



Cities in Darkness

As night falls, other powers rise from slumber...

Player Handbook

Version 2.1 – November 10, 2010



Introduction

Welcome to the Cities in Darkness player's handbook. This handbook is a very basic guide to the world of Cities in Darkness and encompasses useful in character information, basic information on how the game plays, and a few useful bits of information about us.

The Cities in Darkness is an independent society, currently running three Vampire: the Requiem games in the North East: Durham, Middlesbrough and Newcastle. We hope to create three exciting and unique games which interlink, creating interesting cross-city plots and intrigue.

The "World of Darkness" and "Vampire: the requiem" are both © White Wolf. Cities in Darkness take their published materials as our primary source books and would encourage players to look at their "minds eye theater" rules as the main rules of our game.

The Cities in Darkness was set up by role players for role players and we are continually working to make the whole experience of playing Vampire as much fun as possible (for us as well as you!). We hope to provide entertaining, engaging and enjoyable games which keep you hooked through the weeks and months ahead.

To do this, we are constantly working to improve our games and the information we provide. If you have any ideas, comments or suggestions, we would be really happy to hear about them: please drop us a line at citiesindarkness@gmail.com

We hope you enjoy the game!

Player Handbook Version 2.1

We have attempted to make this as complete and as useful as possible. However, Cities in Darkness is a constantly evolving game and therefore the contents of this handbook may well become rapidly outdated.

Updated versions of this player handbook will be available on the Cities in Darkness website as and when they are agreed.

Index

Background and in character information:

- Page 5: The tale of the Cities in Darkness
- Page 6: Durham in Darkness
- Page 7: Middlesbrough in Darkness
- Page 8: Newcastle in Darkness
- Page 9: Darlington in Darkness
- Page 11: What is a vampire?
- Page 14: Clans, Covenants and Coteries

Playing the game:

- Page 17: Character generation
- Page 20: Character development and XP
- Page 23: In character actions
- Page 26: Hand signals
- Page 28: Downtimes

The society:

- Page 30: Officer Roles and organizational details
- Page 32: Code of conduct
- Page 34: Constitution
- Page 36: General contact information and game details

Cities in Darkness

So, what is the world in which the game takes place?

A simple answer would be to direct you to the source material for this game – Vampire: the Requiem as published by White Wolf Inc. It is worthwhile however to run through the version of North East England that your characters will find themselves in.

The “World of Darkness” is a dark reflection of our own world. Everything is a little darker, a little grimmer. In the cities, bleak landscapes and industrial decay watch over streets where crime, vandalism and drug running are common. Businessmen are more likely to be involved in dark deeds, policemen are more likely to be corrupt, hope is rarer and more precious and within this world, hiding in the darkness, the supernatural genuinely exists. Our viewing media has given us a number of insights to a world where dark creatures exist, whether through Buffy or Supernatural on the TV or films such as Blade and Underworld. Our characters exist as these dark supernatural creatures in a world that can be mysterious, threatening and horrifying, even to a powerful member of the undead.

This is a world where inhuman conspiracies can date back centuries and you, the players, will inhabit a dark world where other darker things also exist.

For those of you that have played Vampire: the Masquerade, it is worth noting that the world of Requiem has two significant differences. Firstly, there is no Camarilla, no umbrella organization that demands the loyalty of all Kindred. The cities stand alone. To quote Mind’s Eye Theatre, the Requiem:

“ the undead are bound to the cities of the Kine as tightly as they are to the blood itself...the kindred could no more abandon the city than they could become vegetarians...It’s not that Kindred don’t travel, it’s that they don’t travel casually”

Secondly, this is **not** a world where vampires control everything, nor have they shaped history in their own image. Many accounts of dark gothic worlds where vampires rule have them as the “power behind the throne” and have them shaping most of the major events of history. In Requiem it is clear that they have never had this dominant a grip on the world. Many powers shape this world of darkness and for Kindred to survive takes care, cunning and courage.

The three cities in play at the beginning of the game will soon find themselves linked by events tied into a society wide plot and there will be ample reason for characters to travel between the different games as freely as the players wish. If and when other games join the society, we will incorporate plotline reasons for this contact to occur; the fact that a city may not have a game does not mean it lacks supernatural inhabitants or powerful defenses. Players will be discouraged from attempting to visit, in character, cities without games as any such visits make it harder to establish new games in the area in the future.

Durham in Darkness

This city of mystery and dreaming spires has long been under the iron control of its Undead Bishop. Rigid control over territory, movement and even meeting may make the city sound like a prison, but Bishop Ranulf has made obedience to his law the absolute condition to residence in the city. This has made it a home for misfits; kindred hunted in other cities and a melting pot for free thought and all ideologies – so long as they are not acted upon. This curious mix of sanctuary and prison has seen many competing ideologies and factions, held together only by the Prince's vast power and absolute authority.

As its ruler faces the prospect of a decade's long slumber, will his laws remain or will newer kindred rule as they see fit? Will the pressure cooker of rival factions blow apart? Most intriguingly, what lies in the areas of the city all are currently barred from? Why, in this ancient holy site is there an undeniable, lingering sense of evil?

History

Durham has archeological evidence dating back to 2000 BC, but the foundations of the current city came in 995, when Monks travelled to the site with the remains of Saint Cuthbert, and established a base on this secure site. The following century saw many upheavals and the Norman Conquest saw the establishment of new power bases. The Cathedral at Durham was established in 1093 and in that Durham skyline you can see the twin centers of feudal power – Cathedral and Castle.

Unlike the rest of the country, the Bishops of Durham were give wide powers over their extensive lands. Powers to raise taxes, make their own laws, sit in judgment and maintain their own armies. In this ecclesiastically dominated principality, it is little surprise that control of the city by darkness was soon assumed by a priest among the Vampires, a Lancea Sanctum Bishop. There are none now dwelling in the city who witnessed these early nights of the city except the Prince and, it is rumored, several of his ghoul servants. But rumors would suggest that the Prince dwelt in the city with a small entourage of Invictus and Sanctified kindred.

Other rumors persist that they were drawn into a battle against the remaining Pagan followers of the Circle of the Crone, supporting an ally in what is now Middlesbrough. There are whispered tales of a Pagan site of enormous power that the Sanctified wished to seize and occupy, though where its remains might be are unknown.

A great upheaval came in the 1500's. The seizure of the church by the King and the dissolution of the monasteries had a significant impact on the kindred population and required new mortals to be adopted as "tools" amongst the population. However, these events do little to explain why the Bishop summoned all of the city's kindred together on a winter's night in 1538 and sent all of them away from the city, never to return.

There are no tales of what happened over the following three centuries, as the city remained closed. It was not until 1832, with the opening of the University, that Bishop Ranulf accepted a resident to the city. It may just have been the loss of authority that accompanied Parliament's revocation of the powers of the Prince-Bishops, but Kindred began to enter the city in a slow trickle throughout the following years. Once more, Sanctified travelled to the now ancient Cathedral, though their access was tightly restricted by the Prince who forbade anyone crossing the course of the old moat into the centre of the city without his express permission. Invictus settled in the city and became involved in guiding and exploiting the industrial boom occurring around them. More surprisingly, members of the Ordo Dracul, the Carthians and even the Circle of the Crone were accepted to the city.

Roles were allocated to those kindred favored by the Bishop, but it took little time to realize that in this domain, the titles held little power. Primogen were appointed but never called to council, even the Sheriff was limited in what areas of the city they were allowed to enter. True authority lay with the Bishop's ghoul servants, referred to as "the Warders". Powerful and centuries old, this group administered the city as the Bishop saw fit.

Now:

One of the Bishop's most powerful edicts was that kindred might not meet in groups without his express permission and the presence of one of his warders. This has left a city with isolated and segregated kindred; no meets have occurred in 'living' memory.

Suddenly, on an October evening, this edict has been broken and all who dwell in the city have been invited to gather as the Bishop wishes to address them all. An air of excitement and curiosity pervades the city as the kindred break their centuries of silence and isolation to venture into the domain of the Bishop.

Middlesbrough in Darkness

A once decayed domain, where the powerful industrial lords of the Invictus fought vicious battles for dominance with the street savvy Carthians has seen three decades of peace and a re-generation of the city. The Prince, Dr. Hardy, watches over this court with cautious benevolence, balancing the different factions to avoid a return to the violence of the past.

Many of the kindred factions have settled into half hearted political rivalry and stability appears to have ruled. But in these decades of expansion, conflict and renewal little attention has been spared for the ancient things buried in their midst. This dysfunctional stupor and these faded streets cover long forgotten, pre industrial, mysteries and these mysteries are once more rising to the surface. Why did an entire village disappear in 1757, leaving just grassy mounds beside the A19? Ancient echoes of evil are unfolding that may have to sweep away the current rivalries. The long status quo will be shattered. Who amongst the kindred of the city will rise to these new challenges?

History

In 1801, Middlesbrough was a hamlet with a population of just 25 people living in 4 farmhouses. During the 19th century, however, it experienced a growth unparalleled in England. All of the city's kindred have arrived in the domain since 1830, and a clear history of the area's earlier nights is difficult to arrive at.

It is certainly true that a religious site has existed in the area since 686AD and that in medieval times a substantial church existed. Rumors remain strong that an undead priest of the Vampiric covenant Lancea Sanctum made this church his base in the middle ages and are accompanied by stories of ongoing battles against pagan kindred and their mortal worshippers stretching over centuries. These stories persistently refer to an ancient site of great power, somewhere in the North East that was battled over by the Circle of the Crone and the Lancea Sanctum. The truth of these stories is difficult to establish as reliable records only really begin with the arrival in 1830 of John Vaughn, a young but ambitious kindred of the Invictus Covenant. He was drawn by the possibilities that the extension of the Stockton and Darlington railway to the site created. Over the next few years, the fledgling town grew extensively from the initial 4 streets that had been laid out in 1829, attracting other kindred to this burgeoning population.

When John Vaughn arrived, he discovered just one kindred dwelling in the immediate area, a half-mad vampire who never gave a name or covenant but stridently declared himself the ruler of the local area,

giving himself the strange title of “the Hunter Green of Mydilsburgh”. Despite his ardent declaration of lordship, these kindred were happy to let others dwell in the area, so long as they were polite and addressed him by his title. To arriving kindred this just meant that there was a need to understand the protocol of dealing with this individual and, in all other ways, they were able to get on with governing themselves.

At the point where Middlesbrough’s growth as a shipping point for coal was starting to tail off, discoveries of Ironstone in the Eston hills provided the impetus for a second, greater spurt of growth. A number of kindred came to settle in this expanding population and the late 1800s saw a considerable divergence from the initial kindred influx of Invictus and their Lancea Sanctum allies to include members of all covenants

Industrial unrest saw deep divisions emerge in the kindred population of Middlesbrough, leading to a decade’s long “cold war” in which the city suffered and decayed. One of the early casualties was the mysterious “Hunter Green” who attempted to end the strife by asserting himself as the authority figure for the city. The individual responsible for his murder was never identified but it is clear that from this point until the 1960s no one truly ruled the city.

It is likely that weariness with this constant conflict was instrumental in the acceptance by all sides of a clearly acknowledged ruler of the city in 1962. Dr. Albert Hardy of the Ordo Dracul negotiated a truce that has lasted until the present day and took to himself the city’s traditional title as the “Hunter Green of Mydilsburgh”.

Now:

The city’s factions have rarely met at a general court for the city. Each faction has adopted its own meeting point; each accepted these places as Elysia, a place where all kindred eschew violence. Now the Prince of the city has requested that all kindred meet together and is hosting a large open meeting as there are matters he wishes to lay before the whole domain. Will you respond to this call?

Newcastle in Darkness

With its roots in the Roman Empire, forged in the trials of the middle Ages and empowered by the Industrial Revolution Newcastle is a bastion of strength and dignity in the wild north. With ancient tradition Prince Wodenson rules the domain with an iron grip to ensure dark enemies are held at bay. But despite this the kindred have found the freedom to grow and develop as long as they do not breach the tenants of Wondenson’s law.

With the dragon that terrorized the city kindred dead, Newcastle is looking safe enough for daring kindred to move in and stake a claim. But whom are the dark enemies lurking in the shadows? What secrets, undisturbed for centuries, lay waiting to be discovered? And would the city survive the lawlessness should anything happen to its Prince? Who would risk it all for the chance of power and make this domain their home?

History

Whilst the history of Newcastle begins with the Romans, the kindred history does not start till 1000 AD with the arrival of Wodenson as part of a Viking raiding party. After subduing the area he set about rebuilding it to suit his own needs and continued to defend it from the Sots throughout the dark ages.

During the sixteenth century Newcastle enjoyed the wealth provided by coal and shipping and grew to be the predominant force in the north. During this time the Lances suffered a major setback as Henry VIII set about selling off the considerable religious institutions in the area. In compensation Wodenson offered Brother Vincent the position of Seneschal and set the course of Newcastle's history. For when in 1757 something happened that drove Wodenson in depression the Lancea Bishop took control of the domain in the Prince's absence.

In 1872 something happens to Brother Vincent as well and after months of paranoid talks he attacked Wodenson and drove him into torpor. Shortly after the borders of Newcastle are closed to all kindred and none of the original occupants are seen again. Then in 1915 a small army of Kindred emerged from city calling themselves the Black Friars. They launched an attack on the neighboring domain of Durham but are driven off by the forces of Arch Bishop Odo; but not without heavy losses.

Something within Newcastle changes in 1974 and it soon becomes apparent that Prince Wodenson has arisen from torpor and begun to systematically wipe out the Black Friars. Once more opening the city under his reign, Wodenson handsomely rewards those who flocked to his banner to clear the city of this dark enemy.

At the turn of the millennium the Black Friars are reduced to scattered pockets of resistance and Wodenson declares them effectively wiped out turning the court from a hunting party to a political forum once more. But the start of the new era awoke something else in the city, something that had been slumbering, the dragon. For the next decade Wodenson and the Dragon fought each other to a standstill until in a strange turn of events landed some kindred in the Elysium from some distant existence. Through their sacrifice the Dragon was killed and the city freed from immediate threat.

Now:

Despite being an old city, due to the Dragon and the Black Friars before that, most of the kindred are still relatively new to the domain. So whilst some positions are already established there are plenty of opportunities for power to those coming into the domain. With a little cunning, politics and luck any kindred could carve out a chunk of this domain as theirs provided they can survive long enough to do it.

Will you take the challenge of death of glory?

Darlington is Darkness

Darlington is first mentioned in early English literature in 1003AD, when it was a small Saxon village on Viking held lands called Dearthingtun (the estate belonging to Deaornoth). King Canute or one of his lords gifted the land to the Bishop of Durham after his barefoot pilgrimage to the shrine of St Cuthbert from Garmondsway.

Darlington remained the property of the Bishops of Durham until well into the late medieval period, indeed the Bishops of Durham had a manor house built in Darlington opposite the church. In the 12th century the bishop turned part of the settlement into a market town.

However Darlington was a very small town, even by the standards of the time. It probably only had a population of several hundred. It was also largely an agricultural settlement. Many of the inhabitants of Darlington made their living from farming with the main industries of the area being the weaving and dyeing of wool and leather.

According to the Sanctified legend the first permanent kindred resident was a Sanctified penitent who was exiled to the town by Bishop Odo, although his original sin has been lost to the ages he supposedly charged with keeping a haven for visiting sanctified under St Cuthbert's church.

In the Middle Ages most men were villains or bondmen, halfway between slaves and freemen. They were

tied to the land and had to spend some of their time working on the Lord's land. When the Bishop created a market town he probably freed some of his villains but some remained bondmen and lived in bond gata or bond street.

In 1179 a 'ferocious tremor' shook the land and three great pits opened in the earth near Oxen-le-Hall to the south of Darlington, these apparently bottomless pits called the hells kettles by the locals spawned numerous legends about the boiling green waters.

Mab arrived in Darlington at roughly this time and drove off or killed the small group of sanctified inhabitants dwelling in the town. This began the hostilities between the lady of the lakes and the sanctified that has continued to the present day.

Through the centuries Darlington grew slowly into thriving market town. But it was not without its times of hardship. In the 16th century the rebellion of the northern earls led to 'a great many men' being executed for treason in the town square. Then only a few years later a great fire ravaged the town during a period of drought destroying hundreds of houses, there was such a lack of water that desperate people used milk and beer to try to douse the flames that consumed the town.

And of course the ever present threat of the black death struck repeatedly through the 16th and early 17th centuries with three serious outbreaks in the town that claimed hundreds of lives.

In 1825 George Stephenson and Edward Pease the local Quaker industrialist finished construction on the Stockton and Darlington railway, linking inland collieries to the port at Stockton with steam powered locomotives and the first commercial railway line was born.

The flood of new industry and jobs to the area brought with it a wave younger kindred looking to make their fortunes, as kindred numbers grew higher there was a brief but bloody war over territory before Mab interceded causing a bloody massacre that would come to be known as the 'Great Culling'.

One night the kindred of Darlington awoke to find that half their number was simply gone, havens were found torn apart and piles of ash were all that remained of over a dozen of the new arrivals.

The industrial revolution transformed Darlington with the linen industry giving way to foundries and vast factories pumping out materials for the ever-growing railway industry. Much of the growing industrialization of the town was due to the Quaker movement who numbered many of the more successful businessmen and industrialists of the era in Darlington and the northeast.

By the time the statue of John Pease was erected in 1875 the once sleepy town had been modernized with sewers, running water and a population approaching fifty thousand.

Around 1900 Mab began to retreat from a town that was moving ever further from the myths and superstitions of its rural past, her visits became more and more infrequent until she retreated entirely to her personal territory around the kettles sometime around 1935.

What is a Vampire?

Blood-drinking creatures of the night; Horrors born of the darkness, whose sole purpose in life (unlife, actually) is to slake their unholy thirst on the blood of the living. Without a doubt, vampires are monsters.

Monsters, though, need not always be unthinking, unfeeling terrors empty of remorse, compassion, or other traits. Indeed vampires can exceed their deathless curse, becoming champions of the mortals and of other kindred.

Then again, some vampires simply remain monsters.

Vampire society

Try though they might, the Kindred are not, and never can be, truly part of mortal society. Regardless of their feelings, their wishes or their intentions, Vampires are always separate from those around them. They are wolves amid the sheep, and their very nature prevents them from ever forgetting or ignoring that fact. No matter how much one of the Kindred might love a mortal and wish to stay with them, the Blood calls constantly. The Beast threatens a frenzy that all too often results in the violent death of those they hold dear. The Kindred inability to withstand the gaze of the sun separates them irrevocably from the greater portion of the culture, the society and the *life* that surrounds them. They are provincial creatures who think almost solely on a social level because the greater portion of the world is beyond their reach.

Mortals create communities, almost despite themselves. They portion off nations, celebrate cultures that have evolved over centuries, if not millennia. They are all part of something greater than themselves, even if they fail to acknowledge this. The Kindred however, are bound to the cities that the living has created, and each of these cities is distinct. The Kindred have no nations, no overarching government; the local ruler is the only ruler.

Although a vampire retains a sense of identity or memories from their mortal life, they do not belong. They are no longer a part of whatever greater body with which they identified. Rather, any loyalty or sense of belonging they have is limited to local cities; fealty to the Prince, membership in a covenant or a coterie. These are the only connections the Kindred can truly maintain, the only culture of which they are truly part, and it is upon them that the entirety of their society is built

The Status of a vampire

How a Kindred is viewed by others is affected by many factors. The individual may have status within their city- they may be in an eminent role such as Prince or Harpy – or they may have status within their clan, covenant or coterie. Status is extremely important to many Kindred who operate in a very hierarchical, and often deferential, manner. Obtaining status is often a good way to achieve power over others, protection from your enemies, and access to resources and skills that make your unlife considerably more enjoyable. However, with status comes threat. To reach the top, the kindred in your way must be deposed or destroyed and those on the way up can often find themselves stamped on from those above and dragged down from those below. For some, these political games are a means to an end; for some they are the end in themselves. However, always remember it always pays to keep your friends close and your enemies closer,

Vampire Existence

Eternity is a very long time. Even the thrill of the power obtained from the embrace, the joy of the kill and the pleasures of the blood can lose their pall over the centuries. Kindred also don't entirely forget who they were and even the joyous exultation of the early years of being a neonate (newly embraced vampire) can be tinged with the remnants of mortal guilt and morality. Surviving this ennui, and finding continuous ways of seeking meaning in existence, is one of the challenges for most Kindred. For some, seeking power is the answer. Being the ultimate leader with life and death power over fellow kindred and mortals alike is enough to stave off the boredom of unlife. For others, seeking for answers, wisdom and improvement is the way forward. For yet others, believing in a higher purpose; a calling or devoting one's life to worship gives their unlife meaning and direction.

Each vampire needs to find their own way through; each path is unique and personal, However, though the paths may be different, the need for purpose is universal; those who have little sense of why they exist often simply fail to.

The Beast within

Within the urbane, sophisticated exterior of even the most controlled and rarefied Kindred lurks a beast waiting for any opportunity to escape. The Beast controls the thirst, driving Kindred to hunt relentlessly, regardless of considerations of morality or practicality. The Beast drives Vampires to violence and destruction, particularly when encountering the Beast within others. Much of the day to day existence of the Kindred involves subduing and controlling the Beast within.

Like a naughty child with a bad parent, giving in to the Beast only makes it stronger. Those who indulge in sadistic and amoral acts find themselves losing touch with their humanity; finding it increasingly difficult to remain in control and to interact with mortals and the more urbane of the Kindred society. Failing to feed the Beast results in driving thirst which makes the Kindred liable to frenzy (lose control of their behavior). Exposing the Beast to extreme threats (fire being the most obvious) can also cause the Kindred to lose control and frenzy. Appeasing the Beast whilst not giving in to it is the fine line that all Kindred have to walk if they wish to remain even vaguely resembling human,

The Three Traditions

As with any society, groups of individuals require rules to live together. In a society of predators this need is in many ways stronger and in Vampiric society has boiled down to three traditions. These three traditions are the old and almost universally adhered to. They are, briefly:

The First Tradition: The Masquerade

Vampire society exists in fear that the mortals will discover their existence. Although each Kindred is stronger and more powerful by far than any individual mortal; they have one great advantage – numbers. If mortal society ever ganged together to destroy the Kindred, the extinction of vampires would be inevitable.

Keeping the secrets of the Vampire world and for that matter the supernatural in general, from the mortals is one of the greatest challenges for the Kindred. It is easy to seize power from the mortals by strength but this would lead to disaster. Guile, deceit and subtlety are essential traits for all if the Kindred are to survive.

Unfortunately, many of the demons and beasts of the world do not share this fear and Kindred often find themselves working hard to cover up disastrous exposure to the supernatural. Luckily, a combination of sheep-like stupidity, a tendency to skepticism and a blind swallowing of the information spoon fed to the masses by the media and governing mortals makes this considerably easier. A quiet word in the ear of a “friendly” media mogul, a “patsy” scientist with a half-baked scientific explanation or a conspiracy style

cover up by the police can make even the most bizarre occurrences occur under the radar of the population. However, complacency is fatal. One slip and the kindred are doomed.

The second tradition – progeny

Siring of new vampires is considered against tradition within the vampire world, although to be honest no-one can really remember why. Over the years, the original view that “no vampire may produce a childe” has been somewhat watered down and, as the large numbers of Kindred existing suggests, plenty of childe have been created. However, it is generally considered extremely inappropriate to sire a vampire without the express permission of an elder within your covenant or of your Prince. Vampires who have not requested this permission have often found themselves facing a very angry overlord.

Siring kindred is also a big responsibility. Traditionally, you are responsible for the tutelage of any new childe you create; making sure they understand the traditions, the rules of the kindred society and often the rules of your covenant and clan. Although different cities have different approaches, some form of responsibility is likely to be consistent and therefore it’s advisable to think very carefully before siring.

The third tradition – amaranth or diablerie

In its simplest form, diablerie is draining another vampire until they achieve final death, thus absorbing their soul and ending their life once and for all. Funnily enough, Vampires generally despise this practice and diablerist’s are considered outcasts and are normally actively hunted down and killed.

Unfortunately, some Kindred figure the benefits of diablerie (the adoption of some of the skills and potency of the diablerised vampire – see Requiem handbook for precise details) outweigh the risks and this tradition is broken more than most would like. Diablerist’s take a huge risk as other vampires with the ability to read auras can see a stain upon their aura for well over a year, making detection relatively easy. Detection often leads to blood hunting so diablerie is not a practice to consider lightly!

Clans, Covenants, and Coterie

Clans, Covenants and Coterie are the three main social groups to which a Vampire belongs. These groupings cross city boundaries and are often major influences in the loyalties and choices of Kindred,

Clans

Your clan is your bloodline – your race, to use a mortal concept. You inherit your bloodline from your sire and therefore have no (in character) choice about your clan. However, your clan has a huge influence upon the way in which you are affected by the embrace; your bloodline determines much of your abilities, disciplines (special skills) and often your outlook on the world, once embraced, you cannot change clan and find it difficult to adopt characteristics of another clan.

There are five main bloodlines / clans within the Requiem, although occasionally other unusual bloodlines do pop up. These are:

Nosferatu

The outcasts of the damned, these kindred are scarred physically and / or mentally by the process of the embrace. Often unable to pass as human, these Kindred specialize in using their stealth, strength and fear to survive. Their abilities even terrify other Kindred; their use of their monstrous demeanor to induce fear is only slightly more terrifying than their ability to delve into the secrets of others. Backed up monstrous strength, Nosferatu are respected if often repudiated by the other Kindred.

Mekhet

This clan also uses stealth and subterfuge to obtain their ends. Wisdom and sneakiness are prized in equal amounts amongst this clan and their abilities to obtain information are legendary. Their ability to read others, move with inhuman speed and hide in the shadows makes them invaluable to many Damned societies.

Gangrel

The Gangrel rarely fear the Beast within; they attune themselves to its needs, using its strength and power to make them stronger. Known as the “noble savages”, the animalistic tendencies and behaviors of the Gangrel often cause a shiver of fear to run up the spine of other Kindred. The Gangrel use their close affinity with the beast to obtain power over the animal kingdom, even mimicking their forms, and to develop a resistance and resilience which makes them a challenging foe.

Daeva

Who says the unlife should not be fun? The Daeva are the hedonists of the Damned. They seek pleasure and sensuality; using their abilities to seduce and persuade to entice mortals and often other kindred into becoming their playthings. The Daeva have power over all that is emotional, using their sensuality and unique abilities to persuade and mesmerize. However, their social abilities often mask a physical strength and speed which makes them lethal to the unwary.

Ventrue

The Ventrue are simple; they win, they *always* win. Power and influence are almost as sustaining for a Ventrue as blood and they often work their way to positions of authority within cities and covenants. Their unique abilities aid them in their mission to rule the world: their ability to control the animal kingdom and the minds of mortals and kindred makes it easy for them to shape the world to their ends. They also have a

remarkable resilience which makes them difficult to kill and, although they may not be the strongest in a fight, which needs to get your hands dirty when you can simply, force others to do it for you.

Covenants

Although your clan shapes your abilities and ways of interacting with the world, it can only be part of who you are. What makes each Kindred an individual is their drive, their purpose, their way of making sense of their existence. Many kindred find that others loosely share their views of the world and that working collectively is more effective than working as an individual. Therefore over the years covenants have formed; political groupings which share a common purpose or agenda and which allow Kindred to align themselves with others of like mind.

Covenants are a choice, not an inheritance and therefore it is technically possible to align yourself with more than one covenant or shift between covenants if your aims in life alter with time. The reality is more brutal; covenants often share secrets with their members which give them power and advance their cause. Understandably, they are reluctant to share this with other covenants whose purpose may be at odds with their own. Therefore they are often less than keen to see a kindred defect to the other side, taking their secrets with them; at this point bloodshed often becomes inevitable.

As Covenants are therefore your family, your social group, your teachers and your judges. Choosing your covenant is one of the most important decisions of your (un)life as it is likely to shape your purpose and direction for the rest of your existence.

Carthians

The Carthians are the youngest of the covenants and probably the closest to mortal society. They believe in enacting models of power from mortal society, trying out a variety of new systems of governance. In reality, the Carthians attract many with socialist and equalitarian beliefs. Commitment to the cause can vary from attempts to encourage their domains to use democratic systems to using methods of direct action to reduce the power of non-equitable domains (fire-bombing is a not unusual form of Carthian “encouragement”). Commonly attracting neonates (recently embraced vampires); the Carthians can seem like a route to obtaining power for the younger kindred. Members of the Carthians use their closeness to the mortal world to their advantage, finding it easy to forge alliances and obtain information from mortals.

Invictus

In many ways the diametric opposite of the Carthians, the Invictus are traditionalists of the highest order. They are commonly viewed as the aristocracy of the kindred, adopting formal standards of etiquette and behavior that would drive most people to distraction. Although they technically believe that those who are most able to rule should rule, this meritocratic belief is somewhat diminished by the fact that they tend to believe that those most able to rule are those already ruling. Invictus commonly attract the Venture; the trappings of power demonstrated by the covenant are very appealing to a clan who seek little else. The Invictus also has benefits: the close knit society and trappings of power that bedeck the Invictus make it easy for Kindred to access resources beyond their wildest dreams.

The Lancea Sanctum (also known as the sanctified)

The Lancea believe them to be the spiritual guides of the kindred. They believe that they were embraced for a purpose; to be a physical reminder to mortals of the penalties of damnation. Their strict moral code and traditionalist approach makes them common allies of the Invictus. Believing that they speak for God, the Lancea tend towards the self-righteous and arrogant. However, the Sanctified also contains many pragmatists who realize that the path to the salvation of other kindred is often best approached with a gentle touch. To help them in their quest, God has revealed dark secrets which allow them power over mortals and kindred's alike. The mysteries of Theban Sorcery are passed on from Lancea to Lancea and prove a useful weapon in the war against heresy.

The Circle of the Crone

The Circle has a complex set of beliefs and behaviors which often leave non-covenant members baffled. Their apparent worship of dark gods and blood magic's can often result in them ending up on the wrong side of the Lancea and can leave other kindred fearful or repulsed. The Circle of the Crone run a tight hierarchy, with complex systems of tutelage and support for initiates. While many are repulsed by the paganistic approaches, the Crone are attractive to many who seek meaning in their existence and draw wisdom from the dark spiritual rites of the ancients. Like many ancient religions, the Circle of the Crone has delved into the mysteries of the occult. Their unique blood magic, Cruac, enables them to further their spiritual journey (and its ability to enhance the powers and abilities of the Crone is often useful for less spiritual, more mundane matters such as obtaining power and glory for the wielder).

The Ordo Dracul

Claiming to be descendants of Dracula himself, the Ordo view Vampirism as an obstacle to be overcome rather than a curse or blessing. They continually seek knowledge, exploring mysticism and science in an attempt to understand and overcome the weaknesses of the Vampiric condition. Their core philosophy drives them to continually experiment with the world around them, sometimes causing destruction and devastation - sometimes carrying out acts of untold kindness, simply to study the effects on those involved. Their fascination with improving their condition and their approach to study is often hugely attractive to those with an academic bent within the kindred, but many are put off by their strict hierarchy and the slow progression within the organization. Their investigations have taught them many closely guarded secrets – known collectively as the Coils – which enable them to overcome some of the disadvantages of the vampiric condition (and often giving them a healthy advantage over other kindred).

The Unaligned

While strictly not a covenant, the unaligned refers to those kindred who have not chosen to sign up for a covenant. This large and varied group includes neonates who are yet to decide, ardent politicians who shun the beliefs of the main covenants, and / or individualists and loners. The unaligned rarely link up as a political force and are often seen as a ripe recruiting ground for the other covenants.

Coteries

Coteries are small, select groups of kindred (usually between 3 – 6 but sometimes as big as 12) who band together for a particular purpose. They provide allies and support to their members and often transcend matters of clan, city and even sometimes covenant. These coteries vary in their permanence and commitment – some form (un)lifelong bonds which cannot be broken whereas some coteries unite to fulfill particular goals and then disband. How open Kindred are regarding their allegiances and coteries can vary and many times an unsuspecting Vampire can fall foul of a power enclave that they were not even aware existed.

Coteries are not always happy unions. The Kindred within the coterie remain Kindred and the natural state for any Kindred is solitude. Mistrust and suspicion is rife amongst Vampire society; power can usually only be obtained by removing one's rivals and achieving goals may require (often unwilling) sacrifices. Coteries are as vulnerable to this mistrust and suspicion as any other collection of Kindred, particularly if Vampires outside the Coterie see fanning the flames of mistrust as an effective way of disbanding a potential powerful clique.

Character Generation

This section is designed to help you start the process of thinking about developing your character background.

Who is your character?

Before worrying about clans, covenants, stats and details, think more generally about who your character is overall.

It may help to think through and answer the following questions for you:

Life as a mortal:

- What was life like as a mortal before you were embraced (bitten)?
- Were you happy?
- Did you (do you still) have any relatives or loved ones?
- Did you work?
- Did you have any special skills or abilities?
- What made you passionate about life?
- What were your principles and ideals?

The embrace:

- How old were you when you were embraced (bitten)?
- How long ago was that?
- Did you become a vampire voluntarily or were you embraced against your will?
- How do you feel about being embraced?
- Do you know who your sire was / is and do you still have any contact?
- Did you keep contacts with the mortal world?

Life as a vampire:

- What drives you?
- What do you believe in – what is the point of your existence now you are a vampire?
- What kind of person are you (are you strong, socially skilled, intelligent, creative, etc. Etc.)?
- Do you have any unusual beliefs or ideas?
- Do you have any unusual feeding habits?
- Where will your haven (safe house / home) be?
- Do you retain a mortal identity?
- How do you afford your life / lifestyle?
- What brought you to / kept you in the North East?
- What do you want? What have you come here to achieve?

It is worth thinking carefully about what clan and covenant you would like your character to align to. Pages 14 - 17 detail the nature and spirit of the clans and covenants. Below are a few more details which might make it easier to think about which clan and covenant to align with,

Clans

It is worth considering what *type of character* you wish to play:

Physical characters

If you want to be able to fight your way out of trouble, then you are going to need to be physically strong enough, resilient enough, skilled enough and / or sneaky enough to survive.

Certain clans are more inclined towards physical type characters:

Gangrel have the ability to modify themselves into physical forms which make them tougher and more resilient – they can learn the skill to grow claws which cause serious damage, turn into an animal form which fights well or even learn to adopt a mist form which enables them to float away from danger. They also have the ability to learn resilience skills which make them tougher to hurt.

Nosferatu are strong and sneaky. Better at being a stealthy fighter than the Gangrel, they can terrorize, hit hard and disappear if needed.

Daeva, despite their outwardly social and friendly nature, are pretty hard. The ability to learn vigor and celerity makes them strong and fast.

Social characters

If you want to talk your way out of trouble, then you need to be pretty charming or persuasive.

Ventrue are very much social characters; their ability to dominate the minds of others, or even change their memories and thoughts, allows them to control others and their situations. Their ability to control and manipulate the animal kingdom strengthens this power base and, if it all goes wrong, they are resilient enough to withstand an attack long enough for their minions to get them out of trouble!

Daeva are socially adept in a very different way. They persuade, beguile, and generally charm people into doing what they want. Their ability to entice information from others often proves very useful and they are tough enough to stand their own corner if it goes wrong.

Intellectual characters

If you want to investigate what is happening, find out where the power really lies or generally dig around for the dirt, and then you need to be sneaky and bright.

Mekhet are the ultimate intellectual characters. Their ability to read the aura and minds of others makes hiding information from them difficult and, if that fails, they can always hide themselves in the shadows and ‘overhear’. If they get into trouble, they can simply fade away or they are perfectly built for running fast enough to get away from most beasties,

Character generation and covenants

Before choosing your covenant, it is worth taking the time to really familiarize yourself with the goals and philosophies of the group you are drawn towards. In many cities, your covenant is your strongest social allegiance and, although technically you *can* leave, the high risk of death means that most people sign up for life. Think about how you would interpret the principles of the covenant – what your personal goal within that covenant would be. For instance, if you are a member of the Circle of the Crone, do you truly believe in the Crone? Do you believe in a variant of the teachings (there are several sects within the Crone which you can read about in the covenant book)? What would your principles be? Are you planning to learn Cruac to take forward your spiritual development or to gain power over others?

Understanding what you want from your covenant and what your covenant wants from you will help you to make your character three dimensional and will help you to know what you are trying to get out of the game.

It is also worth making sure you go back to the original White Wolf guidance about the covenants before playing your character for too long – stereotypes about the covenants often quickly emerge within games which may prevent you from doing something interesting and new or which may lead you to drift away from the philosophy of the covenant.

Creating the characters Statistics

Time to go to the “mind's eye theater” books and follow the process as laid out there.

Items, weapons, unusual bloodlines and devotions/ rituals

All items and weapons need to be approved by your ST. Once the item or weapon has been approved, you will be given a signed laminated card which details the actions and / or effects of your item and any costs / benefits to you in its use. Please remember to bring this card with you to all games as it saves considerable time checking the records.

More unusual items, weapons, bloodlines, devotions and rituals will need the approval of the Officers Council. Please submit descriptions of your request in writing to your ST and they will take it to the next 3 monthly meeting for discussion (if not sooner).

Character development and experience points (XP)

XP, or experience points, is a way of tracking the increases in skills, knowledge and abilities that your character gains from their experience of living in the World of Darkness. In game terms, as you play games or submit downtimes, your character gains experience, which is indicated by XP points. These XP points can be 'spent' on developing aspects of your character, learning new skills or abilities, or on acquiring new resources, allies, etc.

Every game you play will earn you XP (4XP per game), as will every downtime (how much you earn per downtime depends on how much you put into your downtime – the more you do, the more experience you will gain – within the range of 1 – 3XP). It's worth being aware that your character will actually have to time in to receive the XP (after all, if you aren't there, how do you gain any experience?).

These XP points can be spent on your character by talking to your Game Support Officer at the beginning of your home city game. Although you can gain XP for visiting other cities, you can only spend it in your home city.

Different skills and abilities cost different things. Early stage (low dot) skills, abilities and attributes cost less than highly skilled attributes. Disciplines and abilities linked to your clan and / or covenant cost less than those of another clan / covenant. For precise details, refer to the Mind's Eye Theatre handbook or discuss with your Game Support.

Some special devotions and disciplines require you to be taught them by other Kindred. Any out of clan or covenant disciplines will need be taught by someone who already has them, as will any specialized rituals and devotions (Don't worry your Game Support will let you know which need teaching). In these cases, both you and the person teaching you need to submit a downtime action describing the process of teaching / learning that occurs before you will be able to spend your XP.

Keeping track of your XP

Your Game Support will keep an up to date log of all of the XP you earn at games and for downtimes. They will keep a note of this on a centralized log and you may request to see this at any time. You are welcome to keep your own records of XP but you should be aware that if the two don't add up, we will go with the Game Support's records. Expenditure will be noted down and added to your character sheet and then a new updated character sheet will be emailed out to before the next game. This might sound a bit complicated but it means we always have a copy of an up to date character sheet for you – vital if you forget it or lose it!

XP bonuses

There are no automatic ways of earning XP bonuses – officers don't receive XP for their role and there are no automatic ways of being granted XP outside of attending games or submitting downtime. However, from time to time bonuses will be handed out to players doing something unusually well – whether that is in character or for the society. For instance, an XP bonus might be given to you by your ST for exceptional role playing or your GS may give you a bonus for working hard on the society website. Bonuses to officers can only be granted by the officer council and bonuses will never be above 5XP.

Character death / carry over XP

There are certain situations where you may create a character with a higher starting XP level.

Where a primary character is killed or permanently retired and it had more than 100 XP, then the player may carryover half of the previous characters XP to create their next primary character instead of the 25 starting XP and 25 background XP normally offered.

A character background is mandatory for characters created with carryover XP.

Retirement of an existing primary character and creation of a new primary character must be clearly communicated to both your GS and ST before arriving at the game where you intend to play the new character.

When a new city is set up, the full council of Cities in Darkness may agree carryover XP to reflect a previous campaign the players had been involved in. At no point may this exceed the maximum carryover XP limit of 250. This must all be agreed and is only applicable to any characters created in the first month of the new city. People joining later will begin without carryover XP.

In exceptional circumstances the full CiD council may agree to award a higher level of carryover XP to an existing Cities in Darkness player, up to a maximum of the previous characters full XP.

Secondary characters

It is not our intention to promote players acquiring multiple characters as this either dilutes the interaction of each character with the game world or massively increases storyteller workload. That said, it is acknowledged that there may be times where your primary character may want to be out of play for a period of time or may be unable to travel to games where you would like to play. Therefore secondary characters can be created in the following way.

Each player can have a maximum of one secondary character. If they wish to create a different secondary character, they must permanently retire their current secondary character.

Secondary characters cannot be of the same clan or covenant as your primary character, nor have any involvement with them.

When attending a game you may play either your primary or your secondary character, and it is the character that is played that earns the XP for that time-in.

Secondary characters cannot be created with anything requiring a special approval.

Secondary characters are created as per the core rules books with no additional XP.

Secondary characters are required to have a minimum of a short background. They gain no XP at startup for this.

Secondary characters earn and spend XP normally, though if the character is killed or retired, there is no carryover XP from this.

As a player, you may submit one Downtime per month. This may be from either the primary or the secondary character, and the character the downtime relates to earn the XP for the downtime submission.

You may change your secondary character into a primary character if your primary character is killed or permanently retired, If you do so the character gains no extra XP for this change. This change must be clearly communicated to both your ST and GS.

In character actions

Often you will want to use your skills and abilities to obtain something or achieve something within the game. Some of your abilities will always work – you may simply need to expend a little of your blood or concentrate determinedly (spend Willpower) to make it happen. Some of your abilities will be contested i.e. there is an element of chance whether they will work or the person or object you are trying to affect has some kind of resilience or defense which your ability has to overcome before it will work.

To work out who, or what, wins out, we use a process of card pulls. Your character will have Skills, Attributes and Modifiers which all indicate how good they are at any ability or action. For example, if you want to shoot something, your ability to hit will be calculated from your skill with the firearm you are using (skill: firearms), your accuracy (attribute: dexterity) and any specific factors i.e., the use of armor piercing rounds (Modifiers: armor piercing rounds). Your scores on each of these will be totaled and added to a random draw of a card (1 – 10. Note if you draw a 10 you are given the chance to draw again and add the second card to your score. If you draw a 1, you always fail). The person you are shooting at will have their own abilities and skills which will affect the outcome: if they are wearing armor or are particularly fast or agile, that will be taken away from your total score. The general rule on a basic test is that if your total score + card draw is more than 10, you score one success, more than 15 = 2 successes, more than 20 = 3, etc. Etc. This may sound complicated but you quite quickly get the hang of it.

More advanced actions

Most actions are a variant on the above basic test but as a cheat sheet, it may be helpful to hang on to the following as a reminder (don't worry if you are new and don't understand a word of it – you will be talked through the details!):

- **Instant actions:** Takes a single round to do and requires only one card pull
- **Reflexive:** Doesn't take a round and requires only one card pull (i.e. your defense when attacked)
- **Extended:** Takes several rounds to perform and requires several card pulls (which may be spaced out over a time period determined by the ST) until a set number of successes have been achieved (i.e. performing a ritual)
- **Contested:** Both parties make a test and the individual with the largest number of successes wins. How successful they are is calculated by taking the number of successes obtained by the loser away from the winner's total.

Combat related information

Some draws are specific to combat. Below is a cheat sheet of what skills, attributes and modifiers are used in particular common situations. For any not mentioned here, refer to the handbooks.

- **Initiative:** Dexterity + Composure + 1 card pull. This will be your initiative score for the entire combat scene. Individuals with the highest initiative score go first (and then so on in descending order)
- **Melee (close contact combat):** Strength + Brawl or Weaponry +/- Modifiers + 1 card pull – target's defense. Each success is one level of damage to the target.

- **Ranged (long distance combat):** Dexterity + Firearms +/- Modifiers + 1 card pull – target's defense. Each success is one level of damage to the target. Remember bullets only do bashing damage to a vampire.
- **Defense:** This is a reflexive action and is taken away from an attack on you. Your defense = the lowest score out of your dexterity and wits (+ any special modifiers such as armor)

Other information that might be useful in combat is the types of damage that can be meted out:

- **Bashing:** recorded as one slash in the health box. One blood heals two levels of bashing damage. Once all of your health boxes are full of bashing damage, any more bashing will cause lethal damage.
- **Lethal:** recorded as a cross in the health box. One blood heals two levels of lethal damage. Once all of your health boxes are full of lethal damage, any further damage will cause aggravated damage.
- **Aggravated damage:** recorded as a star in the health box. Five blood heals one level of aggravated damage over the course of two nights. Once all of your health boxes are filled with aggravated damage, you will fall into torpor – almost like a coma – from which you can only be awakened by blood from another vampire who has a higher blood potency than you,

It is also worth being aware that you can spend your round **dodging**. This will be the only maneuver for that round but will double your defense.

Spending Blood or Vitae

The amount of blood you can spend per turn is determined by your blood potency; the higher your blood potency, the more vitae you can spend per turn. Spending vitae can have a variety of potential effects:

- 1 vitae in a turn can allow you to add + 2 to one physical category for one round of a test
- 1 vitae in a turn can be used to heal 2 points of lethal or bashing damage (remember it takes 5 vitae and 2 nights to heal aggravated damage)
- 1 vitae in a turn can give you the blush of life for a whole scene: your skin will be flushed, your heart will beat and you will even breath
- Vitae may be needed to activate a discipline or ritual
- 1 vitae in a turn will allow you to eat through a scene (although you will bring it all back up later!!!)
- You must spend one vitae every morning to rise

How much blood you start each game with is determined by your herd (source of blood) + blood potency + a single card pull. You can leave the game for a short while to feed if necessary (discuss with your ST if you wish to do this).

Spending Willpower

You can only spend one willpower per turn but you can spend both vitae and willpower in a turn. Willpower is sometimes required for particular rituals or devotions but more generally it is used to add + 3 to a test you are undergoing (spending willpower represents you concentrating really hard; therefore making it more likely you will succeed). You cannot use willpower to increase an offensive draw in combat or as a bonus on a degeneration or morality draw.

Using willpower leaves you drained and tired and take you a while to recover. Your maximum willpower is calculated by adding your resolve to your composure. Willpower will be calculated using a card pull. If you

pull between 6 and 10, you will start the evening on your full willpower. If you pull under 6 you will start on full willpower – 2.

Remember you can increase your willpower in game by indulging your vice (you can gain one willpower per scene where vice indulged) or your virtue (you can fully restore your virtue once per game if you indulge your virtue well) in character.

Hand Signals

Hand Signals

When putting Cities In Darkness together we tried to do two things in relation to hand signals. The first was to devise a logical system of hand signals that fall into broad groups and the second was to keep the number of signals that needs to be memorized to a minimum. Of course only time will tell if we have succeeded and as such we would appreciate your feedback on this new system.

Categories

There are three categories of hand signals:

1. You Can't See Me
2. You Might Not Understand What I Am Saying
3. I Am In An Alternate Form

Each of these will be discussed in detail in a moment. It is worth mentioning that in addition to these every player will have a badge worn prominently somewhere on their torso. These will detail any extra information that needs to be conveyed about the character that people will notice. This will cover such things as the Nosferatu's aura, the fact a player has striking looks and to notify any items carried by the player when costuming is not sufficient. Note these badges are out of character, but should be noted and responded to when you are interacting with other characters.

You Can't See Me

The basic signal for this category is that the player must raise their right hand in the air. This means if you scan the room you know that all the people with their right hand in the air, as far as you are concerned, are not there. If you have some ability that might allow you to see this person then speak to a member of the ST team and they will be able to adjudicate the matter. If you are unable to see someone, simply ignore them and carry on as usual. This symbol should be used if your character is invisible due to the effects of Obfuscate, if your character is astral projecting or is on another plane of existence (obviously this is not an exhaustive list).

There are two notable additions in this category. The first is the out of character gesture where the raised hand will have the fingers crossed (as in for luck). This player is currently not playing and is simply moving through the gaming area to get to the exit or to briefly chat with someone. The second is the heightened senses gesture where in addition to the raised right hand the left hand will be pointing to the characters eyes. This means that the character is still somewhere in the room but is looking or listening in from a distance. The character can obviously not be detected whilst doing this and if you want to know where they physically are simply asking them.

You Might Not Understand What I Am Saying

There are many situations where two characters might be having a conversation, and despite being able to see and hear them you are unable to work out what they are talking about. This will include foreign languages, animal noises and gesture based communication like sign language. In such cases the players involved in the conversation should make an L symbol with the thumb and index finger of the right hand and make sure it can be easily seen. Anyone who wants to be able to actually understand the conversation

must be able to engage in the form of communication being used. To find out what form of communication is being used simply ask one of the players involved in the conversation.

A notable addition in this category is telepathic communication which may not even be noticed and certainly cannot be listened in to. The signal for this is that whilst the right hand will be forming an L symbol as described above, the left hand will be pointing towards the character's temple.

I Am In An Alternate Form

Some kindred possess the ability to change their shape into that of an animal, or to ride inside another entity, or even become mist or shadow. For such occasions this category exists so that people are aware of what form a given player is in.

If a player is in a form alternate to the one their costume denotes then they must hold an A4 piece of paper over their heads declaring what form they are in. In the case of an animal form, the type of animal should be clearly written on the paper. For Mist or Shadow form the appropriate words should be written to indicate the appearance of the character.

Downtimes

Downtimes are the actions that your character carries out between games. To get your character to carry out actions, you must submit a written downtime to your city's ST within two weeks of the last home game (if you are later than that, your ST will try to respond in time for the next game but there are no guarantees). If actions relate to cities other than your home domain, clearly mark this on your downtime and your ST will forward it to the appropriate ST. *Please do not send them to the other ST's yourself as this will get confusing and may result in actions getting missed.*

Downtimes should be descriptions of what you are trying to do, why you are trying to do it and how you are planning to go about doing it. You have a limited number of actions per month (after all there are only so many days in the week) which vary from character to character. Your number of downtime actions =

Resolve + actions handed over to allies/ retainers (one per ally / retainer)

This is capped at your humanity score (i.e. if your humanity = 7, you can only have 7 actions no matter how many retainers or resolve points you have)

An action refers to one task that needs completing i.e. *infiltrating a local gang*. Subtasks can all be collated under one heading

i.e. "I speak to the local gang leader and arrange to meet up to discuss me joining the gang. If he agrees, I will go along with my retainer and discuss whether or not we can both join the gang"

It's worth putting in some detail of how you will approach the situation

i.e. "If it looks like they are getting suspicious, I will try to talk my way out of there using my majesty skills and charm. If that is patently not going to work, I will make a break for it using my celerity to get me out of there before they attack me"

Downtime information

When submitting a downtime always remember to put your name, character name, return email address and home domain on the top. If there are any actions that relate to events in other cities, clearly mark this on the downtime and your ST will forward it to the appropriate ST.

Please mark your resolve and number of allies / retainers on the top of the sheet as well as your humanity score.

Each action should have a clear summary heading which sums up the purpose of the task in a one-liner i.e. *Infiltrating the local bike gang*

In depth detail can then be added. Please feel free to add as much detail as you like – it often helps you and the ST in gaining a sense of how your character is likely to act and respond to events that occur. However, be aware that STs have to deal with large number of downtimes and if they have to deal with 30 downtimes each 8 pages long they are likely to get word blind – remember if you want to make sure that the ST doesn't miss an important point, make sure it is clearly indicated and summarized.

Downtime addresses for the three cities are:

newcastleindarkness@gmail.com
durhamindarkness@gmail.com
middlesbroughindarkness@gmail.com
darlingtonindarkness@gmail.com

Sample Downtime

*Note: this is a sample downtime of the **minimum** standard of detail that would be expected. Please feel free to elaborate further when submitting your downtimes.*

Player: B. Afraid

Character: Reverend Plum

City: Newcastle

Resolve = 4, allies = 2, retainers = 1, humanity = 6 (total actions = 6)

OOO note: Action3, finding information on the prince occurs in the city of Durham so could you forward on to Durham ST please.

Action 1: Learning Majesty

Jeremiah Standish has agreed to teach me Majesty 1 this month, in return for me teaching him how to sword fight more effectively. We spend all of our spare time at my Haven practicing sword fighting and working on my ability to inspire Awe in others

Action 2: Infiltrating the local gang

I want to find out more about who is behind the street gang who has moved into my neighborhood. I suspect that they have some supernatural connections as they seem to be way too powerful to be a normal bunch of thugs. I am therefore particularly interested in any behaviors indicating supernatural events or symbols / indicators of occult practices.

To find out more, I think I need to infiltrate the gang and become a member, I use my ability to obfuscate (obfuscate 3) to overhear their conversations and see if I can learn anything that will be of use in persuading them to let me join, If I don't, I will attempt to break in to their hideout, again obfuscated, and snoop around to see if I can pick up on any clues on what they are up to. If they sense me or find me out, I won't try to fight them – I will use my celerity to get me out of there as fast as possible and will retreat to a safe house for the next few weeks.

Action3: Finding out about the Prince

I want to know more about Bishop Odo's past. I will try to talk to his retainers and to use modern methods of technology (the internet and the library) to find out as much as possible. I've agreed with my coterie members in Durham to do this and they have provided me with details of several of his holdings which I will investigate further.

Action 4 - Retainer action:

I will ask my retainer to purchase me a new house in the Felling district of Gateshead. I am looking for somewhere secluded and not overlooked with good storage so that I can set up my laboratory with no one noticing. This will need to be a big house that I can install decent security into.

Officers and the organization

Cities in Darkness try to keep good games as its main focus. To do this, we have set up a fairly simple but essential organizational system for the society. The aim of this system is to ensure that games are run well and fairly at all times. To achieve this several officer positions have been established. If you are interested in getting involved in any of these officer positions, please speak to any one of the officers at the games. Please read the constitution for details of elections or raising concerns.

Storytellers (ST)

These are the individuals who write the plot, run the games and respond to the downtimes. Each city has a storyteller who commits to ensuring that each game runs with plenty of storyline, that games are run according to the rules of the society and as fairly and equitably as possible, and that downtimes are responded to promptly and with sufficient depth.

Their job is to create the world in which all interactions happen and to create an interesting and testing enough environment to require the players to use their brains, skills and wits to survive and prosper.

Assistant Storytellers (AST)

As the name suggests the AST's support the ST's! Exactly how varies from AST to AST and from city to city. Among other tasks, ASTs run small plots of their own which link into the main city plots, support and manage contested actions within the game, respond (along with the ST) to downtimes, and contribute to the planning of the master plot which pervades the varying cities.

If you are interested in becoming a ST in the future, an AST role is a really good way of developing experience.

Game Support (GS)

The GSs manage all of the out of character aspects of the game. They keep the character sheets up to date, manage XP logging and expenditure and help with the non-plot aspects of making the game run smoothly. They also take responsibility for booking venues, ensuring everyone knows about and is adhering to the code of conduct and deal with any financial issues. Each city will have its own GS and they will regularly link to make sure all is running smoothly across the society.

PR and Propaganda!

The PR and Propaganda coordinator is a slightly unusual officer role. It sits across the society and takes responsibility for advertising and promoting the society. This includes organizing advertising, speaking to new recruits and managing things like this player handbook. This role also is the first point of call for complaints and queries from all members of the society.

PR and propaganda – IT

Given the important role of maintaining the website, forum and Wiki posts, a new post has been created which works alongside the main PR and propaganda position to provide high quality IT services for the society. This individual holds equal status to the PR and propaganda post and is also a first point of contact for complaints and queries.

The Officer's Council

Once every 3 months (or more often if necessary) all the officers will meet to discuss issues relating to the society. This will be the place where any items, bloodlines, or devotions / rituals needing significant approval will be discussed and a decision made about whether to include them within the society's rules will be made. This meeting will also be the chance to discuss concerns and complaints raised by the membership or by any individual officer. It will also be the place to discuss financial issues and anything relating to future developments of the society. Changes in officer roles and / or the constitution will be brought to this meeting before being forwarded to the whole membership.

Complaints and concerns

If you have a complaint or concern about an officer, about another member (which cannot be resolved by talking to that member or the officer of the city) or about the society as a whole, please put this in writing to Ian Philo or Kevin Winter in person or send an email to citiesindarkness@gmail.com (If the complaint is about these individuals, please hand it in writing to another officer of the society).

A response to your complaint will be made as soon as possible and all attempts will be made to resolve it quickly. However, if a serious issue is raised, it may need to be held for discussion at the next Officer's Council. You will be notified of the outcome of the complaint as soon as is possible.

Code of Conduct

Version 1.2

It is to be noted that at all times the emphasis on this code of conduct for both players and enforcing officers to be to exercise the utmost degree of common sense in interpretation or execution.

Where definitions of 'common sense' differ, the Committee will be deemed to be the deciding body.

Rule 1 - Criminality

No criminality will be tolerated within the society. Anyone caught conducting out of Character criminality will be subject to immediate expulsion from the event, the society and in so far as is necessary at law, the society will report any action and support any according police investigation.

Rule 2 – Intoxication

Illegal drugs and their usage will be dealt with as an issue of criminality.

Alcohol is to be used in moderation. Officers must not exceed 2 units while running a game and all other players must drink responsibly. Drunken players will be expelled from an event with future breaches resulting in expulsion and banning from all events until a decision of the committee is reached.

Rule 3 - Contact and Interaction

If you have an issue with certain players' behavior, tell them. If this does not resolve the issue, raise it with an officer and go with the officers ruling.

Contact is limited to the normal run of social contact. Any other contact must be approved by the recipient in advance.

Any claims of deliberate unwanted physical contact will be investigated rigorously and appropriate action taken.

Anyone behaving in a seriously inappropriate manner may be subject to immediate expulsion from the event and suspension from the society pending a Committee review.

This is a game of dark themes so players should be aware of this. Should players find these themes uncomfortable, they have a responsibility to step out of the in Character area until the themes are concluded.

Rule 4 – Cheating and Metagaming

In role-playing games, a player is metagaming when they use knowledge that is not available to their character in order to change the way that they play their character (usually to give them an advantage within the game), such as using information garnered out of character (including knowledge of source material) in an in character setting. In general, it refers to any gaps between player knowledge and character knowledge which the player acts upon. The Society views this as cheating.

Depending on how seriously the player cheats, the penalties will range from the player losing XP gained that month to facing a permanent ban (subject to committee review) in the case of persistent offenders. In the first instance, the city ST will decide issues on a case to case basis.

Rule 5 – Don't Bring the Society into Ill repute.

This is a generic catchall category for any actions, which, in the opinion of and at the discretion of, any officer may damage the reputation and good standing of the society or its members.

Please don't freak the normals! This can be fun and easy to do inadvertently but can cause major problems for the society.

Where possible all breaches will be advised 1st, however failure to abide by a request to stop will result in expulsion and ban subject to committee decision.

Rule 6 - Respecting the Venue and the people in the venue

At all times respect must be show to the venue, general public and staff of the venue. Anyone caught seriously breaking these rules (i.e. causing damage to the property) will be subject to immediate expulsion from the event and banned from future events until the committee rule on the breach.

Don't bring physical representations of weapons to the venue publicly and don't kit up in public if your costume may alarm or offend. Where there is any question over appropriateness, consult with your ST and / or GS as they must approve costume and props. Please use your common sense with props and keep props that might cause offence out of public sight at all times. Breaching of these rules will result in a single warning, then expulsion subject to Committee

Rule 7 – Don't Take the Mickey

Rule 8 - Follow the spirit of the game

A general rule which states that all players will read all rules and the mission statement, and abide by the spirit of the game.

Rule 9 – Do not take any action which may be dangerous!

A self-explanatory rule. Where members have doubts as to whether or not their actions would be hazardous then they are obliged to seek officer approval, and abide by any ruling.

Dangerous actions will not be tolerated and will be punished at the discretion of an officer ranging from a formal warning to formal expulsion and ban pending committee review.

Constitution

1. Preliminary

1.1 The name of the Society shall be 'Cities in Darkness' (hereinafter referred to as 'the Society').

1.2 The objects of the Society shall be:

1.2.1 The association in a social club composed of persons with a common interest in Roleplaying Games of Urban Horror, and the encouragement of social intercourse between such persons.

1.2.2 The promotion of excellence within Roleplaying of the Horror, Supernatural and related fields genre (hereinafter referred to as 'the game').

1.2.3 The collection, assimilation and distribution to its members of news, information, property (whether real, personal or intellectual), and all other matters howsoever pertaining to the game.

1.2.4 The Constitution is the servant of the game, sometimes common sense decisions are made, and the officer's decisions are final.

1.2.5 If you have any disabilities please let us know. It is our policy to assist with any and all disabilities to the full extent that it is reasonable and within the power and scope of the society to do so.

2. Membership

2.1 Membership of the Society is open to any person over 18 who agree to abide by the constitution and code of conduct.

2.2 A member may resign their membership at any time by letter or email addressed to the Secretary and their details will be removed and destroyed from membership lists.

2.3 Members will be asked to renew their commitment to the code of conduct on an annual basis. Any member who fails to do this within 2 months will be contacted to see if they wish to remain a member of the society. If that contact is unsuccessful, they will be deemed to have resigned from their society and their details will be removed from the membership lists

2.4 Attempts will be made to contact any Member who remains absent from either public forum or games for more than 6 months without prior notification. If that contact is unsuccessful, they will be deemed to have resigned from the society.

2.5 Each member shall keep their local Game Support informed of their contact details (email, phone and / or address as preferred).

3. Executives and Officers

3.1 The following officers are selected from the membership of the Society. They will have the following duties and responsibilities in addition to those listed elsewhere in the Constitution.

3.1.1 Storyteller "ST"

One of these posts will exist per domain and they will be a largely responsible for the development of the storylines and plotlines of their local city as well as the overall story of the area in conjunction with the other city ST's. They shall also be responsible for the training and development of AST's. They will also act as primary referee for their city.

3.1.2 Game Support "GS"

Responsible for booking games, handling money, signing off XP expenditure, and managing all other out of character issues. They are responsible for the maintenance of a Central XP log, a list of approved items and for keeping character sheets updated and regularly circulated to players. They will also take responsibility for keeping accurate financial accounts which will be compiled into a yearly annual report.

3.1.3 Public relations coordinator (PRC) and PRC - IT

the Public Relations coordinator is a centralized post who can also act as an independent arbitrator in events of disputes with the committee and can cast a tie-breaking vote at AGM's. They will also take responsibility

for managing publicity for the society and events, maintaining the website and acting as a public representative to organizations external to the society.

3.1.4 Assistant Storyteller “AST”

One or more of these may be found in a city, They act as a support to the ST and referee under the guidance of the ST.

3.1.5 Assistant Game Support “AGS”

One or more of these may be found in a city, They act as an additional referee and assistant to the GS under the guidance of the GS.

4. The Committee

4.1 The Committee shall consist of each city’s ST and GS along with the PRCs. No Officer may represent more than one domain in one post at committee and accordingly must delegate their vote to the AST or AGS as appropriate to act in their stead. The majority of Committee members must be residents of the United Kingdom - no more than two members of the Committee may be non-resident in the United Kingdom.

4.2 A quorum of the Committee shall be four (4) members with no less than 1 member from 60% of the constituent cities.

4.3 The Committee individually or as a whole may stand down at any time although will hold their post(s) until any forced re-election.

4.4 If Any 3 Members in one domain approach the PRCs in any one month with a written vote of no confidence in an officer, then this will trigger an election for that post.

4.5 In the event of an election all members in the city will be canvassed for nominees for one week after the announcement of the election.

4.6 Voting will be held via the Forum and, in the event of a tie, the election will be restaged with the tying candidates as the only candidates. In the further event of a tie, the decision will fall to the PRC.

4.7 No elected officer can be challenged within the first 3 months of election.

4.8 A vote of no confidence in either of the PRCs is made as in the case of any other officer. However, written votes of no confidence can be passed to any officer within the society.

4.8 Election of the PRCs is voted on by the committee, although all cities will be canvassed for Nominees.

5 The Committee Meeting

5.1 Once in every three month period, a meeting of the full committee will be held.

5.2 At the Meeting All ST’s and GS’s (or their deputized assistants) shall give a verbal progress report, The GS shall also bring up to date accounts. These meetings shall be for the discussion of plot and storylines, society developments, issues and to address any disciplinary issues.

The Meeting shall be quorum as described in 4.2 above.

6 Finances

6.1 The finances of the society are to be kept in the form of Cash, therefore every domain must have a secured cash box.

6.2 The GS shall provide Income/ Expenditures Accounts on Excel spreadsheets for audit in the committee meetings

6.3 An inventory of Props shall be kept for access by all committee members.

6.4 Expenditure approval amount will be £10 before checking with GS.

6.5 Accounts will be collated yearly and an annual report for the society will be published and available to all members on request.

7 Out of Character Nights

7.1 The Society shall organize irregular meetings subject to availability and interest. The aim of these society nights will be to encourage both members and non-members of the Society to meet in a friendly

setting. The social nights will be strictly out of character.

8 Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Proceedings

8.1 The Society will rely upon the Society Code of Conduct 1st Edition

8.2 Disciplinary proceedings will be carried out in accordance with the code of conduct. Any decisions to ban, severely penalize or expel members shall be taken to a committee meeting for full discussion. Members will be informed of the outcome of that discussion as soon as is possible,

8.3 Any Amendments to either the code of conduct or disciplinary procedures require council approval and are to be raised in the same manner as a constitutional change.

8.4 All changes will change the version name of the Code of Conduct to reflect the implementation date and it will automatically be assumed that the constitution is to have been updated to reflect said changes to use the most recent versions

8.5 All members agree to abide by the judgment of the Society in all disciplinary and conduct matters.

8.6 The Society retains full right to use its own discretion in all matters relation to Conduct and discipline,

9 House Rules

9.1 House rules (rules regarding the game mechanics) are all agreed variations of and deviations from the rules as printed in the source rule book(s) used.

9.2 The Society will rely upon the House Rules 1st Edition

9.3 Any Amendments to house rules will require Committee approval but can be raised for discussion by the general membership.

9.4 All elected changes will change the version name of the House Rules to reflect the implementation date and it will automatically be assumed that the constitution is to have been updated to reflect said changes to use the most recent version.

9.5 All members agree to abide by all house rules.

10. General

10.1 Proposed Amendments to the Constitution should be put in writing and forwarded to the Committee. Provided that such amendments are endorsed by at least two members of the Society, (Committee members can suggest changes without the need for endorsement). The proposal shall be submitted for voting after discussion at the next committee meeting.

10.2 Acceptance and adherence to these rules and the most recent version of the code of conduct is a condition of membership of the Society.

10.3 This Constitution shall replace and substitute all previous Constitutions, revisions and supplements.

10.4 The Committee shall hold business meetings at the committee meetings, and at other times during the year as appropriate (but not less than four times including the committee meetings). Committee meetings held "on line" will be deemed as suitable alternative arrangements.

Game information and contacts

Monthly games

- 1st Tuesday of the month: Newcastle (Chillingham, Chillingham road, Heaton, NE6 5XN)
- 2nd Tuesday of the month: Middlesbrough (Liberties, 262 – 266 Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, TS1 3QS)
- 3rd Tuesday of the month: Darlington (Upstairs in the Voodoo Cafe, 84 Skinnergate Darlington, DL3 7LX)
- 4th Tuesday of the month: Durham (Durham City Companion's Club, Ainsley St, Durham, DH1 4BJ)

Currently game fees are set at £2 per game.

Society information

Website: www.citiesindarkness.com (this will be regularly updated with new copies of handbooks, society and game information)

Forum: http://s1.zetaboards.com/Cities_In_Darkness/index/

Quarterly Society games

Shared games for the whole society will be held 3 - 4 monthly on a weekend, venues to be arranged. These will be open to all players from all cities. Themes, venues and costs will be announced on the website and forum in advance of the game.

Contacts

Main society contact: citiesindarkness@gmail.com

Newcastle ST and Downtimes: *Emma Catan*, newcastleindarkness@gmail.com

Durham ST and Downtimes: *Rebecca Catan*, durhamindarkness@gmail.com

Middlesbrough ST and Downtimes: *Mark Wilkinson*, middlesbroughindarkness@gmail.com

Darlington ST and Downtimes: *Ian Philo*, darlingtonindarkness@gmail.com

ASTs and GSs can be contacted via the citiesindarkness email address, in game or via city STs.