

# NIGHT SHIFT

Veterans of the Supernatural Wars

QUICK START RULES  
AND ADVENTURE

# TAINED BLOOD...

A series of thefts at a book store lead a group of supernatural investigators to an apothecary that just may be responsible for a series of monstrous vampires that have been growing like a plague throughout town. The answers are not as simple as they should be, but then, nothing in The City ever is...

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Welcome to the *Night Shift: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars* Adventure and Quick Start Kit! Within these pages you will find everything you need to dive into your very first game of dark horror and supernatural heroics. Herein you will find:

- A complete adventure scenario by Derek Stoelting
  - Several pre-generated characters representing popular archetypes from urban fantasy literature, film, and TV
  - Detailed guidelines for how to use the rules to play through the adventure for both the Game Master and players
  - An explanation of the O.G.R.E.S. rules system, including ability check, attack roll, class check, and Rule of 2 mechanics
  - Tips on how to run (and play) an urban fantasy game
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Whether you're new to the game or just want an extra scenario for your table, this kit is the perfect solution!

The plague of the Tainted Blood awaits...can YOU solve the mystery?



POWERED BY...

# O.G.R.E.S

OLDSCHOOL GENERIC ROLEPLAYING ENGINE SYSTEM

# NIGHT SHIFT

Veterans of the Supernatural Wars

## TAINTED BLOOD

By Derek Stoelting

**Rules and System Design:** Jason Vey

**Concept by:** Jason Vey and Timothy S. Brannan

**Based on *Night Shift: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars*** by Jason Vey and Timothy S. Brannan

**Story and Adventure by:** Derek Stoelting

**Suggestions and Input:** Timothy S. Brannan and Jason Vey

**Interior Art by:** Nikola Avramovic, Luigi Castellani, David Lewis Johnson, Joyce Maureira, Bradley K. McDevitt, Miguel Santos. Page border by kjpargeter / Freepik. All artwork used by permission.

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## TAINTED BLOOD

### A Quick Start Adventure For Night Shift: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars

Welcome to the quick start kit for **Night Shift: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars!** This adventure sees the heroes searching for the person or persons behind thefts from a book store and an apothecary that could be related to an increase in vampire spawn around town. As you play through, you will get a feel for how the O.G.R.E.S. (Oldschool Generic Roleplaying Engine System) works in practice.

The locations used in this scenario are based in City of the Twilight Queen. However, the locations are generic enough to transport them to wherever the Game Master sets their game. GMs who are interested in learning more about City of the Twilight Queen should check out the **Night Shift: VSW** supplement *A Faustian Dilemma*.

Throughout the adventure, you will see guidelines for how to use the system and play the game. The intent is not to give you a full breakdown of all of the options and rules of the game, but a taste of how it works, and how it plays out.

You will notice many things are left to the discretion of the Game Master (or GM). This is by design. **Night Shift: VSW** is built to be a very freeform and open game, where the GM is encouraged to make judgment calls and think on the fly, as are the players. It's a collaborative effort, where a player is encouraged to ask, "Can I try...?" and the GM should, unless there's a strong reason why the effort would be impossible, learn to say, "Sure, give it a go," and then call for a roll.

#### Three Mechanics

There are three mechanics at play in the O.G.R.E.S. system. The first is the *percentile check*. In a percentile check, you will roll percentile dice against a chance of success, to use a class ability, cast a spell, etc.

The second is the *d20 check*, wherein you'll roll 1d20 plus applicable bonuses, and attempt to get 20 or better. This is used for combat, saving throws, and ability checks.

Finally, there's the *Rule of 2*. In the Rule of 2, the GM can adjudicate a situation on the fly that isn't otherwise covered by the rules. Choose a die type based on how likely the scenario is, and throw it. A result of 1 or 2 indicates the result you're adjudicating.

Say, for example, characters are casing a crime scene. The Survivor has a Perception skill they can roll, but everyone else just has to

use their basic peepers. The Survivor rolls their percentile skill, while the GM rolls 1d6 for the rest of the characters. If any come up as a 1 or 2, they find something. The Survivor, in turn, if she fails her Perception check, will still get a Rule of 2 check (and if she succeeds, should find more detailed info than those who succeeded on a Rule of 2).

#### Some Terms

**Die Codes:** When you see a code of "xdy," x is the number of dice rolled, d means "dice," and y is the type of die, so "4d6" means, "roll four, six-sided dice." Sometimes you will total the results, sometimes you will keep the best subset. This will be described in the individual roll.

**Vitality Dice (Vit):** The number and type of dice a creature or character has for health. The dice are rolled and totaled. This has already done for you in the creature and character stats.

**Percentile Dice:** Percentile dice are two, ten-sided dice, with one rolled as "tens" and one rolled as "ones." You must designate which represents each before rolling. Most people use a die with two digits as tens, and one digit as ones (so a die will read 10, 20, 30, while the other will read 0, 1, 2...) but you can simply use two different colored dice. Read the dice as they fall, so if your tens die is 3 and your ones die is 7, you have 37%. A roll of "00" means 100, not zero. When rolling percentile dice, a low roll is almost always better. You're trying to roll under a percentage chance for success, so if the chance of success is 50%, anything from 01-49 succeeds.

#### Sample Characters

We have included several sample characters at the end of the adventure for you to use in play. The archetypes they represent should be familiar to fans of urban fantasy television and films. We hope this wink-and-nod adds an extra dimension of fun to your play.

#### What Do I Need?

To play this adventure, you just need this document (including the sample characters), a pencil, some scratch paper, and dice—at least 1d6, 1d20, and percentile dice (2d10). The GM may wish to keep a d4, d8, and d12 on hand in case you wish to change the odds of your Rule of 2 checks.

#### The Setting

**City of the Twilight Queen** is sort of a kitchen-sink, "anything goes" supernatural setting that is more fully detailed in our **Night Trip**



adventure scenario, *A Faustian Dilemma*. A few neighborhoods of the City are detailed in this adventure, but they are all general enough that you can easily move them anywhere you like, even your hometown. If you do stick with the conventions of this setting, here's a few things to keep in mind:

1. The sun never rises in the City. Instead, the City is constantly lit by a strange, dim, violet light in the sky. Nobody questions the lack of sunlight; everyone just assumes that they are "night owls." This is part of the Veil (see below)
2. The Veil is a mystical effect that washes over everyone in the City. It makes regular humans actively blind to the supernatural. A vampire could run right in front of a car, full fangs and yellow eyes, or a werewolf could bound out of an alley, and any onlookers would simply ignore them or rationalize what they see as somehow normal, no matter how far they have to go mentally for the rationalization.
3. Sometimes people partially awaken from the Veil. While they are still subject to the delusion that the City itself is a normal place, they know about the supernatural. They are colloquially referred to as "In the Know," or the "In the Know Community." Most of the NPCs (non-player characters controlled by the Game Master) in this scenario are In the Know or are themselves Fey (the general term for supernaturals in this setting).
4. Getting from place to place is equally strange here, as no matter where you are going, and from where you originate, it always seems to take the same amount of

time to travel the distance, however long that may be. This has the unusual effect that everything, everywhere, is "on the way" to wherever you're going...but stopoffs literally double the travel time.

### What's going on?

The vampire Randall Evans fed on and turned the family of a powerful houngan, who cursed the in vengeance, and he can no longer create progeny. All of his vampire spawn are reborn as sickly, weak vampires. He learned of a tome named *Bàs Dubh* which may have a way to reverse the curse.

Randall located the tome at the Mandragora Used Book Store. After reading it, he discovered he would need to obtain specific herbs to use in the ritual to reverse the curse. He found those herbs at the Raven's Tongue apothecary and stole them. He has begun experimenting with different processes outlined in the tome in an effort to remove the curse. So far, he has had zero success. He is leaving vampire spawn all over town, creating a bit of a mess.

It's now up to the characters to stop him.

### COLD OPEN

This chapter serves two purposes. The first is to introduce the players to the rules and combat and the second is to kick-off the scenario.

Many movies and TV shows begin with a "cold open," or "pre-credits scene." This sets the tone for the episode and gets things moving. In gaming terms, it's usually expressed as "boxed text" that you read aloud or paraphrase for your group. Read the following or paraphrase it to your players:

*This is the city. It's a city of shadows, where people get lost, where people fall through the cracks. It's a city that thrives at night, where few can remember the last time they saw daylight. It's also, however, a city teeming with life, a city that is an intimate part of the hearts and minds of everyone who lives here, whether born or transplant.*

*The city has no name to those who live here. It's just The City. Those who dwell in its towering skyscrapers, its shadowy alleys, its apartments and clubs, bars and shops, are kept safe by thankless heroes, those who are In the Know, and who work the Night Shift. These are the Veterans of the Supernatural Wars that normal people don't see, and most don't even acknowledge.*

*The City is a place of contradictions—on one hand dark and shadowy, with its foreboding alleyways and oubliettes, and on the other hand full of activity and celebration, where there's always something going on. Shops and businesses operate 24 hours a day. People are certain they sleep, but can't remember the last time they woke up.*

*The City has secrets buried in its clubs and storefronts, inside its glass towers and simple takeaway food stands.*

*Tonight, after you leave the local nightclub where you all hang out, the air is thick with tension. Tonight, you are about to be thrust headfirst into the dangers of the City. It's been a good night overall, but as you walk down the streets, just about to go your separate ways, a roar erupts from a nearby alley, and you find yourself under attack from wild-eyed, maddened creatures you can only describe as vampires!*

## Rumble in the City

The characters are all walking home (together) or to their cars after a night out at a local club and café. Along the way, a pack of weakened vampire spawn attacks the characters. They are hungry for blood, have animalistic intelligence, and cannot be reasoned with. There is one fewer vampire spawn than there are characters. The characters should not lose this fight. Allow the players to freely spend Fate Points during the fight, as a way of learning how to use them. In this case only, any Fate Points spent during the fight refresh after the battle.

## Fate Points

**Night Shift:** VSW is a game that can be tailored for multiple levels of "grit." These include the "Realistic," or standard, Gritty, or Cinematic. Fate Points are a system that is intended for cinematic games, though they may be added to realistic games to add a bit of extra player agency. They should never be included in gritty play style games. This package assumes a cinematic game for over-the-top fun. All players begin with a number of Fate Points that they can spend to gain additional effects in game.

A character always has a limited amount of Fate Points, and while the character replenishes this supply with every new level he or she attains, the rate of attrition can far outstrip the rate of gain. As such, players must use them wisely. A character can spend Fate Points to do any of these things:

**Fortune's Favor:** Roll 1d6 and add it to an attack or ability check, or double the value to the percentage chance for success of a class ability or spell being cast.

**Mighty Blow:** Treat the roll as a Natural 20 and deal double damage on your attack, but make an unmodified d20 roll; on a 9 or less the hero is stunned for 1 round, unable to act.

**Righteous Rage:** Spend 3 Fate Points and gain +5 to all attacks and actions for an entire scene, and +10% to all percentile abilities. Must have a good in game reason ("they're the big bad" isn't a good reason to fly into a righteous rage).

**You Missed!:** Avoid an attack. Costs 2 Fate Points.

**Second Wind:** Recover half of all lost Vitality.

**Down But Not Out:** Avoid death when reduced to below -10 Vitality. You're unconscious and stable. Costs 3 Fate Points.

**Providence Smiles:** Gain a minor plot break or scene edit ("good thing someone dropped a gun here!" or "good thing the bolt was rusted out on that ladder so I can kick it away!" etc.) with the GM's approval.

## The Vampires

The vampire spawn attacking the characters are weakened and crazed. Their statistics look like this:

**Weakened Vampire Spawn:** *Vit 2d8 (9 Vit), DV 6, Move 30 ft. Attacks: 2 (claws, bite). Special: Immune to damage from non-supernatural attacks, Regenerate 3 Vitality per round unless damage was from fire, holy water, or sunlight. Repulsed by holy items and garlic (Save or remain 10 feet away; new Save Check every 4 rounds).*

## Monster and NPC Stat Blocks

Monsters and NPCs (non-player characters run by the Game Master) have basic stat blocks that you can use to reference their abilities in game. The stat block can be read as follows:

**Vit/Vit Dice:** The number and type of dice that were rolled to generate the creature's Vitality. This number also determines the bonus to hit in combat. In the above, "2d8" means 2 8-sided dice were rolled for the creature's Vitality, and it adds +2 to all attacks.

**DV:** How difficult the creature is to hit. Attackers will add the creature's DV to their attack rolls, trying to get 20 or better. This means a lower DV is better than a higher one.

**Move:** How fast the creature can move in one round and still make an attack.

**Attacks:** the number and types of attacks the creature makes.

**Special:** Any special abilities or powers the creature has and a quick explanation (if necessary) of how they work.

### Running Combat

The first step in running combat is to determine initiative. Each player rolls 1d10 for their character, and the GM rolls 1d10 for the vampires, each of which goes in a group. The highest result on the d10 goes first, and combat proceeds in descending order.

Combat is structured in *rounds*, which are defined as however long it takes for each character to accomplish one action. The entire combat comprises a *scene* of play.

**Movement:** characters can move up to their standard movement (usually 30 feet) and still perform an action. Alternately, they can "dash" up to double their move without taking an action.

**Attacking:** To attack, you will roll 1d20, adding your character's Attack Bonus, Ability Bonus (strength for melee, Agility for ranged), and the opponent's Armor Class to the roll, and attempting to achieve a result of 20 or higher. Monsters and NPCs add their Vitality Dice and the opponent's DV to attack rolls.

A natural, unmodified result of 20 on the die always hits, and a natural, unmodified result of 1 always fails. At the GM's discretion, it may succeed or fail in some spectacular way, like dealing extra damage, knocking a target prone, losing or breaking a weapon, etc.

**Damage:** All weapons deal 1d6 damage. Most player characters have the ability to make supernatural attacks—this doesn't necessarily mean they are magical. It represents their access to the tactics and equipment

they need to harm creatures of a supernatural origin—in this case, their weapons make use of things like wooden stakes, blades that can decapitate, fire, and holy items in some way. Characters that do not have the supernatural attack ability must either physically hunt down the things that harm vampires, or take another tactic in combat (such as casting spells).

**Firearms:** In an urban fantasy style game, firearms are often anathema, and when one comes out, someone is going to die. There are three levels of "grit" in *Night Shift* to deal with this trope. In a standard game, firearms deal 5d6 damage, added together, instead of 1d6. In a cinematic game, firearms are simply another weapon, dealing 1d6 damage. In a gritty game, firearms are simply lethal. A firearm attack leaves the victim at 0 Vitality, and they have to make a Toughness Save Check or die. These numbers are for humans. Supernatural creatures suffer only 1d6 damage from firearms regardless of the grit level. It's recommended for this quick start to adopt the cinematic (1d6 only) version of firearms.

**Saving Throws:** Saving throws, when necessary, work the same as attacks, but instead of adding the attack bonus, characters add their check bonus and ability bonus to their 1d20 roll, attempting to get a 20. They also add a bonus or penalty based on the difference between 10 and their opponent's Vitality Dice. So a 2 hit die opponent lets you add +8 to a saving throw.

**Non-Lethal Combat:** If a character wants to knock another character or monster out, they simply reduce them to 0 Vitality in combat as normal, and declare the combat as non-lethal at that point. Non-lethal combat leaves an opponent unconscious and stable.

**Healing:** Characters heal 1 point of damage plus their Toughness bonus per day of bedrest. Under professional medical care, the healing rate is doubled. Non-lethal damage heals at Constitution +1 per hour.

**Death:** When a monster or NPC reaches 0 Vitality, it is dead (or unconscious, if non-lethal is announced). When a PC reaches 0 Vitality they are unconscious and bleeding out. They lose 1 additional hit point per round, until stabilized (another character simply takes an action to state they are doing so), or they reach -10 Vitality. If they reach -10 Vitality, they are dead.

**Casting Spells:** To cast a spell, the witch's player casts percentile dice. The base chance to cast a spell is 50%, plus 5% per level of the witch. Thus, a first-level witch has a base 55% chance to cast a spell. This percentage is penalized by 10% per level of the spell (thus, a second level spell imposes a penalty of -20%). If the player beats the base percentage chance to cast a spell by 10% or more, the spell goes off immediately. If they

succeed at less than a 10% margin, the spell effect is delayed by one round. If a witch's base chance to cast a spell is over 100%, there is no roll needed to cast; the spell always works at immediate effect.

**Spell Backfire:** Any time a witch fails to cast a spell, it can backfire, sometimes catastrophically. When a spell fails, the witch or sage must throw 1d20, add the spell's level, and consult the following table to see what happens.

Spell Backfire Table	
d20 + Spell Level	Result
1-10	Spell simply fails to work
11	Spell fails, is lost and cannot be cast until the next day.
12	Caster is stunned and cannot act for 1-4 turns. Spell remains available to use.
13	Caster is stunned and cannot act for 1-4 turns. Spell is lost and cannot be cast until the next day.
14-15	Caster is knocked unconscious; treat as if affected by the <i>sleep</i> spell. Spell remains available to use.
16-17	Caster is knocked unconscious; treat as if affected by the <i>sleep</i> spell; spell is lost and cannot be cast until the next day.
18	Caster suffers 1d6 damage per 2 spell levels (minimum 1d6). Spell remains available to use.
19	Spell has the exact opposite effect intended (GM's discretion). Spell is lost and cannot be cast until the next day.
20-21	Spell affects the wrong parties (allies instead of enemies, enemies instead of allies). Spell is lost and cannot be cast until the next day.
22-23	Spell summons a monstrous horror with a number of Vitality Dice equal to the spell's level. The creature is immediately hostile towards the caster and their allies.

## Post-Combat Moment

After the fight, certain characters may realize these vampire spawns are weaker than expected:

- Chosen Ones realize it as soon as the fight is over, it was too easy to beat them
- Sages that make a successful Lore check realize these vampire spawns were not textbook examples and indeed seem much weaker and less focused than even a neophyte vampire.
- Witches who succeed at a successful Arcana check gain the sense that these vampire spawn were not as strong spiritually, as most.
- Veterans who successfully make an easy (+10) Intelligence check during the combat gain the sense the vampire spawn were not as strong spiritually, as most.

## Using Character Class Abilities

Each character has special abilities explained on their character sheet. Using these abilities is simple: players roll percentile dice and try to get under their score to succeed. Percentile dice means rolling 2d10, or two, ten-sided dice. One should be designated as a "tens" die, and the other as a "ones" die. Read the dice in order, tens first, then ones. So, if the tens die comes up a 1 and the ones die comes up a 6, you have 16. If both dice come up as 0, that's 100 and not 0.

A result of "00" on the dice always fails, and a result of "01" on the dice always succeeds. It may succeed or fail spectacularly, if the GM desires.

## Attribute Checks

If characters fail their percentage check or don't have an appropriate class ability, the GM can opt to allow them a second chance by making an attribute check. An attribute check sees the player roll 1d20 and add their appropriate ability bonus, plus a Check bonus based on their level, and a difficulty bonus assigned by the GM, and try to get 20 or better.

A "natural," that is, without modifiers from your character, result of 20 always succeeds. Likewise, a "natural," unmodified roll of 1 always fails. It may, if the GM desires, succeed or fail spectacularly in some way.

Your abilities are divided among Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary. Your check bonus depends on what level of ability you're checking and your class level.

The GM will then add a bonus of 0 to +10 based on how easy or difficult the task is. This is called the *difficulty modifier*. The higher the bonus, the easier the task.

In this case the check would be based on Intelligence and the difficulty bonus would be +5 as

it's fairly common knowledge to someone who has faced vampires before. So, if a character has an Intelligence score of 13 (+1) and Intelligence is a Primary ability, granting them a +2 check bonus, they roll a d20 and add +8 (5+1+2=8), trying to get 20 or better.

Don't worry if this seems like a lot; the necessary numbers are all worked out on your character sheet at the end of this adventure.

In movie or TV terms, this is where the opening credits roll!

## ACT ONE: INVESTIGATIONS

### Doctor's Visit

Doctor Susan Anderson, or "Doc Susie" as she is known to her clients, is a general practitioner working out of the Narrows section of town. The Narrows is a low-rent district where many downtrodden and economically disadvantaged people live. Doc Susie is funded by Sanctuary, an organization dedicated to providing help to those who have survived supernatural attacks with shelter, therapy, and resources to process what's happened to them. This makes Doc Susie very much In the Know. She is considered a pillar of the community and a *de facto* alderwoman for her neighborhood. More information about Sanctuary can be found in the **Night Shift: VSW** corebook.

The characters all receive a message from Doc Susie asking them to come to her office after hours.

### Doc Susie's Office

Doc Susie's works out office is a one-story office building. There are five patient rooms, a surgery suite, and X-ray room, in addition to the office area and waiting room. The color scheme is best described as springtime with pastel colors adorning the walls.

Doc Susie explains to the characters that vampire spawn are coming to her for aid. They don't realize they were turned into monsters and think they are still human. They only know that that they feel sickly and have a hunger and thirst they cannot slake, but they throw up normal food and drink. She is also seeing a high number of vampire bite victims. She is concerned this could lead to an increase in vampires and vampire spawn, which could then lead to an increase in deaths in her community. She's also heard from her patients that both the Mandragora bookstore and Raven's Tongue apothecary have suffered from theft as of late. She fears all of this could be interrelated.



She asks the characters to look into the situation. If the characters need remuneration for their services, she agrees to a reasonable amount. She suggests three leads: Erin Leakey at the Mandragora Used Book Store, Ellee at the Raven's Tongue, and Kenny the Snitch at his bar, since he's a vampire. . . and a snitch.

**Doc Susie:** *3d6 (9 Vit) DV 9, Move 30ft. Attacks: by weapon (if any). Special: Medical Knowledge 75%, Science! 65%, Supernatural Knowledge 40%*

### Mandragora Used Book Store

Mandragora is a used bookstore near the university. The contents of the store are varied and wonderful, including old classics, new bestsellers, and tomes better left forgotten.

The bookstore began as a converted Victorian home. When the house behind it went up for sale, the original bookstore owner purchased it and then expanded the two homes to connect with each other. Later, they purchased the home to one side of the store. This building is now a café and the offices for managing the businesses which have expanded to not only include mail order book sales, retail sales, and the café, but also hosting private sales and procuring specific books for buyers.

The result is a four story (basement, ground, first, and second floor) Victorian "Frankenstein" building. The interior of the building is an endless maze of bookshelves, windowless hallways along

exterior walls, stairways to even more books, and flooring that tends to sag a bit if you stay in one place too long.

### Erin Leakey

Today, Erin Leakey owns and manages the Mandragora. Erin appears to be in their early 30s with short, wavy, brown hair and hazel eyes. She's not only In the Know but is herself secretly a Fey. Typical dress includes oblong, wire framed glasses, black jeans, t-shirts advertising the bookstore and café, and pearl jewelry. She is businesslike, but pleasant, greeting employees and most customers with a smile.

If asked about vampire spawn, Erin can tell the characters that she has heard there has been an increase in vampire activity near the university. She has not seen any, but she overheard in the bookstore's café that vampire bite victims are wandering the area nightly.

According to Erin, someone stole a book called *Bàs Dubh* last week. One of her employees found the storeroom trashed during business hours and it took a few days to figure out what was missing. The book was purchased as part of a collection and Erin knows nothing about it. She has no idea who would want the book. There is no video camera recordings to review.

Erin will explain that she is a Psychic with the ability to see into the past (and sometimes the future) – in game terms, she has a psychic ability called *Temporal Senses*. After learning of the break-in, she used her powers to gain a glimpse of what occurred. She saw a man in biker leathers lean into the storeroom door and force it open. He enters the storeroom and begins looking at and through various boxes until he finds the one he is looking for. He opens the box and goes through the tomes within, pulling out the one of interest. He tucks it under a coat, turns, and walks out of the storeroom.

She is sure the man is a vampire, and describes him as wearing biker leathers. A silver dagger sticks out the top of a boot. He has black hair and moustache. His eyes are bright blue.

**Erin's Motivation:** Erin knows that her family is not originally from this plane of existence. However, the stories her grandmother told her when she was little never mentioned where exactly they are from. She also does not fully understand her abilities. When she tells the characters that she has Psychic abilities, she's lying. She doesn't know what she has, but it is easier to perpetrate this lie than explain everything to a bunch of strangers. Erin's hope is to find a text that discusses the stories her grandmother

told her when she was young. She is typically pleasant and enjoyable to be around. However, if you waste her time, she will give you no time.

**Erin Leakey (Fae):** *Vit 4d8 (16), DV 4, Attacks: by weapon, Special: Arcana (as the Witch ability) 25%, Lore (as the Sage ability) 35%, Regeneration 3 points per round unless the damage was from iron, Suggestion (as the spell of the same name) as an innate ability, Temporal Senses (as the Psychic ability), and Iron Vulnerability (Normal weapons do no damage. Only weapons forged of iron or supernatural attacks can harm Erin. Steel will not work, as it is an alloy. The weapons must be of pure iron.)*

### Black Death

Sages and Survivors may know Gaelic and if so, they know that *Bàs Dubh* roughly translates to Black Death. Failing that, anyone can search the Internet to learn the meaning of the words.

Sages can make a Lore check at -20% to determine the contents of *Bàs Dubh*. Failing that, a day's worth of research turns up the following:

- The contents of *Bàs Dubh* include discussions surrounding vampires, bringing souls back from the grave, and other necromantic interests
- Previous owners include the Warlock Michael Scott, the accused Witch Janet Douglas the Lady Glamis, and the Witch Margaret Neill Wayne
- According to Vatican records, it was destroyed by Bishop John Geddes in the late 1700s

So, the book was either never destroyed, multiple copies exist, the book may be so evil that it cannot be destroyed, or someone summoned the book from the past to the current era. The correct answer is not pertinent to this scenario. GMs are free to make their own decision as to how or why the book is still in existence.

### The Raven's Tongue

The Raven's Tongue is situated in the Bohems, a bohemian cultural and entertainment district. The apothecary is located within a small shopping plaza that also includes a specialty grocer, game store, outlet clothing retailer, and a hair salon. The front window advertises the company name in a large, art nouveau script.

The interior of The Raven's Tongue is dark and dusky, as one might expect. Jars of various sizes and shapes line the walls. The contents range from known cure-alls to rare finds, and loose leaf teas to BBQ sauces. Tools and utensils for sale sit on tables. Candles and incense burn on top of a display counter at the rear of the shop, while athamé and mirrors rest in the case below. Past the counter is a blanket which hangs across a doorway. It depicts Huginn and Muninn flying upward with a Norse design in the background.

## Ellee

Bjorn and his wife Eleanor (sometimes "Ellee," but never "Lenore") run the shop. Both are In the Know, and Bjorn is a Fey (a werebear). Bjorn is a big man, who dresses in dark suits, while Ellee is more likely found in peasant blouses, broom skirts, and bare feet. The couple are young and excited to run their own business. When sales began to decline two years ago, they expanded into selling loose teas, home-made BBQ sauces, and related accoutrements. While they are known for being one of the best apothecaries in the city, the business currently makes most of its money selling teas.

If asked about vampire spawn, neither Ellee or Bjorn know anything. Ellee is quick to offer herbs the characters can use to ward off vampires. She then mentions they recently had something odd happen here at the store. She isn't sure that it is related. Ellee explains someone broke in last week and stole several jars of herbs. Most of the herbs are fairly common for apothecaries, but one or two were specialized. Sages can make a Lore check and Witches/Warlocks can make an Arcana check to realize what the herbs can be used for. Failing that, Ellee will tell the characters that the herbs could be used to help with issues related to blood. Depending on how they are mixed, they might improve blood flow, increase energy levels, or increase the amount of blood produced by the body. The break-in happened when no one was in the shop and it was closed.

If asked about who they think might have broken into the shop, Bjorn suggests (insists, in fact) it could be a female werewolf he noticed in the shop a few times the week prior to the break-in. The werewolf never made a purchase. Bjorn also claims she was mostly interested in his BBQ sauce, to which Ellee sighs and shakes her head. Ellee describes the woman as having black hair, an animal sort of attraction, and heterochromia. While Bjorn insists that werewolf may be the criminal behind the theft (they are not), Ellee waves it off and says her husband just doesn't like werewolves.

If the characters want to know how Ellee and Bjorn knew the woman was a werewolf, Bjorn gives a toothy grin and says, "We can smell our own."

## GM Improvisation

A hallmark of a good Game Master is the ability to improvise. This werewolf lead could be an easily-dismissed red herring, or it could turn into an entire night of the heroes tracking down a false lead. Does the werewolf have some other nefarious purpose? Is she a criminal or was she just innocently browsing the stock?

If the GM doesn't want to take this route, you can ignore the werewolf lead entirely, or if the players do not realize that searching for the werewolf is likely a waste of their time, the GM can lean heavier into the idea that Bjorn is prejudiced against werewolves, and call for Attribute, Lore, or other checks that suggest a werewolf doesn't seem to fit with any of the information they have.

If a character uses any sort of ability or supernatural senses to determine who the werewolf is, they may gain a glimpse of her. However, she is not the one who stole the jars full of herbs. The werewolf is fairly tall with dark hair. The most memorable thing about her is the fact she has heterochromia eyes. If a Veteran hits the streets making inquiries about her, they will learn that she is a singer who performs at the Khalsa Club, a popular club in the Bohems.

Club Khalsa may be the very club and café the heroes attended tonight, and they may actually have seen her sing there before. If so, this should be further evidence that she's likely innocent. More on Club Khalsa can be found later and in our *A Faustian Dilemma* adventure scenario.

**Eleanor's Motivation:** Ellee lives to help others. The break-in bothers her, because she would have given the herbs away to whomever obviously needed them more than she does.

**Eleanor:** *Vit 4d6 (12), DV 9, Move 30 ft., Attacks: 1 (athame). Special: Lore (as the Sage ability) 40%, Languages (as the Sage ability) 4 of the GM's choice.*

**Bjorn's Motivation:** Bjorn's sole purpose is to make sure Ellee is safe and happy. He is very angry about the break-in and is still being overprotective of Ellee. To that extent, he isn't likely to let her out of his sight when people are in the shop.

**Bjorn (Werebear):** *Vit 8d8 (32), DV 3, Move Attacks: 2 (bite and claws, roll 2d6 per die of damage and keep the better). Special: Danger Sense (as a fourth level Survivor), Immunity to Normal Weapons, Silver Vulnerability (1 die of damage per round it is in contact, even in human form).*

## Talking to the Snitch

Kenny's bar resides in a lonely part of the Flats, which is just how its patrons like it: quiet. The Flats are said to be the oldest district in the City. Most of the buildings look dated to the 19th and 20th century, but a few appear even older than that.

The exterior of this building is dark with a large window looking in on the bar. A brightly painted red door opens to four quick steps up into the room. The interior is long and skinny with the bar counter running the length of it. There are two-top bar tables along the wall perpendicular to the bar. A loft area looks down from above the rear of the

building where tables for groups often sit empty. Bar service is all that is available as there is no wait staff.

The classic mirror-behind-the-bar is not present. Instead, there are various medieval weapons on display, including an iron gáe bolga (a celtic spear with an axe blade on one end) and silver-bladed sword from Spain. Between the weapons are neon signs advertising different drinks of choice.

Most patrons of the bar are members of the Unseelie Court ("dark" fey), random vampires, and humans that don't know any better. The bar is never more than half full. Rumor has it, Kenny can get his hands on non-standard food and drink for his patrons, such as blood and mallow fruit. Otherwise, it's cheap whiskey, cheaper beer, and on occasion, good bourbon.

### Kenny

Kenny is a scrawny vampire with poor fashion sense and no common sense. His clothing typically consists of jeans and t-shirts given to him by alcohol vendors. He talks a big game, but the only people who listen to him sit at the bar.

Generally speaking, any method used to get Kenny talking about what he knows will work: money, violence, threat of violence, or stroking his ego. According to Kenny, there are two new vampires living in a mausoleum in Highgate Cemetery who are responsible for the crimes. He is lying and buying time so that he can contact the vampire that is actually involved. In fact, he will quietly signal another vampire in the bar to slip out during the questioning and go warn the Randall that hunters are snooping around his business. He might be a snitch, but he is still a vampire.

A Survivor using their Perception ability or any character using appropriate sensory abilities or supernatural powers may see through his ruse, but he will stick to his story.

If Kenny is asked about the weak vampire spawn that Doc Susie mentioned, Kenny claims to have heard rumors that someone is creating vampire spawn who are so stupid, they don't try to hide from the sun (he is telling the truth).

The following character abilities are useful in this scene:

- The Chosen One grants everyone a +2/+10% to all rolls interacting with Kenny as he knows what a Chosen One can do
- Sages can utilize Suggestion or perhaps a spell

- Survivors can use their Perception ability to read Kenny's reactions while being interviewed by the characters

- Veterans can attempt a Wits check at +4 to sense that something is off.

**Kenny's Motivation:** not get dusted and get revenge on anyone who has ever wronged him. Kenny is an angry, short vampire. Yet, he has no strength or fighting technique to back up the anger. He is a sad, sad vampire.

**Kenny (Vampire):** Vit 6d8 (24), DV 4, Move 40 ft., Attacks: 3 (claw, bite, by weapon). Special: Feed on Blood (Life Drain) deal 1d3 points of Toustitution damage instead of Hit Point damage on a successful bite attack. Immune to Normal Damage. Mind Control. Regenerate 3 Vitality per round unless damage was from fire, holy water, or sunlight. Repulsed by holy items and garlic (Save or remain 10 feet away; new Save Check every 4 rounds). Shapeshifting (mist, wolves, bats, or swarms of rats per the polymorph self spell), Spawn. Strong and Fast. Vampire Vulnerabilities.



## ACT TWO: CONFRONTATIONAL CONFRONTATIONS

### Highgate Cemetery

Highgate Cemetery is on the outskirts of the City. It's impossibly old, and yet no matter how many people are interred here, it still always seems to have room for more residents. The grounds are surrounded by rock walls topped with iron fencing. Ancient vampires, undead, and other chthonic dwellers exist amongst the crypts and mausoleums.

Once in the cemetery, the Veteran can use their Tracking ability to locate the right mausoleum. If the Veteran succeeds in their check, they find themselves near the Rose family mausoleum. If they fail, their trail leads them to the Rezick family mausoleum.

### Rezick Mausoleum

The Rezicks are an old family full of Witches, Warlocks, Sages, and Psychics. They are well known in the city amongst those with an interest in spells. They own several mansions, a few political figures, and donated a building to City University. Opening the door to this mausoleum wakes a hell hound from its slumber. The hell hound is bound to the mausoleum and cannot travel more than ten yards from it. The hell hound only attacks the characters if they attack it or attempt to gain entry into the mausoleum. If left alone, it will wander back into the mausoleum and go back to sleep. Characters can safely close the door and let this sleeping dog lie.

**Hell Hound:** *Vit 4d8 (16), DV 4, Move 40 ft., Attacks: 2 (claws, bite). Special: burning saliva, sulphuric stench, iron vulnerability.*

### Rose Mausoleum

The Rose family mausoleum is on the north side of the cemetery. A well-worn path through the grass leads past several other mausoleums to this one. The family name and crest is prominently displayed above the door and the Toucrete structure is surrounded by rose bushes.

The newest residents of Highgate Cemetery are a pack of ghouls led by Mary and Anne, twins who are also ghosts. Kenny lied about what they were, but that is a surprise to no one. The twins are using the Rose family mausoleum as their residence while feeding from the newly buried dead in the north section of the property. The twins are feral in appearance and still wear their death shrouds. The rest of their pack vary in appearance. There is one ghoul per character, in addition to the sisters.

Mary and Anne are not responsible for the thefts and have no idea who is. If confronted verbally, they will sternly state they have no idea who is responsible for the crimes. They suggest the characters go back to their source for more information. If the characters physically confront the sisters, they will try to fight back. As soon as one of the sisters loses half of their Vitality, they give up and cower in fear. They do not react to their packmates' deaths.

### Playing Mary and Anne

Mary and Anne smell horrible, and appear gaunt, almost desiccated, with gray skin and sallow, yellow, watering eyes. They speak in gravelly voices and have a disconcerting habit of answering questions in unison or finishing one another's sentences. They are snarky, sarcastic, and above all, resent their lair being invaded.

That being said, they are not looking for a fight. They will be dour and rude, but spend more time demanding that the heroes leave them alone, answering questions about vampires like, "Sometimes someone we're eating wakes up. That annoys us," and "Do we look like vampires? We eat corpses. Someone played you for fools."

They really know very little (if anything at all) about Randall and his schemes. They will only fight if pressed, and then only to get away, not to the death.

**Mary and Anne (Ghosts), and Ghouls:** *Vit 2d8, DV 6, Move 40 ft., Attacks: 2 (claws, bite), Pack Tactics (for each ghoul attacking a character, all ghouls gain +1 to hit and damage, to a maximum of +8 as only 8 can attack a single target at one time; if the target has their back to a wall, that maximum becomes +5), Paralysis (any character struck by a ghoul must succeed at a Toughness save or become paralyzed and completely unable to move for 1d6 x 10 minutes), Stench (ghosts only, coming within 10 feet triggers a Toughness save and failure means the character suffers -2 to all attacks and saves, and -10% to all class abilities while within 10 feet of the creature)*

## ACT THREE: THROWDOWN

At some point, after the cast has pursued all their leads, one of them receives a phone call from Doc Susie's phone. A deep male voice on the other end informs the character that he is the one they're looking for, that he knows they've been poking around in his business, that he now has Doc Susie and if they don't want her turned into a vampire or worse, they should come to the courtyard along the Clinton Close.

Clinton Close is a small, largely neglected urban park in the Narrows. The pathway to the park's main entrance is easily identified by an iron gate spotted with surface rust and adorned with a

monkey motif. Fieldstones line the winding walkway that is barely wide enough for two people to walk side by side. The buildings stretch upward and appear to lean in towards each other above the characters. All the doors and windows facing in to the close are either boarded up or broken out. A cautious three-minute walk leads to a grassy open courtyard that is Clinton Close. In the small courtyard sit several picnic tables, trash bins, and the area is littered with the remnants of children's toys—beheaded dolls, broken toy trucks, deflated sports balls and the like.

Doc Susie sits at one of the picnic tables. On the table in front of her is a large tome and a canvas bagged filled with contents. A male vampire leans against her table watching the characters with full fangs and demonic visage on display as they enter the courtyard. He wears biker leathers. A silver dagger sticks out the top of a boot. He has black hair and moustache. His bright blue eyes shine red if light is directly shone on them. This is Randall Evans.

Standing throughout the courtyard are several weakened vampire spawn (one per character, use the stat block from the opening scene for them).

Randall ignores pleasantries and gets right to the point. He offers to give them Doc Susie in exchange for them leaving him and his vampire spawn alone. If pressed, he will tell the characters that he was cursed by a houngan to have weak blood and he is searching for a way to remove the curse. The curse is not letting him create vampires properly. Even time he tries, he only creates vampire spawn.

If the characters choose to fight Randall, he commands the vampire spawn to attack the characters and moves towards Doc Susie. He will attempt to use her as a prisoner to guarantee his escape. If he is attacked before reaching the doctor, he turns attention to attacking the characters.

If the characters begin to agree to the terms set out by Randall, Doc Susie will remind the characters this means he will be able to continue to create progeny and terrorize the community. If the characters choose to go this route anyways, Randall will let the characters and Doc Susie leave the courtyard.

As the characters near the exit gate with the monkey, Survivors can make a Danger Sense check. Chosen Ones should make a Difficult to Surprise check and/or an Enhanced Senses check. If successful, they realize several people are following them. Once the exit gate comes into view,



Randall and half of the vampires are there waiting for them, smiling wide vampire smiles. The other half of the vampires are behind the characters. If no one noticed the group sneaking up behind the characters, the vampire spawns following the characters get a free attack before initiative is determined.

**Randall Evans:** *Vit 8d8 (32 Vit), DV 2, Move 50 ft., Attacks: 4 (claw, bite, 2 weapon). Special: Feed on Blood (Life Drain) deal 1d3 points of Toughness damage instead of Hit Point damage on a successful bite attack. Immune to Normal Damage. Mind Control. Regenerate 3 Vitality per round unless damage was from fire, holy water, or sunlight. Repulsed by holy items and garlic (Save or remain 10 feet away; new Save Check every 4 rounds). Shapeshifting (mist, wolves, bats, or swarms of rats), Spawn. Strong and Fast (+2 initiative, +12 to attacks, 2d6 damage, keeping the best 1d6). Vampire Vulnerabilities.*

**Weakened Vampire Spawn:** *Vit 2d8 (9 Vit), DV 6, Move 30 ft. Attacks: 2 (claws, bite). Special: Immune to damage from non-supernatural attacks, Regenerate 3 Vitality per round unless damage was from fire, holy water, or sunlight. Repulsed by holy items and garlic (Save or remain 10 feet away; new Save Check every 4 rounds).*

## ACT FOUR: FOLLOW-UP VISIT (DENOUEMENT)

### Now What?

Doc Susie is thankful for the characters' help with Randall. If any of the characters need tending due to injuries, she supplies any needed aid. If she agreed to renumeration, she asks them to come by her office tomorrow. She will have it ready for them in the form of pre-paid credit cards containing the amount owed.

Doc Susie has a list of neighborhoods where more of Randall's vampire spawn were sighted. If the characters are interested in doing any follow up in those areas, she provides the list to them. If not, she will pass it off to police allies "in the know" about supernatural creatures.

Oh, by the way, Doc Susie heard from her friend Tanya that a new werewolf pack is town. Dead bodies found near her café suggest that werewolf pack may be eating people on nights of the full moon. The characters might want to check that out. . .

### What's in the Bag?

The bag on the picnic table contains the *Bàs Dubh*, several jars of herbs, and a notebook. The notebook contains Randall's notes on

trying to reverse his curse. The contents of *Bàs Dubh* are left to the imagination of the GM. The title is Scots Gaelic, but that doesn't mean everything in the book is tied to Caledonia. Suggested content would be text related to black magic, necromancy, second sight, curses, and maybe a recipe for metheglin (spiced mead) or shortbread.

## GM TIPS

The following are considerations for GMs using *Tainted Blood*.

As designed, the scenario should take two to four hours in a single session of *Night Shift: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars*. This assumes a few things. The first is that the players are new to the system and are learning the rules through playing the game. This always adds time to a game, but is completely understood and accepted as part of the hobby!

The second is that the players will role-play their characters and interactions with the NPCs. If you add enough details into the locations and play up personality traits of the NPCs, the players will cue off of those items and are likely to do more role-playing. If the game is just run as a means to test out how the rules work and dice are rolled, it will take a much shorter time to work through it.

## Info Dumps

As it sits, it's possible for the characters to tear through this scenario without ever finding out Randall Evans' name or what he's actually trying to do. If this happens and seems dissatisfying, Randall's notebook can serve as an information dump to fill in all the gaps for the heroes.

## Extending the Game

If the game is running shorter than desired or if the GM wishes to spread the game out over several sessions, the following scenes can be added.

### Bar Fight!

While interviewing Kenny, he decides to not cooperate. Several of his patrons take umbrage at the fact he is being harassed and stand up for him. Now, instead of just slapping around a weakling vampire, they have to contend with additional vampires (use Kenny's stats), werewolves, and even a down on their luck human who has no idea what is going on.

### Hunting the Wolf

The werewolf mentioned by Ellee is not very well known. However, a few days of searching turns up a clue that she sometimes works as a singer at the Club Khalsa in the Boehms. What the clues fail to mention is that Tomasina, the werewolf, is the lead singer of the a regular band, Siren's Delight. She and her four-piece backup group perform here

Tuesdays through Saturdays, unless a guest performer is slated. If the heroes are familiar with the club, they may well have seen the band.

The dress code at the club is upscale casual. The club has low lighting and the décor is a strange and eclectic blend of Goth and Middle Eastern/Indian aesthetic. The drinks are outstanding and poured strong. The music is great and no matter what your tastes you're bound to hear something you like at some point during the night. Best of all, it's an All Ages club, with a fenced-off bar area (wristbands and hand stamps are required). A wide variety of regional bands play there regularly.

Many of the employees and patrons of the club are lycanthropes or Fae members of the Unseelie Court. The proprietor is Alia Kovac. She's beloved by her patrons, many of whom suspect she's something more than human. But she takes care of her clients, and there's been whispers that some of her favorites tend to leave much happier than they came, even if they do look a bit drained from the time they spent there.

She's flirtatious and friendly, always ready with a smirk or seductive smile. She has a dry, sarcastic wit, and treats everyone equally. Still, there always seems to be something behind her eyes, something she's not telling anyone, and most agree that she's not someone to whom you want to get too close.

In any case, Tomasina and her band are popular with employees and patrons and as such, they will not take it too kindly if the characters decide to give Tomasina any trouble. If politely asked about why she visited Raven's Tongue, she informs the characters she was looking for a gift for her father but could not decide what to get him. Characters who decide to play rough with Tomasina may find themselves on the wrong end of teeth and claws, but that's left to the GM's discretion.

### Weakened Vampire Spawn

If the pace of the game starts to slow down too much or you need to inject a bit of excitement, add more Weakened Vampire Spawn. Randall has set at least 50 loose into the city. While several of them have died due to sun exposure, there are still plenty around to cause mayhem. This can also serve to reinforce the mission to stop Randall, as the vampire spawn do not necessarily need to attack the characters. The innocent people in the food court where the characters are eating lunch will do just fine, as will the people walking down rain soaked streets.



### Young Bloods

When visiting the Highgate Cemetery, the characters notice they are being followed. Two younger vampires are out looking for dinner. If two vampires are not enough to give your characters pause, give 'em more vampires to fight off. And if that still isn't enough, well, then bring in any of the ghouls left over from the scene with Mary and Anne. Use Kenny's stats for these vampires.

You could also alter the Hell Hound in the secondary crypt, allowing it to escape and join the fray as well. Adjusting combat encounters is as easy as adding extra monsters, removing monsters, or adjusting the Vitality Dice and Vitality up or down of any monsters already involved. Don't be afraid to tinker!

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## APPENDIX A: FULL CREATURE STAT BLOCKS

### Hell Hound

DV: 4

Move: 30ft.

Vitality Dice: 4d8

Special: 2 attacks (claws, bite), burning saliva, sulphuric stench, iron vulnerability

#### Abilities

**Burning saliva:** a hell hound's bite is searing hot, and deals an extra d6 of fire damage on a successful attack.

**Sulphuric Stench:** anyone coming within 10 feet of a hell hound must succeed at a Toughness Save Check or be at -2 to all actions due to the overpowering stench.

**Iron Vulnerability:** Normal weapons do not harm hell hounds. Only weapons forged of iron, or supernatural attacks, can harm them. Steel will not work, as it is an alloy. The weapons must be of pure iron.

### Kenny, Vampire

DV: 4

Move: 40ft.

Vitality Dice: 6d8

Special: 3 attacks (claw, bite, weapon), vampire abilities

#### Abilities

**Immune to Normal Damage:** Vampires suffer no damage from non-supernatural attacks. In a Cinematic game, they may suffer half-damage from non-supernatural attacks, but may not be killed by non-supernatural attacks.

**Regenerate:** Vampires regenerate 3 Vitality of damage per round, unless they have taken damage from fire, holy water, or sunlight.

**Repulsed by Holy Items and Garlic:** Presenting holy items or garlic requires the vampire to attempt a Persona Save Check or remain at least 10 feet from the object presented. The creature may attempt a new Save Check once every four rounds; if it succeeds it manages to overcome its fear and knock the object away.

**Spawn:** Those killed by vampires may rise as new vampires, if their sire wishes it. Any killed by vampires rise as Vampire Spawn within 24 hours (the following midnight) if the vampire who killed them wishes it. Vampire spawn are under the control of the vampire who created them.

**Strong and Fast:** Vampires gain +2 to initiative rolls, and add half again their Vitality Dice to attack rolls. They also deal 2 dice of damage on attacks, keeping the better.

**Vampire Vulnerabilities:** Vulnerable to fire, sunlight, decapitation, holy water, and stakes through the heart. Fire, sunlight, and holy water deal normal damage to a vampire. Sunlight and fire deal 1 die of damage per round of exposure. Decapitation and stakes through the heart are the method by which a vampire is destroyed when it reaches zero Vit. If the person fighting the vampire does not have the means to destroy the vampire, it cannot be killed.



### **Mary, Anne, and their Ghouls**

**DV:** 6

**Move:** 40ft.

**Vitality Dice:** 2d8

**Special:** 2 attacks (claw, bite), Paralysis, Stench (Mary and Anne only), Group Tactics

#### **Abilities**

**Pack Tactics:** A group of ghouls is a dangerous thing. For each ghoul attacking a character, all ghouls gain +1 to hit and damage, to a maximum of +8 (only 8 can attack a single target at one time). If the target has their back against the wall, the maximum is +5 (5 maximum at once).

**Paralysis:** Any character struck by a ghoul must succeed at a Toughness save, or become paralyzed and completely unable to move for 1d6x10 minutes.

**Stench:** About 10% of ghouls are of a greater variety, ghosts, which have a horrible stench about them. Merely coming within ten feet of such a creature triggers a Toughness save. Failure means the character suffers -2 to all attacks and saves, and -10% to all class abilities while within 10 feet of the creature.

### **Randall Evans**

**DV:** 2

**Move:** 50ft

**Vitality Dice:** 8d8

**Special:** 4 attacks (claw, bite, 2 weapon), vampire abilities

#### **Abilities**

**Immune to Normal Damage:** Vampires suffer no damage from non-supernatural attacks. In a Cinematic game, they may suffer half-damage from non-supernatural attacks, but may not be killed by non-supernatural attacks.

**Regenerate:** Vampires regenerate 3 Vitality of damage per round, unless they have taken damage from fire, holy water, or sunlight.

**Repulsed by Holy Items and Garlic:** Presenting holy items or garlic requires the vampire to attempt a Persona Save Check or remain at least 10 feet from the object presented. The creature may attempt a new Save Check once every four rounds; if it succeeds it manages to overcome its fear and knock the object away.

**Shapeshifting:** Randall can take the form of mist, a wolf, a bat, or a swarm of rats. Changing shape takes one action to accomplish and Randall keeps his own abilities plus gaining those of the creature or form whose shape he assumes (as a bat he can fly, as a swarm of rats he can scatter, as mist he can move through minute cracks, etc.)

**Spawn:** Those killed by vampires may rise as new vampires, if their sire wishes it. Any killed by vampires rise as Vampire Spawn within 24 hours (the following midnight) if the vampire who killed them wishes it. Vampire spawn are under the control of the vampire who created them.

**Strong and Fast:** Vampires gain +2 to initiative rolls, and add half again their Vitality Dice to attack rolls. They also deal 2 dice of damage on attacks, keeping the better.

**Vampire Vulnerabilities:** Vulnerable to fire, sunlight, decapitation, holy water, and stakes through the heart. Fire, sunlight, and holy water deal normal damage to a vampire. Sunlight and fire deal 1 die of damage per round of exposure. Decapitation and stakes through the heart are the method by which a vampire is destroyed when it reaches zero Vit. If the person fighting the vampire does not have the means to destroy the vampire, it cannot be killed.

### **Weakened Vampire Spawn**

**DV:** 6

**Move:** 30ft.

**Vitality Dice:** 2d8 (weakened species)

**Special:** 2 attacks (claws, bite)

#### **Abilities**

**Immune to Normal Damage:** Vampires suffer no damage from non-supernatural attacks. In a Cinematic game, they may suffer half-damage from non-supernatural attacks, but may not be killed by non-supernatural attacks.

**Regenerate:** Vampires regenerate 3 Vitality of damage per round, unless they have taken damage from fire, holy water, or sunlight.

**Repulsed by Holy Items and Garlic:** Presenting holy items or garlic requires the vampire to attempt a Persona Save Check or remain at least 10 feet from the object presented. The creature may attempt a new Save Check once every four rounds; if it succeeds it manages to overcome its fear and knock the object away.

### **Tomasina, Werewolf**

**DV:** 5

**Move:** 40ft.

**Vitality Dice:** 4

**Special:** 3 attacks (2 claws, bite), Enhanced Senses, Controlled Transformation, Immunity to Normal Weapons, Silver Vulnerability

#### **Abilities**

**Controlled Transformation:** Most werewolves are affected by the cycle of the full moon, but not this one. This werewolf can transform at will as many times per day as it has Vitality Dice.

**Enhanced Senses:** Werewolves have enhanced hearing and smell, even in human form. They possess Danger Sense as a 4th-level Survivor, hear noises on a 1-4 on a d6, and can follow a trail by scent on a 1-4 on a d6.

**Immunity to Normal Weapons:** Werewolves cannot be killed by normal weapons. Only silver or the attacks of another supernatural creature can kill them.

**Regeneration:** Werewolves regenerate 3 Vitality of damage per round, unless they have taken damage from silver.

**Vulnerabilities:** Werewolves are affected by silver in much the same way as vampires are afflicted by holy water, dealing 1 die of damage per round the werewolf is in contact, even while in human form. Silver bullets deal normal damage to werewolves, whereas other weapons don't harm them at all, but silver bullets do not continue to deal damage due to being "inside" the werewolf—its body rejects the metal after the initial impact. Werewolves are also allergic to wolfsbane, and if forced to eat wolfsbane, must make a Toughness save or die. They are affected by the presence of the plant the same as vampires facing a holy object.



## APPENDIX B: SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

**Bless/Bane:** Bless instills the caster's allies with divine aid, adding +1 to attack rolls and saves against fear. Lasts for 1 round per level. Bane fills your enemies with fear and doubt. Each affected creature takes a -1 penalty on attack rolls and a -1 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. Bane counters and dispels bless and vice-versa.

**Restore/Drain Vitality:** This spell heals 1d6+1 points of damage to a character touched. Requires a melee spell attack against unwilling targets.

**Mystical Senses:** The caster can sense the presence of supernatural evil within a 60 foot radius, as well as how relatively powerful the source of the evil is (minimal, slight, moderate, great, obscene). The spell notes the general direction, but not the exact location or distance of the evil. This spell will detect undead, but not evil characters of lesser than eighth level (and those of eighth to tenth level will generally register as "slight.") The spell lasts for one turn per level of the caster.

**Extrasensory Perception:** The caster can detect the living presence of other creatures, and their general intent and state of mind. The amount of information revealed depends on how long you study a particular area or subject. On the 1st round, the presence or absence of thoughts and emotions (from conscious creatures with Intelligence scores of 1 or higher), as well as whether the presence is of human, beast, or supernatural. On the 2nd round, detects the number of thinking minds and the Intelligence score of each. This spell does not determine the location of the thinking minds if the caster can't see the creatures whose thoughts he is detecting. On the 3rd round, detect the general intent of any mind in the area (hostile, afraid, attack, hide, etc.) and the exact location of a single mind upon which the caster concentrates. Any in the scanned area can attempt a Wits Save Check to prevent detection. Each round, you can turn to scan a new area. The spell can penetrate barriers, but 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or 3 feet of wood or dirt blocks it. This spell lasts for 1 round per level so long as the caster concentrates and affects a 10-foot per level area. While the spell is active, the caster always senses danger and cannot be surprised.

**Paralyze Person:** This spell holds a single medium-sized or less humanoid target rigidly in place. It is aware and breathes normally but cannot take any physical action. It can, however, execute purely mental actions. The spell lasts for 1 round per level, and the target may make a Save Check with Wits to resist.

**Arcane Darts:** This spell conjures a bolt of magical energy that automatically strikes its target, dealing 1d6-1 damage (minimum 1 point). For every four levels of the caster, another missile fires (a fourth level caster fires two missiles, an eighth level caster three, etc.), though all missiles fire simultaneously and strike the same target.

**Protection from Good or Evil:** This spell creates a magical barrier around the subject at a distance of 1 foot offering protection against good or evil creatures (chosen at casting). It does not defend against characters of less than 8 levels/Vitality Dice, but will defend against powerful characters, undead, and other supernatural evils. The GM determines whether a creature qualifies as a supernatural evil. Demons certainly do, while ghosts may or may not. The barrier moves with the subject and grants a +2 bonus to DV and +1 to saving throws against evil creatures as the spell works to prevent bodily contact: the melee attacks of such creatures fail and the creatures recoil from the protective magic.

The protection ends if the warded creature makes an attack against, or tries to force the barrier against, the blocked creature. Magic resistance can allow a summoned or conjured creature to overcome this protection and touch the warded creature by making a save. Otherwise, no save is allowed. The spell lasts for one hour.

**Subtle Influence:** You suggest a course of activity (limited to a sentence or two) and magically influence a creature you can see within range that can hear and understand you. Creatures that can't be charmed are immune to this effect. The suggestion must be worded in such a manner as to make the course of action sound reasonable. Asking the creature to stab itself, throw itself onto a spear, immolate itself, or do some other obviously harmful act ends the spell. The target is entitled to a Wits Save Check to resist. You can also specify conditions that will trigger a special activity during the duration. For example, you might suggest that a knight give her warhorse to the first beggar she meets. If the condition isn't met before the spell expires, the activity isn't performed.

## APPENDIX C: CHARACTER RULES HANDOUTS

### THREE MECHANICS

There are three mechanics at play in the O.G.R.E.S. system: The percentile check, the d20 check, and the Rule of 2.

**Percentile Checks:** The first is the *percentile check*. In a percentile check, you will roll percentile dice against a chance of success, to use a class ability, cast a spell, etc. The GM can set a difficulty for a task, modifying your base chance of success up or down. They need not tell you what the modifier is; they simply may ask you what your base chance of success is and secretly modify it, then ask you what your result is and tell you if you succeeded. For some tasks, the GM may even secretly roll the ability for you—for example, when a Survivor tries to move silently, they always think they're doing it right. Likewise, when you search for traps in a given area, you don't know if you simply failed the roll or there's nothing there to find. In either case, the GM may opt to roll secretly, and simply tell you what happens.

**The d20 Check:** The second is the d20 check, wherein you'll roll 1d20 plus applicable bonuses, and attempt to get 20 or better. This is used for combat, saving throws, and ability checks. Difficulties for these checks are often modified based on the Vitality Dice or level of the person you're challenging—if you try to seduce someone, for example, you may roll a Persona check, which will be modified by the difference between your level and the opponent's level. Alternately, if an NPC (who doesn't have full statistics) tries to seduce you, you might roll a Wits Save Check, with the difference between your level and their Vitality Dice modifying the check.



In general, attacks and magical effects notwithstanding, ability checks and saves should slant towards the player making the check as opposed to the monster or NPC. Naturally, if you cast *command* on a monster, it will save, but in general...

**Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Abilities:** Each character will have check bonuses marked with \* and \*\*. Those asterisks correspond to ability scores which are marked similarly, and the bonuses are added together for ability checks with that attribute. So you might see a check bonus of +3\*, and then the Strength bonus might be +3\*. For that character, Strength checks are at +6. Each character will have a single attribute and check marked \*, two marked \*\*, and three without abilities. In *Night Shift*, at character generation, abilities are designated as primary, secondary, and tertiary. Characters get higher check bonuses for primary and secondary abilities.

Note that the check bonus is only added to ability checks, and not to combat rolls, which add the attack bonus instead of the check bonus.

**Rule of 2.** The Rule of 2 is largely reserved for the GM, though it applies to PCs in terms of their surprise chances, the GM can adjudicate a situation on the fly that isn't otherwise covered by the rules. Choose a die based on how likely the scenario is, and throw it. A result of 1 or 2 indicates the result you're adjudicating.

Say, for example, characters are casing a crime scene. The Survivor has a Perception skill they can roll, but everyone else just has to use their basic peepers. The Survivor rolls their percentile skill, while the GM rolls 1d6 for the rest of the characters. If any come up as a 1 or 2, they find something. The Survivor, in turn, if she fails her Perception check, will still get a Rule of 2 check (and if she succeeds, should find more detailed info than those who succeeded on a Rule of 2).

The GM can alter the probabilities by changing the die type thrown, or changing the range of success (1 in 6, 3 in 8, etc.). Some GMs may do away with the Rule of 2 altogether and simply use percentile dice for probabilities. This is fine, too, but we think the Rule of 2 adds an elegant and very basic symmetry to quickly adjudicating these things.

## SOME TERMS

**Die Codes:** When you see a code of "xdy," x is the number of dice rolled, d means "dice," and y is the type of die, so "4d6" means, "roll four, six-sided dice."

**Vitality Dice (Vit):** The number of 6-sided dice a creature or character has for health. The dice are rolled and totaled. This has already been done for you in the creature and character stats.

**Percentile Dice:** Percentile dice are two, ten-sided dice, with one rolled as "tens" and one rolled as "ones." You must designate which represents each before rolling. Most people use a die with two digits as tens, and one digit as ones (so a die will read 10, 20, 30, while the other will read 0, 1, 2...) but you can simply use two different colored dice. Read the dice as they fall, so if your tens die is 3 and your ones die is 7, you have 37%. A roll of "00" means 100, not zero. When rolling percentile dice, a low roll is almost always better. You're trying to roll under a percentage chance for success, so if the chance of success is 50%, anything from 01-49 succeeds.

## COMBAT

The first step in running combat is to determine initiative. Each player rolls 1d10 for their character, and the GM rolls 1d10 for the bikers and 1d10 for the hell hounds, each of which goes in a group. The highest result on the d10 goes first, and combat proceeds in descending order.

Combat is structured in *rounds*, which are defined as however long it takes for each character to accomplish one action. The entire combat comprises a *scene* of play.

**Movement:** characters can move up to their standard movement (usually 30 feet) and still perform an action. Alternately, they can "dash" up to double their move without taking an action.

**Attacking:** To attack, you will roll 1d20, adding your character's Attack Bonus, Ability Bonus (strength for melee, Agility for ranged), and the opponent's Armor Class to the roll, and attempting to achieve a result of 20 or higher. Monsters and NPCs add their Vitality Dice and the opponent's DV to attack rolls.

**Damage:** All weapons deal 1d6 damage. Most player characters have the ability to make supernatural attacks—this doesn't necessarily mean they are magical. It represents their access to the tactics and equipment they need to harm creatures of a supernatural origin—in this case, their

weapons incorporate iron in some way. Characters that do not have the supernatural attack ability must either physically hunt down iron, or take another tactic in combat (such as casting spells).

**Firearms:** In an urban fantasy style game, firearms are often anathema, and when one comes out, someone is going to die. There are three levels of "grit" in *Night Shift* to deal with this trope: Standard or "realistic," Cinematic, and Gritty.

In a *standard* game, firearms deal 5d6 damage, added together, instead of 1d6. They are brutal and can be deadly, but can also be survivable.

In a *cinematic* game, firearms are simply another weapon, dealing 1d6 damage.

In a *gritty* game, firearms are simply lethal. A firearm attack leaves the victim at 0 Vitality, and they have to make a Toughness Save Check or die. These numbers are for humans. Supernatural creatures suffer only 1d6 damage from firearms regardless of the grit level.

It's recommended for this quick start to adopt the cinematic (1d6 only) version of firearms. In the full version of *Night Shift*, many aspects of the game offer "realistic," "cinematic," and "gritty" levels to allow you to tailor aspects of the game to your tastes.

**Saving Throws:** Saving throws, when necessary, work the same as attacks, but instead of adding the attack bonus, characters add their check bonus and ability bonus to their 1d20 roll, attempting to get a 20. They also add a bonus or penalty based on the difference between their level and their opponent's Vitality Dice.

**Non-Lethal Combat:** If a character wants to knock another character or monster out, they simply reduce them to 0 Vitality in combat as normal, and declare the combat as non-lethal at that point. Non-lethal combat leaves an opponent unconscious and stable.

**Healing:** Characters heal 1 point of damage plus their Toughness bonus per day of bedrest. Under professional medical care, the healing rate is doubled. Non-lethal damage heals at Toughness +1 per hour.

**Death:** When a monster or NPC reaches 0 Vitality, it is dead (or unconscious, if non-lethal is announced). When a PC reaches 0 Vitality they are unconscious and bleeding out. They lose 1 additional hit point per round, until stabilized (another character simply takes an action to state they are doing so), or they reach -10 Vitality. If they reach -10 Vitality, they are dead.

**Casting Spells:** To cast a spell, the witch's player casts percentile dice. The base chance to cast a spell is 50%, plus 5% per level of the witch. Thus, a first-level witch has a base 55% chance to cast a spell. This percentage is penalized by 10%

per level of the spell (thus, a second level spell imposes a penalty of -20%). If the player beats the base percentage chance to cast a spell by 10% or more, the spell goes off immediately. If they succeed at less than a 10% margin, the spell effect is delayed by one round. If a witch's base chance to cast a spell is over 100%, there is no roll needed to cast; the spell always works at immediate effect.

**Spell Backfire:** Any time a witch fails to cast a spell, it can backfire, sometimes catastrophically. When a spell fails, the witch or sage must throw 1d20, add the spell's level, and consult the following table to see what happens.

### Spell Backfire Table

Spell Backfire Table	
d20 + Spell Level	Result
1-10	Spell simply fails to work
11	Spell fails, is lost and cannot be cast until the next day.
12	Caster is stunned and cannot act for 1-4 turns. Spell remains available to use.
13	Caster is stunned and cannot act for 1-4 turns. Spell is lost and cannot be cast until the next day.
14-15	Caster is knocked unconscious; treat as if affected by the <i>sleep</i> spell. Spell remains available to use.
16-17	Caster is knocked unconscious; treat as if affected by the <i>sleep</i> spell; spell is lost and cannot be cast until the next day.
18	Caster suffers 1d6 damage per 2 spell levels (minimum 1d6). Spell remains available to use.
19	Spell has the exact opposite effect intended (GM's discretion). Spell is lost and cannot be cast until the next day.
20-21	Spell affects the wrong parties (allies instead of enemies, enemies instead of allies). Spell is lost and cannot be cast until the next day.
22-23	Spell summons a monstrous horror with a number of Vitality Dice equal to the spell's level. The creature is immediately hostile towards the caster and their allies.

## FATE POINTS

Fate Points are a system that is intended for *cinematic* games, though they may be added to *realistic* games to add a bit of extra player agency. They should never be included in *gritty* play style games. All players begin with a number of Fate Points that they can spend to gain additional effects in game. There are a number of uses for these points in game, and they are as follows:

A character always has a limited amount of Fate Points, and while the character replenishes this supply with every new level he or she attains, the rate of attrition can far outstrip the rate of gain. As such, players must use them wisely. A character can spend Fate Points to do any of these things:

**Fortune's Favor:** Roll 1d6 and add it to an attack or ability check, or double the value to the percentage chance for success of a class ability or spell being cast.

**Mighty Blow:** Treat the roll as a Natural 20 and deal double damage on your attack, but make an unmodified d20 roll; on a 9 or less the hero is stunned for 1 round, unable to act.

**Righteous Rage:** Spend 3 Fate Points and gain +5 to all attacks and actions for an entire scene, and +10% to all percentile abilities. Must have a good in game reason ("they're the big bad" isn't a good reason to fly into a righteous rage).

**You Missed!:** Avoid an attack. Costs 2 Fate Points.

**Second Wind:** Recover half of all lost Vitality.

**Down But Not Out:** Avoid death when reduced to below -10 Vitality. You're unconscious and stable. Costs 3 Fate Points.

**Providence Smiles:** Gain a minor plot break or scene edit ("good thing someone dropped a gun here!" "good thing the bolt was rusted out on that ladder so I can kick it away!" etc.) with the GM's approval.

## APPENDIX D: PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

The following pages contain character sheets with pre-generated characters that you can use to play this game. The character archetypes should be quite recognizable to fans of urban fantasy television, film, and literature, and that's intentional, to provide an easy way to jump in. They are also created in pairs, but it's not necessary for players to play a full pair. It's possible, if you wish, to have the Chosen One without her Sage, only one brother, or the Survivor without the Fey.

It is recommended that if you don't have both sister witches, you remove "Arcane Bond," and replace it with the other witch's secondary power, then elevate their primary power to twice per day. Thus, if you use only Witch #1, she loses Arcane Bond, gains Telekinesis, and can use Empathy twice per day.

It's also recommended that if you have the witches or sage, they also be given a copy of the "spell descriptions" page from this document so they know what their spells do!

### CHARACTER BACKGROUNDS

What follows are brief background notes for playing each character. You can cut them apart and pass them out to the players so they know who their characters are, as well as what they can do.

**The Chosen One** is a member of an organization that dates to prehistory, and is absolutely dedicated to battling demons, vampires, and all the forces of darkness. She is a teenaged girl and would often much rather be dating or even doing homework than hunting demons, but here she is, nevertheless, committed through no choice of her own to the death. After all, if she's not hunting them....they're hunting her.

**The Sage's** job is to provide knowledge, information, history, and guidance to the Chosen One. He is like a father figure to her, a relationship that neither of them ever expected to develop after a strained beginning. Still, as much as she might try his patience at times, he loves her as a daughter and she loves him as a father, and either would die to save the other.

**The Fey** grew up as a normal human until she one day accidentally killed her boyfriend while making out in a car. She panicked and ran away from home, and has been living on the run ever since. She quickly found herself the target of other supernaturals, who considered her a "rogue," and became a veteran at hunting them before they could hunt her. Eventually, she made the acquaintance of a young human thief and Tou artist, and together they have decided to make the world the way they want it to be, while protecting humanity against the creatures of the night.

**The Survivor** is the best friend of the Fey, a thief and Tou artist who has seen one too many dark things to continue to turn her back. While she'd prefer to run from a battle, her basic morals won't let her do it. She grew up in a strict eastern European immigrant household, but was always something of a black sheep, and ran away from home as a teenager after she stumbled upon a mystical ritual she didn't understand, performed by her grandmother.

**The Veteran Brothers** follow a family business of demon hunting, when their father was killed by a hellspawned creature that vanish, the two hit the road in a beat-up old jalopy. These days they hunt the minions of hell wherever they go, moving from town to town, half hunting the creature that killed their father, and half terrified of the day it finds them.

**The Witches** discovered upon the death of their mother that they had a legacy and an arcane bond to defend the world against demons and the forces of darkness. When demons attacked them in their home, they escaped and in horror, barely managed to overcome the creatures. In that moment, they realized their destiny and have been seeking out and battling the spawn of hell ever since, wielding what they call the Power of Two as best they can in defense of humanity.

# NIGHT SHIFT

Veterans of the Supernatural Wars

PLAYER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CREATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

XP: \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS: Chosen One

LEVEL: 4

SPECIES: Supernatural (human-plus)

NEXT LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION: \_\_\_\_\_

ABILITY	SCORE	BONUS	P	S
STRENGTH	18	+3	✓	
ABILITY	18	+3		✓
TOUGHNESS	15	+1		
INTELLIGENCE	9	+0		
WITS	12	+0		✓
PERSONA	15	+1		
FATE POINTS	5			
DEFENSE VALUE	5			
		VITALITY	21	

SPECIAL ABILITIES AND SKILLS	
ABILITY	BASE %
Stunning blow (on hit; 2d6)	75
Killing blow	25
Supernatural attacks	
Hard to surprise (1 in 6)	
Improved defense (-2)	
Open Locks	15
Find traps	10
Move Silently	20
Hide	10
Climb	55
Heightened Senses	35%
+3 to all damage	
Unarmed Combat (1 attack)	1d6+3
Regenerate	1/hour

CHECK BONUS (P/S/T): +3/+2/+0  
 MELEE BONUS: +5  
 RANGED BONUS: +5  
 SAVES: +1 to all saves, +4 vs. supernatural attacks, magic, and spells.

## PSYCHIC POWERS/THEOSOPHY/SPELLS/SUPERNATURAL POWERS

POWER	LVL	Pg.	POWER	LVL	Pg.

## GEAR/NOTES

Stunning blow 75% (on hit; 2d6 rounds—opponent unable to act for first round, then -4/-20% for the remainder of stun)

killing blow 25% (Natural 20 or beat score to hit by 8 or better, instant kill; can still stun if doesn't kill)

GEAR: Sword, axe, crossbow, wooden stake (Mr. Stabbykins), smartphone, tablet, stylish clothes



# NIGHT SHIFT

Veterans of the Supernatural Wars

PLAYER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CREATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ XP: \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS: The Survivor LEVEL: 4

SPECIES: Human NEXT LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION: \_\_\_\_\_

ABILITY	SCORE	BONUS	P	S
STRENGTH	<u>9</u>	<u>+0</u>		
AGILITY	<u>18</u>	<u>+3</u>	✓	
TOUGHNESS	<u>13</u>	<u>+1</u>		
INTELLIGENCE	<u>15</u>	<u>+1</u>		
WITS	<u>16</u>	<u>+2</u>		✓
PERSONA	<u>15</u>	<u>+1</u>		✓
FATE POINTS	<u>10</u>			
DEFENSE VALUE	<u>4</u>			
		VITALITY	<u>14</u>	

SPECIAL ABILITIES AND SKILLS	
ABILITY	BASE %
Open Locks	<u>45</u>
Bypass Traps	<u>40</u>
Sleight of Hand	<u>50</u>
Move Silently	<u>50</u>
Hide in Shadows	<u>40</u>
Climbing	<u>80</u>
Perception	<u>55</u>
Read Languages	<u>80</u>
Opponents -4 to hit	
Danger Sense	<u>1-3 on d6</u>
Sneak Attack	<u>+4/x3</u>

CHECK BONUS (P/S/T): +3/+2/+0  
 MELEE BONUS: +2  
 RANGED BONUS: +5  
 SAVES: +3 vs death attacks / area effects.  
 For 1/2 dmg saves, take 0 dmg on success

### PSYCHIC POWERS/THEOSOPHY/SPELLS/SUPERNATURAL POWERS

POWER	LVL	Pg.	POWER	LVL	Pg.

### GEAR/NOTES

A successful sneak attack counts as a supernatural attack

GEAR: Sword, knife, throwing knives, thieves' tools, smartphone









