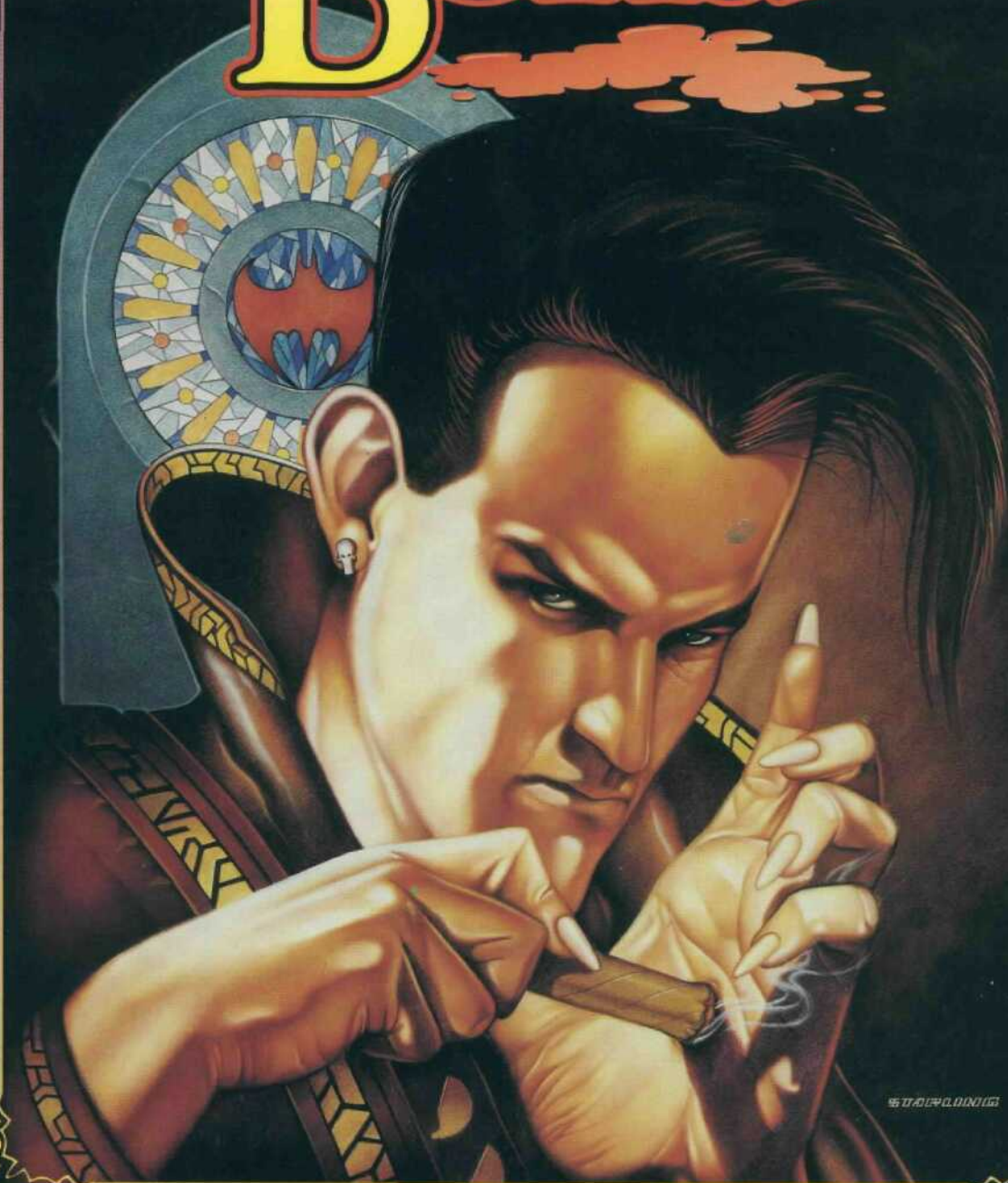
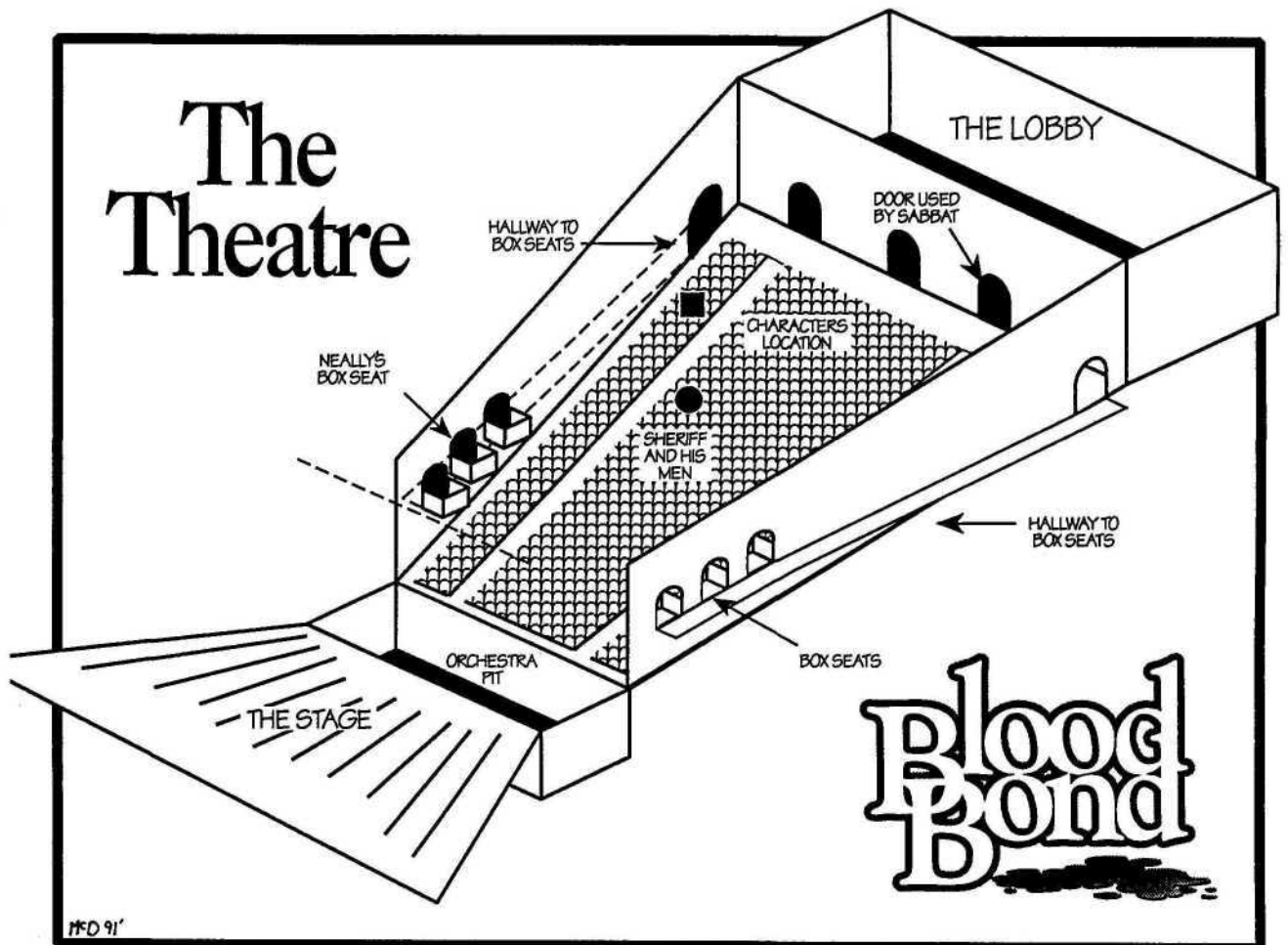
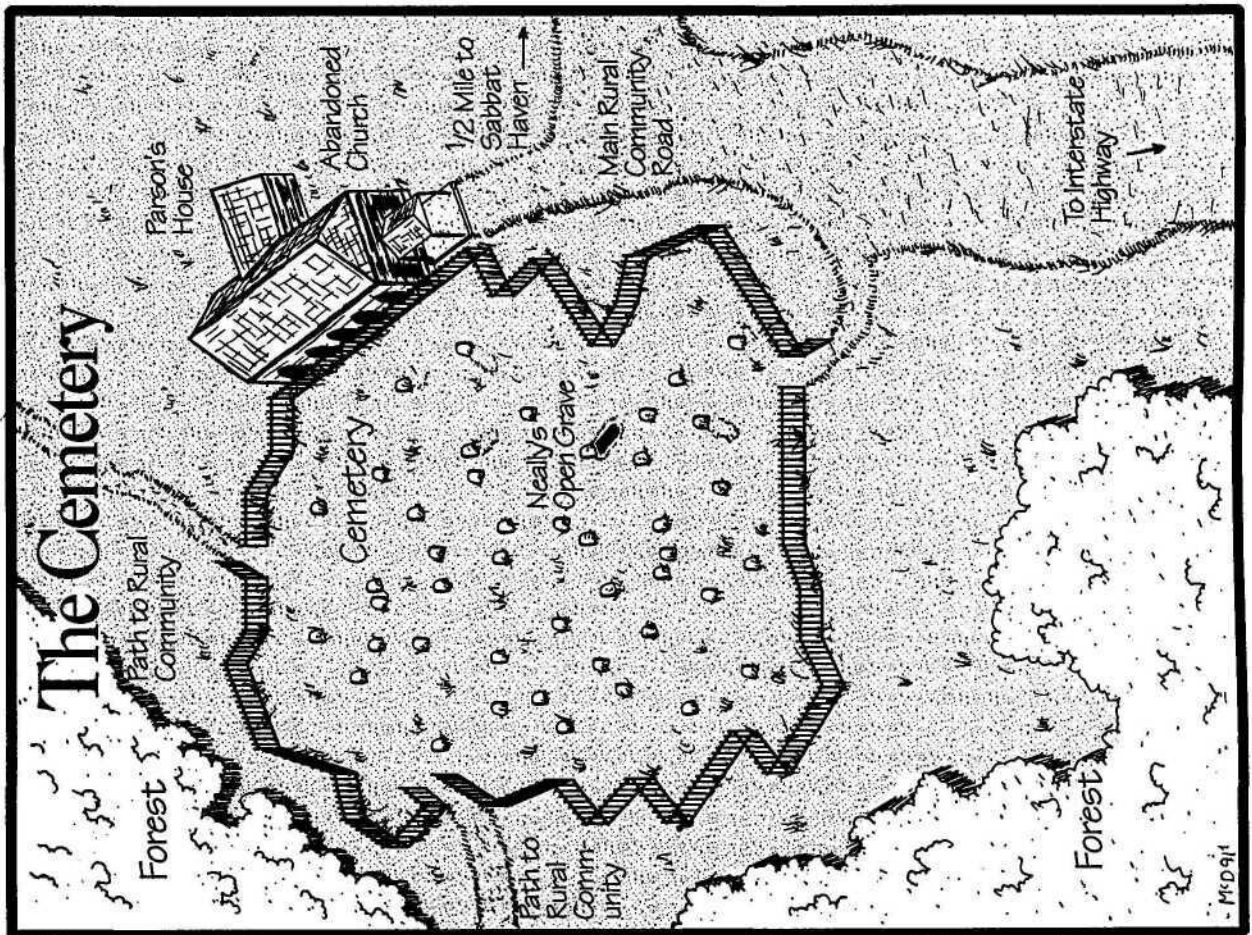


Blood Bond



STANLEY DUNN

A Story for
VAMPIRE™
THE MASQUERADE™



BLOOD BOND

Written by Ken Cliffe

"**Monster!** Whither is thy haste? What designs breed thy rage?"
— Beethoven, *Fidelio*

Many Cainites enjoy pretending they have become bitter cynics, incapable of caring or being cared for. Despite the effort they put into their steely images, the reality of the Blood Bond denies this pose. The hearts of all Vampires, whether they have reached the splendor of Goleonda or the inhuman depths of diablery, can be seduced by the thrice-drunk vitae of their Kindred.

Those thus captured find the warmth of a new-found love spreads through them as they gulp down the third draught. The desires of their regnant become their own, and not even their own existence matters more than their beloved. No acne-scarred teenager was ever more enthralled by puppy love. No newlywed ever felt greater desire. No mortal has ever felt more vulnerable.

Blood Bond is total.
Blood Bond is consuming.
Blood Bond cannot be escaped...
Or can it?

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*This supplement is dedicated to
the memory of Theodore Seuss Geisel
- Dr. Seuss - who told stories to us all.*

Neally Edwards

Special Thanks:

Ken "What are you doing to my work?" **Cliffe** for not losing his cool over space constraints.

Mark "Back on Schedule" **Rein • Hagen** for busting butt (mainly other people's) to get things the way they're supposed to be.

Stewart "Supreme Ruler of this Dimension, and..." **Wieck** for not dominating all he surveys and leaving it to us puny mortals.

Wes "Original Gangsta" **Harris** for instructing all up and coming MacDaddies.

Josh "Shut up, fool" **Timbrook** for not allowing his new position to go to his head.

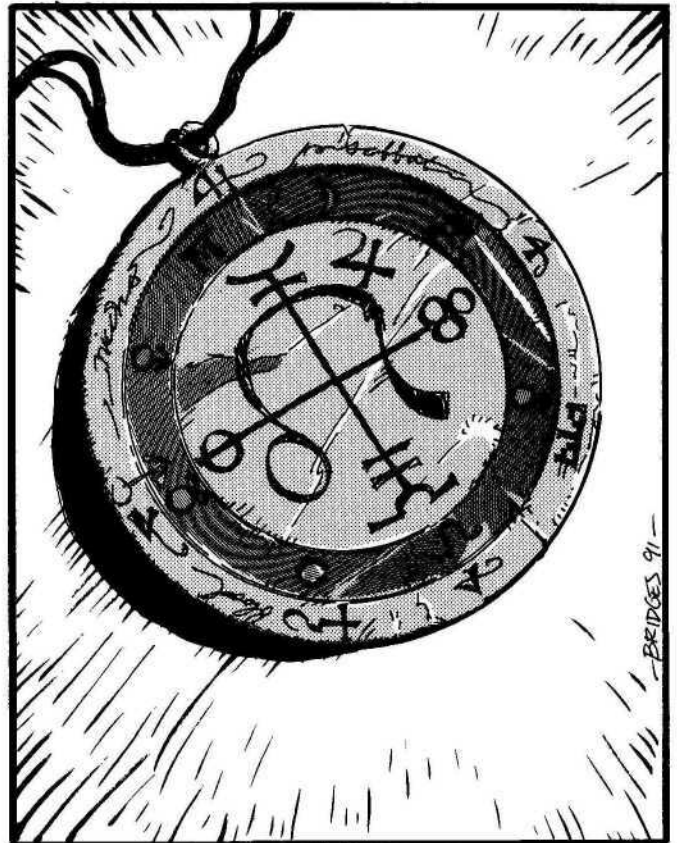
Sam "You ever tasted Auturian Speckled Goose Pie?" **Chupp** for cooking real food and having sugar.

Andrew "Whoah - Gravity" **Greenberg** for putting his foot down and through the roof.

Travis "Oid" **Williams** for going on and on and on and on and on about the computer (and its games, functions, peripherals, etc.)

Chris "Maui Wowee" **McDonough** for taking Ann off the Market (Damn!)

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The Amulet of the Sabbat

INTRODUCTION

Blood Bond explores some of the most powerful emotions known to the Undead. Set in Chicago, this story supplement may be told as part of the **Forged in Steel** Chronicle and placed either before or, more appropriately, after **Ashes to Ashes**. It involves settings and people detailed in **Chicago by Night**. The story is also structured loosely enough to stand on its own so it can be played as part of your own Chronicle, in the setting of your choice.

As the possible outcomes of **Ashes** are virtually unlimited, this story makes one bask assumption about what occurred. Lodin is assumed to have survived his kidnapping and is still reigning Prince of Chicago. If Lodin was destroyed in a previous story, simply replace his role in this story with a new Prince or powerful Elder of your own choosing. You should also keep in mind that if you move the story out of Chicago it requires you to change Neally and some of the other major Chicago Vampires described in this story into similar Kindred from your own Chronicle.

This story also presumes that the characters are Anarchs, or at least rebels of a sort. If this is not the case, modifications will have to be made in the way we describe the interactions between Lodin and some of the other elders and the characters. This should not change things drastically, but it will require you to fabricate a new set of motivations for the characters — which is pretty much left in your capable hands in any case.

Theme

"It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience and the prudencenevertopracticeeither of them."

— Samuel Clemens, *"Following the Equator"*

This story concerns itself with the eternal pursuit of freedom and examines the reason why some wish to restrict it in others. In **Blood Bond**, the characters are allowed a great deal of personal choice and may well be instrumental to an Elder's liberation from Blood Bond. While having a wide latitude in choosing their actions, the characters are later forced to make a number of moral choices — freedom has a price. Over the course of the story the characters discover the oppressiveness of the Camarilla and are invited to determine their own fate by joining the Sabbat.

The pursuit of freedom inevitably leads to direct confrontation with powers seeking to repress the individual. The Prince of the city acts to restrain the characters and preserve the Masquerade. If they are able to defy the Prince's tyranny, the characters may control their own fate. But of course there is no escape from the Blood Bond. It denies all liberties, it suppresses all freedom.

The characters seek autonomy and strive for freedom throughout the story, but in the end they may ask themselves, "who among us is Blood Bound?"

Plot

*"I only think of you on two occasions
That's day and night"*

— The Deal, *"Two Occasions"*

This story revolves around a feud between two Elders, waged over the love of a mortal woman. The characters become involved when they unwittingly release one of the feuding Elders from stasis during a battle with a pack of Sabbat. That Vampire then exacts his revenge against his old foe, Neally Edwards of Clan Ventrue, a revenge which the characters are made witness to over the course of a number of evenings.

Haggard and broken, Neally finally turns to the characters for aid. If the characters decide to help him, however, they unwittingly cause him more harm than he has already suffered. Still, by persevering, they emerge with freedoms previously unimagined—the power to choose their own path of existence.

The mystery behind these events ultimately unfolds in a cemetery during the rite of initiation for the Sabbat, which has quite an exclusive membership. In order to escape the Blood Bond put upon him by his enemy, Neally is willing to join even them.

Note that most events in this story take place over extended periods of time. At first events seem unrelated, but as the characters partake of several unusual scenes, they realize a subtle conspiracy is at work. To reflect this growing awareness, the Storyteller should stage initial scenes independently of each other, at times specified within each scene. Only once Chapter Three is underway should the characters begin to realize the trouble they have stumbled into.

The Story of the Feud

*"oh i miss the treachery the shameless
kiss of vanity the soft and the black and the
velvety up tight against the side of me and
mouth and eyes and heart all bleed and run in
thickening streams of greed"*

—The Cure, *"Disintegration"*

The seeds of this story were planted just under a hundred years ago. The story begins with two young American aristocrats from Chicago; one was named Jefferson Foster, the other Neally Edwards. The two men were inseparable friends since early childhood. Coming from rich families, the two were afforded much time to devote to frivolity, and did their best to enjoy life's pleasures. Jefferson was the more ascetic of the two and preferred to experience cultural delights whereas Neally preferred self-indulgence and revelled in hedonism (though retaining a front of respectability). Though the pair had disparate tastes, they complemented each other perfectly and attended most social functions together, forever trying to comprehend the appeal behind the other's favorite pleasures.

Their relationship changed when Neally became hooked on morphine, Jefferson stood by his old friend through the entire period of degradation and social uproar surrounding his old

friend's addiction. While Neally's other friends and even his family turned their backs on him, Jefferson remained at his side. Neally had expected his friends' rejection, and could not understand why this one stayed with him. Guilt and a refusal to accept that someone could give such unconditional friendship began to haunt him. As the pain of rehabilitation continued, Neally began to resent his old friend for his faithfulness. When he finally left the morphine clinic, a broken and lonely man, he did unconsciously took to avoiding Jefferson. Then he met Lodin, the Prince of Vampires.

Jefferson accepted that his old friend needed some time to himself to recover from this traumatic period. What Jefferson did not know was that his friend had recently been taken from the realm of mortality and turned into a Vampire. Approached by Lodin, Neally had required little persuasion to leave his old life and enter a new one. Neally found his new existence more fulfilling than any other physical pleasure he had experienced. He also found it the perfect way to revenge himself on his old friend (though he did not think of it that way, in his own mind he was doing his best friend a favor) and took the first opportunity to turn Jefferson into one of the Undead — with Lodin's permission, of course. Now Neally could be stronger than his old friend for all eternity, and he secretly revelled in the fact. No more would he feel like the weak and helpless half of their friendship. Once again the two spent almost all their time together, but things had changed between them.

Jefferson did not appreciate the physicality of Vampiric existence. He resented his Bestial side and silently longed to be human again. But, since Jefferson's constant companion had accepted this new life, Jefferson decided he should too. He never realized why his old friend really enjoyed his company, and grew to accept that Neally was now the senior member of their "partnership", just as he was during Neally's "illness."

As Vampires continued their old ways they had the capacity to enjoy more of their favorite pleasures given their newfound longevity. Their forced camaraderie faltered, though, when the two saw a beautiful actress on the Chicago stage. Her name was Emily Carter and her grace and vivacity captivated both. Jefferson was drawn to her for her purity and innocence. He cherished those ascetic qualities as he would a work of art. Above all he appreciated her humanity and wanted to allow her to retain that virtue, thus giving him back something of which he had lost. Neally, on the other hand, cherished her for more carnal reasons. He was greatly aroused by the woman's purity and innocence. He wanted to corrupt Emily and make her a Lick so he could master and abuse her at his leisure. While Jefferson wanted to protect her, Neally wanted to possess her — and both began to compete for her affections.

When the two men courted Emily, their frayed friendship strained and finally snapped for good. Eventually their divergent motives resulted in direct confrontation. Neally ultimately won Emily's love, attracting her with the power of his masculine charm. Though Neally originally wanted to Embrace her, he found making her a Ghoul more satisfying. He realized twisted

sexual pleasure in possessing Emily as a private, permanent source of Food. Coincidentally he also discovered that Emily's continued humanity caused Jefferson much distress. Neally had come to enjoy his friend's useless efforts to win the girl. By leaving Emily her humanity, Neally could still be entertained by Jefferson's vain efforts — Emily's humanity kept Jefferson intent in his desire to win the woman. Had she been Embraced, Jefferson would know that she was unattainable and would have given up the hunt.

To ensure Emily remained his, Neally Blood Bound her. Jefferson was outraged by Neally's crime and moved to steal Emily away and protect her from further corruption. His desperate rescue efforts failed, however, the strength of the Blood Bond being immutable. Thus the old friends became bitter enemies, intent only on causing harm to one another.

Over the ensuing years Jefferson made several attempts to break Neally's Bond over Emily. His efforts were wasted, so he sought some hidden means to break the Bond. Some methods seemed promising, but none succeeded. It was then that Jefferson learned of the secrets of the Sabbat — they had mastered the Bond. The only way to learn the Sabbat's secrets was to join them. With little hope to be found elsewhere, Jefferson traveled to Toronto where the Sabbat were rumored to be in power. Once his dangerous journey was complete he entered a graveyard in the center of the city and announced his presence to the dreaded brethren. After passing many tests he was initiated and then accepted into their Tribe.

His initiation into the Sabbat was maddening, and it tore from him his last vestiges of sanity. After he had pulled himself from his own grave, as the Sabbat indoctrination demands, Jefferson lost all shreds of his humanity. As a ferocious, predatory beast, he forgot his former purpose and ran with the Sabbat for decades. He had broken free of his past, but he has lost himself in the process.

Only after years with the Sabbat, and after gaining considerable power and experience, did Jefferson begin to recall his previous life with the Camarilla. The year was 1967. By that time Jefferson was an Elder within the Sabbat and held significant power in Toronto. However, with the return of his memories, the passion of his former love for Emily returned as well and Jefferson could no longer bear being apart from her. He therefore forsook his power, abandoned the Sabbat, and left Toronto for Chicago. Back in the city of his Birth, Jefferson learned that Neally was still alive and had gained great authority as a servant of Chicago's Prince Lodin. Neally had risen high in the Prince's ranks, earning Lodin's trust and becoming one of his most important progeny.

Not having seen Jefferson for years, Neally had thought his old rival long dead and given him little thought. Subconsciously, however, Jefferson had great effect on him. Since his friend left, Neally had begun to take on some of partner's characteristics, becoming more willing to help others and less suspicious and guarded. The two of them had always been opposite halves of the same coin, and with Jefferson gone a void

had been created in his heart. Over the years he filled that void with the fragile remnants of his own humanity, and had even managed to gain new humanity.

In a sense, the two had traded places. Their fates interwound with one another, and one could not make a change without the other changing in turn. The Yin and Yang were in a dance, and the opposites had to be maintained.

On his return the cold-hearted Jefferson had the opportunity to take Neally by surprise and destroy the Vampire once and for all. Having gained much power in the Sabbat, however, Jefferson also developed arrogance, and resolved to inform Neally of his return so as to season the flavor of the hunt. Given the opportunity to prepare for attack, a frightened Neally sought to destroy Jefferson before the latter could strike. It was not difficult to locate Jefferson's Haven. Neally correctly surmised that Jefferson would seek refuge in a place close to his lost love. Arriving on the scene of the old theatre in which the pair had first seen Emily perform, Neally discovered Jefferson's sleeping form. He created a number of Ghouls to assist him and they brought him to the theatre just before sunset. He then staked Jefferson just as his victim awoke for the night. Though he had intended to extinguish Jefferson, he found that his heart would not let him take such action—the dance continued on. With the theatre under restoration, Neally and his coterie disposed of Jefferson's body at the scene of their crime. The immobilized Vampire was immersed into a mold of wet cement and left imprisoned there. Then Neally slew all his Ghoul helpers so as to leave no witnesses. When mortals came to work the next day, Jefferson was entombed within the walls of the theatre.

Jefferson's imprisonment was tortuous. Staked at the moment between day and night, he was awake for his assault, but was not roused enough to enact a defense. Thus, Jefferson was forced to lie physically dormant, but being mentally aware, lay trapped with the pain and suffering of his staking. This time in stasis caused Jefferson to kindle an even more intense hatred for Neally. That hatred was fueled further by the notion that Emily still lay in the clutches of Neally and that Jefferson could nought but brood.

Since disposing of his enemy, Neally has grown even more complacent. His position in the Chicago Camarilla affords him considerable power and resources. Being the Prince's chief aid, he is also protected from harm — who would dare incur Lodin's wrath by assaulting him? Given this authority and protection, Neally has found that he no longer needs to defend himself against enemies, and has every need catered to. This complacency makes Neally particularly vulnerable to Jefferson's return, and the characters play a hand in the latter's release.

The Flashback

If you are especially adventurous you may wish to roleplay out this story using an advanced roleplaying technique: Flashback. Simply have two of your players play the two "friends," other players play the various other characters, and alternate this story of their feud with the story of the primary characters and they attempt to conclude it. Be forewarned, however; this is a difficult task and not one to be undertaken by every troupe. To be sure, however, there is no better way to explain the details behind what is happening in this story.

CHAPTER ONE: THE RETURN

*"Black day stormy night
No love, no hope in sight
Don't cry he is coming"*

—Prince, *"The Cross"*

This Chapter introduces the characters to Jefferson Foster: they help him escape his stony prison. After meeting Jefferson, the characters do not encounter him again for some time. But when they do, they realize that a story is subtly developing while they have been busy taking care of other business. To create this storytelling effect, this Chapter should be played as a diversion in another story you are telling. Though events described here have no bearing on the story you are currently telling, the players do not know that and may try to incorporate Jefferson's arrival into your story. Let them do so and try to keep your laughter to yourself.

Scene One: Drama at the Theatre

In this scene the characters attend the opera when a motorcycle gang bursts in, interrupting the performance. The gang members are actually rogue Sabbat in search of their long lost leader, Jefferson. The gang has been looking for him for some time, and recently a Camarilla defector from Chicago told them that Jefferson had been seen in this theater prior to his disappearance. Departing immediately to Chicago they visit the theatre as soon as they get to town, causing a commotion as they search it. They see the characters and the performance and, hoping to find a rebellious spirit in the Neonate characters, invite them to join their ranks.

The gang does not go unmolested, however. A Camarilla Elder and his guards are also on the scene. These Vampires confront the Sabbat, resulting in a brawl which literally brings the house down. Regardless of whether they get involved in the fight or not, the characters get in trouble with Lodin, who

becomes angered by any breach of the Masquerade (the Camarilla has long been pressuring him to control his tumultuous Anarchs).

To add further spice to the scene, Neally and his Ghoul, Emily, are also at the theatre. And, of course, Jefferson himself is met near the end of the scene when the characters free him from his tomb of stone.

Setting

This scene is completely encompassed by the setting of the theatre, which is Chicago's famous Auditorium Building and theatre, located on East Congress Parkway. The theatre is the same in which Jefferson and Neally first saw Emily, and it is the same building in which Jefferson was entombed by Neally. The theatre is old and has undergone considerable renovation, though Jefferson has gone undisturbed thanks to Neally's manipulations.

If the characters would not normally attend the opera, change the circumstances of the performance (i.e. make it a comedy, a drama or a Shakespearean tragedy). A high society performance simply lends atmosphere to the scene, allowing for stark contrast with arrival of the brutal Sabbat. Characters might also be induced to attend the opera if they somehow get their hands on free tickets.

Dialogue and Drama

There are several opportunities for dialogue and drama in this scene. The characters may get into an exchange of insults with Sheriff. They can interact, violently or nonviolently, with the Sabbat gang. One or more Vampires might encounter Emily and make an attempt to charm her. And, after releasing Jefferson from his prison, the characters may speak shortly with him before all abandon the theatre. The potential for Drama cannot be ignored, whether it be with Sheriff, the Sabbat gang, or the newly risen Jefferson.

You can run the following episodes in any order you like, but they are presented in the order that they will most likely occur. You will probably be doing some mixing and matching, orienting your story to fit the actions and desires of the characters. We cannot tell you what your players will do as even you cannot do that, so we have tried to give you an idea of some things to present during the scene.

Keep in mind that the theatre is part of Elysium and that violence is strictly prohibited within its bounds. What occurs in this scene violates the sanctity of Elysium and the characters are likely to get in trouble for it. You may wish to warn your players of this, if they are not already familiar with it.

- *Overbearing Balthazar*

One of the first things the characters see once they get to their seats is a Vampire Elder who they have had dealings with before. He looks down at them from his box seat and gives them an evil smile. After a few moments he leans over the railing and

motions them to come up to his box to attend him. The Elder who attends the theatre should be one that the characters have had a run-in with before; the two parties should not be on the best of terms. If you have already played **Ashes to Ashes**, Sheriff would be ideal for this part. He attends the theatre with a human woman named Louella, presumably his evening meal. Three bodyguards are also with Sheriff. These Ghouls never speak. Indeed, they keep their distance at all times, but their presence is unmistakable.

Depending on how you want to stage things, the characters could also spot Sheriff first as he enters the theatre. Any way you do it, his first words are loaded with the same disdain (don't forget his Southern accent):

"What the Hell are you damn Childer doin' here? This here place is fer cultered folks, not snott-nosed little brats. Why don' yo all jus' go on home to yer mommies."

The characters may insult Sheriff in turn, but it is unwise to raise his ire. Though he may not take public action against the group, he will definitely come down hard on them the next time they meet. If it ever seems like Sheriff is in danger of being attacked, his guards close in, and one of them will open his coat to the characters, revealing an Uzi with a silencer. Surrounded by his retainers, Sheriff leans back into the shelter they provide, breaks a smug grin and folds his arms across his wide chest — just daring the characters to make the first move.

Despite this the characters may take physical action against Sheriff. Once any sort of physical action is taken the guards take out their weapons and surround their "liege". Fighting in the theatre is definitely a mistake, though, as it threatens the Masquerade and will put the characters at odds with Lodin (as he discovers what occurred).

If a fight is about to break out between Sheriff and the Anarchs, you may allow the battle to proceed or use your Storytelling powers to bring it to a premature end. The latter is more conducive to the flow of the story, but it goes somewhat against the theme of the story. However, just as Sheriff is about to act against the characters, he seems to glance beyond them. He instantly lowers his guard and quickly moves away. If the characters turn, they find Neally standing only a few feet behind. Emily is with him. Neally stares at them coldly, as if to suggest "show a little more wisdom or suffer the consequences". Wise characters will comply. This encounter is especially useful because it lets the characters know that Neally is present, and allows at least one character to see Emily. If that character continues to watch her as they part, the Vampire notices that she turns back to return the character's look — an act of recognition and attraction.

- *Seductive Emily*

If the characters have not already met Emily, you should have at least one of them notice Neally step into one of the boxes overlooking the stage, accompanied by a startlingly beautiful

ENTER THE SABBAT



woman. Describe how drawn the character is to this dark beauty who sits in Neally's box.

She is Emily, Neally's Ghoul and lover. With one Intelligence success against a value of 6, a character recognizes Neally if they have never met before. With two successes, a character recognizes Emily as Neally's "personal companion." While watching Emily, she will look back, lock eyes and smile. The character may seek Emily out, perhaps during intermission. The physical appearance of the character is inconsequential to the Ghoul; Emily is physically interested in any Kindred. If Emily sees the character approaching, she moves away from Neally and greets the character in a warm, alluring way. Emily immediately dives into sexual flirtation and is prepared to engage the character in a more physical encounter (see *Emily's Exploits*, below). If the character is game, the couple may decide on an agreeable time and place. Emily is not opposed to getting things going within the theatre itself.

You need to carefully choose the character that Emily will flirt with in this subplot. First of all you need to be reasonably sure that the character will respond in some way to her advance. Secondly you will want to choose a player who will go along with it and who can roleplay a character in full. Since the player in question will receive a lot of attention in this story, you should choose a player who has not been the subject of a subplot in sometime. In terms of appropriate character personalities, those with Demeanors or Natures of Gallant, Deviant or Hedonist readily come to mind as types who could easily be interested in Emily. However, characters who are a bit more straitlaced (and find their perfect counterpoint in Emily) would be the Cavalier, Curmudgeon and Visionary.

It is important that Neally be present at the theatre when the Sabbat gang breaks in. He frequents the theatre to relish in his victory over Jefferson. By attending the opera with Emily, Neally effectively thumbs his nose at Jefferson. Present during

the Sabbat intrusion, Neally becomes aware of their existence in Chicago. He also learns of any slim relationship that develops between the characters and the Sabbat, whether by witnessing their meeting or hearing of it afterward. These pieces of knowledge are significant as Neally later "employs" the characters to get him in touch with the Sabbat.

• *Enter the Sabbat*

Just after intermission a commotion is heard out in the lobby. Characters who get a Perception success of 6+ hear someone shouting in a gruff voice and then everyone hears a crash as if someone is being thrown around. The Sabbat make their entrance by throwing a theatre security guard through the main doors, into the audience area. The use of their Vampiric strength is a blatant breach of the Masquerade, but the Sabbat (especially rogue ones) do not uphold petty Camarilla Traditions.

Then, ignoring a red-faced chief usher, the leader of the gang strides in with obvious arrogance. (Immediately after the bikers intrude, the theatre manager calls the police, though it will be at least 10 minutes before they arrive.) Making as much of a commotion as they can, the Vampires brazenly announce their arrival. They shout, hoot and holler, declaring, "*We're here for the Party! Let's get some real culture!*" They claim that they want to watch the opera as well, and won't hear otherwise. Moving near the front of the theatre they begin to toss a number of bejeweled matrons and their dozing husbands from their seats, intent on seating themselves.

Though the Soprano's aria falters somewhat, she bravely carries on, but never takes her eyes off of the strange intruders. However, when the Vampire begin to boo and make suggestive comments about her bust size (and the armor she's wearing), she stops singing completely and runs off the stage. Mortals in the

theatre also take this as their cue to leave and make way for the nearest exit, though not that used by the gang.

In a few moments the theatre is void of those who still breathe. Neally and Emily are among those people leaving. Neally doesn't want to take responsibility for dealing with the Sabbat, leaving that labor for Sheriff. To spot Neally leaving, characters must get a Perception success of 7+. If the characters are actively looking for Neally or Emily, a success of 6+ is needed. Anyone pursuing the couple is left behind as the two enter a waiting limousine which quickly drives away.

You should make sure that the characters have seats located two rows in front of the seats taken by the Sabbat. Bach, the leader of the gang, gets a look at the characters after he sits down and recognizes their kindred Vampiric spirit. Assuming the characters are Anarchs of a sort, he also recognizes a kindred rebellious spirit. Reaching over the people in front of him, he says to the characters in a stage whisper:

"Ah, Brothers and Sisters! Why do you remain within this oppressive Camarilla? You are young and powerful. You have rights and freedoms that are yours, but your precious Elders deny them. Seize your rightful might! Throw off the Camarilla's yoke! Join us. Join the Sabbat! Ours is the way to freedom!"

Bach's offer is spoken in the traditional revolutionary words of Sabbat and are intended to enlighten potential candidates to ways of life alternative to the Camarilla. Anarchs are a primary source of recruits for the Sabbat (the Sabbat was created centuries ago by Anarchs in open revolt), and they work hard at seducing characters over.

Even if the characters are not Anarchs, you could assume that Bach makes a mistake and presupposes that they are. After all, Neonates in the Camarilla appear oppressed when compared to the Sabbat. Throughout the remainder of the story this example of mistaken identity can be continued, providing humor and, more importantly, keeping the characters involved in it.

After the Sabbat are settled in their seats and begin to make trouble, Sheriff and his retainers move toward the gang. He acts on his own volition, enraged that Sabbat would dare show their face in Chicago and further angered with the Sabbats' break of the Masquerade. Sheriff, backed by his bodyguards, orders Bach and the Sabbat to get out of town or be destroyed. They refuse and a fight ensues. The battle is horribly brutal. The Sabbat immediately become bestial and rend their opponents limb from limb.

Characters may get involved in the brawl on the side of their choice, or may remain neutral. Witnessing the carnage caused by the Sabbat, the characters may well choose to stay out of it. Sheriff commands the characters to come to his aid and bellows accusations of treason if they take the Sabbat's side or do not get involved. The Sabbat gang take part in the fight for pure enjoyment. They are not interested in destroying the characters unless the characters use lethal force. As Sheriff tries to destroy his opponents, they do the same to him. Reveling in the melee, the Sabbat laugh when they take the characters'

blows, and expect the characters to have fun too.

During fight the bikers have little to say. They are completely wild, so are limited to screams of primal rage. For shock effect a character could strike an opponent, she takes the blow, turns to the Vampire with a smile of pleasure and says "thank you" before knocking the character through a wall. The Sabbat are enjoying themselves and are not very concerned about their own safety. For them, this is a game.

• *The Stake in the Stone*

The battle at the theatre is incredibly destructive. The Sabbat use all their strength in battle and, since mortals have fled the theatre, Sheriff is not opposed to unleashing his full power. This results in shattered walls and fallen beams. Among the debris is the stone slab in which Jefferson is trapped. The man-sized stone is unique in that it has a wooden stake protruding from it. Reaching from its surface is a concrete encrusted glob wrapping around the stake—possibly a hand. At some point in this scene, the characters must spot this unusual piece of masonry. During battle, it may be discovered on a successful Perception success of 5+. If no roll is successful, the Storyteller should have a character come across the stone as a narrative event.

Since the characters are involved in fierce combat, the stake should appear as a gift from the gods. Emphasize its presence to a character not doing so well in the fight ("You have been knocked head-over-heels into a 6-foot-tall concrete slab. Through the haze of blood obscuring your vision, you see what appears to be a stake protruding from it") If she uses it on one of the Sabbat, the others will have a good laugh before removing it.

After the fight, it is important that the characters have time to investigate the stone without interruption. As Sheriff pursues the Sabbat gang, and all mortals have left, the characters have a chance to investigate. It is important that only the characters know of the slab. If the Sabbat, Sheriff or Neally discover Jefferson at this time, this story will take a dramatically different course from what is proposed here.

Though caution dictates otherwise, characters will probably be unable to refuse the stake's call; the allusion to Arthurian legend may be too compelling and the need during the fight too strong to be resisted. Once the stake is free, the slab lies still for a moment, but soon begins to quake. After the combat has ended and the various participants have fled, dust and rock fly everywhere as Jefferson lunges forward into the world (he was held in stasis by the stake, so still has blood in his veins to utilize once freed). Having been entombed and brooding for decades, he bursts forth in a Frenzy. The characters should momentarily believe themselves under attack. However, after Jefferson realizes that Neally is not present, he cools and converses with the characters.

After the characters and Jefferson have had a short time to become acquainted, approaching police sirens are heard. That sound is Jefferson's cue to leave; he does not want his return to

become widely known before his revenge is achieved. Outside the theatre, Jefferson disappears using his Obfuscate power. It is important that the characters not be able to follow Jefferson at this time as he returns later to harry the Vampires' lives.

Having met Jefferson, the characters may do some research into the mystery man. Any Vampire who existed in Chicago at the turn of or in the early part of the 20th Century may know of Jefferson, remembering him as an old friend of Neally's who suddenly disappeared and was never heard from again. As Neally and Jefferson kept their contest for Emily a private matter, few other Vampires know of their feud. The characters might learn Jefferson disappeared shortly after Neally made Emily his Ghoul. Certainly no one knows that Neally staked and embedded Jefferson in the wall of the theatre.

When characters are investigating Jefferson, keep in mind the grapevine of Vampiric society. If the characters' inquiries are not discreet Neally could get word of nosy Anarchs. Neally does not immediately strike out against the characters for fear of self-incrimination in Jefferson's disappearance. However, he does keep tabs on the characters. His familiarity with them lends even more credence to his reliance on them later in the story.

• *Hurried Farewell*

Though the Sabbat are entertained by the battle, they have a specific agenda at the theatre: to find their missing master, Jefferson. After a few rounds of combat, Bach decides that Jefferson cannot be found at the moment, and orders his people to leave the theatre. The gang stages a strategic retreat to their bikes and take off. They take any downed comrades with them. As the gang easily outnumbers Sheriff and his guards, and the characters are probably half-hearted at best in their attacks, the Sabbat should have little trouble getting away with their numbers intact.

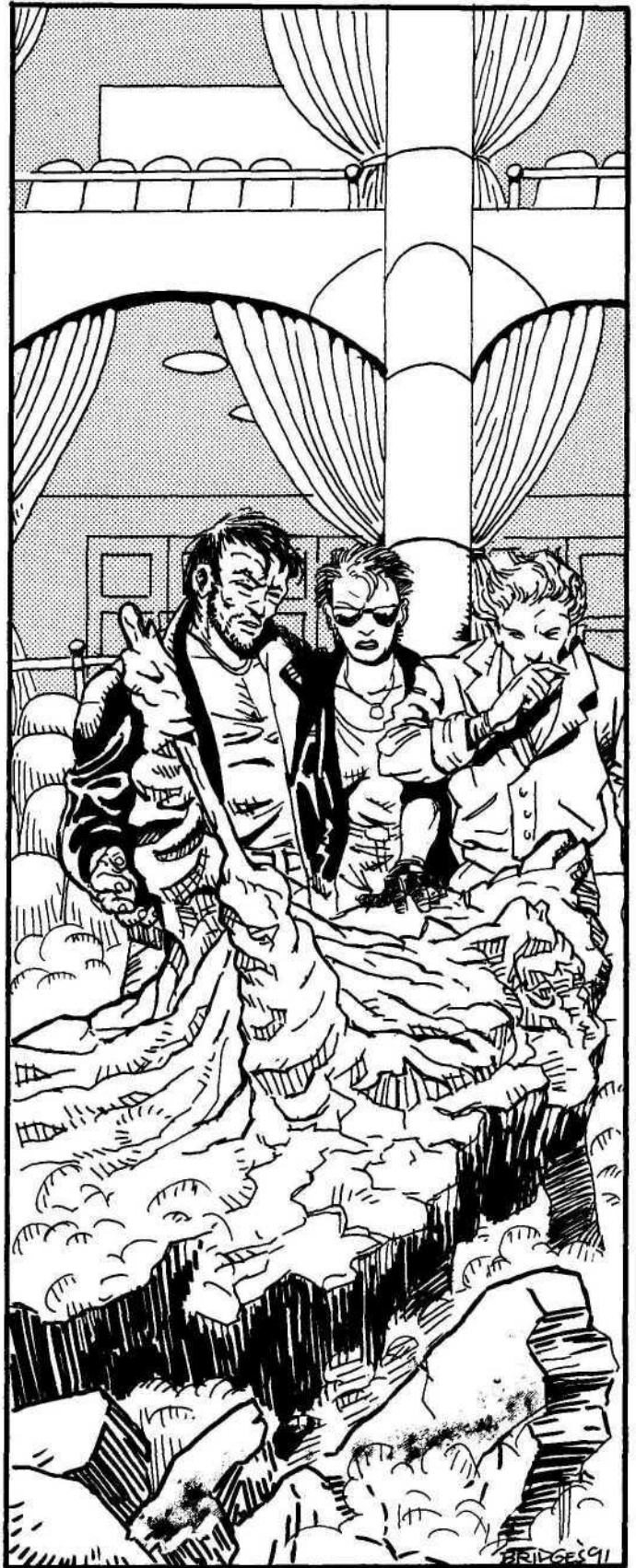
When the Sabbat gang does leave the theatre, the members bid the characters farewell based on the characters' actions during the brawl. If the characters fought the gang, the bikers thank the characters for the fight (or for the pummeling practice if the characters are thoroughly trounced). If the characters fought on the side of the Sabbat, the gang members slap them on the back and yell "let's get out of here!" Bach adds:

"I see you can make choices for yourselves. So the Camarilla doesn't control you entirely. The invitation still stands. Seek us out if you want to join our Blood. That is, if you have the courage to be free."

If the characters remain neutral in the brawl, the victorious bikers dance around them a bit, perhaps stealing the hat of one of the characters and playing keep away. Bach says:

"After all, we are brothers under the skin. Cain may be our father, but not all siblings need war. Come to us when you are ready, and we will become brothers in the Blood!"

Regardless of what happens at the theatre, the characters' relationship with the Sabbat should not be entirely strained. The





two groups meet again later, and we do not want them to leap right into fisticuffs.

Once they leave, the gang makes its way to a rundown bar on the outskirts of town. Sheriff loses track of them, but only after wasting much time in useless pursuit. Thus, the characters are not immediately threatened with reprisal from Sheriff for any acts of "treason". The characters may hope to follow the Sabbat, but are sidetracked with Jefferson's slab.

It is possible that the characters have had their fill of the Camarilla, and accept Bach's offer to join the Sabbat, or that they hope to use the biker gang in one of the ever-present plots and schemes in Chicago. However, given the chaos of the battle, the bikers' hasty exit, and the discovery of Jefferson's tomb, willing Sabbat Initiates are left behind at the theatre. These characters still have a chance to join the Sabbat later, though. If you want the characters to join the Sabbat at this time, you will have to redesign this story's plot. Of course, characters joining the Sabbat have to undergo their Initiation...

Finally, the characters interact with Jefferson after they release him from his stony prison. After Jefferson has recovered from the shock of his release, and realizes that Neally is not present to endanger him, Jefferson questions the characters: "Where am I? Who are you? What year is it?" Jefferson expresses genuine disorientation, and seems angered by the length of time which has passed since he was staked. Jefferson is willing to answer characters' mundane question (Who are you?

When were you staked?), but does not reveal anything of his personal agenda, anything of who staked him, or anything of his Sabbat ties.

All in all, Jefferson is thankful that the characters freed him and is pleasant to them after he composes himself. It should appear to the characters that they have made a powerful, albeit mysterious ally. This friendship only make things difficult later when the group is "employed" by Neally to act against Jefferson.

Characters

Most of the characters appearing in this scene appear throughout the story. Their profiles are presented at the end of this book. For Sheriff's profile, see *Ashes to Ashes*, p. 21. Assume that Sheriff's Ghoulish bodyguards have Physical Attributes of four. The rest are two. The guards also have Brawl and Dodge scores of four, and Potence of two. While armed with Uzi's, they will avoid using them except as a last resort, preferring chairs ripped from the floor and other parts of the theater (difficulty 5, damage +2).

Emily's Story

*"She took me to her castle and I could not believe my eyes
She had so many devices everything that money could buy
She said sign your name on the dotted line
The lights went out and Nicki started to grind"*

—Prince. "Darling Nicki"

Emily was once innocent and naive, but has since been physically and morally corrupted by her Ghoulish nature and by Neally's bizarre sexual demands. As a result of such an existence, Emily perceives herself as little more than a sexual object and has developed unique sexual appetites of her own. In fact, her desires have grown to such a degree that they dwarf even Neally's.

Over the last few years she has grown bored with Neally, and seeks fulfillment beyond her Master. Neally is aware of Emily's promiscuity, and is increasingly troubled by it. He enjoys the new techniques that Emily brings home, but has become worried that this hold over her might be fading. In short, he is becoming jealous, and doesn't want to share her with anyone else. As a form of revenge he has refused to give her any more of his blood, though he still feeds from her.

Lately Neally has been warning Emily to become less indulgent with others, but that does not stop her. If she can lure a character into a rendezvous, she becomes physical right away (though she does not admit it to herself, she wants the blood). Her passion is so overwhelming that the character must make three Self-Control successes of 6+ to remain in control. Otherwise, the character gives body and soul to her entirely. You will need to describe the experience in such a way that the player really understands what the character is feeling, and can roleplay it out appropriately.

Emily knows that her relationship with Neally might frighten off prospective lovers, so she explains how he is tolerant

of her escapades for he no longer has any physical attachment to her. Any character becoming involved with her soon learns the truth of Neally's feelings, though, Emily tells the characters that Neally does not give her blood anymore, and asks them to "read my mind" so as to prove it — if they check, this indeed is the case. Emily does indeed seem to be a safe bet.

One of Emily's passions in the act of love making is a mutual exchange of blood. She opens her own veins and claws open those of her partner so that both may feed simultaneously. Though Emily is only a Ghoul, she has learned to appreciate the Feeding. Neally has not given her his blood in some time, and so she is desperate to gain more before she ages any more (she has noticed wrinkles around her eyes). This physical experience is so intense and satisfying that the character may pass out unless a Stamina success of 6+ is rolled. Either way the character feels rejuvenated by the encounter, regaining all Willpower points.

As Emily is already Blood Bound to Neally, she cannot become Bound to the character (This Blood Bond remains even though he no longer gives her his blood). The character is not so fortunate. The Vampire becomes lustful of Emily and Blood Bound, not to Neally, but to Jefferson! Physical intimacy with Emily is intoxicating. Whenever the opportunity for another encounter arises, the character has trouble resisting. To do so requires two Self-Control successes of 6+ in a single roll. Furthermore, for each encounter after the first, the difficulty of the test increases by one.

Though the character may not be able to control these desires, there are rewards for this "weakness" — the character regains a full Willpower score when together with Emily, and, optionally, gains a permanent Willpower point whenever they share blood. Sexual conquest and fulfillment are one of the most powerful ways to gain self-esteem and confidence.

A third feeding from Emily also makes the character obsessive over the woman. The character's thoughts constantly drift toward her. As a result, any rolls that require concentration are reduced by one die. The character also feels compelled to be near Emily whenever possible. If the two are apart for a week, the character loses a point of Willpower on the eighth and every subsequent day until reunited. (Willpower cannot drop lower than half its maximum as a result of this longing). If Emily ever leaves the character on a permanent basis (i.e. at the end of this story), the Vampire may Frenzy. A Willpower roll is made using the character's current score (which is probably half or less than maximum) against a target of 8. If successful the character manages to put Emily out of his mind and live on. Willpower points lost out of unrequited love return at a rate of one per day. If the roll fails, the character feels compelled to pursue Emily and claim her. In terms of **Blood Bond**, a character pursuing Emily probably ends up chasing after Jefferson, who takes Emily as his own. A confrontation with Jefferson over Emily might mean the character's destruction. If Emily is ever killed due to the character's action or inaction, the enamored character permanently loses a Humanity point.

About three days after Jefferson's release, Emily falls

under the sway of her old suitor. She feeds upon him, putting his blood in her veins (see below for full details). Once the relationship between Jefferson and Emily is established, the character maintaining physical relations with Emily may become Blood Bound to Jefferson. The character must feed on Emily on three separate occasions. After that third feeding, the character unwittingly becomes Blood Bound to Jefferson.

A wary character might realize that freedom is jeopardized when feeding on Emily. Theoretically, Emily was once a vessel of Neally's blood, so a Vampire feeding on her might become Blood Bound to Neally. As far as Emily knows, this is impossible. She does not think a medium can be used between Vampires to achieve Blood Bond, and tries to reassure her lover that freedom is protected. Emily is wrong. The Bond can be achieved through a medium as long as the Vitae is fresh in the medium's veins. She has not fed on Neally's blood for some time, making Jefferson's the only blood potent in her body. Thus, the character feeding on Emily becomes Bound to Jefferson, not Neally.

Scene Two: Lodin's Price

The day after events at the theatre, the characters learn of a massive cover-up. Lodin has exerted his influence over the city's media and made sure that the full scale of the disruption is spoken of by no one. Newspapers and television reports claim damage done at the theatre resulted from a battle between rival drug gangs and that they set a fire which burned down the theatre. If the characters investigate the building, they find a charred husk with no evidence left of the fight that took place the night before. Lodin is, if nothing else, thorough.

Needless to say, Lodin is irate over reports of the Masquerade's defilement. However, the information he has acquired is only piecemeal and contradictory. Sheriff has altered the facts of his conflict with the Sabbat to avoid taking any blame. The Prince knows Balthazar is lying about something, so he doubts Sheriff's claims of Sabbat involvement. Lodin has also approached Neally over the matter, but Neally claims to have left the theatre before the incident, not wanting to sully his hands with such dirty business. This leaves Lodin no choice but to drag the characters in for questioning. Lodin wants to lay blame somewhere, and if the characters prove suitable stooges, he will use them as scapegoats.

Lodin has his Retainers seek the characters out for questioning. Sheriff is also present and subjected to interrogation. With the arguments that undoubtedly arise between the two parties, Lodin eventually grows angry and has all parties drink of his blood. While the Primogen of Chicago do not allow Lodin to Blood Bond any Kindred in the city, he can still use the Bond as a threat since few Cainites know of this prohibition.

Setting

This scene largely takes place in Lodin's Haven.

Dialogue and Drama

Two nights after events at the theatre, the characters hear word that Lodin is looking for them. Nosferatu might overhear some of Lodin's Brood talking, or friends of the characters' might warn the group. You should stage at least one encounter in which a character is spotted by, pursued by, or hunted by Lodin's Brood. If the characters refuse the audience they make things worse for themselves. The characters' elusiveness is considered proof of their guilt in events at the theatre. Lodin declares open season on the characters. Lodin would prefer the characters intact, but will take them destroyed. The Prince's men make this eventuality clear if the characters even hint at straggling.

Be it by choice or force, the characters eventually end up in Lodin's Haven, awaiting interrogation. The characters are taken to Lodin's office. Lodin is not present at first. Instead, Sheriff and his bodyguards from the theatre wait within. They sit and stand around the office as if waiting on Lodin themselves. The two groups probably get into a verbal scuffle, and things could get physical (though Sheriff is wise enough not to initiate combat in Lodin's Haven).

After a short period in which tempers have become flared, or shortly after a scuffle breaks out, Lodin and his two bodyguards enter the room. The Prince's guards pull apart any combatants, but not without getting in a few blows of their own.

Conversation occurs between the characters and Sheriff, and between the characters and Lodin. Discussion between the former parties is loaded with heated accusations as each party lays blame for the recent break in Tradition. Balthazar is

determined to ensure that the characters take the blame for not having stopped the Sabbat:

"Tall was there an' hardly even hepped me whip them boyz. I was fightin' fiveme self a'fore they brought me down. Shoot, if n I didm' know better. I'd think y'all was an their side!"

Ideally, he'd like to see the characters destroyed. If, at any time, the characters accuse Sheriff of lying he becomes enraged and bursts into a tirade. This assault may turn physical, but any such disruptions are met with physical punishment by Lodin's guards.

Lodin is willing to hear both sides of the argument, but has little patience for interruption. Each Vampire receives one warning. If that warning is not heeded and a character speaks out of turn again, one of Lodin's guards is motioned toward the character. He proceeds to strike the character until the victim is silenced.

Lodin has heard Balthazar's claims of Sabbat involvement, but is skeptical of them. Even if he did put credence in them, he cannot appear to believe that Sabbat are in town for political reasons. To admit to Sabbat intrusion in his city would undermine his power. Accordingly, Lodin dismisses any Sabbat claim and orders such claims silenced under threat of further physical punishment.

In an attempt to defend themselves the characters might also ask Lodin to question Neally, the latter having attended the theater. This request enrages Lodin:

"How dare you drag the name of an Elder into such petty affairs! Yours is not the right to question your superiors. You place is to show respect! You test my patience little children."



Another such outburst will result in your destruction — at my own hands!"

The characters had better measure their words more carefully from that point on.

(*Note:* if any of the characters are Ventrue, they will be treated with far more respect and Balthazar will be put down a great deal more. However, the end result is the same—someone needs to be blamed, and the characters were in the wrong place at the wrong time).

If, at any point, the characters try to flee Lodin's Haven, they come under attack from both Lodin's men and Sheriff's guards. Such an action instantly incriminates the characters, and a Blood Hunt is called in retaliation for the characters' "crimes" at the theatre. Given this option, the characters are probably safer toughing out the interrogation and accepting whatever punishment Lodin has in mind.

After hearing all testimony, Lodin declares both parties — Sheriff and the characters—responsible for the recent break in Tradition. He cannot show favoritism for he knows Balthazar is not being entirely honest, and knows that if the characters alone take the blame, they might become martyrs for Chicago's Anarchs. So, Lodin has one of his guards bring a chalice from a cabinet. Producing a knife, Lodin opens his wrist and bleeds into the cup. Balthazar, his guards, and the characters are all made to drink. Each is forced to tip his head while another guard holds the victim's jaw open. A character may still avoid drinking by making a Stamina success of 7+, but it takes two such successes to avoid drinking without being noticed. Otherwise, one of the guards punches the character in the stomach, making her swallow unless two more Stamina successes of 7+ are made.

Though they are given only a single Blood Point, this Blood Point is extremely potent and worth two normal blood points each. Additionally characters can use these point to increase one of their disciplines (except Thaumaturgy) by one level for one full night. They must spend these Blood Points in full, and may begin to use the discipline they wish to increase. You may not want to tell them of this special power, but feel free

to hint about it.

After having drunk Lodin's blood, the characters are one step closer to becoming Blood Bound to the Prince. In the unlikely chance the characters are already Blood Bound to Lodin, the Prince comes up with another suitable punishment. It is possible the characters could already be Blood Bound to someone else, so Lodin's blood has no effect on them. If Lodin knows of this outside Blood Bond, he again devises an alternative punishment.

Following this Drinking, Lodin warns all present not to cross him again. Future acts of defiance will be met with a similar punishment. He tells them that after three crimes the characters will be Bound to him, forever in his power and without personal freedom. Characters performing shady activities in the future will want to keep things mum.

After all drink of Lodin, the Prince commands Balthazar and his guards to leave. Lodin wants the characters to find this motorcycle gang they've spoken of. In his words:

"If you want to redeem yourselves you will produce these people for me. Though I don't believe them Sabbat, for no Sabbat would dare set foot in Camarilla territory, they should be punished for their part in this ... affair."

In reality, Lodin wants proof that Sabbat are in town. He knows that Balthazar's ways are too brutal to be of any use, so the Prince wants the characters to draw out the bikers. Whether the characters actually work to impress Lodin is up to the players. When the characters do get in touch with the Sabbat, they are "working" for Neally (see below). Neally's motivations may be more valuable to the characters than Lodin's favor, so the characters may never produce the gang for the Prince. Of course, should they fail to produce for the Prince, the characters fall further from his graces.

After his latest encounter with Sheriff, the characters have definitely gained his enmity. Balthazar is furious that he, "a powerful Elder," should be made to suffer along with mere Neonates. Accordingly, on their next meeting, Sheriff does what he can to destroy the characters, either politically or physically.

CHAPTER TWO: BEST SERVED COLD

"I've done worst than kill you, Kirk. I've hurt you. And I wish to go on hurting you..."

Khan, *"Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan"*

Events in this part of the story should be staged a few weeks, in game time, after the events in Chapter One. That way characters do not immediately draw a connection between Neally's peculiar behavior (see below) and Jefferson's release.

Each scene in this Chapter might even be inserted into stories you are already telling, initially making events seem unrelated. But, as characters have repeated run-ins with Neally, they realize that a plot is unfolding. Truly paranoid characters might even incorporate these scenes into the other stories you are telling.

After Jefferson is free and gets his bearings in this new world, he seeks out Neally and takes stock of his enemy's power. While searching for a means to get his revenge and to rescue Emily, Jefferson is tracked down by the Sabbat gang, which he led back in the Sixties. Reunited with his followers, Jefferson realizes the Sabbat can be used to break Neally's Bond over Emily, and can be used to destroy Neally himself. Toward that end, he commands his Retainers to make their presence in Chicago widely known, giving them free reign to cause mayhem.

Jefferson's plan first requires a reunion between he and Emily. Given her promiscuity, that meeting is not difficult to arrange. Though Emily chose Neally over Jefferson years ago, she still loves both. Thus, Emily is glad to meet the one man she felt for but never experienced physically. She also keeps their relationship a secret.

Jefferson still sees the purity in Emily, despite the corruption inflicted upon her, so refuses to be intimate with her (which attracts her to him all the more). To exact his revenge against Neally, Jefferson only needs Emily to feed upon himself. That necessity goes against all his values, but Jefferson's craving for revenge is more demanding. So Emily feeds and becomes the carrier of Jefferson's Blood. Jefferson further knows that Neally regularly feeds on Emily, as he has always done, so that habit is used against him. After Neally feeds on Emily three times, he unwittingly becomes Blood Bound to Jefferson.

Once Jefferson achieves the Bond, he commands Neally to perform several crimes against the Camarilla (note that Jefferson's power of the Bond derives from his Sabbat background, so it's slightly different from that described in Vampire—he can control Neally from afar). These crimes are witnessed by the characters in the scenes that follow. As a result of these actions, Neally breaks several important Traditions. Accordingly, Neally becomes wanted by the Prince and loses his power in the Camarilla. This is only part of Jefferson's revenge.

After years spent imprisoned in concrete, Jefferson seeks Neally's utter destruction. After ruining Neally's position in the Camarilla, Jefferson visits Neally. Jefferson tells his enemy that he has been Blood Bound, that Jefferson has been behind Neally's recent actions, and that Neally is Jefferson's to control forever. After years of feuding, Neally cannot bear the thought of domination by Jefferson and desperately seeks a way to break the Bond. However, having watched Jefferson make innumerable failed attempts to break his Bond over **Emily**, Neally knows of only one way to break the Blood Bond—a secret held by the Sabbat.

This is where Jefferson's bikers come in. Having heard rumors of Sabbat activities in Chicago, Neally seeks them out. Neally knows that joining the Sabbat will mean the loss of all that he values, but feels that nothing he now owns has value as long as Jefferson controls him.

The question rises of how to get in touch with the Sabbat bikers without being harmed — the Sabbat are known to espe-

cially dislike Ventrue. That is where the characters come in. After the events at the theatre, Neally knows that characters have a relationship of sorts with the bikers and may even believe they are allied. Neally and the characters also meet several times throughout this Chapter, so the characters become increasingly aware of Neally and his personal problems. At some point he hires the Vampires to arrange for a meeting with the Sabbat — "paying" them with information and promises. The actual meeting which the characters arrange, however, is another Chapter.

Many events of this Chapter are simply things which occur in the presence of the characters, and are not part of any ongoing story. You will need to use new storytelling techniques to get across the unique flow of these vignettes. We suggest that you simply narrate an introduction for each episode, telling the players where they are, what they are doing, and why they came — let them roleplay for a bit, and then interrupt them with the event described below. Whatever you do, you should not have the players roleplay out every little thing their characters do over a period of nights. That would require you to continually manipulate them to get them to be where you want them to go. Just become a little bit more of a Storyteller, and simply put them where you want them (of course, give each player the right to object, "*Hey dude, No way would I go there!*"). Certainly not all the characters need to be present for each scene. You could even arrange it that each character would do one scene each.

Scene Three: Blood Dance

One night the characters are at the Succubus Club, a popular nightclub for Chicago's Kindred. The lights are dim, the music loud and the action heavy. Emily is also present, charming a suitable Kine prospect into becoming her physical companion for the night. As she is here, any character who has become interested in her should also be present.

Before long Neally enters the club. Everyone stops what they're doing, drawn to him. Neally then Dominates a young woman and feeds from her on the dance floor. This act defies the Fifth Tradition and is definitely out of character for the Vampire. Shocked at this surprising breach of the Masquerade, the characters may react according to curiosity's demands.

Setting

The Succubus Club is a three-story nightclub with a large dance floor and numerous darker areas. If you are not running this scenario in Chicago, then the night club can be a new one or one you have used before. It might even be one frequented by numerous Kindred, but it is preferably one which the characters enjoy hanging out at (which explains why they happen to be there).

Dialogue and Drama

You can start this scene out as if it was part of the Subplot with Emily and her Vampiric lover. She invited the character to

the club, and brushes off the mortal companion she had picked up to amuse herself. This angers the man, which may lead to a confrontation between he and the character. He is not happy with being ignored by Emily, and after trying to talk to her for a time, throws a punch at the character the first time there is any interference. Any ensuing fight better be short-lived, or else the bouncers close in on the combatants and try to throw them from the club. If a brawl lasts longer than four rounds, the bouncers close in. To escape the bouncers in the crowd at any time requires a successful Stealth roll against the bouncers' Perception (two) plus Alertness (two, for a total of four – not an especially tough roll, but they need at least three successes).

Should the bouncers get hold of the combatants, they hustle the two out the door. A bold and clever character may flash a Vampiric image to frighten a bouncer off, but do not forget that it would be a violation of the Masquerade. Any combatant who is knocked out is dragged away by the bouncers.

Though a character might be thrown out of the club, the Vampire should still witness Neally's arrival; maybe the character runs into Neally as the Elder enters the club. It is easy enough for the character to follow Neally back in as the crowd becomes transfixed by the latter.

Also present at the club is Jefferson, but he uses Obfuscate to hide his identity. Jefferson arrives seconds after Neally does and watches Neally feed. Characters with an Auspex of at least one may make a Perception + Acting roll (difficulty of 9). One or more successes indicates they see the figure and note something indescribably strange about him. An Intelligence success of 7+ is needed to recognize the figure as vaguely familiar, but its identity cannot be determined. When the characters look next at the figure, he is gone. Jefferson sees to it that Neally follows his commands, and leaves the club without detection.

Neally's arrival at the club is marked by a sudden hush that falls across the crowd, though the music keeps blaring. Neally's Presence draws every eye and mind toward him. The Discipline also affects the bouncers, Emily's mortal companion, and the characters. All are compelled to simply stand and watch. To break Neally's spell for even a short while costs a Willpower point. Five points are required to achieve freedom for the entire scene.

While the clubbers stare, Neally moves through the crowd as if looking for someone. Emily is immune to Neally's spell and assumes it is she that her Master hunts — why else would he be here? She grabs her companion and ducks down. She explains, *"He's looking for me. He's been getting mad at me for having so much fun (wink)."* Emily then strives to drag the character out the back door of the club. She should only get him out the door after the character has witnessed Neally's attack on the dance floor—Jefferson wants him to see Neally's degradation. After Emily and the character are out the back door, the two may go off on one of their physical binges. Emily leaves her partner before dawn and returns to Neally's Haven.

In reality, Neally is not of his right mind and looks right past Emily if they ever come face to face. The characters may realize something is wrong with Neally on a Perception success of 6+. The Vampire's eyes burn with a fiery glow, his hair is dishevelled (another Perception success to recognize his hair is a toupee), and his finger nails are extended. He is clearly on the Hunt and intends to feed right here — a clear denial of the Masquerade which should mystify the characters, considering that Neally works for Lodin.

Neally's path through the crowd comes to an end on the dance floor when the Vampire stands directly before a gorgeous young woman. Neally has her Dominated, and with no warning lunges forward, plunging his teeth into the woman's throat, twisting his head about in a most gruesome way. At that moment the crowd is freed from Neally's Presence and flees the club in panic. The Feeding is so violent that characters with a Humanity score of 9 or 10 might be traumatized by it and unable to take any action for a time. Alternatively, a character with a low Humanity (3 or lower) may be thrown into a blood lust by the scene, becoming Frenzied. To resist, a Conscience success of 4+ is needed. If the test fails, the character attacks one of the escaping crowd and drinks the person dry. As the clubbers are panicked, none realize what the Frenzied character does, nor do they intercede.





Characters may move to stop Neally at any time, even before he feeds, if the group recognizes his predatory state. Or, any character who is infatuated with Emily might try to best Neally in combat. Any opposition against Neally is met with immediate hostility. He dispatches the characters in the most efficient means available to him (i.e. he hurls them out of his way) as his desire to feed is stronger than his desire for battle. If a character poses a genuine or persistent threat to Neally, he uses lethal force.

Characters who keep a level head may try to follow Neally after his Feast, to discover the motivation behind it. Neally remains at the empty club long enough to drink his victim dry (returning his Blood Pool to maximum). Afterward he undergoes a visible, almost "Jekyll and Hyde" transformation. He reverts to normal appearance and looks about in confusion as if having come out of a trance. If characters are within sight of Neally, he recognizes them as Kindred and commands, *"Go home foolish whelps. It's dangerous to be out after dark."* He then leaves the club. With his Bond-induced Obfuscate Discipline, Neally becomes "one of the crowd." Keeping track of Neally requires two Perception + Alertness successes against a Difficulty of 9. To follow him without being seen involves Shadowing (Vampire, p. 145). The characters must get five successes to follow Neally all the way back to his Haven (an estate).

Neally walks all the way to his estate, trying to resolve a problem clearly troubling him. Characters may try to listen in (Perception + Alertness versus 6) as Neally talks to himself: *"What has come over me? I had no need to feed like that. It was as if the Beast had come to life on its own and took control of my mind. Maybe this has to do with my slipping control over Emily."*

Neally may realize the characters are following him. If so he turns and orders any hidden in shadows to show themselves: *"Do not insult my intelligence. I know you are there. I can smell your Kindred scent. Show yourselves!"* If the characters remain in hiding Neally approaches and locates the characters by their Auras. Once he recognizes them as Neonates he dismisses their threat, and warns, *"If I find you meddling in my affairs again I will surely destroy you."*

Even if the characters do follow Neally to his Haven, nothing can be learned there to explain his behavior at the club. This assumes the characters can even get inside the estate.

It is also possible that the characters remain at the club rather than follow Neally. They might even be trying to bring one of their number out of Frenzy. The police were called after Neally fed. Sirens warn of police approach. The characters have plenty of time to escape, but unless they move the body of Neally's victim, the police find it. The next day holds reports of an escaped psychiatric patient who killed a woman at a nightclub –Lodin's way of patching the worn fabric of the Masquerade. Of course, Lodin is furious that Neally would so blatantly

challenge the Traditions of the Camarilla, but as Neally is a trusted aid, Lodin gives him the benefit of the doubt... on this occasion.

Characters

The only new character introduced in this scene is Emily's mortal companion. Give him Social and Mental Attributes of 2, Physical Attributes of 3 (he's a jock) and a Brawl score of 2.

Scene Four: Children in Need

The characters are abroad one night, maybe on the Hunt, when they find a little girl roaming the streets. The child is an orphan and has recently been Embraced. She complains of a scary man haunting the orphanage. Characters will find it a good idea to investigate and find out who has broken Lodin's rules against creating new Kindred (probably so they can blackmail the violator). At the orphanage they find Neally, who has been compelled by Jefferson to feed upon the children and turn them into Vampires, thus breaking the Camarilla's Third Tradition. After hearing Neally's explanation, the characters may deal with him as they will.

Setting

The majority of this scene occurs at the orphanage, particularly in the large dormitory room in which a number of children sleep. The orphanage can be placed anywhere in Chicago, but we suggest locating it near the warehouse district on the Southside. Try to capture a real rundown, Little Orphan Annie feel to the place.

Dialogue and Drama

This scene involves more dialogue than drama; the characters hopefully resolve the confrontation with Neally with words rather than violence.

The characters are abroad in Chicago one night. The first person the characters meet is Becky, the little orphan. She's out on the street for two reasons: 1) The "scary man" frightens her so much that she cannot bear to remain at the orphanage, and 2) she feels a desperate hunger that no amount of food seems to satisfy (she's out looking for more food).

On first sight Becky is heartwarmingly adorable. Characters intending to feed on her must make a Conscience check and gain an extra die in the roll. If the roll fails, the Vampire may continue her attack. If the roll succeeds, the character cannot bring herself to harm the child. If a character moves to attack, Becky runs, screaming, "*you're just like the scary man, Mr. Edwards!*" Characters who get an Intelligence success of 6+ realize "Mr. Edwards" must be Neally. These characters may halt their Hunt to learn what the child knows.

After only a few words from Becky, the characters realize she is a Vampire — she has not yet learned to hide her fangs.

This revelation should horrify the characters for Becky's youthful innocence makes her Embrace a terrible crime.

The child explains why she's out at night:

"A scary man is at home. He comes to me every night but the people at the orphanage won't believe me. All the kids have seen him. The doctors say we're just lying or dreaming. We're not! The scary man is real!"

Neally has been compelled by Jefferson to begin feeding on the small children, much to his immense distaste. Becky is so frightened by Neally that she refuses to return to the orphanage unless the characters promise to chase the "scary man" away, or unless they promise to get her something to eat. Of course, the only "food" that does Becky any good is blood. Feeding the innocent child blood causes a character to lose one point of Willpower, even though the girl needs to Feed to survive.

Having met Becky, the Vampires can go to the orphanage, but "the scary man" is absent. Becky has been asleep for days, adjusting to her new life. She awoke earlier in the evening and from then until leaving the orphanage has not seen the scary man again. Neally has been to the facility since, though. When the characters arrive at the orphanage the children are asleep—unnaturally asleep. Neally fed on many of them, licked their wounds, and commanded them back to bed. If they want the children awake, the characters have to shake the orphans violently. Once roused, the children are initially frightened by the characters, but Becky assures them that the group is here to help. The orphans then break into screams and complaints of "the scary man's" return. Inspection of the children proves that none have been turned into Kindred. Becky is the only one so far, but it's only a matter of time before the others are Embraced as well.

In a smaller room off the dormitory are the two orderlies who keep tabs on the children. If the characters check on the orderlies, the two men are found to be unnaturally asleep as well. Neally Dominated them when he arrived. Left alone, the orderlies sleep all night.

Since Neally is long gone, the characters have to set up surveillance to catch him on his return the next night. The orphanage closes after business hours, but many staff remain to tend the children after closing. Two orderlies remain on duty at night. Allow the characters to make any plans they like for the surveillance, as long as their plans remain within the bounds of reason.

The next night Neally returns. He leaps to a second story window (remember his Potence) and slips into the orphanage. Once inside his Presence is used to draw all the children to him. To resist Neally's appeal, the characters must spend a point of Willpower. If they cannot or do not, the characters are drawn from their hiding places. Becky is among the children drawn to Neally. If she is held back by the characters she begins to wail, demanding to be in the presence of her "father". Even though Becky is deathly afraid of Neally, his Presence draws her to him against all obstacles.



As he is controlled by Jefferson, Neally does not notice the characters' presence until they come out of hiding. If the group leaps out to surprise "the scary man" they discover Neally with the children. He is about to feed again and shows shock and fear when interrupted.

Neally is ashamed of his latest habit, so is willing to explain himself rather than fight. Forced to defend himself, Neally does so, but fights in an effort to subdue the characters so as to explain his actions. If the characters' attack is persistent, Neally does what he must to immobilize them. As Jefferson has now released Neally from control (Jefferson is satisfied that Neally's crimes have been made public), Neally takes the characters' efforts to heart and forces himself to stop feeding upon the children.

When the characters catch Neally in the act of feeding on the orphans, he tries to justify his gruesome appetites:

"It isn't by choice that I do this. I can't seem to control myself anymore. For some reason the Beast in me has risen; one of the latest developments (motioning toward the orphans). Please don't judge me by what I do. My actions don't reflect my true spirit. Though I don't know what has come over me I must learn to control myself before another destroys me or before I drive myself mad."

Neally demonstrates genuine remorse for having fed upon the children. After his first meal, five nights ago, he has tried to make amends by turning children into Vampires. Though Neally thinks this decision was his own, it was actually planted in his mind by Jefferson. Neally has virtually no control over himself any longer. What the characters saw at the club affirms this claim.

Characters listening to Neally's explanation may feel sympathy for him as they understand how difficult it can be to resist the Beast. Play Neally as pathetically as possible, sniffing and shedding the occasional blood tear. Neally would rather resolve any confrontation with the characters in a peaceable manner, but defends himself if necessary. He's willing to resist further temptation at the orphanage and is successful in his efforts (satisfied that Neally has publicly broken another Tradition, Jefferson relinquishes control over Neally's will. . . for now).

At this point in the story Neally is too proud to accept aid in his effort to control "the Beast" within him. He's also ashamed that he is behaving compulsively and wants to save himself before admitting to weakness. Only when absolutely desperate does Neally come to the characters for help (see Chapter Three).

At some point during the characters' interaction with Neally, at least one character receives a Perception + Alertness roll (Difficulty 8), made by the Storyteller. If successful, a character spots a shadowy image standing outside a window, on one of the dormitory window ledges. If the figure is called attention to, it disappears before others spot it. Otherwise, the

figure disappears before Neally gets a look at it. Characters who get an Intelligence success of 7+ recognize the figure as that seen at the nightclub.

Characters who seek justice against Neally may report his recent act of Vampire creation to the Prince. However, Lodin is not likely to believe accusations made against an Elder by Neonates. If the characters are foolish enough to present these accusations to Lodin in person, he pronounces judgement on the upstarts. They could be thrown out of the Haven or made to drink from the Prince's blood again. It is up to you, though the punishment should not be too extreme as the characters have a fair bit of story to go. If the characters' evidence against Neally is convincing, or if it is presented on the characters' behalf by a respected Vampire, Lodin puts credence in the report. He has Neally put under surveillance, and will take action against his underling if Neally breaks another Tradition. However, if Neally is put under watch, Lodin will be aware of Neally's defection to the Sabbat. This means the characters' involvement in that defection will be known, and Lodin will put all blame on them. A Blood Hunt will be called. If the characters want freedom of action in the future, it might be wise to leave Lodin out of recent developments.

Ultimately, this scene teaches the characters that Neally, certain perversions aside, is a decent fellow. With this revelation characters are hopefully more disposed toward him, and may be more receptive when he does come to them for help.

Characters

The orphans have been haunted by Neally for about a week. The children have become psychologically scarred from the Feedings, and the fact that no adults at the facility believe their story has added to their trauma. When playing the children cower and speak softly, but become extremely animated when describing the horror of Neally's visits.

Characters with a background in psychology, teaching, or social services may try to relieve the children of their anguish. This goal may be achieved in numerous ways. A character might visit the orphanage after sunset through normal channels, claiming philanthropy "after business hours". The characters might also visit the children at night, helping them out with their problems. Truly compassionate characters might even arrange to adopt Becky and teach her to control her Vampirism (Neally cannot bear to accept her for fear that his defiance of Tradition might be revealed through her). Characters who work to help the children are rewarded with a point of Humanity, but adopting Becky might get them into even more trouble with Lodin—how dare they Sire without his permission!

Scene Five: On the Hunt

This scene occurs not long after the previous scene. That way you make sure the characters have not had time to forget any compassion felt for Neally.



In order to ruin all Neally's standing in the Chicago Camarilla, Jefferson commands his Bond victim to destroy another Vampire—a direct violation of the Sixth Tradition. To ensure that Lodin hears of this crime, Jefferson commands Neally to kill a relation or associate of the Prince's. This victim cannot be too powerful, like an Elder, as Neally might be killed by the one he hunts. Jefferson wants to destroy Neally himself, so arranges for Neally to destroy a weaker Vampire. As it turns out, the intended victim is a favorite of Lodin's, and, hopefully a friend or associate of the characters' as well. Hunted by Neally, that friend comes to the characters for help, bringing the characters into conflict with the Elder yet again. Though they may not be able to protect their friend forever, the characters do become more intimate with Neally and his recent self-control problems. That relationship establishes the grounds for Neally's call for help in Chapter Three.

For the purposes of this story, Neally's victim is one of Lodin's newest Nenaates, a beautiful young Vampire who enjoys hanging out at the Succubus club. She says she runs errands and delivers messages on the Prince's behalf. Some say her relationship with Lodin is more than just business. If you



have a more suitable character in your Chronicle, feel free to use him/her instead. The character need only be known by the Prince and must not be so integral to the story that he/she cannot die.

Neally chooses Lorraine as his victim as she is in Lodin's favor, whereas he is rapidly falling out of favor. Of course, this rationale only justifies the attack in Neally's mind. Inspiration for the Hunt really comes solely from Jefferson — it is not something Neally would even consider on his own.

Setting

This part of the story may be staged wherever is suitable. If the characters know Lorraine from a specific place, they encounter her and deal with Neally there. She might also seek shelter at the characters' Haven. Conceivably, this scene could be staged on a street or in an alley, where Lorraine runs into the Vampires.

Dialogue and Drama

Most discussion is oriented toward Lorraine. On the run from Neally, she tries to communicate her dilemma to the characters, but being winded, has trouble doing so. Further dialogue occurs if and when the characters try to interfere with Neally's Hunt.

Literally running into the characters, Lorraine's wild eyes express her terror before she can even open her mouth. She gasps exhaustedly, pleading for the characters' help: "You've gotta... help me... He's been after me all night...!" Asked who, Lorraine continues, "One of... Lodin's Brood... I haven't gotten a good look... but I know it's one of Lodin's... I know too much about Lodin's... operations... You pick up a lot when you run "memos"... Now he wants me dead!"

When Lorraine's Hunter first appears he should be little more than a silhouette, disguising his true identity. Characters must get a Perception success of 7+ to recognize Neally at this time. Otherwise, he steps into the light after a moment, and the characters realize why they might not have initially recognized Neally. He is a maddened Beast his eyes are bright with hatred, his hair piece is missing entirely (exposing his premature baldness), his fingers end in pointed talons and his teeth reach to the bottom of his chin, saliva dripping from them to the ground. It is not difficult to recognize this demeanor from the nightclub (Intelligence success of 5+), but this time Neally seems even further gone.

Neally heads directly for Lorraine, ignoring the characters. To him, the Vampires do not exist. If she has already been hidden away or if she has already fled, Neally sniffs the air and follows in the direction she left. Once again, any character who intercedes between predator and prey is dispatched in the most expedient manner possible (i.e. thrown from Neally's sight and

therefore mind). Persistent meddlers are dealt more harsh blows and will be killed if need be, but Neally does not allow his advance to be slowed by the destruction of a character. If the characters cannot be daunted, Neally abandons his pursuit for now and tries to resume it later in the night or at another time. Neally does not end his Hunt for Lorraine until he has captured and sucked her dry. Jefferson will not relinquish control over his victim until Neally has broken the Sixth Tradition. If this means maintaining constant control of Neally for days on end, so be it.

When Neally first appears, Lorraine becomes insane with panic. She immediately bolts through the closest means of escape. Any character who tries to hold her back is on the receiving end of a surprisingly powerful blow (she becomes Strength 5 in her terror). Lorraine has learned the streets fairly well and flees into their shelter. Characters trying to keep up with her must win a Pursuit contest (Vampire, p. 152). Lorraine already has five successes to her credit and needs eight to elude the characters entirely. As Lorraine knows the way through the streets, her rolls are made against a Difficulty of 5. The characters* are made against a value of 7 unless a character is Streetwise, in which his Difficulty is also 5. Should the characters catch up with Lorraine they again find themselves on the defensive from a few blows. After a second Lorraine realizes that it is not Neally who she fights and lets her guard down. She can now be reasoned with and follows whatever orders the characters give. If the characters lose Lorraine in the pursuit, she disappears into the city sprawl. Even attempts at tracking fail to locate her, her path is so erratic.

If the characters are organized enough they may divide into groups. One can try and waylay Neally while the other pursues Lorraine. The latter group will have to be quick about their task—it is unlikely the first group can hold Neally for long.

Whether Neally goes through the characters to get at Lorraine or is forced to flee from the characters, he manages to elude any attempts at pursuit—his *Auspex* makes him aware of trackers and he ambushes them to ensure his getaway. After finally disposing of Lorraine, Neally returns to his estate-Haven. Once there his mind returns to him — Jefferson relinquishes control to let Neally wonder at his latest atrocity. Jefferson's next step is to reveal his return and orchestration of Neally's mania.

Attempts at conversation with Lorraine's stalker do not clear Neally's mind, but do shed more light on the reasons behind his Hunt, "*Lodin owns her and hates me. / used to be his favorite. I want her dead!*" If the characters guess at a relationship between Neally and Lodin, that is more than fine; do not rebuke them. Neally also bellows at characters who intercede themselves between he and Lorraine, "*Get out of my way unless you seek your final grave!*"

Neally's confession of personal hatred for Lorraine absolves Lodin of responsibility in this Blood Hunt. In fact, Lodin does not even know Neally hunts his lover and would do

anything in his power to protect her. However, Neally has put himself between Lorraine and her Prince, all she can do is run away. Neally's confession also suggests the mania he suffers; he is beyond rational thought. If characters spoke with Neally back at the nightclub, they recognize his manner of speech from that occasion.

When characters confront Neally, do not let them forget any past sympathies they may have felt for him. It is clear that Neally has lost control of himself again and is not necessarily to blame for his actions. At first, any sympathy felt for Neally may force the characters to be gentle with him. However, once it becomes clear that only force will stop Neally, the characters are justified in using it (though lethal force may still be unnecessary).

At some point in the chase scene between Neally, Lorraine and the characters, the characters have a chance of spotting Jefferson again. As in the previous two scenes he appears as a familiar silhouette, but no identity can be attributed to him. As usual, if the characters move toward him, or a single character directs the rest to the figure, Jefferson disappears. Jefferson's occasional appearances keep his activities immediate in the characters' lives, even though they do not know he's behind things. When the characters face Jefferson in Chapter Four they realize it is he who has been haunting them all along.

The characters may know of a place to hide Lorraine, but Neally's Hunt is relentless and the Vampires cannot guard Lorraine forever. What is more, Lorraine is afraid to stay in one place for long, regardless of safety assurances. Her life on the streets consists of constant roving, so she thinks Neally will be able to track her down if she sits still (and she's right). Thus, at some point when characters return to Lorraine's shelter, they find her gone or dead, whichever seems more likely based on the situation. If Neally has killed Lorraine, the characters find her in several pieces, her body having been torn limb from limb as if by a ferocious animal (or maybe even the Sabbat...). If a character was particularly close to Lorraine, he or she may lose two Willpower points, may go into Frenzy, or may lose a Humanity point.

If Lorraine gets away from or abandons the characters, they get word of her fate the next day. Rumors spread about her brutal death. It is also said that Neally was seen following her, but for reasons unknown. As the characters know more about Neally's Hunt, they may inject truth into the rumor mill or may approach some authority figure to make the truth of events known. Only truly foolish characters try and approach Lodin with this information; the characters are definitely out of favor with the Prince and you should remind them of this fact.

Over any period of time spent with Lorraine, the characters learn much from her. The girl is a wealth of information and could blackmail almost anyone in the Chicago Camarilla. She is loyal to Lodin, though, so refuses to betray his trust (Lorraine is loyal to Lodin, but is also loyal to the characters, her friends, so refuses to betray them to the Prince, even if that action puts

her in conflict with Lodin's demands.) In return for help against Neally, Lorraine is willing to reveal some of what she knows. The exact nature of her revelations are up to the Storyteller. She could reveal the location of a hated Vampire's Haven, or may know that an envoy from another city, like Gary, is coming to Chicago to sign on recruits. Lorraine knows little of Neally's secrets, but can explain his relationship with Emily (that she's his Ghoul and sex toy), and knows that Lodin has grown wary of Neally lately, given Neally's inexplicable behavior. Lorraine is an excellent tool through which to explain recent events in Chicago Vampire society. She might even give details on the Sabbat gang's activities in town.

Shortly after word of Lorraine's death gets around, Lodin announces a Blood Hunt against his former lieutenant. The bounty offered in return for his capture—alive—is Neally's own blood and essence. If Neally is brought in dead, no reward is paid. If they want, bounty hunters could arrange for another reward, such as a Royal Pardon from Lodin for crimes committed in the past. This would be a valuable prize to the characters. The characters may participate in the Blood Hunt, but their intentions probably change when Neally approaches them in need of help, and when he is willing to pay much better than Lodin.

Subplot: Romancing Emily

"Woman's fidelity

Turns like the weather

Sways like a feather

Tossed in the breeze"

— Giuseppe Verdi, *"Rigoletto"*

While the characters have occasional encounters with Neally in this Chapter, we do not want them to forget about Emily. We particularly do not want a character who has become enchanted by her to lose touch. Thus, this encounter allows that character to maintain a relationship with the Ghoul. It also allows the character to move closer to Blood Bond with Jefferson. The character also gains some insight into what goes on behind recent events.

Out on the street one night, the character attracted to Emily sees the object of his affection. It quickly becomes apparent that the woman walks as if in a trance—she passes the character without even acknowledging him. Called after, Emily snaps out of it and smiles to her friend, but quickly seems to drift off into dreamland. After a few moments the spell fades and Emily returns to normal.

Emily has just been with Jefferson, who opened his veins to her, renewing the potency of his blood within her. Emily walks in a temporary daze, hypnotized by the ecstasy of her encounter with Jefferson, even though it was not of the traditional physical sort.

Having brought Emily around, the character may invite her to an intimate encounter of his own. Emily complies of

course, but seems distracted throughout the affair and is not satisfied with what the character offers. Something clearly preoccupies Emily, something that has intrigued her much more than the character's offering, which is made pitiful by comparison. Emily does not accuse the character of inadequacy, but on their next meeting, the character must do some convincing to get Emily to join in a physical encounter. Obviously, Emily has met someone else.

The character may follow Emily, but she does not meet with Jefferson anytime soon. His blood courses through her and does its task when Neally feeds. Thus, the jealous character never gets a chance to meet his competitor. For mood's sake, though, the character may get a hint at who has stolen his woman. When the character finds Emily wandering in a trance, the shadowy figure seen at the club and other places may also be seen. A Perception success of 6+ is needed to spot Jefferson, but his Obfuscate Discipline hides his identity as usual. Before long the characters should be desperate to learn the identity of this mystery man.

Rumors of the Sabbat

While the characters are embroiled in the other events of this Chapter, and while they have brief encounters with Neally (and maybe even Emily), the group hears rumors and stories of the Sabbat gang. The gang is under orders from Jefferson to make its presence known in Chicago. If Sabbat activity becomes general knowledge, Jefferson hopes that Neally will turn to them to escape the Blood Bond.

These rumors and stories are only samples of what the characters can hear. Feel free to create more. Some are accurate and some are exaggerations. The source of the rumor is listed below, but you may change that source. Of course, different sources impart different information in different ways.

- The characters read in the newspaper of a break in at the ruins of the theatre. It seems that on the night following the "drug battle," looters got in and committed several acts of vandalism. A photograph of spray-painted graffiti reads, "*Sabbat rules! Listen to the Beast!*" Characters who make a Perception success of 7+ realize that no mention of theft is made in the article.

In reality the Sabbat returned to the theatre after their confrontation with Sheriff. They sought Jefferson, but naturally failed to find him. The gang's acts of vandalism pose yet another threat to the Masquerade so Lodin has done what he can to make the break-in seem more mundane than it really is.

- A Nosferatu acquaintance tells the characters of a conversation he overheard:

"I was lookin' for a rat in me Haven when I heard these loud, gruff voices from up 'bove. There was a gang standin' near my grate. I figure they were the Sabbat s'osed to be in town. One of 'em—the leader I figure—mentioned goin' back to the Free State in California when they were done in Chicago.

That's all I heard 'fore my rat showed his succulent li' le self."

It is true that the Sabbat are from the California Free State. They have come in search of their missing Master, and are not opposed to recruiting members of the Camarilla to go back west with them.

- A Brujah the characters are familiar with offers an account of an encounter with the Sabbat bikers:

"We was out patrollin' our turf when they rode in like thunder itself. Dozens of 'em were all around before we even knew what was happenin'. I took on five myself. When the others of 'em saw how bad I was whippin' their friends, they all took off. Bloody cowards. 'Course, one of 'em got in a lucky shot before he took off. Gaveme this black eye... and this broken tooth... and this fractured arm, but we're ready to take 'em again whenever they're game!"

It is true that the Sabbat made a raid against his gang, but their initial intent was to invite the Brujah into the Sabbat. When the local gang refused a rumble broke out in which the Brujah were trounced. He is not about to admit that, though.

- A radio report details a brawl which occurred overnight in a small bar on the bad side of town. A motorcycle gang is reputed to have instigated the fight when one attacked a waitress

without provocation. The woman is in hospital, having lost a life-threatening amount of blood. Three others were hurt in the brawl. Two died in hospital. The police are investigating, but as Sgt. Pike of the Chicago Police Department reports, *"The gang is probably too far gone by now to track down. Those types never stay long in one place."* (He's actually in Lodin's pocket and is burying the investigation in paperwork.)

- On another occasion, the Nosferatu acquaintance reports having heard Lodin has declared a Blood Hunt against Neally. This rumor is told before the actual Blood Hunt is called, so is false for its time of telling. It might be humorous to have the same Nosferatu later report the real Blood Hunt to the characters. The characters probably disbelieve the Nosferatu, having been misled by him before.

- Word spreads throughout Vampire society that Lodin has admitted to Sabbat activity in Chicago — the problem has gotten so bad that he can no longer hide the fact, and needs the help of the Kindred to find the intruders. Sheriff and some of his men went out hunting. They're said to have found the gang, but were beaten to a pulp. Stories now say that even Sheriff has grown afraid of the Sabbat! Thus far no one has found the gang's Haven, but the search goes on.

CHAPTER THREE: EMISSARIES OF DESTRUCTION

"The urge for destruction is also a creative urge!"

— Michael Bakunin, *"Die Reaktion in Deutschland"*

After compelling Neally to destroy one of the Kindred, an event which leads to a Blood Hunt, Jefferson presents himself to his old "friend." Learning that he has been Blood Bound to and is at the mercy of his most-hated enemy, Neally is desperate to break the Bond regardless of consequences. As years of experience have taught him, the Bond is indestructible, save for one means of escape offered by the Sabbat. Among the Anarchs of the Camarilla is it known as the "True Path" in sneering reference to Golconda, which is known as the "One Path." Just as Jefferson hopes, Neally turns to the Sabbat to break free of the Bond, even though that means the end of his life as he knows it.

To join the Sabbat, Neally employs the characters as envoys. After that night at the theater, Neally knows the characters have established terms with the Sabbat. He further relies on sympathy in petitioning their aid; the characters understand the immensity of Neally's recent hardships. Though the Sabbat are willing to accept Neally, they first want the characters to join them on a wrecking spree. If the characters impress the Sabbat, the gang will let Neally's deal proceed.

However, that assumes the characters survive the spree.

Before he can get in contact with the characters, Neally must deal with the immediate threat of the Blood Hunt called upon him. Lodin can no longer overlook Neally's breaches of Tradition, and leads the Blood Hunt himself when he finds out about his precious Lorraine. Neally therefore goes into hiding and cannot be found. He does not even tell Emily where he is going. If the characters become involved in the Hunt their efforts are fruitless, as are everyone else's.

This Chapter is treated as one unit, but it is actually composed of a number of different encounters and events. It will take at least one evening of play to complete as it is likely your players will become quite involved in this contest which the Sabbat forces them into. However, if it does take less time, it would be easy to go directly to Chapter Four, and thus complete this story in three nights (as always, our presentation of the story is only our suggestions on how to use the material—you always have the right to change things to fit your own Chronicle and unique style).

Setting

Neally only comes out of hiding to locate and retain the



services of the characters. To locate the characters, Neally waits for them in some place where he has encountered them before, like the Nightclub, their Haven or on a street corner. If the location is crowded, Neally waits until the characters leave or are alone before revealing himself.

The setting of the characters' ride with the Sabbat is the city of Chicago itself. The gang leads the characters all over the city, demanding specific tasks and feats.

Neally's Plea

Neally understands the danger of approaching the characters—they may turn him in instead of helping him. To ensure the characters' loyalty Neally is prepared to share highly classified information, information that he has learned as Lodin's Lieutenant. You should determine the precise nature of this information based on your Chronicle. Neally might reveal some secret Elder plan to eliminate all Anarchs. Or, Neally might reveal the identity of an Elder who secretly holds one of the characters in Blood Bond (he doesn't know that one of the characters might be Bound to Jefferson, though). Regardless of the exact content of this intelligence, it should be sufficiently important to the characters that they might overlook the Blood Hunt to get it. Neally is not stupid, either. He baits the characters with one revelation and promises more upon completion of their task. To learn more the characters simply need locate the Sabbat and convince them to accept Neally.

It is also possible that the characters might not be interested in Neally's offer of information, or they might want more. Neally holds another secret that he is loathe to admit, but barter

with it if necessary. Only more powerful and influential Elders know legends of a reclusive Shaman in the mountains of Colorado. She is rumored to know the ancient ways to free one of the Beast—she can make a Vampire human again! Neally does not know the precise location of this woman, nor does anyone else. Little more than legend of the woman has ever been passed as those who have gone in search of her have never been seen again. For more information on this Shaman, see *Epilogue*.

Furthermore, characters might have their own motivations for helping Neally. Any character involved with Emily might help the Elder to get closer to the woman. Again, Neally is loathe to acquiesce, but grants the character permission to court or even Blood Bond Emily after Neally is gone. Joining the Sabbat, Neally realizes that his ties with the Camarilla will be forever cut, so will lose his power over Emily. Of course, a character who helps Neally only to win Emily is disappointed by story's end; Jefferson claims the Ghoul instead.

Locating the Sabbat

There are all kinds of ways for the characters to locate and deal with the Sabbat. The characters will probably come up with a means that is appropriate to their personalities and your Chronicle, so you have to be prepared to improvise when the characters search for the gang. The most likely means of locating the Sabbat involves a surveillance of the city, waiting for the gang to wreak havoc again. Characters might tune into the police band or they might spy on Sheriff and his men, waiting for them to go out and deal with the bikers. Learning where the Sabbat are, the characters have to approach the gang before any

authority figures arrive on the scene. Making Neally's offer, the characters can lead the gang to a safer place for further negotiations. Or the gang could scoop up the characters on the spot, taking the Vampires out on their wrecking spree—the characters' test of loyalty.

It is also possible that the characters might put out word that they want to meet the gang. Though the Sabbat are transitory, Jefferson wants Neally, so the gang will hear of the characters' message. However, Bach is disinterested in meeting anyone boring. He only arrives at a preordained meeting place if the characters insult or challenge the power of the Sabbat.

Regardless of the means of the two groups' meeting, the Sabbat are quick to drag the characters off. They want a measure of the characters' resolve and will only deal with the group if the characters prove themselves to be tough or wild.

The gang is interested in the characters' proposal, but before they risk their necks and accept Neally, the Sabbat want the characters to prove that their intentions are genuine:

"How do we know that you're not Camarilla pawns, sent here to lead us into trap? Your precious Masters have already learned they can't take us by force. Maybe now they're wasting their time with petty mind games..."

"Yeah, okay, we'll meet with him. We'll show a puny little Camarilla Elder how to snarl. But first you've got to prove yourselves. If you want to deal with the Sabbat you ride with us first. We don't barter with anyone who's afraid of the Beast!"

Riding with the Sabbat, the characters are in for the time of their unives.

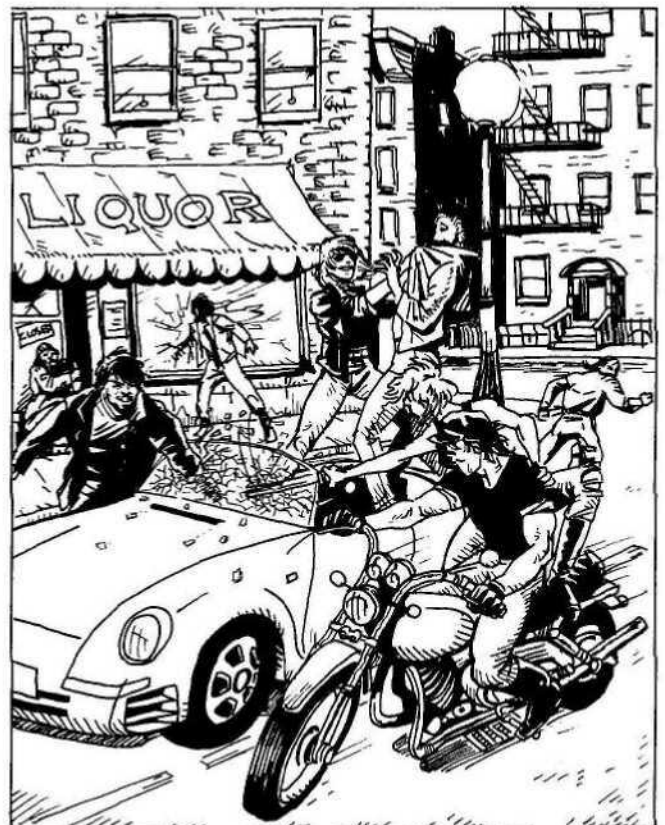
The Spree

Once again, events of the spree are dependent on the characters' personalities. The spree offers an ideal opportunity for the characters to perform any wild actions they have always dreamt of. The Sabbat put each character on the back of a bike and roar around town at steady speeds exceeding 120 mph (success on a Stamina + Drive roll, difficulty of 5, in order not to show signs of illness) until Bach signals a halt. The gang stops whenever a particularly promising destination is reached, like a seedy bar. At each destination one character is ordered to perform some dangerous or destructive feat. Some ideas are listed below, in order from minor to extreme:

- A small Vampire might be commanded to start a fight with a gigantic bouncer at a tough Country & Western bar;
- Go in a church and interrupt the Funeral of a VIP;
- Jump over cars in a traffic jam, ripping the antenna off of each one;
- Dominate/Kidnap a Traffic cop, and force him to give tickets to vehicles parked legally;
- Stop all the Traffic on one side of a six-lane freeway;
- Steal a Police Car with the siren going full blast, and have a race with the Sabbat on their cycles;

- Set fire to an abandoned building;
- Flip over a brand new Lexus parked on the side of the road;
- Hijack a city bus and force the driver to drive it into a park, and on top of the grass (and over a "stay off the grass" sign);
- Bust up a drug deal and steal the money and guns of the participants;
- Paint graffiti on a mobile Police HQ (operated out of an RV);
- Climb the Sears Tower and break windows on the way up;
- Rip down some power lines, cutting off electricity to an entire neighborhood; or
- Derail a Subway Train by breaking up the tracks (if warning is not given to the Train, and death is caused, Humanity may be lost).

Once the characters become thoroughly embroiled in their primal, chaotic deeds (indeed, the players may well be shouting, laughing and constantly coming up with new destructive acts 10 attempt), they move closer and closer to loss of self-control. This change develops gradually and occurs in part by being in company with the Sabbat - the intensity of their Bestiality begins rubs off on others. To recognize this transformation requires a Humanity roll made at a -3 penalty. Those who succeed realize that they are becoming brutes and may stop themselves from degenerating further. Those who fail the roll may lose complete control. A Frenzy check is made with a -3 modifier to resist the Beast.





Characters who Frenzy remain in that state as long as they're in the presence of the Sabbat (and that means all night). If a composed character can lead a Frenzy victim away from the action, the Frenzied character has a chance to recover. Characters who do Frenzy may lose Humanity as usual, but only after they have recovered.

Above all, this scene should be fun for it allows the characters to cut loose where they are not usually able to. Keep experimenting with different feats at different locales until all the players get into causing trouble. If one particular feat entertains them, let all the characters perform it. Lots of Attribute and Discipline rolls add to the excitement of this scene, giving the players a sense of how animated and radical their characters are behaving. Of course, by performing all these feats the characters are breaking the Masquerade. Lodin will certainly be after the characters once word of their acts get out. However, the reward Neally is offering should easily compensate for all that hassle.

Remember that the Sabbat are impressed not only by dangerous and daring feats, but also by wild, unpredictable behavior — the essence of the Sabbat is the Beast. So, if a character fails to succeed in the action he is commanded to perform, the Sabbat groan with disappointment. However, the character can compensate by losing control or doing something unexpected and totally insane. As a rule of thumb, if characters'

actions make you laugh, the Sabbat are entertained and impressed.

Any character who is a stick-in-the-mud, or who refuses to break the Masquerade, also fails to impress the Sabbat. Bach needs to put his confidence in all the characters if he is to accept Neally. Thus, Bach refuses to deal with the characters until all expose their Beast. Characters who have impressed Bach may talk him into changing his mind with a Manipulation success of 7+. He agrees to continue dealings with the group, but will not have the "boring" character present when Neally defects. All in all, it should not be too difficult for the characters to get on the gang's good side.

Creating mayhem all over town, the characters and Sabbat are bound to run into mortal police and maybe even Lodin's goon squad. These opponents should be fun to face, but should not bring the gang's spree to a halt. Furthermore, the characters should avoid capture by mortal or Vampiric authorities. The characters will need their full number when Neally is delivered to and Initiated into the Sabbat.

The night's festivities do not end until the approach of sunrise. The Sabbat refuse to lead the characters to their Haven. The characters are left to return to their own resting places. It is unlikely that the characters can pursue the Sabbat — the bikers kick the characters off their machines and take off. In parting, Bach does express his respect for the characters: *"The Beast is still alive in you! Good! Meet us tonight at the old Northside Church. Bring your weak Elder!"*

Winning the respect of the Sabbat the characters get a definite sense of accomplishment. Furthermore, after reveling in their Bestial side, the characters also feel vital and potent, despite any moral misgivings for the night's events. Accordingly, the characters each regain 5 points of Willpower, but risk a Humanity loss if they have done anything especially repulsive.

Characters

There is no end to the variety and number of characters who can appear in this scene. The Storyteller should improvise character profiles as needed. It is unlikely that any one person met in the spree will appear twice. For the profiles of the Sabbat, see Chapter Four.

Roleplaying Tips

The most consistent characters taking part in this scene are the Sabbat. They largely remain on their bikes or enter a place where a character has been commanded to perform. The Sabbat tend to laugh at a characters' triumphs and defeats. They jeer when a character fails to meet their expectations, and cheer when a character exceeds expectations. Above all, the Sabbat prompt the characters to become more and more Bestial, encouraging the Vampires to test the depths of their animal side. If characters become Frenzied, it is not long before the Sabbat do so as well.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE INITIATION

"Ice will melt, water will boil

You and! can shake off this mortal coil

It's bigger than us

You don't have to worry about it

Ready or not here comes the drop"

— Crowded House, *"It's Only Natural"*

Having won the favor of the Sabbat, the characters deliver Neally to the proposed meeting place of the old Northside Church. The Sabbat await Neally's arrival and have prepared the church cemetery for their cult's Initiation ceremony. Neally is going to be indoctrinated into the Sabbat this very night, and the characters get to (are forced to?) watch.

Further developments include resolution of the mystery of the shadowy man, Jefferson. He's actually the Leader of the Sabbat and performs Neally's indoctrination service. He only exposes himself after attaining revenge against Neally. The characters are made privy to Jefferson's machinations. They also realize that Jefferson has won control over Emily. He intends to leave with her after Neally is broken. Any character who's fallen in love with her may react according to his heart's demands.

Setting

The old Northside Church was built decades ago in a rural region to the northwest of Chicago. It takes about an hour to get to the church by car. At one time the church serviced a small rural community. That community suffered economic problems some time ago, and most folks have since moved on. As a result, the church has fallen into disrepair. Its interiors have largely been gutted, save for its stained glass windows, which are still intact.

For a while the building was the den of a pack of Werewolves. Characters who have encountered Lupines before may recognize the signs of their previous habitation. A Perception success of 8+ reveals scratch marks on walls, long hairs brushed into corners, and gnawed bones scattered about. Characters who do not know the ways of Werewolves may notice these signs (Perception success of 6+), but do not divine their full significance.

Bach elected the church as the meeting place between the Sabbat and the characters since the church has a cemetery in which to Initiate Neally. The old Northside is also close to the Sabbat Haven, an old bam located in the surrounding rural community. For a graphic display of the church, see the church map on the inside of the back cover.

The church itself could house a congregation of about 100. At the head of the church is the altar. Attached to the side of the church is the old parson's house. It, like the church, is rundown and abandoned. On the other side of the church is the

cemetery. There are about two dozen tombstones left standing. Many more have been destroyed. When the characters arrive the Sabbat gang stands in the cemetery. A hole has been dug in the center of the cemetery and is clearly intended for Neally.

The only way to approach the church is by an old road leading from the Interstate.

Dialogue and Drama

The scene at the cemetery is rife with potential for conflict, personal terror, wonder, sorrow and heartbreak. When the characters make their arrival known, Bach warmly greets them. He steps from the group of gang members standing behind Neally's grave. At first it seems that Bach is oblivious to Neally's presence, but it soon becomes clear that Bach holds the Elder is poor regard:

"My friends, we are glad to see you again (the gang members all growl in greeting) The day's light was long and the pack slept uneasily. They missed the scent of their newfound Brethren (at this the gang members howl and laugh deeply).

"We have prepared the Becoming Ritual for your craven Camarilla coward. Look upon his fate (pointing at the lone open grave). The primal earth will bring out his true self, what he was meant to be: a Beast, like us... like you!

"Last night you ran with the pack and entertained us. Tonight we return the service. Sit and observe the making of the true Brood."

Though the characters would expect Neally to respond in kind to insults hurled at him by Bach, Neally remains docile. In fact, he is quiet and sluggish throughout the journey from Chicago to the church. Characters with medical training may examine Neally. On an Intelligence + Medical (or any other related skill) success of 7+, the characters realize that Neally is drugged. Characters without medical training could still come to this conclusion, but against a Difficulty of 8. Characters with experience with drugs make the test as characters with medical skill.

Neally has fed on a heroin addict to make his transition to the Sabbat easier. What he does not know is that the Sabbat ritual of Initiation will return him to full consciousness by virtue of its nature. Buried Initiates become hypersensitive to their surroundings beneath the earth. Those who can endure the mental anguish of imprisonment in the ground have their Humanity stripped away. Those of even greater will claw their way back to the surface. The weak willed go mad and never escape the earth, trapped forever with their insanity.

Thus, when the grunting and howling part of the Initiation ceremony begins, Neally shows signs of rousing. When he is eventually lowered into the earth he becomes fully cognizant. Suddenly terrified, Neally desperately screams for salvation, *"Nooooo! You're destroying me! Help me! HELP! AAAAA!"*

Immediately after Bach takes Neally from the characters the other Sabbat begin to howl and growl. Their calls are initially low tones, but gradually grow in volume and passion. Characters listening closely (on a Perception success of 6+) hear a chanting pattern within the howling, as if the Sabbat are actually speaking another language - the language of the Beast. Any Vampire who hears this howling must make a Willpower success of 7+ or break out howling himself. The entranced character remains so as long as the Sabbat keep howling, unless brought out of it by another character.

Once the Sabbat howls have reached a wild nature, the gang parts to reveal the shadowy figure of Jefferson. The characters immediately recognize the figure as that seen several times before. Until now he has been completely obscured by the darkness of his Obfuscate Discipline. Bach still holds Neally near the open grave. The shadowy figure motions for Neally to be thrown in. While Neally screams for his freedom, the remaining Sabbat fill the grave with earth, smothering Neally's cries. After that all go quiet, intent upon the grave.

In this "intermission" the characters have an opportunity to act on their own (assuming they have not already taken some action). The Sabbat, including Jefferson, are completely preoccupied with Neally's grave. Characters may do as they please.

To prematurely see through Jefferson's Obfuscate requires a Perception success of 9+. Though the characters may learn the shadowy figure's identity from early on, it does them little good now that the Initiation ceremony is underway.

Once Neally has been turned to the Sabbat, Jefferson reveals his true appearance to the characters (assuming they have not yet managed to penetrate his Obfuscate Discipline). After a long pause in which he lets the characters gasp at his revelation, Neally goes into a soliloquy that explains his machinations:

"Thank you for your land assistance my dear comrades. I trust you remember me — Jefferson Archibald Foster. You freed me from my grim confinement at the theatre. Oh how I hate opera. You have not seen me much of late, but I have seen a great deal of you.

"Allow me to explain further so you may understand what has transpired here. This creature you see before you has been my enemy for a long time. We've been competing for Emily for as long as I care to remember. He beat me in every contest without fail. He even drove me to the Sabbat to find a way of freeing Emily of his control. Well now I have done the same to him, and he has come to us of his own free will. I merely took command of his senses, with the help of my lovely assistant (motioning toward Emily), come here my dear, and drove him out of his mind. It was his choice to seek refuge from me here in the Sabbat. In that you have helped me, though of your own free will as well. Neally used you as his pawns. Indeed, by bringing him here you have committed an extraordinary act of valor. He had corrupted this sweet child (caressing Emily's face) where I always sought to protect her. Your deeds have saved a woman

from an eternity of corruption (Emily smiles to the characters in thanks).

To be sure, Neally came to us of his own free will, so he has pronounced sentence upon his own evils. I must admit however, with great satisfaction, that he did not know the full story. He did not realize that I am the leader of this Pack, and that I have finally returned! Finally, revenge is mine!"

After having been haunted for so long by Jefferson, characters undoubtedly have questions for him that put his defeat of Neally in clearer perspective. Having waited decades for his revenge, Jefferson is happy to explain all his motives and plans. He clearly revels in his victory.

If the characters have not interfered with the ritual, Jefferson offers to Initiate them into the Sabbat as well. The choice is theirs and they are not forced into the Cult if they decline the offer. Should the characters remain within the Camarilla, Jefferson offers them two things for having helped him in the past.

The first is information:

"You have assisted me so I will assist you in return. I have learned that one of your number has become Blood Bound to a powerful Vampire, an Elder who cannot be trusted. I refuse to name your Master for the Bond is a personal affair. It is for you to find the Bond Holder and do with him as you please."

The Master of the Bond is Jefferson himself. He has learned of one of the characters' relationship with Emily. He does not identify himself as the Master of the Bond because he knows the character might try to break it. That could mean constant harassment from the victim, and Jefferson would prefer to live without that trouble. He does admit to the Bond as encouragement for the characters to join the Sabbat. It is the only recourse from a life of Bondage.

Jefferson also offers the characters a medallion. He explains that *"when you decide that the Camarilla's oppression can no longer be endured, you can summon me through this. I shall show you the true nature of the Beast. However, should you summon me for purposes of your own, I shall not be... appreciative."* The medallion is actually magical. The characters need only add a drop of their blood to it and Jefferson will know of their wish to join the Sabbat. The medallion offers lots of story potential. If it is used and the characters are not prepared to join the Sabbat, Jefferson may help them with some problem they face (after all, the characters did free him), but he demands some kind of compensation for time wasted. The Storyteller may determine the exact nature of this penalty.

Emily is also at the scene of Neally's destruction (she's been hiding in the church) and leaves with Jefferson and the gang at the end of the story. The character who loves her may appeal to Emily to stay, but she cannot:

"I am fond of you, but you are no Jefferson. He is like no other man I have ever met. He makes me feel like a woman, and has promised to keep me with him always. Last time I made the

mistake of going with Neally instead of him, I won't make the same mistake twice. I must be with him. I'm sorry."

Nothing the amorous character says can change Emily's mind. She believes that Jefferson will restore her humanity and desires that above anything else.

If the characters escape the scene of the Initiation, they go without pursuit Jefferson is thankful for the characters' help in his plans so does not persecute them as Camarilla pagans. When the characters are driving back to the city the Sabbat bikers appear some distance behind them. The bikers gain on the car regardless of what the characters do. When Jefferson rides past on his bike, the characters see Emily on the back. Jefferson tosses the medallion described above through a window, or hangs it on the antenna. He shouts: *"Use it when you can no longer bear the Camarilla!"* As Jefferson rides off ahead, Bach rides past the characters. Strapped to the back of his bike is Neally. The former Elder is wild eyed and manic. The amount of rope used to tie him down proves that Neally has lost his Humanity and is one of the Sabbat. The rest of the gang rides past the car, waves, and disappears into the distance.

The characters might also have second thoughts about giving Neally to the Sabbat, particularly after they hear Neally's cries for help. The only way to save Neally is to snatch him from the scene of the Initiation. The characters have to go through the entire Sabbat gang to do it. The characters might even get away, but their efforts to free Neally are useless. Jefferson still has Neally under Blood Bond. Jefferson would rather Neally join the Sabbat by his own choice, but Jefferson will command Neally to return and resume the indoctrination. This alternative of command is not as satisfying and the first, but still wins Jefferson his revenge. Thus, when the characters are on the run with Neally, Neally suddenly stops and runs back to the church. To stop him the characters have to immobilize him. Neally fights to get back to the Sabbat, though, and it isn't long before the bikers arrive to reclaim him from the group.

Though the characters may interrupt the ceremony by trying to rescue Neally, Jefferson isn't angered. He lets the characters escape, indebted to them for his own rescue. He does, however, throw the medallion after them, calling; *"You run from us now friends, but one day you will run to the freedom of the Beast. Use this then to find me."* The medallion should land near one of the fleeing characters, who may pick it up.

If they want to see the Initiation ritual through, the characters may continue to watch. As the Sabbat stare at the grave, its surface begins to tremble. A fist then breaks through. The hand is black with soil and has nails extended to an unnatural length. The hand is followed by the writhing, contorted form of Neally. The Vampire has survived the Initiation and has lost all his Humanity. He is now of the Sabbat Characters watching Neally emerge must make a Humanity test Those that fail their roll lose a point of Humanity, *permanently!* The scene is not meant for the eyes of those who try to deny their Beast. The



Sabbat, on the other hand, leap about, whooping and hollering at Neally's rise.

His revenge complete, Jefferson shows his true identity. He simultaneously calls toward the church. A figure appears from a low window. Characters making a Perception success of 7+ recognize the figure as Emily. The character who loves her may recognize her with a success of 5+. As Neally had abandoned Emily when the Blood Hunt was called against him, Jefferson invited her to join him at his Haven (the Sabbat bam). During Neally's Initiation Emily remains under Jefferson's orders to remain within the church. Once Neally is converted and his hold over Emily broken, Jefferson calls her out Emily is overjoyed with the sight of Neally wild and cringing on the ground. She then embraces Jefferson as her new Master.

The character who is in love with Emily might try and escape with her, but Jefferson does not allow that to happen. He has his Retainers hunt the character down. The character's only chance of escape is to out run the bikers. That is difficult, though, as Emily fights the character. She is not Blood Bound to Jefferson, but would prefer to stay with him than the character. If the character truly loves Emily he may concede to her requests, not wanting to hurt her. Jefferson understands how a man can be so obsessed with Emily. He therefore does not have the character killed, but warns him against coming between him and Emily again, *"I will let you live now for I owe you a service. But, should you court Emily again I will leave you staked in the earth, never to see the night again."* Jefferson's intentions for Emily are completely honorable. He wants to preserve her beauty and, if possible, restore her humanity. Jefferson will admit to these intentions if it makes the lovesick character feel any better about losing Emily.

Since Emily's lover is actually Blood Bound to Jefferson, the Sabbat could command the character to stay away from Emily. Jefferson, better than anyone, has learned to understand the anguish a Blood Bond can cause over time. He would prefer to leave the character his own will than to force actions upon the poor fellow.

Once the characters have witnessed Neally's Initiation and have learned the truth of events behind it, Jefferson and the Sabbat prepare to leave. The gang's bikes are parked on the far side of the church. One biker relinquishes his bike to Jefferson and rides on the back of another. Jefferson removes his antiquated jacket and puts on a black leather one. Emily rides behind Jefferson. If it has not yet been offered, this is the point at which Jefferson gives the characters the medallion.

Since the characters see the Initiation through to its end, they learn that Neally was actually the greater of two evils in this old feud. The characters may therefore take heart for having done some good in arranging his defeat, even though they intended to help him. Thus, by story's end, the characters regain 5 points of Willpower. If one of the characters loved Emily and has since lost her, he gains no Willpower for defeating Neally.

By the end of this story the characters reach a status quo. They have not been overtly harmed by anyone, nor have they been directly manipulated. This is a rather encouraging ending! If you want the story to take a darker twist, the Sabbat could intend to Initiate the characters along with Neally. Having seen Jefferson, the characters know he is alive, and, having run with the motorcycle gang, the characters are deemed too familiar with Sabbat ways to be let free. You therefore might add a few open graves that have been dug toward the back of the cemetery. The characters might even be willing to join the Sabbat, but it is more likely that they will fight for their right to choose. The only way for the characters to be pardoned is to appeal for mercy from Jefferson, reminding him of the invaluable service done him back at the theatre. A Manipulation + Subterfuge roll is required. If it is 6+, Jefferson lets the characters go, regardless of the consequences, but he makes it clear that he no longer owes any favors.

If the characters are angered by having been made pawns, they may destroy Neally after he climbs from the ground. His revenge cut short, Jefferson is enraged and is sure to force the characters into graves. To get revenge on them, he makes them Sabbat, and his subjects.

Epilogue

The characters may have sacrificed Neally to the Sabbat and lived to tell of it, but now they are in more trouble with Lodin. Word gets to him of the Vampires' little jaunt with the Sabbat. He's furious that they would break the Masquerade again. Lodin is also concerned by the disappearance of Neally. If he has any inkling that the characters were involved in Neally's defection, the Prince gives them no quarter. Thus, a couple days after the Sabbat ritual, Lodin's Retainers hunt the characters down and bring them to the Prince's Haven once again.

As punishment for the characters' breach of the Masquerade, they are made to drink of Lodin's blood once again, unless this would make them Blood Bound to the Prince. In this case, he will probably call a Blood Hunt against them. If the characters are tied to Neally's disappearance, Lodin definitely calls a Blood Hunt against them. He lets them leave his Haven alive, and if they can survive the Hunt, the characters are deemed innocent.

However, the characters can bargain their way out of punishment. The characters may claim to have witnessed a Sabbat Initiation, so know some secrets toward controlling the Blood Bond. (Note that the characters don't know all the Sabbat's secrets, so cannot break Blood Bonds on their own.) This information is important to Lodin, who would love to be allowed to Blood Bound at least some of Chicago's Kindred. Thus, he listens to the characters' information, hoping to be better able to convince Chicago's Primogen that he should be allowed to make such Bonds (after all, if they can be broken they are not so powerful). In return for this information Lodin is

CHARACTERS

willing to let the characters go. Naturally, the Prince does not explain why he wants the characters' information. When they are released, the characters should be sufficiently mystified, and maybe a little frightened. There is no telling what Lodin might have up his sleeve, and no telling how it might involve the characters.

The characters can also avoid punishment by utilizing information Lorraine or Neally has revealed. If the Prince can be blackmailed with some dark secret, he pardons the characters. He will not tolerate continued manipulation though, so if the characters try to blackmail him again he will have them destroyed, regardless of the consequences.

This story must come to an end, but its legacy lives on. There are a few stories that may spin off from Blood Bond:

- The character in love with Emily might pursue her. That means coming in direct conflict Jefferson and his Sabbat gang. The character's pursuit leads him to the California Free State where neither Camarilla nor Sabbat hold power. Even if the character does not pursue his love, Emily and Jefferson could turn up in Chicago again. Jefferson definitely turns up if the characters use the medallion.

- If Neally told the rumors of a shaman, the characters might travel to Colorado to restore their humanity. You can make of her legend as you please. The Shaman could be a hoax, a sham, or genuine. If genuine, her existence in Werewolf infested country has to be explained. Maybe she is a Werewolf herself, but is willing to free the Vampires of their curse. The process might mean actual consumption of the characters, resulting in the consumption of the Beast within.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

JEFFERSON FOSTER

Apparent Age: 30 (Born: 1866)

The Embrace: 1897

Generation: Ninth

Clan: Sabbat (previously Ventrue)

Description: A product of late 19th Century American high-culture, Jefferson still belongs to that age of dress and manner. He wears the fineries of an aristocrat and speaks with a slightly affected air. His hair is neatly trimmed but is not in style by modern standards; he has long sideburns, a pony tail and mustache.

Though Jefferson is usually composed and charming, he is quick to anger and reveals his Bestial side with little provocation — a result of being Sabbat.

Demeanor: Director

Nature: Architect

Notes: After getting his revenge against Neally, Jefferson intends to take Emily to California. There he plans to set up his own Princedom, but one in which Vampires are free to control their own fates — none will be forced to join the Sabbat and none may follow any dictates other than those which maintain the peace.

Roleplaying Tips: Stare directly at people you address and make them know that you are in charge, regardless of who holds official power. Pace about when explaining your machinations, pausing to allow others to gasp at your brilliance. Though you are potent and know it, you still acknowledge the achievements of others, and are friendly with those who help you.

NEALLY EDWARDS (*Blood Bound*)

Description: While Neally is under the direct mental control of Jefferson he gains Attributes and Disciplines he does not usually have. These added powers derive from Jefferson's blood, which courses through Neally veins. When controlled by Jefferson, he has the following additional Disciplines: Celerity 2, Potence 3, Presence 3 and Obfuscate 4. While controlled his Humanity also drops to 2.

When under Jefferson's control, Neally's Beast clearly manifests itself. His eyes are wild, his hair disheveled, his fingernails long and his fangs gleaming.

Roleplaying Tips: When under Jefferson's control snarl a lot and growl out your words. Your chest heaves up and down as adrenaline courses through your body. You can never stand in one spot for long and you lash out at minor annoyances, like insects.

CHARACTERS

EMILY CARTER

Apparent Age: 24

Description: Emily is a shapely, alluring beauty. Her long black hair cascades over her shoulders and around her tender throat. Her ruby red lips command the attention of any man and her deep brown eyes could swallow him whole.

Demeanor: Conformist

Nature: Bon Vivant

Notes: Emily did not want to be a Ghoul. The trauma of her change, as well as the trauma of Neally's abuses eventually caused a perversion of Emily's once-sweet naivete. She now lusts after sexual encounters and cannot control her desires. Though she enjoys physical encounters, Emily does feel guilt for them and longs to be innocent and human again. Jefferson promises to fulfill that hope.

Roleplaying Tips: Press close to any characters you meet. Catch their eyes with a demure look and lick your lips in a sensual way. You are available for an affair and advertise that fact.

BECKY

Apparent Age: 7

The Embrace: A couple days ago

Generation: Ninth

Clan: Ventrue

Description: Becky is a small black girl of endearing charm and innocence. When the characters first meet her she wears pyjamas and clutches desperately to her teddy bear, Miss Missy (which has only one eye). Though her eyes are wide and sweet, her face round and soft and her voice gentle, Becky is Kindred and can't help but bear teeth and become Bestial when frightened or angered.

Demeanor: Child

Nature: Child

Notes: Recently Embraced, Becky has yet to come to terms with her new "life". Once she has, though, she could return to the characters as either friend or enemy, depending on how nasty the Storyteller is. She may be thankful for the characters' help in saving her from Neally, or she may hate the group, angered at all who were involved in her change.

BACH

Apparent Age: 27 (Born: 1931)

The Embrace: 1958

Generation: Tenth

Description: Bach is a powerfully built, sports black leathers and wears a leather "pilot" cap on his head. His hair is medium length and he's clean shaven. A long scar runs down Bach's right cheek and ends at his mouth which is twisted into a perpetual surly grimace.

Demeanor: Rebel

Nature: Visionary

Notes: Bach is the acting leader of the Sabbat gang. He was embraced years ago when he was a art teacher. His Sire was Sabbat and showed him the freedoms of the Beast. With his newfound power Bach, as his Sire nicknamed him, quickly gained authority among his kind. His greatest ideal is to show others the freedom of mind to be found in the Beast.

A Sabbat by nature, Bach is quick to become Frenzied. Even the sight of a fight is enough to rouse his animal spirit.

Roleplaying Tips: Bach is an impassioned speaker who shouts to command attention and thrusts his fists in the air to make his point. Laugh at anything violent you see or take part in. Solid blows made against you only heighten your appreciation for the Beast — you thank your opponent for hitting you and return the favor.

THE SABBAT GANG

The gang consists of seven wild Kindred who revel in any form of violence and danger. They are completely unpredictable. They might talk quietly with a character one moment and in the next try and jam his head in a bike's spokes. Though the characters might be accepted by the Sabbat, the characters should constantly fear for their lives while in the gang's presence. In portraying the bikers, think of the wasteland marauders of the first two Mad Max films.

CHARACTER STATISTICS

JEFFERSON FOSTER

Physical: Strength 3 Dexterity 3 Stamina 4
Social: Charisma 4 Manipulation 4 Appearance 3
Mental: Perception 3 Intelligence 3 Wits 5
Virtues: Conscience: 2 Self-Control 1 Courage 4
Talents: Acting 4, Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 4, Intimidation 4, Leadership 5, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2
Skills: Animal Ken 3, Drive Motorcycle 4, Etiquette 4, Firearms 3, Melee 4, Music 4, Security 2, Stealth 4, Survival 3
Knowledge: Occult (Vampires) 4
Disciplines: Potence 4, Obfuscate 4, Presence 4, Dominate 3, Auspex 2, Celerity 2, Animalism 2.
Background: Retainers 5
Humanity 4, Willpower 9, Blood Pool 10

EMILY CARTER

Physical: Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2
Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 5
Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3
Talents: Acting 4, Alertness 2, Empathy 3, Subterfuge 4
Skills: Etiquette 3, Stealth 2
Knowledge: Bureaucracy 2
Disciplines: Auspex 2, Presence 2, Celerity 1
Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Mentor 3, Influence 1
Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 0, Courage 3
Humanity 6 Willpower 5 Blood Pool 10

BACH

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3
Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2
Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3
Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Empathy 2, Intimidation 2, Leadership 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 1
Skills: Animal Ken 3, Drive 5, Firearms 3, Melee 4, Music 4, Repair 3, Stealth 4, Survival 3
Knowledge: Occult 2, Politics 2
Disciplines: Potence 3, Fortitude 3, Celerity 3, Auspex 2, Animalism 1
Backgrounds: Mentor 3
Virtues: Conscience 0, Self-Control 1, Courage 3
Humanity 3 Willpower 8 Blood Pool 10

BECKY

Physical: Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 1
Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4
Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3
Talents: Alertness 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Leadership 2, Streetwise 1
Skills: Stealth 3, Survival 2
Disciplines: Auspex 1, Celerity 1, Presence 1
Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 1, Courage 5
Humanity 10 Willpower 4 Blood Pool 2

THE SABBAT GANG

For ease of play, one profile is used for all the bikers:
Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3
Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2
Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2
Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 2.
Skills: Animal Ken 2, Drive 4, Firearms 3, Melee 3, Repair 2, Stealth 4, Survival 2
Disciplines: Potence 2, Celerity 2, Fortitude 2
Backgrounds: Mentor 3
Virtues: Conscience 0, Self-Control 0, Courage 2
Humanity 2 Willpower 7 Blood Pool 10

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Blood Bond

The Tie that Binds Is the Tie that Kills

Some mortals say love is the most powerful emotion
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Far more powerful than love is the force of blood.
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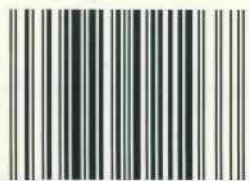
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