



Darker Days Radio

DARKER DAYS RADIO PRESENTS

# Forgotten Lore



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THIS ISSUE:  
THE IN CROWD - A VAMPIRE: THE REQUIEM SHORT  
STORY  
PATCHWORK PEOPLE - PROMETHEAN: THE CREATED  
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APOCALYPTICISM - VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE ESSAY

## Editorial

Welcome back to Forgotten Lore! Darker Days Radio's very own World of Darkness ezine. Bringing you fan created content like short stories, essays, rules and more.

It's been a long time since the last issue, and for that we are sorry, as members of the Rogue Council have moved onto other projects and Darker Days Radio has been revamping itself, both visually with our new logo and look, a new host, and also with hosting all previous episodes of Darker Days Radio on our [YouTube channel](#). Since the last issue, Chris has been running some other rpgs in order to allow his brain to refresh, ready for his next WoD chronicle, Mike has been running some one-shots on Google Hangouts, and our community grows, slowly, on Google Plus. Some great books are out, such as The God Machine Chronicles, Werewolf: the Apocalypse 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition, and we finally have our Kickstarter Deluxe copies of Mummy: the Curse.

The future holds exciting prospects, with more interviews, the release of Blood and Smoke for Vampire: the Requiem, and of course we await the Kickstarter for Demon: the Descent (for which the Quickstart adventure is an excellent read!).

In this issue, Sam Handley (<http://hellocrossbow.wordpress.com>) brings us a short story for Vampire: the Requiem. Travis Wilson submitted a host of NPCs for Promethean: the Created. And finally our very own Darker Days Radio host, Mike, has written essay on Vampire: the Masquerade and the Apocalypse.

Until next time,

Chris and The Rogue Council

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# Apocalypticism in Vampire:

## the Masquerade

By Michael Andryuk

### Introduction

Vampire: the Masquerade is an industry changing roleplaying game first released by White Wolf Publishing in 1991. Central to its impact on the roleplaying industry was a focus on story gaming, creating a complex setting for players and storytellers to explore. In particular, Vampire: the Masquerade and the spin off games that followed included the idea that the World of Darkness, the game's dark reflection of our own world, was on the brink of apocalypse. In Vampire: the Masquerade this was represented by Gehenna, an apocalyptic end time when Caine, the brother of Abel and progenitor of Vampire, would return to judge his childer.

While it was at first a minor element in Vampire's story, Gehenna set a new precedent in gaming. Previously, game settings were set in post-apocalyptic worlds and others had world shattering events. However, Vampire: the Masquerade was the first to have a looming end time that the game's story slowly built up to. This finally culminated with the release of *Gehenna* in 2004, a book that provided four end times scenarios and ended the Vampire product line.

Gehenna is fictional event that is steeped in the Judeo Christian apocalyptic tradition. The writers and developers took pains to align fiction supplements such as *The Book of Nod* and *Revelations of the Dark Mother* with the pseudonymous works of Daniel, Ezekial, and the Revelation of Mark. *The Book of Nod* goes so far as to contain the Chronicle of

Shadows, a segment prophesying events that would lead to Gehenna. Therefore, Gehenna can be analyzed both as a literary concept with the associated texts and as a game design mechanic. This paper focuses on the literary ideas of Gehenna, taking a look at the actual prose and the author's intent behind them. In particular, the paper concludes what Gehenna represents in a literary context for Vampire, and how the author's intent and subconscious views may have reflected the 1990's and the coming millennium in particular.

This paper is organized into four sections preceding this introduction. First is an explanation of Vampire's genesis mythology, which directly links to Gehenna. Following that is a look at the final nights themselves and the prophesized events of Gehenna. The next section looks at the author's motivations, religious texts they looked at and any other relevant background. Finally, we conclude with answers of what Gehenna represents.

### Genesis

All four scenarios presented in the Gehenna sourcebook relate directly to the genesis of vampires. The first deals with judgment by God, the second sees Lilith return, the third is Caine's judgment on his progeny, while the fourth has the Antediluvian elders rise up and battle for the world. Each scenario uses the "sins of the father" theme, making it critical to understand at the origins of vampires before looking toward the end times.

## Of Caine

Caine, brother of Abel, was spurned for sacrificing grain while his brother was rewarded for sacrificing flesh from a kill. Seeing that God craved blood sacrifice, Caine murdered his brother whom he loved most in offering to The One Above. Caine was banished by his father, Adam, to wander Nod alone.

In the dark wastes Lilith found Caine crying. The First Woman took the First Murderer into her home. Caine realized that Lilith had power beyond any mere mortal and wanted her to awaken him to true power. Lilith agreed and fed Caine her blood. The archangels descended on the scene and offered Caine mercy and forgiveness. Caine spurned each angel, determined that only he, not God, could truly judge and forgive himself for Abel's murder. In turn, each angel, Michael, Raphael, Uriel, and Gabriel, cursed Caine and made him the first Vampire. Uriel specifically curses Caine to "...walk forever in Darkness, all [he touches] will crumble to dust, until the last days," which is the first apocalyptic statement found in Caine's mythology (The Book of Nod, 33). Under Lilith's protection, Caine learned supernatural powers, but he was dominated in her household. The seed of rebellion sown, Caine ran from Lilith and left the land of Nod behind.

Then Caine found the First City, Enoch, and became its king. Caine sired three vampires – Irad, Zillah, and Enosch. These three in turn begat the 13 clan founders. The First City teemed with vampires who walked openly among mortals, enslaving them. Society collapsed when the 13 founders and their thin blooded progeny rebelled and slew their sires. Following this act, God, perhaps realizing his mistake, commanded a great flood of forty days and nights, which succeeded in destroying the weakest Cainites. After God's wrath, Caine withdrew from the world and watched his progeny war throughout the ages.

Three of Caine's grandchilder are particularly important to the prophesized Gehenna. The first is Malkav, a mad antediluvian who receives dreams and visions of the future. He is thought to have written the Chronicle of Secrets found in The Book of Nod. Second is [Tzimisce], an antediluvian master of crafting bone and flesh as if clay. Its childer all carry within them an infection stemming from the clan founder. Finally, there is Saulot, thought to be

the gentlest of all Caine's progeny. Saulot traveled to the East and returned with knowledge of Golconda, a balanced state of being in which a Cainite no longer needs blood and returns to a human-like state. Saulot, however, was diablerized by Tremere, a mage who became a vampire.

## Of Lilith

Lilith is the First Woman, created by YHVH from the same earth as Adam. A huntress, Lilith explored the Garden of Eden until she found the tree of knowledge and ate from it. Elevated to a higher state of being, Lilith refused to lay with Adam who complained to YHVH, who took Lilith as his own and created for Adam two other wives. When Lilith wanted to become YHVH's equal above all others, the god grew jealous and cast out the First Woman.

Lilith traveled the wastes and came upon the many gardens of the Elohim. At each she made love to the garden's keeper, partook of its fruit, and conceived monsters of land and sea. When she came upon Eden again she was stopped at the gate by Lucifer, the morning star. This angel was so enthralled by Lilith's beauty that he gave her the moon and a cloak of night, and let her enter Eden once again. There she tricked Eve into eating from the tree of knowledge and as a result YHVH destroyed Eden and cursed Adam, Eve, Lilith, and Lucifer.

Lilith and Lucifer left the ruins of Eden and set out into the desert to build their own Garden. While Lucifer was off shepherding the sun, Lilith came upon Caine alone and crying. Lilith took the weak, scared man to her garden and tortured him with fear and thorns to strengthen him. Then Lilith fed Caine her blood to strengthen him and left him to face the arch angels.

Years later, during the time of the First City, a spiteful Caine returned to Lilith's garden with his progeny. The war band murdered Lilith's children and burned the garden. Lilith, heartbroken, swore vengeance on Caine and all his children.

## The Final Nights

Within The Book of Nod, the Chronicle of Secrets reveals signs which will portend Gehenna, when the secret world of vampires will come crashing down.

The exact nature of Gehenna is an enigma. Some passages say it is a place, such as the line "...the full sum of earth's living will come and live in the Last City, called Gehenna" (The Book of Nod, 102). Other passages refer to it as an event, such as when a prophetic author warns that "...on these signs, you must know, that Gehenna waits, even at the door" (The Book of Nod, 112). Despite this inconsistency, Vampire's fictional sources all agree that when Gehenna comes – literally or otherwise – it will bring about a new world order.

In the Gehenna sourcebook, as well as The Book of Nod there are a number of signs and portents that will herald Gehenna. As the Vampire product line continued, many of these signs appear and prophecies came true with surprising accuracy. Most of these elements are intrinsically linked to three underlying elements of Gehenna – weakening blood and power, rampant diablerie, and widespread mistrust.

The first sign is taken directly from Daniel and the Revelation of John – The moon will turn red and the sky will darken. However the actual sign is different. As of the sourcebook The Time of Thin Blood, the Red Star, called Antihelios, appears in the sky visible only to a select few vampires. This sign is visible to only a select few individuals with the power to read auras, of which red is the most hostile color. No one in kindred society can agree on what the star physically is and but all of them agree that it is the first overt sign of Gehenna.

A later sourcebook, The Red Sign, offers a use for Antihelios. In it, mages and vampires work together to harness the star's power and ultimately return a vampire back to her mortal form. This individual, known as the Redeemed, is the first of many messiahs to appear as Gehenna approaches.

The next sign is a time of thin blood, when clanless will rule and vampires unable to sire will exist. In the background of Vampire the number of Caitiff, or clanless vampires, has increased dramatically following World War II. The Book of Nod offers particular warning that the clanless are "Lilith's foul get" (107). However, The Book of Nod also cautions that the Caitiff can be quelled and accepted, stating "adopt the orphans where you can" (107). Intriguingly, in the Final Nights Cairo and Sydney are the domains of Caitiff Princes.

One perhaps false sign is that "Wild Ones will hunter vampires even in their strongest cities" (Gehenna, 21). In the setting of Vampire: the

Masquerade, Cainites have been hunted for 800 years by a splinter group of the Catholic Inquisition known as the Society of Leopold. Additionally, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has been investigating the supernatural for nearly 80 years. However, corresponding to when Antihelios appeared, certainly divinely empowered mortals known as the Imbued began attacking vampires, lending some credence to this sign.

When Gehenna truly begins it is said that the eldest will awaken and consume all. It is commonly accepted that this will be the Antediluvians who awaken from their slumber and consume their progeny because the blood of mortals will no longer sate their thirst. Throughout the ages this was considered a myth, until the Ravnos antediluvian awoke in India in an event called the Week of Nightmares. While the antediluvian was destroyed, the Ravnos clan went into frenzy across the world, many of them burning in the sunlight.

The next event is that the Crone will awaken and consume all – which may have already happened when a wretched vampire called Baba Yaga awoke in Soviet Russia and began feasting on Cainites throughout Eastern Europe. However, the Crone may also be Lilith in Noddist lore – the mother of monsters who swore to return and destroy Caine's bloodline.

The final event at first seems like hope. According to The Book of Nod, "When the snows consume the earth and the sun gutters like a candle in the wind then, and only then will there be born a woman, the last Daughter of Eve, and in her will be decided the fate of all" (103). However, the last Daughter of Eve is known by a crescent moon birthmark, the symbol of Lilith.

## Author's Intent

When Mark Rein·Hagen first sat down to write Vampire: the Masquerade he knew he wanted it to include biblical undertones. Having grown up in a religious household – his father was a Lutheran minister – biblical underpinnings fit with the theme and mood he wanted in the game. Gehenna and the approaching end times were a footnote in Vampire: the Masquerade 1st Edition, a prophecy that the Antediluvians would someday consume their childer. As the Vampire game continued to expand, Gehenna became a strong theme – an event to fight

against that gave the World of Darkness a foreboding atmosphere.

The idea of Gehenna was taken to the next level in the Players Guide to the Sabbat, which introduced a diabolic vampire faction. To make them more empathetic and playable, developer Andrew Greenberg made their ultimate goal the defeat of Antediluvians and stopping Gehenna.

The Book of Nod, written by Sam Chupp and Andrew Greenberg, was the first supplement to truly expand Gehenna from a one sentence idea to a titanic event. Sam Chupp wanted the book to have mythic resonance – an idea coined by Joseph Campbell – meaning that the story would borrow from the folklore and religious texts to give it more credence.

Sam Chupp, who wrote The Book of Nod's biblical style passages, attended a southern fundamentalist private school when he was younger and feels the "bible thumping, fire, and brimstone education" really affected the writing of the book. Sam was especially inspired that the Revelation of John was originally a political tract, pseudonymously written to spur early Christians into action. Sam wanted to take that same approach – of "using one thing and using it to say another" – when writing The Book of Nod. Sam especially wanted to borrow aspects from the Book of Revelation, since he felt contemporary apocalyptic fiction, such as The Rapture series, did not do the source material justice and was largely made up. Sam especially enjoys that Revelation has been massaged over the years to send chills up your spine. This aspect is especially obvious when Sam was asked about particular aspects of the writing. For example, the Last Daughter of Eve was simply put in to highlight a female character that would be important to the end times. This character, as well as others like Saulot and the Redeemed, wound up having mythic resonance of messiah figures.

In some background of Vampire: the Masquerade Saulot can be seen as a Vampire messiah, but in others he has more devilish aspects. Sam Chupp revealed that Andrew Greenberg and the original author of the Salubri clan had an argument about whether or not good and caring vampires could even exist since vampires are "the most selfish of creatures." Indeed, while Saulot may be viewed as the only Antediluvian that may protect kindred, it is commonly theorized that he may have sired the Baali - a bloodline of demon worshipping vampires.

Ultimately, the authors' goal for Gehenna was to figure out what would scare vampires and they decided to use elements of apocalyptic literature to enhance their story.

## Analysis and Conclusion

Gehenna, as presented in Vampire: the Masquerade, uses many themes of apocalyptic literature. In addition, several elements and ideas are taken from literature like the Revelation of John and Madras of Lilith to enhance the story and lend it more credibility.

Gehenna has many aspects of traditional apocalyptic works, some of which are turned on their head. Christian apocalyptic text was written for an oppressed people, showing them a reward that would come – a brighter future. The apocalypse that Gehenna represents is the opposite – vampires are predators on the top of the food chain and they fear losing their position. First, the vampire's blood is what gives them their physical strength and magic powers, so a plague like the Time of Thin Blood scares them. Additionally, vampires can only survive in the modern day of cell phone cameras and closed circuit television because of their society and ability to masquerade as humans. If their thousand year old society, crumbles, then they lose much of their power and security.

Despite this, the Gehenna source material does provide some sliver of hope for vampires. First, The Book of Nod provides us with one overt messiah – the Last Daughter of Eve. This woman, within whom the fate of all will be decided, is a clear allusion to the second coming of Christ purported in the Revelation of John. However, she has a dark side – the moon birthmark by which she is known is the symbol of Lilith. While the symbol is open to the readers' interpretation, it's quite possible that the Last Daughter of Eve may in fact be evil. In a literary context, this symbol represents, if nothing else, the will for humanity to survive despite the most desperate odds. What it means for vampires is unknown.

The next messiah is the Redeemed, an optional character from The Red Sign. This character works with hermetic mages to harness the power of Antihelios in a ritual to return her to mortal form. The Redeemed represents a small scale messiah who could only save a select few. However, simply the

knowledge that one could return to mortal life is very powerful for vampires that cling to their humanity.

Finally, there is Saulot, the most enigmatic of all messiahs. Some material portrays him as selfless. Others as a devilish master of manipulation. Yet despite his questionable motivation, nearly everything hints that he wants to avert Gehenna. Saulot's presentation of Golconda, a nigh unachievable state of grace, gives many humanity driven vampires a goal to strive towards. Saulot even mirrors the second coming of Jesus since he effectively returns to life. When Tremere diablerized Saulot he was unable to fully absorb Saulot's soul and the antediluvian was eventually able to take over Tremere's body and oust the mage's soul. Now inhabiting another body with no need of vampire blood to survive, Saulot is one of the few antediluvians active in the final nights prior to Gehenna.

In addition to Saulot, two other antediluvians appear actively in the Final Nights. The first is Ravnos, who awakened beneath the earth in India and was only defeated by a coalition of supernatural forces. Ravnos represents something commonly found in apocalyptic literature – the monster from the depths, such as the four monsters found in Daniel. Ravnos also represents something else not found in apocalyptic literature – when the Ravnos antediluvian is killed his clan is driven mad and most perish. Nothing in preceding Vampire lore hinted at this event and it is unclear if it would happen again. However, since there are thirteen vampire clans and the Ravnos are the first to be lost, it forms a parallel to the thirteen tribes of Israel.

The final being is the Tzimisce antediluvian – which seems to have abandoned its humanity and become a disease infecting its progeny. [Tzimisce] represents a non-traditional apocalypse inspired by body horror, where the antediluvian may consume all life on earth and turn the planet into a mass of flesh. This end is clearly unsupported by traditional apocalyptic literature and seems to have more in common with the modern zombie apocalypse. This end, brought about by inescapable conformity, is especially terrifying for those in the relatively free western world.

The signs of Gehenna are not clear to anyone. Only the most learned and erudite are able to decipher the texts of The Book of Nod. Many Gehenna prophecies over the years have been

created by the mad progeny of Malkav, who speak riddles of visions they receive. One aspect of The Book of Nod that Sam Chupp revealed in an interview is the Mnemosyne, or memory-seekers, who compiled the book are actually a rare bloodline of vampires able to derive stories and information from symbols and secrets left at physical locations. While none of these groups have a true link to heaven, it is interesting that they have supernatural means of learning about the end times.

Finally, Gehenna truly represents a judgment of the wicked – vampires are selfish creatures that live among humans like parasites. This is why Gehenna is such a powerful element in Vampire – the Cainites are clearly evil and will one day be punished. The Book of Nod states that “none will say when Caine will arise... and call for the city Gehenna, the Last City, the City of Judgment” (55). Caine set forth his own traditions, like the commandments, for his progeny to follow and it is by these rules that he would judge his childer. This significantly differs from traditional Judaism, where the covenant theodicy exists. It is also poignant that God is completely missing from this judgment – in Vampire, the being seems to have become *laissez-faire* following the Great Flood.

Many of the signs and themes found in Gehenna also have particular relevance to the 1990's and modern society. Author Sam Chupp stated that he set out to write an accurate portrayal of a vampire holy text and he truly succeeded with The Book of Nod. So much so that misguided individuals have contacted him, claiming to be from the Church of Nod, and asking who revealed these vampiric truths to him. The book's prose speaks to many people and definitely contains some subconscious warnings about the future.

[Tzimisce's] infection is spread through the blood, much like HIV. Vampires are inherently sexual predators and it is easy to draw parallels about unwarranted and promiscuous relations.

Likewise the Time of Thin Blood shows a loss of power for the eldest vampires, which they blame on the young and weak rabble around them. The allusions of this are fairly clear – people in power never want to lose power and this is a linchpin of the equality debates raging throughout U.S. History.

Intriguingly, the fear of clanless can have much different connotations. Rather than racial tension, the Caitiff are societal outcasts and deviants. White Wolf championed homosexuality in gaming during

the early 90's and The Book of Nod's passage regarding the clanless is a strong allusion to their struggle, calling them dark seeds who "will cry aloud for justice," and pointing out how they are a subculture with "no family... no generation... no tradition... no hospitality [given]" (107). The passage however recommends that society work out its differences with homosexuals, stating "Pity them! Adopt the orphans where you can" (The Book of Nod, 107). While not the most powerful call to arms it is an interesting look back only fifteen years ago.

Gehenna has many more facets to explore – this treatment only covers a few of the more prominent ideas. Over 100 Vampire: the Masquerade books were published, many of which deal with the end times in some way. Just like scholars looking back at apocalyptic literature, these books provide a glance at the values and conflicts of people living in the 1990's.

### **Lexicon:**

Kindred – A vampire (contemporary term)

Cainite – A vampire (classic term)

Sire – A vampire who creates another vampire through the act of the Embrace.

The Embrace – Creating a vampire by draining a mortal of their blood and replacing it with a small amount of vampire blood.

Childe – A sire's vampire progeny.

Antediluvian – An ancient vampire that created one of the 13 modern clans. Survived the biblical flood.

Clan – A bloodline of vampires sharing similar powers and weaknesses.

Caine – The biblical Cain with an extra 'e' just to be edgy.

Thin Bloods – Vampires so far removed from Caine that they can no longer embrace mortals.

Jihad – The war of ages waged between ancient vampires.

Diablerie – The act of one vampire draining another vampire's blood and by doing so absorbing their soul and power.

Caitiff – A clanless vampire, the lowest rung of society.

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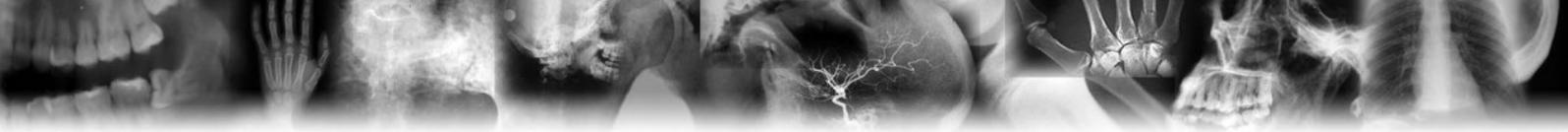
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# Patchwork

## People

By Travis Wilson

*"If the national mental illness of the United States is megalomania, that of Canada is paranoid schizophrenia."*

- Margaret Atwood

### Empty Spaces

Canada, a nation with vast stretches of sub-arctic land stretching across the continent, contains cities of millions, with an international presence that takes in as much as it exports. Canada still contains the empty spaces and primordial forests of North America, but most people dwell in urban environs of tightly packed industry and technology.

### The Patchwork

Canada is a nation bred from hundreds of years of continuous migration. It is a nation without identity, finding strength in diversity. Old legends, modern stories, and monsters from all corners of the globe find themselves at rest in Canada.

In the World of Darkness, there are monsters that lurk in the vacancies, things that thrive on the divides between what is known and what is not. Among snow-swept cairns, rusted iron rails, and voices with a hundred stories to tell, these horrors dwell. Welcome to the Great White North.

**Trapper, The Mad Trapper of Rat River**

**Quote:** "Ne pas venir ici plus", "Do not come here anymore."

**Lineage:** Ulgan

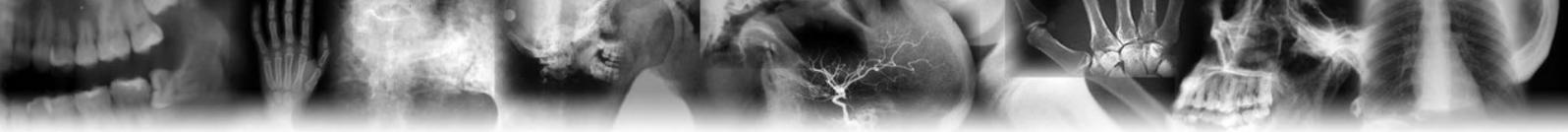
**Refinement:** Centamani

**Background:** The Promethean who calls himself Trapper, awoke within the confines of an inuksuk: a stone cairn, presided over by one of the Yupik People. Blood and offal coated the interior of the stone, a raven sat on his chest, and the man spoke to him in a language he could not understand.

Then the raven spoke, it told him a story of a stranger, who journeyed with one of the People until a blizzard trapped the two men in a cave. The man, a trapper by trade, killed and ate the young tribesman so that he might live out the week. In the morning, the storm was over, and his dead guide's people were waiting for their son just over the next hill.

Trapper negotiated the territory of Tshishtashkamuku, the Shadow, for the shaman drove off any threats the tribe faced. He was called Atshen, and fed only on the flesh of the dead. When the winter came again and took the shaman away, the Promethean walked out onto the ice and never returned.

In the isolated expanse of the Yukon, he did not experience the curse of Disquiet as acutely as other Prometheans, and was unprepared for its effect when he entered Fort McPherson in 1931. Whether or not Trapper was responsible for the greatest manhunt in Canadian history, is largely a mystery - although it might explain the fugitive's week long, 150-mile foot chase in sub-arctic conditions.



Today, the land Trapper calls his own sits over one of the largest deposits of natural gas in Canada, much of which is in the process of development. He squats out over a cabin he built with his own hands, and camouflaged into the confluence of two hills. In this large Wasteland, no matter the time of day or season, the wind howls through the pass.

**Description:** Trapper looks every part the mountain man. His wide frame is swathed in a variety of coats he has taken from the dead. He often trudges barefoot through snow, or over ice. His beard is rough and unkempt, and his eyes seem to be always searching on the horizon. He seems constantly on edge, often communicating in broken French and English with things that may or may not be there.

**Storytelling Hints:** Trapper is a creature in isolation: his only human contact has been as a monster. For a time, he came to embrace Stannum, believing that he could find meaning through acting on behalf of his adopted people. But Trapper has only embraced the company of spirits of predation and cannibalism. The spirits, for their part, keep close company with the wild man, and it shows. He's suspicious to the point of paranoia, and believes himself to be truly a unique monstrosity. The arrival of another Promethean might be the shock he needs to return to the Great Work, or it might drive him utterly mad.

**Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 5, Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 4

**Skills:** Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Craft 3 (Traps), Expression 2, Firearms 3, Intimidation 3, Medicine 2, Occult (Innu) 1, Stealth 3, Survival (Blizzards) 4, Subterfuge 2, Weaponry 2

**Merits:** Language (French) 1, Outdoorsman 3, Shadow Contacts 4, Spirit Ear 3, Famous Face 1, Repute 1, Weatherproof 1, Lair (Security 3, Size 4)

**Willpower:** 9

**Humanity:** 4 (Suspicion)

**Virtue:** Fortitude

**Vice:** Gluttony

**Initiative:** 7

**Defense:** 3

**Speed:** 11 (22 Swift Feet)

**Health:** 9

**Azoth:** 3

**Athamor:** Atshen

**Bestowment:** Ephemeral Flesh

**Transmutations:** Alchemicus - Degradation (••), Fortification (••); Corporium - Swift Feet (•); Deception - Chameleon Skin (•), Leave no Trace (••); Disquietism - Rabid Rage (••), Iago's Whisper (•••), Electrification - Blackout (••••); Pandoran - Azothic Furnace (•••••), Sensorium - Bloodhound Nose (•), Discriminating Tongue(•), Nightsight (••), Ephemeral Gaze (•••); Vulcanus— Sense Flux (•), Sense Pyros (•)

**Pyros/per Turn:** 12/3

**Athamor**

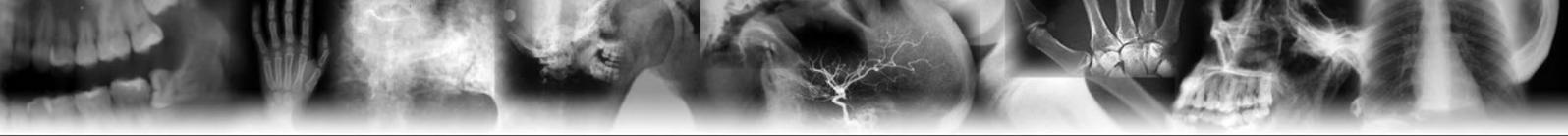
**Atshen - Survival (Ulgan)**

Among the Innu mythology, Atshen is a monster. Called Atoosh among the Cree, and Windigo among the Anishinaabe, it is a person who has gone wild and committed cannibalism. Each person it consumes causes it to grow in strength and size. A Promethean who assumes the Atshen Athamor then embraces the necessities of survival, and understands the sacrifices involved. While an Atshen might be terrible, it does not waste. It knows that everything eats, a Riven with this Athamor then does the same.

**Trait Affinities:** Stamina, Survival

**Promethean Boon:** A Promethean who wishes to harm another can spend two Reagent points during a scene. By succeeding on a "bite attack" (see "Grappling," p. 157 of the World of Darkness Rulebook) and pulling away a mouthful of blood or flesh, the Riven can feed from the life force of a target. The Promethean's player reflexively rolls Stamina + Survival - target's Stamina + Supernatural Tolerance. Successes on this roll deal additional points of bashing damage as the character consumes the target's life force. The life force is conferred to a Promethean as points of Pyros, which disappear at the end of the scene. The target, as a result, feels lethargy, confusion, and cold settling about their limbs. If used against a Supernatural target, the victim instead loses points from their Supernatural power trait. The Promethean can only do this once per chapter against a given target, and is immediately aware upon "tasting" that the target is more or less than human.

**Redeeming Boon:** By sharing a meal, eating the leftovers of, or eating in the presence of another, the Redeemed can 'devour' a single intrinsic (i.e. mostly Physical, Mental, or Supernatural) merit. The



character must succeed on a Stamina + Survival - the target's Stamina + Merit Rating. The target loses access to the Merit, and the Redeemed gains the mechanical benefits, although there are no obvious physical changes. For example a character consuming Huge Size is no larger, nor the target smaller. This lasts for 24 hours. A dramatic failure on this roll means that the target immediately becomes aware of the attempt. The Storyteller has the final say as to which Merits qualify.

### Story Hooks

**Shutdown** - A sudden influx of unemployed multinationals in the city leads the characters to discover that a natural gas refinery has been shut down due to an "accident". Some of the men describe what seem to be Pandorans attacking the facility, and another describes a man coming out and abducting one of the workers.

**Everything Eats** - A man turns a bus (maybe one the characters are taking) into a grisly murder scene and then locks himself in, attempting to eat the corpses before the police arrive. It's the third such incident, and it seems to be only growing worse. What's more, animals are eating their young. If the characters do investigate, they'll find an epidemic of cannibal spirits have taken root in Trapper's Wasteland.

## La Chasse-Galerie, The Phantom Vessel

**Background:** A group of workers met the Devil on New Years', and he offered them a ride home so long as they made it back before dawn. The men boarded a canoe that flew them home for celebrations. They returned to the flying canoe intoxicated, and crashed it into a snow bank. At first light, the Devil took their souls. The Cree tell the story of a chieftain's daughter who rejected a marriage of alliance to escape with her lover. The pair were carried off by a phantom white horse, only to be killed by a pursuing war party. A rail worker in 1908 swore that he witnessed a ghostly train ferry passengers across the CPR line in Alberta.

Drawn by necessity, or summoned forth, the phantom vessel arrives only at night - ready to ferry any who board it.

**Description:** It appears on a night clear enough to see the moon, and always awash in a pale white light. It can take any shape, so long as it is something a human being has used as transportation. A bus with the destination sign labeled as "midnight", a 17th century schooner engulfed in flames, a plane with no visible pilot, and a taxi with white charnel exhaust, are all apt examples. It is utterly silent as it travels, and routinely abandons paths or roadways as readily as it follows them, but it always arrives at its destination. In theory, it could take a voyager anywhere in the world. In practice, none have requested such an extended journey.

**Storytelling Hints:** It sits motionless, until someone asks to be taken somewhere. It can be addressed, but it never communicates in response. However, there is a price to its voyage: one which the passenger immediately understands upon boarding. It might be a trinket, blood, or something more abstract, like a memory or a year of their life. Characters who try to cheat the spirit find themselves hounded by travel related accidents, as well as visions of it in their dreams.

**Rank:** 3

**Attributes:** Power 4, Finesse 9, Resistance 8

**Willpower:** 10

**Essence:** 18 (20 max)

**Initiative:** 13

**Defense:** 4

**Speed:** 35

**Size:** Varies (Minimum 3 Maximum 20)

**Corpus:** 18 (Does not vary)

**Influence:** Travel 3

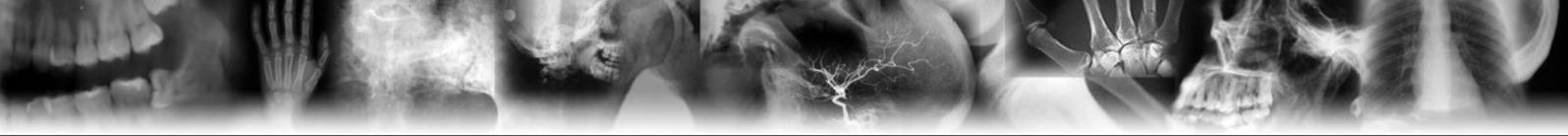
**Numina:** Materialize, Drain, Hallucination, Innocuous, Morphic Form, Pathfinder, Seek, Speed

**Ban:** It can only travel as long as there is moonlight to light the way. In the presence of daylight or absolute darkness it dematerializes, sending occupants crashing to the Earth.

**Note:** La Chasse-Galerie uses its Influence to open a Shadow Gate, the nature of which is up to the Storyteller to decide. Through this realm, it travels to the location requested without fail, normally reaching the location within the scene.

### Story Hooks:

**The Dark Passenger** - It seemed like such a simple sort of arrangement, summoning the La Chasse-Galerie. But now it is on its way home, and the route



is looking circuitous to say the least. The characters are now surrounded by darkness, in pitch black clouds, the dark expanse of sea, or a tunnel that doesn't end. They aren't alone. Whatever it is, it knows their deepest secrets.

**The Last Stop** - One of the characters, (or an ally) didn't step off the boat, and it departed into some supernatural realm. The phantom vessel is now harbored, whether hidden in the Underworld, Arcadia, or even the Supernal realm. The passengers cannot summon it until they have as many as originally boarded. If they find a new passenger, they might uncover some insight into the vessel and rescue their ally. If not, they might lose him forever.

**The Price** - The characters are trapped when the La Chasse-Galerie arrives. It offers immediate salvation from their predicament, but at a steep price: a human soul. Whether one of their own, or another's, the vessel will return in the following night to collect its due.

## Forerunners, Omens in the Darkness

**Background:** For hundreds of years, mysterious lights have appeared above the surface of Candle Lake, presaging terrible storms. On October 7th, 1859 residents in Charlottetown were awoken by the ringing of church bells. That evening, the passenger steamer the Fairie Queen sank, killing everyone onboard. Most recently, a group of high school students encountered websites depicting their deaths, enigmatic text messages, and phone calls with the sound of their own voices screaming for help. The following week, all but one had been killed in a school shooting.

The Forerunners do not cause disaster, but they are drawn to it. Neither wholly a thing of spirit or the dead, the entity is a manifested omen. They are a collective of spirits making up a single being. What brings them about? Any incident which takes human life, usually in great number, but they can appear individually. Forerunners might be a creation of native Mages summoned and bound to the land, a collection of minor Angels, or Quashmillion on some grand mission. Or perhaps no one who sees them ever dies - they're taken to Arcadia by one of these minions of the Gentry.

**Descriptions:** They appear as multi-colored, luminous balls of light, if one is able to see them at all. Normally, they manifest in how they demonstrate an impending threat. Knocks on the door, the appearance of birds associated with death, or the warping of images and sounds into macabre shows of the character's demise.

### Forerunner

**Rank:** 2

**Attributes:** Power 2, Finesse 4, Resistance 1

**Willpower:** 3

**Essence:** 8 (10 max)

**Initiative:** 5

**Defense:** 2

**Speed:** 6

**Size:** 4

**Corpus:** 5

**Influence:** Omens 2

**Numina:** Awe, Hallucination, Omen Trance, Sign

**Ban:** Cannot affect anyone who is wearing a mask.

### Story Hooks:

**Interfaced** - When the Forerunners were brought into the city, they changed. Fettered to machines, they learned how to network. This nascent consciousness has moved beyond a simple thing of the (un)natural world. It has begun ensuring that those who might die, will die. In another month, it will realize that there's power in a human death, if it can take it. In a month after that, it will re-fashion a human soul into one of its Forerunners.

**Doomed** - A nervous phone call from an ex-lover. A diner meeting with an old friend who needs to talk about a dream. An e-mail containing an image dated a week in the future. The characters have each been contacted by someone who has seen an omen of the Forerunners. Are the characters at the center of a mystical attack against them? Are the Forerunners warning of an impending disaster? Or worst of all, are the characters going to do something that threatens the lives of everyone they know?

**Old Rivers** - Once, Candle Lake was part of river to the dead, and the Forerunners were a whole being from the Great Below - perhaps even one of the deathlords. It might know Old Laws, the locations of every cenote in a 100 miles, or be able to tell the precise manner and time in which the character will die.

## Benjamin Kind, a New Man

**Background:** Benjamin was a student, and vaguely recalls some sort of social sciences studies. At least, until he met an attractive woman in a dive club in Downtown Vancouver. She said all the right things, had money enough to drink but never got drunk. He found her again, behind voyeuristic one-way glass, in the washroom of a high end piano bar in Yaletown. He spotted her again a month later, stepping out of a cab in front of a filthy theatre-cum-punk club. She never ate, she never drank anything but alcohol. Benjamin doesn't remember her name, only going home with her, and her disappearing that night with him naked and feverish in a hotel room. He emerged a week later, changed. Now he is a parasite, a supernatural transient moving from one social event to the next, taking his fill of alcohol and sex.

**Storytelling Hints:** Benjamin is a new man, literally. He's at the center of attention for the first time in his life, and he can't get enough. He's addicted to the nightly outings, and has started playing his hands at danger: fighting in bars, engaging in drug deals. Benjamin's living an unsustainable party life, at least for the people who are drawn into his games. He believes he's moved past such concerns.

**Virtue:** Patient

**Vice:** Hedonistic

**Attributes:** Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Presence 5, Manipulation 2, Composure 5

**Skills:** Academics (sociology) 3, Computer 2, Investigation 1, Science (biology) 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Drive 1, Stealth 2, Empathy (lies)3, Expression 1, Persuasion (seduction) 3, Socialize 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 3

**Merits:** Tolerance for Biology, Ambidextrous, Double Jointed, Fleet of Foot 3, Iron Stamina 3, Anonymity 3, Barfly, Pusher, Safe Place 2 (old hotel), Striking Looks 2, Biokinesis 4

**Willpower:** 7

**Health:** 8

**Integrity:** 4

**Size:** 5

**Speed:** 9

**Defense:** 3

**Initiative:** 8

**Armor:** Varies

**Note:** Biokinesis, and the slew of other Physical Merits, best represent Benjamin's inherent ability to manipulate his body. He also has access to the following abilities:

**Perfect Digestion** - Benjamin can survive on anything organic he can eat or drink

**Skin Shedding** - By spending a point of willpower and rolling Stamina + Resolve, Benjamin may change his hair or dress to any style. Whatever he currently has simply dissolves away, leaving behind a filmy white residue. Each success adds to the equipment bonus of the outfit.

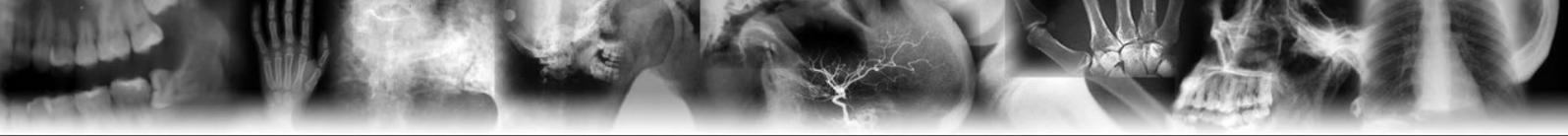
**Cash on hand** - Benjamin literally exudes currency, although only enough to get by for the night. At the beginning of the night, he takes a single level of bashing damage and rolls Stamina + Resolve. Each success generates a temporary Resources merit that lasts until dawn, at which point the money dissolves into a slew of proteins and amino acids.

### Story Hooks:

**Downtown Eastside** - Benjamin has found a means of producing drugs from his body as well. He's earned himself the ire of every dealer around him, but more importantly, he's flooded the local market with something of his own making. What is it? Is it possible that this can spread his condition to others? Or is he just giving these junkies what they want: a perfect no-strings-attached drug?

**The Boyfriend** - One of the character's allies is in a relationship with Benjamin. They've been out every night, and she's not been looking well. She talks constantly of him and his affection, his gifts, his offers to buy them a real place. Does he genuinely care, is he even capable of it? Is Benjamin looking for someone he can make like himself? Or, is this an attempt to get close to a character who might be able to solve the mystery of what Benjamin has become?

**Outbreak** - Provincial Health Services has recommended precautions be taken against a new type of flu that's developed over the last few months, believed to be tied to food distribution. In reality, it stems from Benjamin Kind, he's gone into heat - or as close a thing as something like him can get, but he's not quite figured out the mechanism for transmission. So far, a dozen men and women have died. The urge is consuming him, it could be that he's a vector for something much smaller living



inside him, or perhaps he needs enough raw organic material to create something new wholesale.

Waheela - This 'bear dog' is said to wander the northwestern territories. They've been known to travel in packs, and behave much like a regular wolf might - if they were about twice the size. Inuit say that they're related to the Amarak, a great wolf god who hunted only at night. The local Forsaken believe they are connected to Father Wolf, but it's been a generation since any have encountered the beasts.

The Healing Gift - The earliest settlers of Canada turned to homeopathic remedies, building a unique syncretism of French and Native American medicine. The 'healing gift' was passed in the blood, from mother to daughter. It functions by transferring the sickness or injury to another. Families sharing this talent have come together, forming Mystery Cults. They actively search, usually on ancestry and social media websites, for those who have the gift. Vitaline is a thirty year old engineer who spends her time off watching anime and considering returning for a masters, but she has a secret. She's accidentally killed two people, which hasn't stopped her from experimenting with the limits of her power.

Screaming Tunnel - A small limestone tunnel located near Niagara Falls, and the sounds of a woman screams can be heard throughout. Flames lit in the tunnel are immediately extinguished. The local legends say that it is haunted by a woman who burned to death. That isn't its only effect; the tunnel dampens nearly all supernatural power to some degree. Local Sin-Eaters use it as a gathering place, it is often considered to be a place where grudges and negotiations can be hammered out.

# The In Crowd

## Vampire the Requiem - Fiction

by Sam Handley

The envelope was neat, charcoal-coloured, and it arrived at the hotel's front desk with black ink addressed to her name. Her legal name, the one she'd dreamt up and deed-polled especially for bank accounts and official papers. The one she kept quiet to avoid clashes between her semi-public persona and her vulnerable, human reality.

Sacha took the delivery from the receptionist, clutching it close until she reached the security of her locked room and tore into its contents.

Admit One Only (VIP Room)---

15/05/2011, 20.00-22.00

The Circle Club.

She knew the venue by rumour. Just off Deansgate, a private members' club mostly catering to media types - and vampires, though the two categories sometimes overlapped. A place that served to uphold the Masquerade, whilst remaining a safe house for those who still liked to see and be seen. As a hunter, the concept was a huge source of intrigue, but she'd had no reason to disturb the peace until now. How did they know which identity to find her with? Sacha was new in town, having made only one trip to Manchester prior to this one, and she was careful in keeping her secrets intact.

Turning the card over, she spied a telephone number in the bottom right-hand corner, and considered her options before dialing with the landline receiver on the bedside table.

"Circle Club." The male's accent was undeniably Mancunian, the tone fairly professional sounding.

"Hello, I received a - what is the word - unsolicited invitation to your VIP room. I wanted to check if it's authentic. It was delivered to the Palace Hotel---

"Miss Deniaud?"

"...Yes."

"Yes, that was meant for you and it's authentic. Valid from 8PM until 10PM this evening."

"Mmmhm," she bit her lip, fiddling with the phone cord. "Is there a reason I received it?"

"I just take care of the guest list when it's finalized, Miss. I'm not the one who approves the why and how... if you like, I can ask, but I'd need to---

"--No, that's fine. Thank you." She hung up, already guessing that she wouldn't get answers from a secretarial lackey. There was the small possibility that this could be a trap of some kind, though she had her doubts. Vampires, especially vampires in such an elaborate network, did not lure hunters to start fights on their home turf. Exceptions could be made for the beastlier specimens, but by and large the city dwellers were more sophisticated.

Her incentive to accept the invite was two-fold. Firstly, to catch a glimpse of the low-lit world of the blood-sucking elite, and secondly, to give them a few harsh words about their manner of getting in touch.

\*\*\*\*\*



8 o'clock arrived, and Sacha headed off in the direction of St. Ann's Square in a dress short enough and strappy enough to fit with the crowd, albeit with a biker jacket thrown over the top. Flashing her card at the door, she was rewarded with only minimal scrutiny from the bouncer as he traded it for a VIP stamp just above her wrist.

Inside, the club was populated with a select few groups of people, nursing drinks: likely local celebrities. The music was at a medium volume, sultry lights reflecting off leather booths and glossy wooden floors.

The small cluster of young men and women guarding the border to the VIP room were, as far as she could tell, ghouls. Humans who had willingly offered themselves up as servants, fed regularly on vampiric blood: the stuff was supposedly addictive enough to make them stick around and do as they were ordered to. She only went so far as stating who she was, and the curtain was drawn back to reveal a reasonably sized hideaway, couches upholstered in the same slick, dark leather she'd noticed earlier.

There was only one man present, dressed in a formal style, a three-piece suit of burgundy pinstripe, and when he stood to greet her she could see he was at least six feet in height. His hair was blonde and smoothed back behind his ears, and he had a pair of cheekbones that could cut glass. "Mademoiselle Deniaud... *bonsoir*. Ah... *c'est gentil de votre part d'être venu*." A self-deprecating laugh, and when he spoke again it was with a lofty, upper-class English accent. "...My French is extremely poor, I'm afraid."

She had little care for his effort to communicate in her native language, unimpressed by niceties from someone who may be using them to mask their true intentions. "You sent me the invitation?"

"I did. My name is Matthew Rain," he extended a hand, "perhaps you've heard about me."

Her eyes cast upwards and downwards over him, rather dismissively, and she did not accept his handshake. "No."

He gave a bitter smile in response to her rudeness. "Well, no matter, I suppose. Regardless, I assume my true nature is obvious

enough." Turning, reaching over to the table, he picked up a half-full glass of blood, idly swirling the syrupy liquid. He made to move towards one of the couches, gesturing out. "Would you like to take a seat?"

She dug into her jacket pocket for the crumpled envelope, thrusting it into his open palm.

"...I'd like to know where you got hold of this name."

"My apologies. I would have had someone approach you directly, but this was more covert. I am an old business associate of Henri... he always spoke highly of you. I'm sure you were just a slip of a thing then, but I see you've come into your own..."

He was referring to her uncle Henri, her guardian following the suspicious car accident which caused the death of her parents. She was now old enough to take care of herself, and he'd recently been incarcerated for tax fraud. "My uncle is in prison. He only knows me as Sacha."

A pause, and Rain's lips slowly widened to reveal very white, mildly menacing teeth.

"...Yes. You'll understand that we have other ways of learning these things." He sipped from his glass, savouring the vitae before swallowing, pulling out a handkerchief and dabbing at his mouth lightly in case of stains. When she folded her arms in agitation, he continued. "I need you to assassinate another vampire on my behalf."

Purposeful murders were not what she was traditionally hired for. All of Sacha's kills had been abstract and aimed at unlucky randoms, fuelled by the desire of the black market. Occasionally she wouldn't be asked to kill at all, just obtain a magical artefact. "I'm sorry, that's not really what I do."

"And why not?" He questioned, beginning to circle, appearing to enjoy how her body grew more rigid as he passed behind her. "You clearly have the skills, the experience. I don't need you to retrieve anything from the target, but that means less work and - hopefully - less mess. A simple beheading. Or fire, whichever you prefer." Stopping face to face with her, he added, "The target has many more enemies than friends... I don't anticipate an especially strong backlash. I am merely one in a dozen with a motive."

"What happens if I'm caught?"

"Vampires do not like to get into quarrels with hunters, it never works out in our favour. Even if we do decide to fight one, a dead or injured hunter can inspire the wrath of many others, threatening us with exposure to the world. So, you might even say that my peers would be afraid of you."

The jibe was hard to resist, and she was giddy on that self-importance as she tossed her head to one side. "Are you afraid of me?"

"Fear can be healthy. Don't you think so?" He advanced a little into her personal space, near enough that the scent of blood in the glass was palpable. Sacha's overconfidence did not match with the sudden change in her body language - she squared her shoulders, her head inching back ever so slightly in reflex. Rain seemed satisfied with this.

"I can offer a certain degree of protection, as well... I have a lot of influence in the city. You will carry out the kill at the vampire's haven - his home - during the daylight hours in which he sleeps. That is all I am prepared to discuss at this juncture: I haven't the time for details tonight. I can meet you at a later date, if you are interested."

"I'll think about it."

Rain slipped a hand into his jacket, producing a cheque. It had been pre-written, with the name he had used to send the invitation, and a five-figure number. "Food for thought, then?"

Sacha blinked at the rectangle of paper, trying not to seem dazzled by the prospect of a client who was the very opposite of cheap. Keeping on top of her own affluence was a difficult task - in comparison to her former lap of luxury at home, she'd been living to a much lower standard during her first couple of years in the field.

"You seem surprised. Perhaps you've been undercharging for your work." He held the cheque out for her to grip between her fingers, as though allowing her to absorb the truth of it.

Noting his triumph in winning her over, she suppressed her eagerness. "Well... I only take cash."

"That can be arranged." His blue eyes glistened with vindication and all the likely lies that his kind were prone towards.

Could a vampire be trusted? Never completely, but risks could be taken if they made grand offers such as this. Swiping the ballpoint pen that nestled in his breast pocket, she scribbled something onto the back of the cheque before shoving both pen and paper against his chest. "This is my number. And don't use my other name again."

Rain's look of irritation was only fleeting: it faded into amusement, as if he were watching a child at harmless play. "Of course." He grinned, icily.

"Have a pleasant evening, Miss Deniaud."