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AUCTORITAS RITAE

The Auctoritas Ritae are a collection of thirteen rituals practiced by all members of the Sabbat. While the Ignobilis Ritae are optional to a point, Auctoritas Ritae are upheld in a manner similar to the theological commandments given by Moses to the Hebrews. They are held with zealous fever and generally observed on a very casual base.

If you want priestly competence and power to matter in your chronicle, use these optional rules. If you'd rather keep it simple, just use the standard rules for tests associated with each rite. Again, these rules are strictly optional.

When a priest embarks on a rite, he makes a Social Challenge against a number of Traits equal to the number of participants. When a bishop or higher ranked priest performs a rite with lower-ranked assistants, each assistant adds one Trait to the lead priest's Social Traits total. If the lead priest ties this test, participants receive no bonus or penalty during the rite. If the lead priest succeeds, everyone adds one Trait per level of the priest's Path rating to their own Traits for the purposes of tests. This bonus applies to all tests directly associated with the ritm - during Fire Dancing, for instance, it applies to a vampire's Physical Trait total for jumping the fire but not to trying to establish a psychic link to someone four blocks away.

If the priest fails the test, make two Simple Tests. If the priest wins at least one of them, the rite unfolds as usual. Otherwise, all participants suffer a one-Trait penalty on all related tests - if the priest is spiritually impaired, how can he hope to lead his followers appropriately? The priest has the option of canceling the rite. This automatically imposes the Negative Status Trait Unfaithful, which the priest can remove only by successfully performing two Auctoritas Ritae in the future.

Allegiance

Before the Acceptance Ritus occurs, a vampire already Embraced but not yet Sabbat must go through the Allegiance Ritus. This ritus is especially important for Camarilla defectors. The Allegiance Ritus is long and involved, and it may go on for years before the recruit is permitted the Acceptance Ritus and welcomed as a full member of the sect. Part of the process involves the implanting of a secret mark on the body of the defector (a tattoo, scar, brand, etc.) through the use of Vicissitude so it will be permanent. Before receiving this ritus, the initiate must sit or stand to the rear of his packmates during auctoritas ritae. He must drink last at the Vaulderie, and may not contribute himself. He may not read or discuss passages from the Book of Nod aloud. The time involved in confirming the initiate's commitment to the Sabbat makes it all the more difficult for him to leave the sect.

System: The Mark created by this ritae may not be removed or altered in any way. Additionally the vampire gains the flaw "Probationary Sect Member" until such time as they receive their creation rites.

The Blood Bath

Sect leaders perform this ritus to confirm a vampire's appointment to a bishopric or higher

office. All Sabbat members who can attend the Blood Bath do so; avoiding it unnecessarily may strike the new leader as an insult. Each participant in the ritus steps forward, kneels to the new leader, expresses praise for or confidence in the recipient and offers blood into a common vessel. The leading priest acts first, followed by attending sect leaders and then by everyone else present. The vampire receiving the new title offers a response of praise or advice to each vampire present, emphasizing her wisdom and how she benefits the Sabbat. He then bathes in the pool, and all participants drink from it. Sometimes the priest consecrates the pool as a Vaulderie, sometimes not. Fervent Sabbat supporters often refuse to acknowledge leaders who cannot produce evidence of having undergone a proper Blood Bath.

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System: Each participant must contribute at least one Blood Trait. If the pool is consecrated as a Vaulderie, follow the Vaulderie system.

The Blood Feast

The Blood Feast often accompanies other rim; in some cities, the bishops celebrate this on its own. This ritus combines an opportunity for formal gathering with a stark celebration of vampires' predatory natures.

The Blood Feast itself is the vampiric equivalent of a formal dinner. The guests dine on the blood of captured men and women suspended over a dining table, bound to statues or otherwise immobilized.

Preparations begin well before the feast. For several nights before the feast, a specially constituted hunting party rounds up humans (and, when the opportunity arises, vampires outside the Sabbat). It's an honor to be chosen to take part in the hunt, and it takes great self-restraint to deliver the captured prey alive and as unharmed as possible. The hunters present their prey along with demonstrations of martial prowess and boasts of their exploits to the highest-ranking Sabbat member present. She receives each victim and gives the vampire who brought the victim a kiss of thanks of the forehead. Vampires then secure the prey safely until the night of the Blood Feast.

On the night of the feast, ghouls or low-ranking vampires arrange the prey at the Blood Feast's location. The nature of the meal makes tardiness a grave offense against hospitality; guests arrive early or on time. The presiding official dedicates the prey to the glory of the Sabbat and the participants in the ritus. She may deliver a Sermon of Caine at this time, depending on how self controlled the participants are in the face of imminent feeding. The presiding official gets her pick of the vessels and draws first blood. Once she's begun, the guests set in.

Tradition calls for a minimum of one vessel per three participants in the Blood Feast. Some groups favor more. The ratio depends partly on how tidily or messily the participants feed. Some groups feed directly from the vessels while others drain the blood into champagne flutes or other containers. The presiding official may mandate a particular method of feeding or allow diverse styles as she deems fit.

The priestly blessing at the beginning of the Blood Feast somehow intensifies the vessels' blood as it leaves their bodies; it gains double normal potency. The Sabbat hierarchy appreciates the

merits of the Blood Feast but censures groups that engage in it too often. Too many kidnappings and gorespattered meeting halls attract mortal attention even in thoroughly cowed cities.

System: The priest's ceremony at the start of the ritus transforms the blood of victims bound and presented for the Blood Feast. Each Blood Trait of a vessel so consecrated becomes two Blood Traits as it leaves the vessel's body. Vampires who drink the consecrated blood get the benefit of two Blood Traits even though it only occupies one Blood Trait's worth of capacity in their own bodies. Participants in the Blood Feast generally feel unusually energetic; the extra blood can take them beyond their normal generational limits for vitae. Any doubled Blood Traits unspent at the end of the third night after the Blood Feast collapse back into single Blood Traits.

Creation Rites

Outsiders assume that the Sabbat's "shovel party" is the standard way of making new Sabbat members. The sect knows otherwise. The process is inefficient; a lot of victims don't make it out. Many of those who do survive emerge permanently insane.

New recruits to the Sabbat don't join as full members until they've proven themselves in combat or intrigue. Until they complete the Creation Rites, they're on probation. They can be destroyed at any time for disobedience, creating childer of their own or even for getting in the way of their elders. The probation lasts at least for several days, often for weeks and goes on for years in areas with very strict leadership. A sire may require his childe to display her newfound strength and nature by performing in a test of his choosing before he considers her ready for the rite.

A priest administers the Creation Rites. She touches a flaming brand to the initiate's forehead and leads her in an oath of allegiance. The phrasing varies; the key points include loyalty to one's pack leader, to the chain of command and to the principles of the Sabbat as they've been taught to the recruit. Once branded, the initiate becomes a true member of the Sabbat, with all the risks and benefits that implies. The priest follows the branding with a Vaulderie.

Sires and packs often add celebrations or other rites of their own. Young urban packs perform gang-style initiations while dignified elders present their upper-class childer in formal gatherings. In their various forms, such supplemental commemorations both congratulate the new recruit and remind her that she is still at the bottom of the pile.

System: The branding requires the new recruit to succeed in a two-Trait Rotschreck test. A recruit who panics gets a second chance, albeit with a substantial stigma for cowardice. Failing the test a second time brings immediate destruction. See Laws of the Night, p. 224, for the shovel-party rules.

Some bishops like to form new packs in a special version of the Creation Rites. Each member of the pack-to-be gets drained and buried as if the victim of a shovel party, and must dig her way out. With the benefits of vampiric strength, a vampire undergoing re-creation must win or tie two out of three Simple Tests with the Narrator (rather than having to win two out of three). Like a mortal in the same situation, the vampire can spend Physical Traits for retests. When (and if) all the members of the pack emerge, their designated priest brands himself and the other members of the pack and leads them in a Vaulderie. Since there's always the risk of losing vampires in this

process, bishops in areas of active conflict or reduced numbers of members frown on the practice.

High Holidays

This ritual is used during the celebration of several formal holidays integral to the worship of Caine. The current High Holidays are the Festivo Dello Estinto and the Palla Grande. Some priests of the Sabbat argue that having two Auctoritas Ritae reserved for holidays is excessive (three if one counts The Binding), and that a single ritual could be used to cover both celebrations and also to allow more traditional priests to revisit the older holidays of the Sect.

A High Holiday Ritus occurs within another, more specialized celebration dedicated to the holiday in question. During the Festivo Dello Estinto, there may be ritual sacrifice, bacchanalian indulgence, or gorging, while the Palla Grande is a more restrained vampiric ball with political overtones. Holidays are prominent events and religious celebrations. Unlike Camarilla balls or social salons, High Holidays are bloody, monstrous gatherings. They allow members of the Sect to revel in their vampiric nature, and educate one another on tactics, paths of enlightenment, and the lore and doctrine of Caine. This is not to say there are no politics at the High Holiday gatherings, but they are both more subtle and more brutal than those of the Camarilla.

System: Vampires who participate in a High Holiday Ritus replenish their Willpower completely. Further, they receive one additional Willpower point over their natural capacity. This extra Willpower point is kept until spent, or until one month has passed (whichever occurs first). A character may have only one bonus Willpower at a time.

Example Holidays:

<u>The Binding</u>: On the night of the winter solstice, Sabbat members gather for a public reaffirmation of their oaths to the sect. Just as the Vaulderie unites members of a pack, the Binding ties together all the oath-taking vampires in the community.

The ceremony begins with a recitation of the group's interpretation of the Sabbat credo. Each group does this a little differently. Some work it out in liturgical form while others present each point in metaphorical language or in the form of a parable. Military-style gatherings shout out the credo in call-andresponse style. Sometimes the recitation takes an hour or occupies just a few angry sentences.

Founded packs host nomadic packs, where possible, although the negotiations beforehand to allow safe passage seldom go smoothly (very few occasions could encourage such mutual restraint). Tradition calls for performing the Binding near water - a beach, riverbank or waterfall if possible, a fountain if there's nothing else. Water symbolizes the sect's implacable determination, eroding or flooding all opposition just as the Sabbat must in the end triumph completely. Vaulderie and a separate oath to protect the sect's secrets to Final Death almost always follow the Binding. Major Sabbat war efforts also often begin at the Binding, exploiting the unity of purpose the ritus creates.

System: The Vinculum ratings of all participants in the ritus increase by one (to a maximum of lo), and remain elevated for the next month.

<u>Festivo Dello Estinto:</u> The Festival of the Dead occupies the entire second week of March; it's second only to the Grand Ball as an opportunity for participants to celebrate their trans-human abilities. All the Sabbat vampires in a city gather, setting aside usual disputes for the week of the Festival, and nomadic packs come into town to celebrate with their urban brethren.

The Festival begins as soon as the highest-ranking priest in town declares it underway. He gives a single instruction to the assembled participants: Revel. This is the time for vampires to set aside their normal restraints and find out just what they can do to themselves, to each other and above all to the mortals around them. Each night includes a Blood Feast and a celebration of the Vaulderie after the night's exertions, scheduled as late as possible given the need of the participants to settle down for the day.

In principle, the Festival's participants should act utterly without regard for anyone's concerns but their own. In practice, the world is still there even while vampires celebrate. The Sabbat uses the Festival partly to weed out the vampires who cannot distinguish between the freedom to choose their own course of action and consequences to their choices. Vampires who bring out mortal hunters or other supernatural beings in response to Festival behavior deserve what they get, the sect's teachers say.

Festival events vary widely. Fire Dancing takes place almost everywhere, often coupled with dances pairing vampires with unwilling mortal partners. Packs whose members know Necromancy often raise zombies to provide accompaniment. In many cities, packs compete to present reenactments of passages from the Book of Nod and Sabbat history. Vampires who fancy themselves great hunters set out on special hunts, going after specific sorts of victims - teen mothers, bald priests, married computer programmers or some other specialized category of mortal. Vampires with experience in butchery, surgery and the like oversee competitions to kill victims with a minimum of blood spilled or to remove of as many internal organs as possible while keeping the victim alive and conscious.

Presiding archbishops and bishops watch the various competitions and award victors with the right of drawing first blood at the next Blood Feast. In some cases, a particularly good performance wins the victor a promotion on the spot while an appalling failure may lead to demotion or to the loser becoming one of the next Blood Feast's vessels. Elders look with favor on competitions to hunt as widely and freely as possible without attracting mortal attention. Success in this sort of challenge requires developing and presenting a plausible cover story, such as a terrorist attack. The Sabbat hierarchy admires and rewards the ability to use mortal institutions without becoming tangled in mortal values or concerns like the Camarilla.

System: Resolve the various competitions as seems appropriate. The Festival is as much an occasion for roleplaying as for number-crunching. Note that many Festival sports require a fair number of Storyteller mortal characters, so plan ahead to have enough Narrator support.

<u>Palla Grande:</u> The Grand Ball - Palla Grande to Sabbat elders and others who like to retain a European flavor to their rim - marks the end of the Sabbat's year. On All Hallows Eve, all the vampires in the city gather for a two-part celebration. Some archbishops summon all the vampires in their territory to celebrate in a single city; others encourage separate celebrations in

each city. In either case, attendance is not optional. Nomad packs converge on the nearest city holding a Grand Ball. The most renowned priest in the city (who may not be the highest-ranked) oversees the ritus.

The night before the Grand Ball, the presiding priest and her assistants prepare incense burners. The burners hold an exotic mix of herbs and chemicals designed to weaken mortals' willpower and skepticism and induce a mild hallucinogenic state in which acquiescence and belief come easily. As she blesses each burner, the priest adds a Blood Trait of her own to start the mix's transformation.

The first part of the Grand Ball takes place in public, often staged as a festival, a rave or some other gathering open to the general populace. The Ball's vampiric hosts generally put on a fancy spread in whatever idiom they choose, with the best music, plenty of free food and drink and so on. Almost all Grand Balls emphasize costumes, going beyond fancy wardrobe to include physical transformation through Vicissitude and the illusions of Obfuscate and Chimerstry . Each vampiric participant in the ritus adds a Blood Trait of his own to one (or more) of the incense burners. The air takes on a very slight pink tinge and all mortals in the area experience a mild form of the surrender that comes with the Embrace.

The second part of the Grand Ball takes place away from mortal eyes. The priest convenes a Blood Feast for the vampires of the area. Daring groups snatch their vessels from the nearby crowd or from the unlucky recipients of invitations to a "special private gathering" associated with the ball's public face. Sabbat communities who face more serious challenges from hunters or whose leaders believe in not creating unnecessary risks round up their victims for weeks beforehand. Sabbat vampires, retainers and ghouls who've committed flagrant offenses also become vessels for the occasion.

At midnight, individuals chosen by the presiding priest present a reenactment of an event from Cainite legend or history. In some cities, would-be actors compete for the priest's favor; in others, theatre duty is as much a punishment as a reward. Caine's murder of Abel outstrips all other topics in popularity, with the diablerie of the Tzimisce and Lasombra Antediluvians close behind. Gehenna scenes attract both favor and controversy, with some elders (and devout neonates) arguing that too much attention to future troubles undermines morale. Most theatre groups include some element of audience participation, seizing prepared targets for use as disposable props.

After the show, the archbishop or ranking bishop present receives the Blood Bath. The recipient reclines in a tub, pool or other large container. Attendants bleed out selected victims to fill the pool. Each vampire present contributes vitae to a Vaulderie cup, whose contents then join the mortal blood. The recipient maintains a steady chanting all the while, and takes in a bit of the essence of the other participants.

At the conclusion of the Blood Bath, the participants join the bath's recipient in a final pre-dawn dance, generally very noisy and almost always ending in a frenzied attack on the unfortunate mortals saved for the consummation of the rim. In most cases, the participants collapse in the ball's private space and rely on ghouls to take care of guarding them and cleaning up during the

following day. Over the next several days, vampires and ghouls charged with attending to the aftermath use a combination of lethal force, mental Disciplines and occasional Embraces to tidy up loose ends.

System: Grand Ball participants gain the benefits of the Blood Feast and Blood Bath as usual. In addition, they completely replenish their Willpower. Each participant must contribute at least one Blood Trait to the cloaking incense burners, and may contribute more. The recipient of the Blood Bath can make a Mental Challenge against any of the other participants; if she succeeds, the recipient can use any oracular powers the target possesses, like Auspex and some Thaumaturgical Paths, as if they were her own for the night. She does not gain fine control, seeingrandom moments of the coming year that warrant her attention. The Storyteller should feel free to make the resulting images symbolic and allusive, and to allow circumstances to render them null and void.

Fire Dance

Fire is one of the great enemies to vampire, a danger to flee. The Sabbat believes in mastering that fear. In times of war, Sabbat vampires use fire as a weapon against their enemies. In between battles, they perform the Fire Dance to show their triumph over the weaknesses in their souls.

A priest can call a Fire Dance at any time, whenever she judges the pack in need of some morale boosting. Bishops generally celebrate a Fire Dance just before a War Party, bringing together all the packs who will fight in the upcoming assault. Given the Sabbat's emphasis on individual freedom, the convening priest never forces a vampire to take part in the ritus until she feels truly ready for it. Most vampires somehow find the resolve to participate anyway; their packmates do not tolerate cowardice, and too many refusals of the Fire Dance can get a vampire exiled or destroyed.

The convening priest lights a bonfire somewhere away from mortal eyes. Participants set a rhythm with drumming, chanting or other regular music. They circle the fire, working themselves into a trancelike frenzy. They close in on the flames until primitive instinct forces them away; some make obeisance to the fire as if it is a god they hate but still venerate. As each participant feels ready, she jumps through the flames. The more vampires make it through, the more they encourage (and challenge) the remaining participants to do so. Particularly devoted or entranced vampires jump again and again; some perform the most exotic stunts along the way. The n'tus ends when every vampire has jumped.

Sometimes a vampire simply can't muster the courage to jump. Tolerant packs throw him through so as to honor the spirit of the occasion. Less tolerant packs slaughter him as an inferior breed or pin him down in the fire to help him overcome his weakness.

System: Once the fire's started and the revels begin, participating vampires must make a Courage test against two Traits to approach the fire. (Their trance state reduces the normal difficulty.) Actually jumping through the fire requires a Static Physical Challenge against five Traits. The Storyteller should increase the difficulty of complex maneuvers; if they work, the participant gains one or more bonus Social Traits for the rest of the night.

All participants who voluntarily leap through the fire get a bonus Courage Trait for the rest of the night and for three nights after that. This bonus can exceed the usual Virtue limit of 5.

Do not, under any circumstances, actually go leaping through bonfires. Use your imagination to capture a sense of the experience without the prop of real fire.

Games of Instinct

The Sabbat glorifies achievement. Thinking grand thoughts doesn't mean anything without action. Therefore, the ceremonial demonstration of one's physical, mental and social prowess is a religious act. The label "Games of Instinct" applies to all competitions in which participants compete against each other and the surrounding world in ways that exemplify the Sabbat's ideas.

Note that Games of Instinct do not include random carnage for its own sake. The Sabbat does not believe in the Masquerade as a goal, but sect leaders aren't stupid and know that there are very firm limits to how far vampires can go without bringing down massive reprisals. The Sabbat does not value stupidity and won't reward it, let alone treat it as a matter of spiritual importance.

The priest presides over each game, blessing the participants and instructing them in the terms of this particular game. The practice should resemble the ancient Olympic games in which participants demonstrated physical excellence as an act of worship. The games are vigorous, enthusiastic and often bloody, but never frivolous. Holy joy in one's superiority is far more than simple bloodthirst.

System: The specific mechanical aspects of a Game of Instinct depend on the nature of the game. All games share a specific feature. The winners of a game get a one-Trait bonus to one Ability they used during the game. This bonus lasts for two weeks of game time. A vampire can only enjoy this benefit for one Ability at a time, no matter how many games she participates in.

Some examples of common Games of Instinct:

Capture the Ductus.

This game pits two packs against each other. The priest designates territory, generally a few square blocks. Each pack aims to present the ductus of the other to the priest; the first pack to do so wins. Inflicting Final Death on any participant automatically costs the destroyer's pack the game (plus the rage of the offended pack). The priest has discretion in setting boundaries for mortal awareness. Particularly challenging games require that no mortal ever know the game's being played while other times, for games of terror, the priest actively condones displays of vampiric power.

The Rat Race.

At the beginning of the game, participants unleash one or more humans in a bounded, labyrinthine space -an actual maze, a factory district or someplace else with complex terrain. The humans get piles of weaponry capable of actually hurting the vampires. Then the vampires go in unarmed and hunt the humans. Each vampire who drains a human wins. It's "legit" to cripple or maim competing vampires, but not to torpor or destroy them. A more extreme form of this game requires vampiric participants to draw straws, with the one who gets the short straw becoming the designated victim. The vampiric variety seldom proceeds to Final Death except as a punishment (in which the draw of straws is usually rigged).

Rousing the Beast.

Each participant must dig up a victim of a failed shovel party. The participant must then immobilize and destroy his victim. Keep in mind that the victim emerges weak but in frenzy. The process of consecrating disinterment as a rim somehow strengthens the victim, who regains one Trait per turn until at full strength and suffers half normal wound penalties.

The Spire.

The priest designates some target to climb that human beings cannot achieve without elaborate tools, such as the tallest skyscraper in the area. The participants must scale it using only their own bare hands and feet, their Attributes, Abilities and Disciplines. The first one to the top and back down wins. Climbing barehanded up modern buildings (stone, glass and metal, etc.) requires a Simple Physical Test every 10 feet or so. The difficulty varies, from six Traits for conveniently sized bricks up to 12 or more for sheer featureless walls. Using Disciplines stylishly doesn't guarantee a win, but earns the respect of competitors.

Monomacy

The Sabbat's internal disagreements don't always erupt into war, contrary to the popular opinion among outsiders. Most conflicts find fairly quick and fairly peaceful resolution, through a combination of actual persuasion, use of Status and the occasional push with Disciplines. When two individuals can't settle a quarrel, often their authorities, starting with the pack leader and priest, can. Sometimes all efforts at mediation fail. Monomacy provides the ultimate resolution: Combat to the death.

Monomacy isn't just a duel to the death. Through careful authorization of Monomacy, the Sabbat applies a limited form of evolutionary selection to its ranks. The duels purge individuals who were too physically weak or too crippled by bad ideas to make effective use of their abilities. The sect grows stronger as the weak and inefficient fall - better to lose them in an internal dispute than to suffer them in crises to come. Strong leaders and strong followers keep the sect strong as well.

Monomacy is a genuine rim, not a right anyone can claim on their own. The Sabbat denies the opportunity to young, unproven recruits who don't appreciate the gravity of what they're doing. If everyone could get their leaders' blessings for the sacred duel, in short order most packs would lose all their members over trivial matters. The pack priest must formalize any effort at Monomacy. The challenger presents her claim to the priest and the target simultaneously. The priest decides whether the point of conflict warrants Monomacy, and if so, whether the priest will preside himself or appoint a substitute. If the priest is himself the challenged party, the ductus presides or refers it to another pack's priest.

The defender doesn't have to accept just because the priest approves. Declining involves some loss of status, since bystanders assume cowardice or some shameful secret must contribute to the refusal to take part in an important ritus. The defender encounters fewer hassles if the challenger

is of much lower rank. Leaders can brush off even genuinely serious claims as just another case of a youngster being uppity.

When the challenger and defender belong to the same pack, it's easy to pick the right authority to arbitrate: Their pack priest does the job. Matters get more complex when the disputing parties belong to different packs. In theory, a bishop should hear such cases. In practice, most bishops feel they have better things to do with their time and respond unfavorably to all but the most urgent or illuminating claims. Rivals often do better to seek out the priest of a third pack, preferably but not always one they both know, and ask him to perform the ritus.

The definition of the ritus leaves the setting and method of combat open. As long as it satisfies the participants and the overseeing priest, it's fine. The challenger sets the time and place; the defender rules on weapons and other details. The defender can ask for the duel to be to first blood rather than Final Death. In such a case the loser faces exile. A defender who takes such a wimpy course of action loses respect whether he loses the duel or not. More impressive restrictions include fighting while blindfolded, fighting surrounded by fire, fighting only with out-of-clan Disciplines and the like. The priest declares the duel begun and finished. Priests and archbishops can declare a Monomacy null and void, but doing so for any reason short of proof of direct cheating by a participant invites new Monomacy-worthy challenges against the priest.

Sometimes Monomacy takes on strange forms. Lasombra elders may choose to duel with lifesized chessboard populated by living pieces, moved by threat or command. A famous conflict between a Tzimisce and a Ventrue antitribu ended in a Monomacy in which each took turns shooting one of the other's ghouls. The Tzimisce won when the last of the Ventrue's ghouls succumbed to his wounds and fell over.

The winner of the Monomacy gets his pick of the loser's possessions. This doesn't include diablerie unless the priest approves it as a term of the contest. Custom suggests but doesn't require offering a cut to the presiding priest. Anything left over goes to the loser's packmates and any scavengers who can stake a claim.

Monomacy settles all sorts of serious disputes within the sect. Would-be ducti, pack priests and bishops bring out their grievances (and generally lose). Individuals contesting points of influence take it to a duel if their priest deems the issue important to Sabbat activity in the area. Rumor says that the current regent took her position after besting her predecessor in a simple no-weapons physical battle.

System: This ritus calls for very little mechanical adjudication. The form of the fight itself suggests what sorts of challenges the participants should make. The priest's player should emphasize the seriousness of the occasion with proper pomp and circumstance. This isn't just a rumble, it's a rumble with profound religious significance. Whatever theme and style a pack presents - urban gang, enthusiastic cult, disciplined military team or something else - should color the proceedings. The priest should feel at liberty to add plausible restrictions, perhaps postponing the battle to the next new or full moon or requiring the setting to incorporate sacred numbers.

Contrition Ritus

The Contrition ritus is most likely to win promotion to auctoritas status soon; very nearly every pack practices it in some form. Sabbat members who've committed offenses against the sect confess their failings and accept any punishment short of Final Death. Minor failures earn no more than a beating and assignment to unpleasant duties. Breaches of sect security might win dismemberment and the restoration of just enough vitae to let the contrite vampire begin healing.

Packs vary in their willingness to accept repeated performance of the Contritionritus, whether for the same offense again and again or for a diversified but sustained pattern of clueless conduct. Packs whose leaders show too much leniency face condemnation themselves. The sect is, after, all, at war.

System: If a vampire attempts the Rite of Contrition and succeeds, they are utterly forgiven the grievance they had committed. It may not be brought up again, and no further argument, vengeance, or persecution may occur related to this issue. Though it is certain that vampires do not forget grudges so easily, the appearance of "dropping the issue" must be maintained by those who were aggrieved.

If the vampire attempts the Rite of Contrition and fails, they are stripped of all status, forced to step down from any position, and may not gain dots in the Status background nor the benefits of any title for six months thereafter.

Sermons of Caine

Caine the historical (or at least mythical) figure matters very much to some Sabbat members, not at all to others. Among the vampires who care enough to argue theology, some treat Caine as the biggest, oldest and therefore worst menace of all, while others find in him the example of true freedom and individuality. Vampires who do care about origins and do take Caine as their inspiration gather regularly to listen to teachings about him. This ritus renews their conviction and provides them with the shared attitudes and ideas to resolve disputes.

In some packs, the priest always delivers the sermon. In others, pack members share the duties. Each one in turn recites some favored passage from the Book of Nod and offers comments about its relevance to the pack's situation. Depending on the pack's preferences, the speaker may get an uninterrupted audience, or the rest of the pack may argue back. After the sermon, the priest may perform the Vaulderie. Enthusiastic pack members may continue the "discussion" until the approach of dawn.

Vampiric society has very few written records. The Book of Nod isn't a single text - it's a mass of fragments and an attitude about Cainite origins. Sabbat packs argue constantly about the best, truest or oldest phrasing of a passage, and about whether a passage belongs in canon at all. Some believers argue that the sect must establish a single authoritative reading and make sure everyone studies it. Others claim, with just as much fervor, that the spirit of the work transcends any specific text, so competing searches for illumination serve the sect's best interests. Arguments on these points sometimes destroy packs and fuel inter-pack wars. **System:** This ritus doesn't really require any mechanics. If Storytellers want, they can ask for Performance tests to see how effectively a speaker communicates her point. Regular exposure to the Sermons of Caine might raise a participant's Sabbat Lore, up to a limit of one or two levels less than that of the pack priest. This ritus is primarily an occasion for roleplaying.

Vaulderie

The vampires of the Sabbat take their nightly struggle seriously - so seriously that they tolerate no dissent in their ranks. From the lowliest new recruit to the most exalted priscus, the Sabbat ensure loyalty to one another through a bloody ritus known as the Vaulderie.

The Vaulderie is similar to a blood bond, though it differs in intent and function. No Sabbat would ever voluntarily succumb to a blood bond, reasoning that such bonds are the tools the elders use to enslave their childer. Rather, the Sabbat swear the Vaulderie to each other, bonding themselves to the pack instead of an individual, and thus, to the Sabbat's greater cause.

Those who are ignorant of the Vaulderie's finer details believe it to be a simple commingling of vampire vitae in a vessel and the subsequent drinking of it. In truth, the matter is far more mystical. To start the ritual, the priest takes a tool used specifically for the Vaulderie and nothing else and cuts her wrist. The ritual cutting tool could be a small knife, silver straight razor or awl. To impart more gravity to the ritus, many packs use elaborate ritual bloodletters decorated with engraved swirls, spirals or blood droplets. The priest then bleeds into a vessel and passes the cutting device to each Sabbat present, who pierces his own flesh and bleeds into the chalice. The vessel is then passed around the pack again and the priest recites an incantation over it, consecrating it as a terrible sacrament while every member of the pack draws a draught.

Vaulderies take place at any time - before assaults, during important Sabbat gatherings, at the initiation or Creation Rites of new members and almost infallibly at pack esbats. This ritus is perhaps the foundation of the sect's ritae, and it is afforded the most reverent status.

The result of this ritus is known as a Vinculum, or blood-tie. These ties connect each member of the pack to one another, engendering a mutual loyalty in addition to bolstering pack morale. Because of the mystical nature of the Vaulderie, however, Vinculi are imperfect - what one pack member feels toward another one night may pale in comparison to what he feels toward her the next. Vinculum ratings may change every time the ritus is observed.

Without the Vaulderie, the Sabbat would probably collapse under its own weight and dogma the chaos and anarchy that follows the sect endemically would erode what little organization it has without the loyalty and sympathy created by the ritus. Those who refuse the Vaulderie or oppose it are not viewed favorably by other Sabbat. Vampires who refuse to partake of the Vaulderie at least monthly suffer ostracism from the pack at best - and may become vessels for Blood Feasts or destroyed outright at worst.

System: The first time a character observes the Vaulderie (or during creation of a Sabbat character), roll a die for each character whose vitae is part of the ritus. That number reflects the Vinculum the character feels toward the individual whose blood she ingested; see the chart for

effects generated by individual Vinculi. Every time a new member participates in the Vaulderie, each player should roll a die and record the score for her Vinculum rating toward that character.

Example: Lucretia, Vaughan and Dezra (characters created by three players) have just partaken of the Vaulderie. Each player rolls a die for the two other players' characters and records this score as their Vinculum to that character. Lucretia's player rolls a 6 for her Vinculum to Dezra and a 4 for her Vinculum to Vaughan. During the course of the game, a new character, Madd Killah, joins the pack, and after her first Vaulderie with him, Lucretia gains a Vinculum of 5 toward him.

Each time the pack partakes of the Vaulderie, each player should roll one die for each of her Vinculi. If the result is higher than the Vinculum score, increase that Vinculum score by one (to a maximum of 10). If the result is a 1, lower the Vinculum score by one (to a minimum of 1).

At times, a character may be at odds with herself over how to react to a given situation because of Vinculi she possesses toward another vampire. In cases such as these, the player should decide which party her character would favor outside the Vinculum. The character then rolls a number of dice for each party equal to her Vinculum score for that individual against a difficulty of 5 (for the party favored regardless of Vinculum) or 7 (for all other parties). The individual who receives the greatest number of successes earns the character's aid. Such is the nature of the Damned and the Vinculum - a character who knows better may sometimes be forced into an obviously bad course of action by following her emotions.

Example: Lucretia has Vinculi toward packmates Dezra and Vaughan. The pack has heard there is a Camarilla Ventrue spy in their city, and its members cannot agree about the best resolution to the problem, Dezra proposes that the pack hunt him down and drink his vitae while. Vaughan believes that the best option is to ask around and try to find out information about this so-called spy, believing the confrontation of a vampire of unknown power to be folly. Lucretia thinks Vaughan's option is the wiser of the two, though she must test her Vinculi to see if emotion sways her loyalty to Dezra. She rolls six dice (her Vinculum to Dezra is 6) against difficulty 7 and gains three successes. For Vaughan, she rolls four dice (her Vinculum to Vaughanis4) against difficulty 5 and gains only one success. Against her better judgment, she sides with Deya, saying "I'm following Deya," while flashing Vaughan a defeated look. Dezra smiles and crosses his arms.

Note: Storytellers should require Vinculum rolls judiciously, and only in matters of dramatic significance. Too much reliance on Vinculum rolls strips free will from the players' characters, and instead of savoring the anguish of their emotional response, players may grow cross at being railroaded by dice rolls.

The Vaulderie can also corrode existing blood bonds. Multiple draughts of the Vaulderie may be required, but sooner or later, the pack's blood will overcome all but the most potent of vampiric vitae. A vampire wishing to break a blood bond via Vaulderie must have no more than one blood point in his blood pool, and must ingest six points of Vaulderie vitae. At that point, the old blood bond fades rapidly, replaced almost as quickly by Vinculi toward those whose blood composed

the Vaulderie. A vampire attempting to replace Vinculi with a new blood bond is in for a disappointment - unless her blood is powerfully potent, Vinculi may not be so easily erased.

Unlike normal blood bonds, Vinculi do not fade over time - a Vinculum left after a Vaulderie with a vampire in nights hundreds of years past is still as potent as the night it arose. Indeed, many elder Sabbat have vast webs of Vinculi connecting them to sect members across the world. Some Sabbat whisper guardedly of a ritual that can break the Vinculum outright, though only members of the Nosferatu antitribu and the Inquisition are rumored to know this ritual. If these rumors are to be believed, the ritual breaks every Vinculum a vampire has, not just select ones. The Inquisition supposedly uses this ritual to break Vinculi toward infernalists, though its obvious other ramifications have many Sabbat worried about the true loyalties of their compatriots.

Vinculum Ratings

Vinculum Effect

10 You will readily give your life - or take the life of another - for the individual.

9 You will do practically anything for the individual, including putting yourself in great danger.

8 You will gladly offer resources or influential assistance to the individual.

7 You may put yourself at moderate risk of harm for the individual and, depending on your code of ethics, may kill for him.

6 You feel strongly for the individual and help him even if it inconveniences you. You will gladly fight for the individual.

5 You respect the individual and help him out as long as it's no huge risk or bother.

4 You will aid the individual as long as it doesn't involve risk or anything out of your way.

3 You are loyal to the individual as long as that loyalty doesn't interfere with your own designs.

2 You have a minor sense of kinship toward the individual, but you're not going to go out of your way to help him unless something's in it for you.

1 Fuck 'em. This isn't necessarily hostility, but you don't care about this person on a Vinculum level, though you may on a personal level.

Note: It bears mention that, like the emotions engendered by blood bonds, these feelings are artificial, as they are created through ingestion of blood. It is quite possible for a character to utterly hate someone for whom she would risk her unlife, just as it is possible to have immense love for someone who has little in the way of Vinculum and everything in between. Players are encouraged to explore the full range of these complexities in their packs through roleplaying.

War Party

The War Party puts Sabbat doctrine to practical use. Multiple packs compete for the blood of a designated non-Sabbat elder, with the winners getting the benefits of diablerie. Hunting elders isn't easy - they generally didn't survive all those centuries by being careless or stupid, after all. In addition, while rival packs seldom use outright lethal force against each other, they can and do sabotage each other's efforts with means that stop short of destruction.

A Sabbat member of bishop or higher rank declares a War Party after identifying an elder whose removal would benefit the sect. (Almost every non- Sabbat elder poses a threat to the sect in some sense.) Preparations usually include a Fire Dance, a Sermon of Caine and a Blood Feast or Vaulderie. The chief of the War Party - usually the highest ranking priest involved, though sometimes ducti or bishops lead more politically oriented hunts – addresses the assembled packs. He asks each ductus one of the few ritual questions that actually has a standard phrasing throughout the sect: "DO you come freely to war, and do you take up this noble cause, never resting until the blood of our enemy is spilled?" Each ductus answers with "We do!" After this expression of commitment, the War Party leader identifies the target and presents information that might help the hunt.

A ductus can decide to withdraw her pack from the challenge. She faces ridicule for this, and any packmates who call for Monomacy generally win approval on the spot. The packs who remain celebrate the rest of the night and embark on the hunt itself after rising from sleep on the following night.

The War Party makes every tactic legitimate if not automatically wise. Hunting packs can inflict whatever collateral damage they deem necessary on their way to the target, and when the destructive action shows courage and forethought, packs not participating in the War Party often help clean up the damage. In the final approach to the target's haven, competing packs often dispense with niceties like doors if they have members with the strength to break through barriers. Note that sometimes, brute force is very unwise. A well-protected target calls for approaches emphasizing stealth and treachery. Some War Parties last for weeks or even months rather than a few violent nights.

Only one member of the winning pack gets the full benefit of the diablerie, of course. Sabbat tradition generally recognizes success, and awards the kill to the first vampire to get her fangs into the victim. Pack members need not sit idly by, however. Tradition also endorses vigorous competition, and it's not uncommon for a hunt to end with only one pack member still mobile enough to actually commit the deed.

The target elder seldom acquiesces calmly to her fate. Entire city blocks sometimes collapse in rubble in the ensuing struggle. Depending on their personal styles, targeted elders may unleash Master-level Disciplines or potent bribes in various coins. Every so often, a winning pack gets a good enough offer to betray the Sabbat and defend the elder, though they usually don't survive long after that.

The War Party ritus comes to an end when the winning pack presents tangible evidence of their kill to the War Party leader. The leader accepts the token after examining it for signs of fakery

and blesses the victors. All surviving packs gather for another round of revels as soon as news of the War Party's resolution spreads.

System: The individual vampire who actually diablerizes the target gets all the usual benefits of diablerie. The members of the winning pack get the temporary Status of Martial, which lasts until the next War Party, Grand Ball or Festival of the Dead. Particularly prominent targets like Methuselahs win permanent Status for the victors.

Wild Hunt

The Wild Hunt gives force to the Sabbat's emphasis on devotion. A member who betrays the sect's secrets risks this ultimate sanction.

A priest calls the Wild Hunt. Generally the highest-ranking priest in the vicinity does so, and she'd better have the support of her superiors before accusing another Sabbat member of treachery or face the same punishment herself. All loyal sect members in the area must hunt down the traitor and anyone, Cainite or mortal, to whom he may have given the information. Overzealous vampires who destroy a Wild Hunt target before interrogation risk Final Death themselves. The traitor's contacts are exterminated only after examination makes sure that they haven't spread the leaked information further.

The Wild Hunt seldom takes place in the risky and yet exuberant atmosphere of a War Party. Treachery exposes the whole sect to risk. Whatever preparatory rites take place, their priests perform them solemnly. Vaulderie is essential, and Fire Dancing usually accompanies it.

The vampire who captures the traitor and his contacts bring their prisoner back to some central meeting place for questioning. The ductus and priest, and any superiors who wish to take part, recite the traitor's crimes and use torture to extract confirmation. Hot irons, mutilation, Vicissitude and a multitude of other means come into play. Once the traitor confirms his sins and the Sabbat establishes the spread of his leaked secrets, torture becomes straightforward punishment, lasting as long as anyone involved has ideas about how to hurt the traitor. Vampiric collaborators also face torture while mortal allies generally meet quick, if painful, ends.

After tormenting the traitor, his former packmates throw his staked body onto a consecrated funeral pyre. An attending priest recites the Book ofNod's Chronicle of Caine to remind all involved that victory requires unity and that distrust makes unity impossible. Vaulderie follows to reestablish the bonds of mutual commitment.

System: Some regions practice the Auctoritas ritus of Contrition, to allow traitors to make amends. Storytellers may allow the targets of a Wild Hunt to invoke this or not, at Storyteller discretion. For minor offenses, allowing contrition with punishment balances severity with the avoidance of hasty character death. More serious offenses should bring a more serious penalty: The Sabbat is not a place where "do as you please" flourishes without qualification, and sometimes nothing short of character death makes the point clear. Never arrange a character's death lightly, but don't hold back when it's truly earned.

IGNOBLIS RITAE

The Ignobilis Ritae are more varied and informal rituals used by the Sabbat. While the Auctoritas Ritae are performed by all Sabbat members, the Ignobilis Ritae are optional to a point. Presentation and exercise of these rituals vary greatly from pack to pack or city to city - each pack will personalize the ritual to reflect the personality of those that make up the pack.

Acceptance Ritus

This ritus welcomes a new member to a particular pack, to recognize the ascension of a recruit, or any time a change in power or membership occurs (such as a new ductus or priest). Each member of the pack must recognize the new position of their fellow Sabbat in a personal manner, be it by sharing blood, the giving of a gift or whatever. The Sabbat being accepted must make an oath of allegiance to each member of the pack, and to the Sabbat cause in general. For example, a new True Sabbat's oath details the gratefulness the recruit has for being allowed into the pack, and his pride in being chosen to serve the pack and the sect. The Acceptance Ritus differs from the Creation Rites because it is more social than supernatural. A Sabbat may have received his Creation Rites, but may be snubbed by a pack that refuses to extend him the ritus of acceptance.

System: Those among the pack who have undergone this ritae may call upon an Acceptance Ritus retest against other members of the pack in all Social Challenges once per night.

Welcoming Ritus

This ritus is largely a social convention. Priests invoke it whenever two Sabbat packs meet to spend time together, such as when pilgrim packs stay in a city for a time, or packs unite toward a common short-term goal. The Welcoming Ritus reinforces the Sabbat ideology that respects individuality, while requiring unity to achieve the sect's purpose. Most packs carry this ritus out quite informally, with the pack leaders sharing blood while their packmates bear witness, but there are two incidents of protocol which typically must be met. At the opening of the ritus, all pack members greet each other individually, stating their names and home (if any). This provides the members with a sense of location-where they come from and to where they may travel. At the height of the celebration, a gift is exchanged from pack to pack. It could be a weapon, or a treaty, or the head of an enemy. The gift is presented from a pack's True Sabbat to the other pack's ductus under the priests' supervision. Ducti and priests often use this ritus as an opportunity to discuss Sabbat plans.

System: Once performed all those who participate gain two bonus traits on social challenges against anyone else who has also participated in this ritae. These bonus traits last one night.

Ritus of Thanksgiving

This ritus is actually less a thanksgiving than a session to boast of one's exploits. The thanksgiving usually comes under the auspices of "I thank Caine for his favor when I..." stories, which usually exaggerate or aggrandize the speaker's prowess. The Ritus of Thanksgiving generally precedes esbats or other gatherings of the Sword of Caine.

System: Once performed those who participate in this ritae gain 1 Bonus Trait on all Social Challenges for the remainder of the night.

Martial Ritus

In times of war, a Sabbat pack tries to increase its strength in any way possible, often by creating the sense of kinship found only in combat. The Martial Ritus serves to whip the Sabbat into a fervor that heralds destruction for its enemies. The ritus begins with chanting a mantra such as "strength," "fire," or "muscle and hate." The beating of drums, usually led by the priest, accompanies the chanting. Packs sometimes decorate each others' faces and bodies with blood, paint or henna.

System: Those who participate in this ritae gain a number of bonus traits in all Brawl, Melee, and Firearms challenges equal to the performing priests Morality Rating. These bonus traits must be called upon only in a combat and once the combat concludes these traits are lost.

Spilling of Blood

When two or more Sabbat feed together, they sometimes recognize the sharing of their blood meal, saying together, "Hot blood that spurted from Abel at his time of death, sustain us for the will of the Sabbat."

System: Sabbat who perform this ritae and share a mortal enjoy an increase in that mortals blood supply. For the purposes of feeding the mortal body contains 20 Blood Traits to drink rather then 10.

Stealth Ritus

In the interests of maintaining silence, some packs take extra precautions and invoke favorable omens. In the Stealth Ritus, all participating vampires bite out each other's tongues and spit them into a fire. Though this causes no health levels of damage, the immediate bleeding and healing consumes one blood point. The priest or ductus usually bows out so he can issue orders, but some packs have developed complex hand signal systems so they may communicate silently while on stealth-intensive activities.

System: Those under the effects of this ritae gain a number of bonus traits on all stealth challenges equal to the performing priests morality rating. These traits are lost the second the character breaks their stealth in any form.

Sun Dance

The Sun Dance tests Cainites' endurance and bravery. During the ritus, vampires writhe and gyrate in a hypnotic dance around a symbolic inscription of a fiery sun from sunset to sunrise without pause, until they collapse in exhausted heaps, covered in blood sweat. The ritus always takes place during a full moon, and pack members usually dress for the occasion, wearing frightening masks or red body paint. Pack members prove their courage by seeing who among them, after an exhausting night's dancing, can remain in the open the longest. A Blood Feast sometimes follows the Sun Dance (especially when it is performed at heavily attended sect functions), as the vampires must replenish their spent energy constantly for the duration of the ritual.

System: A vampire who completes a Sun Dance refreshes all of their Willpower traits. Additionally for the next month they gain 1 temporary Willpower trait over their maximum that may used in retests only in Rotshreck challenges.

Tests of Pain

Sabbat priests use these grueling ritae to test how strong of spirit their packmates are. Different packs use the ritae in different ways, some for those claiming leadership, others as punishment. One such test is the Indian Stick trial: The pack suspends the subject from a timber forced through his chest at dusk, and he remains immobilized until they release him just before sunrise. (Truly brutal subjects tear their bodies from the pinion before sunrise, and may subject themselves to other tests.) The Trial by Fire involves the ritual singeing of various body parts by the pack priest. The Gauntlet sees Sabbat Cainites line up in two rows while individual vampires run between them, suffering punches, kicks and stabs from the vampires in line. Priest characters and Storytellers are encouraged to create their own Tests of Pain for use in their packs.

System: Those Sabbat who complete a Test of Pain may spend 1 willpower to ignore all Wound Penalties, Regardless of source of Method, for a scene. This Ritae lasts one night, and when called upon it is considered used up and lost.

The Asp's Blessing

In some accounts, the Sabbat likens itself to a serpent, and many packs practice ritae that involve snake-handling. This ritus, however, fits with the more traditional and occult ritual of the sect. The priest raises a (usually poisonous) snake before the pack, asks for Caine's watchful eye to preside over the assembled vampires, kisses the snake and holds it before every member of the pack, who must kiss it themselves. If the snake bites an unfortunate vampire, it is believed that Caine holds disfavor for that vampire, and that he has caused the snake to bite her for some past or secret transgression. Some Sabbat even bring humans into this ritus, in hopes that the snake will bite them and symbolize Caine's disdain for mortals, the Children of Seth.

System: The storyteller should determine at random (a coin flip) if the snake bites the vampire or not. If the snake bites the vampire they are cursed for the rest of the night; they must 2 additional traits on all challenges. If the snake does not bite them, then they are favored and gain 2 bonus traits on all challenges for the night.

Truth Revealed

This ritus ensures the honesty of a statement to be revealed (much like the swearing in of a witness at court - it doesn't truly "compel" truth in a mechanical manner). If a priest doubts an individual's statement's veracity, the victim writes her statement on a piece of paper given her by her accuser, in her own blood. The priest then burns the paper, sometimes in a censer. If the smoke burns black, the statement is a lie. If white, it is truth. In truth, the power of the pack's belief in their packmate and his statement determines the outcome of the revelation, and this ritus is seldom employed for truly grave matters.

System: This ritae will always reveal a truth or lie if used.

Blessings

The pack invokes a blessing upon itself or another for some important purpose. The ritual is used before dangerous missions and occasionally before a Jyhad. It serves primarily as a morale boost.

System: A Sabbat member who undergoes a Blessing gains 1 retest on all challenges related to fear or Rotshreck. Once called upon, this retest is lost. This ability lasts for 1 night.

Call to Caine

These are various speeches that call upon the guidance of Caine for some great mission or event. The Sabbat priest is not the only one that leads this ritual; all the pack members get a turn.

System: Those sabbat who partake in this Ritae are immune to Surprise for the next scene or an hour.

Confession

This ritual is less a confession than it is a bragging contest. It is used at celebrations where each individual vampire relates his best, greatest and vilest accomplishments.

System: Those who partake in this ritae gain 1 bonus Social Trait in all social challenges with other members of the sabbat for the rest of the night.

Consecration Rites

These rituals sanctify an area or building. Usually a sacrifice of some kind is used and the area is then marked with signs representing its sanctity.

System: A Pack Member can call upon the power of the Consecrated Land from their pack to ward their holy ground against uninvited supernatural intruders for a scene. Once the Consecrated ground is activated in this manner, uninvited vampires and demonic creatures cannot enter or cross it without spending a Willpower Trait or a number of Mental Traits equal to the pack priests who performed the ritae's morality rating. Doing so allows the uninvited creature to stay for 10 minutes or travel up to 50 feet into or through the holy ground. If a vampire or demonic creature is present when the consecrated ground is activated, they must spend the Willpower or Mental Traits immediately or leave. Moreover, any of that consecrated ground's packmates may add the performing priests morality rating in bonus traits to their own when resisting Supernatural powers. This ritae only functions for those in the pack it was used with.

Dance Macabre

The Dance of Death is held simply to celebrate being a vampire. The entire pack participates. Its members dance around, wrestle and drink each other's blood. Many packs dress in costumes and masks representing death. It is not uncommon for participants to frenzy.

System: Vampires who participate in a Dance Macabre regain one temporary Willpower trait which may not exceed their maximum.

Ghost Dance

This special dance is held to honor the dead. The dance is not only for fallen members of the pack, but also for its human victims. The dance is carried out in many different ways.

System: When the Ghost Dance is performed for one of the Sabbat who has died, they will appear in an ethereal ghostly form before all in the ritae. This creature is not actually a spirit or a wraith. Rather is a construct made from the memories of all who participated about the deceased vampire. They may interact with, say their goodbyes, and gives thanks to the dead Sabbat member. However once the Ritae finishes the "spirit" of the dead vampire leaves. It can not be bound or compelled in any way (as it is not real). A dead vampire may only ever be called once with this Ritae.

Harvest Rites

The harvest represents the in mortal food supply. The Rites are held to bless the Hunt. The pack calls for aid in catching prey and covering the evidence. The Rite usually involves the Blood Feast before or afterward.

System: This ritae grants all who participate a free retest on all challenges made when hunting for blood. This effect lasts for one hunt only.

Jyhad Rites

The pack it asks for a blessing in upcoming Jyhad through this ritual. It often acts out a mock battle, though Sabbat have been known to get carried away and seriously hurt each other.

System: While under the effects of the Jyhad rites; any abilities and traits lost during these mock battles are restored at the end of the combat.

Oaths of Fealty

This is a less this is less a ritual than a swearing of mutual allegiance to one another. All the Sabbat of the pack profess their loyalty and responsibility to one another.

System: Packs that have sworn an Oath of Fealty may spend 1 action in a combat (or three seconds outside of a combat) to grant a pack mate a retest on any one challenge. This retest may only be called upon once per night, and a packmate may only ever give out one (though you may benefit from multiple packmates).

Pack Creed

The pack creed is a short, emotional speech about the duties of pack members and the honor of the pack.

System: Those Sabbat in their pack who partake in this ritae gain 1 free retest a night in all Self-Control/Instinct Challenges. Once called upon this retest is lost.

Running the Gauntlet

The pack actually forms two parallel lines with a few feet between them. Then all pack members in turn or one chosen pack member, runs between the two lines while the other vampires beat him.

System: Those Sabbat who undergo a Gauntlet and survive are forgiven of whatever minor infraction or crime they have committed. This ritae is only used for minor Offenses in the Sabbat. More serious Offenses require the Contrition Ritus.

Sacrificial Rites

This is a ritual involving the sacrifice of the human, Lupine or vampire. The pack may hold the sacrifice as part of another ritual or separately for some special reason.

System: The priest who performs this ritae may bless themselves or another. If a mortal is sacrificed the recipient may hold 1 more blood trait over their generational maximum for the night. If a Lupine is sacrificed the recipient gains 1 additional action (which functions as per celerity) for the next scene or an hour which may be called upon three times. If a vampire is sacrificed they gain two bonus traits on all challenges with a chosen discipline for the remainder of the night.

Vision Quest

In some packs, if an individual wishes to become a leader or simply seeks advice, she must go on a visionquest. The Sabbat's visionquest is similar to that of the Plains Indians. The Sabbat must go alone to a desolate spot. There he or she must fast, drinking only enough vitae to avoid torpor. She must pray constantly, meditate, and mutilate herself to induce a vision.

System: After spending atleast 30 minutes on your search for signs, you may attempt your reading. Start by asking the Storyteller a particular question. Once the question has been assigned a difficulty based on its wording, intent and quality of focus, you risk 1-5 mental traits and then engage in a static mental challenge vs. 8 traits. Depending on the number of traits risked determines how specific the answers you receive.

War Dance

The war dance is a ritual dance similar to the Jyhad Rites, but the war dance is held before the commencement of a war party. The war dance may also be held during crusades.

System: Those who participate in a war dance gain two bonus traits on all combat challenges to the combat chosen for the dance. Once this combat concludes these traits are lost.

Mark of Caine

Over the course of history, some of these rituals have been lost, either due to the death of Sect members, or because the ritus simply was not as integral to the Sect's survival in the modern world. One of these lost ritae was the Mark of the Father, which offered protection against weapons of faith. As faith has declined in the modern world, the ritus was used less and less, until eventually, priests who know the ritae have become all but extinct.

Some vampires who participated in the lost Mark of Caine ritus were especially blessed, and still bear a faint sign of favor. Such vampires are always old, pre-dating the first Sabbat Civil War, and once had this ritual cast upon them by a powerful practitioner. These vampires have a small, faded mark upon their forehead that resembles the Hebraic letter tav.

System: A vampire who undergoes this Ritae may purchase the merit Mark of Caine from Rites of the Blood page 41.

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Prayer to St. Gustav

To the Ventrue antitribu, the Presence discipline (while useful) is often viewed as decadent and unworthy of the martial heritage they imagine for themselves. In contrast, the Auspex discipline is prized for its power to grant insights and to see through deceptions.

This ignobilis ritus allows a Ventrue antitribu to replace Presence with Auspex as a Clan Discipline. The ritus requires a group consisting solely of Ventrue antitribu to participate in a Vaulderie while wearing ceremonial armor and singing the praises of St. Gustav Mallenhaus, the founder of the Sabbat Inquisition. The player of any crusader present who has not yet acquired any dots in Presence may roll Intelligence + Occult (difficulty 7), and if the roll succeeds, she may replace Presence with Auspex as a Clan Discipline. With five or more successes, the Storyteller may decide to award the Blessed by St. Gustav Merit. A character who has already started learning Presence may attempt this ritus, but may not swap out his Presence for Auspex — instead his Presence immediately becomes outof-Clan, and the player must pay the difference in experience points between what the Presence cost before and what it costs now.

FACTION RITAE

MODERATES

Embrace the Concrete Jungle

In the mondern nights, it is imperative that the Sabbat keep with the times. This ritual was developed to allow a better transition for Elders to awaken in unfamiliar urban territories; however the usefulness of this ability even for the youngest Cainite cannot be denied as it proves even the greenest of vampires knows how to utilize the streets to their advantage.

"Our home is concrete and stone. The jungle is made of buildings and lights. The unfamiliar land becomes our ally. With it the host remains true."

System: Grants 2 bonus traits on all Streetwise Ability tests. During the ritual all the participants must deal 1 Lethal to their right hand. If the priest heals their wound the Ritual effect is disrupted for everyone.

The Feast of Rebecca

The story of Rebecca is one of courage and resource. To sup from her blood makes the Cainite calmer in all situations, though to prove yourself worthy you must first overcome the Beast within. Such Rituals are often conducted before meeting a Cardinal, for to lose one's temper there is to invite death itself.

"May the resolve of Rebecca bless us this day. Let her courage and serenity awash our demons. Let the beast be soothed in this time."

System: This Ritual grants a single Bonus Trait on Self Control/Instinct challenges. All those involved in the Ritual put all their blood into a vessel in which the priest is standing. All participants must resist falling into a Feeding Frenzy, difficulty 7 minus the Priest's Ritae Ability level. This bonus lasts for the next scene or an hour.

LOYALISTS

Purity of Babel

The Book of Genesis details the story of a mighty city of peace and prosperity, whose heights would reach into heaven and rival even the glory of God. The Almighty struck down that city, even as Enoch was destroyed by the Deluge. So, too, do the Loyalists see absolute unity as another type of slavery, and reject conformity. The Purity of Babel was created to strengthen the pack, allowing secure communication even within a larger gathering. The fact that public conversations using the ritus tend to frustrate those who do not understand them is just a bonus. Only members of the Loyalist Faction may participate in this ritus.

System: For the rest of the night, those who participated in a specific Purity of Babel ritus (up to ten Loyalists) may choose to communicate with one another in a manner that is indecipherable to all those around them. These vampires have the capacity to literally speak another language, one that cannot be deciphered by any means. Further, this communication does not have to be verbal.

The participants in this ritual may signal to one another clearly so long as they can see, hear, touch, or otherwise clearly sense one another, even over video cameras, cellphone or other electronic means, and those who were not part of the individual's ritus cannot gain meaning from these gestures.

Vampires who participate in one Purity of Babel ritus may not decipher the communication of those using a different form of the ritus. This communication is as obvious as any other conversation; only the meaning is obscured.

Calling the Directions

This ritual hearkens back to the Native American shamanic practices adopted by the Sabbat upon the Sect's arrival in the New World. The Loyalist faction had the strongest ties with the native peoples of the Americas, from the tribes to the north to the huge cities of South America, and the rituals and philosophies learned from those shamanic practices still influence loyalist thought.

Calling the Directions is a means of invoking the spirits of the four winds (usually East, South, West, and then North), beckoning these cardinal spirits. By doing so, the participants of this ritual reconnect themselves to the elemental, primal nature of the world, asking to – for a short time – feel as if they are a part of the cycle of the living world. This ritual often involves dancing, drumming, and ecstatic practices.

System: This ritual requires at least four participants, one to stand at each quarter and call specific winds. Participants in this ritual gain a benefit according to the direction they invoke during the casting of the ritus. If there are more than four participants, the additional practitioners may choose which of the four directional points they are assisting, gaining the benefit of that quarter. These benefits last until the next sunrise.

East: The wind of speed and mental swiftness. The participant gains a +1 Bonus Traits to their initiative total.

South: The wind of passion, emotion and breath. The participant gains a + 1 Bonus Traits for purposes of interacting with mortals (or loses all negatives to interaction with mortals, if on a Path of Enlightenment).

West: The wind of wisdom and knowledge. The participant gains a + 1 Bonus Trait to any noncombat skill, chosen at the time of the ritual's casting.

North: The wind of the mountains and of physical constancy. The participant gains one additional Healthy wound box.

Fury of Caine

The power of the Beast is a potent tool, though rarely used, for though the vinculum remains strong, the urge to destroy the enemy is so great that even basic safety measures are ignored. The use of this Ritual ensures that the Beast is released but at the same time controlled to ensure carnage and common sense reign together.

System: The Ritual group automatically go into Controlled Frenzy in the next scene. However, if another stimulus occurs during this time, the character must test for frenzy as normal.

Run This Town

In many ways the Loyalists have always taken on the culture and mentality of the most down and out mortals of their area. In the modern nights this often reflected in emulation of Gang Culture. A love of violence and loyalty. 'Blood in, Blood out', is a common phrase among the loyalists. This rather old ritus of the faction comes from the nights of the Anarch Revolt. The Loyalists have kept it alive and well. Usually this ritae is only performed at a large gathering of Loyalists. Loud music, partying, fire, and violence all encompass this ritae. As the loyalists gather and rile themselves up in their beliefs and fanaticism to their cause, they often declare that they "Run This Town.". This ritus empowers this angry mob in their territory, creating a link between all loyalists who join. As a result, all territory controlled by the Loyalists gain several special effects.

System: The loyalists must tag an area with their markings and celebrate everything it means to be a Loyalist. Each time new territory is acquired by the faction, they need to perform this on the new territory. Each loyalist present spends one willpower to fuel the ritae. After doing so, for the remainder of the a month all Loyalists enjoy several perks when in loyalist territory. Firstly all Loyalists will be immediately aware when another of their faction is in danger in their territory. They don't know where exactly, who are why. But they will know something is up. This is reflected by performing a static Mental challenge retested with Awareness at a difficulty of 12. This is not perfect detection system, but rather only lets the Loyalists know if someone is in immediate direct danger. Spying, for example, would not count.

Status Quo

Laurel of Concordance

Members of the Status Quo do not appreciate change, and work to keep the Sect in a state of abiding stasis. They do this by creating consensus, and encouraging others to compromise rather than seek progress in any specific direction.

System: During this ritus, members of the Status Quo enchant sprigs of laurel, which they must keep on their person for the remainder of the night. If an individual loses this material token, the ritual's effects end for that vampire. This ritual may additionally be cast on mortals who have a blood tie to the Status Quo vampire (ghouls or Revenants).

For the rest of the night, all those involved in this ritual gain +2 Bonus Traits on all challenges for the purposes of mediation, achieving compromise, trying to calm someone out of frenzy, or quieting a state of aggression. This bonus does not apply to pools used with supernatural disciplines.

Voice of the Blood

The ability to instantly communicate under pressure should not be underestimated. Being able to silently communicate instructions to multiple targets could mean the difference between life and death. The effects of this Ritual allow a group to receive messages from the designated leader, five words in length. However, the effect is so powerful that anyone with Telepathy can enter your mind with ease.

System: The designated leader may send up to five Telepathic words to the Ritual participants – but are 4 Traits down to resist Telepathy.

Concord

This ritus crafted by the Status Quo is often used in heated conflicts between Sabbat. The architect must step in and offer to mediate a situation in hopes of working out differences between Sabbat. If he can convince the conflicting parties to sit down with one another, then he will perform this ritus. Shared over a bottle of blood wine, the ritus opens with a reading of the Sabbat's holy documents that guide the sect; as a reminder to all. After which the Status Quo member enjoys an aura of diplomacy to aid them.

System: While this ritus is in effect, all parties involved may not engage in open conflict or fight one another. To do so they must first defeat the status quo member in a Social Challenge retested with leadership.

ULTRA-CONSERVATIVES

Irad's Wall

Irad's Wall is an old ritus, but one guarded jealously by the Ultra Conservative faction to assure that their plans are unobserved. To cast, the petitioners must cause an area no larger than a single room of 100 square yards/ meters to be consecrated with incense and salt.

System: When this ritus is cast, it sanctifies a building or small area for a single night, preventing spirits, wraiths, or astral forms from entering the location. Such entities may attempt to spy on the protected area, but they cannot cross the barrier of Irad's Wall. If a body whose spirit is elsewhere crosses this barrier, the spirit immediately returns to its body – instantly ending powers like Possession, Astral Projection, or Soul Stealing. Characters who leave their bodies while inside of an area secured by Irad's Wall will find themselves unable to leave that area until their body crosses the barrier. This ritual ends when the sun rises.

Renunciation

The Renunciation is a solemn, formal ritual casting out all previous beliefs and doctrines, and swearing an oath before Caine to be loyal to the Ultra Conservative faction. This ritual (like all faction ritae) may only be performed by an Ultra Conservative, but may be cast on any other consenting vampire. An individual who undergoes this ritus is forgiven their previous sins against the Church of the Dark Father, and begins a new life as an Ultra Conservative. This ritus should be performed publicly. The priest who performs this ritus does not have to believe in the petitioner's sincerity; elder vampires of the Sect have long used this ritus to ensure the loyalty of allies who have fled from the Camarilla's ranks.

In order to fulfill the Renunciation, the vampire must swear a formal oath of allegiance to the Ultra Conservative faction. Thereafter, the performing priest stakes the petitioner in a public display of trust in the priest (it does not matter if this is against the petitioner's will, so long as it occurs). While the individual is transfixed, the priest recites a short Sermon of Caine over their unmoving form. When the stake is withdrawn, mythically representing the vampire overcoming

death (a symbolic Embrace), the vampire rises and is welcomed into the faction by her peers. The formal oath of the Renunciation is as follows:

"I (name), pledge to uphold the Sect, its rightful clergy, and its sacred goals, in the name of the Dark Father. Stability through discipline. Unity through constancy. Victory through relentlessness. I will prove my worth. I swear it, upon the altar of Caine."

System: A vampire who has undergone the Renunciation ritus gains a permanent Bonus Trait Self-Control or Instinct challenges, so long as they are a member of the Ultra Conservative faction and doing something that upholds the ideals of that faction. A priest who begins the Renunciation ritus but does not complete it (for example, kills the petitioner while they are staked) is considered to have broken the ritus, and will be punished severely by her superiors.

Soul of Hektor

A ritual which may actually date back to the fall of Rome itself, legend speaks of great ancient warriors never really dying and infusing worthy fighters with their warrior capabilities. This ritual created by a potent Pack priest claims to have actually ripped the soul of the great warriors from the past and added it to the strength of his pack. This power, though great, is short lived and creates a huge amount of animosity as the beast urges to break free.

"We shall shatter our enemies We shall grind their organs We leave our enemies begging We shall be victorious."

System: Grants 2 Bonus combat re-tests which must be used before all other Situational Retests. You may only ever use one retest of this ritae in a challenge at a time, and are applicable to Brawl, Melee, Firearms, Dodge, or Survival challenges

The Chain of Command

All Solders of the Ultra-Conservatives understand and respect the Chain of Command. They willingly sacrifice their freedom to ensure the freedom of all others and the Sabbat's Final Victory. This ritus was created as a reminder of their oath of loyalty to their faction and the chain of command. Lead by an Ultra-Conservative priest, the Soldier reads from the book of nod in regards to Gehenna and is reminded of their vow to save the Sabbat and the world from Gehenna and of their duty to Father Caine and the Sabbat as a whole. After such a speech, the Ultra-Conservative members feel invigorated and emboldened in their tasks.

System: After performing this Ritae all members of the Ultra-Conservatives that participated enjoy an additional two bonus traits on all combat challenges in the next scene they are in. The effects of this ritae wear off after a scene or an hour.

DANDER MOVEMENT

One of My Tribe

Devised by Joseph Pander himself, the Renaming Ceremony is based on Native American initiation and manhood rites. This ritual officially adopts a Caitiff (or an individual of any Clan) into the Panders. By spending a full night dancing, drumming, and performing feats of the blood with other Panders, the individual asks for and receives rebirth. She takes a new name and loses

all blood-ties to her former Clan, lineage, and Antediluvian, becoming a member of the Pander Clan.

System: By spending a full night in ritual activities with other members of this faction, the target individual, if willing, may cast off the ties of lineage and "become" a Pander. Although their character sheet retains their native Clan, they sever all metaphysical connections to Sire and lineage. Malkavians are expelled from the Madness Network, and any powers that work through the ties of lineage can no longer target them.

Reveal the Inner Beast

This Ritual was first used to create a feeling of fear and mistrust when the Anarchs were trying to muscle in on an area. It has been used in modern nights to extract information from individuals without the use of physical violence.

"The beast is fear. Our face hides our desire. The beast triumphant. Our bodies weak. The beast shall overcome all. Our soul is lost."

System: The Ritual group gains 3 bonus Intimidation Ability traits, but cannot initiate any Social Challenge other than those which are Intimidation-based. This bonus lasts for one scene or an hour.

Death of the Elder's Blood

Description: For some Pander Supremacists, just because a cainite is a member of the Pander movement is not enough. These cainites call for their brothers and sisters to willfully shed their clan blood and identity. The ritae begins with the Pack Priest asking the would be member some questions, and giving brief monologues about Caine, and the meaninglessness of clans. The questions are used to determine the cainite's true motives. The line of questioning ends when the priest asks the candidate "to which clan to you belong?" Their answer will set the tone for what follows. If the candidate proclaims any clan other then Pander, one way or another they will be told they do not belong. If they declare Pander or claim they are clanless, then the ritae will continue to unfold.

The candidate is told to dig a grave and to lie within. Then, while standing around the grave the candidate has dug for them self, the pack priest consecrates a Vaulderie (the candidate does not add blood). The candidate is then instructed to free the blood from their veins and to allow it to drain into the earth until they have no blood left within their body. As the blood drains from the candidate the pack proclaims the strengths of the Clanless, declaring why they have united under the name Pander and how they are Caine's truer children. At this point, a small portion of the Vaulderie is given to the candidate and the pack quickly buries the candidate as the priest makes proclamations of Caine setting them free from their elder's, and Caine's blood washing away the curses he laid on the antediluvians.

The candidate is then expected to dig them self free of the grave they dug for their old self. Should the candidate fail to dig them self free the pack leaves them behind, as obviously their clan had too much of a hold over them. If the candidate digs them self out they will find the remainder of the Vaulderie and additional fresh blood awaiting them. After they have finished the blood in the Vaulderie and have filled themselves on fresh blood they are told that their old self is dead, and they must find a new name for them self. They are welcomed into the pack and a Vaulderie is performed cementing their new ties.

System: The Ritae begins with a Sermon of Caine for all intents and purposes. After the individual has spilt their blood from their veins the pack begins to prepare the Vaulderie. By the mystic nature of the Ritae, through the combined belief of the pack, this is where the real magic takes place.

If the individual has spilled all their blood and told the truth about their desire to renounce their clan, they are not effect by the sight, smell, or taste of blood, and they will not hunger frenzy as a result of the Vaulderie being prepared. Furthermore, when the small bit of the Vaulderie is given to the candidate, they will feel as if they are going though the change a second time. While the candidate is feeling the agony of the change the pack quickly buries candidate. If the individual has lied about their intent to abandon their clan or held even one blood trait in their system, they must make three hunger frenzy challenges (even if they are not hungry) with a difficulty of 6. These challenges should occur when the Vaulderie is consecrated, when the candidate. The target of this hunger frenzy will be the blood in the Vaulderie chalice. Upon drinking any of the blood from the Vaulderie, the candidate will feel the agony of the change. Unlike a honest and sincere candidate, however, this pain is accompanied with a deep burning sensation. The failed candidate takes three points of lethal damage per round until they fall into torpor. (Optionally the challenges can be made before the ritae with an ST so the RP is not interrupted by RPS and the host pack does not know if the individual has lied or not.)

After the candidate is buried they must dig themselves out of the grave. They must win (not tie) two out of three simple tests to free themselves from the grave. Each physical trait the candidate spends entitles them to get another test. Once they have accumulated two wins they have freed themselves from the earth (assume each test takes 10 minutes). The now reborn Pander will have a new temporary derangement that will last for the next month, after which time it fades away.

If the candidate entered frenzy or failed to dig them self out of the grave, the pack will take it as a sign of the candidate's lack of faith or the strength of the hold the candidate's antediluvian had over them. This does not mechanically change the character's clan, and is entirely an In Character belief and change.

Occult Underground

Wisdom of the Crone

The Sabbat have never been famed for their brainpower, so it was only a matter of time before a Priest would develop a ritual to increase a Packs thinking capability. The Priest who developed it had a slightly sick sense of humor and he could only impart brainpower by eating brains. Even then it only works for specific occult based information. More work is needed to increase actual brainpower, but the Sabbat may well have more important things to do...

"My mind is open to be expanded. The brains of all others will make me stronger. The power of brains shall create a web of information. Like a spider drinking a corpse, we shall sup from the brains of humanity. With this brain we will feast; mmm brains."

System: This Ritual grants 2 bonus points to Occult or Sabbat Lore ability scores for the scene.

Eyes of the Lowlands

The Giovanni have always had something the Sabbat requires; the ability to see Ghosts, Wraiths and all sorts of spectral creatures. This Ritual allows a Cainite to know if he is being watched, for when your resting place can be touched by such a creature from which you have no defense, then at least the ability to see them should be able to ward them off. Strangely this ritual was developed by a Samedi, and even then it was an accident during a particularly drug-induced game of instinct. It requires the Cainite to lose a piece of himself into the ether so that his mind may see the spectral forms around him.

"My eyes shall see the unseen. My mind shall know that which cannot be known. My sight knows no bounds. No spies shall hide from me."

System: Participants gain the ability to see Ghosts and Wraiths for a scene, but lose a Mental and a Social Trait.

ORDER OF ST. BLAISE

Martyr's Eyes

The members of the Order of St. Blaise use this ritual as an early warning system, giving them limited information at range when things go wrong.

System: When someone who "contains" the vampire's blood (a ghoul or someone with a high vinculum to them) is truly frightened or demonstrably in danger, the vampire receives a flash of insight. This insight provides only a sense of who is in danger, and a sense of the general cause (being attacked, falling off a building, being chased by police, or seeing a werewolf, for example). This ritual only needs to be cast once. Thereafter, the ritual's effects are permanent so long as the target maintains a bond of blood (such as the vinculum or the blood ingested by a ghoul) to the caster. If that bond of blood is ever destroyed, the ritual must be enacted again.

The Blessing of Saint Blaise

Drawing upon Saint Blaise in his capacity as the patron saint of throat ailments, the order uses this ritus to guard against maladies which pass through the throat. The priest begins by consecrating a pair of candles, and presses them in a crossed position to the neck of blessing's recipient. The priest then recites the blessing, "Through the invocation of Saint Blaise, bishop and martyr of the Sword, may Caine deliver you from ailments." The recipient is then cured of any harmful effects they may be suffering as a result of having ingested something, and further grants a measure of protection against the harmful effects of ingested substances for the next seven days.

System: If the target has been affected by poison, drugs, or any other ingested substance, the effects of those substances are immediately ended. This includes anything which has been

poisoned, diseased, chemically altered, or tampered with, provided it was consumed through the throat.

Further, the ritus protects against the next single ingestion of tainted substances within a seven day period. Note this does not remove the Disease Carrier flaw from a vampire with that Flaw (the infection is latent within the Cainite), but could cure someone who has consumed the blood of an individual who possesses that Flaw. This ritus has no effect on the blood bond or the Vaulderie.

Red Confession

The cainite clears their mind by confessing their sins against their path and moments of weakness to the performing priest. Depending on the severity of the sin in question the Priest might offer various forms of penance. After the sinner has made peace with themselves and Caine, the Priest blesses them, marking them across his forehead with a trait of vitae. This absolves the Cainite of his sin, giving him a renewed sense of clarity.

System: Completion of this Ritus (Which must be role-played) gives the confessor in this Ritae a +1 trait bonus to conscience and conviction challenges for the evening.

Excommunication

This Ritus is one of punishment, used on Cainites deemed no longer capable of performing Ritae and who have been stripped of the ability to hold the Ordained status. The priests performing this Ritus (Must be at least three) take turns reciting the failings of the priest in question. When it is finished the target of this ritus is offered the opportunity to beg contrition of the acting priests. If it is either not asked for or refused, the target is then spat upon and thus rendered unable to perform Ritae. If they attempt to perform Ritae, it automatically fails and deals the false priest a level of lethal damage that comes in the form of an obvious lash across the face or back.

Midnight Mass

This Ritus is akin to the catholic church's normal mass. However instead, it is solely for Cainites. Sabbat gather in a Catholic Church (usually cleared of all non Sabbat before hand). There, the Preacher reads Sermons, Tales, and other Noddist lore to his Brothers and Sisters. The goal of the Ritus is to help the Order of St. Blaise gain more acceptance with the rest of the Sabbat and uplift their mass. However, the truth is that the Ritus holds another purpose. While the Midnight Mass appears to be a Social gathering of Cainites to discuss the religion of the sect, the Order also uses it as a method to scout out heretics. After a Midnight Mass, the Order gains a number of bonus traits on all challenges to determine if someone is a heretic equal to the casting priests path rating. This effect lasts for one month.

Exorcism Rites

Taken from the Catholic Rites of Exorcism, the Order of St. Blaise created this Ritus to combat the demonic who would possess others and take hosts. The ritus followers a similar method as the normal Catholic Rite, though the Preacher often substitutes God with Caine. Indeed, like the normal rite, it may take days or weeks to exorcise a demon. First the Priest needs to learn the name (though note, not necessarily the True Name) of the Demon who is possessing the individual. Once that is learned, the Priest performs the rite to banish the Demon. The Priest engages the Demon in a contested Willpower Challenge. The Priest needs to defeat the Demon in a number of challenges equal to the possessing Demon's Faith Score if it's a Fallen, or Gnosis Score if it is a Spirit Demon. The Priest may only perform one challenge a night, so most Exorcisms take several nights at the earliest. Should the priest win, the Demon is exorcised from its host and forced to either return to hell or find a new home. Should the priest lose, there is always the chance the Demon may take them over instead.

CO

CHILDREN OF THE DRACON

Lay of the Land

Since before the ties of urbanization all humans had experiences with Survival, and thus so did Cainites. Now though new vampires do not understand the fields and woodlands as they do the cities. Rarely used, it makes it more likely that vampires who have to make long trips will survive when moving around in the wilderness.

"Our home is the very land beneath our feet. The city is made of trees and stars. The road allows us access. With the Beast we are free."

System: Grants 2 bonus Traits on all Survival Ability tests. During the ritual all the participants must deal 1 Lethal to their right hand. If the priest heals their wound the Ritual effect is disrupted for everyone.

Blood Alchemy

The Children of the Dracon are, first and foremost, scholars of the Sabbat who pride themselves on study and inner reflection. As such, the Faction has developed a ritae that mirrors the old beliefs and practices of Alchemy. Using their own blood mixed with various Alchemical substances, the Children of the Dracon can create potent elixirs.

System: The Elixirs created by the Ritae of Blood Alchemy allow those who imbibe them to gain Two Bonus Mental, Physical, or Social Traits for a scene or an hour. A vampire may only ever be under the effect of one Blood Alchemy at a time.

ECCLESIASTICAL

Atra Sacamentum

The sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church are considered necessary for a mortal's salvation. So, too, do Orthodox members of the Church of Caine consider the Atra Sacramentum integral to a vampire's unlife. When the Atra Sacramentum is cast, all vampires involved in the ritus must perform a sacrifice of their own flesh, offering reparation to the Dark Father in penance for the sins of her forefathers, the Antediluvians. Typically, the ritus is performed in front of an altar fire, into which each vampire slices a finger or some other small portion of their flesh while offering a prayer for the blessing of Caine.

System: The vampire receives two points of unsoakable aggravated damage when performing this ritual. Healing this wound ends all effects of the Atra Sacramentum. Until the next sunset, a vampire who has participated in the Atra Sacramentum ritus does not suffer the effects of their

Clan's weakness. A vampire may only receive the benefits of the Atra Sacramentum once per lunar month, and the ritus's benefits last only for one night.

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The Last Rites

The ritual of the Last Rites is typically performed on a vampire who is entering a situation in which they are about to die. This ritual may only be performed by an Orthodox member of the Sabbat, but may be cast on any individual to whom the caster has a Vinculum.

System: To cast this ritual, the Orthodox faction member melts a small bar of silver in a brazier, and the target must press their fingers into the molten metal, taking a point of unsoakable lethal damage. Healing this wound ends all effects of the Last Rites.

If the target of this ritual dies, the caster becomes immediately aware of the death. So long as the death does not include their diablerie, the target's soul may be "reclaimed" by the caster of this ritus by simply willing it to join with her own. Although the caster does not gain any mechanical benefit, it is in all other ways as though she had performed the diablerie upon her companion. In the moment that the soul is "reclaimed," the caster gains a vision from the dead vampire's point of view, allowing them to see the last moments of the target's existence. The effects of this ritual last until the next sunrise; if the target dies after the sun has cleared the horizon on the morning after the ritual was enacted upon them, the caster will not know.

Red Pentecost

This ritae was developed to extend one's senses into the ethereal divine. By using either a mixture of herbs and alchemy, or the use of the discipline of Dementation, the priest causes his congregation to experience extremely vivid hallucinations and revelations. In doing so, it in encourages those to experience their darkest desires and either indulge or restrain these urges. This often results in torture, murder, self-flagellation and other such horrors.

System: The faction priest performs this rite through either use of Dementation or a combination of herbs, toadstools, and alchemical potions. Those who undergo this rite suffer from a divine vision quest, of sorts, as they are in a frenzied state. Even creatures like mortals who do not have beasts enter this frenzied state. While in this state, victims suffer from a divine revelation and indulge in all the darkest monstrous urges they could conceive of. Much like a normal frenzy, those who have undergone the Red Pentecost don't recall what happened, only the divine revelations they had. Please see the Cainite Heresy book on page 48.

Blood Communion

This rite resembles the Sabbat rite of the Vaulderie, but with much more catholic overtones. Indeed this rite is nothing more than the Catholic Eucharist rite, but instead of wine the priest uses the blood of Caine. This is often used in personal performances of the rite, however it can be given to an entire heretical mass. Cainites who indulge in this rite suffer the same effects as the Vaulderie, but mortals simply become blood bound as per the normal drinking of cainite vitae. The ceremony, however, often does increase the potency of the blood drank resulting in euphoric effects. **System:** This ritae is largely a role-play mechanic and is a central rite to the Faction. The Blood Communion is quite literally the Catholic Rite of the Eucharist, but instead of wine, the priest's blood is used instead. Vampires who partake follow the normal rules for a Vaulderie with a catholic twist to it. Mortals who undertake the Blood Communion suffer the normal effects of the blood bond and even experience euphoric feelings. See the Cainite Heresy book on page 49.

CRIMSON TIDE

Way of the Road

The one thing that separates the Crimson Tide from all other Nomadic Sabbat is their code of conduct which has been blended with this Ritae. The Crimson Tide pays lip service at best to the Code of Milan. The Way of the Road is the governing code they hold as the means by which the Faction conducts itself. The Way of the Road is a code followed by all members of the faction even if they do not know the Ritae. The Ritae is used at campfire gathers of the faction and performed for all. Since much of the faction's history is oral tradition, many other ritae are performed in addition to this one. The priest speaks of the early nights of the Sabbat, and why the nomadic lifestyle is the true way for the sword. At the conclusion of the speach the priest recites the Way of the Road. The Way of the Road is as follows:

- A leader may be challenged at any time. If defeated the challenger replaces the leader.
- The Ritae are sacred and must be followed
- One's Word will be honored. Once it is given it is to be kept.
- If in anthers territory one strikes a bargain, that bargain must be kept. Honor your word and Honor the territory of another until and unless they betray your trust.
- When you meet, a fellow traveler offer them a place at your fire. If they pay their way with a story they are free to go and may not be challenged
- All must put the good of the whole before the good of the one.
- If you know where your enemy is, take the fight to them, draw them out, do not allow them to exist if you have the means to destroy them.
- Those who fail in the Way are not worthy of it and such shall have their heart's blood reclaimed.
- Our Justice is Eye for an Eye.
- We are Free and kneel to no one.
- Monomacy and single combat shall settle all disputes.
- Any may call a council of Warlords and the Khan for Judgment
- He who drops the prey has claim to the prey

System: Those who swear upon the Way of the Road or renew their vows to it feel a since of inspiration. Characters who perform the Way of the Road Ritae gain 1 temporary Willpower which may not go over their permanent Willpower rating.

Shovel Party

Those outside the Sabbat tell that the sect takes vampires they wish to induct into the Sword of Caine and buries them alive. The stories say the new sabbat prospects are hit over the heads and

buried in graveyards to strip them of their humanity. The Sabbat indoctrinates its members to their ways from the very start. These stories are a misunderstanding of the Sabbat's Creation rites. The Crimson Tide keep this ritae alive as they claim it was once a sect wide practice.

The Priest makes the recipient dig their own grave in dirt. Once completed they hit the individual in the back of the head with a shovel knocking them out (regardless if they are vampire or mortal). After which, the recipient of this Ritae must claw themselves out of the earth to freedom. The sheer horror of having to dig one's self out of their own grave causes the victim to shred his humanity and emerge a Cainite monster of the Sabbat.

System: The ritae must be performed as described above. Those who wish to dig themselves out of their grave must perform 5 static physical challenges at a difficulty of 10 retested with Athletics. After each successful test the victim must then engage in a Conscience test at an increasing difficulty of 1 to 5 based on order of challenges (Challenge 1 is difficulty 1, Challenge 5 is difficulty 5). Each time they fail they will lose a level of Humanity. Regardless if the victim passes all tests they will lose at least 1 level of Permanent Humanity. Note this Ritae has no effect on those who do not follow Humanity before it is used.

Soul Trophy

Among the Crimson Tide diaberie is seen as a badge of honor. To the members of the Faction the only downside to the Diablerie is that its markings on your soul fade over time. Meaning to them the honor is lost. Members of the Crimson Tide developed this Ritae to make it far more permanent on their Auras. Before diablerizing a foe, the priest will take the blood of the fallen enemy and put it across the face of the victor in three thick streaks across their face. After some offerings to Caine and to the supremacy of the Vampire Race the recipient of the Ritae must commit Diablerie upon his victim. After which the Diablerie Veins from the act on the aura of the vampire are now permanent. In addition, each time they commit Diableire the veins go thicker and those in the know can count how many times the vampire has committed diaberlie, like rings on a tree trunk.

System: After committing Dialberie the priest may perform this Ritae and make the Black Veins on their aura permanent instead of fading within three months' time. Additionally, a priest who knows this ritae may attempt to read the veins of a person who has undergone it. After successfully using the power of Aura Perception they may now also ask the questions "How Many times have you committed Diablerie?" and "What are the names of those you Diablerized?" at the cost of 1 temporary Mental Trait per question.

Single Combat

Monomacy is an auctoritas ritae that is used for ritual combat to the death between two Sabbat. It has a variety of uses and ways it is performed. Using that as a basis for inspiration the Crimison Tide developed this Ignoblis Ritae. Single Combat is simply a fight between two cainites. There are no tricks or deviations allowed. The Two combatants simple fight until one drops the other. Final Death is no allowed in Single Combat unless explicitly decided upon by the two combatants and the overseeing priest. The terms of the combat are simple. The combatants are allowed a sword each and must fight until one can no longer fight. Everything else goes, and the

fight happens when the priest says it will take place. Use of cowardly tactics or disciplines are grounds for immediate loss. The priest oversees the challenge and makes all judgments in this regard. At its core Sonor Combat is a simple fight between two cainities to determine who is strongest and best.

System: The only mechanical effect of this ritae is that the priest overseeing it will be automatically aware of all supernatural powers being used in the duel and who is using them. In this way, he is allowed to know if anyone is cheating in what is considered an Honorable Combat.

INQUISITION

Auto-De-Fe

The Act of Faith is the traditional trial of the Sabbat Inquisition. The Auto-de-fe is a semi formal trial of guilty until proven innocent. A Judge Inquisitor sits as head of the trial as the accused has the charges leveled against them. Others may be invited to speak as witnesses, defenders, or accusers. All however, are required to swear an oath upon the Iron Reliquary. More often than not, those who are subjected to the Auto-de-fe are killed; some are offered an ordeal instead, decided by the overseeing inquisitor. These Ordeals are often as well to the death. Though trials are overseen by the Judge Inquisitors (and they are the Judge, Jury, and Executioner), the Knight Inquisitors run security during the trials. Trials may last as long or as short as the Judge overseeing it decides. Though ceremonial, the Auto-de-fe is also a ritae was inspired by the Spanish Inquisition. The few who do survive the Auto-de-fe are viewed as free of heresy in the Sabbat.

System: Once the auto-de-fe has begun and until its conclusion, the Judge Inquisitor gains a free retest on all challenges related to the trial.

Malleus Maleficarum

Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live. This is the creed of the Knight Inquisitors. This ritus was developed by the martial arm of the Sabbat Inquisition. The Knights are often tasked with carrying out the most dangerous of missions to directly confront and fight heresy. As a result, the Knight Inquisitors have developed this ritus based upon the Malleus Maleficarum book, but with a Sabbat twist. Though many Inquisitors are Christian in nature, not all are. This ritus focuses more on the teachings and blessings of Caine then those in the actual Malleus Maleficarum. While under the effects of this ritus, Knight Inquisitors fall under a spell of almost fanatical zealotry. They will let none stand in their path, and few would dare try to get in their way.

System: While under the effects of the ritus of the Malleus Maleficarum, which may only be used when directly fighting heresy, the Knight Inquisitor receives one free retest that may be used on any combat challenge against his chosen target heretic. The target of this ritae must actually be a heretic for this ritae to take effect.

BLACK HAND

The Call is Issued

The Alpha of the Kamut chooses and assembles its members as dictated by a mission of the Black Hand. As each member of the chosen step forward for the Kamut the Alpha asks them to recite their oath. Each then slashes their palm with an anointed blade of the Black Hand in remembrance to their oath and are welcomed by the Alpha into the Kamut.

System: The effects of this ritae is the Kamut gains one bonus traits on all challenges related to their assembled purpose.

Sacrament of Caine

The Black Hand's version of the Vaulderie is performed much the same way as the traditional Auctoritas Ritae. The major deference being is that is only performed for members of the Chosen. Additionally many Black Hand priests like to quote the Adominations for their Sacraments.

System: The Sacrament of Caine functions the same as a normal Vaulderie. However, Characters should record these Black Hand Vinculum separately from their normal ones. This version of the Vaulderie creates a stronger bond between Hand members than a normal Vinculum. It is used specifically so that Black Hand agents may ignore any lesser non-Black-Hand Vinculum when sent on missions against regular Sabbat.

The Eagle Watches

When a new Watch Commander is appointed to oversee a Watch, their Dominion will perform this ritae to make their rise to the role official in the eyes of the chosen. The Dominion gathers all to this watch and asks for the new Watch Commander to step forward and kneel. They will then recite an oath of mantra related to their Watch and swear before the whole of the Watch for the new Watch Commander to his duties to them. The Dominion then pulls their new Watch Commander up from their knees and welcomes them into their new role.

System: As long as the Watch Commander maintains their Role within their appointed Watch; they gain 1 Bonus Trait on all Social Challenges against members of their Watch.

Walk of Caine

This ritae is performed on the rare occasions that an assigned Black Hand's punishment is not immediate death. Used as a form of excommunication, the subject is given a year and a day to make suitable amends for the offense in question, and is slain if he is unable to do so. Often, the Seraphim will track the subject with a Bloodstone during this time as well. The subject's hand-the same hand marked during of The Branding--is severed, and will not grow back for the duration of a year and a day. This ritual is known and performed by Seraphim only. Those under this ritae have until their time is up to prove their loyalty and right to be Black Hand. Should they succeed, they are welcomed amongst them again. Should they fail, they are destroyed by the Seraphim. **System:** There are no specific mechanics for this ritae. However, those under its effects are known to all Black Hand. They are expected to be considered not one of them or helped in any way as they try to make amends with the Chosen.

Tests of Faith

The Black Hands version of a Game of Instinct is used more for training purposes then anything else. Rather than using games as a cover to help train; the Tests of Faith are far more blunt about their purpose. Members of the Chosen use these Tests to practice and train their martial prowess, their knowledge of noddism, or any other specific skills they may require.

System: Any Traits or Abilities used and lost during a Test of Faith are regained at the end of the scene. This ritae may only be used for Training purposes.

Ritus of Ascension

This Ritae is known only by the Seraphim Themselves. This ancient blood rite is used when the Seraphim choose to elevate another to the rank of Dominion. Once chosen the new Dominion must travel on foot and make the pilgrimage to the Weeping Stone Alone. Once they arrive the council of Serpahim are waiting by the Stone. The recipient is expected to strip bare before the Seraphim and the Stone. On their knees they swear a personal oath to Zillah and her Seraphim. Dedicating their eternal lives and souls to their service. The Seraphim them bath the recipient on the blood of the Weeping Stone and finally given a Zillah's Tear. During which the new Dominion experiences heightened visions and messages from the Weeping Stone. Once completed the Cainite rises as a Dominion of the Black Hand.

System: The only mechanics for this ritae is that once performed the Seraphim may always contact and interact with the Dominion regardless of any distance or status of the Dominion.

Irad's Grace

The Chosen's version of the Stealth Ritus is performed in a similar manner. Rather than cutting out their tongue however, the members of the chosen instead invoke the name of Irad and spill their own blood to honor him. Once invoked, the Black Hand agent may not speak, less the blessing of this ritae fade.

System: While under the effects of this ritae, the recipients gain a number of bonus traits to all Stealth challenges equal to the casting priest's morality rating. The effects of this Ritae end if a recipient speaks while under its use.

The Branding

Ritae are already an important part of Sabbat culture; every True Sabbat has undergone Creation Rites and theVaulderie, among others. The Black Hand makes use of Sabbat ritae, but always had its own set of secret ritae as well, both formal and informal.

The formal rite of initiation into the Chosen of Caine is simple, but filled with symbolic meanings. Only one cadet is initiated at a time, so the full impact of the ritual may be felt by undergoing it alone (though other cadets may be initiated that same night, in separate rituals). The initiate has already passed the final tests (Storytellers, see Chapter Five for suggestions), and is ready now to swear her allegiance o Caine and his Chosen. She has spent the day in a stone

tomb to symbolize surrendering her unlife and self-determination, lying naked 'save for a linen shroud. When the proper time comes, she is taken on a bier to a place of ritual; a circle of stone is traditional, though the site may be either outdoors or deep underground. There, in the presence of at least three dominions, one of whom may be her sponsor, she answer the questions put to her about her willingness to sacrifice her unlife, blood and soul to Caine's purpose. Some of her blood is put into a Vaulderie vessel, along with that of the other participants and witnesses, which is then ritually blessed. She is given a robe of black to wear, and is sometimes even given armor. Then, kneeling before the senior dominion with his sword point to her throat, she takes the oath, swearing by her own blood. He accepts her oath formally as well, dipping a finger into the cup and drawing a mystical sigil in blood on her forehead to seal her vow. The initiate offers her right hand, palm up, relying on willpower o steady her as a dominion with skilled in blood sorcery uses an sharpened awl dipped in the contents of the cup to cut the crescent into her palm. The initiate is the first to drink from the Vaulderie cup. It is a potent draft indeed, for it activates the thaumaturgical ritual. The wound in her flesh burns itself painfully deep, then heals, leaving a perfectly shaped black crescent. The cup is shared among all participants, as witnesses to her oath. A Blood Feast follows, attended by as many of the Hand as can be there, to introduce themselves and meet their new sister in Caine's service.

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System: This ritae creates the Crescent Moon Tattoo on all Black Hand members and is given to them when they first join. The Tattoo will always remain and may never be removed.

Zillah's Retribution

When a member of the chosen is killed its Watch (usually its Chaplin, but not always) will call for Zillah's Retribution. The priest calls forth the name of the one was killed by one not of the chosen. They then name their killer and call to Caine and Zillah to give them the strength to be their vengeance given form. Each member of the Chosen that wishes to partake in this callt o vengeance steps forward. Each swears their dedication to pursue the killer of the one who slew the member of the chosen. Each spills their own blood after swearing their oath. There after those so marked by this ritae are forever hunted by the chosen

System: All those members of the Black Hand who participate in this ritae gain a number of bonus traits on all challenges to kill the target of this ritae equal to the casting priests morality rating. This Ritae only concludes with the death of the target.

Enoch's Test

Conflict and mistrust are not common things among the chosen; however from time to time members have been known to take issue with one another. When one member of the Chosen's word is distrusted by another this ritae is performed. Similar to the normal Sabbat's Truth Revealed ritae; it intent is of the same mind. A chosen whose word is doubted speaks their truth and spills their blood over their crescent moon tattoo. If the member of the chosen is speaking the truth the tattoo will absorb the blood. If the member of the chosen is lying, the blood will wash over the tattoo and fall off.

System: Similar to truth Revealed but no method may be used to fool this ritae. It will always reveal the truth.

The Four Ride Forth

Also known as the Mission Ritus; was created by Black Hand Dominion named Ghost. This ritae is used by the chosen for any assigned mission given by their Dominion or Watch Commander. Reminding the Kamut assigned to the task of their vows to the Chosen, the priest instills his own zealotry and fervor into the Kamut. The members of the Kamut who benefit from this ritae gain a number of bonus traits on all challenges related to the assigned mission equal to the casting priests Path of Enlightenment rating.

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System: While on the appointed mission and in their Kamut, the participants receive a number of bonus traits in all challenges dedicated to the mission elected from this ritae equal to the casting priest's morality rating. This Ritae ONLY functions while in a Kamut and on a direct Black Hand Mission. Using it nightly will not work and is an abuse of the ritae.