







# KNIGHTS OF THE BLACK CROSS

An introductory adventure story for  
**Dark Ages Vampire**

Hello there, and thank you from White Wolf Publishing for participating in this introductory event for our newest roleplaying game, **Dark Ages: Vampire**. If you're not already familiar with us or with our Dark Medieval setting, **Dark Ages: Vampire** is a core rulebook in the tradition of our flagship production, **Vampire: The Masquerade**. It uses our d10 storyteller system to help groups of inspired individuals create interactive tales of epic horror that take place in medieval Europe. The game itself is scheduled for release in July of this year, but giving you this story now gives you the chance to drum up some early interest among your friends and customers. (Not to mention the fact that it gives us a chance to show off this slice of a greater product we're all very proud of.)

So let's get started. This packet includes everything you need to run this story, from pre-generated character sheets to easy-to-swallow explanations of the game systems used at each point in the action. The bold, capitalized directions in the brackets are addressed to the "Storyteller" (i.e., the person who'll be running the game, narrating the scenes and representing the background characters), giving him tips on how to tell the story smoothly, and the various choices that characters might end up making over the course of the story have been accounted for inasmuch as our powers of prediction allow. The only things you need to provide to get you started are pencils, perhaps some scratch paper if your players want to take notes on the events, and enough 10-sided dice for everyone to share.

# The Plot in Brief

This story, "Knights of the Black Cross," is set in AD 1230 at Bran Castle in Kronstadt, Hungary. It details the exploits of five vampire knights who are acting at the behest of an older, very powerful vampire lord. He commands them to trek into the dangerous forest buffer zone between his army and that of his ancient enemy, where they will gather intelligence data vital to his war effort. In so doing, though, they are given reason to suspect treachery against their lord, and they must play a dangerous game of deciding whom to trust. Then, once all is said and done, they must make their way back to the safety of their castle and report on what they've found.

This story has room for two to five players, and we've included five pre-made characters—two of which are vampiric wilderness scouts, the rest of whom are vampiric men-at-arms—and requires one bold, confident soul to take the reins of Storyteller. Once you've gathered players, set aside an hour and a half (maybe two) and get ready to take a glimpse into the dangerous world of the undead. It is a time of strife, a time of tragedy and a time of sweeping change. But at the same time, it is also an era of adventure and opportunity, when all one needs is the will and the strength to take up arms in the darkness and seize his dark, eternal birthright for himself.

## Background

**[THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE HAS ALSO BEEN PROVIDED TO YOUR PLAYERS. YOU DO NOT NEED TO READ IT ALOUD, BUT YOU SHOULD FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH ITS CONTENTS.]**

## Meeting Lord Jürgen the Sword-Bearer

The year is AD 1230. You are a Teutonic Knight of the Order of the Black Cross—a secret order of vampire knights operating within the greater Teutonic Order. You have been stationed at heavily fortified Bran Castle located on a high hill overlooking a dark, forbidding forest in the wilderness of Kronstadt, Hungary. You are part of an army of vampires and men, led by an old and powerful vampire known as Lord Jürgen the Sword-Bearer. You are recently arrived from your order's headquarters in Magdeburg, Germany, and you come highly praised and recommended by the order's second-in-command, Lucretia von Hartz.

You awake night after your arrival at Bran Castle to find many of your fellow soldiers in a state of excited agitation. The castle's defenses are being checked and double-checked, and there are more guards in evidence on the walls than usual. Mortal scouts are being sent out and reporting back twice as frequently as usual, and the

castle's smiths and armorers are working frantically. Even the horses and livestock seem skittish and anxious. Overhead, clouds are rolling in from the east, bringing the sound of faraway thunder and intermittent flashes of lightning to mirror the growing anxiety on the ground. Before you can investigate the cause of all this agitation, though, a captain of the castle guards approaches you, with several other knights at his side.

"Knight of the Black Cross," he says.

"You must come with me at once. Lord Jürgen bade me collect you and escort you to him. No questions, now, this is urgent. Come."

The captain then leads you across the castle's bustling courtyard and into the castle proper. You follow him through echoing stone corridors to a small, torch-lit chamber where Lord Jürgen himself is waiting for you on the other side of a heavy wooden table. Jürgen is a tall, powerful-looking man with blond hair, broad shoulders and striking blue eyes. He is wearing full chain armor with a belted white tabard over it, as well as thick leather gloves and boots. A stark black cross upon his chest dominates the center of his tabard. An enormous and ornate broadsword hangs at Lord Jürgen's hip, and one of his hands rests on its pommel. This man radiates an aura of command that makes him seem invincible, as if he could never possibly fall in battle. He dismisses the captain before turning to speak to you.

"Fellow knights of the Black Cross," he says to you. "Thank you for coming so quickly. Let me welcome you personally to Bran Castle. Lucretia von Hartz speaks highly of you in our correspondence. She feels that you will serve me well in our crusade against the demonic fiends who oppose us here. In fact, the time has come for you to prove to me that her faith in you is well founded. I have chosen you to undertake a mission of critical importance. Are you ready to prove yourselves to me and the rest of your sword-brethren?"

Lord Jürgen does not wait for your answer, certain of your agreement, and you let him continue uninterrupted.

"Excellent. Now, you may have noticed that your fellow soldiers seem ill at ease of late. They are anxious because a great battle against our foe looms on the horizon. The monstrous vampire-fiend Vladimir Rustovitch has raised an army of men, vampires and inhuman monstrosities against us, and he means to drive us out once and for all.

"But know this, my sword-brethren, I will not be chased out of this castle or out of this country, not by man nor king nor demon-fiend. We have all worked too hard these many years to turn back now, and I say we fight for this land and domain we have earned by right of arms. That is why I have summoned you tonight. I have received word from a spy in Rustovitch's camp that preparations for a major, conclusive offensive are underway, and that Rustovitch's army plans to attack us in one week's time. My spy has gathered information on the planned assault that could prove crucial to our



victory — perhaps even our survival. He is planning to break away from Rustovitch's camp tomorrow night and make his way here to report to me.

"The wilderness between Rustovitch's camp and ours is arduous and heavily contested, and my spy does not trust his wilderness survival skills enough to make the entire trek alone. I need you to make your way in secret to a rendezvous point, meet up with my spy and guide him back safely to deliver the intelligence he has gathered. I know some of you are excellent scouts and all of you are able, valiant men at arms. I can spare no men to aid you, but I promise you great rewards should you succeed. So what say you? Can you be prepared to leave tomorrow night, one hour after sunset?"

This is a simple enough task, and it takes you only a moment to agree to Lord Jürgen's request.

"Very well. I will see that you are given new weapons and armor, supplied with maps of the forest in which your rendezvous will take place, and given your fill of fresh blood for the hard work ahead. May God's grace be upon you, my knights of the Black Cross. All of your sword-brethren are counting on you. Do not let us down."

Lord Jürgen then nods gravely and raps on the table with his knuckles. The captain of the guards who led you here reenters the room and escorts you out.

## The Woods

The next night, you awake well rested and find the other soldiers at Bran Castle as excited and edgy as they were the night before. You are allowed to drink your fill of blood in preparation for your mission, and once you have finished, you are outfitted with new weapons and a suit of chain mail that is as light as leather armor, and which has been designed to make as little noise as possible while you're running through the woods. The scouts are allowed half an hour to commit the maps of the surrounding forest and the directions to the rendezvous point to memory. You're not allowed to carry the maps with you because they also mark important ambush sites and troop placements, which could be harmful if they fell into Rustovitch's hands.

The captain of the guards who led you to Lord Jürgen last night takes you and your companions to the edge of the woods and gives you one final briefing.

"Now remember, knights," he says. "Lord Jürgen's not asking much of you. Just go to the rendezvous point and wait there. Our spy'll meet you there and show you a sign he's Jürgen's man, loyal to the Black Cross. When you find him, get him here without letting any of Rustovitch's men find him. Simple as that. Just remember to keep quiet and try to stay hidden. These woods are full of wolves and men and worse, and don't none of 'em want you there. Stay sharp and alert if you want to make it back here no more dead than you already are."

With that, the captain laughs a spitefully and leaves you and your fellow knights alone at the edge of woods, to face whatever dangers lie within.

## Scene One

### The Woods

**[BEFORE YOU BEGIN, ASK THE PLAYERS IF THEY HAVE ANY QUESTIONS THAT YOU ARE ABLE TO ANSWER. WHEN EVERYONE IS READY, HAVE EACH PLAYER TAKE A MOMENT TO SAY HIS CHARACTER'S NAME AND DESCRIBE WHAT HIS CHARACTER LOOKS LIKE. THEN BEGIN THE SCENE BY READING THIS ALOUD TO YOUR PLAYERS.]**

The woods are thick and dark, but you know that you must get moving quickly. The scouts are the only members of the group who have seen the map. You are relying on them to lead the way to the rendezvous point.

**[GIVE THE CHARACTERS A FEW MINUTES TO INTERACT AND GET THEMSELVES ORGANIZED. IF THE PLAYERS NEED HELP GETTING STARTED, OR WHEN THE CHARACTERS ARE READY TO ENTER THE WOODS, CONTINUE WITH THE STORY.]**

Now, at this point, I need the scouts to make Intelligence + Survival rolls in order to remember the way to the rendezvous point and lead the way there.

**[HAVE THE PLAYERS IN QUESTION INDEPENDENTLY ROLL A NUMBER OF DICE EQUAL TO THEIR INTELLIGENCE + SURVIVAL RATINGS AGAINST A DIFFICULTY OF 6.]**

**THEN, BEFORE YOU TELL THEM WHAT HAPPENS, SEE IF THE SCOUTS RESULTS DISAGREE. IF THEY DISAGREE (IF, FOR INSTANCE, ONE HAS ROLLED SUCCESSFULLY WHILE THE OTHER HAS FAILED), HAVE THE CHARACTERS CHOOSE FOR THEMSELVES WHICH SCOUT WILL LEAD THEM. (FOR EASE OF GAME-PLAY ENCOURAGE THEM NOT TO SPLIT UP, AS IT WOULD BE TOO DANGEROUS AND LESS TIME-EFFICIENT TO DO SO.) REMIND THEM, THOUGH, THAT THEY CANNOT CHOOSE BASED ON THE DICE ROLLS. THE ROLLS DETERMINE HOW THINGS ARE GOING TO END UP, NOT HOW THEY SEEM LIKELY TO END UP BEFORE THEY EVEN BEGIN.**

**ENCOURAGE THE PLAYERS TO ROLE-PLAY THEIR WAY TO A DECISION. ONCE THE CHARACTERS HAVE DECIDED, THE RESULTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:]**



## • Success

**[READ THIS PART ALOUD TO YOUR PLAYERS, BUT DIRECT IT TOWARD THE SCOUT CHARACTERS. REMIND THE PLAYERS THAT THEIR CHARACTERS CAN USE AUSPEX OR PROTEAN TO SEE IN THE DARK.]**

Recalling the details of Lord Jürgen's maps, you lead your comrades into the eerie and forbidding forest. The thick canopy of gnarled, twisted branches overhead blocks out even the scant light of the moon through the clouds, but your heightened vampiric senses penetrate the darkness handily. Your comrades can't see as easily or as far, but they follow you with confidence.

**[NOW SKIP DOWN TO WHERE IT SAYS "NEXT..." ]**

## • Failure

**[READ THIS PART ALOUD TO YOUR PLAYERS, BUT DIRECT IT TOWARD THE SCOUT CHARACTERS. REMIND THE PLAYERS THAT THEIR CHARACTERS CAN USE AUSPEX OR PROTEAN TO SEE IN THE DARK.]**

The details of Lord Jürgen's maps are somewhat hazy to you. You remember certain landmarks and the basic direction you should be going in, but this forest is uncomfortably eerie. The thick canopy of gnarled, twisted branches overhead blocks out even the scant light of the moon through the clouds, throwing everything into unwelcoming shadow. Maybe if you drew out a rough sketch of the map in the dirt...

**[AT THIS POINT, ALLOW ONE OR BOTH OF THE SCOUTS TO RE-ROLL INTELLIGENCE + SURVIVAL, BUT AGAINST A DIFFICULTY OF 7. IF THIS CYCLE REPEATS ITSELF, ALLOW THE SCOUTS TO MAKE THE ROLL AGAIN, INCREASING THE DIFFICULTY BY ONE EACH TIME (HOLDING STEADY AT 10). HAVE THEM REPEAT THIS PROCESS UNTIL THEY ROLL SUCCESSFULLY, THEN READ THE TEXT UNDER "SUCCESS." REMIND THE PLAYERS THAT THEY CAN SPEND A WILLPOWER FOR AN AUTOMATIC SUCCESS.]**

## • Botch

**[READ THIS PART ALOUD TO YOUR PLAYERS, BUT DIRECT IT TOWARD THE SCOUT CHARACTERS. REMIND THE PLAYERS THAT THEIR CHARACTERS**

## **CAN USE AUSPEX OR PROTEAN TO SEE IN THE DARK.]**

Recalling the details of Lord Jürgen's maps with practiced ease, you lead your comrades into the eerie and forbidding forest. The thick canopy of gnarled, twisted branches overhead blocks out even the scant light of the moon through the clouds, but your heightened vampiric senses penetrate the darkness handily. Your comrades can't see as easily or as far, but they follow you confidently.

After half an hour, though, you realize that you might have made a mistake when you emerge from the woods facing Bran Castle, no less than two hundred yards from where you left.

**[AT THIS POINT, ASK IF THE SCOUTS ADMIT THEIR MISTAKE TO THE OTHER CHARACTERS, AND GIVE THE PLAYERS A MOMENT TO ROLEPLAY. TO ENCOURAGE INTERACTION, YOU MIGHT HAVE THE OTHER PLAYERS ROLL PERCEPTION + SURVIVAL TO NOTICE THEY HAVE GONE IN A CIRCLE BEFORE ALLOWING ONE OR BOTH OF THE SCOUTS TO RE-ROLL INTELLIGENCE + SURVIVAL, DIFFICULTY 8. IF THIS CYCLE REPEATS ITSELF, HAVE THE SCOUTS MAKE THE ROLL AGAIN, INCREASING THE DIFFICULTY BY ONE EACH TIME (HOLDING STEADY AT 10). REPEAT THIS PROCESS UNTIL THEY ROLL SUCCESSFULLY, THEN READ THE TEXT UNDER "SUCCESS." REMIND YOUR PLAYERS THEY CAN SPEND WILLPOWER FOR AN AUTOMATIC SUCCESS.]**

## Next...

**[READ THIS PART ALOUD]**

As you're on your way, the forest closes in around you, seeming to swallow you into the belly of some rough beast. Once you're out of earshot of Bran Castle, you begin to realize just how isolated and cut off from any reinforcements you actually are. The more you think about it, the more you notice unidentifiable sounds in the distance, seemingly coming from all around you. It may be simple nocturnal animals going about their business or the sound of some hapless peasant who's wandered too deep into the forest away from home, but it reminds you of what the captain said about keeping quiet and staying hidden.

Now, I need everyone to make a Dexterity + Stealth roll.

**[HAVE THE PLAYERS INDEPENDENTLY ROLL DEXTERITY + STEALTH, DIFFICULTY 6. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IS VERY MUCH AN ALL-OR-NOTHING SITUATION. IF ALL OF THE PLAYERS**



**SUCCEED ON THIS ROLL, BEGIN YOUR NARRATION FROM THE "SUCCESS" POINT. IF ANY ONE OF THEM FAILS ON THIS ROLL (EVEN IF ALL THE OTHERS SUCCEED), BEGIN AT THE "FAILURE" POINT. HOWEVER, IF ANY ONE OF THEM BOTCHES THE ROLL (REGARDLESS OF ANY OTHER SUCCESSES OR FAILURES), SKIP DOWN TO WHERE IT SAYS "BOTCH" AND START READING THERE.]**

### • Success

**[READ THIS PART ALOUD TO YOUR PLAYERS.]**

As one, you all exchange a look and a series of military hand signals then nod knowingly. With the scouts in the lead, you proceed in single-file, stepping only on tree roots, broad stones and hard ground. The strange alien sounds in the forest fade away to the rear as you disappear into the shadows and continue on with your mission.

**[NOW YOU MAY SKIP AHEAD TO "SCENE TWO"]**

### • Failure

**[READ THIS PART ALOUD TO YOUR PLAYERS, BUT DIRECT IT ESPECIALLY TO THOSE WHO FAILED THEIR DEXTERITY + STEALTH ROLL]**

As one, you all exchange a look and a series of military hand signals then nod knowingly. With the scouts in the lead, you proceed single-file, trying to step only on tree roots, broad stones and hard ground. That's easier said than done, though, considering how dark and dense the forest has grown with the setting of the sun. Almost inevitably, it seems, you put a foot wrong and step onto a dry, dead stick. The stick breaks with a sharp *snap!* All of you freeze momentarily, and the sound of something dashing through the underbrush in your direction catches your ears. Before you can figure out exactly which way the sound is coming from, a pair of beasts explodes from the underbrush right in the middle of your coterie. The beasts are each half as large as a man and completely hairless—they're like no living creatures God created. They appear to be demonic hybrids of wolves and enormous spiders. They lunge forward on too many legs, snapping wickedly fanged mandibles at you indiscriminately.

You're too well trained to scatter and run away. You know that your best bet is to fight.

**[NOW SKIP DOWN TO WHERE IT SAYS "COMBAT WITH THE BEASTS"]**

### • Botch

**[READ THIS PART ALOUD TO YOUR PLAYERS, BUT DIRECT IT ESPECIALLY TO THOSE WHO BOTCHED THEIR DEXTERITY + STEALTH ROLLS]**

As one, you all exchange a look and a series of military hand signals then nod knowingly. With the scouts in the lead, you proceed in single-file, trying to step only on tree roots, broad stones and hard ground. That's easier said than done, though, considering how dark and dense the forest has grown with the setting of the sun. You find yourself becoming separated from the group.

In your hurry to catch up so you don't lose your comrades entirely, you jump from a patch of hard dry ground to what you think is a flat rock. That "rock," however, is actually a dead, hollow log, and the rotten wood disintegrates beneath your feet with an echoing *CRUNCH!* Everyone freezes momentarily, and the sound of something dashing through the underbrush in your direction suddenly surrounds you. Before you can figure out exactly which way the sound is coming from, four beasts explode from the underbrush all around your coterie. The beasts are each half as large as a man and completely hairless—they're like no living creatures God created. They appear to be demonic hybrids of wolves and enormous spiders, and their battle cry is an unearthly trill. They lunge forward on too many legs, snapping wickedly fanged mandibles at you indiscriminately.

Despite your momentary lack of grace, you're all too well trained to scatter and run away. You know that your best bet is to fight.

**[NOW SKIP DOWN TO WHERE IT SAYS "COMBAT WITH THE BEASTS"]**

## COMBAT WITH THE BEASTS

**[DON'T READ THIS NEXT PART ALOUD TO YOUR PLAYERS WORD FOR WORD.**

**WHAT FOLLOWS IS A QUICK PRIMER FOR HOW THE STORYTELLER SYSTEM HANDLES SMALL-SCALE COMBAT SCENES. MOST OF THIS INFORMATION IS ALSO COVERED IN THE INTRODUCTION, AND IT IS ALL SUMMARIZED IN THE COMBAT CHEAT SHEET AT THE END OF THE SECTION. THE COMPLETE COMBAT SYSTEM COVERED IN THE DARK AGES: VAMPIRE'S CORE RULEBOOK INTRODUCES A HOST OF POTENTIAL TRICKS AND COMPLICATIONS THAT ADD MORE ELEMENTS OF REALISM TO A COMBAT SCENE, BUT WE'RE JUST USING THE BASICS FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS DEMO.]**



## Combat

Combat itself is fairly simple. First, have everyone roll a single d10 in order to determine *initiative*. You also roll a d10. Now, tell the players to check their character sheets and add the number they just rolled to the total of their Dexterity + Wits rating. (They merely add these ratings together for the purpose of initiative, rather than rolling as many dice.) In this scene, add three to your die roll.

These initiative results determine who goes first in each turn. Whoever has the highest initiative result acts first, then everyone else proceeds in descending order. If combat is still in progress after everyone (including you) has taken an action, start over again at the highest initiative number and repeat as necessary until combat is over. Use the number you rolled as the initiative score for all of the beasts in this scene (be it two or four).

Now, as each character's initiative turn comes up, he has two options. First, he can wait for one of the beasts to attack then try to *dodge* out of the way. Even if his initiative number is higher than that of an attacking beast (meaning he should go first), a character can wait to dodge until the beast's initiative number comes up to attack. If the character's number comes up *after* the beast's, he can still attempt to dodge the beast's attack during the beast's turn. If he does so, though, he gives up his later place in the initiative order until the *next* time it comes around in the combat.

To dodge, a player rolls his character's Dexterity + Dodge. The difficulty of this dodge roll is 6, which means that every die that comes up 6 or higher is considered a success. The player who's dodging then compares his number of success against the number of successes his opponent achieved on his *attack roll* (see below). If the defender has more successes dodging, he gets safely out of harm's way. If the attacker has more successes, the dodger isn't quite so lucky.

If the character doesn't want to dodge, he can choose to attack (which he can only do during his place in the initiative order). To do so, have the player roll a number of dice equal to his Dexterity + Brawl ratings (for a punch, kick or vampire bite) or his Dexterity + Melee ratings (for an attack with a weapon). The difficulty of the *attack roll* is 6, which means that at least one of the dice has to come up showing a 6 or higher for the attack to hit. (Or, as above, the attacker must roll more successes than the character who's dodging rolled to dodge.)

If the attack hits, have the attacker then roll a number of dice equal to his character's Strength rating plus an additional number of dice that varies according to what type of attack the character is using. Refer to gear chart for the number of dice to add. The difficulty of this *damage roll* is 6, so any die that comes up 6 or higher is considered a success. If the character has a rating in the Potence Discipline, add a number of successes equal to that rating *automatically* to the total he rolled. Each success has the potential to inflict one level of damage.

When someone is hit, have him roll a number of dice equal to his Stamina rating, plus his rating in the Fortitude Discipline (if he has one), plus any armor he might be wearing. The chain mail armor the characters are wearing adds 3 dice to this roll because the beasts inflict *lethal damage*. This roll does *not* constitute an action for the purposes of initiative. It occurs *any* time a character is hit by an attack. The difficulty is 6, so every die that shows a 6 or higher is a success. This roll is called the *soak roll*, and it reflects the character's resistance to injury.

## Hang in there....

Now, have the attacker compare the number of successes on his damage roll to the number of successes the defender rolled on his soak roll. Each success on the soak roll cancels out one success on the damage roll. If there are any damage roll successes left over after that, each one inflicts one health level of damage on the defender. If a character sustains more levels of damage than he has health levels available, he collapses to the ground. If another attack then inflicts one more health level of damage on him, the vampire enters torpor or the beast is destroyed.

## The Beasts

Their important ratings are as follows:

**Attack:** six dice, **Damage:** six dice, **Soak:** five dice, **Initiative:** 1d10 + 3, **Health Levels:** six, **Blood:** three

As far as tactics are concerned, the beasts that attack the characters in this scene aren't terribly sophisticated. Each one picks one target and tries to bite him, thus inflicting lethal damage. (Choose at random which character each beast attacks, but don't double up beasts on any individual character.) The beast will not dodge, nor will it run away if it is wounded. It will only attack. It will do so until either it is killed or its target falls down dead. Should its target fall down dead, it will try to drag the incapacitated body away to devour at leisure. Remember though, you don't want your characters to die before they even get started, so if the characters are having trouble winning against the beasts, you can always reduce the number of dice you are rolling.

## The Aftermath of the Combat

In theory, these beasts should not prove much of a threat for the players' characters. Even in the four-on-five battle, the characters should be able to win through with only a little effort. Now, of course, they might have gotten scratched up a bit (i.e., taken a few health levels worth of damage), but here's where it's good to be a vampire. Before the characters proceed, inform the players that their characters can take this opportunity to heal themselves of any damage they might have taken. They can do so by spending one *blood point* from their *blood pool* (at the bottom of the character sheet). One blood point heals



one level of damage, and the character can spend as many blood points to heal levels of damage as he wants (provided he doesn't run entirely out of blood, that is). Should any one of the characters be especially wounded, he can even add to his blood pool by drinking blood from one or more of the dead beasts he's killed. The beasts have a number of blood points in them equal to the rating listed above. The beasts, however, cannot use these blood points to heal themselves, since they aren't vampires.

### Combat Summary: The Beasts

- Determine initiative: Add Wits + Dexterity + 1d10 for the players. The beast's initiative is 1d10 + 5 (roll once and use the same number for all the beasts).

- Have the players declare blood and Willpower expenditures and Discipline activation. Give them a moment to figure out what their character's can do.

- Highest initiative acts first, then in descending order. Resolve each player's action before moving on to the next. A character using Celerity takes his first action on his initiative turn; all other actions take place at the end of the turn.

- One action/turn, except when using Celerity. Character's have the option of dodging (parrying) or attacking. Beasts will only attack, and they inflict lethal damage.

- Rolls:

- Dodge: Dexterity + Dodge

- Parry: Dexterity + Melee

- Unarmed Attack: Dexterity + Brawl

- Armed Attack: Dexterity + Melee

- Resolve actions.

- 1. Roll for action.

- 2. Roll for damage, if necessary. Include extra dice or successes from weapons or Disciplines.

- 3. Roll to soak damage, if necessary. Include extra dice from armor and Disciplines.

- 4. Record damage on Health chart.

- Resolve Celerity actions, as above.

Remember: Spending blood and Willpower, activating Disciplines and soaking damage are not actions!

ambush. If any of you want to try to identify the creatures, make an Intelligence + Occult roll. The difficulty is 7.

**[THE RESULTS ARE AS FOLLOWS.  
READ THE APPROPRIATE ONE AS THE  
CHARACTER'S ROLL DICTATES.]**

### • Success

This beast, you realize, was once a wolf or a mastiff that was tortured, warped and physically reconstructed through an awful supernatural power possessed by the vampire fiends under Rustovitch's command. They've been known to create and use beasts like this as hunting animals and scouts, so it's good you destroyed these so handily. You realize, though, that you'd probably better carry on with your mission before any more show up.

### • Failure

This wretched thing looks like it could once have been a wolf or hunting dog, but you have no idea what turned it into the monstrosity you see before you. Hopefully there aren't any more out there prowling around. In fact, you realize you'd probably better get going, rather than sticking around to find out.

### • Botch

This can be naught but the spawn of Satan, conjured to Rustovitch's dire service through some infernal pact! You've prevailed against them this time by the grace of the Black Cross, but you had best keep moving, lest Rustovitch send more of them after you.

**[AT THIS POINT, YOU CAN PROCEED ON  
TO SCENE TWO . IF, HOWEVER, YOU'RE  
A REAL SADIST OR YOU'VE STILL GOT  
PLENTY OF TIME ON YOUR HANDS, YOU  
CAN FORCE EVERYONE TO ROLL DEX-  
TERITY + STEALTH AGAIN AND  
PROCEED FROM WHERE IT SAYS  
"NEXT..." ABOVE. IF YOU WANT TO  
BE A LITTLE NICER, YOU CAN REQUIRE  
THIS ROLL OF ONLY THOSE WHO  
DIDN'T SUCCEED ON THE INITIAL  
DEXTERITY + STEALTH ROLL.  
OTHERWISE, JUST GO STRAIGHT  
TO SCENE TWO.]**

## Scene Two

### Dark Encounter

**[READ THIS PART ALOUD  
TO YOUR PLAYERS.]**

Without further excitement, you make your way to the rendezvous point. It is a clearing in the dense forest with an enormous stone on one side, surrounded by

Now...

**[ONCE THE COMBAT SCENE IS OVER,  
READ THE FOLLOWING ALOUD  
TO THE PLAYERS.]**

As the heat of combat fades, an eerie hush falls over your immediate surroundings, letting you know that there aren't more of the hellish beasts lurking for another



gnarled, ugly trees. Overhead, all you can see are clouds. Although it's taken you a little longer than expected to reach this place, you find the clearing deserted. The only sign of life is a large black crow perched on top of the stone across the clearing from you.

As you enter the clearing, the crow looks up from the corpse of whatever it's picking at, regards you with an uncanny appearance of intelligence, then flies away into the shadows. Silence descends on the clearing and remains unbroken for several long minutes.

**[PAUSE HERE BRIEFLY TO GIVE THE PLAYERS A CHANCE TO LET THEIR CHARACTERS WHISPER NERVOUSLY OR WONDER WHERE THEIR SPY CONTACT IS. DON'T LET THE MOMENT DRAG ON TOO LONG, BUT GIVE THEM A SECOND TO ROLEPLAY IF THEY SO DESIRE. THEN CONTINUE READING.]**

Eventually, though, you hear quiet footsteps approaching from the other side of the stone, and a slight, tentative figure comes forward from the woods. He is dressed in the dirty uniform of one of Rustovitch's infantrymen, but he wears no armor and carries no weapon. On his left shoulder, a large black crow is perched. The man stays close to the stone, seemingly ready to bolt at the first opportunity.

"Stay your hands sword-knights," the man whispers urgently. "My name is Nagy, and I believe we are allies. I know what my clothes make you think, but Vladimir Rustovitch is not my master. I and my true master revere this symbol."

He extends a trembling hand toward you palm-up and concentrates intently for a moment. Before your eyes, the image of a black cross appears in the air above his palm and rotates slowly in place. If anyone wants to take a guess at how he's making that happen, roll Intelligence + Occult.

**[IF ANY OF THE PLAYERS ARE SO INCLINED, COMPARE THE RESULTS OF THEIR ROLL AGAINST A DIFFICULTY OF 7. THE RESULTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:]**

#### • Success

The floating black cross is naught but an illusion, created by the application of a vampiric Discipline power. It is possessed by a rare minority of nomad vampires who call themselves Clan Ravnos.

#### • Failure

See how it just floats there.... Sure, it's just an illusion, but that's a neat trick, isn't it? If only you knew how he did it.

#### • Botch

That's obviously some form of magical levitation and remote manipulation. You've heard of young cabals of sorcerous vampires who possess such power, but you've never met any.

**[REGARDLESS, GIVE THE PLAYERS A CHANCE TO DIGEST THIS INFORMATION. HOPEFULLY, THIS SIGN OF THE BLACK CROSS WILL REMIND THEM OF WHAT THE CAPTAIN AT BRAN CASTLE TOLD THEM ABOUT HOW TO RECOGNIZE LORD JÜRGEN'S SPY. ONCE THEY MAKE THIS CONNECTION, READ THIS NEXT PART TO THEM.]**

Nagy closes his hand, and the black cross disappears. He then looks around nervously once again and takes a couple of steps toward you.

"You recognize the black cross," he says. "That makes you Lord Jürgen's men, yes? The ones he sent to get me back to him safely through these demon-haunted and God-forsaken woods. That's good then. I have intelligence on Rustovitch's army and his plans to use them. He intends to storm Bran Castle in one week's time, as I last reported, so I must warn Lord Jürgen about what forces to expect and be prepared to defend against. But we should hurry."

He then regards the crow perched on his shoulder, and the two of them stare into each other's eyes. The man squawks something unintelligible, and the crow responds with a similar sound. It then nods once, hops from the man's shoulder and flies away into the forest. When the crow is gone, the man turns back to you even more nervously than before.

"All right, then," he says. "That's done with. I commanded him to watch for you while I waited, and now I've sent him ahead to make sure our way out of here is safe. Now let's get back to Bran Castle before Rustovitch's men realize I'm gone." He pauses, fidgeting and looking around for a second, then says, "What's the matter? Why are you just looking at me like that? Don't you trust me?"

Now, if any of you actually have any reservations about trusting Nagy, or if you aren't sure if he's telling the truth, there's a roll you can make to try to gauge his honesty. Otherwise, we can just carry on from here.

**[IF THE PLAYERS JUST CHOOSE TO CARRY ON, PROCEED TO WHERE IT SAYS "THEY TRUST HIM." IF THEY CHOOSE TO MAKE THE ROLL, HAVE THEM ROLL THEIR PERCEPTION + SUBTERFUGE. THEY MUST ROLL INDEPENDENTLY SO THAT EACH PLAYER'S IMPRESSION IS BASED ON HIS INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER'S POINT OF VIEW. THE DIFFICULTY IS 5 BECAUSE OF THE WAY NAGY IS ACTING. THE RESULTS ARE AS FOLLOWS.]**

#### • Success

As he speaks, Nagy won't make eye contact, and just a hint of bloodsweat is visible on his forehead. Plus, if he really sent that bird to scout ahead for trouble, it would



have flown off in the other direction, not back from the way Nagy came. Nagy is a liar, and a poor one at that. You're certain of it.

### • Failure

Maybe he's lying, or maybe he's just worried about being caught by Rustovitch's men, who are notorious for the hellish torture they inflict on traitors. It's so hard to tell with vampires, especially strangers. You'll just have to go with your gut.

### • Botch

This poor creature must be terrified. All alone out here in the forest with enemies all around. He's obviously too scared to lie. You're certain of that. You'd best get him back to Lord Jürgen as soon as possible, before this wretch has a nervous breakdown.

**[NOW, IT'S LIKELY THAT NOT ALL OF THE PLAYERS ACHIEVED THE SAME RESULT ON THEIR SEPARATE ROLLS. IF THEIR RESULTS DISAGREE, HAVE THEM DECIDE AMONGST THEMSELVES WHETHER OR NOT TO TRUST NAGY. HAVE THEM ROLEPLAY OUT A QUICK ARGUMENT IN HOPES OF REACHING A GROUP DECISION. IF ALL THE MEMBERS CHOOSE TO TRUST HIS WORD, PROCEED TO WHERE IT SAYS "THEY TRUST HIM". IF ALL (OR EVEN ONE) OF THE CHARACTERS BELIEVES THAT NAGY IS LYING AND CONFRONTS HIM ABOUT IT, PROCEED TO WHERE IT SAYS "THEY CONFRONT HIM". IF ANY OF THE CHARACTERS BELIEVES THAT NAGY IS LYING BUT CHOOSE NOT TO CONFRONT HIM, YOU SHOULD PROCEED TO SECTION "THEY TRUST HIM."]**

## They Trust Him

**[READ THIS PART ALOUD]**

"Good," Nagy says. "Let's go then. The faster I'm back indoors and out of this awful place, the better. I'll lead the way back. Hurry."

So saying, he pushes between you all and rushes off into the woods in the direction you came from. You move to hurry after him, but a sudden noise gives you pause. It's the sound of arrows being loosed from strings. You've been had. It's a trap!

**[THE CHARACTERS HAVE NO CHANCE TO REACT TO THIS FIRST ATTACK. THEREFORE, ROLL FIVE DICE AT A DIFFICULTY OF 6, ONCE FOR EACH CHARACTER. IF THE ROLL IS SUCCESSFUL, THE CHARACTER IS HIT IN THE BACK**

**WITH AN ARROW. NOW ROLL THREE DICE TO DETERMINE DAMAGE. IF YOU ROLL FIVE SUCCESS ON THE ATTACK ROLL, AND THREE SUCCESS ON THE DAMAGE ROLL, THE TARGET IS STAKED THROUGH THE HEART AND PARALYZED. (SEE SIDEBAR UNDER "FIRE".) OTHERWISE, EACH SUCCESS ON THE DAMAGE ROLL INFLECTS ONE LEVEL OF AGGRAVATED DAMAGE ON THE VICTIM.**

**THE CHARACTERS ARE NOT ABLE TO MAKE SOAK ROLLS AGAINST THIS DAMAGE, HOWEVER. TO THE CHARACTERS' PAINFUL SURPRISE, THE ARROWS ARE ACTUALLY ON FIRE—THE BANE OF ALL VAMPIRES. THE ONLY EXCEPTION ARE THOSE CHARACTERS WHO HAVE A RATING IN THE FORTITUDE DISCIPLINE. THOSE PLAYERS MAY ROLL A NUMBER OF DICE EQUAL TO THEIR STAMINA AND FORTITUDE RATING IN ORDER TO SOAK THIS DAMAGE.**

**NONE OF THE CHARACTERS CAN HAVE A CHANCE TO REACT TO THIS SURPRISE ATTACK UNTIL YOU'VE ROLLED ONCE FOR EVERYONE.**

**ONCE YOU'VE NARRATED THIS SURPRISE ROUND, SKIP DOWN TO WHERE IT SAYS "FIRE!"**

## They Confront Him

**[READ THIS PART ALOUD.]**

"What?" Nagy says, trying his best to look innocent, but backing up toward the large stone behind him. "Surely you jest? You can't... can't think that I..." But the guilt and the fear is too much for Nagy. He looks at each of you then into the woods like a wild, cornered animal. Finally, he darts away into the trees shouting, "Now! Now! They know you're here!"

As soon as the little weasel disappears, bright spots of light appear in the darkness among the trees behind the stone. You mistake them for glowing eyes for a second, but then you realize what they really are. They're the tips of flaming arrows aiming for each of you! You were right; it's a trap! The hidden archers take aim and fire!

**[THE FIRST WAVE OF THE ATTACK PROCEEDS AS IT DOES UNDER "THEY TRUST HIM." BUT SINCE THE CHARACTERS WERE PREPARED FOR THE ATTACK, GIVE THEM A CHANCE TO DODGE THE INCOMING ARROWS. HAVE EACH PLAYER ROLL HIS CHARACTER'S DEXTERITY + DODGE RATINGS AGAINST A DIFFICULTY OF 6. (IF THE PLAYER SO CHOOSES, HE COULD HAVE HIS CHARACTER ATTEMPT TO PARRY THE INCOMING ARROW WITH HIS WEAPON INSTEAD. IF HE WANTS TO DO SO, HAVE HIM ROLL HIS CHARACTER'S DEXTERITY + MELEE RATINGS AGAINST**



## Combat: Flaming Arrows

### They Trusted Nagy

Begin here if the player's trusted Nagy, or did not confront him.

- The characters may not act because they have been ambushed and do not have time to react. They may not spend blood or activate Disciplines because they are surprised, but they may still spend Willpower.

- Roll five dice, difficulty 6, once for each character to see if any are hit with a flaming arrow. For every successful roll, roll three dice, difficulty 6. Each success inflicts a level of aggravated damage. Only characters with Fortitude may roll to soak aggravated damage.

- If you roll all successes on both the initial roll and the damage roll, the character is staked through the heart. Refer to the Staking sidebar for details on this situation.

- Once you have rolled for each player, stop the combat. The archers will leave, and you should proceed to where it says "Fire!"

### They Confronted Nagy

Begin here the player's did not trust Nagy, or confronted him.

- Do not roll initiative; every player gets one action and order is not important, so simply go around the table. Characters may not activate Disciplines or spend blood because they have been surprised. They may still spend Willpower.

- Roll five dice for the archer's attack. Have the player roll Dexterity + Dodge to dodge the arrows, or Dexterity + Melee to parry the arrows with her weapon. The difficulty or all rolls is 6. If you roll more successes than the player, the attack is successful. Roll three dice for damage, difficulty 6. If the player rolls more successes than you, the attack is not successful. Do not roll for damage. Staking rules still apply, but require that you still have five successes after the player has rolled to dodge or parry, and you roll three successes when rolling damage.

- Once you have rolled once for each player, stop the combat. The archers will leave; proceed to where it says "Fire!"

**A DIFFICULTY OF 7.) IN EITHER CASE, YOU THEN COMPARE THE NUMBER OF SUCCESSES YOU ROLLED FOR THE ATTACK AGAINST THE NUMBER OF SUCCESSES THE CHARACTER ROLLED TO DEFEND HIMSELF. IF YOU HAVE MORE SUCCESSES, THE ARROW HITS THE CHARACTER AND DOES DAMAGE AS ABOVE. IF THE PLAYER HAS AN EQUAL OR GREATER NUMBER OF SUCCESSES FOR DEFENSE, THE CHARACTER DODGES OUT OF THE WAY (OR BATS THE ARROW ASIDE WITH HIS WEAPON).**

**AFTER THIS INITIAL VOLLEY, GO DOWN TO WHERE IT SAYS "FIRE!".]**

### Fire!

**[READ THIS PART ALOUD.]**

As more arrows cut through the air, sticking into the ground at your feet and in the trees nearest you, you get an all-too-close look at them. They're on fire, and like all vampires, you have an instinctual, primal fear of fire. Your Beast recoils from the flame, and you can feel the terror taking control. I would like everyone to roll their Courage, difficulty 8, to see if they fall to R'tschreck.

## Staking

If, during the attack, the Storyteller rolls five success on the attack roll and three successes on the damage roll, and the defending players does not roll any success on his defense roll, the vampire is staked through the heart, unable to move, speak, activate Disciplines or spend blood, but she is still aware of her surroundings and able to feel pain. The character immediately catches on fire, suffering one level of aggravated damage per turn until the fire is put out. If the character reaches Incapacitated and is still on fire, he will die the next turn, his body turning to ash.

Note: A player whose character is staked character may still roll to soak damage. Only characters with Fortitude may roll to soak aggravated damage.

If the fire is put out before the character is destroyed, he suffers no more damage from the arrow. When, or if, the arrow is removed, he must make an immediate R'tschreck check, difficulty 6. Success means he pulls himself valiantly together and continues, failure or botching leads to frenzy. Remind the players of this, in case their character's decide that it would be better to take their staked comrade with them, rather than risk him falling to R'tschreck and injuring himself further — or drawing more unwanted attention to the group.

If any knight is staked, the other character's treatment of the unfortunate victim should be governed by their road. Remind the players to check their Hierarchy of Sins before deciding how to react, and have them make a road check if the character's act contrary to their Road rating.



[AFTER THE PLAYERS ROLL, APPLY THE FOLLOWING RESULTS, AS APPROPRIATE. ONE SUCCESS IS ALL THEY NEED TO RESIST R-TSCHRECK. REMIND THEM THEY MAY SPEND WILLPOWER FOR AN AUTOMATIC SUCCESS. NARRATE FIRST FOR THE PLAYERS WHO SUCCEED, THEN FOR THE PLAYERS WHO FAILED OR BOTCHED.]

### • Success

You know that now is *not* the time for panic, so you fight your terror and regain control of yourself, looking around to see that state of your companions.

### • Failure

It suddenly seems as if the fire is everywhere, and you begin to flee blindly back the way your frenzied minds think you came. You only run for about five minutes before your rational minds take over once again. You're well away from the clearing by this point, but you're not exactly certain where you actually are. When the instinctive fear takes over like that, it subsumes your will entirely. Luckily, though, you didn't end up too far away from the rest of the group, so you're able to regroup and decide what to do next.

### • Botch

It suddenly seems as if the fire is everywhere, and you begin to flee blindly forward. In your terror, you brush against an arrow in the ground and catch on fire, but luckily your flailing arms puts it out. By the time your rational mind takes over, you're well away from the rest of the group, but you can hear them in the distance and are able to rejoin them after a few minutes.

[ROLL ONE D10, DIFFICULTY 5, TO SEE IF THE CHARACTER TAKES ANOTHER LEVEL OF AGGRAVATED DAMAGE FROM THE FIRE.]

## Scene Three

### Escape

[READ THIS PART ALOUD.]

You all are quite shaken by the ambush, and it takes a few minutes to find each other and gather your wits. You must decide what to do next. Your options seem to be fairly cut-and-dried. You can either return to Bran Castle at once and report Nagy's treachery to Lord Jürgen, or you can try to find and capture Nagy yourselves, in order to bring him back to Lord Jürgen for punishment and interrogation. You can hear the sounds of men and beasts searching through the forest some distance away, so it would be well to decide quickly.

[GIVE THE PLAYERS THIS CHANCE TO DISCUSS IT. NEITHER CHOICE IS

NECESSARILY THE RIGHT OR WRONG ONE, BUT TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE. IF THEY SEEM TO BE LAGGING OR TAKING TOO LONG, DESCRIBE TO THEM THE SOUNDS OF SEARCHERS DRAWING CLOSER AND MAKE THEM FEEL LIKE THEY COULD GET JUMPED ANY SECOND. WHEN THEY MAKE UP THEIR MINDS, SKIP AHEAD TO EITHER "BACK TO BRAN CASTLE" OR "FINDING NAGY" AS APPROPRIATE.]

## Back to Bran Castle

[THE FIRST THING YOU WANT THE PLAYERS TO DO IS TRY TO FIGURE OUT WHERE THEY ARE AND WHICH WAY THEY MUST GO TO GET TO SAFETY. IN ORDER TO DO SO, HAVE THE PLAYERS OF THE SCOUT CHARACTERS MAKE INTELLIGENCE + SURVIVAL ROLLS IN ORDER TO ORIENT THEMSELVES. IF THE SCOUTS' RESULTS DISAGREE, HAVE THE PLAYERS DECIDE (AS BEFORE) WHOSE LEAD TO FOLLOW. THEN READ THE RESULTS TO YOUR SCOUTS' PLAYERS AS FOLLOWS.]

IF THE SCOUTS ARE UNABLE TO LEAD (THEY ARE DEAD, STAKED OR IN TORPOR) HAVE ALL THE PLAYERS ROLL PERCEPTION + SURVIVAL TO SEE IF THEY CAN TRACK THEIR WAY BACK TO THE CASTLE. USE THE SAME RESULTS AS BELOW.]

### • Success

It takes you a moment to orient yourself, but by judging the natural landmarks and looking at the moss on the trees, you're able to figure out which general direction you need to go in. You point the way and lead your swordbrethren into the forest away from the sounds of searchers behind you.

[THEN SKIP AHEAD TO WHERE IT SAYS "NEXT..."]

### • Failure

Frankly, it's tough to say how to get back to where you came from since you aren't exactly sure how you got here. Maybe if you take another few moments to calm down and get your bearings you'll straighten everything out right.

[AT THIS POINT, ALLOW THE PLAYERS TO ROLL INTELLIGENCE + SURVIVAL (OR PERCEPTION + SURVIVAL), BUT



AGAINST A DIFFICULTY OF 7. IF THIS CYCLE REPEATS ITSELF, ALLOW THE PLAYERS TO MAKE THE ROLL AGAIN, INCREASING THE DIFFICULTY BY ONE EACH TIME (HOLDING STEADY AT 10). HAVE THEM REPEAT THIS PROCESS UNTIL THEY ROLL SUCCESSFULLY (SKIP BACK TO "SUCCESS") OR BOTCH (SKIP BELOW TO "BOTCH").]

### • Botch

It takes you a moment to orient yourself, but you catch the vague sound of a stream in the distance, which you remember passing earlier, and it helps you figure out which general direction you need to go in. You point the way and lead your sword-brethren into the forest.

About ten minutes later, though, you begin to suspect that you've made a mistake when you find yourselves behind a large stone that seems somehow familiar. Going around it ever-so-quietly, you find yourselves right back in the clearing where you met Nagy less than half an hour ago. Fortunately, it is empty of attackers at the moment—since they're probably out looking for you right now—but that's small comfort considering you've lost ground.

[AT THIS POINT, ASK IF THE SCOUTS ADMIT THEIR MISTAKE TO THE OTHER CHARACTERS, AND GIVE THE PLAYERS A MOMENT TO ROLEPLAY. TO ENCOURAGE INTERACTION, YOU MIGHT HAVE THE OTHER PLAYERS ROLL PERCEPTION + SURVIVAL TO NOTICE THEY HAVE GONE IN A CIRCLE BEFORE ALLOWING ONE OR BOTH OF THE SCOUTS TO RE-ROLL INTELLIGENCE + SURVIVAL, DIFFICULTY 8. IF THIS CYCLE REPEATS ITSELF, HAVE THE SCOUTS MAKE THE ROLL AGAIN, INCREASING THE DIFFICULTY BY ONE EACH TIME (HOLDING STEADY AT 10). REPEAT THIS PROCESS UNTIL THEY ROLL SUCCESSFULLY, THEN READ THE TEXT UNDER "SUCCESS." REMIND YOUR PLAYERS THEY CAN SPEND WILLPOWER FOR AN AUTOMATIC SUCCESS.]

### Next...

[READ THIS PART ALOUD.]

And with that, you slip away as quietly as you can, hoping not to attract too much attention to yourselves. Once again, the forbidding forest closes in around you, and you realize that even though you know how to find your way home, the way will not be an easy one. All around you,

you can hear the sounds of beasts and soldiers hunting you, so you know it would be in your best interest to make your way back quietly and carefully. That being the case, I need each of you to make Dexterity + Stealth rolls.

[AS BEFORE, MAKE SURE THAT EVERYONE MAKES THIS ROLL INDEPENDENTLY AGAINST A DIFFICULTY OF 8. IF EVERYONE SUCCEEDS, CONGRATULATE THEM AND SKIP AHEAD TO THE EPILOGUE. IF EVEN ONE OF THE PLAYERS FAILS (BUT NO ONE BOTCHES), START READING WHERE IT SAYS "FAILURE." IF ONE OF THE PLAYERS BOTCHES THIS ROLL, THOUGH, GO ON TO WHERE IT SAYS "BOTCH".]

### • Failure

[READ THIS PART ALOUD TO YOUR PLAYERS, DIRECTED TOWARD WHOEVER FAILED HIS DEXTERITY + STEALTH ROLL.]

Tonight is not your night. Maybe it's the unfamiliar terrain, or maybe the sound of hunters in the distance is distracting you. Whatever it is, you can't concentrate on making your way quietly. As you're making your way down a creek embankment to cross it on your way home, you step on a concealed shelf of stones, which sends leaves dirt and rocks sliding and clattering down the embankment. They splash into the water loud enough to draw attention, and draw attention they do.

You all freeze for a second, then look up just in time to draw your weapons as four soldiers appear from the woods across the creek from you. You look at them, they look at you, then they draw their own weapons and charge you.

[NOW SKIP DOWN TO WHERE IT SAYS "COMBAT WITH THE SOLDIERS"]

### • Botch

[READ THIS PART ALOUD TO YOUR PLAYERS, DIRECTED TOWARD WHOEVER BOTCHED HIS DEXTERITY + STEALTH ROLL.]

Tonight is not your night. Maybe it's the unfamiliar terrain, or maybe the sound of hunters in the distance is distracting you. Whatever it is, you can't concentrate on making your way quietly. As you're making your way down a creek embankment to cross it on your way, you step on a concealed shelf of stones in which some sort of angry woodland creature had made its lair. The animal shrieks and takes off into the night, sending leaves dirt and rocks sliding and clattering down the embankment. The scream and the splash are loud enough to draw attention, and draw attention they do.

You all freeze for a second, then look up just in time to draw your weapons as four soldiers appear from the



woods across the creek from you. These soldiers are leading awful, hairless beasts that appear to be foul mixtures of wolves and spiders. You look at them, they look at you, then they loose their hellish hounds at you. As the beasts attack, the soldiers move into positions to surround you.

[NOW SKIP DOWN TO WHERE IT SAYS  
"COMBAT WITH THE SOLDIERS"]

## Finding Nagy

[HAVE THE PLAYERS ROLL PERCEPTION + INVESTIGATION. FOR THE MEN-AT-ARMS, THE DIFFICULTY IS 8. FOR THE SCOUTS, THE DIFFICULTY IS ONLY 6. IF RESULTS VARY, HAVE THE PLAYERS CHOOSE WHO WILL LEAD. THE RESULTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:]

### • Success

[READ THIS PART ALOUD.]

The trail has almost gone cold by the time you begin your search for the traitorous Nagy, so you track back to the clearing where he sprung his surprise attack. There are no archers or other attackers in evidence there — since they're probably out searching for you right now — so you're able to look for signs undisturbed.

After a few minutes, you find a scrap of cloth from Nagy's uniform and are able to make out a trail from there. You follow this trail deeper into the forest, avoiding detection yourselves, until it suddenly stops. You hunt around the ground for a few moments until at last you're forced to conclude that the trail has abruptly ended. You're about to give up the search altogether in frustration when you're delivered a message from above. That is, a bird defecates onto one of your shoulders.

You look up to see a familiar-looking crow take off from a branch of one the trees. Before you can even tell which way it's going, it disappears into the night. From where it was, though, you can also barely make out the form of Nagy sitting on a branch about 30 feet up. He's looking down at you, and when he notices that you see him, he tries desperately to escape. He stands up on his limb and leaps off, hoping to reach the safety of an even higher limb on a tree several yards away. His leap, however, is ill judged.

Nagy leaps into the air and comes down feet-first onto the branch he's aiming for. The branch is dry and dead, though, and it shatters beneath his feet. He falls down through the branches, breaking his back across a solid one near the ground, then rolling off the limb onto the ground. He lands head-first and breaks his neck across a thick root. The sound of the crash echoes through the forest. Likely, if any soldiers are nearby looking for you, they heard that. You can leave now, or you can try to get some answers out of Nagy if he hasn't fallen into torpor

[IF THEY CHOOSE TO LEAVE NOW, GO BACK A BIT TO WHERE IT SAYS "NEXT..." UNDER "BACK TO BRAN CASTLE." IF THEY CHOOSE TO STAY AND DEAL WITH NAGY (OR EVEN IF THEY PLAN TO GRAB NAGY'S BODY AND TRY TO SNEAK IT BACK TO BRAN CASTLE WITH THEM, READ ON. THE CHARACTER'S MAY ALSO TRY TO STAKE NAGY WITH A PIECE OF WOOD, AND TO DO THIS THE PLAYERS ROLL DEXTERITY + MELEE. SHE MUST ROLL AT LEAST FIVE SUCCESSES, AND INFLICT AT LEAST THREE LEVELS OF LETHAL DAMAGE TO SUCCESSFULLY STAKE NAGY.)]

You approach Nagy's prone body and find him twisted into a terrible wreck. His back is sharply bent at the midpoint, and his neck is equally bent in the opposite direction. As you come close, though, his eyes roll wildly, and he tries to work his jaw. After a mere moment, you realize that he's trying to speak.

"You fools are all going to die," he hisses wildly, on the verge of losing himself to his bestial side. "My master's soldiers will hunt you down and kill you all before the sunrise. Then, tomorrow night, our entire army will descend on Bran Castle and raze it to the ground. You will all die. All die! There will be blood! Blood! *Blood!*"

In his excitement, he begins to lose himself to the beast within, and every spark of intelligence or sanity begins to gutter out. He thrashes wildly as if he intends to tear you apart and drink your blood himself, but he is too badly injured for such commotion. The thrashing only makes his grave injuries worse, and with one final sickeningly wet crack, what's left of his neck and back disintegrates. He jerks one last time, shudders and collapses. He's useless to you now — just an empty husk in torpor. And to make matters worse, his screaming is sure to have attracted beasts or soldiers of the enemy. Your only chance is to try to escape through the woods back to Bran Castle. Your own unlives notwithstanding, you must get word to Lord Jürgen that an attack is planned *tomorrow night*, rather than in one week's time as he originally thought.

[GIVE THE PLAYERS A CHANCE TO DECIDE WHETHER THEY LEAVE NAGY BEHIND OR TAKE HIS BODY ALONG. THE CHOICE HAS MANY DIFFERENT IMPLICATIONS, SO HAVE THE PLAYERS REFER TO THEIR HIERARCHY OF SINS AND THEIR NATURES FOR GUIDANCE. IF THEY ACT CONTRARY TO THEIR ROAD, HAVE THEM ROLL TO SEE IF THEY LOSE ROAD RATING. ONCE THE PLAYERS HAVE DECIDED WHAT TO DO, AND HAVE ROLLED FOR ROAD RATING, GO BACK TO "NEXT..." UNDER THE HEADING "BACK TO BRAN CASTLE."]



### Rolling to see if a character's loses Road rating

- Determine the "sin" the character has committed.
- Use the corresponding number as the difficulty for the roll. If the number is higher than the character's Road rating, no roll is necessary and the character does not lose any Road rating. If the number is equal to or lower than the character's Road rating, having the player roll Conscience/Conviction.
- Succeed: Do not decrease Road rating; the character feels guilty for violating his moral code.
- Fail: Decrease Road rating by one; the character does not feel remorse for violating his moral code.
- Botch: Decrease Road rating by two; the character *enjoyed* violating his moral code.

[NOW, GO BACK A BIT TO WHERE IT SAYS "NEXT..." UNDER "BACK TO BRAN CASTLE".]

### • Failure

[READ THIS PART ALOUD.]

You search for more than half an hour, but you find no sign of Nagy. He knows this terrain better than you do, you realize, since he's been here at least since the beginning of Lord Jürgen's campaign, and you've only just arrived.

[GIVE THE PLAYERS A CHANCE HERE TO KEEP SEARCHING OR GIVE UP. IF THEY KEEP SEARCHING, HAVE THEM ROLL THEIR PERCEPTION + INVESTIGATION AGAIN, THIS TIME INCREASING THE DIFFICULTY BY ONE.

IF THIS CYCLE REPEATS ITSELF, INCREASE THE DIFFICULTY BY ONE AGAIN AS NECESSARY, BUT HOLDING STEADY AT 10 UNTIL THE LEADER IS EITHER SUCCESSFUL OR HE BOTCHES. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY DECIDE TO GIVE UP THE SEARCH, GO BACK A BIT TO WHERE IT SAYS "NEXT..." UNDER "BACK TO BRAN CASTLE."]

### • Botch

[A BOTCH ON THIS ROLL IS THE SAME AS A BOTCH ON THE DEXTERITY + STEALTH ROLL UNDER "NEXT...", WHICH IS UNDER "BACK TO BRAN CASTLE." REFER TO THAT ENTRY. ON TOP OF THAT, ANY TRAIL OR TRACE OF

HIMSELF NAGY MIGHT HAVE LEFT IS GONE FOR GOOD.]

## Combat With the Soldiers

[YOU DO NOT HAVE TO READ THIS PART ALOUD.]

Combat against the soldiers (or soldiers and beasts) proceeds exactly the same way here as it did in the earlier scene against the beasts. Apply the dramatic systems and the appropriate dice rolls the same way. The only variables here are in the way the soldiers themselves behave.

### The Soldiers

Their important ratings are as follows:

**Attack:** seven dice, **Dodge:** three dice, **Damage:** five dice, **Soak:** five dice **Initiative:** 6+1d10, **Health Levels:** six, **Blood:** six

### The Beasts

Their important ratings are as follows:

**Attack:** three dice, **Damage:** three dice, **Soak:** three dice, **Initiative:** 1d10, **Health Levels:** three, **Blood:** three

These soldiers are smarter and a little better trained than mere beasts. They are wearing light leather armor and carrying cruel-looking short swords. If the characters have encountered a pack of them who are leading beasts, the soldiers wait until the beasts are finished off before moving in. As each beast falls, a soldier moves up to take its place. Remember, the beasts will only attack, they will not dodge.

As for the way they fight, soldiers attack with their short swords or dodge, depending on whether or not they have the advantage. That is to say that if a soldier's initiative is better than his opponent's initiative, he will attack. If he loses the initiative, he will attempt to dodge his opponent's attack.

If one of these soldiers reaches five health levels of damage, he will turn and attempt to flee. He moves slowly and with a great deal of effort, but it still takes a character's action during his initiative turn to catch up (should he be so inclined). A fleeing soldier will not attack, but he will still attempt to dodge if the character attacks.

Now...

[READ THIS PART ALOUD.]

When all of your immediate enemies finally lie dead at your feet, the noise in the surrounding area dies down significantly. You can't hear any nearby sounds of pursuit or attack, but you know that more of Rustovitch's soldiers must still be lurking. You can take this opportunity to feed from your downed victims in an effort to heal your injuries, but it might just as well behoove you to hurry on back to Bran Castle and report to Lord Jürgen. The choice is yours, but choose quickly.



## Combat Summary: Soldiers and Beasts

- Determine initiative: Add Wits + Dexterity + 1d10 for the players. The beast's initiative is just 1d10 (roll once and use the same number for all the beasts). The soldier's initiative is 1d10 +6 (roll once and use the same number for all the soldiers).

- Have the players declare blood and Willpower expenditures and Discipline activation. Give them a moment to figure out what their character's can do.

- Highest initiative acts first, then in descending order. Resolve each player's action before moving on to the next. A character using Celerity takes his first action on his initiative turn; all other actions take place at the end of the turn.

- One action/turn, except when using Celerity. Character's have the option of dodging (or parrying) or attacking. Beasts will only attack, and they inflict lethal damage.

- The beasts will only attack; they will not dodge. If the soldier has a higher initiative than his opponent, he will attack. If he has a lower initiative than his opponent, then he will defend.

- Rolls:

- Dodge: Dexterity + Dodge

- Parry: Dexterity + Melee

- Unarmed Attack: Dexterity + Brawl

- Armed Attack: Dexterity + Melee

- Resolve actions.

1. Roll for action.

2. Roll for damage, if necessary. Include extra dice or successes from weapons or Disciplines.

3. Roll to soak damage, if necessary. Include extra dice from armor and Disciplines.

4. Record damage on Health chart.

- Resolve Celerity actions, as above.

Remember: Spending blood and Willpower, activating Disciplines and soaking damage are not actions!

**[IF THEY DECIDE TO FEED, LET THEM DO SO, BUT PLAY UP HOW PEDESTRIAN AND WRETCHEDLY ANIMALISTIC THEY SEEM, HAVING BEEN REDUCED TO LAPPING BLOOD UP FROM CORPSES LIKE CARRION-EATERS. THE CHARACTERS COULD ALSO CHANGE TACTICS AND GO LOOKING FOR NAGY IF THEY DIDN'T CHOOSE TO DO SO BEFORE. IF THEY DO, GO BACK TO WHERE IT SAYS "FINDING NAGY" AND PROCEED FROM THERE. OTHERWISE, YOU CAN PROCEED ON TO THE EPILOGUE.]**

**[IF, HOWEVER, YOU'RE A REAL SADIST OR YOU'VE STILL GOT PLENTY OF TIME ON YOUR HANDS, YOU CAN FORCE EVERYONE TO ROLL DEXTERITY + STEALTH AGAIN AND PROCEED FROM WHERE IT SAYS "NEXT..." ABOVE. IF YOU WANT TO BE A LITTLE NICER, YOU CAN REQUIRE THIS ROLL OF ONLY THOSE WHO DIDN'T SUCCEED ON THE INITIAL DEXTERITY + STEALTH ROLL. OTHERWISE, JUST GO STRAIGHT TO THE EPILOGUE.]**

## Epilogue

### Return to Bran Castle

**[READ THIS PART ALOUD TO YOUR PLAYERS ONLY IF THEY FOUND NAGY AFTER HE BETRAYED THEM AND LEARNED THE ATTACK WILL TAKE PLACE TOMORROW NIGHT. IF THEY DID NOT FIND NAGY AFTER THE AMBUSH AND DO NOT KNOW WHEN THE ATTACK WILL TAKE PLACE, USE THE "SECOND EPILOGUE."]**

Your return through the woods is harrowing and fraught with anxiety, but eventually you regain familiar ground and hurry to the safety of Bran Castle. The guards usher you inside in a hurry, assailing you with questions about what you've been through and how you fared. Their captain chases them all back to their posts, though, and takes you to Lord Jürgen straightaway.

You make your report on what you went through in the woods, and the Sword-Bearer's face grows grim and grave. He is furious that his spy, Nagy, betrayed him, but he is proud of you for seeing through the deception. He is also startled to learn that the attack he had been anticipating in a week's time could actually take place as soon as tomorrow night. He calls for the captain of his guards and shares that news, then orders him to change the watch schedule and concentrate his forces at the castle for a set of new orders. The captain then hurries away to assemble the men.

Finally, Jürgen turns back to you and begins to speak.

"Brave knights of the Black Cross, he says,

"you have done me a greater service tonight than I originally expected. You have revealed a potentially deadly treachery and alerted us to an attack that would have taken us by surprise without your efforts. For this you will be well rewarded, and your fame will spread through every land I call my own.

"But now, I must call upon you again. Rustovitch thinks to storm this castle and drive us out perhaps as early as tomorrow night, hoping to catch us off guard. Well, I



say let us turn his own tactic against him. Let us make ready tonight and take up the offensive ourselves as the sun sets tomorrow evening. As the fiends' army rides forth, they will find us waiting to receive them at their very walls. We will take the battle to their very gate, and we will be the ones driving *them* back! What say you knights? Will you take up arms with your sword-brethren and prove to them what you've proven to me tonight?"

[LET THEM RESPOND.]

To those that say no, he says "I understand, sword-brethren. You have suffered much tonight, and have many other duties. I have promised you reward, and so you shall have it. First, though, you must rest, and I must prepare for battle. We will speak again, soon." To those that say yes, Lord Jürgen responds "Excellent. Then come with me. Let us make ready. We have much to do before the battle can be joined."

## Second Epilogue

[USE THIS EPILOGUE IF THE  
CHARACTERS DID NOT LEARN  
THAT THE ATTACK WILL HAPPEN  
TOMORROW NIGHT.]

### Return to Bran Castle

Your return through the woods is harrowing and fraught with anxiety, but eventually you regain familiar ground and hurry to the safety of Bran Castle. The guards usher you inside in a hurry, assailing you with questions about what you've been through and how you fared. Their captain chases them all back to their posts, though, and takes you to Lord Jürgen straightaway.

You make your report on what you went through in the woods, and the Sword-Bearer's face grows grim and grave. He is furious that his spy, Nagy, betrayed him, but he is proud of you for seeing through the deception, and now worried that Nagy may have been sending false intelligence. He calls for the captain of his guards and shares that news, then orders him to change the watch schedule and concentrate his forces at the castle for a set of new orders. The captain then hurries away to assemble the men.

Finally, Jürgen turns back to you and begins to speak.

"Brave knights of the Black Cross, he says,

"you have done me a greater service tonight than I originally expected. You have revealed a

potentially deadly treachery. For this you will be well rewarded, and your fame will spread through every land I call my own.

"But now, I must call upon you again. Rustovitch thinks to storm this castle and drive us out, perhaps as early as tomorrow night, hoping to catch us off guard. Well, I say let us turn his own tactic against him. Let us make ready tonight and take up the offensive ourselves as the sun sets tomorrow evening. We will take the battle to fiend's very gate, and we will be the ones driving *them* back! What say you knights? Will you take up arms with your sword-brethren and prove to them what you've proven to me tonight?"

[LET THEM RESPOND.]

To those that say no, he says "I understand, sword-brethren. You have suffered much tonight, and have many other duties. I have promised you reward, and so you shall have it. First, though, you must rest, and I must prepare for battle. We will speak again, soon." To those that say yes, Lord Jürgen responds "Excellent. Then come with me. Let us make ready. We have much to do before the battle can be joined."





## Fitz

You were a member of the Teutonic Knights before your Embrace, and it was your dedicated service that first drew your sire's attention. After your Embrace you spent a period of time training and serving your sire, learning the ways of Cainites. A leader in your mortal life, you were chosen by your sire to lead in your new life as well, and to this end he taught you to follow the Road of Kings, a road of oaths, honor, and service. When your sire deemed you ready, you joined the Order of the Black Cross as a way to gain experience as a leader of Cainites, a prelude to day you will rise to the rank and status of lord, commanding vampire and mortal alike. You have served with honor and distinction, and have won some renown for yourself as a knight and a leader.

Now, you are called upon by the Order to travel to the lands of Lord Jürgen, and he has requested you escort his trusted spy back safely to Bran Castle. From one of Lord Jürgen's standing, there is no difference between a request and a command, so you readily agreed to the task. The woods are treacherous, but you are not alone. Though strangers to each other, your companions are also knights of the Black Cross. As fellow knights, you know you can trust them to be steadfast in their duties, especially since you are there to lead them. Let us hope they trust in your leadership as much as you trust in their diligence.

**Roleplaying Hints:** As the only knight on the Road of Kings, and with more status than your companions, you are the self-appointed leader of the group. You are certain your fellow knights will see the logic in this choice, and if they do not, you know that explaining your status and qualifications will alleviate any doubts they hold. You are confident, honorable, fair and aware that at all times, you must lead by example. Each knight brings his or her unique strengths to the group, and therefore you are committed to helping the group work together to accomplish this task. Besides, you are bound by your word to bring back the spy to Lord Jürgen, and a knight always keeps his oath.

**Gear:** Fine but practical clothing, money, broadsword, armor

## Clan: Ventrue

Warrior kings and loyal vassals, Ventrue are found among the leaders and aristocracy of Cainite society. They are knights, noble warriors, and empire builders. They often Embrace mortals who personify honor, power and conquest, believing nobility is a matter of both blood and deed. Warlords and knights, they gather armies and strike out in conquest — sometimes at each other. Whether leader or follower, Ventrue know their time of glory has come, and that still more awaits them if they only have the courage and skills to seize it, either on the battlefield or in the courts of great Cainite lords.

**Weakness:** All Ventrue have a specific limitation on their feeding habits. They are restricted to feeding off one type of human, such as priests or virgins or Frenchmen. You do not regain Blood points when imbibing blood from mortals not among your selected prey. This weakness does not apply to drinking vampire blood. Fitz can only feed off honorable men and women.

## Nature Demeanor

**Autocrat:** You were made to lead. You thrive when you can take charge and bring order to what's been chaotic. You do not hide your Nature — your ambition and natural affinity for leadership is evident to all who know you. Regain Willpower when you lead a group to some significant accomplishment.

## Disciplines

### Dominate

Those who do not lead must follow, and those that refuse to follow must be made to obey. Dominate allows a Cainite to impose his will on another, forcing the victim to obey.

- Observance of the Spoken Word

By making eye contact and speaking in a language the target understands, the Ventrue may issue a one-word command which the victim must obey immediately. The player rolls Manipulation + Intimidation with a difficulty equal to the target's Willpower.

### Fortitude

Though all Cainites are tougher than mortals, some have powers of endurance that are truly supernatural. Each dot in Fortitude adds one die to rolls when soaking bashing and lethal damage. In addition, a player may roll Stamina + Fortitude to soak damage from sunlight and fire. If the character suffers aggravated damage from any other source, roll only his Fortitude rating.

## Presence

Leaders need more than skill at arms; charm and charisma are equally important. Presence is a tool of persuasion, allowing a vampire to augment his talents of expression and intimidation.

- Awe

The use of Awe increases a character's charisma, making him more fascinating and impressive to those around him, and targets are more likely to listen to and work with a vampire successfully using Awe. To activate Awe, the player rolls Charisma + Expression (difficulty 7). The number of successes determines the number of people affected.



Successes	Effectiveness
1	One person
2	Two people
3	Six people
4	20 people

### •• Dread Gaze

By activating Dread Gaze and physically revealing his vampiric nature by baring his fangs, glaring and hissing, the Cainite inspires unbearable terror in his victims, sending them fleeing from his horrific visage. To use Dread Gaze, the player rolls Charisma + Intimidation, difficulty equal to the victim's Wits + Courage.

## Road and Virtues

Fitz follows the Road of Kings. Followers of this road believe that there are only two roles in the world: master and servant, and teach that to rule others, you must first rule yourself — and your Beast. The Road of King teaches honor, fealty and respect as well as power, glory and skill. After all, only those who seize power gain it; only those who use power keep it. The Road of Kings teaches Conviction and Self-Control.

## Background

### Meeting Lord Jürgen the Sword-Bearer

The year is AD 1230. You are a Teutonic Knight of the Order of the Black Cross — a secret order of vampire

knights operating within the greater Teutonic Order. You have been stationed at heavily fortified Bran Castle located on a high hill overlooking a dark, forbidding forest in the wilderness of Kronstadt, Hungary. You are part of an army of vampires and men, led by an old and powerful vampire known as Lord Jürgen the Sword-Bearer. You are recently arrived from your order's headquarters in Magdeburg, Germany, and you come highly praised and recommended by the order's second-in-command, Lucretia von Hartz.

You awake night after your arrival at Bran Castle to find many of your fellow soldiers in a state of excited agitation. The castle's defenses are being checked and double-checked, and there are more guards in evidence on the walls than usual. Mortal scouts are being sent out and reporting back twice as frequently as usual, and the castle's smiths and armorers are working frantically. Even the horses and livestock seem skittish and anxious. Overhead, clouds are rolling in from the east, bringing the sound of faraway thunder and intermittent flashes of lightning to mirror the growing anxiety on the ground. Before you can investigate the cause of all this agitation, though, a captain of the castle guards approaches you, with several other knights at his side.

"Knight of the Black Cross," he says.

"You must come with me at once. Lord Jürgen bade me collect you and escort you to him. No questions, now, this is urgent. Come."


The captain then leads you across the castle's bustling courtyard and into the castle proper. You follow him through echoing stone corridors to a small, torch-lit chamber where Lord Jürgen himself is waiting for you on the other side of a heavy wooden table. Jürgen is a tall, powerful-looking man with blond hair, broad shoulders

## Road of Kings

### Hierarchy of Sins

Score	Minimum Wrongdoing	Rationale
10	Neglecting your duty	Those who fail in their responsibilities often lose them.
9	Treating a peer with disrespect	A leader earns respect by acting respectfully
8	Treating an inferior as an equal	Everyone should know their place, including you
7	Breaking your word to a peer	Trust is earned by being trustworthy
6	Behaving shamefully before your peers	Honor and reputation are everything
5	Showing weakness in front of inferiors	A leader must be seen as strong.
4	Failing to answer a challenge to your honor	Honor must be maintained; challenges cannot go unanswered
3	Treating a superior with disrespect	Superiors must be given the respect they are due.
2	Breaking your word to your superiors	Your word is your bond. If your word is worthless, then so are you.
1	Breaking a sworn oath	Oaths of fealty hold the world together.





and striking blue eyes. He is wearing full chain armor with a belted white tabard over it, as well as thick leather gloves and boots. A stark black cross upon his chest dominates the center of his tabard. An enormous and ornate broadsword hangs at Lord Jürgen's hip, and one of his hands rests on its pommel. This man radiates an aura of command that makes him seem invincible, as if he could never possibly fall in battle. He dismisses the captain before turning to speak to you.

"Fellow knights of the Black Cross," he says to you. "Thank you for coming so quickly. Let me welcome you personally to Bran Castle. Lucretia von Hartz speaks highly of you in our correspondence. She feels that you will serve me well in our crusade against the demonic fiends who oppose us here. In fact, the time has come for you to prove to me that her faith in you is well founded. I have chosen you to undertake a mission of critical importance. Are you ready to prove yourselves to me and the rest of your sword-brethren?"

Lord Jürgen does not wait for your answer, certain of your agreement, and you let him continue uninterrupted.

"Excellent. Now, you may have noticed that your fellow soldiers seem ill at ease of late. They are anxious because a great battle against our foe looms on the horizon. The monstrous vampire-fiend Vladimir Rustovitch has raised an army of men, vampires and inhuman monstrosities against us, and he means to drive us out once and for all.

"But know this, my sword-brethren, I will not be chased out of this castle or out of this country, not by man nor king nor demon-fiend. We have all worked too hard these many years to turn back now, and I say we fight for this land and domain we have earned by right of arms. That is why I have summoned you tonight. I have received word from a spy in Rustovitch's camp that preparations for a major, conclusive offensive are underway, and that Rustovitch's army plans to attack us in one week's time. My spy has gathered information on the planned assault that could prove crucial to our victory — perhaps even our survival. He is planning to break away from Rustovitch's camp tomorrow night and make his way here to report to me.

"The wilderness between Rustovitch's camp and ours is arduous and heavily contested, and my spy does not trust his wilderness survival skills enough to make the entire trek alone. I need you to make your way in secret to a rendezvous point, meet up with my spy and guide him back safely to deliver the intelligence he has gathered. I

know some of you are excellent scouts and all of you are able, valiant men at arms. I can spare no men to aid you, but I promise you great rewards should you succeed. So what say you? Can you be prepared to leave tomorrow night, one hour after sunset?"

This is a simple enough task, and it takes you only a moment to agree to Lord Jürgen's request.

"Very well. I will see that you are given new weapons and armor, supplied with maps of the forest in which your rendezvous will take place, and given your fill of fresh blood for the hard work ahead. May God's grace be upon you, my knights of the Black Cross. All of your sword-brethren are counting on you. Do not let us down."

Lord Jürgen then nods gravely and raps on the table with his knuckles. The captain of the guards who led you here reenters the room and escorts you out.

## The Woods

The next night, you awake well rested and find the other soldiers at Bran Castle as excited and edgy as they were the night before. You are allowed to drink your fill of blood in preparation for your mission, and once you have finished, you are outfitted with new weapons and a suit of chain mail that is as light as leather armor, and which has been designed to make as little noise as possible while you're running through the woods. The scouts are allowed half an hour to commit the maps of the surrounding forest and the directions to the rendezvous point to memory. You're not allowed to carry the maps with you because they also mark important ambush sites and troop placements, which could be harmful if they fell into Rustovitch's hands.

The captain of the guards who led you to Lord Jürgen last night takes you and your companions to the edge of the woods and gives you one final briefing.

"Now remember, knights," he says. "Lord Jürgen's not asking much of you. Just go to the rendezvous point and wait there. Our spy'll meet you there and show you a sign he's Jürgen's man, loyal to the Black Cross. When you find him, get him here without letting any of Rustovitch's men find him. Simple as that. Just remember to keep quiet and try to stay hidden. These woods are full of wolves and men and worse, and don't none of 'em want you there. Stay sharp and alert if you want to make it back here no more dead than you already are."

With that, the captain laughs a spitefully and leaves you and your fellow knights alone at the edge of woods, to face whatever dangers lie within.



# Dark Ages VAMPIRE

Name: **Fitz**

Player:

Chronicle: **Knights of the  
Black Cross**

Nature: **Autocrat**

Demeanor: **Autocrat**

Clan: **Ventrue**

Generation: **11th**

Concept: **Man-at-Arms**

Haven: **Bran Castle**

## ATTRIBUTES

**Physical**  
Strength \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Dexterity \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Stamina \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○

**Social**  
Charisma \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Manipulation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Appearance \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○

**Mental**  
Perception \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Intelligence \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Wits \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○

## ABILITIES

**Talents**  
Alertness \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Athletics \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Brawl \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Dodge \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Empathy \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Expression \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Intimidation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Leadership \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Legerdemain \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Subterfuge \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○

**Skills**  
Animal Ken \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Archery \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Commerce \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Crafts \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Etiquette \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Melee \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Performance \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Ride \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Stealth \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Survival \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○

**Knowledges**  
Academics \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Hearth Wisdom \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Investigation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Law \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Linguistics \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Medicine \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Occult \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Politics \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Seneschal \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Theology \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○

## ADVANTAGES

**Disciplines**  
**Dominate** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
**Fortitude** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
**Presence** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Backgrounds**  
**Generation** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
**Resources** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
**Status** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Virtues**  
~~Conscience/Conviction~~ \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○  
Self-Control/~~Instinct~~ \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○  
Courage \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○

**Other Traits**  
**Broadsword** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**Str+4L** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**Armor** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**+2B/+3L** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
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\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Road**  
**Road of Kings**  
● ● ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○  
Aura: **Command** ( )  
**Willpower**  
● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □  
**Blood Pool**  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □  
□ □ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

**Health**  
Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Hurt -1 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Injured -1 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Wounded -2 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Mauled -2 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Crippled -5 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Incapacitated \_\_\_\_\_ □  
**Weakness**  
You may only feed from honorable people  
**Experience**  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Jacqueline

Your father served a noble as a Master of the Hunt, so you grew up learning the ways of animals and forest creatures. You learned how to track and hunt your wild prey, as well as how to tame and train a dog or horse. You thrived in the outdoors, and learned well at your father's side. Yet the life of a hunt master was not the life of a woman, and as you grew your father permitted you at his side less frequently, until you were finally exiled to the duties of lady-in-waiting to the noble's wife. Though you chafed at your new lifestyle, you tried to please your father and perform your duties, but you had few skills and less enthusiasm. After one disastrous evening, you fled to the forest in a fit of frustration, hoping the familiar woods and night air would clear your head. But the woods were not so familiar and the night was dark, and soon you were lost. Your sire came to you in the shape of wolf, but when you woke from death, you beheld a man retreating into the forest. You would not see him again for years, but no matter. Experience is a swift teacher, and though some lessons were hard, you learned them well.

You were recruited into the Order of the Black Cross after you attacked a group of hunters who had the misfortune to stumble into your territory. One of the hunters was a knight, who convinced you that while the world of mortals had no place for a woman with your skills, the Teutonic Knights would welcome them. His words proved true, and that is how you find yourself at the castle of Lord Jürgen. The wood does not frighten you, though you respect the danger that lurks in the shadows, and have heard whispers of the creatures hiding there. You agreed to Lord Jürgen's request to escort his spy because you know the knights will need a scout who can do more than read maps. The group needs your skill with the trees and the beasts, for you know that once inside the wood, getting lost might be the least of your worries.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You understand that predator and prey are not mutually exclusive, and are constantly on your guard. You prefer to be outdoors, and grow irritable when confined for even a short period of time. Your ways are those of the wanderer and the hunter. When scouting for a group, you are quick and efficient, and your fellow knights have learned the folly of disregarding your reports and advice. You have little tolerance for stubbornness and arrogance, since both are signs of weakness — and weak prey is always the first to fall.

**Gear:** The staff is your preferred weapon, though you also carry a hunting dagger. You often refuse to be burdened with either skirts or armor, though in the latter case you will make exceptions if doing so will not interfere with your ability to move swiftly and silently.

## Clan: Gangrel

The Gangrel is a clan that shuns civilization, its members drawn from those who understand the value of land and beast and have not succumbed to the tempta-

tions of the civilized world. New Gangrel are generally left on their own at first, surviving or dying. That is the way of the wild, and the way of the Gangrel.

**Weakness:** Gangrel are close to the beasts of the forest, and to the Beast within. Every time a Gangrel frenzies, she gains a new animal feature. Elder Gangrel or Gangrel that lack self-control soon appear more beast than man. Jacqueline is still young, but even she has begun to take on the traits of her Beast, her ears resembling those of a wolf, and with short, coarse wolf hair covering her arms and back.

## Nature and Demeanor

**Survivor:** No matter what challenges you face, you will survive, or you will die. That is the only way you know to live, and you have never thought to hide your ways behind a façade of pretty words. Regain Willpower whenever you survive a serious threat through determination and tenacity.

## Disciplines

### Animalism

A Gangrel's connection to the wild is strong, and manifests in the Discipline of Animalism, allowing her to communicate with the beasts of the forest, and even the Beasts of vampires.

- **Feral Speech**

The Gangrel has learned to speak to the animals in their own tongue, by looking into their eyes and using the sounds the animals makes. No roll is necessary, but the character must spend a turn getting the animal's attention and looking into its eyes. The character must make sounds that the animal uses to communicate, such as barking or chirping, and to gain useful information or favors from the animal, the player must successfully roll Manipulation + Animal Ken.

### Fortitude

Though all Cainites are tougher than mortals, some have powers of endurance that are truly supernatural. Each dot in Fortitude adds one die when rolling to soak bashing and lethal damage. In addition, the player may roll Stamina + Fortitude to soak damage from sunlight and fire. If the character suffers aggravated damage from any other source, roll only her Fortitude rating.

### Protean

Vampires are predators, and Protean allows them to mimic both the skills and shape of a predator.

- **Witness of Darkness**

A vampire with this ability can see normally in darkness. This Discipline does not require a roll, but it takes a full turn to activate. Once activated, the character's eyes glow red, but return to normal when she stops using Witness of Darkness.



## Road and Virtues

Jaqueline follows the Path of Humanity. *Via Humanitatis* teaches that a vampire is no different than her fellow man or woman, and that mortal and Cainite alike are measured by word, deed and heart. Only by holding on to human compassion, conscience and reason can a Cainite separate herself from her Beast. The Golden Rule guides the Road of Humanity: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. *Via Humanitatis* upholds the Virtues of Conscience and Self-Control.

## Background

### Meeting Lord Jürgen the Sword-Bearer

The year is AD 1230. You are a Teutonic Knight of the Order of the Black Cross — a secret order of vampire knights operating within the greater Teutonic Order. You have been stationed at heavily fortified Bran Castle located on a high hill overlooking a dark, forbidding forest in the wilderness of Kronstadt, Hungary. You are part of an army of vampires and men, led by an old and powerful vampire known as Lord Jürgen the Sword-Bearer. You are recently arrived from your order's headquarters in Magdeburg, Germany, and you come highly praised and recommended by the order's second-in-command, Lucretia von Hartz.

You awake night after your arrival at Bran Castle to find many of your fellow soldiers in a state of excited agitation. The castle's defenses are being checked and double-checked, and there are more guards in evidence

on the walls than usual. Mortal scouts are being sent out and reporting back twice as frequently as usual, and the castle's smiths and armorers are working frantically. Even the horses and livestock seem skittish and anxious. Overhead, clouds are rolling in from the east, bringing the sound of faraway thunder and intermittent flashes of lightning to mirror the growing anxiety on the ground. Before you can investigate the cause of all this agitation, though, a captain of the castle guards approaches you, with several other knights at his side.

"Knight of the Black Cross," he says.

"You must come with me at once. Lord Jürgen bade me collect you and escort you to him. No questions, now, this is urgent. Come."

The captain then leads you across the castle's bustling courtyard and into the castle proper. You follow him through echoing stone corridors to a small, torch-lit chamber where Lord Jürgen himself is waiting for you on the other side of a heavy wooden table. Jürgen is a tall, powerful-looking man with blond hair, broad shoulders and striking blue eyes. He is wearing full chain armor with a belted white tabard over it, as well as thick leather gloves and boots. A stark black cross upon his chest dominates the center of his tabard. An enormous and ornate broadsword hangs at Lord Jürgen's hip, and one of his hands rests on its pommel. This man radiates an aura of command that makes him seem invincible, as if he could never possibly fall in battle. He dismisses the captain before turning to speak to you.


"Fellow knights of the Black Cross," he says to you. "Thank you for coming so quickly. Let me welcome you personally to Bran Castle. Lucretia von Hartz speaks highly of you in our correspondence. She feels that you

## Road of Humanity

### Hierarchy of Sins

Score	Minimum Wrongdoing	Rationale
10	Selfish thoughts	Thought is as good as deed.
9	Minor selfish acts	Compassion separates us from the beasts.
8	Injury to another person (deliberate or otherwise)	Follow the Golden Rule.
7	Theft and robbery	Respect the property of others.
6	Accidental violation of another	Ignorance does not excuse cruelty.
5	Wanton destruction	Man creates; the Beast destroys.
4	Impassioned violation of another (e.g., killing in frenzy)	Those who act as beasts become beasts.
3	Planned violation of another (e.g., murder)	If you surrender to the Beast, you become its slave.
2	Casual violation of another (e.g., wanton killing, feeding past satiation)	Others are worthy of your respect.
1	The most heinous and demented acts	Are you man or beast?





will serve me well in our crusade against the demonic fiends who oppose us here. In fact, the time has come for you to prove to me that her faith in you is well founded. I have chosen you to undertake a mission of critical importance. Are you ready to prove yourselves to me and the rest of your sword-brethren?"

Lord Jürgen does not wait for your answer, certain of your agreement, and you let him continue uninterrupted.

"Excellent. Now, you may have noticed that your fellow soldiers seem ill at ease of late. They are anxious because a great battle against our foe looms on the horizon. The monstrous vampire-fiend Vladimir Rustovitch has raised an army of men, vampires and inhuman monstrosities against us, and he means to drive us out once and for all.

"But know this, my sword-brethren, I will not be chased out of this castle or out of this country, not by man nor king nor demon-fiend. We have all worked too hard these many years to turn back now, and I say we fight for this land and domain we have earned by right of arms. That is why I have summoned you tonight. I have received word from a spy in Rustovitch's camp that preparations for a major, conclusive offensive are underway, and that Rustovitch's army plans to attack us in one week's time. My spy has gathered information on the planned assault that could prove crucial to our victory — perhaps even our survival. He is planning to break away from Rustovitch's camp tomorrow night and make his way here to report to me.

"The wilderness between Rustovitch's camp and ours is arduous and heavily contested, and my spy does not trust his wilderness survival skills enough to make the entire trek alone. I need you to make your way in secret to a rendezvous point, meet up with my spy and guide him back safely to deliver the intelligence he has gathered. I know some of you are excellent scouts and all of you are able, valiant men at arms. I can spare no men to aid you, but I promise you great rewards should you succeed. So what say you? Can you be prepared to leave tomorrow night, one hour after sunset?"

This is a simple enough task, and it takes you only a moment to agree to Lord Jürgen's request.

"Very well. I will see that you are given new weapons and armor, supplied with maps of the forest in which your rendezvous will take place, and given your fill of fresh blood for the hard work ahead. May God's grace be upon you, my knights of the Black Cross. All of your sword-brethren are counting on you. Do not let us down."

Lord Jürgen then nods gravely and raps on the table with his knuckles. The captain of the guards who led you here reenters the room and escorts you out.

## The Woods

The next night, you awake well rested and find the other soldiers at Bran Castle as excited and edgy as they were the night before. You are allowed to drink your fill of blood in preparation for your mission, and once you have finished, you are outfitted with new weapons and a suit of chain mail that is as light as leather armor, and which has been designed to make as little noise as possible while you're running through the woods. The scouts are allowed half an hour to commit the maps of the surrounding forest and the directions to the rendezvous point to memory. You're not allowed to carry the maps with you because they also mark important ambush sites and troop placements, which could be harmful if they fell into Rustovitch's hands.

The captain of the guards who led you to Lord Jürgen last night takes you and your companions to the edge of the woods and gives you one final briefing.

"Now remember, knights," he says. "Lord Jürgen's not asking much of you. Just go to the rendezvous point and wait there. Our spy'll meet you there and show you a sign he's Jürgen's man, loyal to the Black Cross. When you find him, get him here without letting any of Rustovitch's men find him. Simple as that. Just remember to keep quiet and try to stay hidden. These woods are full of wolves and men and worse, and don't none of 'em want you there. Stay sharp and alert if you want to make it back here no more dead than you already are."

With that, the captain laughs a spitefully and leaves you and your fellow knights alone at the edge of woods, to face whatever dangers lie within.



# Dark Ages VAMPIRE

Name: **Jacqueline**

Player:

Chronicle: **Knights of the  
Black Cross**

Nature: **Survivor**

Demeanor: **Survivor**

Clan: **Gangrel**

Generation: **11th**

Concept: **Scout**

Haven: **Bran Castle**

## ATTRIBUTES

Physical  
Strength \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Dexterity \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Stamina \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○

Social  
Charisma \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Manipulation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Appearance \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○

Mental  
Perception \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Intelligence \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Wits \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○

## ABILITIES

Talents  
Alertness \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Athletics \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Brawl \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Dodge \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Empathy \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Expression \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Intimidation \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Leadership \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Legerdemain \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Subterfuge \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

Skills  
Animal Ken \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Archery \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Commerce \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Crafts \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Etiquette \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Melee \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Performance \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Ride \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Stealth \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Survival \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○

Knowledges  
Academics \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Hearth Wisdom \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Investigation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Law \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Linguistics \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Medicine \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Occult \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Politics \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Seneschal \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Theology \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

## ADVANTAGES

Disciplines  
**Animalism** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
**Fortitude** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
**Protean** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

Backgrounds  
**Generation** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
**Contacts** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

Virtues  
Conscience/~~Conviction~~ \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○  
Self-Control/~~Instinct~~ \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○  
Courage \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○

Other Traits  
**Dagger** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**Str+1L** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**Staff** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**Str+2B** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**Armor** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**+2B/+3L** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

Road  
**Road of Humanity**  
● ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○  
Aura: **Normalcy** ( )  
Willpower  
● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □  
Blood Pool  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □  
□ □ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Health  
Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Hurt -1 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Injured -1 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Wounded -2 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Mauled -2 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Crippled -5 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Incapacitated \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Weakness  
Gain an animal feature  
every time you frenzy  
Experience  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Joseph

You are the younger son of a lord, and as such not were not destined to inherit the burdens of your father's title. You grew up dreaming of studying at one of the new universities, perhaps even traveling the world cataloging knowledge and shaping the future of the world with ideas. While studying at the university, you made friends with an old and wise instructor who taught you many things. You are now ashamed to admit that you dismissed some of his teachings as the fancies of an old man, but when he Embraced you and brought you into Cainite society, you saw the error of your judgment. Your sire also taught you that there is balance in all things, that a man can be both scholar and warrior, and be better for it. Though never groomed for knighthood, you entered the Order of the Black Cross to learn the ways of a knight and to travel the world collecting knowledge. You know that one day you will trade in your sword for a quill, but at the moment you are content to learn by experience, strengthening both mind and body.

You were excited to be called to the land of Lord Jürgen, and hope that while there you will have time to study the land and its secrets. You were disappointed to learn that your duty is brief and straightforward, but agreed to meet and escort the spy because you understand the value of knowledge. You wonder what you will encounter in the woods, and hope that perhaps you will learn something new after all. However, it will not do to become too distracted by academic pursuits, for surely Lord Jürgen would not call in five knights if the woods were not treacherous indeed!

**Roleplaying Hints:** Recently Embraced, you still have all the enthusiasm and curiosity of a young man. Friendly and genial, you look on each person as either a potential teacher or student, and you share your knowledge generously. Still, you have learned the value of the sword, and study the skills of a knight as diligently as you study the world. For the moment, you are content to let others lead, trusting the skills of the scouts and the experience of the other men at arms. You will cheerfully lend your blade and your mind to the task presented, for every task offers the chance to increase skill, knowledge, or both.

**Gear:** A student's clothes, quill, parchment, broadsword, armor

## Clan: Brujah

Brujah are committed, intelligent and passionate. They take up their cause with strength and valor, fighting to shape the world to their vision. As ideas begin to multiply and grow, many Brujah have begun to question the visions of their clan mates. The line between passion and temper is a thin one indeed, and many a fight has broken out among clan mates. Elder Brujah worry that vision and passion may tear their young progeny apart from the inside out.

**Weakness:** The Brujah find their passion a blessing as well as a curse, and a Brujah's temper is always just below the surface. The difficulty of a Brujah's roll to resist frenzy is always increased by 2.

## Nature and Demeanor

**Pedagogue:** Knowledge is your passion and your cause, and people must be led by the word as well as by the sword. Though you share your clan's fierce temper, your eagerness and vision allows your true nature — that of a scholar — to shine through.

## Disciplines

### Celerity

Cainites wielding this power move with inhuman speed. Each level of Celerity grants one extra action in a turn, and the character must spend a blood point for each level of Celerity he wishes to activate.

### Potence

Some Cainites learn speed, other learn endurance. Those who study Potence learn strength. Each dot in Potence adds one automatic success to any roll involving Strength.

## Road and Virtues

Joseph follows the Path of Humanity. *Via Humanitatis* teaches that a vampire is no different than his fellow man, and that mortal and Cainite alike are measured by word, deed and heart. Only by holding on to human compassion, conscience and reason can a Cainite separate himself from his Beast. The Golden Rule guides the Road of Humanity: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. *Via Humanitatis* upholds the Virtues of Conscience and Self-Control.

## Background

### Meeting Lord Jürgen the Sword-Bearer

The year is AD 1230. You are a Teutonic Knight of the Order of the Black Cross — a secret order of vampire knights operating within the greater Teutonic Order. You have been stationed at heavily fortified Bran Castle located on a high hill overlooking a dark, forbidding forest in the wilderness of Kronstadt, Hungary. You are part of an army of vampires and men, led by an old and powerful vampire known as Lord Jürgen the Sword-Bearer. You are recently arrived from your order's headquarters in Magdeburg, Germany, and you come highly praised and recommended by the order's second-in-command, Lucretia von Hartz.



You awake night after your arrival at Bran Castle to find many of your fellow soldiers in a state of excited agitation. The castle's defenses are being checked and double-checked, and there are more guards in evidence on the walls than usual. Mortal scouts are being sent out and reporting back twice as frequently as usual, and the castle's smiths and armorers are working frantically. Even the horses and livestock seem skittish and anxious. Overhead, clouds are rolling in from the east, bringing the sound of faraway thunder and intermittent flashes of lightning to mirror the growing anxiety on the ground. Before you can investigate the cause of all this agitation, though, a captain of the castle guards approaches you, with several other knights at his side.

"Knight of the Black Cross," he says.

"You must come with me at once. Lord Jürgen bade me collect you and escort you to him. No questions, now, this is urgent. Come."

The captain then leads you across the castle's bustling courtyard and into the castle proper. You follow him through echoing stone corridors to a small, torch-lit chamber where Lord Jürgen himself is waiting for you on the other side of a heavy wooden table. Jürgen is a tall, powerful-looking man with blond hair, broad shoulders and striking blue eyes. He is wearing full chain armor with a belted white tabard over it, as well as thick leather gloves and boots. A stark black cross upon his chest dominates the center of his tabard. An enormous and ornate broadsword hangs at Lord Jürgen's hip, and one of his hands rests on its pommel. This man radiates an aura of command that makes him seem invincible, as if he could never possibly fall in battle. He dismisses the captain before turning to speak to you.

"Fellow knights of the Black Cross," he says to you. "Thank you for coming so quickly. Let me welcome you personally to Bran Castle. Lucretia von Hartz speaks highly of you in our correspondence. She feels that you will serve me well in our crusade against the demonic fiends who oppose us here. In fact, the time has come for you to prove to me that her faith in you is well founded. I have chosen you to undertake a mission of critical importance. Are you ready to prove yourselves to me and the rest of your sword-brethren?"

Lord Jürgen does not wait for your answer, certain of your agreement, and you let him continue uninterrupted.

"Excellent. Now, you may have noticed that your fellow soldiers seem ill at ease of late. They are anxious because a great battle against our foe looms on the horizon. The monstrous vampire-fiend Vladimir Rustovitch has raised an army of men, vampires and inhuman monstrosities against us, and he means to drive us out once and for all.


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## Bad of Humanity

### Hierarchy of Sins

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1	The most heinous and demented acts	Are you man or beast?





"The wilderness between Rustovitch's camp and ours is arduous and heavily contested, and my spy does not trust his wilderness survival skills enough to make the entire trek alone. I need you to make your way in secret to a rendezvous point, meet up with my spy and guide him back safely to deliver the intelligence he has gathered. I know some of you are excellent scouts and all of you are able, valiant men at arms. I can spare no men to aid you, but I promise you great rewards should you succeed. So what say you? Can you be prepared to leave tomorrow night, one hour after sunset?"

This is a simple enough task, and it takes you only a moment to agree to Lord Jürgen's request.

"Very well. I will see that you are given new weapons and armor, supplied with maps of the forest in which your rendezvous will take place, and given your fill of fresh blood for the hard work ahead. May God's grace be upon you, my knights of the Black Cross. All of your sword-brethren are counting on you. Do not let us down."

Lord Jürgen then nods gravely and raps on the table with his knuckles. The captain of the guards who led you here reenters the room and escorts you out.

## The Woods

The next night, you awake well rested and find the other soldiers at Bran Castle as excited and edgy as they were the night before. You are allowed to drink your fill

of blood in preparation for your mission, and once you have finished, you are outfitted with new weapons and a suit of chain mail that is as light as leather armor, and which has been designed to make as little noise as possible while you're running through the woods. The scouts are allowed half an hour to commit the maps of the surrounding forest and the directions to the rendezvous point to memory. You're not allowed to carry the maps with you because they also mark important ambush sites and troop placements, which could be harmful if they fell into Rustovitch's hands.

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"Now remember, knights," he says. "Lord Jürgen's not asking much of you. Just go to the rendezvous point and wait there. Our spy'll meet you there and show you a sign he's Jürgen's man, loyal to the Black Cross. When you find him, get him here without letting any of Rustovitch's men find him. Simple as that. Just remember to keep quiet and try to stay hidden. These woods are full of wolves and men and worse, and don't none of 'em want you there. Stay sharp and alert if you want to make it back here no more dead than you already are."

With that, the captain laughs a spitefully and leaves you and your fellow knights alone at the edge of woods, to face whatever dangers lie within.



# Dark Ages VAMPIRE

Name: **Joseph**

Player:

Chronicle: **Knights of the  
Black Cross**

Nature: **Pedagogue**

Demeanor: **Pedagogue**

Clan: **Brujah**

Generation: **11th**

Concept: **Warrior-Scholar (m)**

Haven: **Bran Castle**

## ATTRIBUTES

**Physical**  
Strength \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Dexterity \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Stamina \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○

**Social**  
Charisma \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Manipulation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Appearance \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○

**Mental**  
Perception \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Intelligence \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Wits \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○

## ABILITIES

**Talents**  
Alertness \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Athletics \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Brawl \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Dodge \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Empathy \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Expression \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Intimidation \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Leadership \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Legerdemain \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Subterfuge \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Skills**  
Animal Ken \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Archery \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Commerce \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Crafts \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Etiquette \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Melee \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Performance \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Ride \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Stealth \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Survival \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○

**Knowledges**  
Academics \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Hearth Wisdom \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
Investigation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Law \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Linguistics \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Medicine \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Occult \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Politics \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Seneschal \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Theology \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○

## ADVANTAGES

**Disciplines**  
**Celerity** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
**Potence** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Backgrounds**  
**Generation** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
**Resources** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
**Mentor** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Virtues**  
Conscience/Conviction \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○  
Self-Control/Instinct \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○  
Courage \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○

**Other Traits**  
**Broadsword** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**Str+4L** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**Armor** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**+2B/+3L** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Road**  
**Road of Humanity**  
● ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○  
Aura: **Normalcy** \_\_\_\_\_ ( )  
**Willpower**  
● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □  
**Blood Pool**  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □  
□ □ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

**Health**  
Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Hurt -1 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Injured -1 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Wounded -2 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Mauled -2 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Crippled -5 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Incapacitated \_\_\_\_\_ □  
**Weakness**  
**+2 difficulty to all frenzy checks**  
**Experience**  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Rachael

Born to noble parents, as a child you behaved in ways which appalled your caretakers, until they despaired of ever making you a lady. Forever dragging home sick and injured animals, or giving away your expensive possessions to those in need, most adults viewed you as careless, with no appreciation for station and wealth. Your habits did not change as you grew to adulthood, and your parents sent you to a convent, hoping a life of piety would settle you down. The sisters saw the value in your generous behavior and through their example and love, you came to appreciate the simple life of service and ministry that Holy Orders offered. You would have been content to live out your days as a nun, had your sire not Embraced you and opened your eyes to new evils in the world. With all humanity as your charge, you left the Holy Orders and joined the Knights of the Black Cross, to fight evil in all its forms. Lacking the strength of body or will to wield the sword and deliver death, you applied your keen mind and sound education instead. You are known as a scout of all terrain, navigating with equal ease through foreign geography and the complex political games played at court. Your natural charm is rivaled only by your sharp investigative skills and attention to detail, making you very good at your job.

Though wary of working for any lord who bears such a name as "Sword-Bearer" you have heard of the evil fiends whom Lord Jürgen prepares to battle. Such evil must be destroyed, so you did not hesitate when he asked you to help him, though you disagree with some of his other political goals. But the best defense is sound information, and what ever intelligence Lord Jürgen's spy can bring is worth the danger of the woods. Though you do not know your companions, they are fellow knights and deserve the protection that your knowledge can bring them.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are kind and generous to all you meet, but you are not naïve. You know that appearances are deceiving and oaths may be lies, so you are careful in choosing whom to trust. Your faith in God is sincere, and you will always strive to show compassion and mercy: no man or demon is beyond redemption. Those who have fallen to evil ways may yet be saved, but those who refuse salvation must be cast back to the hell whence they came. You are devoted to the well-being and protection of those you love and trust, including your fellow knights. You know they are depending on you. After all, only one other knight has seen the maps, and getting lost could lead to failure — and to the deaths of many and the victory of evil in Lord Jürgen's land.

**Gear:** Simple, practical clothing, rosary beads, small pouch with herbs for healing various ailments, needle, thread, and a dagger for self-defense

## Clan: Toreador

Toreadors are the artisans of Cainite society. Drawn to beauty, Toreadors select progeny from among the beautiful or the socially adept, from among scholars or

artists. Nobility, beauty, grace and an appreciation for what it means to be human mark members of clan Toreador. Many Toreador retain ties to the mortal world, striving to remember what it is to be human, pursuing beauty and art in all its forms, using these as tools to control the Beast within them.

**Weakness:** Every time a Toreador beholds a thing of beauty, whether object, person or idea, she becomes entranced by it. This fascination may last for hours, and while enraptured the Toreador is oblivious to her surroundings and helpless against attack. When her character is confronted with a thing of beauty, the player should role Self-Control (difficulty 6) to see if the character falls victim to it. If the player fails, the character is entranced until the source leaves her sight. If attacked or harmed while entranced, the player should make another Self-Control roll to see if the character can break the spell and defend herself.

## Nature and Demeanor

**Caretaker:** You are indeed your brother's keeper, and devote your life to providing for other's needs, even in the face of ingratitude. You are not jaded or cynical enough to feel the need to hide your Nature, preferring to live openly God's commandments to love thy neighbor *and* thy enemy. Regain Willpower when you put forth significant effort that benefits others, without any gain for yourself.

## Disciplines

### Auspex

Auspex is a Discipline which allows a vampire to sharpen her senses, at high levels even shattering the limitations of the physical world, so she can see, hear and interact with the metaphysical world.

#### • Heightened Senses

The most basic ability of Auspex doubles the range and sensitivity of a vampire's five sense: hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch. No roll is required to activate this power and while active, the difficulty of rolls using the character's senses decrease by a number equal to the character's Auspex rating. A vampire using Heightened Senses is susceptible to strong stimuli, such as bright lights or loud noises, and such stimuli can be very painful, leaving the character deaf, blind, numb or otherwise unable to use the affected sense for a short time (10 minutes).

### Celerity

Cainites wielding this power move with inhuman speed. Each level of Celerity grants one extra action in a turn, and the player must spend a Blood point for each level of Celerity he wishes to activate.

### Presence

Presence is a tool of persuasion, allowing a Cainite to augment her talents of expression and intimidation.



### • Awe

The use of Awe increases a character's charisma, making her more fascinating and impressive to those around, and targets are more likely to listen to and work with a vampire successfully using Awe. To activate Awe, the player rolls Charisma + Expression (difficulty 7). The number of successes determines the number of people affected.

Successes	Effectiveness
1	One person
2	Two people
3	Six people
4	20 people

### •• Dread Gaze

By activating Dread Gaze and physically revealing her vampiric nature by baring her fangs, glaring and hissing, the Cainite inspires unbearable terror in her victims, sending them fleeing from her horrific visage. To use Dread Gaze, the player rolls Charisma + Intimidation, difficulty equal to the victim's Wits + Courage.

## Road and Virtues

Racheal follows the Path of Humanity.

*Via Humanitatis* teaches that a vampire is no different than her fellow man or woman, and that mortal and Cainite alike are measured by word, deed and heart. Only by holding on to human compassion, conscience and reason can a Cainite separate herself from her Beast. The Golden Rule guides the Road of Humanity: Do unto

others as you would have them do unto you. *Via Humanitatis* upholds the Virtues of Conscience and Self-Control.

## Background

### Meeting Lord Jürgen the Sword-Bearer

The year is AD 1230. You are a Teutonic Knight of the Order of the Black Cross — a secret order of vampire knights operating within the greater Teutonic Order. You have been stationed at heavily fortified Bran Castle located on a high hill overlooking a dark, forbidding forest in the wilderness of Kronstadt, Hungary. You are part of an army of vampires and men, led by an old and powerful vampire known as Lord Jürgen the Sword-Bearer. You are recently arrived from your order's headquarters in Magdeburg, Germany, and you come highly praised and recommended by the order's second-in-command, Lucretia von Hartz.

You awake night after your arrival at Bran Castle to find many of your fellow soldiers in a state of excited agitation. The castle's defenses are being checked and double-checked, and there are more guards in evidence on the walls than usual. Mortal scouts are being sent out and reporting back twice as frequently as usual, and the castle's smiths and armorers are working frantically. Even the horses and livestock seem skittish and anxious. Overhead, clouds are rolling in from the east, bringing the sound of faraway thunder and intermittent flashes of lightning to mirror the growing anxiety on the ground. Before you can investigate the cause of all this agitation,

## Road of Humanity

### Hierarchy of Sins

Score	Minimum Wrongdoing	Rationale
10	Selfish thoughts	Thought is as good as deed.
9	Minor selfish acts	Compassion separates us from the beasts.
8	Injury to another person (deliberate or otherwise)	Follow the Golden Rule.
7	Theft and robbery	Respect the property of others.
6	Accidental violation of another	Ignorance does not excuse cruelty.
5	Wanton destruction	Man creates; the Beast destroys.
4	Impassioned violation of another (e.g., killing in frenzy)	Those who act as beasts become beasts.
3	Planned violation of another (e.g., murder)	If you surrender to the Beast, you become its slave.
2	Casual violation of another (e.g., wanton killing, feeding past satiation)	Others are worthy of your respect.
1	The most heinous and demented acts	Are you man or beast?



though, a captain of the castle guards approaches you, with several other knights at his side.

"Knight of the Black Cross," he says.

"You must come with me at once. Lord Jürgen bade me collect you and escort you to him. No questions, now, this is urgent. Come."

The captain then leads you across the castle's bustling courtyard and into the castle proper. You follow him through echoing stone corridors to a small, torch-lit chamber where Lord Jürgen himself is waiting for you on the other side of a heavy wooden table. Jürgen is a tall, powerful-looking man with blond hair, broad shoulders and striking blue eyes. He is wearing full chain armor with a belted white tabard over it, as well as thick leather gloves and boots. A stark black cross upon his chest dominates the center of his tabard. An enormous and ornate broadsword hangs at Lord Jürgen's hip, and one of his hands rests on its pommel. This man radiates an aura of command that makes him seem invincible, as if he could never possibly fall in battle. He dismisses the captain before turning to speak to you.

"Fellow knights of the Black Cross," he says to you. "Thank you for coming so quickly. Let me welcome you personally to Bran Castle. Lucretia von Hartz speaks highly of you in our correspondence. She feels that you will serve me well in our crusade against the demonic fiends who oppose us here. In fact, the time has come for you to prove to me that her faith in you is well founded. I have chosen you to undertake a mission of critical importance. Are you ready to prove yourselves to me and the rest of your sword-brethren?"

Lord Jürgen does not wait for your answer, certain of your agreement, and you let him continue uninterrupted.

"Excellent. Now, you may have noticed that your fellow soldiers seem ill at ease of late. They are anxious because a great battle against our foe looms on the horizon. The monstrous vampire-fiend Vladimir Rustovitch has raised an army of men, vampires and inhuman monstrosities against us, and he means to drive us out once and for all.

"But know this, my sword-brethren, I will not be chased out of this castle or out of this country, not by man nor king nor demon-fiend. We have all worked too hard these many years to turn back now, and I say we fight for this land and domain we have earned by right of arms. That is why I have summoned you tonight. I have received word from a spy in Rustovitch's camp that preparations for a major, conclusive offensive are under way, and that Rustovitch's army plans to attack us in one week's time. My spy has gathered information on the planned assault that could prove crucial to our victory — perhaps even our survival. He is planning to break away from Rustovitch's camp tomorrow night and make his way here to report to me.

"The wilderness between Rustovitch's camp and ours is arduous and heavily contested, and my spy does not trust his wilderness survival skills enough to make the entire trek alone. I need you to make your way in secret to a rendezvous point, meet up with my spy and guide him back safely to deliver the intelligence he has gathered. I know some of you are excellent scouts and all of you are able, valiant men at arms. I can spare no men to aid you, but I promise you great rewards should you succeed. So what say you? Can you be prepared to leave tomorrow night, one hour after sunset?"

This is a simple enough task, and it takes you only a moment to agree to Lord Jürgen's request.

"Very well. I will see that you are given new weapons and armor, supplied with maps of the forest in which your rendezvous will take place, and given your fill of fresh blood for the hard work ahead. May God's grace be upon you, my knights of the Black Cross. All of your sword-brethren are counting on you. Do not let us down."

Lord Jürgen then nods gravely and raps on the table with his knuckles. The captain of the guards who led you here reenters the room and escorts you out.

## The Woods

The next night, you awake well rested and find the other soldiers at Bran Castle as excited and edgy as they were the night before. You are allowed to drink your fill of blood in preparation for your mission, and once you have finished, you are outfitted with new weapons and a suit of chain mail that is as light as leather armor, and which has been designed to make as little noise as possible while you're running through the woods. The scouts are allowed half an hour to commit the maps of the surrounding forest and the directions to the rendezvous point to memory. You're not allowed to carry the maps with you because they also mark important ambush sites and troop placements, which could be harmful if they fell into Rustovitch's hands.

The captain of the guards who led you to Lord Jürgen last night takes you and your companions to the edge of the woods and gives you one final briefing.

"Now remember, knights," he says. "Lord Jürgen's not asking much of you. Just go to the rendezvous point and wait there. Our spy'll meet you there and show you a sign he's Jürgen's man, loyal to the Black Cross. When you find him, get him here without letting any of Rustovitch's men find him. Simple as that. Just remember to keep quiet and try to stay hidden. These woods are full of wolves and men and worse, and don't none of 'em want you there. Stay sharp and alert if you want to make it back here no more dead than you already are."

With that, the captain laughs a spitefully and leaves you and your fellow knights alone at the edge of woods, to face whatever dangers lie within.



# Dark Ages VAMPIRE

Name: **Rachael**

Player:

Chronicle: **Knights of the  
Black Cross**

Nature: **Caretaker**

Demeanor: **Caretaker**

Clan: **Toreador**

Generation: **11th**

Concept: **Scout**

Haven: **Bran Castle**

## ATTRIBUTES

**Physical**  
Strength \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Dexterity \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Stamina \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○

**Social**  
Charisma \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Manipulation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Appearance \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○

**Mental**  
Perception \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●○○○○○  
Intelligence \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Wits \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○

## ABILITIES

**Talents**  
Alertness \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Athletics \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Brawl \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Dodge \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Empathy \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Expression \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Intimidation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Leadership \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Legerdemain \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Subterfuge \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Skills**  
Animal Ken \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Archery \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Commerce \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Crafts \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Etiquette \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Melee \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Performance \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Ride \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Stealth \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Survival \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○

**Knowledges**  
Academics \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Hearth Wisdom \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Investigation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Law \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Linguistics \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Medicine \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Occult \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Politics \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Seneschal \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Theology \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

## ADVANTAGES

**Disciplines**  
**Auspex** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
**Celerity** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
**Presence** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Backgrounds**  
**Generation** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
**Allies** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Virtues**  
**Conscience/Conviction** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●○  
**Self-Control/Instinct** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○  
**Courage** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○

**Other Traits**  
**Dagger** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**Str+1L** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Road**  
**Road of Humanity**  
● ● ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○  
Aura: **Normalcy** \_\_\_\_\_ ( )  
**Willpower**  
● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □  
**Blood Pool**  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □  
□ □ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

**Health**  
Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Hurt -1 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Injured -1 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Wounded -2 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Mauled -2 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Crippled -5 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Incapacitated \_\_\_\_\_ □  
**Weakness**  
Roll to resist becoming  
entranced by beauty  
**Experience**  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Ralph

Born a peasant, you had a hard life, eking out a living from the land for a lord who took more than his share and left you and your family to make do with what was left. Stricken by a pox when you were young, you were never an attractive child, and that only added to your pains. Though you were strong and good, few young women could see past your appearance. You had resigned yourself to living and dying alone. Walking home late one night, you saw a young woman walking ahead of you. She dressed well, and her brown curls hung freely down her back, unseemly conduct for a woman of any station, and certain to draw unwanted attention. You approached, but hid your face, worried you might frighten her. When a few steps away, you called out to her, ready to admonish the foolish girl for walking alone at night, but the words died when you saw her face. At first you thought she was a demon, with her thin, distorted face, all points and angles. It looked as if she had no skin, her sinews showing clearly, and her body smelling of raw meat. Then you saw her eyes, brown and human and full of sadness, shedding tears of blood and begging pity. In that instant you knew she was no monster. You never returned home that night, and you walked many roads with Anne before finding your own path as a Knight of the Black Cross.

A knight's life is his duty, and his duty is dictated by his lord. You go where duty calls, and were prepared to accept Lord Jürgen's request before you even knew what it was. You must wonder, though, what strange and terrible dangers the wood holds, that five knights are needed to escort one spy. What ever the danger, you will face it with sword and with fist, defending your new comrades, especially as some do not look capable of defending themselves! Let the women worry about the spy — you are there to protect your fellow knights against the dangers of the woods, for surely they will need your strength and courage to survive the perils ahead.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are valiant and strong in both body and will. While most of your fellow knights are repulsed by your appearance, few judge you by it, for a knight proves himself by word and deed. You have proven to be skilled and honorable, and your courage is spoken of by all who know you. Because you are ugly and speak infrequently, you are often mistaken as stupid, but your friends understand that you simply do not waste words when action will suffice. You will carry out Lord Jürgen's orders because that is your duty, but you know your real purpose here is to defend your comrades from the unknown dangers of the wood.

**Gear:** Ralph places no value on possessions. He travels with only his shield and bastard sword, and a lock of Anne's hair tucked in the bandages near his heart.

## Clan: Nosferatu

The Nosferatu are shunned and despised by mortal and vampire alike, for each and every member is hideously de-

formed, the curse of Caine twisting his body into a truly monstrous shape. Some Nosferatu believe their appearance is a test; as God tested Job, so too is He testing them. Other Nosferatu believe their appearance to be visible proof of their damnation, and abandon God as they believe He abandoned them. Still others do not blame God or devil for their affliction, merely accepting it as their lot. Forced to live on the fringes of mortal and Cainite society, Nosferatu lurk in the shadows and seek out each other for company or solace. Nosferatu trade information freely among themselves, and barter it for high prices to vampires not of the clan. Masters of hiding, deception and subterfuge, the Nosferatu have learned that some times walls do talk, and they are always there to listen.

**Weakness:** Nosferatu can never any dots in Appearance. Ralph was always tall and broad, but the Embrace thickened and grew his limbs until he towered over all men and most Cainites. It also opened old scars, turning them into fresh boils that seep with a dark, viscous fluid. Ralph wraps his body, hands and face in burlap, which quickly becomes stained and foul, and he dresses in burlap robes. Ralph smells of illness and rot, and is often surrounded by flies and bugs.

## Nature and Demeanor

**Defender:** You stand guard over that for which you care, and you do not bother to hide you devotion, the better to warn those that might harm that which you defend. Regain Willpower whenever you defend your chosen object of loyalty from some outside threat.

## Disciplines

### Obfuscate

Masters of stealth, Obfuscate allows a Nosferatu to hide his body with shadows and his appearance with illusion.

- **Cloak of Shadows**

Bystanding still and silent in the shadows, the Nosferatu can conceal himself. No roll is required, but the character must have some sort of cover, and cannot move or speak.

- • **Unseen Presence**

The Nosferatu no longer relies on the shadows for cover; he has learned to conceal himself even in plain sight, and can move unseen by others. Again, no roll is required, but the Nosferatu must begin in a concealed place. He can move about slowly and stealthily, but speaking or interacting with his environment will break the concealment.

### Potence

Some Cainites learn speed, other learn endurance. Those who study Potence learn strength. Each dot in Potence adds one automatic success to any roll involving Strength.



## Road and Virtues

Ralph follows the Path of Humanity. *Via Humanitatis* teaches that a vampire is no different than his fellow man, and that mortal and Cainite alike are measured by word, deed and heart. Only by holding on to human compassion, conscience and reason can a Cainite separate himself from his Beast. The Golden Rule guides the Road of Humanity: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. *Via Humanitatis* upholds the Virtues of Conscience and Self-Control.

## Background

### Meeting Lord Jürgen the Sword-Bearer

The year is AD 1230. You are a Teutonic Knight of the Order of the Black Cross — a secret order of vampire knights operating within the greater Teutonic Order. You have been stationed at heavily fortified Bran Castle located on a high hill overlooking a dark, forbidding forest in the wilderness of Kronstadt, Hungary. You are part of an army of vampires and men, led by an old and powerful vampire known as Lord Jürgen the Sword-Bearer. You are recently arrived from your order's headquarters in Magdeburg, Germany, and you come highly praised and recommended by the order's second-in-command, Lucretia von Hartz.

You awake night after your arrival at Bran Castle to find many of your fellow soldiers in a state of excited agitation. The castle's defenses are being checked and double-checked, and there are more guards in evidence

on the walls than usual. Mortal scouts are being sent out and reporting back twice as frequently as usual, and the castle's smiths and armorers are working frantically. Even the horses and livestock seem skittish and anxious. Overhead, clouds are rolling in from the east, bringing the sound of faraway thunder and intermittent flashes of lightning to mirror the growing anxiety on the ground. Before you can investigate the cause of all this agitation, though, a captain of the castle guards approaches you, with several other knights at his side.

"Knight of the Black Cross," he says. "You must come with me at once. Lord Jürgen bade me collect you and escort you to him. No questions, now, this is urgent. Come."

The captain then leads you across the castle's bustling courtyard and into the castle proper. You follow him through echoing stone corridors to a small, torch-lit chamber where Lord Jürgen himself is waiting for you on the other side of a heavy wooden table. Jürgen is a tall, powerful-looking man with blond hair, broad shoulders and striking blue eyes. He is wearing full chain armor with a belted white tabard over it, as well as thick leather gloves and boots. A stark black cross upon his chest dominates the center of his tabard. An enormous and ornate broadsword hangs at Lord Jürgen's hip, and one of his hands rests on its pommel. This man radiates an aura of command that makes him seem invincible, as if he could never possibly fall in battle. He dismisses the captain before turning to speak to you.


"Fellow knights of the Black Cross," he says to you. "Thank you for coming so quickly. Let me welcome you personally to Bran Castle. Lucretia von Hartz speaks highly of you in our correspondence. She feels that you

## Road of Humanity

### Hierarchy of Sins

Score	Minimum Wrongdoing	Rationale
10	Selfish thoughts	Thought is as good as deed.
9	Minor selfish acts	Compassion separates us from the beasts.
8	Injury to another person (deliberate or otherwise)	Follow the Golden Rule.
7	Theft and robbery	Respect the property of others.
6	Accidental violation of another	Ignorance does not excuse cruelty.
5	Wanton destruction	Man creates; the Beast destroys.
4	Impassioned violation of another (e.g., killing in frenzy)	Those who act as beasts become beasts.
3	Planned violation of another (e.g., murder)	If you surrender to the Beast, you become its slave.
2	Casual violation of another (e.g., wanton killing, feeding past satiation)	Others are worthy of your respect.
1	The most heinous and demented acts	Are you man or beast?





will serve me well in our crusade against the demonic fiends who oppose us here. In fact, the time has come for you to prove to me that her faith in you is well founded. I have chosen you to undertake a mission of critical importance. Are you ready to prove yourselves to me and the rest of your sword-brethren?ol”

Lord Jürgen does not wait for your answer, certain of your agreement, and you let him continue uninterrupted.

“Excellent. Now, you may have noticed that your fellow soldiers seem ill at ease of late. They are anxious because a great battle against our foe looms on the horizon. The monstrous vampire-fiend Vladimir Rustovitch has raised an army of men, vampires and inhuman monstrosities against us, and he means to drive us out once and for all.

“But know this, my sword-brethren, I will not be chased out of this castle or out of this country, not by man nor king nor demon-fiend. We have all worked too hard these many years to turn back now, and I say we fight for this land and domain we have earned by right of arms. That is why I have summoned you tonight. I have received word from a spy in Rustovitch’s camp that preparations for a major, conclusive offensive are underway, and that Rustovitch’s army plans to attack us in one week’s time. My spy has gathered information on the planned assault that could prove crucial to our victory — perhaps even our survival. He is planning to break away from Rustovitch’s camp tomorrow night and make his way here to report to me.

“The wilderness between Rustovitch’s camp and ours is arduous and heavily contested, and my spy does not trust his wilderness survival skills enough to make the entire trek alone. I need you to make your way in secret to a rendezvous point, meet up with my spy and guide him back safely to deliver the intelligence he has gathered. I know some of you are excellent scouts and all of you are able, valiant men at arms. I can spare no men to aid you, but I promise you great rewards should you succeed. So what say you? Can you be prepared to leave tomorrow night, one hour after sunset?”

This is a simple enough task, and it takes you only a moment to agree to Lord Jürgen’s request.

“Very well. I will see that you are given new weapons and armor, supplied with maps of the forest in which your rendezvous will take place, and given your fill of fresh blood for the hard work ahead. May God’s grace be upon you, my knights of the Black Cross. All of your sword-brethren are counting on you. Do not let us down.”

Lord Jürgen then nods gravely and raps on the table with his knuckles. The captain of the guards who led you here reenters the room and escorts you out.

## The Woods

The next night, you awake well rested and find the other soldiers at Bran Castle as excited and edgy as they were the night before. You are allowed to drink your fill of blood in preparation for your mission, and once you have finished, you are outfitted with new weapons and a suit of chain mail that is as light as leather armor, and which has been designed to make as little noise as possible while you’re running through the woods. The scouts are allowed half an hour to commit the maps of the surrounding forest and the directions to the rendezvous point to memory. You’re not allowed to carry the maps with you because they also mark important ambush sites and troop placements, which could be harmful if they fell into Rustovitch’s hands.

The captain of the guards who led you to Lord Jürgen last night takes you and your companions to the edge of the woods and gives you one final briefing.

“Now remember, knights,” he says. “Lord Jürgen’s not asking much of you. Just go to the rendezvous point and wait there. Our spy’ll meet you there and show you a sign he’s Jürgen’s man, loyal to the Black Cross. When you find him, get him here without letting any of Rustovitch’s men find him. Simple as that. Just remember to keep quiet and try to stay hidden. These woods are full of wolves and men and worse, and don’t none of ’em want you there. Stay sharp and alert if you want to make it back here no more dead than you already are.”

With that, the captain laughs a spitefully and leaves you and your fellow knights alone at the edge of woods, to face whatever dangers lie within.



# Dark Ages VAMPIRE

Name: **Ralph**

Player:

Chronicle: **Knights of the  
Black Cross**

Nature: **Defender**

Demeanor: **Defender**

Clan: **Nosferatu**

Generation: **11th**

Concept: **Man-at-Arms (m)**

Haven: **Bran Castle**

## ATTRIBUTES

**Physical**  
Strength \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●○○○○○  
Dexterity \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Stamina \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○

**Social**  
Charisma \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Manipulation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Appearance \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Mental**  
Perception \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Intelligence \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Wits \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○

## ABILITIES

**Talents**  
Alertness \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Athletics \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Brawl \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Dodge \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Empathy \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Expression \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Intimidation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Leadership \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Legerdemain \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Subterfuge \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○

**Skills**  
Animal Ken \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Archery \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Commerce \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Crafts \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Etiquette \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Melee \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○○○  
Performance \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Ride \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Stealth \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Survival \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○

**Knowledges**  
Academics \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Hearth Wisdom \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Investigation \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
Law \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Linguistics \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Medicine \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Occult \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
Politics \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Seneschal \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
Theology \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

## ADVANTAGES

**Disciplines**  
**Obfuscate** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
**Potence** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Backgrounds**  
**Generation** \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○○○○  
**Mentor** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○

**Virtues**  
**Conscience/Conviction** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●○○○○  
**Self-Control/Instinct** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○○  
**Courage** \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●

**Other Traits**  
**Bastard Sword** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**Str+5L** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**Armor** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
**+2B/+3L** \_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
\_\_\_\_\_ ○○○○○○○○  
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**Road**  
**Road of Humanity**  
● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
Aura: **Command** ( )  
**Willpower**  
● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □  
**Blood Pool**  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □  
□ □ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

**Health**  
Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Hurt -1 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Injured -1 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Wounded -2 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Mauled -2 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Crippled -5 \_\_\_\_\_ □  
Incapacitated \_\_\_\_\_ □  
**Weakness**  
You ugly! (May never increase  
Appearance score past 0.)  
**Experience**  
\_\_\_\_\_