles. He speaks French and Latin, and his Greek and Arabic are improving, though still limited.

Jared is more aware of his status as a pawn than most Cainites. He understands that Boniface hates him because of his association with a mortal military order, and that Azif hates him because he is a Christian. Unable to find much sympathy from either his sire or his sire's enemy, Jared spends what free time he has assisting the Nosferatu among the lepers with his limited medical knowledge and helping the many poor of Jerusalem. He tries to hunt exclusively from thieves and murderers; he feels this is just punishment for their crimes.

**Image:** Until recently, Jared usually dressed in the white habit with black cross that is the lay brother's uniform of the Hospitaller order. Since the Muslim leaders have expelled the order from the city, Jared has taken to wearing an undyed linen robe resembling a Cistercian habit. He appears to be in his late 30s or early 40s, with his fair hair tonsured.

**Roleplaying Hints:** As a mortal you were cool and collected, and you try to maintain this façade. There is a deep rage within you now, however: the Beast burns hot in your blood. You spend so much time running errands for your sire that your vampiric education is both limited and inadequate. As a result, you are often distracted, irritable, nervous and hungry, and your outward calm is pierced rapidly in any extended conflict or argument.

**Haven:** An unused cistern underneath the cloister of the Hospital of St. John serves as haven to Jared.

**Secrets:** This is all too new; Jared is still trying to figure out his place in unlife.

**Influence:** Jared has none, yet. He'll soon begin building an information network, however, as his understanding and range of activities expands.

**Destiny:** Jared's destiny lies — unfortunately for Jared — with Azif.

**Clan:** Brujah

**Sire:** Azif

**Nature:** Rebel

**Demeanor:** Caretaker

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 1189

**Apparent Age:** late 30s, early 40s

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

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 2, Intelligence 4 (Astute), Wits 2

**Talents:** Acting 1, Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 3

**Skills:** Herbalism 2, Melee 1, Ride 3, Stealth 1

**Knowledges:** Academics 2, Linguistics 3, Medicine 3

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1, Celerity 2, Potence 2, Presence 2

**Backgrounds:** Allies 1, Contacts 1, Mentor 1

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

**Road:** Road of Humanity 3

**Willpower:** 4

## ETHERIA

**Background:** Etheria was born in Spain of good Hispo-Roman stock, and converted to Christianity early. She became a nun at the age of 16 rather than marry a boy she found both tiresome and ugly, and came to regret the decision. She quickly found that convent life did not suit her vagabond spirit; nonetheless, she was elected abbess, and soon after, used her newfound influence to embark on pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Knowing full well the value of historical records, she wrote many letters and kept a journal of the various rites and rituals she saw, describing all the important churches and shrines she and her fellow travelers visited. Upon arriving in Jerusalem, she decided to stay permanently, inspired by the recent construction of a fabulous church and the many other pilgrims it attracted. Sending her travelogue home, Etheria set up house in the Holy City, and soon came to the attention of a Cainite who found her both attractive and intelligent. Etheria was Embraced about 395 CE.

Over the following years she shifted in positions and recreated her influence within the Church from deep within the confines of the nunneries. She traveled on important Church business with the retinue of the patriarch, siring several childer, including Boniface, over the years. After Boniface's return from torpor near 800 CE,



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she retired to Bethlehem. During the carnage of the First Crusade, Etheria gave refuge to several Jerusalem Cainites who still owe her favors; among them is the Cappadocian Adam, who has promised to protect Boniface in his struggles with Azif.

Etheria visits Jerusalem at Eastertide for several days each year, and then again at Pentecost. Even at those times, however, she is rarely seen. During the First Crusade, she sheltered numerous vampires in and around Bethlehem, but many Cainites — Christian as well as Muslim — believe her influence may have helped instigate the Crusades in the first place.

**Image:** Etheria is a wispy, willowy woman with Roman features and rather dusky skin, at least for a vampire. She dresses in plain shape-hiding gowns of rich cloth, which betray both her noble upbringing and her mortal time in the religious life. She appears to be in her middle thirties, and is haughtily beautiful.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You can be extremely shocking when you wish to be; sensuality and seductiveness are not beyond you, and they worked extremely well on Boniface. Christians are often surprised by this behavior, since your outward demeanor is often very nun-like. Indeed, the “holy woman of Bethlehem” is an image you like to cultivate. It makes you seem weaker than you really are, until it is too late for your victims. Many of the Jerusalem Cainites owe you favors since you provided refuge in Bethlehem during the First Crusade.

**Haven:** Etheria makes her home in a manor in the vicinity of Bethlehem, or when in Jerusalem, a cave near Jeremiah's Grotto, north of the city.

**Secrets:** Etheria thoroughly enjoys her reputation as the “holy woman of Bethlehem.” She would go to any lengths to protect that reputation.

**Influence:** Etheria's influence has spread far and wide among Cainites who have been in Jerusalem for a century or more. This is not to say that she is quick to call in favors, but she gains a certain amount of peace, knowing that she is owed future benefit from past deeds.

**Destiny:** Etheria still lives in Bethlehem, still dispenses refuge among the Cainites seeking escape from political unrest, still calls in favors when one of her childer need protection. At least, she does until Habiba finally garners proof that Etheria helped instigate the Crusades.

**Clan:** Brujah

**Sire:** Unknown

**Nature:** Survivor

**Demeanor:** Innovator

**Generation:** 6th

**Embrace:** 395 CE

**Apparent Age:** mid-30s

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

**Social:** Charisma 4 (Captivating), Manipulation 4 (Persuasive), Appearance 5 (Striking)

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 4 (Sharp Memory), Wits 3

**Talents:** Acting 3, Alertness 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 4 (Gain Trust), Subterfuge 4 (Changing the Subject)

**Skills:** Crafts 3, Etiquette 4 (Church), Melee 1, Music 3, Ride 2, Stealth 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 4 (History), Linguistics 3, Politics 4 (Favors), Seneschal 3

**Disciplines:** Auspex 4, Celerity 3, Dominate 2, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 2, Potence 3, Presence 6

**Backgrounds:** Allies 4, Contacts 3, Herd 2, Influence 4, Resources 4, Retainers 2, Status 3

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

**Road:** Road of Humanity 6

**Willpower:** 8

## YUSUF

**Background:** Yusuf is a Muslim trader whom Azif Embraced 30 years ago; he is Azif's primary tool for controlling his business concerns all over Palestine. Like Jared, he was initially enthralled by Azif's blood oath, though its power has been weakened substantially by long years of distance and travel. He is proud to use the powers that Allah and Azif have granted him. The supplies he sells on Azif's behalf and their men's methodical elimination of enemy stragglers have contributed substantially to the Arab military successes under Salah al-Din.

Yusuf is in Jerusalem for about a week out of every month. He is somewhat frustrated and jealous that Azif has felt the need to Embrace Jared, another weak healer



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like Boniface, instead of relying on his own militant passions. Recently, however, Yusuf's luck has been good — Jeanette, a Christian soothsayer and a Malkavian blessed with the sight, has come under his influence and now seems to trust him. Her truthful visions, such as the locations of the havens of some of the Ventrue crusaders and the prediction of Salah al-Din's death, have given Azif new faith that he and his cause are granted the blessings of Allah.

Yusuf chooses to feed on the enemy, those of his own choice and Azif's. When the Beast goads him on, he ranges well away from his caravans in the night; otherwise he feeds on Christians and even Jews where he can, including the occasional pilgrim near one of Boniface's beloved hospices.

**Image:** Yusuf is a short, overweight Muslim of Persian stock, wearing rings and other finery that indicate his status within his trader communities. He is garrulous among those he can use, including merchants, guards and dancers, and his natural hospitality has earned him the trust of his many contacts.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Be chatty and charming, especially if you perceive a possible use for the person to whom you're speaking. You enjoy playing host to Muslims who fight against the Christians for control of Jerusalem and the surrounding lands. Along with this, you have an intense dislike of both Gangrel and Lupines; both are savages who often cause havoc with your business affairs. Azif's cause is your own, and though the blood oath is weakening, you are loyal to the cause of preserving Muslim control of the Holy City.

**Haven:** An old, Roman cellar near Herod's Gate is home to Yusuf when he's in Jerusalem.

**Secrets:** Yusuf is beginning to wonder if Jeanette is as mad as she seems. Is it possible that she is using Malkavian madness to disguise her vulnerability as a female? And where does she get her information and prophecies?

**Influence:** Yusuf has less influence than he'd like to believe. Azif is tiring of Yusuf's jealousy, and may find that it is possible to operate without the benefit of his childer's abilities.

**Destiny:** Yusuf's manipulations eventually annoy Azif to the extent that Azif "neglects" to collect Yusuf when leaving Jerusalem. Yusuf vanishes into the chaos of history, and there are no reports of him in the modern era.

**Clan:** Brujah

**Sire:** Azif

**Nature:** Survivor

**Demeanor:** Fanatic

**Generation:** 7th

**JERUSALEM BY NIGHT**

**Embrace:** 1167

**Apparent Age:** mid-40s

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

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 1

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 1

**Talents:** Alertness 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Archery 2, Melee 2, Ride 3, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Law 3, Linguistics 2, Politics 3

**Disciplines:** Celerity 3, Potence 3, Presence 4

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 3, Influence 1, Mentor 2, Resources 3

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

**Road:** Road of Humanity 5

**Willpower:** 6

## CAPPADOCIAN

Where but Jerusalem could so much religious lore exist? The Cappadocian who strives to know more, understand more, incorporate more ancient wisdom, must study in the Holy City.

### ABRAHAM

**Background:** Abraham is the senior Cappadocian in Jerusalem, and it is difficult to ascertain how long he has held that distinction. He is certainly one of the oldest vampires in the city, having arrived about the same time Nehemiah did in 445 BCE. In addition to the annual solstice clan gathering, Abraham has occasionally left the city for extended periods, notably from 602 CE to 811 CE and again from 1068 to 1125. Still, he has essentially been in residence for seven and a half centuries, an impressive achievement by anyone's standards.





Abraham's current focus of study is the so-called Black Torah, a scroll reputedly scribed in white ink on blackened parchment and containing further revelations of the Prophet Elijah. Abraham reportedly brought the Black Torah with him to Jerusalem when he returned in 811 CE. Over time he became frustrated with the complexity of the manuscript, and Embraced the young Adam, a promising rabbinical scholar, to assist him in decoding the elaborate messages he believed to be hidden in it.

The search for answers has now consumed some four centuries, and still Abraham studies, writing letters to Cainite and mortal colleagues across Europe and Persia in order to confirm his findings. The chambers beneath the Tiferet Yisra'el Synagogue where Abraham and Adam work are filled with hundreds of pages of parchment and vellum covered in gematria and notariqon anagrams; the place is a fire-trap which would make any sane Cainite extremely nervous.

Although Abraham is exploring revelatory scripture, he is far from mastering his subject matter. He has devoted himself to these mystical studies to understand the place of death in the universe, and perhaps his own place within unlife. As the city of Jerusalem has grown to become a religious focus, so have Abraham's revelations, and he firmly believes that faith, struggle and death have deeper meanings within the surroundings of the Holy City.

Abraham is aware that his student and colleague Adam thinks him mad at this point, thus he is more cautious around the younger Cainite than he used to be. Moreover, he knows that Adam seeks power rather than wisdom. As a result, Abraham has tried to deflect some of Adam's ambition in other directions, returning him to the noble studies of the sacred texts and revelations.

Though there are reports of a clan "alliance" between Ventrue and Cappadocian across Asia Minor, Abraham distrusts the Ventrue crusaders while still respecting their power and devotion to their cause. He meets with the Ventrue Lucius on occasion, trading safe passage of his scholarly letters to the West for information about local Cainite history, and Marcus in particular.

**Image:** The hot, dry air of his tomb has reduced Abraham's torso to a mummified shadow of what it once was. His hair has gone wispy and silver, his form is haggard and thin. He often appears deeply focused as if in prayer and distracted from the world around him.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Cease speaking abruptly, as though suddenly captured by a thought. Drift away from conversations, mumbling aloud. Stare out an imaginary window and return to single-minded talk of the com-

plexities of your studies and the role of Cainites and Jerusalem within them.

**Haven:** An ancient family tomb complex somewhere in the Kidron Valley, west of the city provides a safe haven for the Cappadocian.

**Secrets:** Abraham has many, many, many secrets — where he hides the Black Torah, what the gematria reveal, how thoroughly the revelations of the prophet Elijah will influence future generations — but no secrets of any political nature.

**Influence:** Abraham is of interest only to other scholars; he exerts little influence on the wider social or political structure.

**Destiny:** Abraham fades into obscurity; no one has heard from him for years, but no one ever heard of his Final Death, either.

**Clan:** Cappadocian

**Sire:** Unknown

**Nature:** Fanatic

**Demeanor:** Penitent

**Generation:** 5th

**Embrace:** before 500 BCE

**Apparent Age:** impossibly ancient

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 7(Enduring)

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0

**Mental:** Perception 4 (Insightful), Intelligence 5 (Sharp Memory), Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness 4, Brawl 1, Dodge 3

**Skills:** Herbalism 2, Ride 3

**Knowledges:** Academics 6 (Theology), Hearth Wisdom 3, Investigation 6 (Library Search), Linguistics 6 (Translation), Medicine 3, Occult 6 (Kaballah), Science 3

**Disciplines:** Auspex 6, Celerity 2, Dominate 3, Fortitude 6, Mortis 7, Obfuscate 4, Obtenebration 2, Potence 3

**Backgrounds:** Allies 1, Contacts 4, Resources 2, Status 3

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

**Road:** Road of Heaven 9

**Willpower:** 9

## MARCUS

**Background:** Marcus has not been in Jerusalem for some time; he last visited in 70 CE when he worked with demolition crews to pull down the Temple of the Jewish God who had incited a seemingly subjugated people to revolt against the Roman Empire. During the revolt, Marcus was assigned to decimate two towns; literally, to crucify every tenth man. In three weeks, he and his men hung over 2,000 crosses on the road from Joppa to Tyre, and watched while the victims slowly died.

Marcus's dispassion brought him to the attention of the Cainite Theophilus, who Embraced him, and buried





him alive for three days. After recovering from his "dark night of the soul," Marcus traveled with his sire throughout the empire, conducting a wandering tour of death as the Roman civilization continued to crumble around them. Marcus and Theophilus finally parted ways in Athens near 650 CE.

Since that time Marcus has primarily roamed through the Byzantine Empire, though he has traveled as far as Persia. He allied with Balkan Tzimisce forces to raze monasteries and churches during the height of Byzantine iconoclasm near 730 CE, earning the enmity of the Ventrue, including Lucius. He has also been intrigued by numerous religious philosophies over the past 500 years, including Islam, Latin and Greek Christianity, Manicheism and a host of other studies.

Marcus returned to Jerusalem, the city of his Embrace, approximately two decades ago, and has settled down in the presence of the holy sites of Judaism, Christianity and Islam to reflect on what he has learned over the centuries. He suspects that the Toreador Elsh, a phantom from his distant past, is still here; in the midst of a city ravaged by holy wars, the elegant closure of ancient temple-builder and temple-destroyer amuses him. Marcus cares little for the esoteric studies of Abraham and his child — if those fools wish to waste eternity in a parchment-filled tinderbox, he will not argue.

Three years ago, a ghoul of Paliuro Rustucci's approached Marcus and led him through secret passages to subterranean chambers outside of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The former Cainite prince demanded the Cappadocian's services, preaching plans for experimentation, and destruction transformed to resurrection and everlasting life. Paliuro has dominated Marcus ever

since, perverting the Cappadocian's sacred rituals to his own self-destructive ends. More than one lesser Cainite has been drawn into these rituals, never to be seen again.

**Image:** Marcus is a well-built figure of above-average height with a squared-off face, clipped Roman beard and an aquiline nose. He appears to be about 30 years of age, and often dresses himself in penitent robes to move about the city's Christian districts without attracting undue attention.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You have traveled widely, both as a mortal and as a Cainite. You are extremely self-disciplined, stubborn and single-minded. You have less than the usual regard for holy sites; you helped pull down the Jerusalem Temple, and Yahweh has not struck you down for it yet. So far, it doesn't look like Yahweh, God, Allah or any other deity is going to interfere with you at all.

**Haven:** A chamber deep beneath the foundations of the Citadel acts as his haven, though he also maintains chambers near the Church of the Holy Sepulcher when engaged in purification rituals with Paliuro.

**Secrets:** As defiant as Marcus is about all things religious, he really would prefer that no one find out about Paliuro's domination.

**Influence:** Marcus doesn't much care what anyone else thinks, so exerts little influence and is rarely influenced.

**Destiny:** He will be staked by Duyal as vengeance for Marcus's destruction of Elsh's handiwork — or so rumor has it.

**Clan:** Cappadocian

**Sire:** Theophilus

**Nature:** Rogue

**Demeanor:** Barbarian

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 70 CE

**Apparent Age:** early 30s

**Physical:** Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4 (Stoic)

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4 (Combat Nerves)

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 4 (Wrestling), Dodge 3, Intimidation 3, Leadership 2

**Skills:** Melee 4 (Swords), Ride 3, Stealth 2, Survival 2, Throwing 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 4 (Theology), Linguistics 3, Medicine 3 (Battle Wounds)

**Disciplines:** Animalism 3, Auspex 4, Celerity 3, Fortitude 5, Mortis 5, Obfuscate 3, Potence 4, Presence 3, Protean 2

**Backgrounds:** Influence 1

**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

## JERUSALEM BY NIGHT



Road: Road of Humanity 4

Willpower: 9

## ADAM

**Background:** Adam was a promising rabbinical scholar in Jerusalem before he was Embraced by Abraham in 813 CE, after deciphering intricate Aramaic texts for the elder Cainite. Abraham has since dragged him deeper into the studies surrounding the Black Torah and other revelatory texts, using his skills as a translator, scribe and librarian to codify and translate the many scrolls stored in their working chambers beneath the synagogue.

Adam took refuge in Bethlehem during the darkness of the First Crusade, though he could only save the most important of the research documents as he fled. Though her deeds were clothed in the guise of "Christian piety and protection," Etheria provided shelter for Adam and his documents only after extracting the promise that he and Abraham would protect her child, Boniface, upon returning to Jerusalem. Thus Adam is indebted to the Brujah — a debt he would dearly love to erase, for he is sure that Etheria and her brethren conspire with the crusaders.

Through their studies, Adam has learned just how deeply involved his sire is with the revelations of the Prophet Elijah, and how many secrets Abraham seems to have gradually unlocked. In those years Adam has increased his own strength and power through Abraham's research, making scholarly and mystical contacts under the elder Cainite's name and digging deeper into the secrets of gematria. Annoyingly, Abraham has grown increasingly paranoid about the most important of his sacred texts; Adam is not even sure if this Black Torah

is anything more than a shadow of Abraham's wish for revelatory insight.

Adam has been a Cappadocian for more than three centuries, yet he remains in servitude to his scholarly master and indebted to a Brujah who conspires with murderous invaders. He has enjoyed only small tastes of power, freedom and independence, and yearns to see more of the world than a synagogue chamber within a war-racked city. Some suspect that he even yearns to be free of both his intellectual nature and the lingering shreds of devotion to Abraham's mystical studies.

**Image:** Adam appears to be in his mid-thirties, and his hair and beard are long, curly and black. The right side of his face is disfigured, the result of an accidental fire within the archives decades ago.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are spending more and more time away from the archives and Abraham, some of it protecting Boniface and his agents within the hospitals. You are searching for better answers than can be found in the lunatic ravings of the mystically interpreted Black Torah. You are likely to make inquiries from any new Cainite you meet. Currently, you are exploring some of the books in the Christian and Muslim libraries of the city, trying to find material that will provide perspective on Abraham's theories — or a way to escape him.

**Haven:** Adam dwells in an underground chamber deep beneath the Tiferet Yisra'el Synagogue.

**Secrets:** Adam, much as he would like to believe Abraham's vision, is beginning to suspect that the Black Torah doesn't actually exist anywhere outside of Abraham's fantasy.

**Influence:** Adam has little influence — yet. It is possible that his growing need to get beyond Abraham's world may gradually erode his normally secretive Cappadocian nature.

**Destiny:** Adam eventually breaks away from Abraham and Jerusalem and wanders off to Venice to seek new horizons. His story ends there, abruptly, in the 15th century.

**Clan:** Cappadocian

**Sire:** Abraham

**Nature:** Gallant

**Demeanor:** Loner

**Generation:** 6th

**Embrace:** 813 CE

**Apparent Age:** mid-30s

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

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 1

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 4 (Learned), Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Herbalism 2, Stealth 2





**Knowledges:** Academics 5 (Jewish), Investigation 3, Linguistics 3, Occult 4 (Kabbalah)

**Disciplines:** Auspex 3, Fortitude 4, Mortis 2, Obfuscate 2, Presence 3

**Backgrounds:** Mentor 2, Resources 2

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

**Road:** Road of Heaven 5

**Willpower:** 4

## GANGREL

The Gangrel currently in Jerusalem are about as individualistic as one might expect. The battles of those who truly care about the city are not their battles; the causes of the Cainites who war here are not their causes. Their services may be hired, but they are no more than mercenaries in the conflicts that steadily erupt. Needless to say, they prefer it that way.

### CANIS

**Background:** Canis has lived in and around Jerusalem since the sack of the city during the First Crusade. However, she is familiar to many of the older Cainites of the Middle East, as she has been living in Egypt and the Levant since the time of the Punic Wars. Were it not for the fact that Canis is so clearly intelligent, most Cainites would take her for some sort of dog or wolf subjected to the Embrace despite the sheer impossibility of that notion.

Canis has lived in Baghdad, Alexandria, Cairo, Antioch, Carthage and Babylon, and in all the lands between them. At various times, she has served as the pet, companion, guardian and messenger of various Middle Eastern Cainites, Hatshep-seru, sorcerers and others with connections to the world of the occult.



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So far, Canis has remained independent of the politics of Jerusalem, living on livestock and human stragglers of all kinds. With the city in turmoil once again, there is no effective leadership to mount a hunt for her, and Canis finds the lands around Jerusalem an effective refuge where her skills can be practiced without reprisal from a strong local prince.

She normally runs at the head of a pack of ghouléd strays, though she doesn't develop any lasting attachment to members of the pack. Packs come and packs go, but Canis endures. Just because she doesn't assume human form doesn't mean that Canis is any less a Cainite than her bipedal cousins. While she can't (or won't) communicate beyond the abilities of her form, she is quite skilled in a variety of Disciplines, both those natural to her bloodline and those favored by other clans.

While Canis's companionship is not for sale, her abilities as a guardian and a messenger are. It is well known that she accepts tutoring in Disciplines, blood, shelter and future favors, in that order of preference. Though she makes a fine runner and guardian, Canis's primary talent is her ability as a scout. She is a naturally superb tracker whose instincts have been honed by centuries of practice. Only very skilled and very lucky Cainites can slip her noose when she hunts, no matter how cold their trail or how fast they run.

Perhaps one or twice per decade, Canis and her pack vanish to some foreign land in the company of a petitioner who requests her services as the leader of a hunt or war party. While none of the local Cainites have, as yet, needed her services, she has had passing contact with most of the city's older vampiric residents. She has traveled extensively, and a creature as peculiar as Canis has created her own legend that makes her familiar to many.

The Constantinian Keeper of the Faith has given Alexis Simocatta, the Tzimisce spy, a token to present to Canis should her assistance become necessary in his cause. This token, a small golden statue of a she-wolf, is instantly recognizable to Canis as part of a favor to be repaid the Dracon and the Keeper.

**Image:** Canis appears as a large canine, with a mixture of jackal and vulpine features. While she does not normally appear to be anything more than a feral dog of some sort, Canis does use her Disciplines regularly, and she is just as intelligent as most of the Cainites who might challenge her.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You perceive yourself as a canine, with the self-image and basic mannerisms of a large dog. However, you are hardly a dumb animal; you choose to run with a pack and live in a dog-like fashion. You are a sixth generation Cainite, and just as clever and ruthless as your fellows under the Curse of Caine. Unlike most of your fellows, however, you are not a self-aggrandizing pawn in the wars of the elders. While you know all



about the so-called Jyhad, you are not a victim of ennui. Dogs need no diversions from the eternal boredom of existence. You chose long ago to only become involved in the war of ages in a peripheral fashion, and only as far as it benefits you — usually by offering the opportunity of diablerie or education in the Disciplines.

**Haven:** Canis currently lairs with a half-dozen strays in a monastery burnt during the crusader sack of the city, 10 miles from the city walls. During the day she sleeps beneath the earth floor of the rubble-choked wine cellar, while by night she and her pack hunt far and wide. Canis is quite intelligent about her predation — she ranges across the region, keeping her pack small and her kills distributed so that no serious effort is made to root her out.

**Secrets:** If the Cainites of Jerusalem realized how many of their secrets that the soft-pawed Canis and her pack had ferreted out, they would no doubt be much more concerned about her presence near them. While Canis isn't very well informed as to the *plans* of the local Cainites, she knows almost everything there is to know about their habits and havens. She even knows a great deal about the movements of the enigmatic vampire Mandalay. Shortly after characters arrive, she will also know almost everything about them unless they are exceptionally crafty.

**Influence:** Canis ultimately trusts only Canis. However, a fairly large number of elder Cainites have enjoyed her companionship over the centuries, and others are grateful to her concluding the existence of various foes. This includes Michael of Constantinople and the Dracon, with whom she lived as a companion for almost a century during the heyday of the Dream. Cainites who push Canis too far or seek her blood are likely to find out just how many old friends she has.

**Destiny:** Canis succumbs to her Beast at the beginning of the 17th century. Almost a decade later, in 1640, she and her pack are brought to heel by a band of Christian sorcerers and vampire-hunters. Backed by a squadron of the provincial governor's light cavalry, the wizards and holy men ride her down over the course of three days. At their hands, one of the most ancient of the Middle East's Cainites meets her end.

**Clan:** Gangrel

**Sire:** Unknown

**Nature:** Survivor

**Demeanor:** Loner

**Generation:** 6th

**Embrace:** Unknown

**Apparent Age:** 6 — in dog years

**Physical:** Strength 4 (Ferocious), Dexterity 4 (Feral Grace), Stamina 5 (Tireless)

**Social:** Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 5 (Keen), Intelligence 2, Wits 5 (Combat Nerves)

**Talents:** Alertness 4 (Crowds), Athletics 4 (Running), Brawl (Bite), Dodge 4 (Leap), Intimidation 5 (Staredowns), Leadership 3

**Skills:** Stealth 4 (Prowl), Survival 5 (Tracking)

**Knowledges:** Investigate 3, Linguistics 3

**Disciplines:** Animalism 6, Auspex 3, Celerity 5, Dominate 2, Fortitude 7, Obfuscate 4, Potence 4, Presence 2, Protean 6

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 4, Status 3

**Virtues:** Conviction 4, Instinct 4, Courage 5

**Road:** Road of the Beast 9

**Willpower:** 9

## HAKKON

**Background:** At little after the year 900 CE, as Christians measure time, a man and a woman fell in love. The man was named Hakkon Arnulfsson, and the woman, Thorhalla. Hakkon was a great reaver and the son of a petty king; Thorhalla was a Walkurie, one of the childer of the Gangrel Methuselah known as the All-High. The two met in high summer in Trondheim.

Hakkon was in the Trond gathering men to build ships and vike south the next spring. Thorhalla had come, in her shining mail, to witness a holmgang involving another hero, Ulf Grimmson. If he performed admirably or won, he was to be given the blood oath and taken to the All-High's temple at Uppsala to server as one of his *einherjar*. Unfortunately, more famous men had taken all the skilled crew before Hakkon arrived, and Ulf Grimmson died on his knees, begging for mercy like a toddler. Hakkon and Thorhalla met as they wandered



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disappointed outside Trondheim in the late evening. They fell in love over the next several nights; Thorhalla confessed her unliving state to Hakkon, told him of her service to the All-High and what he would have to accept to be with her.

After Hakkon accepted Thorhalla's Embrace, they dallied over the course of the summer, until Thorhalla's fellow Walkure came to retrieve her. Thorhalla told Hakkon to flee to the south, since it was inevitable that the All-High would find out about Hakkon's creation. The young hero had already learned the wolf-form trick, and he went first east and then south, careful of Lupines and other Cainites. He traveled first to Byzantium, where a cousin was serving in the Varagian Guard. But when he arrived there, he found his cousin imprisoned and the city crawling with Cainites. With their laws and their twisted blood-families, all that was there for a brave man was senseless death in someone else's war, without even riches or glory.

So Hakkon traveled south to the lands of the dark-skinned Muslim. His wanderings took him all the way to Alexandria before turning back to Jerusalem, as he vowed his steel and his strength to those who could pay for strong and savage mercenaries. Over the years he has fought for and against many sides in many battles. His claws have drawn blood from Assamites for the Setites and Setites for the Fatimid Brujah. Following the latter change of alliances, a trip to more northerly climes seemed in order.

Hakkon spent several years as a wastrel following his flight from Egypt. By the time the First Crusade arrived, he had been dwelling for some time in a "hall" outside Jerusalem's walls, with a few transplanted Northmen as his herd. With their fair skin and knowledge of Christ-god lore, he and his men became mercenaries for the invading Europeans. They assisted in the sack of the city but wisely stayed outside the walls during the Weeks of Madness, earning bulging pockets and a well-deserved reputation among the crusaders.

He and his band lived fairly well over the following decades. His men and ghouls work as guards to the rich, and the whole lot of them eat meat and drink wine every night. While the Gangrel is a bit of a cultural anomaly, to the Muslims he's just another mad Franj, just as he was another part of the surreal Saracen landscape to the Latin kings. After the return of Jerusalem to Muslim hands, Hakkon and his men became escorts and enforcers for rich pilgrims instead. They generally prefer to keep to the mortal communities, and stay out of the mainstream of Jerusalem's Cainite politics.

Recently, Hakkon heard about the burning of Uppsala from a Swedish trader. Since then, he has been

desperate for rumors. Word of the All-High's fall has rekindled in Hakkon the desire to return home, to see the land of his birth and to search for his love Thorhalla. His ghouls, of course, are equally enthusiastic; how can they not be?

For the last year, he and his men have been working twice as hard as ever (that is, actually pulling an honest night's work) to raise money for a ship and the provisions they'll need for the journey northward. Any Cainites who can provide Hakkon with information on the condition of the High North, especially of the All-High and the Walkure, will gain his eternal friendship. Those who try to convince him that times have changed or that he may no longer have a place in the North will be scoffed at and called gutless women.

**Image:** Hakkon is a strong-shouldered, handsome man with a shock of bright red hair, the legacy of a mother kidnapped from Ireland. With good teeth and a broad, unpocked face, Hakkon is quite attractive. His skin is covered in the scars of scrapes and cuts, however. From the contrast between his somewhat sunburned skin and his vampiric pallor, he seems like a man recovering from long illness.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are a true Norse hero and a real man. You fear nothing and nobody. You take what you want, say what you want and do what you want, no matter how outrageous the deed might be. On the other hand, you aren't stupid. There's a difference between fear and prudence. Your fearlessness is based on your understanding that everyone is equal when you catch them in a bad situation. You are loyal to your men, impulsive as a teenager, and almost totally without respect for anything but brute force. You are also crafty, lucky and really, really tough, which helps explain your continued survival.

**Haven:** Hakkon lives in a traditional Norse feast hall modified for the hot Middle Eastern climate. While the hall is long and low and narrow, with bunking along the side, each section of wall is held to the studs with a bar-and-stable system, rather than pegs or nails, allowing the walls to be removed and the hall made into a wholly or partially open-air pavilion. It also has a tile roof and slate-shingled walls for fire resistance, and the knock-out walls largely prevent the old tactic of hall-burning from working.

**Secrets:** Hakkon wouldn't know a secret if it bit him. He's never even met half the Cainites in the city, and has never even heard of Mandalay or Canis. Azif the Brujah knows of him, though, and is considering using Hakkon's forces as muscle if the struggles with Boniface and Etheria get rough.

**Influence:** Hakkon leads a pack of strong men who are familiar with the important mortals of the area, since they work as their bodyguards. While nobody is going to

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do anything for them voluntarily, the concept of bribery or even extortion is quite familiar to Hakkon. Cainites with direct influence over a field may be able to block Hakkon with playful ease, but he knows exactly where to start spreading the money around to get what he wants. Hakkon also has a great deal of money saved up, though he's tight-fisted at the moment.

**Destiny:** Hakkon and his men travel successfully to the High North, where they become part of the *vargr* community. After several decades of fruitless searching for his beloved Thorhalla, Hakkon enters torpor, where he stays until the present day when the awakening of the Walkurie draws him out of his slumber.

**Clan:** Gangrel

**Sire:** Thorhalla

**Nature:** Survivor

**Demeanor:** Fanatic

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 905 CE

**Apparent Age:** late 20s

**Physical:** Strength 4 (Broad Shoulders), Dexterity 3, Stamina 4 (Laughs at Pain)

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4 (Nerves of Steel)

**Talents:** Alertness 4 (Ambushes), Athletics 3 (Swimming), Brawl 3 (Grappling), Dodge 3 (Sidestep), Intimidation 3, Leadership 4 (By Example)

**Skills:** Archery 2, Melee 4 (Axes), Stealth 2, Survival 3

**Knowledge:** Hearth Wisdom 2, Linguistics 2

**Disciplines:** Animalism 2, Celerity 3, Fortitude 4, Potence 3, Protean 4

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Resources 3, Retainers 4, Status 2

**Virtues:** Conviction 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

**Road:** Road of the *Einherjar* 8

**Willpower:** 7

## LASOMBRA

The Lasombra clan has influenced or controlled Jerusalem's religious patriarchy through influential pilgrims and advisors for hundreds of years, though the instability of the region has made maintaining this control into a frustrating chore. Paliuro Rustucci of Genoa and his retinue have been in permanent residence since the bloody crusader occupation of 1099. Roman Catholic Father Paliuro all but ruled the Jerusalem Cainites as their prince until Salah al-Din's recapture of the city less than a decade ago. However, his tenuous hold on his remaining power is slipping along with his sanity, as forces of faith and treachery assail him. Rival Italian Lasombra have sent a child of Narses of Venice

to deal with the entrenched Genoans, who in turn vie for Paliuro's power by conspiring with Ventrue crusaders and the Armenian Ravnos, Varsik.

### FATHER PALIURO RUSTUCCI, ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST

**Background:** Father Paliuro Rustucci was born near Genoa in 683 CE, a haughty child of a noble merchant family, sent at an early age to study as a priest and learn the virtue of humility. His keen and organized mind took to the reflowering faith within the Church, but the sharp tongue hidden beneath his beatific countenance did not endear him to his elders. The young Paliuro took to retreating to the extensive church libraries at nights, poring over tomes of historical religious doctrines as he became convinced that his own insights on faith rivaled that of his teachers. It was a testament to his charisma and his growing influence among the other young parishioners that he survived his insolence.

During these evening studies, Paliuro absorbed much of modern Catholic philosophy, including histories of the Emperor Constantine's generous and ideologically critical construction of Jerusalem's churches. The presence and faith of the Church was what supported community and civilization, providing purpose and place to all, from the lowliest peasant to the highest patriarch — Constantine had been blessed with the vision and the might to make this possible. Paliuro raged with anger that infidels should now occupy the Holy City, restricting the flow of believers through their oppressive taxes, and this idealistic conviction combined with an unquestionable mastery of Church doctrine gave his sermons a fiery intensity.



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Paliuro's increasing influence within the Genoese scholars and military merchants, secular and religious, soon attracted the attention of Enrico, second to the Genoese Lasombra prince — the lad's conviction combined with a learned background would make Paliuro a powerful ally. Enrico began to advise the young priest on matters of Catholic discipline, and intrigued Paliuro with his own intimate knowledge of the Church's history and its rise to glory.

Enrico visited Paliuro over the course of months, engaging in discussions ranging over topics from the strength of the Holy Roman hierarchy and the accountability of cardinals to the morality of forced conversions and salvation of the pagan. It was during a visionary dialogue on the God-given immortality of the spirit that Paliuro expressed his deep desire to someday see Jerusalem returned to Catholic hands. The Lasombra sire offered Paliuro an immortal's lifetime to preach as an empowered disciple, and — God willing — to see the Holy Land restored to the control of true believers. Paliuro sensed the power to impose his own interpretation of doctrine, and freely chose the childer of the shadows' Embrace.

Paliuro's influence grew with Enrico's treacherous rise to power in 797 CE and the pope's ritual crowning of Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor in 800 CE. However, he grew frustrated with the subtle delicacies of Church politics and with the decades that passed between moves in the struggles of Lasombra and Ventrue power games. After a bitter theological outburst in front of the representatives of the Patriarch of Pisa one night, Enrico calmly suggested that his childer's passions might best be calmed on pilgrimage.

Paliuro spent the next several years traveling with Genoese merchants and sailors, with wise captains trading safe transport for the inspiration Paliuro invoked in their crews. His dark presence and magnetic sermons could invoke terror in unbelieving mortals; their supplications after his proselytizing were usually quickly followed with tributes that filled the ship's coffers.

He arrived in Jerusalem for the first time as a noble pilgrim in 820 CE, escorted by an elaborate and sumptuous retinue. Though Jerusalem was prosperous, civilized and open at this time, the Cainite chafed at the Muslim *jizya* taxes and the outrageous rumor that Christians were being required to tattoo their names on their hands. He petitioned the patriarch and made considerable contributions to renovations of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (hewn by the Toreador Elsh), after discovering it outdated and unworthy compared to the more impressive cathedrals of Italy.

Paliuro departed Jerusalem not long after seeing his donations mostly used for repairs and piddled away on taxes. He spent another century continuing his conver-

sion campaigns to little end, but solidifying his significant influence and even garnering respect as his temperament settled. Paliuro was finally granted the privilege of Embrace in 980 CE, choosing Pacifico as a vicious and strong ally and bonding the promising but aggressive youth in a blood oath to ensure his loyalty. The pair and their retainers returned to Genoa in 990 CE, and worked to strengthen the elder Lasombra's family position through the years of the Catholic Schism.

All of this changed with Pope Urban II's call for the First Crusade in 1095. Paliuro petitioned his sire for permission to join Robert of Flanders' forces bound for Jerusalem; the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was a deep personal affront for him. With the recapture of the city, the forces of the crusaders would need immediate guidance from the organization of the Church. Enrico, seizing the opportunity to control Catholicism in Jerusalem and gain leverage over the hated Byzantines, naturally acceded.

Over the months Paliuro traveled with his ghoul knight, Sebastian of Genoa, and his enthralled childer Pacifico; they rode through Greece and Byzantium with the main force of the crusaders. In this time Paliuro keenly traded favor for favor, allying his clerical influence with that of the Ventrue among the military. His ambitions were to come to fruition with the blessings of the pope: he would see the Holy City recaptured with his own eyes, position his own loyal patriarch, and preach the strength of the Lord from the Church of the Holy Sepulcher itself.

The momentous liberation of Jerusalem finally took place in 1099, when the north wall fell and the invading army overran the city. Inspired to violent frenzy by the massacre of thousands by the forces of the Cross, and draining combatant after combatant, Paliuro was also seared to the soul by the True Faith of his fated destination at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Since that night he has had haunting dreams of the agony and the ecstasy of his own demented redemption, recapturing by destruction what he had once peacefully tried to restore to glory.

However, the pain and blood lust that torment Paliuro also serve to make him stronger and more vicious in his dealings with the other Cainites of Jerusalem, whom he sees as either useful pawns or infidel unbelievers. In the years preceding Salah al-Din's recapture of the city, he had ruthlessly assumed his self-made role as prince and used Pacifico, Varsik and other crusader Cainites to restore a steady flow of rich and influential Catholic pilgrims into the city.

Infidel Arabs and Jews now conspire to control the city of Jerusalem and the surrounding territories. Paliuro is calling in favors from the Ventrue crusaders and the Ravnos Varsik, an Armenian Catholic and trusted true



believer himself. The continued influx of merchant funds gives Paliuro material resources, but he is finding it successively more difficult to discern allies from traitors. With diablerie by the cowardly Assamites a constant threat, Paliuro seeks safe haven in one of the few locations in the city he believes no Cainite assassin could dare enter.

With the assistance of the Cappadocian Marcus, Paliuro is purifying himself through pain, undergoing rites in soundproofed catacombs beneath the Holy Sepulcher. The church and its surroundings he claimed as his own domain since his return to Jerusalem, and he will not surrender the symbol of the Catholic presence in the Holy City to Muslim forces or to the liberal and weak Greek Orthodox. The deliciously mad memories of the first night's massacre and faith in divine inspirations lend him the strength to endure, as the Church endures. Recently God has even sent Salah al-Din to his death, and it is only a matter of time until the City of Holies is returned to its rightful owners.

**Image:** Paliuro was once dark and beautiful, the ideal of Genoese manhood. Though he still maintains some of this beauty, he now bears a foreboding presence and the torments he endures nightly are drawing wrinkle chasms across his flesh. However, his gripping sermons still carry the full force of his charisma, and he can soothe or scare pilgrims and congregations with the hypnotizing intensity of his conviction.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You believe your faith to be greater than that of all others, and your calling to be divine. The smallest slight offends you. You demand all of the deference due your position, never mind that Christians no longer rule here. Privately, your conviction borders on obsession as you attempt to gather and control your allies. Others may be manipulated by allowing them to think that you are shallow, cruel, pious or insane; use them all to your equal advantage.

**Haven:** Father Paliuro havens in the catacombs proximate to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. This is not a pleasant experience for him; less so for anyone seeking to visit him.

**Influence:** Father Paliuro's influence is enormous, and his contacts range wide. He knows of nearly all influential pilgrims who enter and leave the city, but he is allowing his merchant contacts to be delegated to Varsik and Pacifico as he grows more obsessed with his own personal safety. His security has been further challenged by the recent arrival of Narses's puppet Magdalena; Paliuro believes she can be managed and guided by playing the Assamites against her, but she must be watched carefully.

**Destiny:** A never-ending spiraling vortex of doom awaits the priest. Paliuro meets his Final Death in the

Khwarazmian invasion of Jerusalem and desecration of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in 1244 CE.

**Clan:** Lasombra

**Sire:** Enrico

**Nature:** Autocrat

**Demeanor:** Fanatic

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 717 CE

**Apparent Age:** late 30s

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

**Social:** Charisma 5 (Captivating), Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 5 (Insightful), Intelligence 5 (Knowledgeable), Wits 4 (Shrewd)

**Talents:** Acting 4 (Religious Awe), Empathy 3, Intimidation 4 (Subtle Hints), Larceny 3, Leadership 5 (Orate), Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Etiquette 5 (Courtly Manners), Herbalism 2, Ride 3, Stealth 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 6 (Theology), Investigation 3, Linguistics 5 (Diplomatic), Occult 4 (Ancient Wisdom), Politics 5 (Religious)

**Disciplines:** Dominate 5, Fortitude 4, Obtenebration 6, Potence 4, Presence 2

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 4, Influence 4, Resources 3, Retainers 3, Status 5

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

**Road:** Road of Heaven 10

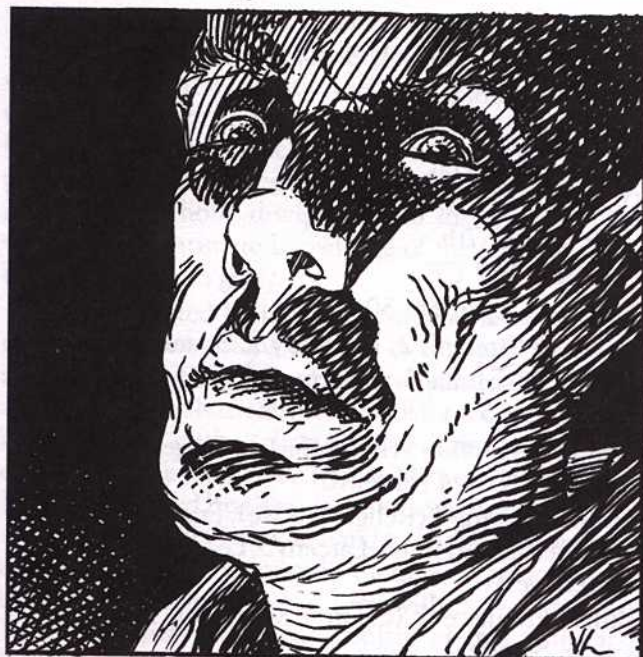
**Willpower:** 9

## PACIFICO GRILLATI

**Background:** Pacifico Grillati has been set to a task that he finds somewhat demeaning: he passes his time as a translator in the al-Bismaristan al-Salahi Hospital in the Tanner's Quarter, gathering information and providing the occasional safe haven to feed for other Cainites. He drives a clever and shrewd bargain with those in need, but also understands that many have long memories and honor that will not forget a 'favor.' However, he is beginning to resent being kept away from the main action of Cainite city politics, and sees his ambitions as frustrated by Paliuro's single-mindedness.

He ought to be used to being in this position; Pacifico is from the most powerful family in a very small town outside of Rome, close enough to know about the political maneuverings of the city, but too far away to actually play a role in it. Shortly after Pacifico's father died, the young man found himself first admired and then Embraced by Paliuro, when the former began a bold move to vastly increase his family's holdings. Pacifico's henchmen planted evidence of diabolical heresies in the houses of his rivals, allowing Pacifico himself to lead the





righteous townsfolk to take to the torch and purge the rival families from the land. What Paliuro knew — but Pacifico did not — was that one rival was an obstreperous Gangrel who was worthy of elimination.

The Genoese father courted the youth with gifts, and upon their meeting told him of the wider treasures of the world awaiting their alliance. He cloaked his promises in half-truths and shade, luring Pacifico with grand dreams spun from the power of the clergy combined with the financial support of the merchant military. Pacifico, ever tempted by powers that seemed just within his reach, willingly allowed the shadows to enclose him.

Over their years together, Paliuro kept Pacifico close at hand, and soon Pacifico became an enforcer as well as emissary. To assure the arrogant, younger Lasombra's unswerving loyalty, Pacifico fed him drops of his own blood over the turbulent decade of the Schism, and treated him kindly and firmly to cement the bond of their blood oath. When the call for Crusade came, there was no place for Paliuro but by his regent's side; privately, he was also thrilled with the prospect of foreign intrigue and excess.

In the years of Catholic occupation, Pacifico enjoyed the funds brought in by appreciative pilgrims, and indulged in the lifestyle of power and wealth that he felt was his right as a noble and a Lasombra. He held a house of his own, was empowered with his own ghouls by Father Paliuro and invited common amusements to the city to entertain clerical and secular guests. However, with the recapture of the city, Pacifico has been required to relinquish his much of his wealth. He cares less and less for the politics of mortals, so

long as those who do rule ensure his wealth and pleasure.

Considerably more pragmatic and less idealistic than Father Paliuro, Pacifico was nowhere near as affected by the slaughter that followed the Crusader victory — perhaps because he was restrained enough to feed on weak refugees instead of frenzying through the captured city. Now as his power is dwindling with the recapture of the city, he resents his sire's obsessions, the growing "friendship" of the Ravnos Varsik with Paliuro and his own relegation to the status of hospital toady.

Pacifico is beginning to think about broadening his own base of power; in fact, he is just barely starting to entertain the notion of open defiance. Surely there are powerful Arabs whom he might turn his eye to, for among them are many people of knowledge and proper breeding. If he were to begin Embracing a few childer of his own, perhaps he would be able to begin building his own loyal following and start directly controlling a little of the action himself again.

The weakness of this strategy is a sympathy for the Salubri Aisha that Pacifico never anticipated. Her spiritual heights and depths, her compassion and simplicity and her indefatigable devotion to a higher cause are something that been have as absent to Pacifico's life as faith in any God but the Church. Her sympathetic consultations with him may have undermined his aggressive bravado just enough.

**Image:** Pacifico appears to be a proper Lasombra, in the classic suave Lasombra style. He is well kept and superior, carrying an air of courtly splendor even in the hospital robes he now wears.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You're out for yourself, and of that there should be no doubt. In any situation, ask about the potential advantage to you? You are crafty, cunning and maybe a little sly. You understand that Paliuro has descended into madness, yet he still provides a useful distraction as you gather your conspiracies.

**Haven:** A room deep in the slumbering gloom of the hospital, surrounded with malevolent shadows of death and despair is home to the ambitious Lasombra.

**Secrets:** Pacifico has decided to allow the Salubri, Aisha, to take refuge within the hospital. Her position is precarious now that Saulot has been diablerized, and if anyone ever finds out that she is there, he will undoubtedly loudly proclaim his magnanimity. She thinks she is gathering information for Pacifico to pass along to Paliuro, but more to his advantage, she is also unwittingly watching for likely candidates for Pacifico to Embrace as he starts building his own power base.

**Influence:** Pacifico's influence is growing — at least, among disenchanted Lasombra. He has exchanged favors with those among the crusader Ventrue, but he is



careful not to let any get too close. Leufroy of Provence seems congenial, but Vicelin of Marseilles is a bit too fanatical for Pacifico's taste.

**Destiny:** Pacifico thinks he will have sufficient political strength to tackle the Lasombra power structure in Jerusalem in, oh, seventy or ninety years. In fact, he returns to Genoa after Paliuro's demise, eventually entering the Sabbat and falling during that sect's civil war.

**Clan:** Lasombra

**Sire:** Paliuro Rustucci

**Nature:** Rebel

**Demeanor:** Defender

**Generation:** 8th

**Embrace:** 980 CE

**Apparent Age:** late 30s

**Physical:** Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 1

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

**Talents:** Acting 2, Alertness 2, Leadership 3, Subterfuge 2

**Skills:** Crafts 1, Etiquette 3, Herbalism 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 2, Investigation 2, Law 1, Linguistics 2, Medicine 2, Occult 3, Politics 3

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1, Dominate 2, Obtenebation 3, Potence 2, Presence 1

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Contacts 1, Influence 1, Status 1

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

**Road:** Road of Humanity 4

**Willpower:** 6

## MAGDALENA CASTELUCCI BORCELLINO

**Background:** Magdalena is the only daughter of the marriage merger of two great Venetian shipping dynasties: the House of Castelucci and Borcellino and Sons. She was brought up as a proper daughter, spending her time learning to play simple musical instruments, producing fine needlework (nothing practical, of course!) and learning languages sufficient to be a credit to her family. She also learned to follow the dinner conversations that involved overseas trade. These conversations introduced her to the new ideas and products brought by the traders. She learned — albeit unintentionally — about balance sheets, the changing politics of far-distant regions and the value of a shrewd bargain.

Stunningly lovely, magnetically engaging and well-endowed, Magdalena found that her suitability as a lady — as well as her discerning nature — soon became a topic of considerable speculation among Venetian nobility. She attracted the attention of Narses, who courted her with a series of simple and elegant candlelit meetings, each in a more exotic and remote location than the



last. Magdalena was privately enchanted but frustrated with the Cainite's refusals of her own invitations, and she eventually married another.

When fighting among merchant houses in Venice erupted in 933 CE, Magdalena was caught on the road and made a fine target for kidnap and ransom — or bloodletting. Her entourage was ambushed and slain by assassins in the employ of a rival house one evening near dusk, and Magdalena herself was captured. Riding away with their prize, the attackers were confronted that night by a vengeful specter. One assassin was smothered with darkness, while another's skin smoldered to ashes. In the ensuing melee, Magdalena's throat was cut, her blood running free even as her killer was torn limb from limb by beasts carved from inky blackness.

Magdalena awoke to find Narses by her side, and with her first feeding he explained the cost that must be paid for her return to being. God had created their brood with purpose, and they would bring the wealth and influence of their families to power to celebrate beauty and punish the weak, the deformed, the impure. She has loyally stayed within his retinue since that night, and lends her own insights and presence to his power at gatherings of his clan.

Narses has now sent Magdalena on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where she is to watch over Paliuro and his childer and discover what influence she can garner. Magdalena is coming to the conclusion that Paliuro is losing his grip on reality even more quickly than Narses had assumed; his obsession is already his undoing, with the wrenching of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher from Italian to Greek Orthodox hands by the Arabs. Paliuro's childer, Pacifico, is something of an unknown; it is



difficult to decide whether he is as loyal to Paliuro as he claims to be. The Ventrue crusader, Leufroy of Provence, is showing promise, however. And wouldn't it be amusing to have a Ventrue bound to the Lasombra in Jerusalem? That would be appropriate retribution for the situation in Constantinople.

**Image:** Magdalena dresses as befits someone of her rank and social class. Her dark hair is dressed elaborately, and her gowns are encrusted with gold couched threads. She usually has a piece of fine embroidery near to hand; around her neck is a chatelaine holding her carved ivory needle case and her gold stork-shaped embroidery scissors.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are regal, deigning only occasionally to allow lesser beings to kiss your hand. The role you play is second nature; you were raised to do this as naturally as you breathed. Underneath, however, you are a keen observer of social interactions, noting everything, putting half pieces of information together so well that the outline limned tells the entire story. You value honor, strength, beauty and clarity; confusion and deformity only serve to blight the landscape.

**Haven:** Protected by her retinue of ghouls and servants, Magdalena havens in her cramped home near the Damascus Gate on the north wall of the city.

**Secrets:** Magdalena is finding all the political intrigues of Jerusalem to be an amusing challenge and, well, enjoyable in an odd sort of way. Isn't that preposterous? Unfortunately, there is one secret Narses himself has not shared with her: his role in the so-called Cainite Heresy. Were evidence of this to be presented to Magdalena, her worldview would no doubt be severely shaken.

**Influence:** Magdalena's influence is far-reaching and growing. She has the backing of Narses of Venice, along with her ties to powerful merchant families, and has a close relationship with Bishop Alfonzo in Constantinople. She seeks to control Varsik, assuming that his merchant connections imply merchant sensibilities and goals, although she's beginning to think that Azif and his childer may serve her purposes better. She is considering enlarging her power base in the Cainite community by asking the Toreador, Elsh, to construct a larger home for her.

**Destiny:** Magdalena is discovering that she is better at intrigue and manipulation than she thought she would be. While it will be many centuries before she won't be hampered quite so much socially by her gender, she becomes adept in finding her way in what remains a man's world. Magdalena returns to Italy, and is an enthusiastic and successful player of power politics for centuries to come. She vanishes around the time the clan elder is destroyed, and there are persistent rumors that she has taken up with the *antitribu*.

## JERUSALEM BY NIGHT

**Clan:** Lasombra

**Sire:** Narses of Venice

**Nature:** Survivor

**Demeanor:** Autocrat

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 933 CE

**Apparent Age:** early 30s

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 4 (Light Touch), Stamina 2

**Social:** Charisma 4 (Charming), Manipulation 4 (Persuasive), Appearance 5 (Striking Looks)

**Mental:** Perception 4 (Insightful), Intelligence 4 (Sharp Memory), Wits 4 (Clever)

**Talents:** Acting 4 (Feign Emotions), Alertness 3, Empathy 3, Intimidation 4 (Subtle Hints), Leadership 4 (Compelling), Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Crafts 3, Etiquette 4 (Courtly Manners), Herbalism 2, Music 2, Ride 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 1, Hearth Wisdom 1, Linguistics 2, Politics 3

**Disciplines:** Auspex 2, Dominate 4, Obtenebration 4, Potence 2, Presence 4

**Backgrounds:** Allies 5 (Narses of Venice), Contacts 4, Influence 2, Resources 4, Retainers 5

**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 3

**Road:** Road of Heaven 5

**Willpower:** 6

## MALKAVIANS

The Malkavians of Jerusalem, as elsewhere, have no coherent organization. Al-Hakim The Lizard, a vicious persecutor of Christian, Jew and Muslim alike, has arrived in Jerusalem to finish the destruction of holy sites he had started as the Caliph of Cairo in the early 11th century. Al-Hakim may have found unusual allies — the Setites — on his tortured path from Cairo to Jerusalem. Then again, who can say what al-Hakim found — or thinks he found? Brother Bernardus seeks salvation for his murderous Beast and peace from his flaring madness of temper by assisting the hospitals in their missions of mercy and compassion, trading his own gifts of dementia with the peace of lucidity as he traffics the masquerading hunted through his own haunted shadows. A dancing soothsayer, cursed and blessed with her own brand of madness, has also become important in the struggles between Muslim and Christian Brujah.

Madness tends to be solitary; this is a good thing. Malkavians in and around Jerusalem probably have no particular reason for being there — or anywhere else in particular — beyond whatever personal voices drive





them individually. Terror and treachery entice; torment and temptation thrill.

### AL-HAKIM, THE LIZARD

**Background:** Al-Hakim has been trying to knit the two halves of his heritage into a unified whole all of his life. He is the son of a Muslim father — a Muslim father so prominent and so religious that he was Caliph of Cairo — and a Christian mother. This is certainly allowable in Islamic law (Christians worship the same deity as Muslims, after all), but being “tainted” with Christian blood while his father was the city’s Muslim religious leader gave al-Hakim plenty of opportunity to ponder his role in the religious hierarchy. His father died while al-Hakim was still a minor, and suddenly al-Hakim found himself thrust into the caliphacy.

To no one’s surprise, al-Hakim was not a successful caliph.

He was, however, a successful ghoul of Hassan abu Khalid, who was interested in gaining and maintaining control of the region. Speaking on behalf of his sire, al-Hakim ordered churches and synagogues destroyed, all across the lands over which he had influence. When Muslims objected that Jews and Christians were protected in their worship, al-Hakim ordered that mosques also be destroyed. In a fit of vindictiveness against his co-religionists, he restored their lands to the Jews and Christians — but he did not go so far as to fund the rebuilding of the structures he had ordered destroyed. The strain of maintaining a sense of reality grounded in anything other than his own whims took its toll. Al-Hakim realized at this point that he was truly the reincarnation of Allah, not

merely mortal, and that he had returned to earth to impart new wisdom. Because he was Allah, Muslims should turn toward whatever city he was in when they prayed, and they should substitute his name for Allah’s in their ritual prayers.

As the Muslims rioted, al-Hakim wandered through Cairo untouched, unseen and unchallenged. Eventually he got on his horse, collected his small retinue, and rode away from the city.

His sire, Hassan abu Khalid (who was rarely lucid himself) Embraced al-Hakim while the latter was sauntering away from the rioters demonstrating against him in Cairo, their anger ignited by his religious persecution of his own fellow believers. Abu Khalid would come to regret, albeit briefly, his act of impetuosity. He had intended to reward al-Hakim for being a faithful ghoul while Caliph of Cairo, but in the next moments mad al-Hakim found abu Khalid’s throat and diablerized him. He then proceeded to ghoul his own retinue, for al-Hakim reasoned that since he had been a ghoul himself once — his devout followers should rejoice in being able to follow so closely in his divine footsteps.

Al-Hakim no longer has any formal interest in the caliphacy or in earthly trappings of power that he left behind. He finds it moderately amusing that the mosque he built (and named after himself) in Cairo in 1013 still stands, but his amusement lies primarily in the knowledge that he actually constructed the mosque so that the worship could be directed toward himself, the new Allah.

Jerusalem is his current obsession. Al-Hakim is, after all, Allah. And Jerusalem is the city sacred to Allah. And God. And Yahweh. That one God should have three names makes perfect sense to al-Hakim — with different names being used by different groups, he can keep track of who is beseeching him at any moment. Al-Hakim’s rightful place is where his worshipers can appreciate him — and that rightful place is obviously the center of the religious world: Jerusalem.

There are problems with this semi-divine comedy, however. While al-Hakim’s obsession is fueled by a scheming Setite, Abdullah al-Sathaja, he is coming under increasing scrutiny from the Ventrue and Lasombra Christians, who are beginning to realize that it is *this* al-Hakim who was responsible for the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in 1009. It will only take one failure in silencing a babbling priest or one hidden moment of sanity among the true faithful for Paliuro or Lucius to catch his stink on the wind. However, if they choose to hunt al-Hakim and his followers, they run the risk of encountering a unified Muslim outrage from both Cainite and kine.



**Image:** Al-Hakim has the bearing and dignity of a caliph with the imperial attitude to match. He dresses with dignity and elegance, but this does not begin to hide the fact that his sobriquet, "the Mad," is well deserved.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are arrogant, in a clearly megalomaniacal sort of way. You are Allah and you expect obedience from your followers, and become annoyed with and punish the disobedient. Threats of divine retribution are always in order should your whims not be obeyed.

**Haven:** For the moment, al-Hakim has set up quarters near al-Aqsa Mosque. Once his divinity is recognized, he intends to dwell in the mosque itself.

**Secrets:** It is only a matter of time before al-Hakim is recognized as the new Allah. He really is Allah, you know.

**Influence:** Al-Hakim's influence — like his prestige — is almost as illusory as a mirage in the Sahara. With Abdullah's assistance, he has gathered a small herd whom he has "blessed" with enlightenment of his own holy nature.

**Destiny:** Al-Hakim will remain convinced that he is Allah for the remainder of his existence. He will demand that he be treated with respect, and that he be the recipient of worshipful prayers. He will, several centuries from now, be so convinced of his deific state that he decides that he can overcome the Cainite prohibition against sunlight by his own will. To the surprise of no one except al-Hakim himself and his few remaining followers, the attempt fails.

**Clan:** Malkavian

**Sire:** Hassan abu Khalid

**Nature:** Autocrat

**Demeanor:** Judge

**Generation:** 8th

**Embrace:** 1021

**Apparent Age:** early 50s

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4 (Oblivious)

**Social:** Charisma 4 (Commanding), Manipulation 5 (Persuasive), Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Intimidation 3, Leadership 4 (Compelling), Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Etiquette 2, Melee 1, Stealth 1, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Law 1, Linguistics 2, Occult 2, Politics 3

**Disciplines:** Auspex 2, Dementation 4, Dominate 2, Obfuscate 2, Presence 2

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 2, Retainers 3

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

**Road:** Road of Heaven 8

**Willpower:** 4

**JERUSALEM BY NIGHT**



## BROTHER BERNARDUS

**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 havens 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

**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

**Road:** Road of Heaven 9

**Willpower:** 2

## JEANETTE D'AVIGNON

**Background:** Jeanette was born to a merchant family in Avignon in 1125. She was a fey child, living much of the time in her own fantasy world and given to disturbingly wild inspirations of insight which were more often true than not. Jeanette's natural allure and exciting demeanor eventually inflamed the passions of a young local innkeeper, who took her as his wife and lady. He brought Jeanette to church, talked with her through her more disturbing visions and directed her to stop listening to her inner voices. The couple produced a daughter, and her responsibilities to her family helped Jeanette control herself as she settled into a quiet, respectable life.

However, denying her God-given visions was not without its price, as they continued to find expression in





her slumber. One evening she awoke screaming at the horrid vision of her three-year-old daughter Lise being tossed lifelessly beneath the torrent of a flood. Days later, as Jeanette was occupied with the laundry of the household, Lise fell into the Rhone and was swept downstream to her doom.

Jeanette lost her mind — or more precisely, she lost half of her mind. Unable to reconcile herself to the loss of her child, a portion of her existence is now spent returning to the fanciful existence of her childhood. “Child” Jeanette carries a doll with her, speaking to it and about it as if it is real. She encourages it, disciplines it, bathes it, and tries to make sure the doll gets sufficient nourishment and sleep to grow up straight and strong. “Adult” Jeanette carries the doll around with her, too — but only so her daughter doesn’t misplace it and mourn its loss later. However, on the rare occasions that another adult speaks to the doll as if it is a child, Jeanette invokes Dementation and wonders aloud if they, too, see the child.

Neither “child” nor “adult” Jeanette remembers the details of the Embrace. Her “adult” half recalls thinking that it would be a very good idea to leave Avignon, where life had suddenly become unbearable; the temptations of the hunger had replaced the torment of her dreams. With the funds that she gathered from her husband’s coffers, she departed Avignon in search of anything to free her from the hunger and madness. For a time, the child-woman ranged across the countryside, barely surviving by the efforts of her Beast.

It was her “child” however, who decided that it would be exciting to wander south with the pilgrims heading to the recaptured Holy Land. They seemed like an interesting and exciting band, from all over the

region. The pilgrim leader was sympathetic to her weakened state and mental innocence, and charged her only a small amount to join the band. To this day Jeanette remembers this kindness of the pilgrims, and refuses to dine on Christian pilgrims’ blood.

The pilgrims Jeanette traveled with crossed paths frequently with others, and it was on the pilgrim’s road to Jerusalem that Jeanette first encountered other Cainites. She found the Ravnos to be particularly sympathetic, and was entranced by their free spirit, their trickery and their casual attitudes towards property. After a Ravnos gave her an anklet of tiny brass bells in exchange for stories of her former life in Avignon, she joined their caravan, eventually becoming accepted and learning how to feed with other Cainites.

While traveling with the Ravnos, Jeanette also honed her skills as a seer. She learned not to question or analyze, but rather to rely on her own perceptions and hunches, regardless of what “truths” a person might have spoken. She learned tales of ancient lore, how to use herbs and incantations to make simple philters, and danced to the music only she could hear.

The Ravnos band with whom Jeanette had been traveling left Jerusalem after several months, but she has decided to stay for a while longer. Both her selves enjoy the company of Yasmina and Hannah, and she is often their adult protector and child companion. Varsik, for his part, is amused by her madness but resents her growing fanciful influence over his child. He knows better than to believe the Malkavian’s twisted interpretations of Ravnos legends; her “inspired visions” are laughably pitiful in comparison to his greater reality.

Instead, Jeanette has recently been sharing stories and dances with the merchants and minstrels of Yusuf’s caravans, becoming drawn into the intrigue surrounding the Brujah elders Azif and Boniface. Jared himself has been impressed by Jeanette’s soothsaying ability, and twists her prolepsis and her knowledge to serve Azif. Jeanette, both adult and child, is trusting and guileless in these interactions, and believes most of what Jared tells her — he is a traveling merchant storyteller, after all, so much like her former Ravnos companions.

Though she has come to some understanding of her Cainite nature, Jeanette also privately still hopes for redemption. The City of Holies still may hold the blessings that free her — and the youth — from the curse of Caine, allowing them to live again and return to a normal existence. In more earthly ways, Jeanette also had best keep track of her daughter’s doll; Lise will be so angry if it’s lost....

**Image:** Regardless of which personality is in control, Jeanette looks as if she could belong to the Ravnos Clan



instead of the Malkavian. Given to flamboyant colors, trailing gauze and tinkling bells, she skips, dances and cavorts more than she walks down a street. Her auburn hair is caught up in saucy curls, while her green eyes flash with amusement.

**Roleplaying Hints:** As "child" Jeanette, talk to (and about) your doll as if it were a toddler; use the doll to bring others into the conversation, and play upon adult sympathies. As "adult" Jeanette, protect the doll and explain that you are keeping it safe for your own daughter. Be playfully maternal and fiercely protective with the child Cainites, and easily distracted by music and dancing.

**Haven:** Jeanette stayed with the Ravnos outside of town when she first arrived in Jerusalem. Now she has found haven in the catacombs and caves beneath Temple Mount, formerly known as the Stables of Solomon.

**Secrets:** That wide-eyed Ravnos child, Yasmina, looks much like the daughter Jeanette thought had died—is it possible that the Ravnos have taken her child and renamed her? Jeanette has also heard rumors of Paliuro's protection rituals in the Holy Sepulcher, and searches her visions to discover if these rituals might be proof of the holy site's powers of resurrection.

**Influence:** Jeanette's only significant influence is with the youth of the city, who view her as a curious combination of playmate and protector. Yusuf, and through him Azif, understands that Jeanette has a gift of mad prolepsis, and they seek to turn her prophecies to their own ends. Her influence with them grows whenever one of her random prophecies happens to come true; naturally, it falls again when her next vision proves worthless.

**Destiny:** Jeanette's growing persistence as a prophetess and collusion with Azif's forces are betrayed by Varsik, who grows tired of her interference with Yasmina. He petitions Paliuro for her elimination, and together the elders form a plan to frame Boniface and his allies for Jeanette's Final Death. The war truly begins when Jeanette's blood-covered doll is delivered into Azif's hands.

**Clan:** Malkavian

**Nature:** Child (child) / Survivor (adult)

**Demeanor:** Celebrant (child) / Defender (adult)

**Generation:** 9th

**Embrace:** 1147

**Apparent Age:** early 20s

**Physical:** Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

**Talents:** Acting 4 (Mimicry), Alertness 2, Athletics 2,

Dodge 2, Intimidation 2, Larceny 2, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Music 2, Stealth 4 (Shadows)

**Knowledges:** Hearth Wisdom 2, Linguistics 2, Occult 4 (Mystical Powers)

**Disciplines:** Auspex 2, Dementation 4, Obfuscate 2

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 2, Generation 3, Resources 3

**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self-Control 2, Courage 4

**Road:** Road of Humanity 6

**Willpower:** 5

## NOSFERATU

Nosferatu in the Jerusalem area are in a particularly fortunate position. The leper colony they prefer is close to the city, yet avoided by Cainite and mortal alike. Kothar and his followers can gather information from the city's population and from the thousands of religious pilgrims who travel the nearby roads, yet never have to worry about their own havens being intruded upon. Cainites of other clans are willing to trade information for information, though, and thus the Lepers' reach extends far beyond their valley.

### KOTHAR

**Background:** Born 50 years before David conquered Jerusalem for Israel, Kothar traveled between the settlements of the Jordan River valley as an itinerant craftsman. He bore the name of the Canaanite god of crafts and took pleasure in his very skillful work. But he became cursed with leprosy, first losing fine control over his fingers then losing most of the fingers themselves. Those he'd helped exiled him to the Hinnom Valley, where lepers had gathered for time out of mind. Kothar accepted his banishment with dignity and faith in a higher purpose. By words alone, he worked to teach his arts to





the less disfigured lepers, slowly building his own community of blighted artisans.

To Hinnom's lepers, the Jewish conquest meant little; all any ruler wanted from the lepers was distance. But one night a prophet came to speak to Hinnom's outcasts. Others had come before, with messages of hope or judgment, but this one was different. Like his audience, this prophet had leprosy. But he also had a blood curse, which he described as the mark the Lord of Hosts put on the first murderer. Lepers, said the prophet, were God's chosen people, suffering the sins of the world and destined to become the foundation of a new order when the existing world crumbled away in global flames like the ones burning all around in Hinnom. Kothar became the prophet's disciple, and in time he received the Embrace. After the prophet moved on, Kothar never saw or heard from him again, and never even learned his name.

Through all the centuries since, Kothar has been the whisperer of God's words to the lepers and, through them, to the world beyond. Very, very few people in the outside world notice that there's anything unusual about the leper community — after all, what is the standard of comparison? Many of the lepers themselves want nothing to do with Kothar or his God, but he continues to comfort those who will receive comfort, and to work with those who retain some physical skill to attend to the needs of their fellow sufferers. Kothar himself has not adopted Christianity, but many of his disciples have, and a few have adopted Islam in recent centuries. However, all the religions still bring pilgrims to and from Jerusalem, and Kothar's knowledge has grown considerably over the centuries as the Holy City has become the focus of so many travelers, so many warriors.

Kothar chooses his childer carefully. He doesn't create many, and only a few inhabit Hinnom at any given time. Half a dozen of his childer dwell elsewhere, examining the secret underside of cities from Rome to Delhi. The extensive network of informants and messengers brings lore of all kinds back to Kothar, which he remembers and sorts while awaiting the judgment he is sure will come. Those few outsiders willing to venture among the lepers, such as the elder Cainites Abraham and Elsh, reap rich harvests of knowledge.

While Kothar guides his disciples and waits for the apocalypse, he feeds primarily on two kinds of people: lepers and other outcasts who've reached the point of suicidal despair, and the criminals, bullies and other people who seek to prey on the lepers and outcasts. Outcasts know that if they pray a prayer of surrender or cry a lament for final rest, *something* sometimes answers them. The criminal communities of the area know that

giving too much abuse to their weakest victims sometimes calls down a terrible retribution. For his part, Kothar punishes his childer for feeding too often on other sorts of mortals, but his control is looser than he thinks.

**Image:** Those who meet Kothar for the first time usually wonder how he holds together at all. His flesh is shriveled and his body withered, with bare bones visible in many places. He can barely muster enough wind for an audible voice. Cataracts cloud his remaining eye. If it weren't for the powers of vitae, he'd be completely incapacitated.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are the kindest sort of religious fanatic. Someday all the healthy, wealthy people around you will be swept away, leaving the remainder of existence for you and your followers. However, God will take care of the sweeping, not you, and so you bide your time and aid those who will receive your help. You speak softly and kindly, becoming angry only when your disciples report being abused by an outsider. Any abuser they can identify and whose wickedness you can confirm, on one of your own rare trips outside Hinnom, meets an untimely end. Then you return to your ministrations and your interpretation of the lore brought by your disciples.

**Haven:** One of the many small caves in the Hinnom Valley is where Kothar rests.

**Secrets:** Kothar knows at least something about all of the other clans' activities in Jerusalem, as well as the vast majority of the inner workings of civil and religious leadership throughout the area. Anyone who continues talking with friends or colleagues while making a donation to one of Kothar's beggars is an unwitting link in the great chain of observation.

**Influence:** Directly, Kothar only influences his own followers. Anyone willing to trade information and support with him can potentially gain tremendous influence as a result, given the range of Kothar's knowledge.

**Destiny:** Kothar falls into torpor as the Black Death sweeps through the Middle East in the 14th century. The panic and mass destruction of corpses badly damages the fragile balance of power among Hinnom's victims, with long-delayed religious and political confrontations all erupting at once. In the ensuing centuries, Kothar's most loyal disciples return, but the march of progress makes it harder for them to maintain their ancient routine. In the 20th century, they may manage visits to Kothar's resting place only once every few months, or even every few years. When he returns, they know, one or more of them may well have to sacrifice themselves for him, and they're prepared. In the meantime, they work together to maintain as complete and accurate a body of knowledge about Jerusalem's secrets as they can.



**Clan:** Nosferatu  
**Sire:** Unknown  
**Nature:** Fanatic  
**Demeanor:** Caretaker  
**Generation:** 6th  
**Embrace:** before 1000 BCE  
**Apparent Age:** Ancient  
**Physical:** Strength 4 (Gnarled), Dexterity 3, Stamina 5 (Determined)  
**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 5 (Evangelistic), Appearance 0  
**Mental:** Perception 5 (Watchful), Intelligence 4 (Knowledgeable), Wits 3  
**Talents:** Acting 5 (Feign Weakness), Alertness 5 (Ambushes), Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 5 (Afflicted), Intimidation 3, Larceny 3, Leadership 5 (Inspirational), Subterfuge 5 (Find Weakness)  
**Skills:** Animal Ken 4 (Vermin), Crafts 3, Herbalism 3, Stealth 5 (Shadows), Survival 5 (Wilderness)  
**Knowledges:** Hearth Wisdom 4 (Jewish), Investigation 5 (Web of Contacts), Linguistics 3, Occult 3, Politics 4 (City)  
**Disciplines:** Animalism 6, Auspex 3, Celerity 4, Dominate 4, Fortitude 5, Mortis 2, Obfuscate 6, Potence 6, Presence 3, Protean 3  
**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Contacts 5, Herd 4, Resources 2, Retainers 5  
**Virtues:** Conscience 4, Self-Control 4, Courage 3  
**Road:** Road of Heaven 8  
**Willpower:** 8

## EPHRAIM

**Background:** Ephraim was the first mortal Kothar Embraced, meeting death for the first time shortly after the Assyrian conquest. Ephraim was a tailor before developing leprosy. Once exiled to Hinnom, he served Kothar and his fellow lepers, trying to ignore his personal loss by aiding those more disabled than himself.

When Jerusalem fell to the Assyrians and Solomon's Temple was defiled, Ephraim lost hope for his society as well as for himself. Kothar explained to him that destruction is no more eternal than creation, that new cities are promised to rise from the ashes of old — but Ephraim didn't think it likely that renewal would come in his lifetime. When Kothar realized Ephraim was on the brink of dying from despair, the Embrace followed, and for the following three centuries, the younger Nosferatu wavered as to whether vampiric existence was worth the costs. When the restoration of Jerusalem began at Cyrus's orders, Ephraim found hope again. Despite occasional moments of doubt, he's never lost this core of faith in the centuries since.



Ephraim is much better at concealing his deformities than Kothar, and so he is his sire's most trusted observer. Every few decades, Ephraim establishes a new identity for himself as a stranger in the city, ingratiates himself with one set of authorities or another, and finally succumbs to leprosy or meets some other tragic fate — then he repeats the process *ad infinitum*. Through Ephraim's reports, Kothar builds his sense of how the poor and needy live, who needs what sort of help and who is earning just punishment. While "in the field," Ephraim seldom returns to Hinnom, and he regards the years between disguises as precious times of renewal and community.

In 1195, Ephraim began building up the identity of merchant Michael ben David, come to Jerusalem from somewhere indistinct to the south, specializing in supplying the needs of priests and religious observers. He explains his need to avoid the sun as a curse put upon him by an evil witch, and claims that he is seeking but has not yet found relief.

Ephraim has encountered many of the city's elder Cainites over the centuries, though he does not choose to maintain regular contact with any of them. He feels that Boniface lacks the direct involvement of personal suffering that would make him an effective shepherd of the needy, and occasionally makes an effort to undermine the priest's works as a result. However, he respects his sire's cooperation with Elsh and Abraham, for he understands that those who would hunt or expose those worthies would then proceed on to Hinnom. No Cainites in the city know of his successive masquerades, with the possible exceptions of Canis or Mandalay. And as neither of those two is talking, his secret is safe.



**Image:** When at home in Hinnom, Ephraim appears even more badly deformed than his sire. The Nosferatu curse manifested in him as splits running through his arms and legs, with incomplete limbs (also withered and leprous) sprouting above each joint, where bone splinters off. When away from Hinnom, he uses his powers of Obfuscate to take on a suitable appearance, and he pays careful enough attention to age himself naturally over time.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You think of yourself as Jewish, but the solid core of your faith long ago became the distinctive home-brewed creation of Kothar. You particularly share his compassion for the least fortunate and those on the edge of death. Mingling with the rest of society is difficult for you. As a consummate actor, you can play whatever part you care to take on — callous aristocrat, greedy merchant or ambitious bureaucrat. But deep inside, you dislike the deception. You exist for the precious moments when you can reveal your true self and perhaps bring another chosen one into the fold.

**Haven:** In between infiltrations, Ephraim dwells in a cave near Kothar's in Hinnom; while infiltrating Jerusalem, whatever is appropriate. Currently, his haven is a modest home in the Temple district.

**Secrets:** Since the Crusades, Ephraim has focused on the religious life of Jerusalem. He has contacts throughout the Jewish, Muslim and Christian communities, and keeps appraised of plans for expansion, doctrinal disputes and clerical support for one political faction or another.

**Influence:** As an apparent newcomer, "Michael ben David" does not yet wield any significant influence. But his connections grow and prosper, as he becomes known as a reliable — if curious — merchant. He's already carried out minor missions as courier for mid-ranking Jewish priests. In time he'll be able to parlay those favors into services for himself and his kin back in Hinnom.

**Destiny:** Ephraim continues his cycle through the centuries to the era of the Final Nights. While in disguise, he usually arranges some way to keep a watch over slumbering Kothar: archeologist, caretaker, tender of relics, whatever comes to hand. In the last decade of the 20th century, he operates as Ephraim Goldstein, immigrant from the United States studying medical history and performing related digs in Hinnom.

**Clan:** Nosferatu

**Sire:** Kothar

**Nature:** Martyr

**Demeanor:** Celebrant

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 722 BCE

**Apparent Age:** late 40s

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5 (Tough)

**Social:** Charisma 5 (Charming), Manipulation 5 (Smooth), Appearance 0

**Mental:** Perception 5 (Attentive), Intelligence 4 (Sharp Memory), Wits 3

**Talents:** Acting 4 (Character Acting), Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Subterfuge 4

**Skills:** Crafts 3 (Tailor), Etiquette 3, Stealth 3

**Knowledges:** Investigation 2, Law 2, Linguistics 3, Politics 2

**Disciplines:** Animalism 3, Auspex 4, Celerity 3, Dominate 4, Fortitude 6, Obfuscate 3, Obtenebration 2, Potence 4, Protean 3, Quietus 1

**Backgrounds:** Allies, Contacts 2, Resources 2

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

**Road:** Road of Heaven 7

**Willpower:** 6

## HANNAH

**Background:** Hannah is the newest of Ephraim's childer. He first noticed her as a severely crippled young girl at the start of his last false life. He was tempted to Embrace her immediately to bring her relief, but decided (and Kothar agreed) that an eternity of childhood would be worse than a single lifetime of suffering. So, ten years later, when he prepared to "die," he revealed his true nature to the now-grown woman and Embraced her. She's been a vampire for less than two decades, and is still very much adapting to her new condition.

Very much to the surprise of Ephraim and Kothar, Hannah is not entirely filled with gratitude at her new state. She had a hard, bad life, full of abuse and torment, and she resents the thought that watchers in the shadow could have helped but did not. She also feels that



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Kothar's sense of mercy (which she shares emphatically) would be best served by spreading the Embrace far and wide —. However, she also fears what "justice" Kothar might serve should she sire childer of her own.

Hannah considers herself at least partway outside the Hinnom community. She was never a leper, and retains much of the prevailing superstitious dread of leprosy even though intellectually she understands it holds no peril for her. So she spends very little time in Hinnom, preferring to mingle with the beggars and paupers she once counted herself among. She and Varsik's waif, Yasmina, often wander the streets together, sometimes in the company of that disturbing Malkavian dancer who likes Yasmina so much. She also occasionally quarrels with the Cappadocians about Cainite responsibilities to those who suffer and linger near death.

**Image:** Hannah's spine is badly deformed, making it impossible for her to stand upright. Could she straighten herself, others would notice that she's somewhat taller than the local norm; very likely there's a barbarian sailor somewhere in her ancestry. She dresses modestly, blending among the locals of whatever streets she travels.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You're an outsider among outsiders, sharing a common belief with the other childer of Kothar but not really belonging. You don't belong to the community whose suffering you shared in life any more, either. So you roam. Your goal, such as it is, is to meet other Cainites and find some anchor for the night-to-night needs of unlife to match the long-term vision Kothar's given you.

**Haven:** Hannah dwells in the basement of a home lying empty for a period of purification after plague. She changes her haven every few years, and is just beginning to think about doing so again.

**Secrets:** Hannah has an exhaustive understanding of the lower classes in Jerusalem. She's also got an ever-growing depth and breadth of insight into the Cainite population of the area. Once she began encountering vampires beyond Kothar's circle, she supplemented overt encounters with spying, and she's good at it. She hasn't penetrated any of the deeper, inner machinations of the elders, but she usually knows at least as much or more about what childer are up to than their sires do.

**Influence:** At the moment, Hannah is something of a conundrum to the clans. She doesn't (yet) use her knowledge for blackmail, but she's very persuasive when it comes to trading her help at a task important to another vampire for help in a matter that concerns her.

**Destiny:** Hannah's conflicting impulses remain unresolved throughout the 13th century. Finally, early in the 14th century, she decides that she'd benefit from time away, to resolve her conflict without the constant goad of the leper community. She heads off into the East.

That's the last the Jerusalem vampires see of her. From time to time over the next eighty years she sends messages back, carried by other vampires, ghouls or other sundry messengers. But the last one comes in 1399. After that, it's silence. Did she encounter monsters in the East, or fall afoul of mortal vampire-hunters? Did she (as Kothar hopes and prays) find Golconda on her own? The Cainites of Jerusalem can only guess.

**Clan:** Nosferatu

**Sire:** Ephraim

**Nature:** Loner

**Demeanor:** Judge

**Generation:** 8th

**Embrace:** 1180

**Apparent Age:** mid-teens

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 1, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 0

**Mental:** Perception 4 (Attentive), Intelligence 2, Wits 2

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Search 3, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Stealth 3

**Knowledges:** Hearth Wisdom 2, Linguistics 2

**Disciplines:** Animalism 2, Obfuscate 4, Potence 3

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 2, Status 1

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

**Road:** Road of Heaven 5

**Willpower:** 4

## RAVNOS

The Bashirite Ravnos have led and bled the trade city of Damascus nearby for over 500 years — a position of power understood, if not respected, by all Jerusalem Cainites except the very new or the very naive. Surviving and thriving through the cycles of empires, both East and West, the Bashirites believe that the downfalls of the great civilizations and the presence of holy armies mark the coming of a dark chaos. Their most ardent members seek to destroy all that is holy, battle against the Methuselaha and prophesy the imminent rise of the Antediluvians from their age-long slumber. The rest are simply in it for the profit, to a greater or lesser extent.

Because the Bashirites have a higher calling, they generally care little for the petty infighting of the mortals during the Crusades. Each side requires supplies, and provisions to feed armies are difficult — and expensive — enough to obtain that the merchants of Damascus have considerable leverage. The Ravnos take advantage of Arab, Jew and Christian equally, with two exceptions: They are vitally interested in holy relics, and work to undermine the activities of the crusader Cainites who seek to disrupt the Bashirite prophecies.



The battleground of Jerusalem is perhaps the most important location in this struggle. Varsik, an Armenian Bashirite Ravnos of formerly Catholic descent, represents the main interests of his clan in Jerusalem. He plays both sides against the middle, and eagerly takes the newer Cainites of the city into his confidence, assuring them as to what a powerful ally he might be. He is also a worrisome enemy, for no Cainites can afford to have the population of the Holy City reduced to deluded rabble if they incur the antipathy of the entire Ravnos clan.

Jerusalem is full of nobles and nobodies, property and possessions, audiences to thrill and relics to liberate. Rumor among the Ventrue is that Varsik was among the emissaries who gave information on the crusader forces to Salah al-Din at Hattin, leading to the defeat of the Christian armies and the reoccupation of Jerusalem by the Muslims. Others speak of Ravnos whispers influencing the destruction of temples over the centuries. However, in a time when the future of faith is at stake, desperate Cainites deign to make pacts with even the Ravnos, trading bargains and favors in efforts to reestablish their power within the city.

## VARSIK

**Background:** Varsik was Embraced as one of seven childer of Bashir, and is one of only two remaining in 1197. Born an Armenian Christian in the sixth century, he was engaged by the tales of Arab scholars and conquerors, and became a merchant to follow his wandering spirit. Through his years of caravan travel he developed a keen sense of compassion for others who played tourist through

life. Eventually he came to settle in Damascus. This city served as Varsik's center of trade for many years, and he became a well-known merchant.

As the years passed, Varsik held the reins of his trading close, choosing the honor of dealing with important customers himself, often over the traditional Arab evening meal. The power of his personality and his engagingly embellished tales of his travels won many allies and profitable deals; it was in the course of a particularly shrewd trade in Damascene blades that he attracted the attention of Bashir, a Ravnos of ancient blood. Varsik's traveled heritage, his skill with words and his masterful sleight of hand all impressed the Cainite, who sensed in the Armenian a kindred nature.

After the Embrace, Varsik traveled with Bashir's brood, learning new languages on the journey and stories of ancient and modern ways. He became one of Bashir's ardent supporters, saving his sire on a dark night when three other childer were betrayed by a vindictive and petty Ventrue, and collectively sacrificed at the next dawn. Since that night, Bashir and many of his brood have merged the inclinations of the Road of Paradox with their apocalyptic stance, returning to take control of Damascus' trade, influencing and observing the Levant and waiting for further signs of prophecy.

Though Bashir's ideas are hardly popular among the more traditional members of his clan, even they cannot argue that the great civilizations of the West have an untidy habit of collapsing. Over centuries of watchfulness, Varsik has had a great deal of time to review the portents, and finds his instincts quarreling with his sire's teachings. After another of Varsik's childer was slain in the crusader carnage, Varsik came to Jerusalem in 1101 to take her place as well as personally avenge her betrayal. In truth, he believed that Jerusalem was the focus of the coming great struggle, and his eyes were already set on the horizon.

With his trade influence and Christian heritage, Varsik and his merchants were accepted into Jerusalem upon their arrival. Over the years he became involved with Father Paliuro of the Lasombra, trading small favors (such as a trick image mirror that Paliuro uses to fool mortal and Cainite alike) for favor and protection. He also amuses Paliuro with wild, inspirational stories of miracles and spiritual redemptions for the priest to use in his sermons. In truth the two Cainites once found each other useful. With Paliuro's recent descent into paranoia and madness, however, the relationship is rapidly becoming burdensome, and Varsik is now seeking to contract the Assamite Gabriel to end it entirely.

Varsik is also in touch with a Ravnos elder near Damascus, and serves as that Cainite's primary contact with the southern Setites and Assamites who are



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waging war on the invading Christians. For the Assamites, Varsik is a worthy ally as regards trade and information, but a dangerous manipulator as well. They understand that the suspicious demise of Varsik would only bring more Ravnos to Jerusalem, to a city that still contains many holies that could be stolen or demolished by the vagabond Cainites, but still they seek ways to limit him. Varsik is actually more wary of the Setites, but finds Abdullah al-Sathaja particularly easy to manipulate.

Varsik has many contacts in all sects of the city, and his nocturnal explorations have allowed him to encounter natives and travelers of a variety of social classes. He particularly enjoys the pilgrims who are less pious, attending to their company and trading his own stories for their tales of distant lands. He honorably restrains himself and his childer from an easy mark if the mortal's stories are inspired; the treacherous, insolent and barbaric are more likely to be seen as herd. He collects additional information from Yasmina, a child he Embraced who beguiles passersby with her waifish looks and simple innocence.

Varsik makes his home in the Christian Armenian Quarter where few other Cainites can easily travel — all outsiders are shunned there, while the Greek Orthodox are hated. His rare ability to make a deal that seemingly satisfies all sides has the hallmark of a merchant diplomat, but in truth he seeks to enjoy this place to the fullest before the next cycle of devastation inevitably begins. He has ghouls running on both sides, some believing him to be clan Ventrue instead of clan Ravnos, while others trade their blood for his support in ensuring their own survival.

Varsik is not personally powerful in close combat; instead, his power derives from his political contacts and his knowledge. He is, however, charismatically threatening, and his oratory skills combined with his mastery of Chimerstry can rally anti-Cainite (and even anti-Church) crowds easily. Thus he can sway public favor in an already heated situation.

**Image:** Varsik is slick without being slimy, and he carries himself with a charismatic combination of disarming modesty and alluring confidence. He has dark hair and bright eyes capable of an amazing intensity. His attire is subdued — for a Ravnos.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are glib, charming and slightly effusive. You are also unencumbered by any guilt over your manipulation of those you take advantage of for business or to feed. Your surface weaknesses are similar to those of other Bashirites, for your immediate attention is always gained by talk of Methuselahs, holy relics and Antediluvians. Your stories draw information out of others as your bite draws out their blood, though your motives may not be what they seem at first blush.

**Haven:** Varsik finds haven in a crypt beneath the home of one of his ghouls in the Armenian Quarter of Jerusalem.

**Secrets:** Varsik, like Magdalena, secretly enjoys the chaos and uncertain times of Jerusalem. Its stance as an open city is perfect for the Ravnos, for no single faction is powerful enough to eject them. Prey — political, financial, mortal — are plentiful and distracted, and Varsik will work against the Bashirite philosophies just as much as for them if his amusement and survival are put at risk.

**Influence:** Varsik's influence within Jerusalem is wide but paper-thin, with a few exceptions in the Cainite power structure. He draws upon the power of his sire and clan, as well as his own indisputable magnetism, to sway the distribution of food, funds and information, attempting to ensure a perpetual stalemate between Christian and Muslim forces.

**Destiny:** Varsik's influence and area of control widen over the next several centuries. His skill at manipulating information into profitable business deals becomes legendary, while his evasive inquiries about the dealings of Methuselahs and his betrayals of the Bashirites will eventually be his undoing.

**Clan:** Ravnos

**Sire:** Bashir

**Nature:** Jester

**Demeanor:** Gallant

**Generation:** 6th

**Embrace:** 610 CE

**Apparent Age:** mid-40s

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

**Social:** Charisma 5 (Charming), Manipulation 6 (Persuasive), Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 4 (Sharp Memory), Wits 4 (Clever)

**Talents:** Acting 3, Artistic Expression 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Larceny 3, Subterfuge 4 (Fast Talk)

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Crafts 4 (Organization), Melee 4 (Clubs), Music 3, Ride 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 4, Investigation 3, Linguistics 5 (Merchant), Occult 2, Politics 4 (City), Theology 2

**Disciplines:** Auspex 3, Chimerstry 7, Dominate 4, Fortitude 3, Presence 4

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Contacts 5, Herd 4, Influence 2, Mentor 4, Resources 4, Retainers 3

**Virtues:** Conviction 4, Self-Control 3, Courage 3

**Road:** Road of Paradox 6

**Willpower:** 8

## YASMINA

**Background:** Yasmina was Embraced by Varsik on one of his evening excursions through the city.





Over the course of months of strolling, a peculiar beggar waif had caught his eye, staking out her claim at the intersection of two well-traveled thoroughfares. She seemed unusually adept at garnering the attention of passersby with her unconscious assessment of their sympathetic weaknesses. The bullies she studiously avoided, while the pilgrims donated coins after listening to her charming, hesitant phrases in Latin, Greek or Arabic about her plans to serve God or Allah when she grew up.

Growing up was evidently not in the universe's plan for Yasmina, however. She was in her usual place late one evening when Varsik happened to be nearby, admiring her work. A horse spooked at the scent of the Cainite, and before the rider could seize control, the animal had plunged into the crowd. Along with three others, Yasmina had been trampled. As her life's blood drained into the dust, Varsik stepped from the shadows and took her into his arms. He embraced the young innocent as soon as he could hustle her into a secluded spot.

Yasmina now alternates between tagging along with Varsik and continuing to wander the streets on her own. She uses her talents for remembering what strangers tell her, and utilizes her powers of observation, then takes the results back to her sire. She doesn't understand much of what she tells Varsik, but he does. Perhaps the only thing she has not told Varsik about is another girl that roams the streets, a cripple named Hannah, who has become a friend she can trust in the night.

Yasmina is Varsik's tool — she is neither a toy nor a colleague. She is not even really bright enough to be a very interesting companion, but her innocent naïveté

and newness to the world delight and energize him. He sees it as an amusing contrast to the dark foreboding maintained by the other Bashirites.

Yasmina is glad to help — at least, Varsik tells her that she's helping him by passing along the stories that the pilgrims on the street tell her. And she gets to see interesting places and travel, and she can almost always find her way back to wherever Varsik is staying. Sometimes especially nice people invite her home, or into a hostel or hospital, and she gets to feed and even find pretty, shiny baubles to take back to Varsik.

Though the bloodlust that sometimes takes control of the girl frightens her, Yasmina is glad that Varsik saved her from death and brought her to darkness. He told her that now she could be young and have fun forever. She occasionally realizes, however, just how long "forever" can be.

Yasmina has several people other than Varsik watching over her. Brother Bernardus stops by to listen to her stories and make sure she's safe, although Yasmina isn't quite sure how she could be in danger. A new woman, Jeanette, seems to think Yasmina is her daughter, which makes Yasmina suspicious and uncomfortable.

**Image:** Yasmina is a wistful, waif-like child. She has large, dark eyes and a mop of dark curls. Her clothing is just ragged enough to invoke sympathy, but clean enough to cause strangers to assume that she's harmless. She is quick, lithe and alert.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You're cute. Smile prettily at the nice stranger, and ask lots of questions and tell lots of meaningless stories about the city, the sights and the person talking to you. Maybe that will get you some coins, or the chance to feed when the stranger takes you home.

**Haven:** Yasmina usually stays with Varsik in the Armenian Quarter of the city.

**Secrets:** Yasmina likes her friends and buys their trust by helping them beat bullies and other street thieves. She is growing particularly fond of Hannah, and the Nosferatu cripple returns her friendship. When Varsik is popular, Yasmina feels neglected, and the wrath of this neglected child may simmer for years before erupting to spectacular effect.

**Influence:** Yasmina has almost no influence whatsoever, except among street children and with Hannah.

**Destiny:** Yasmina is a "one trick pony." As long as Varsik prospers, Yasmina will be all right. When his tricks finally catch up with him, she does not escape the conflagration either.

**Clan:** Ravnos

**Sire:** Varsik

**Nature:** Jester

**Demeanor:** Child

**Generation:** 7th

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**Embrace:** 1143

**Apparent Age:** not yet 10

**Physical:** Strength 1, Dexterity 4 (Light Touch), Stamina 1

**Social:** Charisma 4 (Outgoing), Manipulation 4 (Persuasive), Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 1

**Talents:** Acting 4 (Pretend), Alertness 2, Empathy 2, Larceny 4 (Rumor Mill), Subterfuge 1

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Etiquette 2, Ride 1, Stealth 4 (Hide)

**Knowledges:** Hearth Wisdom 2, Investigation 2, Linguistics 2

**Disciplines:** Animalism 1, Chimerstry 2, Fortitude 2

**Backgrounds:** Allies 1, Contacts 2, Mentor 2

**Virtues:** Conviction 2, Self-Control 3, Courage 3

**Road:** Road of Paradox 6

**Willpower:** 5

## SALUBRI

The few Salubri in Jerusalem, still thoroughly shaken and disoriented in the wake of Saulot's destruction, are little better than targets in these dark nights. Elusive and fearful, they are turning to their own more and more when they seek allies, for they can trust no others. Notes left in obscure places, written in the ancient language of the Second City, are all well and good—but real contact with others, others like yourself, becomes increasingly important as the Salubri become more isolated and cautious. Jerusalem, always a nexus of intrigue, draws Salubri as they pass through on their way to... somewhere else.

A Salubri nursemaid is kept within the al-Bimaristan al-Salahi Hospital through the generosity of the Lasombra, providing safe access to a docile herd even though the hospitals supposedly answer directly to the Islamic governor. A European warrior Salubri on pilgrimage may be on his way through—but that rumor has been floating around the city for several months now without so much as a glimpse of the fellow—and their few truces with other Cainites are tentative at best.

### 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



CHAPTER FOUR: CAINITES OF JERUSALEM



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:** 8th

**Embrace:** 1024

**Apparent Age:** late 20s

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

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2



**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

**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

## NAHUM BEN ENOSH

**Background:** Nahum ben Enosh started out as a Talmudic scholar, spending his days in yeshiva, studying and arguing the fine points of Jewish law. One evening, as he was headed home, he was overheard to say that he regretted his rapidly approaching death. Old age was catching up to him, and Nahum mourned all of the knowledge that he had not the time to acquire. It was Saulot who overheard, and who Embraced him.

Nahum spent the following centuries learning and passing his knowledge on to others. While he despaired of ever reconciling the blood-prohibition with his Cainism, he is reconciled to the fact that Yahweh's plans were far beyond his meager, mortal understanding. Blood feeding notwithstanding, Nahum could not imagine his existence as a Salubri warrior, so followed the healing path instead.

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Before long, Nahum slightly turned his inquisitive nature from being wholly devoted to Torah studies, to include the study of demonic pacts too. What, exactly, are demons? Why does Yahweh allow them to continue to exist? What purpose do they serve? Is it possible to control them? Or are Cainites and kine alike merely fooling themselves into believing that it is possible to control a demon?

A scholar of considerable repute, Nahum ben Enosh has been at his trade for century upon century. He is, however, greatly distressed by the events of the past 50 years, and is having difficulty with the current lack of leadership in the clan. Several years ago, he heard that Aisha bint Wahiba was providing underground services for other Salubri, passing along messages and directing Salubri to safe havens. He began considering the possibility of traveling to Jerusalem to meet with her. If there were a likely successor to Saulot, perhaps Aisha would know that Salubri's whereabouts. Another motivation to go to Jerusalem came from the knowledge that Moses Maimonides — a Torah scholar of international repute — was in residence in Jerusalem, serving as Salah al-Din's personal physician. Unfortunately, by the time Nahum reached Jerusalem, Salah al-Din had died, and Maimonides had left the city. Nahum regrets that he could not discuss demons with Maimonides, Nahum had hoped that Maimonides' knowledge would guide him through his perplexity. It was not to be.

Aisha bint Wahiba would like for Nahum to stay and help her in the hospital (although that Malkavian, Bernardus, seems demonically possessed, which is something of a deterrent), but Nahum thinks that he will keep heading north. If the militant Christians are here in Jerusalem, then it must be fairly safe in their northern homelands — or so he reasons. So Nahum is just passing through Jerusalem. He is not going to stay, unless something drastic happens to change his mind.

One bit of recently gathered intelligence does intrigue Nahum. He has heard rumors that a Cappadocian elder, Abraham, has in his possession an ancient religious parchment. Nahum has recently contacted Adam, Abraham's childe, to learn more of this matter. Adam sees Nahum as another potential mentor in more powerful and practical aspects of mysticism, and is willing to bear the risk of traveling with the Salubri should he choose to leave the city in search of answers and peace.

**Image:** Nahum appears to be a harmless old man, dressed in traveler's robes and carrying a walking staff. His hair and beard are quite white.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are old, feeling your years. You are tired from your journey and a bit daunted by the journey ahead of you.

**Haven:** At the moment, Nahum is cadging a room near Aisha in the al-Bimaristan al-Salahi Hospital.

**Secrets:** Nahum is tired. He would like to be enthusiastic, support the cause and help rebuild the Salubri... but Nahum is tired. Since the diablerization of Saulot, Nahum has lost most of his enthusiasm. He is beginning to think about torpor as a possible compromise; perhaps things will look better in a couple of centuries.

**Influence:** Nahum once had a considerable amount of influence under Saulot. Now, however, he is becoming a bit mythical himself; other Salubri are surprised to hear that he is still active. Sometimes, he is, too.

**Destiny:** Nahum ben Enosh does decide to retreat to torpor not long after leaving Jerusalem, and vanishes from the pages of history.

**Clan:** Salubri

**Sire:** Saulot

**Nature:** Judge

**Demeanor:** Caretaker

**Generation:** 4th

**Embrace:** 216 CE

**Apparent Age:** mid-60s

**Physical:** Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 4 (Attentive), Intelligence 5 (Clear Thinker), Wits 4 (Clever)

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Empathy 4 (Truths), Leadership 3, Subterfuge 2

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

**Knowledges:** Academics 4 (Demonology), Hearth Wisdom 4 (Jewish), Linguistics 3, Medicine 5 (Diagnosis), Occult 5 (Demons)

**Disciplines:** Auspex 6, Fortitude 3, Obfuscate 6, Presence 4, Potence 2, Valeren 8 (both paths)

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Contacts 2, Status 3

**Virtues:** Conscience 4, Self-Control 5, Courage 7

**Road:** Road of Chivalry 10

**Willpower:** 9

## SETITES

The Setites of the city find all religions except their own anathema, but cannot resist the temptation of seducing throngs of pilgrims new to these lands. A Setite prostitute has allied her gifts of pleasure with the Assamite road assassin, and together they work on converting one another through scenes of their former lives' passions. Another Setite, a new import from Cairo, is securing himself as the Serpent behind a Madman, luring those who would follow the fallen leader and his delusions of godhood to an even darker servitude.



## SHAHARA AL-RASHWA, COURTESAN

**Background:** Shahara is something of a rarity: a native of Jerusalem. Born under Muslim rule, she was outside of the city when the crusaders slaughtered everyone inside the walls in 1099. The smell of blood on the winds drove her to frenzy; the confusion and disruption in the weeks following the massacre was such that no one noticed her return. After the crusaders installed their own version of governance, it took little effort to convince a few guards that she was a Christian and to permit her re-entry into the city.

Shahara was Embraced by a Setite recruiter explicitly looking for prostitutes who were willing to use their wiles to increase their standing and wealth, and thus gain access to power. Shahara was only pretty, never beautiful, so becoming the mistress of a powerful man seemed unlikely. Instead, she was trained to seduce with words and actions, rather than to rely on her looks. She learned how easy it is to turn men from their lofty intentions, and how simple it was to drag them into the depths of their personal torments. Shahara has discovered that those who are second-in-command make easy targets, too, as she offers them the flattery and compliments usually reserved for their masters.

Shahara has recently become intrigued by Rashid the Assamite, who has returned to the city. Despite all of the traditional rivalries between Setite and Assamite, Rashid is delighted to find someone of the same background, language and city, who happens to be a fellow Cainite, too. Shahara, on the other hand, is considerably less enthralled, having to overcome her distaste for Assamites just to associate with Rashid. It would appear, however, that he knows things that might be useful to her... and he is rapidly



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getting to the point where he will turn his back on his incomplete training and give himself over to corruption for her sake.

Shahara has made several advances toward Lasombra Pacifico Grillati, with little effect. The Toreador, Duyal al-Malatya, and the Ventrué, Vicelin, show promise — at least they are beginning to show some interest in expanding their influence, and Shahara is encouraging them to believe that she can assist them in achieving their goals. Shahara has little to do with any female Cainites in the city; who needs their interference with her attempts to corrupt men?

**Image:** Even better for her purposes than being beautiful (she comes close, but really isn't "beautiful"), Shahara is striking. She has an air of sensuous mystery about her that intrigues passersby. She dresses provocatively: her veils are a trifle too sheer, and her skirts mold slightly too close to her body to be considered "respectable."

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are sinuous and sensuous. Your movements are languid and graceful. While you may appear to be coy, you are particularly adept at luring men away from their virtues, their coin... and their secrets.

**Haven:** Shahara maintains simple quarters near the Zion Gate in the southern wall. This location puts her near merchants and pilgrims, as well as giving her easy access to the road outside of the walls.

**Secrets:** Secrets? Shahara's trade is the collection of secrets. What will you offer in trade? Or better, perhaps she'll just entice you into trading your secrets for ones she has no further use for.

**Influence:** Shahara walks a fine line between brokering power and maintaining a grip on her conquests. At any moment, those she's corrupting may recognize the path upon which she's set them, and the consequences could be disastrous.

**Destiny:** Rashid eventually comes to break free of Shahara's web, at least partially, and she flees the city in fear for her existence. She spends the next several centuries moving from place to place, always keeping a wary eye out for assassins. In the middle of the 20th century, she sets up shop in Rio de Janeiro, and becomes a major player in Cainite existence there.

**Clan:** Setite

**Sire:** Jezebel

**Nature:** Survivor

**Demeanor:** Rogue

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 980 CE

**Apparent Age:** late teens

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3



**Social:** Charisma 4 (Captivating), Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

**Talents:** Acting 3, Expression 4 (Dance), Dodge 1, Subterfuge 5

**Skills:** Etiquette 4 (Foreign Customs), Music 2, Stealth 3, Survival 1

**Knowledges:** Hearth Wisdom 3, Law 1, Linguistics 4 (Diplomatic), Occult 3, Politics 1

**Disciplines:** Obfuscate 4, Presence 3, Serpentis 4

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Contacts 2, Mentor 1

**Virtues:** Conviction 3, Instinct 4, Courage 3

**Road:** Road of Typhon 6

**Willpower:** 4

## ABDULLAH AL-SATHAJA

**Background:** How can one lead a lunatic into temptation? Abdullah al-Sathaja, a recent arrival to Jerusalem from Cairo, intends to find out.

Abdullah (which means "slave of Allah") enjoyed a life as a fish merchant near the docks on the Nile in Cairo. He was a proper, respectable businessman — right up until he got involved with a soothsayer woman dedicated to a life of pleasure, sacrifice and (as he now sees it) irresponsibility. His business lost, his family alienated, Abdullah found the life he had known destroyed. He turned back to the woman, Nagat... only to find that the new price of his "redemption" with her was capitulation and utter devotion to Set.

After the Embrace, Nagat bound Abdullah to her whim and her coterie with a blood oath. He served her indulgent pleasures in demeaning ways over the course of the next few years, becoming her guard during dalli-

ances that threatened to sway the sympathies of the vizier away from a rival Setite faction during the rule of the vicious al-Hakim. As the infighting grew, al-Hakim's enforcers decided to end the rivalry themselves. What followed was a night of betrayal that ended with Nagat ritually beheaded by an assassin, her favorite serpent dismembered beside her.

Abdullah prayed to Set for vengeance upon the caliph who had exercised such a reign of terror, daring to think of himself as Allah incarnate. He followed Hakim's last departure from Cairo intending to contact the Assamites or eliminate the caliph himself — and would have tried, were it not for the frustrating trickery of the Malkavian, who somehow managed to counter his every move. Upon reconsideration, though, Abdullah has come up with an even darker destiny for the Mad Lizard.

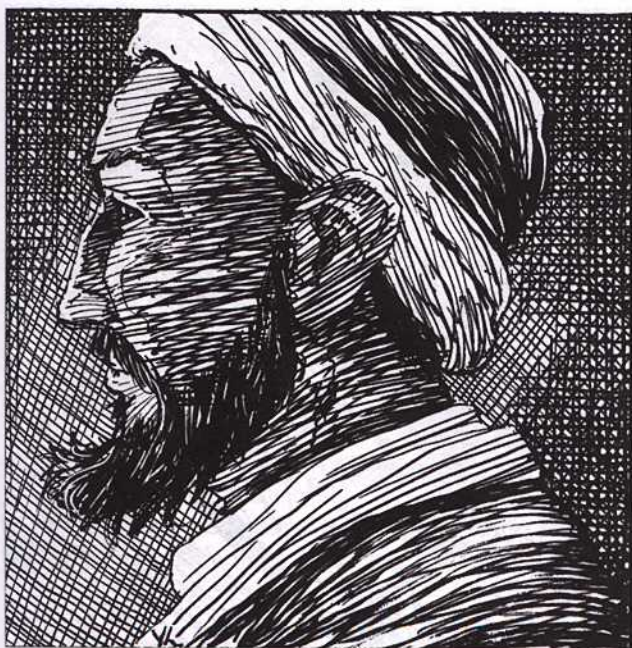
Abdullah has set out to lure al-Hakim into his clutches by giving him exactly what he wants: devoted worshippers. He has instructed his ghouls to be deferential and submissive to al-Hakim, at least to the extent that the lunatic is aware. This keeps al-Hakim near to Abdullah to be used as a figurehead, allowing the Setite to draw in his followers and convert them *en masse* to the worship of Set.

Going after al-Hakim is the most ambitious goal Abdullah al-Sathaja has set for himself to date. There are risks, of course. But Set will be pleased, very pleased, when Abdullah succeeds.

As Abdullah has been making progress in al-Hakim's corruption, he is beginning to think about who else might be susceptible to Set's ways. The Ventrue, Vicelin, appears to be properly self-indulgent; perhaps there is a possibility in that direction. The degradation of "children" might be another way to glorify Set: The "adults" watching over Yasmina will prove no real hindrance. Abdullah is also cautious, however. He actively avoids being anywhere near Gabriel Chavez, who is known to have hunted and diablerized influential Setites in Cairo.

**Image:** Abdullah al-Sathaja appears to be innocuous, in a pleasant sort of way. He's not exactly "forgettable" as much as he is "ordinary" or even "bland."

**Roleplaying Hints:** You have about you the air of quiet competence. Ponder each question or comment before answering — unless the query is regarding Allah. Then let your enthusiasm for being Allah's (or more specifically, al-Hakim's) slave pour forth. In private, you drop the charade and are coldly calculating about your plans. Trust no one; if your smile can hide a knife, so can anyone else's.





**Haven:** Abdullah al-Sathaja has a small home immediately to the left of al-Hakim's dwelling. One must be near, should Allah desire anything.

**Secrets:** Abdullah recognizes Varsik's attempts to entice information from him. The Setite feeds Varsik nothing of value, but instead is slowly trying to create the illusion that Abdullah possesses the information and contacts Varsik desires, in order to draw the Ravnos closer. Just now, Abdullah is preoccupied with luring al-Hakim down Set's path — but Varsik (or perhaps, Vicelin) could be next.

**Influence:** None in Jerusalem yet — but then, Abdullah al-Sathaja only arrived three years ago.

**Destiny:** Abdullah al-Sathaja comes to an ignoble end in 1234. Al-Hakim becomes suspicious of Abdullah's motives, stakes him and leaves him on the eastern wall of the city just before sunrise.

**Clan:** Setite

**Sire:** Nagat

**Nature:** Monster

**Demeanor:** Fanatic

**Generation:** 8th

**Embrace:** 930 CE

**Apparent Age:** mid-30s

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

**Social:** Charisma 4 (Eloquent), Manipulation 5, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Talents:** Acting 5 (Pretend), Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Empathy 3, Intimidation 2, Leadership 3, Subterfuge 2

**Skills:** Crafts 1, Etiquette 3, Herbalism 2, Ride 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Investigation 3, Linguistics 2, Occult 2

**Disciplines:** Auspex 2, Dominate 2, Obfuscate 2, Presence 3, Serpents 4

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 1, Herd 2, Influence 2, Retainers 3

**Virtues:** Conviction 2, Instinct 2, Courage 3

**Road:** Road of Typhon 6

**Willpower:** 6

## TOREADOR

Builders, artisans, lovers (and preservers) of the exquisite — the Toreador in Jerusalem struggle with the current political and religious upheavals which endanger so much historic beauty. They still seek to build further for the glory of God (and in some cases, themselves), but times and circumstances don't always permit such noteworthy endeavors. At least there's always politics for some members of the clan to fall back

on. And in Jerusalem, politics can definitely be an art form all their own.

## ELSH (ZAARU-HEYAN)

**Background:** In Tyre at the turn of the 12th century BCE, Zaaru-Heyan earned a reputation for himself as one of the finest builders of temples in the known world. The sacred spaces he planned, it was said, pleased the gods more than the work of any other man in Tyre and beyond. They were certainly graceful structures, each evoking the spirit of its god in form and feature. Donations flowed freely into his temples' coffers; prayers and sacrifices filled the air. Zaaru-Heyan himself honored each of the gods whose temples he built, winning their priests' admiration as well as generous payment.

While still in his early forties, Zaaru-Heyan succumbed to a mysterious illness. He lost the strength of body and clarity of mind that had been the cornerstones of his success, wasting away within a few weeks. Seeking to make his final peace, he resolved to walk to the sea to meet Elat, goddess of the ocean, the only major deity of Tyre for whom he had not built a temple. He left a brief inscription on a potsherd explaining his purpose, and his footprints could still be seen on a beach north of Tyre the following morning.

However this affliction was not a disease, but the over-enthusiastic attention of a Toreador who fell in love with his work and tried to drain off some of his creative humour. When the Toreador realized that Zaaru-Heyan was on the brink of death, the temple builder received the Embrace. Repentant, his sire helped him fake his death, arranged for him to receive instruction in Cainite ways from another Toreador in Tyre, and departed. Zaaru-Heyan never saw his sire again, though it



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is rumored that he still receives a letter of advice and architectural notes every century or two.

When Solomon sent to Tyre for workmen to help build a new temple in Jerusalem, Zaar-Hevan received permission from the senior Toreador to go. He adopted the name Elsh, "steward," and joined the procession of architects, craftsmen and laborers heading south into Israel. He did not care to risk the attention that playing a major role might draw, but through the generations he's contributed in small ways to prominent projects, and sometimes served as designer or overseer for relatively minor ventures.

Elsh has never been able to muster faith in Judaism or its descendant religions, and has gradually lapsed into a quiet state of internal doubt. However, he still seeks to offer mortal believers places to worship even though he no longer shares their devotion. After several centuries on the brink of torpor, he regained an interest in his work with the first spate of church-building by penitent pilgrims, and in recent centuries he's been much more active than usual within Jerusalem and the surrounding communities.

Along with Kothar, Elsh is one of the oldest Cainites of Jerusalem. His extensive knowledge of Jerusalem's architecture and holy structures and his strict neutrality in Jerusalem's religious conflicts have earned the respect of the city's Cainites; many, including the Lasombra Paliuro, are in his debt for favors he has provided in the past. Elsh has intimate knowledge of all the sites of True Faith within the city walls, as well as hiding places and catacombs otherwise lost over the centuries. He has also taken the young illuminator, Dyal al-Malatya, under his guardianship.

Elsh feeds on worshipers at the temples he's worked on over the centuries. At first he felt guilty about this, but as his disbelief grew, he decided that a little touch of euphoria while worshiping wouldn't do the kine any real harm. He uses the priesthood of several small churches in and around Jerusalem as his herd, though he is careful never to influence them against the wishes of other Cainites. He also relies on a very extensive network of ghouls among the city's craftsmen to carry out his orders and sometimes even to pretend to be him on daylight visits to work in progress.

At the present time, Elsh has no childer. He created several in the first few centuries CE, but they all fell to monster-hunters thanks to their own (or perhaps his, the nightmares sometimes whisper) carelessness. He has grown patient, contemplative and apolitical while holding himself free from the obligations that childer would bring. There is no beauty and no inspiration in siring childer in Jerusalem, at least not as the city and its inhabitants stand at this time.

**Image:** Elsh is a nondescript Phoenician. He's shorter than most of Jerusalem's living inhabitants, but his dark complexion and curly black hair don't stand out. He has exceptionally fine and strong fingers: He can carve stone and paint filigree with equal ease. He dresses in well-made but simple clothing, usually in dull tones that attract no attention and won't show stains if he spills something while on a construction site.

**Roleplaying Hints:** The single, great joy in your unlife is architecture, particularly building houses of worship. Sometimes you wish that you could rekindle your own faith, either in one of the gods of your lost living past or in one of those now preached in your adopted city. However, visions of the destruction, poverty and fear created by the crusader wars are all that you need to return your heart to secular detachment.

**Haven:** The home of one of his ghouls, a silversmith, is haven to Elsh.

**Secrets:** Elsh makes no effort to systematically harbor secrets, but he listens to what is whispered within the sanctuaries that he designed, and picks up useful snippets here and there. He has an immensely broad, but shallow, knowledge of the concerns of pilgrims: the politics of their homelands, the crises they faced on their paths to the Holy City, and their complaints about problems within Jerusalem itself. In the course of listening, he has also learned a great deal about the personal lives of priests. Where there is an unrequited love, jealousy among members of a temple or a quarrel over the significance of a worshiper's visions, Elsh knows about it.

What Elsh doesn't know about is that there are several Cainites throughout the city who are less than pleased with his efforts. By creating sites that abound in True Faith, he seals off more and more of the city from its Cainite inhabitants, and there is always the chance that someone may decide to prevent him from erecting any more monuments to heaven.

**Influence:** Elsh holds a great deal of indirect influence through his knowledge of politics and secrets of the priests, as well as his undisputed mastery of architecture and paths where Cainites may safely tread within the Holy City. His wide network of ghouls, some ambitious and influential in their own right, also protects him from those who thirst for his ancient blood.

**Destiny:** Elsh continues his quiet existence well into the Renaissance. His ghouls become increasingly independent and tire of his lack of interest in parlaying position into power. In 1555 they finally tire of him altogether, and drain him dry of vitae. Over the course of the next few years they slaughter each other in brutal infighting, and the entire network of alliances collapses.

**Clan:** Toreador

**Nature:** Innovator



**Demeanor:** Autocrat

**Generation:** 6th

**Embrace:** 1079 BCE

**Apparent Age:** mid-40s

**Physical:** Strength 5 (Strong Hands), Dexterity 5 (Nimble Fingers), Stamina 5 (Determined)

**Social:** Charisma 5 (Inspiring), Manipulation 5 (Cajole), Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 5 (Keen Eyed), Intelligence 6 (Creative), Wits 2

**Talents:** Acting 2, Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Intimidation 3, Leadership 4 (Building Projects), Sculpture 6 (Religious Motifs)

**Skills:** Crafts 6 (Architecture), Etiquette 4 (Religious), Herbalism 2, Melee 2, Ride 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 6 (Mathematics), Investigation 3, Law 2, Linguistics 2, Medicine 2, Occult 3, Politics 4 (Religious), Science 5 (Engineering)

**Disciplines:** Auspex 6, Celerity 4, Dominate 5, Fortitude 6, Obfuscate 5, Potence 5, Presence 6

**Backgrounds:** Herd 5, Influence 3, Resources 3, Retainers 4

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

**Road:** Road of Humanity 7

**Willpower:** 7

## DUYAL AL-MALATYA

**Background:** In the 1130s, Duyal al-Malatya was the only survivor of a plague that swept through his village in Asia Minor. That he survived any longer was the result of his being found by a Sicilian monk who was returning to his monastery from a pilgrimage to Jerusa-



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lem. Duyal — who was only eight at the time of the plague — had no one else to turn to, so he accompanied the monk back to Sicily.

Duyal received a monastic education, and discovered to his surprise a real talent for calligraphy and illumination. He also converted to Christianity; the only time he gave any particular thought to his Muslim origins was when he was asked to use human or animal figures in his illuminations. He found himself wryly amused that the Islamic prohibition against figurative art still occasionally gave him pause. In 1150, however, Duyal became one of the assistants to the Islamic naturalist Idrisi, who was preparing a multi-volume natural history of the world for Roger, the King of Sicily. Under Idrisi's influence, Duyal returned to Islam, much to the ire of the monks who'd sheltered and taught him. After Idrisi died in 1166, Duyal decided that he'd be safer elsewhere.

In the newly founded kingdom of Portugal, his calligraphy brought him to the attention of the Toreador Nasawi, who passed through many European courts as a patron of the arts. Nasawi saw great promise in Duyal's art as well as his unique religious and cultural heritage, and decided that this sensitive and diverse artisan could not be lost to a natural death. Nasawi seduced and Embraced Duyal with the promise of immortality, and tutored him in Cainite ways.

Over the following decades Duyal traveled along the Mediterranean coast with Nasawi's retinue and other childer, stopping for a few months here, a few years there. In 1192 they entered Jerusalem after hearing of the bargain of peace between Salah al-Din's forces and the Franks of King Richard. Duyal was enchanted with the architecture and art of the Holy City, and he received offers of work from impoverished monasteries seeking illuminators with barely an inquiry. Nasawi and his retinue continued on, intent on returning to Jerusalem in 1202.

Duyal does secular as well as religious work, from calligraphy on ceremonial documents to decorations on lintels and mantels. He came to Elsh's attention within months of arriving, and the senior Toreador found in him a kindred spirit. Now they enjoy quiet evenings together, discussing their shared interests in the use of art to exalt the sacred. Occasionally they hunt together, most often when tracking down a zealot marring temples Elsh built. Duyal also spends some time visiting with the Cappadocian Abraham, listening to the elder Cainite's interpretations of his work.

Duyal has recently heard rumor that an ancient Cappadocian temple-destroyer may have returned to Jerusalem. The idea of a Cainite willing to defile sacred architectures infuriates him more than any mortal defilers; after all, it is the Cainites who are chosen by Allah to bring glory and inspiration.



**Image:** Duyal is an Arab man, albeit not a particularly handsome one. He dresses in simply decorated robes and makes no effort at elaborate grooming or styling. He usually blends in with an Arab crowd, not talking much and seeming lethargic. He only becomes energetic and full of enthusiasm when he is working, or when he is discussing inspirational art and its place.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Sacred art is your religion and what infuses your soul. The vampiric condition is a useful annoyance: useful in that you won't have to stop at the end of a normal lifespan, annoying in the need to track down prey and the inconvenience of feeding. Try not to think about it. There are manuscripts to illuminate, great works to paint and techniques to learn. Anyone who can teach you something is worth listening to. Others are at best distractions; be polite but waste as little time as possible on them.

**Haven:** Duyal has an apartment in a non-descript neighborhood, with a backup in a nearby warehouse.

**Secrets:** Duyal doesn't care much about the secrets of others, though he'd be glad to learn more about the lives of artists he admires.

**Influence:** The only influence Duyal could wield comes from appreciative clients, but as long as he's supplied with work and the tools of his trade, he's content.

**Destiny:** Duyal learns of Marcus's existence and history, and decides to take action against him to protect the holy churches of the city (many of them Elsh's handiwork) from the defiler. He departs after a falling out with Nasawi in 1204, and continues to ply his craft over the centuries. After a series of close brushes with vampire-hunters in the 14th century, he enters a period of wandering, finally settling down in Madrid, just in time for the Reconquista. He flees again, and in the early 16th century falls into Tzimisce hands. After suffering the horrors of extended experimentation, he finally finds peace in True Death.

**Clan:** Toreador

**Sire:** Nasawi

**Nature:** Celebrant

**Demeanor:** Innovator

**Generation:** 12th

**Embrace:** 1175

**Apparent Age:** late 30s

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

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Leadership 2

**Skills:** Crafts 4 (Illumination), Etiquette 2, Herbalism 1, Ride 2, Stealth 2

**Knowledge:** Academics 4 (Calligraphy), Hearth Wisdom 2, Investigation 1, Occult 1

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1, Celerity 2, Presence 1

**Backgrounds:** Influence 2, Resources 2

**Virtues:** Conscience 4, Self-Control 2, Courage 5

**Road:** Road of Humanity 6

**Willpower:** 5

## TREMERE

Working to establish a mercantile foothold, the Tremere also search for Salubri. They will be galvanized into action, once they discover the Salubri underground, and a Cainite slaughter to rival the mortal one of 1099 is a very real possibility.

## MARA

**Background:** Mara was an ambitious student of mysticism and magic in a Chantry on the western outskirts of Latvia in the 11th century when she discovered the haven of her mentor and surmised the true nature of her House. Greedy for advancement, she drew a series of clever bargains and deceptions to secure her position. Her beauty, skill and talent attracted the attention of the Chantry master, who chose to Embrace her at the prime of her years. He later made an offer of mutual affection and the exchange of the blood oath with her in return for her own Chantry — but after he fell prey to a Belorussian Tzimisce's claws, the Tremere Council decided to transfer Mara to an important, but highly remote and dangerous post.

Since 1194, Mara has been the official outrider for Tremere operations in Jerusalem. Her duty is to work promoting Tremere-backed Baltic merchants of her



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homeland and lay the groundwork for future expansion. Not only are her outposts near Acre and Jerusalem forward stations of the Tremere-supported proto-Hanseatic League, but they are also the foundation of other plans the clan has for the region and its rich heritage of occult treasures. Added to these complex goals was another, more straightforward directive. Mara is to investigate the rumors of the evil spirit or Cainite known as Mandalay. She is to ascertain if it is in fact part of Saulot's brood or a student of Saulot — and if it is, she is to destroy it, though no specific suggestions were made on how precisely she is to go about this.

To accomplish these tasks, Mara has her apprentice and a relatively experienced Gargoyle. She is forbidden to sire any additional childer, and under no circumstances is she to reveal herself to local magicians. To her credit, Mara has done well for herself. An adept politician, she has managed to set up the groundwork for a larger operation against the hostility of Venetian merchants, with severely limited resources — and even turn a small profit.

She has fared less well in her more direct task. After hearing some of the local fables and stories of Mandalay, she has postponed the issue of how to deal with the Cainite, and does not even know where to start with the hunt. Mara also does not know of any of the Salubri of the city, though she would certainly do everything within her power to eliminate them if she were to discover proof of their existence.

Mara knows that her assignment here is a golden opportunity as well as an exile. What she does with the situation is entirely up to her.

**Image:** Mara is a short, thin woman with an attractive, round face and sleepy eyes. Pale-faced in life, death has made her the medieval ideal of beauty, with crimson lips and snow-white skin. Her hair is as black as coal and her eyes are a deep black as well, with the iris almost indistinguishable from the pupil. Mara dresses in a variety of styles, but usually wears the full dress of a wealthy, but pious, muslima.

**Roleplaying Hints:** If you want something done, do it yourself. People are either incompetent, self-aggrandizing or both. The most anyone can be trusted with is busywork that is either so simple that a child could do it in half the time allotted, or that looks prestigious but is actually meaningless and won't damage anything important when they fail at it. You use your hand-picked Dominated ghouls for daytime work and travel, but otherwise do things yourself. You're actually quite happy to be here alone — neither Rusticus nor Vaclav has any ambition at all, so you can actually get something done. If other Tremere were here, Chantry politicking would ensure that you'd never be able to accomplish *anything*.

**Haven:** Mara and the rest of her Jerusalem Chantry make their haven in the basement of a large villa outside the city walls. The more mundane inhabitants of the villa, the Baltic merchants she sponsors, are her ghouls and catspaws in the daylight world. Most of the merchants are so driven from the blood oath and her use of Dominate that they have to be sedated in order to sleep. Their bizarre behavior is beginning to attract some attention in the city.

**Secrets:** During her inquiries into the local lore about Mandalay, Mara has also heard rumors that a Cappadocian elder scribe and his childe are studying ancient mystical texts of unknown powers. Mara is intrigued by the prospects of infiltrating this compound and studying these scrolls herself — the promise of arcane studies unknown to the Tremere elders may bring her further power and status within the clan.

Through Tremere merchant contacts in Constantinople, Mara also knows about the Eyes of the Dracon, though she has not yet met Alexis. She is carefully monitoring the growth of his information network with the mercantile community, and while she doesn't think she knows all the operatives, she is fairly certain she knows enough of them to blind the Dracon for at least a short while.

**Influence:** Through her ghouls, Mara has a significant influence in the foreign quarter. While she is obviously limited by the presence of the Venetian Magdalena, she still has a long reach. She also wants to approach the Cappadocian Adam at some point, though she is waiting for the right opportunity to do so.

**Destiny:** Mara successfully sets up the Jerusalem Chantry and is recalled to central Europe after promising her Tremere elders news and learning from the distant Holy City. She is destroyed in 1261, leading an expedition against an alliance of several Tzimisce lords.

**Clan:** Tremere

**Sire:** Randeux

**Nature:** Tyrant

**Demeanor:** Autocrat

**Generation:** 9th

**Embrace:** 1072

**Apparent Age:** mid-20s

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

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 4 (Cunning), Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

**Talents:** Acting 2, Alertness 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Intimidation 2, Leadership 2, Subterfuge 2

**Skills:** Animal Ken 1, Crafts 2, Etiquette 3, Ride 2, Stealth 3, Survival 1



**Knowledges:** Academics 2, Investigation 2, Law 1, Occult 3, Politics 3

**Disciplines:** Auspex, 3, Dominate 4, Thaumaturgy 4

**Thaumaturgical Path:** Rego Vitae 4, Creo Ignem 3, Rego Mutos 3

**Backgrounds:** Influence 1, Resources 3, Retainers 2

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

**Willpower:** 7

**Road:** Road of Humanity 6

## VACLAV

**Background:** Vaclav was apprenticed for several years before being Embraced by Mara in 1199. She gained permission to Embrace him when he was twenty-four, and he finished the last three years of his apprenticeship as a Cainite. One year later, the two of them were ordered to begin preparations for the trip to Jerusalem. For the last four years, he has been serving as Mara's sole subordinate other than the Gargoyle Rusticus.

This enforced continuation of apprenticeship would probably be a lot harder to bear if Mara weren't convinced that any job important enough to need doing is too important to leave to your subordinates. While her ghouled merchants are treated like extensions of herself (which they quite often are), Vaclav and Rusticus spend most of their nights idle.

Given that the only duty that Mara is willing to trust him with is holding down a chair at the Chantry, Vaclav's existence could easily be both unrewarding and dull — especially given that he finished mastering the last Thaumaturgy text in the Chantry last year. Thankfully, Vaclav and Rusticus have found their personalities to be rather compatible, and become friends. For the last

year or so, Vaclav has been teaching the Gargoyle Thaumaturgy in exchange for lessons in personal defense. While they're fairly certain Mara would object to this, they haven't mentioned it to her and haven't received any orders to the contrary. So, for as long as it's not actually forbidden....

When he isn't tutoring the Gargoyle in magic, Vaclav typically spends several hours a night practicing rituals to defend the haven, reading whatever texts he can convince the ghouls to pick up at the bookseller's stalls, and teaching himself Arabic. He is desperately hoping that more Tremere will arrive in Jerusalem soon, or that he and Mara will be recalled back to Europe. While he understands that he potentially has forever to see the world, that doesn't make living in a basement for three years any more enjoyable. However much he resents his place, he also knows that even he and Rusticus acting together would stand no chance if they chose to rebel against Mara. If she didn't defeat them, the combined might of the clan would.

**Image:** Vaclav is a personable, if somewhat bookish, man in his mid-20s, with only a dusting of pox marks across his face. Fairly attractive, he dresses well (the ghouls buy him the latest fashions), but has a perpetual squint from poor eyesight. He has recently taken to carrying a sword, and his wrists are thickening from fencing practice.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are bored almost to the point of open rebellion. You are a talented, intelligent young man who has spent the last three years living in a basement. There aren't even any more magical texts for you to study, so you study the local historical and religious texts instead. Alive, you were happy and vivacious — now, after the Embrace, you are slowly sinking into morose depression. You are also an eternal apprentice, stuck forever in the same position in your relationship with Mara that you held when you were Embraced. You can't wait until something — *anything* — changes. If someone approaches you with an opportunity to break out of your rut, you'll gladly seize it, and think about the consequences later.

**Haven:** Vaclav also lives in the basement of the Baltic merchant house. He sleeps outside Mara's door.

**Secrets:** Vaclav doesn't know a damn thing — not even about House Tremere. He does, however, dress extremely well.

**Influence:** The house servants and Rusticus always listen to what Vaclav says, at least unless Mara has told them not to.

**Destiny:** Vaclav survives to a ripe old age, and becomes a major figure in the apparatus of the Vienna Chantry. The Seven sentence him to his Final Death in





1873 after they discover evidence of his 200-year practice of infernalism.

**Clan:** Tremere

**Sire:** Mara

**Nature:** Gallant

**Demeanor:** Rebel

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1189

**Apparent Age:** mid-20s

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 4 (Quick), Stamina 2

**Social:** Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

**Talents:** Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 1, Leadership 2

**Skills:** Animal Ken 1, Archery 1, Etiquette 2, Melee 2, Ride 2, Stealth 3, Survival 1

**Knowledges:** Academics 2, Investigation 1, Law 1, Occult 1, Politics 1, Seneschal 2

**Disciplines:** Auspex 3, Dominate 4, Thaumaturgy 4

**Thaumaturgical Paths:** Rego Vitae 3

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Influence 1, Resources 2

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

**Road:** Road of Humanity 5

**Willpower:** 6

### RUSTICUS (GARGOYLE)

**Background:** Rusticus has vague memories of the time before his Embrace. He remembers gardening and a life spent as a professional soldier. Other than that, there is nothing before he awakened in a Tremere Chantry in Hungary. Loyal to his masters, Rusticus is glad to be serving in the Holy Land (or anywhere, really).



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Like his regular companion, Vaclav, Rusticus has been generally limited to staying in the Chantry to provide security and manual labor.

In the three years that Rusticus has been at the Chantry, he has made it as secure as funds and secrecy allow. For the last two and a half years, the upkeep has taken about two hours a night. As a result, he has had every available gargoyle ritual performed on him by Vaclav. He has also learned to garden in the dark, play chess, read and write simple German, and has been learning the basics of Thaumaturgy from Vaclav in exchange for fencing and pankration lessons.

Outside his job, Rusticus is a gentle creature, though he suspects that he was far less congenial in his previous existence. This doesn't make him any less dangerous while he's performing his duty; uninvited visitors to the Chantry are likely to have their heads twisted around backwards. Rusticus buries the bodies in the base of the compost heap. The newly interred join several unlucky thieves and the dust of a Ravnos who annoyed Mara one too many times.

Rusticus is not a particularly reflective being. He does his duties, he feeds and when neither food nor his job presses him, he improves himself or sleeps. While his lost existence does not trouble him, he is somewhat curious about what he was before becoming Rusticus the Gargoyle. Rusticus's condition is best described as "wistful" — he in no way wishes to return to his previous condition; he is quite happy as the creature he is today, and would actually turn down the chance to return to being his old self. On the other hand, he is curious about just what sort of person he was before the ritual. While he would never betray his post to get at information about his past (it just isn't that important to him), Rusticus would be quite thankful to anyone who could provide him with stories that might contain some truth. He is occasionally given to writing stories about his past, ranging from the wildly fantastic to the strangely mundane. As he is a Spartan creature, this diary of fantastic pasts is Rusticus's only real personal possession.

**Image:** Rusticus is a former Tzimisce turned Gargoyle. He appears to be a large, stony, bipedal figure. Not at all blocky, Rusticus is a creature of smooth curves and sharp spines. His skin is naturally covered in a baroque intaglio of design. Rusticus is not some rough-hewn waterspout to adorn a second-rate cathedral somewhere; he is a work of art in his own right.

**Roleplaying Hints:** At some level, you know that, once upon a time, you were a very unkind creature. The magic that created you prevents you from really conceiving the idea of disliking your job, but within the parameters of your job, you strive not to



think about what you have to do (or might have done). You are inquisitive, not erudite. Your fury burns slowly, but when it is kindled, it burns hot. You have some affection for Vaclav, and anyone who seeks to harm him earns your implacable enmity.

**Haven:** Rusticus also lives in the Tremere Chantry. He sleeps in the basement, between its entrance and the quarters of Vaclav and Mara.

**Secrets:** Mara told Rusticus recently she might need him for some heavy lifting in the near future, and Rusticus knows a good deal about Mandalay.

**Influence:** Vaclav thinks very highly of Rusticus, as does the woman who runs the Chantry kitchen.

**Destiny:** One of the most loyal and distinguished of the early Gargoyles, Rusticus survives the destruction of Mara's expedition. Rusticus dies at the hands of the Spanish Inquisition in 1561, covering the escape of several Tremere elders from the country.

**Bloodline:** Gargoyle, formerly Tzimisce

**Sire:** Unknown

**Nature:** Gallant

**Demeanor:** Defender

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** Unknown

**Apparent Age:** Unknown

**Physical:** Strength 5 (Rocklike Fists), Dexterity 4 (Agile Flyer), Stamina 5 (Battle Hardened)

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4 (On Guard)

**Talents:** Alertness 4 (Ambushes), Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 1, Intimidation 4 (Overt Violence)

**Skills:** Crafts 2, Etiquette 1, Herbalism 2, Melee 4 (Swords), Stealth 3, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 1, Hearth Wisdom 2, Investigation 2, Linguistics 1, Occult 1

**Disciplines:** Fortitude 2, Gargoyle Flight 4, Potence 3, Visceratika 4

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2

**Virtues:** Conviction 5, Instinct 4, Courage 4

**Road:** Road of the Beast 6

**Willpower:** 8

## TZIMISCE

The venerable Tzimisce seem somewhat out of place in Jerusalem. Phantom-like, Mandalay has recently returned—or has it? Alexis Simocatta gathers information for the Dracon and the Keeper of the Faith, but they do not explain their goals to him. Fortunately for the Tzimisce, the other clans are barely aware of their presence. It's safer for all concerned that way.

## MANDALAY

**Background:** Mandalay came out of the East, out of Persia, from the darkness of Nebuchadnezzar's reign when it first learned of Jerusalem. Like a dust devil on the night's winds, it chose to accompany and plague the thousands of refugees returning to Jerusalem in 538 BCE, in the time of Cyrus. Mandalay spoke little and was seen less; some called it a demon, others called it a monster. The wise among the rabbis said that it was cursed with the blood of Caine, and the knowledgeable left the stealthy beast to its own devices. It fed only on the lowest refugees from Babylon. The few attempts made to find its place of slumber during the day were fruitless, but during the night its form was sometimes seen outside the camp or as a shadow walking between the tents.

Mandalay came to the ruins of Jerusalem with the pilgrims, and they never saw its thin, shadowy form striding along in the dusk again. A few bodies were found in isolated parts of the ruins, and soon these places were shunned by night. As for the wasting illnesses and the occasional death that struck the pagans who lived beyond the city's fallen walls? So much the better then, if they avoided the shadow of the city of their betters. Perhaps it was not just from anger at their exclusion from the rites of the faith that the local inhabitants threw stones at the returning Jerusalemites. Whatever the case, it was a fruitless gesture.

And this is the history of Mandalay. Since the rebuilding of the walls, it has been a shadow among shadows, a legend to the legendary. Perhaps the eldest of the Cainites of Jerusalem, it is a fearful myth even among the other hunters of the night. Twice, other descendants of the blood of Caine have attempted to



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hunt Mandalay for its blood. The first was a Carthaginian Brujah desperate for power to aid her home city in its struggle with Rome. She hunted Mandalay for three nights, then was never seen again. Almost three centuries later, shortly after the birth of the Empire, a Roman Lasombra came with the army of Titus to claim Mandalay's blood as his own. In the form of a great, savage monster, it set upon the Lasombra as he hunted with his companions through the battle-scarred ruins of Jerusalem. In a battle that was witnessed by several other Cainites, it tore him to pieces, cast the pieces to the four winds and then disappeared.

Some say Mandalay is less mysterious than it seems. There are texts that survive from Babylon that say that Mandalay displays the third eye, and is a child and student of Saulot. The majority of those Cainites who make it their business to study such matters, however, believe that Mandalay was actually once Keres, a fifth generation descendant of Tzimisce. Several ghouls claim to have seen Mandalay's desert-brown form standing atop the walls at dusk when the wind is blowing in a storm. Others say they have seen it walking among the lepers with the Nosferatu Kothar in the valley of Hinnom. The truth of these rumors has never been ascertained; for now, Mandalay is one of Jerusalem's most terrifying enigmas.

**Image:** Mandalay is thin, dusty figure, either shaped by Vicissitude or worn down by the weight of years into a sexless, desiccated mummy. Inordinately dexterous and graceful, Mandalay seems to flicker from location to location, rather than to walk as mortals do. Mandalay usually wears a dirty *djellabah*, but has occasionally been seen to walk naked. As rumored, Mandalay does indeed possess the third eye, though the vampire is usually careful to hide the extra orb. Mandalay's voice is the whisper of dust over polished bones.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Mandalay is ancient, mysterious, predatory and patient. It has survived a very long time, and learned amazing things. It has no intention of ending its existence in the foreseeable future. However, Mandalay occasionally has a need for information. Sometimes these investigations are into the disposition and condition of the remains of famous persons, or of those buried in certain auspicious locations. At other times, they are inquiries into the process of death and dying. Mandalay has, from time to time, approached Cainites it does not perceive as powerful enough to pose a threat and hired them to help with its research.

**Haven:** A dweller among tombs, Mandalay spends its days sleeping in the soil of one of the city's cemeteries. It has no permanent haven, though it is known to have access to money and other enticements, so it must have caches of such secreted somewhere in the city.

**Secrets:** Mandalay lives in isolation from the rest of the city's Cainite population. While it knows Alexis's mission and the location of Canis's lair, as well as the havens of many other vampires, it is largely blind to political goings-on. It has some idea that Mara is here on orders to hunt it, but has seen no actual preparations to do so on her part.

**Influence:** Mandalay has no real influence on the city as a whole, other than a near-undisputed control over its places of burial and the witnessed ability to tear seasoned Cainite warriors limb from limb.

**Destiny:** Mandalay continues to fade in and out of history. It is seen in Poland and Germany during the Reformation and in Mexico during the reign of Napoleon II. Always a creature of the dead, its motives remain uncertain, and its true ends a mystery. It is believed to be responsible for the deaths of eleven members of the Giovanni clan who attempted to capture it on the suspicion it might be related to Cappadocius in some way.

**Clan:** Tzimisce

**Sire:** Unknown

**Nature:** Loner

**Demeanor:** Barbarian

**Generation:** 5th (as near as can be determined)

**Embrace:** Unknown

**Apparent Age:** impossibly ancient

**Physical:** Strength 5 (Vicious), Dexterity 4 (Graceful), Stamina 6 (Tireless)

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 4 (Persuasive), Appearance 0

**Mental:** Perception 5 (Keen-Eyed), Intelligence 5 (Knowledgeable), Wits 4 (Cunning)

**Talents:** Acting 2, Alertness 5 (Sixth Sense), Athletics 4 (Leaps), Brawl 4 (Rend), Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Intimidation 5 (Reputation), Subterfuge 4 (Subtle)

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Melee 4 (Staves), Ride 1, Stealth 5 (Lurk), Survival 4 (Badlands)

**Knowledges:** Investigation 3, Linguistics 4 (Common Parlanche), Occult 4 (Ancient Wisdom)

**Disciplines:** Auspex 4, Celerity 6, Fortitude 5, Mortis 2, Potence 5, Valeren 5, Vicissitude 6

**Virtues:** Conviction 5, Instinct 4, Courage 5

**Road:** Road of Bones 8

**Willpower:** 10

## ALEXUS SIMOCATTA

**Background:** Alexis Simocatta was a talented, young secular scholar in Byzantium during the reign of Basil II, Bulgar-slayer. While his family's position had been weakened during the iconoclastic controversy, Alexis was an accomplished architect and illustrator.



His illustrations were much in demand for stained-glass windows, and his designs for chapels and villas were sought after by the rich and famous and imitated by lesser architects. He was also a man of great personal faith, who refrained from the priesthood only because he knew his talents lay elsewhere.

At the age of 31, Simocatta was at the height of his creativity, and married to the 23-year-old daughter of one of the empire's finest generals. While supervising the renovation of a transept, a block slipped and struck him in the face. The scaffolding he was on collapsed, and he felt almost 30 feet to the stone floor below. His broken body was rushed to a surgeon, but even the youngest of the masons had to know it was hopeless as they carried Alexis's body through the streets, using a pew for a stretcher.

Alexis was buried in a somber spectacle, but somewhere between the time the architect left his house that fateful morning and the moment the last breath left his body, a switch was made. How much had been planned, and for how long, is known only to the enigmatic Byzantine Tzimisce known as the Keeper of the Faith. Whatever the case, the body that lies in the grave of Alexis Simocatta is surely not Alexis Simocatta's.

Alexis woke with the setting sun, with a great hunger within him. They gave to him and he drank, what choice did he have? After he was sated, the Keeper's soothing voice related to Simocatta the circumstances of his death. In due time, Alexis was trained for work in the Library of the Forgotten. It soon became clear that his potential was being wasted as a librarian, and that he would never be at home in the library's underground scriptoriums. As a result, he was retrained and sent

south, to Jerusalem. There, he would act as the eyes of the Keeper of the Faith, and, through him, of the mysterious Cainite known as the Dragon.

Alexis uses several methods of keeping in touch with the Keeper of the Faith, from the regular (messages carried by sea captains) to the exotic (ghoul passenger pigeons modified with Vicissitude for speed and endurance). Every message is sent along several different routes, so that the loss or interception of one or even two will not blind the Keeper and Dragon to some important development.

**Image:** Alexis is a clear-faced man who has managed to retain much of his color in death. A worker as well as a planner in life, Simocatta is well muscled. He walks with a slight limp, and those who see him without a shirt note his back is slightly twisted. Well fed, he has a slight paunch, but is by no means fat. He dresses inconspicuously, though his hands are usually stained with inks and pigments — the Embrace may have dulled his ability, but he still creates on occasion.

**Roleplaying Hints:** A scholar and a gentleman, you have been a master of several trades, married to the daughter of a successful general and an agent of one the most powerful individuals in existence. You are a pleasant fellow, but the Dragon and the Keeper of the Faith didn't send you here to be pushed around. As long as people treat you with the respect you deserve, you're perfectly amiable (though this doesn't mean you'll give them things; you'll just be polite in your refusal). People who don't seem to understand proper behavior don't merit your attention.

**Haven:** Alexis has spent the last 60 years in Jerusalem, leaving the city and living in the nearby countryside after fires or in times of plague and imminent sack. He knows of most of the city's Cainite population, including the Tremere. His personal acquaintances include Canis, with whom he shares a relationship of grudging respect, and Varsik, though the trader's engaging tales are spun of meaningless gossamer as often as substance. Alexis maintains several havens in various places throughout the city. He favors grain silos, warehouses, old wells and other places where the chance of discovery is low.

**Secrets:** Simocatta doesn't make it his business to pry into the lives of the city's other vampires any more than necessary to carry out his job. His position as the Eyes of the Dragon is one of spy and spy-master, yes. However, the Dragon is — quite rightly — much more concerned with the events in the mundane world than with the Cainite community. Michael and his Dream are powerful enough to withstand the depredations of his fellow Cainites.

It is from the dynamic, changing world outside the Byzantine sphere of influence that the Dragon knows





threats arise. Alexis Simocatta knows little or nothing of his fellow Cainites' secrets. But the mundane secrets of the living Jerusalem are his meat and drink. Little goes on in Jerusalem, or the Holy Land as a whole, that does not come to Simocatta's ear. Alexis relies on a well-paid net of informants and spy-ghouls whose appearance changes according to his needs for them.

**Influence:** Simocatta has a great deal of influence in Jerusalem and the other cities of the region. He has extensive contacts in the mercantile, political and military spheres. He studiously avoids involvement in clerical affairs, though he is equally studious about using as part of his network those who have already walked a good distance down the road of corruption. Alexis's influence goes largely unexerted, however; he is a servant of a greater power. For now, that power remains inactive.

That doesn't mean that he doesn't use a great deal of blackmail, subornation, bribery and intimidation on a night-to-night basis. Those are the basic tools of espionage, after all. It's just that these are used to maintain and nourish the organization, not pointed towards some end. Alexis's spies exist to gather information, not act on it. They *can* act, of course, it just that doing so isn't the primary focus of his organization.

**Destiny:** Alexis Simocatta continues as the servant of the Dracon until 1481, when he is killed by an unknown Assamite assassin. After his destruction, his spy network crumbles.

**Clan:** Tzimisce

**Sire:** Keeper of the Faith

**Nature:** Survivor

**Demeanor:** Gallant

**Generation:** 6th

**Embrace:** 1018

**Apparent Age:** early 30s

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

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

**Mental:** Perception 4 (Penetrating), Intelligence 3, Wits 2

**Talents:** Acting 3, Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Intimidation 3, Larceny 1, Leadership 2, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Crafts 4 (Architecture), Etiquette 3, Melee 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 3, Investigation 2, Law 1

**Disciplines:** Animalism 4, Auspex 2, Potence 2, Vicissitude 5

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Contacts 2, Influence 3, Mentor 5, Resources 3

**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

**Road:** Road of Heaven 7

**Willpower:** 8

**JERUSALEM BY NIGHT**

## VENTRUE

The Ventrue are biding their time and gathering resources. They wait for the next great Crusade, and intend to be in position to benefit. For now, they know that their rivals have the upper hand within the city, and as such avoid open confrontation.

### LUCIUS TREBIUS RUFUS

**Background:** Lucius Trebius Rufus comes from one of the minor aristocratic families of southern Italy. He preferred action to a settled life, so his relatives arranged a military command along the Libyan frontier in 57 CE. The assignment provided few opportunities for glory, but a great deal of combat against rebels, including both nomads who refused to submit to Roman rule and a myriad of independent brigands. During breaks in the intermittent fighting, Lucius gradually developed a philosophical interest in the Christianity professed by some travelers, though his faith was more contemplative than devotional.

After a distinguished military career, Lucius was promoted to an administrative position and returned home to his family's estate near Herculaneum. The peace of retirement was short-lived, however, as the nearby volcano of Mt. Vesuvius erupted only two years later. During the chaos that followed, his calm, organized efforts helped save the lives of many, including his own family and servants as well as the household of a Ventrue who owned a neighboring villa. During the weeks following the eruption, Lucius and the Cainite talked of duty, self-sacrifice, courage and meaning, and soon afterwards the Ventrue offered the aging Roman the Embrace.





Gradually the Trebius family fell into decline, and in the 2nd century CE Lucius moved north to establish a new familial estate. The line's fortunes rose and fell repeatedly during the next centuries. The instabilities of the Roman Empire and his own questions of faith led Trebius to search for a grander guiding principle and return to the Christian ideals which had intrigued him as a youth. After Embracing his first childe, the pious Leufroy, he chose a belief in God and the Church to complement his chivalrous and honorable nature. He held no particular influence within his clan, but when the pope called the First Crusade, he eagerly joined in his persona as French Count Remi of Provence. By going to war for the Lord, Lucius hoped to find a renewal of purpose at the site of his first illumination.

The reality proved more complex and ambiguous. While glad to be back in Jerusalem, Lucius finds it difficult to listen to the spirit in the midst of endless politicking. The only good to come from the whole mess is the Lasombra's relative fall from grace, as Lucius's influence played a significant role in the return of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher to the Greek Orthodox a decade ago. Now he patiently waits for Christian reinforcements and sympathy to build, and for Paliuro's influence to crumble as he destroys himself. Lucius then hopes to drive out all infidels and other unworthy Cainites, and establish a wise and just protective canopy over the Holy City.

Lucius is rather underestimated by other Cainites; they see him as an echo of the crusader power, defeated by Salah al-Din's armies and unbalanced by mortal military affairs. Magdalena's interference with the already weak Roman Lasombra gives him the freedom to gather his forces and concentrate his influence on the newer, weaker Cainites. He particularly seeks to undermine Varsik, as well as eliminate assassins who surely infiltrate his guard, and he has entrusted his childe Leufroy to exacerbate the tensions between Boniface and Azif. The demise of Salah al-Din has provided an opportunity, and Lucius will seize it, honorably, when the treaty of peace between Muslim and Christian ends.

**Image:** "Rufus" is Latin for "red," and as his Latin nickname indicates, Lucius is a redhead with fiery hair and pale blue eyes. His complexion was fair even in life and he retains some scatter of freckles. He dresses in the finest clothes he can obtain, with Roman motifs from his youth incorporated into modern designs.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You've discovered your cause: the protection and sanctification of this Holy City. You gladly cooperate with all believers and even with righteous pagans, but there can be no just compromises with the wicked. For five centuries you were aimless, and for

another five you were patient. Now it is time to act for the future of faith and honor.

**Haven:** Lucius owns a manor with a view of the Temple.

**Secrets:** Lucius has friends in the fighting monastic orders, among both the few remaining Hospitallers as well as the Templars. While Lucius does not hold high office, generations of well-developed contacts have given him a small but effective network of ghouls throughout the French and Italian commands.

**Influence:** Through his ghouls, Lucius exerts substantial influence over French decisions throughout the crusader kingdoms. He seldom chooses to intervene in matters of policy, though his ghouls do push an agenda of harsh punishment for cowardice, desertion and infidelity.

**Destiny:** Lucius's childe Vicelin is an early supporter of the Sabbat revolt. Lucius and his first childe Leufroy both fall to Diablerie.

**Clan:** Ventruue

**Sire:** Gaius Cassius

**Nature:** Fanatic

**Demeanor:** Tyrant

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 79 CE

**Apparent Age:** mid-40s

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

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 4 (Keen), Intelligence 3, Wits 4 (Steady)

**Talents:** Acting 3, Alertness 4 (Edgy), Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Intimidation 4 (Political), Leadership 3, Subterfuge 2

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Archery 2, Crafts 1, Etiquette 3, Melee 4 (Swords), Ride 4 (Mounted Combat), Stealth 2, Survival 3

**Knowledges:** Academics 3, Investigation 2, Law 2, Occult 1, Politics 2

**Disciplines:** Auspex 4, Celerity 4, Dominate 7, Fortitude 5, Potence 5, Presence 6

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

**Virtues:** Conscience 5, Self-Control 3, Courage 4

**Road:** Road of Heaven 7

**Willpower:** 8

## LEUFROY OF PROVENCE

**Background:** Leufroy came to Lucius's attention during the reign of Sigebert, a hundred years or so after Lucius moved up from Italy. Leufroy shared Lucius's sense of valor and duty, and combined these with an unshakable religious conviction that Lucius found intriguing. After





prolonged deliberation, Lucius Embraced Leufroy to create a follower who would last more than a generation — and, Lucius gradually realized, to act as a sounding-board for Lucius's developing questions about his faith. While he never overtly challenged Lucius, Leufroy nonetheless encouraged his sire along a path of righteous conviction. It was Leufroy who first made contacts on his sire's behalf with other Ventrue, and who drew Lucius into preparations for the Crusades.

Leufroy now devotes his time to preparing for the battles that are sure to come; God will not allow the heathens to hold Jerusalem forever. While escorting supplies along the important military route between Jerusalem and Acre, he was blessed with a vision of another holy Crusade, which would capture Jerusalem from the south after seizing Egypt. With his sire's support Leufroy has also started to conspire against Azif and the other Muslim Cainites; Etheria has told him of Adam's debt of protection to the Brujah, and he will call on this assistance when the time comes for deliberate action.

**Image:** Leufroy is of average height and extremely muscular build, with long, rough-cut blond hair and blue eyes like those of his sire. He doesn't care about niceties of appearance, relying on commanding presence rather than elaborate clothes to make his status clear.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You have never experienced the doubts your sire did. You know in your bones that you serve the holiest of causes and that your deeds are pleasing to God. Whatever harm you may commit will be all be justified on the Day of Reckoning by the good you've done. Those who do not share your conviction are at worst enemies to be destroyed immediately, and at best tools to be used and then discarded. You have no

obligations toward those who reject the truth, but wisdom dictates that they should sometimes be exploited where it can help ensure victory.

**Haven:** Leufroy shares Lucius's manor.

**Secrets:** In his role as escort, Leufroy overhears a great deal said by thoughtless travelers. He has a broad grasp of the conflicts among crusader factions and some sense of who favors cooperation with the Muslims. These latter are high on his list of enemies.

**Influence:** Though he chooses not to join the fighting orders directly, Leufroy carries the respect of the Knights Hospitaller and the Templars for his repeatedly demonstrated courage. He supplements his sire's network of ghouls with a smaller system of contacts of his own. Through them he wields substantial power at points of embarkation — with a few words he can get a shipment "lost" or "delayed," or another one greatly expedited.

**Destiny:** Like his sire Lucius, Leufroy gets diablerized by Vicelin in the opening years of the Sabbat revolt.

**Clan:** Ventrue

**Sire:** Lucius

**Nature:** Fanatic

**Demeanor:** Judge

**Generation:** 11th

**Embrace:** 570 CE

**Apparent Age:** late 20s

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

**Social:** Charisma 4 (Inspiring), Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 4 (Discerning), Wits 3

**Talents:** Acting 2, Alertness 2, Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Intimidation 3, Subterfuge 2

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Archery 1, Crafts 1, Etiquette 3, Melee 2, Ride 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 4 (Theology), Investigation 2, Law 1, Occult 1, Politics 2, Seneschal 2

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

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Contacts 2, Influence 2, Resources 2

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

**Road:** Road of Heaven 6

**Willpower:** 8

## VICELIN OF MARSEILLES

**Background:** Vicelin came to Leufroy's attention during the 1090s, while Lucius was building his position of influence within the Ventrue of France. Lucius chose to Embrace Vicelin himself, somewhat to Leufroy's displeasure; to allay Leufroy's resentment, Lucius had to promise his first child the right to create childer of his own soon.



Vicelin is a ruthlessly dedicated advocate of the Crusade, and an enthusiastic supporter of efforts to weed out all heresy and doctrinal confusion as well. His passion for Christendom matched Lucius's own growing fervor, so it was a happy meeting of minds. Vicelin promptly took to the use of Cainite abilities to be that much more effective a warrior for orthodoxy.

What neither sire nor fellow childe realizes is that Vicelin is completely amoral. As a child he practiced random cruelty; as he grew up he looked for the institution that would offer him the most opportunities and most protection for the same, and settled on the Church. When he began to suspect the existence of vampires, he set out to make himself attractive to them. In due time he will turn on others of his clan, but for now he's continuing to earn respect and the opportunities that come with it.

**Image:** Vicelin is the very image of heroic chivalry, a strong-jawed, steely-eyed man with an almost monastic tonsure and armor that shows the scars of the many dangerous battles he's fought. He speaks in calm, measured tones except when in battle or feeding on victims who cannot escape. Unlike his sire, he very much favors the trappings of power, to let inferiors know just how important he is.

**Roleplaying Hints:** On the surface, you're the perfect warrior of the faith, zealously bringing righteousness to all around you. No impurity of word or deed escapes you. What only your carefully-chosen victims learn is that the surface is only an illusion. It's a role you play for the sake of the opportunities it provides. You can hardly wait for the next moment



when some sinner waits for chastisement, only to find that you're not terribly interested in repentance. The bodies you then dispose of in whatever way is handy at the time.

**Haven:** Vicelin has a simple home near Lucius's manor.

**Secrets:** Vicelin knows little of the secrets that swirl around him; his strength lies in being able to guess accurately enough to give the appearance of greater knowledge than he actually possesses. When he wants longer-term leverage, he parlays his intimidation of underlings into useful information about their superiors, but he does this haphazardly.

**Influence:** Many of the more devout crusaders respect Vicelin as an example of what they wish all crusaders were. Only a few feel some discomfort in his presence, sensing or catching a glimpse of his inner nature. He's also gaining respect among Ventrue ranks as a careful planner with a good grasp of the weaknesses of key enemies.

**Destiny:** Vicelin dabbles in politics and the Church for centuries, spending some time under the aegis of the See of Nod after meeting Narses on a trip west. The formation of the Sabbat offers Vicelin the opportunity for action he'd been waiting for. He diablerizes his kin, then embroils himself in the tangle of Sabbat politics. Unfortunately for him, he finds that he's not nearly as good at it as some others, and around 1700 he finally perishes as food for more effective plotters.

**Clan:** Ventrue

**Sire:** Lucius

**Nature:** Monster

**Demeanor:** Judge

**Generation:** 11th

**Embrace:** 1092

**Apparent Age:** mid-20s

**Physical:** Strength 4 (Barrel Chest), Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

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

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Archery 2, Crafts 1, Etiquette 1, Melee 4 (Hammers), Ride 2, Stealth 3, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 2, Investigation 2, Law 1, Politics 2

**Disciplines:** Dominate 4, Fortitude 3, Presence 3

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

**Virtues:** Conviction 3, Instinct 4, Courage 4

**Road:** Road of the Beast 8

**Willpower:** 8









# Chapter Five: Storytelling in Jerusalem

The greatest attraction of the Dark Medieval world lies in the ability of characters to shape the future. The modern ambiance of the Masquerade remains centuries away. The world of 1197 bristles with ideas and beliefs far removed from the despair-ridden nights of the World of Darkness. A vast, empty canvas stands before you, the Storyteller, waiting to absorb the dark pigments with which you paint your chronicle.



Now, admittedly, there's a tendency sometimes to tune out part or all of a chapter called "Storytelling," especially if you're an old hand at the game. Any good Storyteller can weave a captivating tapestry of plot, mood and theme in her game, even one set eight centuries in the past. Obviously, creativity, common sense and an overriding concern for the players' enjoyment go a long way toward making yours a memorable chronicle.

Nevertheless, a fresh perspective always helps, particularly with a historical city sourcebook. Dark Medieval Jerusalem offers a host of possibilities for your chronicle, but many of these possibilities may not always be immediately visible. With that in mind, this chapter attempts to illuminate some of these avenues for Storytelling, so that you have a wide assortment of tools to make your Jerusalem chronicle the best and most authentic it can be.

## WELCOME TO THE 12TH CENTURY

The Middle East that appears regularly on the evening news bears no resemblance to that of the 12th century. Differences in enemies, allies and causes notwithstanding, the very pace of Dark Medieval Jerusalem demands that players and Storytellers make some significant adjustments to how they perceive and operate in the Holy Land.

Time and space behave far differently. The Long Night is no misnomer, and those characters counting on information, reinforcements or simple weaponry can find themselves waiting very long indeed for such rudiments. Opportunists of all sorts routinely delay or glean supplies both inside and outside the walls. Vital messages are often intercepted, and sometimes changed just enough to impact disastrously on the recipient's plans. Even employing such tactics as tricking an enemy into getting caught outside at dawn can backfire, if dawn arrives later than expected.

The physical makeup of Jerusalem and the surrounding region also influences characters' machinations. For example, the simple act of sending a message to an ally on the other side of town becomes an adventure in itself. Jerusalem is divided into three main quarters, one for each of the major religious communities. Each quarter boasts its own set of walls, gates and sentries, and each group of inhabitants immediately distrusts any outsider, for good reason. Any courier looking to deliver a missive must often pass through at least two of these neighborhoods, if not all three, to reach his destination —

and then repeat the process upon his return. Shortcuts are out of the question; Jerusalem's bric-a-brac architecture teems with secret passageways, dead ends and doors that open to unexpected places — like someone's bedchamber. The only guaranteed route is the open, exposed one. And if the courier looks the wrong way at any point along his journey, he may never reach his destination.

## WEAVING THE TAPESTRY

### Mood

In Jerusalem, emotion runs at a fever pitch. Decades of bloodletting from the Crusades have left their mark on the population. Paranoid mistrust of one's neighbors mixes with self-righteous zealotry, producing a palpable tension in the night air. And that's just on the mortal side of the spectrum. The children of Caine struggle with their own demons at levels no mortal can comprehend. Dark Medieval Jerusalem invokes any number of moods that you can incorporate into your chronicle:

### ALIENATION

To European Christendom, Jerusalem literally lies on the other side of the known world. The city sits deep within the Muslim Caliphate; its small Christian population remains foreign to the European "liberators." Byzantium, the crusaders' closest major ally, is hundreds of miles away, and even its emperor's "alliance" with the western kingdoms leaves much to be desired. Help is a long way off; friends are hard to find; disorientation is a close companion.

Such feelings of dislocation do not escape those Cainites who travel to Jerusalem under the crusaders' banners. In this case, the characters are newcomers. Reliable networks of clanmates, ghouls and retainers do not exist. Local Cainites, even those of the characters' own clan, have their own agendas and problems to worry about, which often do not mirror those of the characters.

### AMBITION

Ambition runs unchecked throughout the region. Church and state are inseparable during the Dark Ages, and the Crusades provide the perfect excuse to gain temporal clout under a holy banner. Having tasted initial victory in the First Crusade, European nobles look to augment their personal fortunes and fiefdoms by seizing land and tribute from the local populations. Entities such as the "crusader states" of Antioch and Tripolis and smaller citadels like the Krak des Cheva-



liers (captured by Muslims in 1187, recaptured, and finally overwhelmed for good in 1271) hold authority over locals and collect tolls from the endless caravans that traverse this area of the Middle East.

The spiritual aura of the Crusades does not prevent its soldiers from succumbing to the temptations of this world, either. The pope is a temporal as well as spiritual ruler, and the commanding general who can find a way to vanquish the heathen invaders will surely earn himself His Holiness' eternal gratitude. Crusaders also remain fully aware of the lack of support coming from Orthodox Byzantium. Capturing Jerusalem gives the crusaders an ideally situated point from which to revenge themselves on the heretical emperor and his waffling advisors, should the opportunity present itself.

Ambition is no less prevalent among vampires. Powerful elders control supplies and information for mortal and Cainite populations alike. Politically savvy immortals vie for the ears of prominent kine of all faiths. Making the right connections often means the difference between survival and Final Death for the characters.

The location of the city itself also plays a significant role in the overall scheme of things. Militarily speaking, European Cainites need a stable base of operations to strike back at the Assamites and Setites, and they believe Jerusalem fits that description perfectly. Obviously, the spiritual impact of Jerusalem is no less important. The Holy City represents a symbolic as well as a political prize for vampires, as intensely as it does for the mortal world. The confluence of three faiths' histories within its walls promotes an image of Jerusalem that acts as a counterbalance to the relatively blatant corruption of Byzantium.

The course of Cainite history makes Jerusalem a prime spiritual force for other, specifically vampiric reasons. Simply put, the Middle East is the site of the legendary location of the First City, the original home of the Antediluvians. Whoever controls Jerusalem moves into a perfect position to control the entire Middle East, and with it the font of the Cainite race. The very soil pulses with the memory of the Third Generation; it raises the stakes of any chronicle and can drive characters to desperate acts.

Jerusalem also provides a gateway to the uncharted East, wherefrom Saulot himself reportedly returned with insight into Golconda. Although the Tremere do their best to discredit Saulot's childer, many Cainites still yearn for some sort of philosophy that will bring peace to their existences. The possibility of setting out eastward in Saulot's footsteps, and finding Golconda themselves, entices a good many vampires to carve out

their own claims in Jerusalem, mostly to control access to the East.

## CLAUSTROPHOBIA

The walls of Jerusalem strain from hordes of the faithful living and passing through the city. Add to this several factions of opportunistic Cainites, and the building pressure threatens to burst out violently. Even with a substantial mortal population to disappear into, vampires must still take precautions to avoid discovery. In addition, the tight squeeze of the city can be overwhelming to visiting immortals used to the relatively depopulated villages and rural areas of Europe. Sensory overload can often lead to a loss of self-control, and thus to frenzy. Keeping one's personal Beast under control in the midst of Jerusalem's inescapably kinetic atmosphere can add an interesting twist to the plot of your chronicle.

## FAITH

Vampires, by their own definition, are damned creatures. Faith has no place in their world. At least, that's how the theory goes.

Of course, it's never that simple. Every Cainite was once mortal, after all, and a lifetime of prayer, worship and wonder is not simply cast aside overnight. Newly Embraced vampires in particular struggle with their condition and try to reconcile their former faiths with the long road of resigned bestiality that stretches out before them.

Questions vex the still-devout nightly. Religion is immutable, and the same laws and dogmatic strictures apply to all human beings equally. But what of vampires? For those Cainites still wrestling with divine law, even necessities like feeding become troublesome. Mosaic law forbids drinking blood outright. The Koran allows a devout Muslim to ingest blood only in the greatest extremity, without craving it — and that's hard to get around if you're a vampire. As for Christianity, Jesus commanded the apostles to eat His body and drink His blood if they were to be saved — and if the Son of God's blood is fit to consume, what about that of mortals, who are made in God's image?

Moreover, the concept of salvation still resonates among many vampires. Every character, from time to time, wonders about his or her place in Creation. Some Cainites believe their existence to be a test of their mortal faith. Others wonder whether they have been cursed to set an example for humanity. Still others speculate whether they have been chosen for a specific task in their Embraced state, as heralds of the end of the world. Some simply lament their damned nature, believing themselves forever cut off from the prospect of Heaven.



Others subscribe to the idea of Golconda, accepting their vampiric nature while searching to control its more brutish aspects. Such a philosophy remains frowned upon by many devout immortals — Golconda denies the salvation of Heaven and the punishment of Hell — yet an increasing number of vampires seek a more realistic answer to their condition, and they believe that Golconda provides such an answer. In each of these instances, faith defines and fuels a character's actions, and remains relevant in any chronicle.

## THEMES

The 12th century promotes a number of themes for you to utilize in your chronicle. The social framework is held together by status and lineage: in short, blood. Status-consciousness preoccupies Cainite thought and interaction as much as it does mortal relationships. Treaties, arranged marriages and other favorable exchanges among mortal nobility have their equivalents in blood oaths and other pledges of loyalty for Cainites.

How vampires react to such tortured political etiquette varies. Although powerful elders place no value in institutions like arranged marriages, it is not unheard of for elders to cement treaties and alliances with each other by exchanging prized childer. This alone can present problems, especially if the whelps in question do not fancy being treated as cattle. On the other side of the coin, vampires devoid of appropriate status may decide to shift their support in whatever direction the political winds blow. Friction between "insiders" and "outsiders" can lead to backstabbing or open revolt, which alter the political landscape drastically. Chronicles that play up the prominence of status touch on all of these issues.

Caine's legacy also provides a rich thematic source. History never dies for the Cainites, and events from the dawn of time affect the current situation as forcefully as those of the previous night. All vampires inherit the curse from their condition, but how each individual or coterie reacts to the legacy of Caine is not as clear-cut. While one group may choose to be faithful to the legacy and accept their fates, the power of faith and the hope of salvation (or Golconda) might encourage another group to reject their monstrous nature.

## CONFLICT

Conflict is plentiful in Jerusalem... almost too plentiful. The atmosphere of unrest in the city fuels the Cainites' own midnight wars against one another, instilling overconfidence and ruthlessness in all factions. In this powder keg of a city, any action against an enemy can spark an explosion of hellish proportions.

## CAINITES VERSUS CAINITES

Just as European nobility skirmish against one another in order to increase their own holdings, Cainite princes and elders do the same among the mortal populations of Europe. Oftentimes characters in Jerusalem find themselves in the heat of a battle or targeted by an enemy securely ensconced back in Europe, who uses local retainers or other minions to wreak her revenge. Every Cainite in Jerusalem retains some mysteriousness about them, and that enigmatic nature can color the characters' relationship with a potential ally or purveyor of information. The ancilla who offers the characters entry to a prime hunting ground may be setting an ambush. The consanguineus who offers sanctuary may ask one or more members to take on a suicidal mission in return. Havens routinely fall to vampire-influenced riots of mortal factions, and the nonstop switching of loyalties can create all sorts of confusion and vulnerability for the characters.

In addition to those familiar enemies, the Assamites also pose a danger to Cainites of other clans, be the latter natives or visitors. The Saracens' practice of diablerie understandably panics members of all other sects. Jerusalem and the Middle East are the Assamites' home turf; clan members know the region infinitely better than do crusading interlopers. Local vampires suffer the most at the hands of the Assamites, but the vast infusion of unassimilated westerners only encourages the clan's elders, who especially delight in the prospect of destroying a few influential infidels.

## CAINITES VERSUS MORTALS

Although the organized nemesis of the Inquisition is centuries off, the sheer press of humanity within Jerusalem fosters its own problems. A superstition-crazed mortal population may acknowledge the existence of vampires, but that doesn't mean that every single kine cowers in abject, drooling terror from the presence of Cainites.

Possession of the Holy Land fosters the sort of mortal ambition that is not going to be derailed by a bunch of low-level neonates. By 1197, the disastrous Second and Third Crusades have allowed the Muslims to regain most of what they lost to the European invaders. Crusader holdings dwindle down to a few isolated, unprofitable outposts which need a constant stream of supplies simply to maintain viability. The European knights' power begins to wane and their leadership begins to fracture. The soldiers of the cross grow more and more desperate, and desperate people tend to do desperate things — and then *overdo* them.

In spite of the decided advantage the Muslims have, total victory is by no means assured. Each side knows the other will fight to the last man if necessary,





## CASTING LOTS

*Medieval threats are never idle.*

— William Manchester, *A World Lit Only By Fire*  
And now, a few words on combat.

Jerusalem has been more or less defined by combat. At one point or another, the city and its inhabitants have been attacked, besieged, breached, occupied and decimated by armies of all stripes and faiths. In 1197, however, Jerusalem enjoys one of its rare periods of relative calm. Nerves fray, and the odd skirmish erupts in the region, but wholesale war is kept at bay for now.

In this sort of atmosphere, it's easy to introduce a fair (or unfair) amount of combat into your chronicle. Life and unlife alike come cheap in the Holy Land. And let's face it, it's the easiest thing in the world to stick a sword into someone's liver to get your way.

However, that's only going to get the characters so far. It's difficult to hush things up in a city where people live literally on top of one another. Even in night's blackest hours, one or more pairs of eyes watches every move made within the walls. Sooner or later, taking the brutal approach comes back to haunt any character. Vampires are masters at intrigue and brinkmanship, and the politics of Dark Medieval Jerusalem encourage all manner of deals, machinations, treaties, truces and betrayals. The challenge for Cainites lies in maneuvering their domains within and beyond the shifting boundaries of mortal flocks, without setting events in motion that the characters cannot control.

This is not to say, of course, that your chronicle should *never* include combat. (Sometimes you just have to drive your point home Literally.) But the delicate balance of forces and desires in Jerusalem requires a gentler, subtler hand. And done right, it's much more rewarding for the chronicle as a whole.



for each side continues to articulate the divine blessedness of their respective causes. Muslim and Christian groups often engage in espionage and sabotage against each other's citadels. Each army consists of highly-trained warriors and specialist mercenaries who wouldn't hesitate to cut down anything in their way, assuming the end result is worthwhile. More than one Cainite has been run over roughshod by the troops of one side or another, destroyed as an unfortunate side effect of local politics.

Military threats notwithstanding, the proliferation of religious strife within Jerusalem itself produces enemies for vampires as well. Crusades aside, each of the three faiths spawns numerous extremist sects who take a very narrow outlook on the situation in Jerusalem. Many of these sects are willing to take their philosophies into the streets, determined to vanquish every heathen and heretic they encounter — and if they happen to encounter an occasional neonate spawn of the Devil, so much the better.

In short, the corruption of political power and the overzealotry of religious fanatics means that not every mortal can be dominated into a mindless pawn. Manifestations of True Faith reach nearly undreamed-of heights in Jerusalem, which inconveniences any Cainite looking to construct a shield of mortal ghouls around herself.

## THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Every action the characters take has consequences. In Jerusalem, those consequences are often disproportionate to the actions taken. Case in point:

A band of Tremere who Dominate a minor priest so they can turn his nondescript chapel into a Chantry find that the chapel houses some important Christian relics, which the faithful in the city regularly come to venerate. One of these worshippers is a Ventrue elder, furious at the sacrilege perpetrated by this gang of upstarts. The elder calls in a favor or two from a few of his allies, who quickly get behind the elder in his plan to throw the overbearing Usurpers out. The ensuing fracas alerts a few Assamite spies, who readily report to their superiors that the infidels in the Christian Quarter are squabbling amongst themselves, and that now might be a choice moment to strike....

Action and reaction do not balance out, but expand exponentially, simply from the close quarters of the city itself. Identity and space are at a premium, and those characters who go into the chronicle determined to cut a wide swath through the region, and damn the consequences, will find the effects of their actions rebounding back upon them.



JERUSALEM BY NIGHT



## PERSPECTIVES

Much of our understanding of Jerusalem in the time of the Crusades has been told from the Christian perspective. The epic tragedy of selfless, God-fearing knights taking up the banner of the Cross, fighting bravely, yet ultimately failing to free the Holy City from heathen Muslim hordes obscures the greater picture of the era.

Everything that happens in Jerusalem has three sides to it: Jewish, Christian and Muslim. Persons of all three faiths hold a vested interest in the future of the city. Individual motives do not always make sense at first to an outsider, but that fact makes such motives no less real. Cainites who hail from any one of the three faiths possess many of the same opinions, prejudices and mindsets that their mortal counterparts do.

Keeping this multiplicity of viewpoints in mind is important in Storytelling a chronicle set in Jerusalem. Obviously, this is not meant to encourage a "live and let live" feeling among vampires. But it does mean that you should try to utilize varying viewpoints in your chronicle as much as realistically possible. Introducing characters from a different faith who try to woo the coterie over to their line of thinking (or at least show them the rationale behind an opposing viewpoint) helps add a new dimension to the characters' roleplaying and the chronicle in general.

## CHRONICLE IDEAS

But enough of generalities. There are countless stories to be told in Dark Medieval Jerusalem, ranging from tales of bloody conquest and vengeance to stories of faith and redemption. The previous pages have given some idea as to the broader thrust of stories that can be told in the Jerusalem setting; here are some specific ideas....

### ENTERING JERUSALEM

It makes a world of difference if the characters are entering Jerusalem from outside, rather than already dwelling within the city walls. All sorts of characters have reasons for visiting the Holy City: trade, research, pilgrimage, quests after some uniquely Cainite goal and so on. In other words, there are a plethora of reasons for bringing characters to Jerusalem as the focus of a chronicle. Some possibilities include:

#### PILGRIMAGE

The characters could be pilgrims, seeking to visit the holy sites of Christianity before the five-year truce ends. A chronicle of this sort could take in both the perilous journey to the Holy Land (travel is

always chancy for Cainites, never more so than when they go by sea, and the Genoese merchants who carry cargo to the crusader kingdoms may not be scrupulous about opening their freight). Conversely, travel by land wends its way over harsh and hostile territory, filled with inimical mortals and Cainites alike. Once in the city, the characters fall into the web of competing sects and faiths among mortals and immortals alike. Boniface may look after pilgrims, but if those pilgrims are devout Armenian Christian, he may choose to look the other way as harm befalls them. And what if al-Ain decides the time has come to make an example of the arrogant Christian Cainites who clearly have come to reinforce their brethren within the city walls?

Pilgrims don't necessarily have to be Christian, either. Muslim Cainites seeking to visit the Dome of the Rock, al-Aqsa or even just al-Quds in general run their own risks. Neither Rustucci nor Leufroy is liable to welcome such visitors with open arms, and a band of Cainites caught in between those two formidable personalities is in a great deal of trouble. On the other hand, being in the crossfire between two powerful and devout Christian Cainites may also serve as an opportunity....

And what of Jewish Cainites fulfilling the ancient promise of the Passover Seder, "Next Year in Jerusalem?" Their allies in the immortal world are few, mostly the Cappadocians (who are otherwise occupied) and Nosferatu (likewise, and nearly powerless in the city). Religious concerns make the job of finding shelter with mortal coreligionists difficult at best. With no one to turn to, such vampires are exposed to the machinations of their brethren in the blood, who do not have their best interests at heart.

#### CONQUEST

Jerusalem's status is far from settled in 1197. With the end of the truce near, the expectation among all parties is that there may well be another Crusade on its way soon. Certain of the European clans have a vested interest in such matters; characters could be outriders for the Ventrue (perhaps through the Templars?) seeking to gauge the strength of potential supernatural opposition before urging their mortal pawns forward. Then again, perhaps the characters have been sent at the behest of the Lasombra, who have elders on both sides of the divide between Christian and Muslim, and who may well reflect that division internally. The coterie could even be part of a pre-emptive strike, sent in to eliminate Franj Cainites before the war begins, fatally weakening the enemy even before the truce ends. Or the characters may well be spies, there to



learn the lay of the land and the whereabouts of the local Cainite population; who would jump one way and who would jump the other if war came.

## THE RETURN

Jerusalem has been sacked and emptied innumerable times over the centuries. As each conqueror sweeps in with fire and sword, the wise Cainites leave the city. Some are lost in the dust of history, some settle elsewhere and some eventually choose to return home. Now, with the city somewhat more stable than it has been in the past, Cainites who once dwelt in David's City may be turning their steps homeward once again. Unfortunately, they're in for a surprise when they once again pass through the gates.

The city is not as it once was. Familiar landmarks are gone, familiar havens have been destroyed or usurped. Newcomers dwell where once the characters might have resided; arrogant Cainites with all of a century in residence have no need for rootless wanderers who might once have dwelt in the city. And the whole flavor of the mortal population has changed. How would characters deal with returning to a city at once so strange and so familiar, and what steps might they take to make the city theirs once again?

## MERCHANTS

Jerusalem offers a plethora of bazaars and marketplaces, both within the city walls and without, sanctified and illicit. Anything is for sale here, and anyone as well. The mortals run their markets, quite well too, but there's certainly a place for a stall that only opens after dark and caters to brave clients. Perhaps the characters traffic in things that can only be sold in darkened alleyways or nameless shops: prestidigitation, fortunetelling, drugs, ghouls or mortals to feed upon. Surely there is a market in even the Holy City for such things. However, finding that market and surviving the attentions of those who already service it is another thing entirely.

Then again, the characters could be engaged in smuggling — spices, gold, gems or even Cainites. The Salubri, among others, use Jerusalem as a way station on the path to fleeting safety. Could the characters not be involved in helping the few remaining Salubri flee through the city — for a price, of course? Would doing so incur the wrath of Jerusalem's Tremere?

## MYSTERY

There are many secrets of Jerusalem known only to Cainites. What is the mysterious Mandalay, whose fame has spread far and wide? Is there truth to the rumors of Antediluvian blood fountaining up through the city? What of the Grail, the True Cross, the Spear

of Longinus and other treasures that the city might yet hold? The Black Torah in Abraham's possession certainly falls into this category; how would he react to attempts to steal it, or requests to share it?

## KNOWLEDGE

The Cainites of Jerusalem include some of the most famous and noteworthy of their kind. What Toreador engaged in building cathedrals would not wish to study under Elsh? Abraham has one disciple already; would he not be willing to accept another? Perhaps the fame of the Valley of Hinnom has spread beyond the Holy Land, and Lepers from far and wide now seek sanctuary there. The possibilities are endless.

## WITHIN THE WALLS

On the other hand, there's the possibilities that the characters are already residents of Jerusalem, watching newcomers enter and dodging the plots of their elders. In that case, the sorts of stories the site lends itself to alter dramatically. In this case, the characters may be attempting to ascend the city's hierarchy, exploring the deeper mysteries or fending off outsiders.

## THE CLIMB TO POWER

While Jerusalem has a great many Cainites, the city's vampiric power structure is in a constant state of flux. Old vampires flee, new ones arrive, clans are split internally by religious and political dissent and the most potent Cainites may be so lost in their memories or studies that they let temporal power slip through their fingers. In other words, it is dangerous, but not impossible, for a dedicated group of younger Cainites to claw their way into positions of power. Any attempts to do so by means of brute force are liable to fail, but the web of favors, alliances and betrayals that has built up over the centuries surely offers some opportunities. A kind deed to one of Kothar's lepers could yield knowledge of Rustucci's weaknesses, which the Lasombra would do anything to avoid having bandied about, while Etheria's assistance can *always* be purchased for a price....

## THE DEEPER CITY

Perhaps the surface politics of Jerusalem are not enough. The city is old, after all, built upon layer after layer of its former self. The catacombs beneath the Temple Mount beckon; who knows what secrets they've been holding for centuries? And what of the even older cities built on the site? Surely there are treasures to be gained by exploring the roots of Jerusalem; elder vampires in torpor, perhaps, or remembrances of Cainites who now stalk the streets above. More mundane treasures have their value as



well. Surely Elsh would pay handsomely for a relic from one of his earlier creations, or Habiba would give much for conclusive proof of Etheria's involvement in inciting the Crusades. Such proof can only be found in the deep and the dark, where even the wisest of Cainites normally fear to go.

### DEFENDERS OF THE CITY

Jerusalem is crowded with Cainites. Too crowded, it can be said. Surely there is no room for any more. With that in mind, the characters could well be working to slow the flood of immigrants to the city. Perhaps they seek to shut off the tide of Christian pilgrims wending their way from Europe; doing so would mean ending the peace and convincing the Muslim hierarchy to close the city once and for all. Of course, such a task would not be easy;

other Cainites surely have their claws in Salah al-Din's successors already, and would not take kindly to interlopers.

Then again, perhaps it's a specific sect the characters want to drive out: Knights Templars, Hospitallers, Genoese merchants, Karaite Jews, Assamites or whomever. Each group has its existing supporters and enemies, and not necessarily the ones that might be expected. Trying to drive away the lepers from their traditional home might be more of a task than one might think, however, when Kothar starts calling in his favors and using his secrets, while on the other hand, trying to get rid of the upstart Tremere Chantry could win the assistance of the oddest collection of Brujah and Malkavians, all of whom have something to do with the hospices....



# JERUSALEM

## BY NIGHT™

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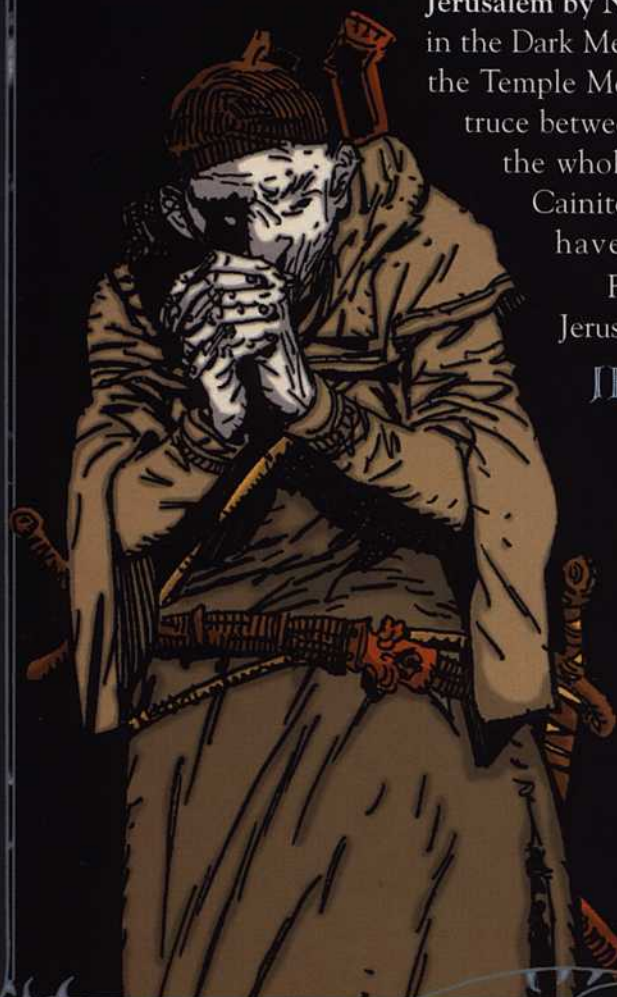
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