

Vampire the Masquerade v5 Cheat Sheet

Setting

New Orleans - Summer 2005

Louisiana territory was bought by the USA in 1803 after having been swapped between Spain and France over the previous century. English is the main language but French and Cajun (a lower class hybrid of French and English) are also widely spoken. Creole, spoken by Haitian immigrants, is also prevalent. New Orleans thus has a very distinctive culture with elements of English, French, Spanish, Haitian and various west African influences.

Louisiana is bordered on the south by the Gulf of Mexico, which has many oil rigs and supports commercial fishing (mostly shrimp). To the East is the panhandle of Florida and Mississippi, to the North is Arkansas and to the West is Texas. Louisiana has a lot of swampland and wildlife includes alligators, deer, coyotes and bobcats. New Orleans is a coastal city at the southern tip of the state in the delta of the Mississippi; it is surrounded by swamps and forests.

Louisiana has high rates of poverty, murder and has the highest incarceration rate the country. It is deep in the Bible Belt, mostly evangelical Christians for the whole state but with a notable Catholic population in the south (where they are the majority). Voodoo is mainly a tourist gimmick.

The world in 2005 had no smartphones and very limited social media: MySpace was established but Facebook; Instagram and YouTube had just been created. Google was the dominant search engine by then but you still had to go to libraries to find niche or academic information or public records.

Human to Vampire

You have been made into a *kindred* (a vampire) to balance the books of the existing *clans* (subspecies/bloodlines/families) in New Orleans. Why were you in New Orleans? (born and raised, moved there a while ago/recently, just passing through)

Each of the clans tends to *embrace* (make) new kindred that already align with their personalities and has something valuable to offer (e.g. the beautiful, artistic socialite Toreadors embrace beautiful, artistic social people). How are you like your clan and what do you have to offer?

Becoming a kindred is a huge change to your life. You now have magic powers and have been thrust into a Machiavellian world of intrigue that is difficult to survive, let alone claw yourself towards the top. How has this changed your circumstances? (upgrade/downgrade, loss of friends and family, can't go out during the daytime anymore).

You are not just here to be a passive participant; your dreams may have died with you to be replaced with new opportunities or they may just have become more realistic. Did you have any goals before being embraced? Have they changed and have you gained any goals since?

How do you feel about your worldview now knowing that vampires and potentially other supernaturals exist? Even someone who believed in vampires would probably have had a different conception of how they operated. Kindred themselves are very religious/cultic and there are myriad cults venerating certain ideas or vampires (ancient and contemporary).

Vampire the Masquerade v5 Cheat Sheet

Lore

Origins and Generation

Disputed by many in detail or totality, the story you were told is that vampirism originated with Cain after he killed Abel. He was cursed to roam the world forever and eat his own children. He then created a group of vampires (the 2nd generation) who themselves created the 13 vampires of the 3rd generation who are the originator of each clan (e.g. Malkav is the ancestor of all Malkavians etc). These are referred to as the *Antediluvians* (literally: before the flood) and none are known to still be active. Only one 4th generation vampire (called *Methuselahs*) is known to still be active (c. 3,500 years old).

Most of the oldest vampires active now are 7th-9th generation (*elders*, c. 1,000 years old). Most vampires in positions of importance in kindred society are *Ancillae* (c. 500-250 years old), being 10th-12th generation.

You will be 13th generation (*Neonate*), having been embraced by a vampire of the 12th generation in the Summer of 2005. The closer to Cain you are (i.e. the lower your generation is), the more powerful you are. Kindred of 5th or lower generation have essentially god-like power.

14th+ generation vampires are known as *thinbloods*. They have limited powers and limited weaknesses – some can even tolerate sunlight. Most vampires consider them vermin to be regularly culled and those with a religious bent consider them to be signs of the end times (*Gehenna*).

Ghouls can be created by feeding vampire blood to humans. It stops them ageing and gives them some basic vampire powers. A ghoul is devoted to its master (the vampire who provided the blood) as long as they are regularly given vampire blood. If that stops, the blood will eventually wash out of their system and they will no longer be a ghoul.

Kindred Sects

Camarilla

The Camarilla is a globe-spanning feudal network of cities and regions (*domains*) that agree to work together under a short, common set of principles to prevent *kine* (mortals) from learning of the existence of vampires. It was formed in reaction to the Inquisition by several clans (Brujah, Gangrel, Malkavian, Nosferatu, Toreador, Tremere and Ventrue). They are mostly based in Europe, North America and the Antipodes). A domain is ruled by a *Prince*.

Anarchs

The Anarchs also uphold the Masquerade but do so without the Camarilla's other stringent rules and feudal power structure. Brujah make up the majority of anarchs, with the Gangrel and other clans making up the rest. Anarch domains don't have rulers or fixed positions of power. However, there is usually one or more kindred who are respected enough that their word carries weight on matters too lowly to call a referendum for.

Sabbat

The Sabbat do not uphold the Masquerade and are mostly based in Eastern Europe and Central America.

Vampire the Masquerade v5 Cheat Sheet

Independents

Some whole clans, none of which you know anything specific about, are independent of the above sects. There are also independent vampires called *Autarkis* who rule small cities or parts of larger ones. This is generally because they are too powerful to be ousted without spending significant resources and it is simply easier for a sect to work out a deal with them (effectively making them a client king).

Human Factions

Second Inquisition (SI)

Select individuals at the highest levels of the CIA, NSA, MI6 and similar organisations have learned of the existence of vampires and are working together with traditional religious vampire hunting organisations to destroy kindred.

Calling in the SI on a rival is not unheard of but it is the nuclear option; the SI are just as dangerous to you as those you point them at.

The Masquerade

Keeping the Masquerade just means ensuring that humans do not learn of the existence of vampires. You are expected to act responsibly (in the way you feed, use of disciplines in public etc) and if you breach the Masquerade (intentionally or not), you may have a *Blood Hunt* declared on you.

Blood Hunt

If someone is the subject of a Blood Hunt, then that person is a public enemy of all Camarilla vampires. No kindred may give shelter or aid the target and, if they are able, bound to destroy or at least harm the target. A Prince who issues a Blood Hunt may well dispatch the Sheriff and his Hounds (or a group formed for the purpose of prosecuting the hunt), but that doesn't preclude anyone else from participating.

During a Blood Hunt, it is acceptable to *Diabolise* the target.

Diablerie

Diabolising a kindred is the vampire equivalent of cannibalism; just as illegal and just as frowned upon in normal circumstances. It is also very dangerous and can result in being possessed by the beast of the target. Should the diablerie succeed, the kindred who committed it gains the powers and blood potency of the target and reduces their generation by 1. Both the reward and risk are great.