
A SOURCEBOOK FOR VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE
SECOND INQUISITION
VAMPIRE
THE MASQUERADE

# Second Inquisition

A Sourcebook for
*Vampire: The Masquerade*



VAMPIRE
THE MASQUERADE

# The Second Inquisition


## LEGAL AND CREDITS

WRITTEN BY Cat Evans, Kenneth Hite, and Khaldoun Khelil

EDITING AND DEVELOPMENT BY Kenneth Hite and Elisa Teague

ART DIRECTOR: Trivia Fox and Elisa Teague

COVER ART: Mark Kelly

INTERIOR ART AND ILLUSTRATION: Nevzat Aydin, Raquel Cornejo, Trivia Fox, Mark Kelly, Violet Schrage, Elisa Teague

GRAPHIC DESIGN AND LAYOUT: Joshua "HTTPaladin" Mendenhall

CULTURAL CONSULTANT EDITING: James Mendez Hodes

## WORLD OF DARKNESS BRAND MANAGEMENT

BRAND MANAGER: Sean Greaney

BRAND CREATIVE LEAD: Justin Achilli

BRAND ART DIRECTOR: Tomas Arfert

BRAND EDITOR: Karim Muammar

BRAND COMMUNITY DEVELOPER: Martyna “Outstar” Zych

BRAND MARKETING MANAGER: Jason Carl

## PARADOX LICENSING

BUSINESS DEVELOPER: Dhaunae De Vir

## RENEGADE GAME STUDIOS

PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER: Scott Gaeta

VICE PRESIDENT SALES & MARKETING: Sara Erickson

CONTROLLER: Robyn Gaeta

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS: Leisha Cummins

DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: Erika Conway

SALES AND MARKETING PROGRAM MANAGER: Matt Holland

SENIOR PRODUCER OF ROLEPLAYING GAMES: Elisa Teague

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER OF ROLEPLAYING GAMES: Trivia Fox

SENIOR PRODUCER OF BOARD & CARD GAMES: Dan Bojanowski

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER OF BOARD & CARD GAMES: Jimmy Le

SENIOR GAME DESIGNER: Matt Hyra

GAME DESIGNERS: Dan Blanchett & T.C. Petty III

SENIOR CREATIVE LEADS OF BOARD & CARD GAMES: Anita Osburn & Jeanne Torres

VIDEO PRODUCTION ASSOCIATE: Katie Schmitt

CUSTOMER SERVICE: Jenni Janikowski

FINANCE CLERK: Minnie Nelson

EVENT MANAGER: Chris Whitpan

CREATIVE PRODUCTION: Noelle Lopez

CREATIVE PRODUCTION: Todd Crapper



© 2021 Paradox Interactive® AB. Vampire: The Masquerade® – are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Paradox Interactive AB in Europe, the U.S., and other countries.


Visit the World of Darkness online at www.worldofdarkness.com

paradox INTERACTIVE®

RENEGADE GAME STUDIOS

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


## Introduction, 6

How to
Use this Book, 7
Storyteller Style, 7
Theme and Mood, 8
SI Lexicon, 10

## *Chapter One:* Hunter Killers, 13

Fixers and Faces: Social, 13
Techies and Sleuths: Mental, 23
Hitters and Operators: Physical, 31
Warlocks and Clerics: Magical, 37
Turncoats, 46
Building OPFOR, 51

## *Chapter Two:* Special Weapons, 69

Arms and Materiel, 69
Vehicles, 76
XTech, 79
Artifacts, 83

## *Chapter Three:* Dangerous Games, 89

Standard Operating Procedures, 89
Investigative Tactics, 90
Channelizing Tactics, 96
Operational Approaches, 101
Second Inquisition Projects, 108
Coalition Response Algorithm, 112

## *Chapter Four:* Fire Teams, 115

United States, 116
United Kingdom, 123
Russia, 125
Brazil, 128
Partner Organizations, 137
Farm Teams, 140

## *Chapter Five:* Mirror Mazes, 147

Story Element: Chronicle Structures, 147
Setting Element: Welcome to the Occupation, 151
Thematic Element: Fire and Sword, 153
Setting Element: Theaters of Operation, 155
Thematic Element: Night and Fog, 156
Story Element: Shoot or Talk?, 157
Thematic Element: Mirror Images, 158
Setting Element: Enemies of My Enemies, 160

## INDEX, 162




**T O P  S E C R E T // FIRSTLIGHT // REL TO VATSSL / UKJTRG,**

VZBLLXRO93492
PP RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDT RUEHHM
DE RUEHIAO #0877/02 0361442
ZNY VVVVV ZZH
P 000822V FEB 04 2021
FM <REDACTED>
TO RUEHC/OPS LANGLEY PRIORITY 0022

**ELINT SURVEILLANCE INTERCEPT**
**ASSETS:** <REDACTED>
**DATE:** JAN 30/0701HR EST
**LOCATION:** 25.830500 / -80.180374 // MIAMI, FL, USA

**SUBJECTS:**
Male Blankbody 1 Harry 'Twitch' Logan (**HTL**)
Unknown Female Blankbody 2 (Codename SHIRLEY) (**SHR**)
Unknown Male Blankbody 3 (Codename GRASSI) (**GRS**)
Male Blankbody 'Dominic' (No Last Name Known) (**DOM**)

**DURATION:** 05:02

**REMOTE PHONE PUSH INITIATED**
**[Sound of footsteps]**
**[Sound of door sliding open, then shut]**
**HTL:** Don't worry, I lost them.
**SHR:** Lost who?
**GRS:** Where the fuck have you been? It's almost morning, pendejo.
**SHR:** Lost who?
**HTL:** Them, these guys, I think they might have made me outside the club. Black guys, faded sides, looked tough, like cops. Or troops.
**GRS:** What club, asshole?
**HTL:** Scarlet Street, fuck you. Look, I was starving, I been out all night trying to score and nothing, totally dry. Like, dry as your girlfriend.
**[Unintelligible shouting]**
**SHR:** These two guys –
**HTL:** Like I said I lost them, they didn't even see me go into the club, I know the yellow door –
**GRS:** Every jamf in Hialeah knows the yellow door, asshole, it's on their fucking TripAdvisor page!
**HTL:** Well they weren't anywhere around when I went in, just the usual trash and Carlos and some homeless guy.
**SHR:** So the homeless guy saw you go in.
**HTL:** No! I don't know! I don't know what he saw, he was out of it, man, talking to himself –
**SHR:** So after you lost the two troops and got made by a homeless guy you went into Scarlet Street –
**GRS:** Through the douche door –

[Unintelligible shouting]

**GRS:** You lame punk-ass loser.

**HTL:** Fuck you, man, I scored tonight. Huge, maybe a clot, I feel amazing. Hot. I'm topped up, I'm great, nobody on the streets at all after closing, I practically flew here, I don't even know why I mentioned it.

**SHR:** Twitch, are you all right? You look, well, weird. Even for you. You didn't bring the bloody COVID in here?

**HTL:** No, babe, it's cool, nothing like that, I just feel great, really great, really really great.

**SHR:** Jesus, he's tripping balls! Fuck, he's actually sweating! Get his coat off –

**[Loud thump]**

**DOM:** What is that?

**HTL:** I, I, I –

**DOM:** Is that a phone?

**HTL:** It's not mine, Dom, I swear.

**GRS:** It fell out of your pocket, dipshit.

**DOM:** You know the rule about phones.

**HTL:** I do, I do, I don't know where it came from, it's not mine I swear to Christ I mean Cain.

**GRS:** So how did it get in your coat, moron?

**HTL:** I don't know, maybe the girl at the club, she was pretty frisky took my coat off and my shirt and –

**SHR:** This bird, did you feed from her?

**HTL:** Yeah, I told you, I hit that shit, so fine, super fine, way out of my league but I nailed it at the club, drank deep, tasted good but I didn't want to leave a body like you're always saying Dom we gotta be low profile and shit plus maybe if she's a clot it might be worth something tasted so good so fucking good [retching noises]

**GRS:** Hey, watch the denim, motherfucker!

**SHR:** Fuck your jeans, we've been made! Don't you get it? That girl was bloody bait, a Judas goat! We've got to get out of here!

**GRS:** How, exactly? It's fucking dawn, and our so-called Oracle is drooling his blood-mickey on my fucking Jacquards. He couldn't hide a fucking rabbit much less himself.

**DOM:** All of you shut up. Grab his arms. I have a plan. First thing –

**HTL:** [Spitting, retching] Hey, was that a truck outside --

**[Sound of windows breaking, flash-bang grenades detonating]**

**[Gunfire, unintelligible shouting]**

**DEVICE DESTROYED**

# *Introduction:* Opening Gambits

***"For behold, the day is coming, that shall burn like a furnace. And all the proud, yes, all who do evil will be as straw in it. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," says the LORD of Hosts. "Neither root nor branch will be left of them."***

—— MALACHI 4:1

An unnamed Toreador coined the term "the Second Inquisition" for the shitstorm that's deservedly raining down on the Kindred right now. It is, literally, a term of art, not a specific referent: you can't call the Second Inquisition on the phone, or email them @si.gov. (Although if you do send email to that domain name, somebody reads it ...) Nobody has "Second Inquisition" letterhead or a cool SI logo. Even the Vatican just considers this the same Inquisition as the one they started in the 13th century, only the fires blaze higher (and higher-tech) now as the end times near.

Think of the Second Inquisition as an event rather than an organization in itself. This is the time of the Second Inquisition, a new burning time when the Masquerade frays and the Kindred need once more fear the kine. In these nights, vampire-hunting factions of all sizes (and levels of funding and preparation) come together and strike a fire.

The most salient iteration of the Second Inquisition, and what the Kindred usually mean by that phrase, is the illicit and covert multinational conspiracy within many intelligence services and the Vatican to hunt vampires. That group calls itself "the Coalition," when it refers to its membership unofficially. (Officially, it doesn't exist.) Even that oversimplifies matters: in practice, the Coalition comprises two overlapping conspiratorial alliances, a major third force, and a number of clandestine local programs that all sometimes share targeting information.

This book focuses on those hunters and their hunt, because that particular exemplar of the Second Inquisition poses by far the most danger to Kindred society as a whole. But one neighborhood church group or union local with a stake lathe in the garage can destroy you just as truly as a centuries-old Vatican militant society or a deniable DEVGRU strike team can.

# How to Use this Book

This is a book of antagonists for **Vampire: The Masquerade**. It contains no systems for developing Inquisitor or hunter player characters, and its guides to roleplaying and deploying those sorts of characters remain focused on the Storyteller. It does contain a whole lot of "plug-and-play" hunters, suitable for any type of contest in any type of chronicle. Not just chronicles where secret teams of deniable government killers might bust into your haven any morning, but chronicles set wherever the kine hate, fear, and resent the monsters in their midst, and ever more among them armor up to do something about it. So, pretty much any chronicle in these modern nights.

Storyteller characters use the systems, artifacts, tactics, and weapons in this book against the player coterie. Storytellers can and should put any number of obstacles in the player characters' way if they try to turn them around or use them themselves: challenge makes for satisfying stories, and if you touch a holy icon without research (or gloves made from a corpse's skin) you deserve to get burned. Mechanically, some of these systems are deliberately overpowered: they abstract away a lot of training, cooperation, information mining, and tax money with the goal of replicating the paranoia and danger the Kindred experience as the Second Inquisition rises.

## Storyteller Style

Like most worldwide phenomena, the Second Inquisition appears very different depending on how you look for it, and on where you find it. War stories and spy stories often resemble each other more than actual soldiers and spies do. Like most stories in **Vampire**, you can choose what the story of the Second Inquisition in your chronicle looks like. Is it a slick ultra-violent spy thriller, a gritty espionage or cop show, or a looming nightmare that never quite resolves itself?

Pick and choose from among the antagonist types presented, tuning them for your chronicle and your sense of drama. You don't have to build out a tactical OPFOR, or even know what the acronym means. (We'll tell you on p. 51.) The world might be full of black-armored death squads (True Death squads?) burning out havens from Seattle to Sydney but your chronicle's city can just have a half-dozen undercover Helsings in the police department who hide their hunts like their comrades hide their shootings or side rackets. There's maybe a new priest on the east side, and a few tough-looking guys who hang out at the Brazilian restaurant and watch soccer on their phones.

Provide hints and clues, flavored the way you want your story to taste when it's fully cooked. Give up telling details, maybe even personality quirks, but no monologues or data dumps. (Going up against the NSA is how the Kindred got in this mess in the first place.) Don't drown the players in explanations: horror works best when it's unknown and hard to see clearly. Keep the hunters scary and significant when they drop, especially when they drop into the player characters' haven wearing Kevlar and carrying stake-launchers.



# Theme and Mood

The theme of the Second Inquisition is determination – aimed at the player coterie. Like a certain killer cyborg from the future, the Coalition can't be reasoned with, it can't be bargained with. It doesn't feel pity or remorse or fear and it absolutely will not stop. Ever. Individual Inquisitors or soldiers or cops or nuns can be reasoned with and bargained with. Most feel fear, some feel pity, and even a few feel remorse. All those deviations and human moments make excellent stories, ripples in the flood. But the narrative relentlessly washes over those stories, replacing every flawed or broken foe with two more – ten more — out for revenge or salvation. The Inquisition as a whole – both as a conspiracy and a movement that enflames that conspiracy – will not stop until every Kindred burns. Conveying the impersonal, implacable determination of a gigantic bureaucracy to crush the player characters should not be impossible in the 2020s – but it should be very effective.

The mood of the Second Inquisition is paranoia. Gone are the innocent days when vampires – or anyone – could make a phone call, check a website, send an email, buy a book, like a pretty boy without someone seeing it. And someone does see it, because someone is always watching, or they can pull up the data and watch you tomorrow. And unlike you and your data, your watchers don't leave traces or have names and credit ratings and Facebook statuses. And some of those watchers watch in person, from unmarked cars or sniper's nests or the crowd you thought to hunt in safely. And then they close in, and someone else watches them dust you.

### CONSENT AND RESPECTFUL PLAY

**Vampire** deals with mature themes and story elements that some may find uncomfortable or that remind them of personal traumas. The methods used by vampire hunters during the Second Inquisition are violent, tortuous, and place individuals in situations that can reflect real-world discrimination and suffering.

It's worth calling out that these are story elements and themes. They are specifically not a license to traumatize players or abuse the trust between players. While the characters in a chronicle in which the Second Inquisition plays a part may well experience dire circumstances, by no means should such situations or techniques be visited upon the participants of the game.

For more information on consent and respectful play, see Appendix III of **Vampire: The Masquerade**, pp. 421-425.





# SI Lexicon

**Auto-da-Fé:** Literally "act of the faith," originally the ritual sentencing and punishment of a heretic, sometimes by burning at the stake; now a Leopoldite judgment order (usually termination) on a target or subject. Also used for a **Shake and Bake** (q.v.) raid, or any operation involving ample incendiaries.

**BBZed:** Pronounced "B.B. Zed," it abbreviates "Blankbody Zero," the JTRG term for the desired outcome of its operations in Britain. Often used by Coalition hunters to report a successful mission, or sometimes a negative surveillance finding: "We have BBZed on 18th Street."

**Beleza:** Great, beautiful, well-handled; often used sarcastically. Literally "beauty" in Brazilian Portuguese; it has spread to ESOG and American SI special ops.

**Bella:** A mortal suspected of working with or for vampires. Sometimes **Renfield**.

**Blankbodies:** FIRSTLIGHT and SO13 term for vampires, referring to their blank readout on infrared cameras. Also **Two-Bravos**, **B-Boys**, and **BBs**.

**BOES:** Batalhão de Operações Especiais Secretas; Brazilian paramilitary vampire-hunting group. They call themselves **os Sagrados**, "the Sacred."

**Cenacle:** A team of Leopoldite inquisitors; their base of operations is a **Cenaculum**.

**Coalition, the:** Informal name given by the Five Torches to the covert overall planning and operations directorates for the global vampire hunt. What most Kindred mean when they say "the Second Inquisition."

**Eighth Direction:** Vampire-hunting group within the Russian GRU (military intelligence) Fifth Directorate, also **Direction 58** (Napravleniye 58) or **GRU-N58**.

**ESOG:** Entity Special Operations Group; the special-forces component of the Society of St. Leopold. (In Italian, Gruppo Operativo Speciali della Entità, or **GOSE**.) Also **Gladius Dei**.

**Father Leo:** The Society of St. Leopold, or its personnel; mostly used by non-Leopoldites. ("Father Leo has scouted the hospital for us.") Also **Pai Leo** (Brazilian), Otets Lev (Russian).

**FIRSTLIGHT:** Joint CIA/NSA Special Access Program to identify, locate, and destroy vampires.

**Five Torches:** The five main components of the clandestine vampire-hunting Coalition: FIRSTLIGHT (U.S.), JTRG (U.K.), GRU-N58 (Russia), BOES (Brazil), and the Society of St. Leopold.

**Fourteenth Century:** The hundred "hidden" Navy SEALs tasked by IAO for special operations against blankbodies. Also **C14**.

**Green Zone:** Area of a city considered clear of vampires.

**Helsing (or Van Helsing):** A solo vampire hunter; generally used condescendingly by the SI and dismissively by the Kindred.

**IAO:** Information Awareness Office, originally a Pentagon threat-prediction program officially shut down in October 2003; now the shadow command for the U.S. military forces involved in the Second Inquisition.

**In Partibus Sanguisugarum:** "In the lands of the bloodsuckers," used by the Society of St. Leopold to refer to assignments and missions in cities thought to be vampire-controlled. ESOG and other special ops often shorten it to **IPS**, or "In Perfect (or Pure) Shit."

**JTRG:** Joint Threat Response Group within GCHQ (the British signals-intelligence agency) tasked to locate vampires, track them, and target them for SO13 operations.

**Leech:** A vampire. Often pronounced "kleech" by Russian hunters, as a pidgin with the Russian kleshch, or "tick."

**Mulambo:** Messed-up, ugly. ("This operation was mulambo from the jump.") Literally "ragged" in Brazilian Portuguese; now used by BOES, ESOG, and many American hunters for anything gone wrong or fucked up.

**Newburgh Group:** Informal advisory group on occult threats to Great Britain, headed by Sir Simon Newburgh.

**Nightwatchman:** Short sword used by ESOG, optimized for beheading blows.

**Project Twilight:** Informal name for the information-sharing network within the U.S. security establishment in the 1980s and 1990s that believed in monsters, ghosts, and "paradimensionals."

**Pylon:** A mortal (usually a civilian) present at the scene of an operation; connotes both obliviousness and in-the-way-ness. ("Clock the citizen in the doorway across the street." "A Bella?" "No, looks like just a pylon.")

**Ratface:** Vampire of nonhuman appearance, especially Nosferatu, increasingly used for all vampires.

**Rolar:** "Let's roll!" The Brazilian military equivalent of the U.S. military "Hooah!"

**SAD:** Special Affairs Division of the FBI, tasked with "occult crimes" investigations since the 1920s and dedicated to vampire-hunting since 2006.

**Shake and Bake:** An assault using incendiaries and explosives on a target. Also **Auto-da-Fé** (q.v.).

**SO13:** Former name of the Anti-Terrorist Special Operations branch of the London Metropolitan Police; since 2006 the designation for the British vampire-hunting special operations force.

**Tango:** From the NATO alphabet for "T"; used for a generic target or often for a suspected terrorist.

**Transylvania:** Dangerous territory, turf controlled by blankbodies.

**UTR:** Unusual Threat Response, the general bureaucratic or military designation for the special police or military units deployed by the Coalition.

**Velum Sanctuarii:** "Holy Veil," the code name for the red gas deployed by ESOG against high-value Kindred targets.


OPEN
MK
2021

# *Chapter One:* HUNTER KILLERS

*At the first dawn of day, awake your whole detachment*

— MAJ. ROBERT ROGERS, *"RULES OF RANGING"*

Despite common misconceptions among the Kindred, the Coalition isn't all stone-faced militants hiding swords under their trench coats. Each operation and maneuver requires a varied mix of skill sets, a hard ticket to fill even if all personnel survived the first few months. The Coalition constantly seeks out and recruits assets who can bring novel approaches to their work. (And plenty of hunters and Helsings "self-recruit" with the same results.) The monsters they hunt are undying manipulators with an inscrutable array of supernatural powers at their disposal; cookie-cutter tactics and paint-by-numbers massacres won't win this war. They need an army that can fight on every battlefield.

**GENERAL DIFFICULTIES**

**The General Difficulty values given for each Antagonist let the Storyteller treat them as Simple Antagonists (Corebook, p. 370). The number before the slash represents the Difficulty to defeat their strongest ability, the number after the slash the Difficulty to overcome them in other tests.**

## Fixers and Faces: Social

The Coalition understands that blankbodies navigate the halls of power with unnatural grace and that they can never truly be defeated unless they're confronted on that battlefield as well. Fixers are operatives and allies that have power, influence and connections in the mortal world. Whether gained through inheritance or ambition, these invisible power brokers often shape how the conspiracy approaches a blankbody threat once it's detected. Most Fixers operate in the shadows and they can be frustrating enemies for younger blankbodies that prefer to tackle problems head on. When part of a larger operation, Fixers often run their operations from a well-guarded safehouse or secure office building.

Of course, some of the most important Faces on the front line against vampires run their operations from churches, soup kitchens, mosques, or yeshivas. Just as they did under the first Inquisition, clergy burn with righteousness during the Second Inquisition. For standard clerics, use Clergy (Corebook, p. 371).


MK
2021

## Blackmailer

Blankbodies are parasites that only value the mortals around them as pawns and tools. The Blackmailer turns those pawns against their masters with bribes and threats. A common variety of Fixer, Blackmailers usually take a hands-on approach when turning blankbodies' pawns.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 6, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Firearms 5, Intimidation 8, Streetwise 7
**Equipment:** Smartphone, compromising photos, tax records
**Special:** The Blackmailer's presence in an operation makes it more difficult for blankbodies to use their local Allies and Contacts against the hunters. Whenever a vampire attempts to use one of the above Background types against the hunters, they must first make a Composure + Persuasion roll contested by the Blackmailer's Intimidation Die Pool.

Since Blackmailers usually coerce their victims in person, they often leave behind more obvious trails than other Fixers. Tracing a Blackmailer requires a Resolve + Streetwise roll contested by the Blackmailer's Streetwise die pool. The number of successes determines how complete the information uncovered is and how quickly it was uncovered. Blackmailers usually travel with a Gangster as a bodyguard (Corebook, p. 371).

### Variant: Bear Trap

A seemingly less accomplished Blackmailer who intentionally leaves a messy trail to their doorstep, the Bear Trap lures and entraps blankbodies that have proven elusive to capture in the past. Bear Traps put themselves at great risk and in the GRU this role is considered a punishment or even a death sentence.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 5, Mental 4
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 6
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Firearms 6, Manipulation 7, Streetwise 5
**Equipment:** Smartphone, compromising photos, tax records
**Special:** As Blackmailer above except the Bear Trap is usually guarded by a team of four Hit Men (p. 35) or Warriors (p. 35. Their safehouses are also outfitted with XScope security cameras and motion detectors, while Bear Traps working for the Vatican have mystical wards in place within their safehouses.

## Cuckoo

The Cuckoo is an undercover agent. They infiltrate herds, blankbody cults, circles of groupies and the other groups of hangers-on that swarm around the undead like flies on a corpse.

Handlers never see undercover agents as fully trustworthy, even when they're not interacting regularly with bloodsucking monsters with mind control powers. They get too close to their targets, start to develop sympathy for them. They lose themselves in their cover identity. Add blood bonds and Presence into the mix and a Cuckoo's fellow team members, their support network, are often right to be suspicious.

Even worse, Cuckoos are isolated and exposed. If a blankbody catches on to their role, and doesn't choose to immediately drain every milliliter of blood from their body, it's easy to pass them bad information.

All this to say that being a Cuckoo is a dangerous, unrewarding proposition – but it's essential. Cuckoos have access to information no other agent does, especially as the blankbodies become more cautious about electronic communication.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 9
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 6, Etiquette (Kindred) 7, Investigation 7, Persuasion or Subterfuge 7
**Equipment:** One-time pad disguised as vapid self-help e-book, burst transmitter built into a cell phone.
**Special:** Cuckoos undergo intense psychological conditioning before being allowed out into the

field. They receive 4 extra dice on attempts to resist vampiric Disciplines. Some FIRSTLIGHT and GRU handlers pre-Blood Bond the Cuckoo to a torpid, imprisoned vampire as a preemptive defense against them being invited to drink from a blankbody target.

### Variant: Blood Doll

The Blood Doll is underestimated, nigh invisible. They're passed around at parties, or treated like a favorite pet. They see more than they should, and they're assumed to be oblivious, high on the excitement of the Kiss.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 5
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Persuasion 8, Stealth 8
**Equipment:** None
**Special:** Blood Dolls are unobtrusive. Blankbodies pay no attention to their faces or names, and treat them like a piece of furniture. Any attempt, active or passive, to pierce their cover is made at +1 Difficulty.

JTRG and GRU handlers, especially, use Blood Dolls as weapons infected with EV-H07 (p. 79) or one of the more dangerous Alchemical formulae (p. 46).

## Deprogrammer

Blankbodies have a way of engendering loyalty in their servants. They're beautiful, powerful, and they hold the power of life and death in their cold hands. People who get sucked into their orbit tend to fall for them, and hard. Deprogrammers undo all of that conditioning from the people they liberate, converting them from brainwashed blankbody pawns to Informants or Cuckoos... or just releasing them to try and reclaim a normal life.

Techniques vary, but tend to involve locked rooms and intense psychological and emotional pressure. The aim is not to make the subject happy



and healthy, it's to stop them being a useful blankbody asset and, if possible, activate them for the Second Inquisition.

Some Deprogrammers do more than provide counseling. The best of them know how to relieve the effects of Blood Bonds and Domination through blood transfusions, strong psychiatric medication, and – in extreme circumstances – psychosurgery. A little loss of cognitive function is a small price to pay for freedom.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 7, Medicine 7, Persuasion (deprogramming) 8, Science 7
**Equipment:** N/A
**Special:** The Deprogrammer has access to drugs, religious ceremonies, or just highly specialized psychological approaches that alleviate blankbody mind control. Using them effectively requires a successful Intelligence + Medicine (drugs) or Academics (religion or psychotherapy) roll at Difficulty equal to the highest Discipline rating of the influencing vampire. This short-term effect lasts for one scene.

Long-lasting deprogramming takes three days to a week. The deprogrammed ghoul or thrall loses one die from Wits pools, but resists their former master with four extra dice.

### Variant: Oswobodziciele Liberator

Sometimes the Coalition lets blankbodies' other enemies do their dirty work. Beginning in Poland, a movement simmers away amongst the Anarchs that aims to free ghouls from their bondage. Oswobodziciele ("Liberators") do tough, dangerous work mostly unrewarded: ghouls find ways to crawl back to their masters, or find a new one. Or they just prove poorly adapted to normal mortal life after years or decades in the shallows of a glamorous, sunless world. These Anarchs do the work anyway, because it's right.

The O don't work for the Second Inquisition. They occasionally get tips through the grapevine that give them a window of opportunity to snatch a ghoul and get to work on them. When the O have done their work, and taken the blame, FIRST-LIGHT or Father Leo picks up the newly liberated ghoul, gives them a compassionate reception, and siphons out every useful piece of information they can get.

This profile reflects a neonate vampire on the side of the O's movement.

**General Difficulty:** 4/3
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 6, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 8, Stealth 7, Streetwise 8, Persuasion 8
**Equipment:** Pistol, handcuffs, chloroform.
**Disciplines:** Animalism 1, Celerity 2, Potence 2
**Humanity:** 7
**Blood Potency:** 1

### Variant: Psychic Surgeon

This variant Deprogrammer severs the connection between a blankbody's victim and the monster itself. The SAD and GRU-N58 both discovered what they called "psychic surgery" in the 1990s, and the Society of St. Leopold has its own "blood exorcism" rituals. By any name, cutting a Blood Bond (or any other vampiric connection) causes physical pain and leaves leaves lasting emotional scars.

A rare gift, never seen amongst any vampire, or in anyone who has ever consumed Kindred blood, it can be amplified by training but not – apparently — taught from nothing. Some vampire alchemists believe that the blood of a Psychic Surgeon can be used to make an elixir that would break a Blood Bond; those with the gift seldom advertise it.

(In game terms, Psychic Surgery is a Merit, but since player characters can't use it, this hardly matters.)

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** relevant Psychic Surgery pool 9
**Equipment:** N/A
**Special:** Breaking a blood bond with Psychic

Surgery requires an Extended Test, with one roll per day and a Difficulty of 5 × the Bond Strength. The Psychic Surgeon can reduce the Difficulty by dealing an equivalent amount of Aggravated damage to the bonded subject: bloody sweat or stigmata, seizures, spleen failure, and other symptoms manifest in such cases. If the subject survives, permanently reduce their Resolve by 1.

The Society of St. Leopold's blood exorcists use Charisma + Persuasion; GRU or SAD psychic surgeons use Resolve + Science (if they began as psychiatrists) or Manipulation + Occult (if they began as street healers); Newburgh Group "silver-cutters" use Intelligence + Occult. Unwilling thralls or ghouls can contest the roll using their Willpower.

### False Flagger

The False Flagger presents themselves as an agent of a blankbody faction, usually the Camarilla, to targets politically estranged from that faction. Ideally, Turncoat blankbody assets or Lordlesss fulfill this role, but those assets remain extremely thin on the ground. Thus the Coalition more often uses mortal operatives trained to resist mental coercion. False Flaggers present the targets with "missions" that supposedly allow them to enter the faction's good graces, but actually pit them against other blankbody targets. The ultimate end game: internecine war amongst the local blankbodies, ideally with plenty of fatalities. The handler then withdraws the False Flagger and deploys a team of operators to capture any survivors.

**General Difficulty:** 4/3
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 7, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Etiquette 8, Persuasion 8, Subterfuge 8, Politics (local blankbodies) 7
**Equipment:** Smartphone, fashion accessory with faction symbology
**Special:** The False Flagger has a cover story equivalent to Mask 2. They can also access Resources and Influences on a case-by-case basis to help prove their bona fides. The False Flagger contests Dominate and Presence powers with their Willpower.

## Gentrifier

Naturally territorial monsters that twist their environment to suit their vices, it can be difficult to root blankbodies out of their nests without first dismantling their early warning systems. The Gentrifier eats away at blankbody assets and resources on their home turf, turning their Domain's defenses and conveniences into a trap. Many of them prove to be self-starting Helsings rather than agents of a clandestine government conspiracy. Independent actors or Coalition assets, they generally operate "in Transylvania" — in cities or neighborhoods with a well-established blankbody population.

The Gentrifier uses cash and credit as their main weapons: once they know where blankbodies make their nest they begin to turn up the heat. They buy out condemned buildings and re-market them as condos. They invest in old businesses, refurbishing them with state-of-the-art computerized security systems. They pull strings to get street lights repaired, and install surveillance cameras on them with the police or suspiciously well-funded "neighborhood watch" groups. Charitable contributions and political favors incentivize the police to patrol the streets more regularly. The devastating side effect of the damage gentrification does to mortal neighborhoods is inconsequential to the Gentrifier's goal. Within a matter of months, if not weeks, a gentrification campaign can transform a vampire's Domain from their hunting ground to their prison.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Finance (Real Estate) 7, Investigation 7, Politics (local) 7, Streetwise 7
**Equipment:** Smartphone, perfect credit score, loan guarantees
**Special:** Gentrifiers damage the Domains of coteries that they target (Corebook, p. 195). Once a week the Gentrifier can make a Finance roll opposed by one character's Intelligence + Finance + Portillon; for every extra success they reduce a Domain's Chasse and Lien rating by one dot each. Once the Domain's Chasse and Lien are reduced to zero, any leftover successes reduce the Domain's

Portillon on a one for one basis. After a Gentrifier stops pressuring a Domain, the Coterie regains one lost dot every week.

As long as the Domain is damaged by a Gentrifier, the coterie cannot invest or remove dots from the Domain. If a Coterie abandons a Domain under attack by a Gentrifier they lose all dots invested in the Domain unless they can convince the Gentrifier to undo the damage. Gentrifiers can only target one Domain at a time.

See p. 98 for mechanics for longer-term or wider-scale gentrification attempts.

### Variant: Broker

The Broker is a cutout for an organized criminal enterprise and any asset they take over is immediately used to enrich their backers. Domains under the ministrations of a Broker quickly become the site of arsons, robberies and open drug deals. The police presence in the neighborhood also chaotically fluctuates between their complete absence and an overwhelming armed occupation.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Investigation 7, Politics 7, Streetwise 7
**Equipment:** Smartphone
**Special:** As the Gentrifier above, except the relevant contest is the Broker's Streetwise vs. the character's Resolve + Streetwise + Portillon. Also when a Broker reduces a Domain's Chasse and Lien dots to zero, any leftover successes reduce the Resources available to all Coterie members on a one for one basis. Brokers usually travel with two Gangsters as bodyguards (Corebook, p. 371).

### Variant: Dealer

The Dealer sets up shop near an area of blankbody activity and becomes part of the grey market selling drugs or other illegal materials to the mortals there. The Dealer cultivates a wide customer base and targets mortals with close blankbody ties for entrapment. Once the blankbody's herd or other mortal pawns are indebted to the Dealer they are slowly recruited to perform small tasks in service of the operation that transgress against their master's trust. If successful the Dealer identifies and ensnares the blankbody's mortal support network, neutralizing their value to the vampire.

**General Difficulty:** 2/1
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 5, Mental 4
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 5
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Larceny 5, Medicine 5, Melee 5, Streetwise (Black markets) 5
**Equipment:** Knife, smartphone, illegal drugs or contraband
**Special:** Once per week, the Dealer uncovers actionable intel about their neighborhood: whether a mortal belongs to any blankbody's Herd, if a given location is being used as a vampire's Haven, etc. This ability only begins to pay off after the Dealer has operated in the area for three weeks, plus one week per dot in the Domain's Portillon. Particularly secure Havens may take an extra week per dot in Haven to uncover (or less time if the Haven has the Compromised Flaw (Corebook, p. 188)).

## Informant

Informants are weak links: staff, retainers, and contacts with a grudge against their undead employer that burns away at their loyalty, or a weakness that hunters can exploit. The Coalition buys informants with money, threats, blackmail or promises of extraction from the vampiric web. They're an object lesson in why it pays to treat underlings with grace and respect – and to reward them well.

Most informants are low level: the closer an employee gets to the real secrets, the better a vampire usually vets them. That's why it's important to have a whole network of informants, everywhere from a vampire's herd to their corporate office. Some of them don't even know they work for a monster. It's also why most informants are disposable. A highly placed informant, on the other hand, can be worth their weight in gold.

This profile reflects a run of the mill, low-level informant.

**General Difficulty:** 3/1

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 4, Mental 3
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 5
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Subterfuge 7, Insight 6, One special skill (e.g. Finance, Academics, Drive) at 7.
**Equipment:** Burner phone.
**Special:** The informant has a direct line to their handler. It might be a phone number, an email address, or a coded message on an online forum. If they feel unsafe or have information to pass on, they can get it to their handler in an hour.

Being an Informant is a dangerous position. If a blankbody, or anyone else, becomes suspicious, a successful Wits + Insight or Intelligence + Investigation roll provides enough evidence for them to be sure of the Informant's position. The Difficulty for this roll starts at 5 and reduces by one for every six months the Informant has worked with the hunters: the longer they're in place, the more suspicion builds and evidence mounts up.

### Variant: Canary

The Canary is close to their vampiric employer. They know a lot of secrets, and they provide a regular feed of information, not only when their handler asks. A Canary is valuable, and their handler works much harder to protect them.
**General Difficulty:** 4/1
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 4, Mental 3
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 5
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Subterfuge 7, Insight 7, One special skill (e.g. Finance, Academics, Drive) at 7.
**Equipment:** Burner phone.
**Special:** The longer an Informant is in place, the more value they have to the Coalition and the more trust and affection builds up between the Informant and their handler. The Canary can ask for favors from their handler, acquiring a one-dot increase to any Background for the duration of a week.

The Canary also knows incriminating secrets about at least one other person in the blankbody's personal network. If they're caught and confronted, they can scapegoat this other connection, even pointing to a few pieces of convenient, circumstantial evidence.

## Politician

The Politician wages a slow and painstaking war against blankbody influence in local or regional bureaucracy. It's rare for a blankbody to hold truly national influence in the West – not least because when they do, the Coalition prioritizes bringing them down.

Politicians stop or subvert vampiric projects, diverting resources or trapping them in a snarl of red tape. They undermine relationships with allies – supporting blankbody causes, even unknowingly, has severe consequences for other projects. They might even turn a neighbourhood or city into a hostile environment for blankbodies: working to get the unhoused population off the streets, changing licensing laws to reduce the number of nightclubs and other feeding grounds, or relocating a blood bank.

Politicians might be "full-time" Coalition directors who take an active role in project planning and strategy, close allies in the know, or ignorant contacts who still don't want to get on the wrong side of the CIA, MI6, or their ilk. This profile suits a full Coalition asset.
**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 6, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Etiquette 8, Finance 7, Leadership 8, Politics 9, Persuasion 8
**Equipment:** Top of the line smartphone, winning smile.
**Special:** Politicians interfere with vampiric projects. If the Coalition has a Politician in place, the Difficulty of all blankbody endeavors that involve bureaucracy or finance, or require any permits or licenses, increases by 2. It's not instantly apparent that a roll has failed: it simply takes longer, processes get swallowed up in red tape, and people lose interest or are swayed by lobbyists with

different interests.

Politicians have a dramatic effect on long-term Projects, too. Any Project that interacts with city or regional government in any way has its increment increased by one step (hours to days, days to weeks, etc.).

If a Politician isn't actively engaged in opposing a blankbody plan or Project, their presence wears away at alliances and influence. For every month a Politician isn't otherwise occupied, a target vampire's Allies, Contacts, or Influence in politics, law enforcement, or other civic positions effectively reduce by one dot. The reduction lasts until the Politician is out of office. Many separate Kindred have their fangs in city hall, so a Politician rarely focuses on one target for consecutive months.

It's not easy for a blankbody to find the specific Politician who obstructs their interests. They hide behind subtle machinations and proxies, and it requires an Extended Intelligence + Politics roll (required number of successes equals the Politician's Wits + Politics pool) to track one down. Politicians under threat from blankbodies (or other enemies) have a bodyguard or two (use the Police Detective, Corebook p. 371).

## Socialite

The Socialite is on the best lists and their very presence can make or break a party. Most of the Coalition's Socialites come from old money or Catholic fortunes, but FIRSTLIGHT and JTRG have begun recruiting (or blackmailing) social media influencers. Socialites play a tricky role within the Coalition conspiracy. They primarily deny blankbodies easy access to the upper echelon of society by drawing them into compromising social situations or tarring their reputations through rumor, but they're also supposed to gain their target's confidence. This requires them to develop a persona that is at once enticing and believably naive or incompetent.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 7, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 7, Etiquette 8, Persuasion 8, Subterfuge (Lies) 8
**Equipment:** Smartphone, stunning clothes, invites to the best parties
**Special:** The Socialite can gain access to any event or venue open to mortals regardless of how exclusive it is for everyone else. The velvet rope never blocks their path and their admirers hang on their every word.

When a Socialite wins Social Combat against a vampire (or their assets) they can reduce one of their opponent's Backgrounds to zero for a week in addition to the regular benefits of victory (Corebook, p. 304). Social shunning might reduce Contacts, Fame, or Influence; a media frenzy might reduce Haven or Mask. The Storyteller determines which Background reduces; after one week the reduced Background returns in full as the media or social circus moves on.

### Variant: Busybody

The Busybody (or Gossip) has an insidious empathy and can even pry open a dead heart. Gossips are often recruited interrogators and psychologists given a cover identity as a rich dilettante or aspiring actor. They attempt to gain leverage against blankbodies by identifying pressure points that still resonate from their mortal life.

**General Difficulty:** 4/1
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 7, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 9
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Insight 9, Performance 9, Subterfuge 9
**Equipment:** Smartphone, caring expression, access-journalist friends.
**Special:** As Socialite above, except the Busybody can learn the identity of a blankbody's Touchstone instead of gaining any other benefit from defeating them in social combat. Sometimes this social combat moves so subtly that the blankbody isn't even aware they've lost – until their Touchstone suddenly stops returning their calls.


MK
2021

# Techies and Sleuths: Mental

Inhuman minds, faster than any mortal, watch the cities of the world from orbit and from every ATM: computerized surveillance systems. The Coalition commands this technology, and repurposes proven analytical techniques in their hunt for the undead. Not every hunter group depends on such systems, but the entire Second Inquisition as a movement and a phenomenon benefits from the keenest among them: FIRSTLIGHT analysts and algorithms, Vatican archivists, GRU eavesdroppers. Blankbodies can no longer depend on the shadows and anonymity to hide their crimes; the Coalition has let the light in and privacy is a luxury the world can no longer afford.

## Bear-Leader

While vampire hunting used to be a primarily solitary activity, the advent of the Second Inquisition has transformed it into a globe spanning conspiracy within a byzantine bureaucracy. The logistics and organization required to bring together multiple agencies with different group dynamics and mission statements can be daunting. The Bear-Leader (also called the Party Planner) is equal parts project manager, quartermaster and psychologist. They understand how groups of people work together and can quickly turn a pack of rivals into a well-oiled squad of hunters. This also gives Bear-Leaders an almost unnatural ability to piece together the group dynamics of the blankbodies they are hunting. Nothing makes them happier than when a plan comes together.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Insight 8, Leadership 8, Persuasion 8, Politics 8, Subterfuge 8
**Equipment:** Smartphone, laptop, whiteboard, maps, thumb tacks, red string
**Special:** When a Party Planner runs an operation they can call in favors from other organizations in the Coalition (or from local authorities) with a Politics roll. The Difficulty of this roll depends on the scale of the favor needed. A SIGINT tap or records access might be Difficulty 2; a police raid, a budget bump, or speedy confidential forensics results Difficulty 3; requisitioning a chest of silver pounds sterling, or obtaining a relic from the Order of St. Leopold might be Difficulty 4; immediate deployment of a specific GRU-N58 veteran Warrior, a platoon of ESOG UTR troopers, or a Predator strike to the Paris suburbs would be Difficulty 5. Player characters with connections to that organization can snarl, delay, or outright block the requisition with a contest of their Manipulation + Politics (+ Influence if relevant) against the Bear-Leader's Politics pool.

Bear-Leaders can also make an extended Insight roll once a week against a Difficulty of 10 to determine the basic Relationship Map of any vampire coterie they are hunting (Corebook, pg. 142). A Domain's Portillon rating reduces this die pool normally, while information uncovered by Burrowers, Informants, and others may add successes at the Storyteller's discretion.

## Black-Bagger

Understanding and gathering information on a target before taking direct action against them is fundamental to many Second Inquisition operations. The GRU, SAD, SO13, and FIRSTLIGHT make regular use of technical experts who can quickly enter premises or a vehicle, plant covert listening devices, and extricate themselves without leaving any tracks. These Black-Baggers allow a UTR team to keep tabs on a target and identify their accomplices with a minimum of risk to the team itself. Black-Baggers have to be exceptionally careful when breaking and entering into blankbody premises: supernatural senses can detect the slightest disturbances to their property, and many blankbodies take a perverse delight in trapping their havens against intrusion.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 3, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 6
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 6, Larceny (Alarms) 8, Stealth 7, Technology 7
**Equipment:** Maxim 9 suppressed pistol, listening devices, toolbox

### Variant: Mechanic

Mechanics use their technical skills to get into places they don't belong and then they rig them to explode at the push of a button. The Mechanic is an artisan at heart and often crafts their improvised explosive devices based upon the mission's requirements. While limiting collateral damage is rarely their primary concern, often their devices are only used to disable a vehicle during a pursuit or to flush out blankbodies hiding in a haven. Putting together the right device for the job is an art and the Mechanic wants their work to contribute to the UTR team's success without further endangering them.
**General Difficulty:** 4/1
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 3, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7, Craft (Explosives) 8, Firearms 7, Larceny (Alarms) 6, Stealth 7
**Equipment:** Toolbox, plastic explosive, detonators, burner cellphone
**Special:** A vehicle rigged to explode by a Mechanic causes Aggravated damage (equal to the Mechanic's relevant explosives pool) to anyone inside it, and half that to anyone nearby. Blankbodies and mortals with some forewarning can make a Wits + Composure roll to attempt to get clear in time to avoid the blast. Each success on this roll reduces the damage from the blast by one to a minimum of 2 Aggravated Health levels of damage.

## Burrower

It's hard to disappear completely. Vampires leave traces. Names change, identities are falsified, but – and this is key – vampires rarely move around. With enough patience and access to the right private libraries it's possible to connect scattered traces of records into a picture of a monster.

The Burrower is somewhere between a librarian and a criminal profiler. They stitch together information to uncover blankbody resources (e.g. a family home, a secret identity), motivations (e.g. a gradual expansion of influence over a subculture or neighborhood), and even to hazard a guess at their supernatural powers and limitations. A Burrower can look at a pattern of animal attacks, the failure over four purchases and twenty years to develop a greenfield site, and local folklore and conclude that the city has a Gangrel problem.
**General Difficulty:** 4/1
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 4, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 6
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 9, Insight 7, Investigation 8, Occult 8
**Equipment:** A laptop full of obscure research materials is the only tool a Burrower needs. When they're sent out into libraries, archives or collections where they might be in jeopardy they're armed with a TASER. If they're in serious danger, a Lone Wolf or other field Operative accompanies them, and makes them wear a Kevlar vest.
**Special:** The Burrower systematically dissects and analyses a blankbody's past and present lives to ruin them. See Data Analysis: Academic Specializations (p. 94) for specific mechanics.

### Variant: Forensic Accountant

In modern nights, personal history is often less important than how the money flows. Find your way into bank accounts, investments, and financial transactions and you build up a strikingly clear picture of someone's existence. This is even true for the dead: privacy and security cost money, the staff needs payroll, and most blankbodies with the resources to purchase a haven do so. It's the twenty-first century: hardly anyone pays cash any more so there's a data trail, albeit tightly encrypted, for every single transaction.

Once a Forensic Accountant has found the trail,

they set about cutting off a blankbody from their money, which has a way of severing other ties. A blankbody accustomed to wealth and privilege suddenly finds themselves unable to get anything done. When the money stops flowing, alliances evaporate and projects founder. No more bribes, no more buying influence. It might even stop a Bagger or Consensualist from getting their fix of fresh blood.

**General Difficulty:** 4/1

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 4, Mental 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 7, Finance 9, Investigation 8, Politics 7

**Equipment:** Laptop full of cutting-edge banking software; logins (legitimate or otherwise) to tax authorities worldwide

**Special:** The Forensic Accountant identifies the sources of a blankbody's Resources with an Extended (one roll per day) Resolve + Finance roll, with a Difficulty equal to 7 minus the Background's rating. Reducing Resources requires an Extended Intelligence + Finance roll with a Difficulty equal to 21 minus three times the Background's rating: it's easy to skim some money off a fake bank account, harder to wipe someone out completely, not least because at the lower end of the scale some of those Resources exist only as cash.

Some Forensic Accountants find it hilarious to distribute the Resources they seize to good causes. The Society of St. Leopold makes sizable donations to Catholic charities, for example. Others just plow the money back into their team's operational budgets. BOES goes as far as to flaunt it, making big, showy purchases of new munitions immediately after they've drained a target's bank account.

## Detective

The Detective is a hardened investigator with street level experience and a gentle way of squeezing information – support networks, hiding spots, key figures in various underground scenes — out of marks without making them suspicious. While cash and gentle questioning often suffice to get a lead on a target, the Detective isn't afraid to follow a clue to an abandoned hotel or an underground bunker.

For a standard police detective unaware of the vampire threat, see the Police Detective (Corebook, p. 371). Build a more clued-in or connected detective or spy with the Inquisitor Investigator (Corebook, p. 372). This writeup essentially describes that Inquisitor Investigator after surviving a couple of years hunting blankbodies.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 5, Mental 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 6, Firearms or Melee 7, Investigation 7, Larceny 6, Persuasion 7, Streetwise 7

**Equipment:** Pistol (Glock 17) or police baton, smartphone, wad of cash (or police badge)

**Special:** Working alone or with the occasional street informant, a Detective who already knows blankbodies exist can deduce the same things about a blankbody as the Dealer can learn (p. 19). The difference is primarily that the Detective focuses on one blankbody, while the Dealer covers a whole Domain. Unlike the Dealer, the Detective can start putting the pieces together after one week, plus one week per dot in the target's Mask. Particularly secure Havens may take an extra week per dot in Haven to uncover (or less time if the Haven has the Compromised Flaw (Corebook, p. 188)).

### Variant: Hammer

Hammers prefer violence to pressure a blankbody's support network into giving up their master. Their methods are not subtle and the SI often brings Hammers into an operation as a last resort to find a vampire that has gone to ground but likely remains in the area. The direct tactics employed by the Hammer work best when a vampire's pawns can no longer count on their patron's protection.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 7, Firearms 7, Intimidation (Threats) 7, Melee 7, Streetwise 7
**Equipment:** Pistol (Glock 17), smartphone, brass knuckles, signature melee weapon (baseball bat, clawhammer, etc.)

## Doctor

Their calling is to preserve human life; the blankbodies' purpose is to poison and destroy it. Doctors make a natural component of Coalition units. BOES, GRU, and IAO hit squads often attach a corpsman or medic; SAD hunter teams work hand in glove with the medical examiner; FIRSTLIGHT keeps entire haematological research facilities funded; the Society of St. Leopold operates within a whole network of Catholic hospitals. Any competent Bear-Leader gets their medical specialist admitting privileges at the local hospital, or at least has a trustworthy physician on 24-hour standby.

But doctors don't always get drafted or deployed onto the front lines of the Second Inquisition – sometimes they volunteer. A city full of vampires is a city full of mysterious deaths and strange injuries, of blood stocks stolen from patients in need, of ambulance calls that turn even darker than normal. Teams of hunters drawn from hospitals – EMTs, trauma ward nurses, night-shift residents who have all seen behind the Masquerade – may be more common than teams of hunters drawn from police departments.
**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 7, Insight 7, Medicine 8
**Equipment:** Medical bag, crash kit, surgical knives
**Special:** Doctors and medics who hunt vampires for long enough develop familiarities with certain conditions and injuries that go beyond mere specialties. Add two dice to their Medicine pools to diagnose, treat, or heal blood loss, anemia, piercing trauma (such as fangs or stakes), blood poisoning, and the like.

## Hacker

While FIRSTLIGHT, JTRG, and the Russian GRU have an army of programmers and analysts combing through the world's data streams, sometimes an operation requires a hands-on technology expert. The Hacker takes control of the digital world around them and constantly feeds their team with up-to-the-second information on their targets and their digital activities. While their ability to commandeer the security apparatus of urban areas is incredibly powerful, their true value to an operation comes from when the team comes into possession of a blankbody's electronic devices. A Hacker needs less than an hour with a laptop to copy it for deeper analysis. Smartphones can prove tricky for most Hackers to crack, but FIRSTLIGHT and IAO operatives have access to secret exploits built into the underlying operating systems of most modern smartphones.
**General Difficulty:** 4/1
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 4, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 6
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Insight 7, Larceny 5, Subterfuge 7, Technology 8
**Equipment:** Smartphone, laptop, powerful gaming rig, VR headset
**Special:** Hackers operating on a FIRSTLIGHT, JTRG, or Eighth Direction supported mission can add three dice to their Technology pool for hacking attempts, reflecting the support of the NSA, GCHQ, or GRU and their vast institutional cyberwarfare power.

### Variant: Phone Phreak

The Phone Phreak is a technical specialist in older forms of communications such as land lines, cryptograms and mechanical cipher devices. As blankbodies have retreated from modern technology to evade the Second Inquisition, the hackers of the 1980s have suddenly come back in demand. The Russian GRU is widely acknowledged to have the most skilled Phone Phreaks in the Coalition and often remands these technical operators to other

Coalition teams working in urban environments with dated technological infrastructure.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 3, Mental 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Craft 7, Larceny 8, Subterfuge 8, Technology 7

**Equipment:** Smartphone, decoder ring, professional lineman set

**Special:** Phone Phreaks do not incur a penalty for working with analog or other technology from the 20th century and any penalties inflicted for working with devices from the 19th century are halved. Phone Phreaks are also familiar with mechanical cryptography and can use a Craft roll to recreate the mechanism of cipher devices like the WWII-era Enigma machine if given enough time. Their successes on this roll can be added to any computational efforts to crack codes generated from the cipher devices they've recreated.

## Tail

The Tail is just another face in the crowd, an Uber driver waiting on their passenger or a delivery guy fixing his bike on the street corner. Although a lot of their most basic functions have been overtaken by modern technology their task is both simple and deadly serious. Tails track blankbodies that have successfully countered electronic surveillance in the past but might not realize the Coalition now directly targets them. Tails follow their targets while



keeping mostly out of sight and only communicate with their handlers when their targets can't make them. Tails often use disguises if tracking targets over long periods and always have an escape route planned if they're made.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 6
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 6, Awareness 7, Drive 7, Stealth 7, Streetwise 6
**Equipment:** Earbud, comfortable but nondescript shoes
**Special:** Tails with radio coverage, overwatch, or partners gain a two dice bonus to all non-combat rolls when involved in a pursuit. This bonus also applies when the Tail is attempting to throw off pursuers.

### Variant: Lamplighter

The Lamplighter marks the favorite spots of their targets and plants remote video surveillance devices to keep tabs on them. These devices are often smaller than a tennis ball, have a limited range but incorporate simple XScope technology to detect blankbodies. More traditional Lamplighters also work in teams and use dead drops to communicate with their handlers if a target's route becomes erratic.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 6
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 7, Larceny 7, Stealth 7, Streetwise 7, Technology 7
**Equipment:** Concealed micro communications device, remote XScope cameras
**Special:** As Tail, above. Lamplighters are well versed in evading surveillance by using sight lines and DIY dazzle camo to fool facial recognition software. Lamplighters can roll their Technology pool to avoid detection by active or passive surveillance devices. This roll is contested by (active) or has a Difficulty of (passive) the camera operator's Resolve + Technology.

### Variant: Mother Hen

The Mother Hen tracks multiple targets using a network of local paid informants and loyal spies. While this means the Mother Hen can "follow" several blankbodies at once and discover their group dynamics, their ability to track and investigate individual blankbodies remains somewhat diminished in comparison to other Tails. The Mother Hen is also in less direct danger if exposed and can abort and restart operations with a new team if necessary.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 7, Leadership 7, Medicine 7, Politics 7, Streetwise 7
**Equipment:** Laptop, expensive watch
**Special:** The Mother Hen can track the movements of known blankbodies by rolling Streetwise. The Difficulty of this roll is equal to the number of blankbodies the Mother Hen is tracking. If a blankbody enters a Coterie's Domain, the Domain's Portillon rating subtracts successes from the Mother Hen's original roll. If a blankbody becomes aware of the surveillance or takes active measures to avoid detection they contest the Mother Hen's Streetwise roll with an appropriate roll of their own (usually Wits + Stealth). Lastly the Mother Hen's tracking of targets rarely occurs in real time and their information can have a delay of anywhere from a few minutes to an hour.

## Weaponer

In an ideal world, getting the right gear for an operation would be as easy as filling in the right form. In the real world, it helps to have someone on staff who can cobble together an LRAD or taser-like shotgun shells with a couple of days and the contents of a fairly mediocre weapons locker.

The Weaponer isn't quite Q Division, but they're a vital asset. They adapt paintball guns for chemical or acid ammo, craft thermobaric or pyrophoric rounds, and customize a team's loadout for the specific blankbody they face. Although they do some of their best work in a workshop, a Weaponer

is useful in the field, too. Breaking into a blankbody's nest presents unexpected challenges, and the ability to improvise technical solutions in the field, or even get a damaged weapon back in working order, is highly useful.

This writeup is appropriate for a field technician.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Craft 8, Science 8, Technology 9
**Equipment:** A handgun or shotgun, Kevlar vest, acetylene torch, tool kit, an assortment of useful items/components
**Special:** The Weaponer performs at their best in the field, tinkering with equipment, breaking and recombining to make whatever the team needs right that moment. Given 10 minutes, a successful Wits + Technology roll against Difficulty 3, some common household or office supplies and a couple of pieces of mechanical or electronic equipment they can create a useful gadget that assists with one manual or investigative task: lockpicking/breaking, levering a door open, taking fingerprints, etc. Each point of margin on the roll adds one die to tasks using that piece of equipment for the rest of the scene.

### Variant: XTechnician

The XTechnician has a special gift. They work in one of the classified laboratories most of the Five Torches have at their disposal – though sometimes they have more in common with church crypts than sterile labs. They're the people who create the Coalition's superweapons, specifically creating tech that works around blankbodies' supernatural advantages.

XTechnicians are generally too precious to risk their big brains in the field, but sometimes the value outweighs the danger. If a Coalition team faces an unfamiliar enemy with powers they've never seen before, the XTech's ability to improvise can be a lifesaver.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 7
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Craft 8, Science 9, Technology 9
**Equipment:** Design software, industrial 3D fabricator, pre-printed motherboards and control surfaces, an assortment of useful items/components, one piece of XTechnology (pg. 79).
**Special:** Given a day and sufficient laboratory facilities, the XTech can prototype a device that counteracts a specific Discipline or other blankbody ability: screamer grenades that play havoc with Heightened Senses for a few seconds, a tanglefoot trap to stop a preternaturally fast blankbody, even a magnetic field that impedes Blood Sorcery.

Deploying that device in the field requires a Wits + Technology roll either by the XTech (Difficulty 2) or by someone under their direct supervision (Difficulty 3). The next time a vampire uses that Discipline near the gadget, they make their roll to activate it with one fewer die per point of margin on the XTech's roll. If a Discipline doesn't usually require a roll to use on mortals, the blankbody must roll to activate it but at half the penalty (rounded down). The gadget works once, and then burns out immediately.

If anyone survives the operation and reports the gadget's performance the Coalition might put the device into development, to be deployed within eighteen months.




MK
2021

# Hitters and Operators: Physical

At the end of the day the Second Inquisition hunts monsters. Blankbodies will not surrender of their own accord; they have to be dealt with on the ground. Local heroes and terrified gangbangers can weed out the slow, the new-fledged, and the stupid from the leeches' ranks. But to hunt tougher targets for months or years requires soldiers who not only have the skills to confront such a threat, but the mental fortitude to keep the movements secrets and step over their own moral boundaries. Fortunately for the Coalition, many nations had developed deep benches of such soldiers indoctrinated in the gospels of patriotism and national security.

When the vampires' Masquerade began to crack it was a natural evolution to recruit vampire hunters from military and intelligence personnel trained in counterterrorism and shadowy special operations. Deployed as cadre in "Unusual Threat Response" teams, these operators form the tip of the Coalition's spear. For a generic Coalition UTR special operator, use the Inquisitor Delta (Corebook, p. 372).

## Amateur

Many vampire hunters begin as Amateurs. These "Helsings" often work alone, but some Coalition UTR teams recruit promising local Amateurs after suffering severe casualties. Amateurs have yet to hone the skills necessary to tackle stronger blankbodies and their teams usually keep them arm's length from the heart of the action until they are properly seasoned. Amateurs depend on grit and luck to see them through their early missions, but few make it through unchanged.

Given the overlap between Kindred activity and criminal activity, many Amateurs begin as Gangsters, See Corebook, p. 371).

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 3, Mental 3
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 6
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 6, Brawl 6, Firearms 6, Melee (Stakes) 6, Occult (Vampires) 4
**Equipment:** Shotgun, stakes and hammers, gas can, zippo lighter, football pads (Armor Value 1, no defence against ballistics).
**Special:** When the Amateur is reduced to zero Health they are incapacitated but will not die unless specifically finished off by an enemy or the environment. The next time they appear in the chronicle they have an appropriate scar and have become a Warrior, Clearance Specialist, Flagellant, or other dangerous hunter type.

Homemade explosives are dangerous: on a failed test to set or detonate them, the Amateur takes that damage themselves.

## Breacher

Breachers ensure physical obstacles don't slow their team down. They're a solution to every environmental problem from blowing holes in walls or thick doors, making sure the exits from a vampire nest are securely blocked before the team goes in to cleanse it, to clearing traps. Without a Breacher on board, a UTR team's numbers would be thinned down before they reach their objective, or they might never get there at all.

Breachers are worth their weight in gold when it's time to storm a haven or destroy a feeding ground, and they're invaluable when a blankbody makes its lair in a non-standard spot, like a crumbling clock tower or a maze of sewers. They're equipped with the tech and the knowledge to navigate those spaces quickly and safely.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 3, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7, Craft 7, Firearms 7, Larceny 7, Science (Engineering) 7, Technology 6
**Equipment:** Kevlar vest, helmet (+1 Armor Value), axe, tactical ear buds, battering ram or breaching bar, plastic explosives, thermite, grenade launcher with thermobaric munitions, shotgun (loaded

with breaching rounds and slugs)
**Special:** Breachers become thoroughly accustomed to the noise and chaos of demolitions. They ignore penalties to senses and Composure tests from smoke, fire, or explosions (but can still use reduced visual range to avoid meeting a blankbody's eyes).

For a Breacher, destroying a wall or other structure with explosives or thermobaric munitions requires the following number of successes on an Intelligence + Larceny roll (or other relevant pool; Corebook, p. 410):

- Interior wall, car: 1
- Exterior/brick wall, armored car, large vehicle: 2
- Concrete/reinforced wall: 3
- Vault: 4 or more

In the worst-case scenario, a captured Breacher carries enough explosives to bring down a building with them inside. By detonating everything they have on them, they create a single explosion large enough to rip through several floors of an office building or towerblock. It deals 10 levels of Aggravated damage to anything unfortunate enough to be caught inside. The building is, needless to say, no longer structurally sound or even still standing afterwards.

## Clearance Specialist

Clad in Level IV body armor, the Clearance Specialist brings heavy firepower to the vanguard of the fight against the vampires. Blunt force in close quarters is their operational role and when a UTR team has to force its way into a blankbody nest during their active cycle, Clearance Specialists take the lead with shotguns loaded with Dragon's Breath shells. They are not the most versatile of operators and their loadout often leaves little left to capture if they have to engage hostiles. Most IAO and GRU UTR teams include a few Clearance Specialists in case things get hairy. The UK's SO13 even deploys entire death squads composed of these operators as part of their eradicator doctrine.
**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 4
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics (grenades) 6, Firearms 8, Intimidation 6, Melee 6, Technology 6
**Equipment:** SA shotgun (Benelli M4), Dragon's Breath shells, heavy body armor, axe, HE grenades

### Variant: Firebug

Armed with an experimental XM11 flamethrower developed in 2005 with private funding based on the classic M9 design used in Vietnam, the Firebug clears hardened positions and forces blankbodies out into the open. Fire is the great equalizer between mortal and monster, and the Firebug is usually held in reserve until circumstances make their skills a necessity. When the Firebug comes onto the field usually any hope of capturing a blankbody has faded and the operational focus has moved on to cutting losses and preventing the team's exposure.
**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 4
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 6, Firearms (Flamethrower) 8, Melee 6, Technology 6
**Equipment:** XM11 flamethrower, gas mask, heavy body armor, thermobaric grenades, axe

## Lone Wolf

These generalists work alone from preference, habit, or lack of resources and they have a broad mix of skills to enable that. With some close combat, some firearms, some technical skill and a respectable amount of espionage fieldcraft a Lone Wolf can handle most situations – or at least keep a situation under control until a field team can be mobilized.

Used to going it alone, many Lone Wolves find it difficult to surrender control to a larger team, or to integrate into one. They make their own decisions, and they don't take well to trying unfamiliar tactics. If they find a team that fits their way of doing things they make an excellent addition, rounding out skillsets otherwise lacking.
**General Difficulty:** 4/3
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 5, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness (traps) 8,

Firearms 8, Intimidation 7, Larceny 7, Melee 8, Stealth 7, Streetwise 6
**Equipment:** Kevlar vest, compound crossbow, automatic pistol with armor piercing ammo, flashbang grenades, bolt cutters, ropes
**Special:** No agent alone in the field survives long without training to resist vampiric mind control. Lone Wolves never count as "unprepared" for the purposes of these Disciplines. They add 3 dice to their Resolve when using it to resist a vampiric Discipline.

### Variant: Slayer

The Slayer is the most solitary of Lone Wolves. Either they don't want to risk the people they care about or they've already lost them all. They live for the hunt, and they're impeccable hunters. They're rarely found inside Coalition ranks: they don't take orders or work in teams, and that's no use to a coordinated operation.
**General Difficulty:** 4/3
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness (traps) 9, Firearms (crossbow) 9, Intimidation 7, Larceny 7, Melee (stakes) 9, Stealth 7, Streetwise 6
**Equipment:** Chainmail, compound crossbow, automatic pistol with armor piercing ammo, flashbang grenades, bolt cutters, ropes, holy symbol, protective amulet or good luck charm just in case, stolen XScope
**Special:** Slayers have all the same abilities as Lone Wolves, and more. They add 4 dice to their Resolve when they use it to resist a vampiric Discipline. They've developed such a high pain tolerance (or amphed addiction) they work through injuries that would put a normal mortal out of the fight: the first time during a scene they take Aggravated damage from piercing, cutting, or ballistic weapons, treat it as Superficial damage.

Kindred who have been hunted by a Slayer believe them to be supernatural in their own right. Whether this is true, or whether the Kindred subconsciously pull their punches, a Slayer can always win at a cost (Corebook, p. 121) against a single vampire.



## Snatcher

Most Hitters excel at dusting blankbodies. That's the job. The Snatcher (or "rendition specialist" in FIRSTLIGHT terminology) knows how to take prisoners, and how to wring information out of them. They're covert operatives, getting in and out quickly and leaving a minimum of evidence behind them. They combine stealth skills with careful, precise planning, physical prowess, and a gift for getaway driving.

The Coalition attempts rendition only for very special targets: those who can lead them to more vampires of even higher value. They're either well-connected or powerful in their own right, so rendition operations are some of the best resourced in the Coalition playbook.

Snatchers coordinate closely with Cuckoos, Canaries, or Lamplighters, making use of their detailed data on a target to pick the perfect time to strike or maneuver them into position.
**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 4
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 8, Brawl 9, Drive 8, Larceny 8, Stealth 8
**Equipment:** Zip cuffs, handcuffs, chainmail hood, sunbag, restraint harness; TASER, shotgun (M26

MASS), Kevlar vest, XTech appropriate to the known powers of their target

**Special:** FIRSTLIGHT and GRU snatchers have trained on identical buildings, and bring expertise and custom tools to disable security systems and breach doors or walls. Similarly elite Snatchers never have their Difficulty increased by the Haven Background when penetrating a Haven.

### Variant: Interrogator

The Interrogator takes over once the rendition target is back at the base of operations. They employ a range of tactics from psychological manipulation to outright physical torture to rip information out of a subject as rapidly as possible. Unfortunately, rendition comes with a high chance of inaccurate data: a subject will say anything to end a threat to their loved ones or their life.

Even amongst the Coalition, Interrogators make fellow agents uncomfortable. They're the Second Inquisition's "left hand," the ones who do what others won't or can't. Between colleagues who insist that Coalition policy should be to shoot any blankbody on sight, and those who prefer to turn useful ones into assets, most of the Coalition looks forward to a day when Interrogators go the way of the dinosaurs.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Insight 8, Intimidation 9, Medicine 7, Persuasion 8, Science 7

**Special:** Interrogators – those who survive their first session, at least – have at least a hope of guiding their targets' frenzy into speech rather than violent rage. They can use standard interrogation techniques including torture (Corebook, p. 415) on blankbodies.

If this happens "on screen" be sure to read the Torture sidebar on p. 102 - 103.

## Sniper

A sniper kills from a distance – often a very great distance. Modern sniper rifles (and sniper optics) make thousand-meter shots almost routine. Most snipers work with a spotter, who tracks the target for them and also keeps an eye out for unfriendly presences on their hill or rooftop. A spotter adds one die to the sniper's pool.

Regular troops distrust snipers, who kill with far less risk than grunts take, although they appreciate deadly overwatch when it's on their side. Snipers often suffer more combat guilt than regular front-line troops, feeling subconsciously that sniping more resembles murder than it does battle.

This writeup reflects a police SWAT sniper, either trusted by the local SI team or not told exactly who or what they're shooting at.

**General Difficulty:** 4/1

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 3, Mental 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 7, Brawl 7, Firearms (Sniper Rifle) 8

**Equipment:** Sniper rifle (Heckler & Koch PSG1 7.62mm), scope

**Special:** Hitting a stationary, torso-sized target with no cover at moderate range (100 meters) with a sniper rifle is a Difficulty 1 test (Resolve + Firearms) for the sniper, See Corebook, p. 302). Changes to those conditions increase the Difficulty.

A sniper using incendiary rounds firing through a haven's windows (or with NATO Raufoss 12.7mm rounds, through a haven's walls) threatens Kindred inside even if he can't see them through the wisely blacked-out windows. A critical success on such a shot sets the whole room, and eventually the building, on fire.

Although most sniper rifles use subsonic ammunition (and the SI uses suppressors) a Kindred with Heightened Senses (Auspex • ) can make a Wits + Awareness test (Difficulty 3) to determine the source (direction and distance) of a sniper shot if it doesn't destroy them. A critical success might even spot the street lights winking off the scope.

### Variant: Hit Man

Possibly with military training, but now working in the private sector. The Eighth Direction may have sourced them through the Organizatsiya, or

the Society of St. Leopold through the Camorra, or the NSA might have tapped their anonymous Gmail account. Their weapons are either common, disposable rifles or very expensive pieces of ceramic and plastic that break apart into innocuous shapes for travel. Either way, they tend toward shorter ranges but use moderately heavy ammunition (.308 or 7.62mm) to ensure a kill shot in the head (-2 successes).

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 7, Firearms (Sniper Rifle) 8, Larceny (Alarms) 7, Melee 7, Stealth 7, Streetwise 6

### Variant: Reaper

Brought into the Coalition from Delta Force, or the Spetsnaz, or some other unit dedicated to silence and deadliness. Military snipers prefer heavier rifles, firing larger ammunition (12.7mm) at longer ranges than police snipers.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 3, Mental 4
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 8, Awareness 7, Brawl 8, Firearms (Sniper Rifle) 9, Melee 8, Stealth 8
**Equipment:** Sniper rifle (Barrett M82A .50 caliber), scope

## Warrior

Since blankbodies are notoriously hard to destroy with guns, the Coalition urgently needs operators that can handle themselves in hand-to-hand combat. The Vatican's Society of Leopold and the GRU seem to have an almost endless supply of soldiers with these skill sets, but FIRSTLIGHT has to compete with the CIA and SOCOM's counterterrorism operations. Until the U.S. government runs out of human targets to kill up close, IAO has to make due with the few Warriors it can beg, borrow or steal from the private sector.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 3, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7, Awareness 7, Brawl 7, Firearms 7, Melee (Knives) 9, Stealth 7
**Equipment:** Pistol (Glock 17), silencer, combat knife, garrote, night vision, camo suit
**Special:** Warriors can use their garrote or combat knife to decapitate or dismember their victim (Corebook, p. 221).

### Variations: Leopoldite Sicarius

A holy warrior combining the best UTR training doctrine with the Vatican's most powerful mystical weapons, Sicarii are veteran slayers. Their armor and weapons have been blessed by one of the Society's suborders. Their body has been anointed with prayer and enshrouded in the blessings of a Grand Master.

**General Difficulty:** 5/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 3, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7, Awareness 7, Firearms 7, Melee 8, Occult (Vampires) 7, Stealth 7
**Equipment:** Pistol (Glock 17), silencer, shortsword, night vision, camo suit
**Artifact:** Dagger of Akkad (p. 87)
**True Faith:** 2 to 4
**Special:** The Sicarius is immune to powers of Oblivion. Drinking a Sicarius' blood inflicts 2 points of Aggravated Health damage to a vampire. A vampire can reduce this damage on a one for one basis with successes on a Stamina + Resolve roll.

### Ghoul Template

**Make the following modifications to any other antagonist profile to make a them a ghoul. See Lordless, p. 50, for a more in-depth ghoul profile.**

**General Difficulty: +0/+1**
**Standard Dice Pools: Physical +1**
**Secondary Attributes: Health +1**
**Disciplines: Celerity 1, Potence 1 (or 2 dots of the Storyteller's choice)**


MK
2021

# Warlocks and Clerics: Magical

Occultism isn't something most blankbodies would associate with the Coalition, or any of the others who hunt them. "Second Inquisition" calls to mind intelligence analysts and UTR teams, Havens burned and allies murdered, the Fall of London and the destruction of the Vienna Chantry. But the Coalition succeeds because they are pragmatists: they use any tool that proves effective. And the mysterious, half-understood secrets of the arcane can be very effective.

Despite a rough history of Brazilian repression of their beliefs and practices, a mutual understanding has surfaced, where some Brazilian Candomblé and Umbanda practitioners bless weapons, work rituals, and protect their BOES colleagues, a force that has long been their own historic enemies; the Newburgh Group has theurgists, self-proclaimed witches, and scholars of hermeticism; the Akritai and the Society of St. Leopold have miracle workers. The GRU takes advantage of Soviet-era psychic warfare experimentation, and the SAD accumulates a little of everything from remote corners of America.

That said, specialists in the arcane arts remain rare, especially out in the field where they could get eaten – or turned by similarly sorcerous blankbodies. The Vatican remembers the story of Faust, after all, and Leopoldite Censors still sniff out those tempted by forbidden arts within the Society. Most Coalition troopers have never seen any magic that didn't want to drink their blood; the existence of occult specialists remains more of an urban legend even among many Leopoldites than it does an entry on a T.O.

For a "generic" clerical hunter, see the Faith Hunter (Corebook, p. 371).

## Cunning Folk

The Cunning Mage brings folk magic and witchcraft to the service of the Second Inquisition. Many more Cunning Folk are found outside the Coalition than within it: practitioners of this branch of magic don't tend to be team players. (The general exception: Scottish and Appalachian Cunning Folk often serve in their nation's military.) They're strongly individualistic, and in many cases the desire to rid the world of undead monsters is their only common ground with the Coalition. Fans of law and order, and religious orthodoxy, they are not.

When the Coalition does work with Cunning Folk, the relationship is often at arms' length by mutual agreement. These practitioners work as consultants, assisting where needed but not slotting directly into a UTR team. There are exceptions, of course. Some Cunning Folk are patriotic, or just thoroughly modern and desirous of a career path with a good salary and benefits, but they're far from the norm.

Blankbodies often believe Cunning Folk are a less implacable enemy than the Coalition's main forces. In some ways they're correct: a coterie of Champions protecting a witch's neighborhood, or a Cerberus coterie safeguarding a magical artifact, may have more common ground with one of the Cunning Folk than the IAO does.

The Cunning Mage uses hedge magic for a range of curses and blessings, or borrows the bodies or senses of their animal familiars.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 9
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Insight 7, Medicine 6, Occult 8
**Equipment:** Ritual tools, knife, neck protector
**Special:** Cunning Folk know a variety of blessings and curses, each of which requires ritual preparation in advance, a point of Willpower, and a successful Resolve + Occult roll. These rituals channel power into a talisman, amulet, or other material token carried by the Cunning Mage. The accumulated spiritual power can hocus machinery: every additional token borne after the first subtracts one die from any roll by the Cunning One using technology (including

firearms). Common effects include:

- Good Health: The bearer of the token gains 2 additional Health levels
- Good Fortune: The bearer of the token adds 2 additional dice to rolls using an Attribute of their choice.
- Protection: Vampires and other supernatural creatures find it difficult to touch the bearer of the token. They must make a Resolve + Composure roll to do so, and must achieve at least 2 successes in order to harm the bearer.
- True Sight: The bearer of the token can see vampires or other supernatural creatures, even if they're using Blush of Life or other supernatural power to appear mortal.

The duration of these benefits depends on the Cunning Mage's result:

- One success = one scene
- Two successes = one day (until the next sunrise)
- Three or more successes = two days

Cunning Folk can also Hex an opponent: a simple magic word, a gesture, or even a look may suffice. With a successful Manipulation + Occult roll, and a spent point of Willpower, the Cunning Mage imposes a 2-dice penalty on their opponent's next roll. This cannot remove Hunger dice from a roll.

#### Variant: Animalist

Not unlike the vampiric Discipline of Animalism, Animalist Cunning Folk use their animal familiars to observe others, skimming through the night as a bird or prowling as a rat or cat. These Cunning Folk work for the SI as spies, observing and reporting back from places no normal mortal would dare tread.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 9
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Animal Ken 8, Investigation 6, Occult 8
**Equipment:** Ritual tools, knife, neck protector, kibble
**Special:** Animalists have the ability to control animals, project their senses into them, or even place their consciousness in the body of an animal.

To control animals, inspiring them to loyalty or friendship, fear, or rage directed at a target of the Animalist's choosing, they spend one point of Willpower and make a contested roll of Charisma + Animal Ken vs. the animal's Resolve + Composure, or if another creature currently controls the animal vs. that creature's Charisma + Animal Ken. This control lasts for one turn with one success, and one scene for 2 or more successes.

To project their sight and hearing through an animal's senses, the Animalist spends one point of Willpower and rolls Wits + Animal Ken. They roll three extra dice if they project their senses through a trained familiar, and two extra with an animal that knows them. For one success, they perceive through the animal's senses for one turn, for two successes up to 10 minutes, and for three or more successes, a scene. When they project their senses, the Animalist's body is blind and deaf until they cut the bond with the animal, which they may do at any time.

An Animalist can project their whole consciousness into the body of a familiar, not only borrowing its senses but controlling its body as if it were the Animalist's own. By spending a point of Willpower and rolling Resolve + Animal Ken, they take control of their familiar's body for one scene.

When the Animalist's consciousness is in their familiar, the human body is vulnerable, effectively comatose. If the body is damaged, the Animalist may make a Wits + Occult roll to return and awaken.

## Faithful

UTR teams that find themselves in possession of a relic only have a weapon if they have someone worthy of wielding it. While testing for True Faith isn't really possible, it tends to emerge fairly rapidly under combat conditions. Thus, even if the Faithful doesn't have the best marksmanship on the team, they carry more than their weight in a spiritual sense. In teams without a dedicated occultist, they tend to drift into a "supernatural intelligence officer" role.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 6, Insight 6, Occult 6
**Equipment:** Body armor, standard unit loadout, holy symbol
**Artifact:** The best Relic the team has available
**True Faith:** 2 or 3 (Corebook, p. 222)
**Special:** The Faithful also knows the location of any holy ground, See below) in their patrol area, and adds two dice to any attempt to reach it or guide their unit to it.

## Flagellant

Mystics who achieve holy communion through pain, Flagellants undergo powerful rituals that fortify their blood and make it burn with faith. Flagellants usually operate independently but a few of their number have found their way into ESOG and Akritai teams.
**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7, Awareness 7, Melee 7, Occult 7
**Equipment:** Desert Eagle pistol (.50 Action Express), shortsword, body armor

### HOLY GROUND

**Some places absorb the spiritual energy of the devout for so long or so intensely that they begin radiating it back. Locations of major miracles or significant martyrdoms can become holy ground overnight. These sites may come from any religious tradition and may be located anywhere. Storytellers may choose to make forgotten sites (a standing stone, a buried church) linger on in holiness.**

**True Holy Ground has a rating from one to five dots. Interpolate the specific Holy Ground values for locations in your chronicle city from the following:**

**• Neighborhood religious building, consecrated graveyard**
**•• Large mosque, cathedral, temple, or synagogue**
**••• Venerated Site: Mt. Athos, Blue Mosque, tomb of a saint or imam, Six Grandfathers in the Black Hills, South Dakota**
**•••• Major Holy Site: Notre Dame Cathedral (Paris), Dakshineswar (Kolkata), Al-Kadhimiya Mosque (Baghdad), Mount Kurama (near Kyōto), Wudāng Temple Complex in Húbĕ (China), Uluru in the Northern Territory (Australia)**
**••••• Holy of Holies: Wailing Wall, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Dome of the Rock (all Jerusalem), Kaaba (Mecca), Dashashwamedh Ghat (Varanasi), Mount Kailāsa (Himalayas), palace of the Oòni in Ilé-Ifẹ̀ (Nigeria)**

**Holy Ground has no mechanical effect on vampires or other supernatural creatures (except those with the appropriate Folkloric Block Flaw (Corebook, p. 182)), although it may make them uneasy or irritated. Until, that is, someone with True Faith stands on it; at such times, the Faithful adds the dots of the Holy Ground to their own True Faith.**

**If the Faithful comes from a different tradition from the Ground (a Catholic priest in a Hindu temple, for example), they generally cannot add Holy Ground to their Faith. Other activities (having a running gunfight in a Buddhist stupa, for instance) might interfere with such addition. Storytellers must determine whether an individual Faithful and a specific piece of Holy Ground are compatible, and if so how much.**

**Vampires, especially in the Sabbat, may seek to desecrate holy ground. The specifics of those rituals or activities remain in the Storyteller's hands but they generally involve a contest (Resolve + Occult, for example) vs. Holy Ground + True Faith of its most Faithful defender. Add a die to the vampires' pool for every Stain incurred in the attempt; if the Faithful wins, each vampire takes 1 Aggravated damage for each extra success.**

**Special:** The Flagellant adds four dice to any pool to resist or contest a vampiric Discipline that draws its power from Oblivion. Drinking a Flagellant's blood inflicts 3 points of Aggravated Health damage to a vampire. A vampire can reduce this damage on a one for one basis with successes on a Stamina + Resolve roll.

### Variant: Absolved

A holy warrior of the Cult of the Friars, See page 134) who has made their peace with this world and the next. The Absolved usually guard secret Vatican sites of mystical importance that are too remote or sensitive to be put on FIRSTLIGHT's radar. These Friars understand that they will likely die in service to the Society of St. Leopold.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7, Awareness 7, Melee 7, Occult 7
**Equipment:** Shortsword, body armor, HE grenades, incendiary grenades
**Special:** As the Flagellant above. The Absolved can detonate one of the grenades in their possession immediately after being reduced to 0 Health.

## Nullifier

Some people can become, or create, a supernatural null zone. Their precise techniques vary: an Akritai or Leopoldite acolyte leans on prayers and channels the powers of saints for protection, especially St. Marcellus of Paris who destroyed a vampire in fifth-century Paris. A Nullifier trained by the Newburgh Group is more likely to craft a magical sigil or repeat an incantation in Enochian. Meanwhile, SAD and GRU-N58 sometimes train operatives to activate a latent psychic talent for suppression.

The techniques change but one fact is consistent: Nullifiers keep their team alive. When fanged monsters slide between their hunters' senses or force their will on a mortal's mind, a Nullifier stops them in their tracks. With a duty to stay out of danger to protect the team, Nullifiers usually don't excel at combat. They might know a little first aid or other useful skills that stop them being a one trick pony, but mostly their job is to wear the best possible armor and watch their team's collective back.

Outside of combat ops, a Nullifier sitting nearby can nix a vampire's attempt to wipe a victim's memory of their feeding, stop the blankbody seducing a victim to begin with, or prevent them from sneaking up on a target. For that reason they're sometimes positioned as bodyguards – circumspect ones – to mortals deemed at risk from vampiric influence.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 9
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 7, Occult 7, Stealth 6
**Equipment:** Kevlar vest, semi automatic handgun, first aid kit
**Special:** A Nullifier can simply choose to stop a blankbody's Disciplines from working, and extend that effect like a field to their colleagues. It's mentally and physically strenuous, and activating one of their powers not only costs the Nullifier a point of Willpower but inflicts two points of Superficial damage.

When a blankbody attempts to use Dominate, Obfuscate, or Presence, the Nullifier spends an additional point of Willpower and rolls Resolve + Occult vs. the blankbody's Discipline pool. Every two successes on their roll reduce the blankbody's successes by 1. If the Nullifier wins the contest, the Discipline simply fails.

## Pscout

A graduate of the Eighth Direction's psychic training programs (and, to a lesser extent, similar CIA or Army programs re-started by FIRSTLIGHT), the Pscout trains to find blankbodies, or their kills, through the power of visions. The lucky ones can do this from the safety of their offices but most of them are out on the front lines, clutching at hazy mental impressions blasted into their minds by looking at weathered old bloodstains, or touching the walls in a blankbody's kill room.

The really unfortunate ones get those visions with no prompting or warning: they're suddenly overcome with a vision of a corpse overlaying an apparently healthy, living human, or a glimpse of an unknown blankbody sinking their fangs into the throbbing neck of a mortal victim. The first visions aren't always helpful, on their own, but they're the first steps down a path that leads Pscouts to blankbodies the Coalition might not have otherwise suspected.

Pscouts' visions can be hard to interpret: does that flash of a death's head over someone's face mean they're a blankbody, about to be the victim of one, or destined to become one in future? Like many Coalition investigative personnel, Pscouts use painstaking investigation to clarify and confirm their visions: costly mistakes have been made by jumping to conclusions.



**General Difficulty:** 5/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 9, Investigation 7, Stealth 7
**Equipment:** Experimental psychotropic medicines, Zener or Tarot cards
**Special:** The Pscout can identify supernatural creatures, including those using Blush of Life or a similar power to appear as mortals, with a successful Wits + Awareness test. With one or more successes they detect that something is "off" about the person, but not what type of supernatural creature they are. With two successes they can identify a blankbody and with three or more they can guess roughly what type of creature they're looking at (e.g. a shapeshifter, someone with occult or arcane powers, a being not of this world).

The Pscout can also "read" objects and locations, picking up traces of past events. The more emotional a situation was — prompting extreme fear, suffering, passion, for example — the easier it is to read. The Pscout can touch an object or person and, with a successful Intelligence + Awareness roll, see a brief flash of one significant thing that happened to them in the last week. A brush with a blankbody or other supernatural creature will almost always be the most significant thing, so "reading" a victim to identify who fed on them is straightforward (Difficulty 2). The Pscout sees and hears, and smells the scene from their subject's point of view.

The Pscout's final ability is both a blessing and a curse: they can sense the proximity of blankbodies. With a Resolve + Awareness roll, they can tell if there are blankbodies within a mile. With three successes, they can tell roughly how close the nearest one is, and with five successes they can perceive the location of a specific blankbody if they are within a mile.

All psychic powers cost the Pscout 1 Willpower to attempt.

## Pstriker

Another graduate of the Coalition's psychic development labs, the Pstriker wields their half-understood powers as a weapon, albeit an unpredictable one that can be as dangerous to their colleagues as their enemies. Pstrikers stay in the Coalition because any weapon has some situational uses, and it's not as if they can safely retire to civilian life. They get pushed into dangerous confrontations in vampire-controlled cities, and do as much damage as they can, as many times as they can, before some blankbody monster inevitably takes them out.

The Pstriker is a valuable asset. They cause serious damage, in a way blankbodies can't replicate and usually aren't prepared for. Even so, it comes as a relief to their colleagues when they're gone. Being around a Pstriker has a way of inflicting emotional bleed: when they're tense and angry, all their friends are tense and angry too. That's not conducive to a smooth operation or a stable team.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 8, Science (Parapsychology) 6
**Equipment:** Kevlar vest, helmet, experimental psychotropic medicines
**Special:** The Pstryker manipulates telekinetic forces. They can pull, push or throw an object in their line of sight using telekinetic force, by making a Resolve + Awareness roll and spending a point of Willpower. Gauge their effects using the Feats of Strength table on p. 411 of the Corebook; each success on the roll represents one dot of telekinetic Strength.

By spending one point of Willpower and succeeding on a Resolve + Awareness roll, the Pstriker causes a blast of telekinetic power to radiate outwards around them. The range is roughly one meter per point of Intelligence, and all creatures within the range must contest the Pstriker's roll with Strength + Stamina. If they lose, they fall to the ground prone and take 2 levels of Superficial damage per marginal success.

Being around a Pstriker for a prolonged period

of time is taxing. Their emotions run high, and tend to bleed out into those around them. After spending a scene in a Pstriker's company, mortals and supernatural creatures alike lose one die from Composure dice pools until they're away from the Pstriker for at least a day.

### Variant: Pyrokinetic

The Pyrokinetic is a very intelligent flamethrower. Instead of telekinetic force, they control heat and create fire — making them a superweapon in the fight against blankbodies.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 8, Science (Parapsychology) 6
**Equipment:** Kevlar vest, helmet, experimental psychotropic medicines, cigarettes, no lighter
**Special:** The Pyrokinetic's blast is an expanding circle of fire, and deals Aggravated damage. In addition, the Pyrokinetic can call fire into existence by expending 1 Willpower, setting fire to flammable objects such as clothing and inflicting 1 level of Aggravated damage per round to anyone in contact with the fire until someone spends a turn extinguishing it.

Being around a Pyrokinetic causes the same emotional bleed and loss of Composure as a regular Pstriker.

## Sorcerer

Arcane powers manifest in many different ways: spirit possession, prayer and fasting, lengthy study of eldritch tomes, manipulating ley energies, entheogenic chemical stimulants, initiation into an older tradition, or just weird synchronistic coincidence. The specifics matter fundamentally to the Sorcerer, but mechanically overlap: any tradition might develop healing magic, wards and amulets, or any other specific sorcerous effect. Treat Occult as the pool for such sorceries unless noted otherwise, although each Sorcerer tradition calls it something else and activates it in its own fashion.

Even more than with other Antagonist entries in this book, tailor your Sorcerer characters and their powers specifically to your chronicle, tune them to oppose and vex your coterie. A mortal capable of sorcery should be as unpleasant a shock to the player characters as a vampire would be to a normal mortal. Treat the numbers in this profile as starting points and suggestions; treat the menu of possible arcane effects likewise.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 9
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 7, Awareness 8, Occult 9
**Equipment:** Ritual tools, a book of rituals, talisman or holy symbol, athame or ritual sword.

## Arcane Effects

If their art grants them an arcane effect listed below, the Sorcerer spends a point of Willpower and makes an Occult roll. If they succeed, the effect occurs. Subtract 1 die from the pool if the Sorcerer hasn't spent the previous eight hours in appropriate ritual preparation or activity; subtract 2 dice from the pool if they attempt the effect while in combat or otherwise stressed and distracted.

A Sorcerer can only use one effect at a time.

Sorcerers who draw their powers from the divine often have True Faith; if so, they can add their True Faith to their Occult pool.

No Sorcerer wields all (or even very many) of the possible sorceries here; these examples come from a broad menu.

### Halt

With a commanding word, the Sorcerer compels a blankbody to take no action. This requires two points of Willpower, and a Contested Charisma + Occult roll vs. the blankbody's Willpower. The blankbody is unable to take any action, including moving, for one turn.

### Heal

With a successful Composure + Occult roll (Difficulty 4, or 5 for Aggravated damage), the Sorcerer can heal as many Health levels as they have successes on the roll. Each injury healed costs one point of Willpower.

### Hide from the Hawk
For one scene, the Sorcerer becomes imperceptible to the Blood Sorcery rituals Illuminate the Trail of Prey (Corebook, p. 277) and Eyes of the Nighthawk (Corebook, p. 279) and immune to Disciplines used through a Nighthawk.

### Insight
The Sorcerer senses the surface thoughts and true intentions of one subject. The thoughts they read are only flashes of surface thoughts: whatever strong, conscious intention or image is uppermost in their mind — for example, whether the subject intends to resist or cooperate, who comes to mind when the Sorcerer threatens someone they care about. They might get a flash of insight into a Touchstone. They also know if the subject is deliberately lying or misleading them.

The subject can resist this effect with a successful Resolve + Subterfuge roll with a Difficulty equal to the Sorcerer's successes on the Occult roll.

### Light
The Sorcerer spends a point of Willpower, makes a Resolve + Occult roll (Difficulty 4), and creates a spark of light as bright as a flashlight, that lasts for up to one scene. The Sorcerer can spend more Willpower to make the spark of light expand to an orb large enough to fill a medium sized room. This larger light functions like sunlight, dealing 1 level of Aggravated damage to vampires for every additional point of Willpower expended, and burns out after one turn.

### Perceive the Obfuscated
The Sorcerer spends an additional point of Willpower and rolls Resolve + Occult vs. the blankbody's Wits + Obfuscate. The Sorcerer can sense Obfuscated characters as normal for the rest of the scene.

### Resist Oblivion
The Sorcerer remains unaffected by the Oblivion (**Chicago By Night**, pp. 293-295) abilities Shadow Cloak and Stygian Shroud. They automatically detect a blankbody scrying through Shadow Perspective or Shadow Cast and can spend an additional point of Willpower to negate those powers for a few seconds (or one turn of combat), or 3 points of Willpower to negate them for the scene. They can spend 2 points of Willpower to prevent a blankbody using Shadow Step.

### Scry
If the Sorcerer has a personal possession, a quantity of the target's blood (enough to fill a test tube), or one of a blankbody's Touchstones, they can spy on one target's current activity. They see and hear the target's current location as if they were looking over the target's shoulder.

The ritual remains active for one scene. It cannot penetrate wards or occult barriers, and a blankbody with Auspex or a Discipline that allows them to spy on others from a distance (e.g. Blood Sorcery, Oblivion) knows when they are being scried on, even if they are not the intended target of the ritual.

### Trace
With the use of a personal possession, blood, or a Touchstone, the Sorcerer locates their target, and can pinpoint them on a map. The Sorcerer doesn't see or hear what the target is doing and the accuracy depends on the number of successes on the Occult roll. With one success, the ritual identifies the correct neighborhood; with two, the city block; and with three or more, the building that the target is in. This ritual doesn't track a moving target: it only reveals the location when the ritual is cast.

### Un-Ward
Detect and resist Wards and Warding circles cast using Blood Sorcery (Corebook, p. 275). While this ability is active (one scene) the Sorcerer can roll Intelligence + Occult to notice a ward, and the Ritual test to activate one against them is made at +1 Difficulty.

### Ward
The Sorcerer creates an arcane barrier that prevents blankbodies and their ghouls from entering a room, or spying on it using their Disciplines. To overcome this ritual protection, the blankbody must make a Resolve + Discipline roll with a Difficulty equal to the Sorcerer's successes on the Occult roll. The ward lasts for one scene, or (for an extra point of Willpower) until the next sunrise.


MK
2021

# Turncoats

The Coalition holds no common position on the use of blankbodies as assets. Some personnel will never trust them, never believe that they share a common cause, and refuse point blank to work with them. Others find the end justifies the means: they may not trust their blankbody allies of convenience, but they'd rather make a mission a success than stick to their principles. Still others believe that even these monsters have some chance for repentance.

Ex-ghouls have a substantially easier time finding acceptance. Not all hunters accept them, but it's much easier to believe in their narrative of liberation and revenge.

## Alchemist

Searching for a cure (or for payback) brings many thin-blood alchemists into the fold of the Second Inquisition. Proactive local Coalition agents sometimes recruit them with threats or even appeals to their patriotism. Once on board, Alchemists prove extremely useful, creating unique concoctions to overcome supernatural obstacles and impair other blankbodies.

**General Difficulty:** 4/3
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Medicine (Pharmacy) or Science (Chemistry) 7, Streetwise 7, Technology 7
**Equipment:** Pistol, GPS implant
**Disciplines:** Thin-Blood Alchemy 4, one dot in the surprisingly useful Discipline derived from whatever they drank last
**Humanity:** 6
**Blood Potency:** 0
**Special:** The Alchemist is a problem solver. They have a wide array of recipes at their disposal and have a knack for coming up with concoctions in a pinch when their team encounters a supernatural obstacle. The Alchemist can roll Medicine or Technology depending on the nature of the mystical problem to attempt to devise a solution.

As well as the alchemical distillations described in the Corebook (pp. 283-287), the Coalition encourages Alchemists to brew a few more bespoke elixirs. With the resources of CIA or GRU chemistry labs, or the Vatican storehouses, these blends can get quite outré and powerful.

### *Level 2 Formulae*

#### BLOOD OF MANDAGLOIRE

This concoction can taint an entire herd, but must be imbibed by the victims within a few hours of being distilled.

**Ingredients:** The Alchemist's Blood, melancholic human blood, ketamine or Thorazine, melted human fat, verdigris
**Activation Cost:** One Rouse check
**System:** After taking this concoction the herd takes on a melancholic Resonance and becomes sluggish and unresponsive. Any vampire feeding off of them while they're in this state must make a Composure + Resolve roll against a Difficulty equal to the cooker's Alchemy or fall into a dreamless sleep for an hour. Aggressive shaking or slapping gives the vampire another roll to resist the stupor, while inflicting a wound awakens them immediately though the melancholy Resonance lingers.
**Duration:** This formula stays active in the herd's blood for three nights after dosing.

#### MIRROR OF TRUST

This mixture, when imbibed by the Alchemist, makes them compelling and attractive, overwhelming other blankbodies' self-control and encouraging them to speak honestly and frankly, especially in response to direct questions.

**Ingredients:** The Alchemist's Blood, sanguine human blood, truth serum, a white chrysanthemum taken from a grave
**Activation Cost:** One Rouse check
**System:** The Alchemist has 3 extra dice on Persuasion or Intimidation rolls to make another person or blankbody be honest with them
**Duration:** One hour

## *Level 3 Formulae*

### FANG-STINGER

This poison can be injected into a mortal's bloodstream, dealing no damage to them (through the miracle of alchemical transformation) but inflicting considerable pain on a blankbody who feeds from them. Other variations create different effects: babbling incoherence (and inability to use some Disciplines), indifferent calm, etc.

**Ingredients:** The Alchemist's Blood, choleric human blood, foxglove, absinthe, laundry detergent or phosgene

**Activation Cost:** One Rouse check

**System:** The victim makes a contested Stamina + Resolve roll vs. the Alchemist's Resolve + Alchemy (7 dice). If the victim wins, the serum has no effect. For every success the Alchemist wins by, the victim takes 2 levels of Aggravated damage.

**Duration:** One day

### FREEZER FLUID

When ingested by or injected into a blankbody, this serum freezes their limbs, making them clumsy and possibly even helpless. Wood absorbs it; plastic remains inert; it sublimes rapidly from metal. Hunters either covertly inject it into their targets or soak their stakes in it. Targets get a Wits + Awareness roll to avoid drinking it in a beverage (Difficulty 2 for non-foaming beverages; Difficulty 3 for beer).

**Ingredients:** The Alchemist's Blood, melancholy and phlegmatic human blood, echinacea, possum scent glands, local anaesthetic or ricin

**Activation Cost:** One Rouse check

**System:** The victim makes a Contested Stamina + Resolve roll vs the Alchemist's Resolve + Alchemy (7 dice). If the victim wins, the serum has no effect. For every success the Alchemist wins by, the victim loses 2 dice from all physical dice pools.

**Duration:** One scene

## Brute

The Brute is a vampire taken from their unlife, locked away in a secure facility, and brought out when needed to take down a hard target. They're often the result of extraordinary rendition, but some were willing turncoats betrayed in their turn by the SI.

The Brute is starved, frenzied, and reduced to an incoherent monster. They're literally leashed, usually branded into submission and taunted with fresh blood before they're released. They're unleashed on a target for maximum shock and awe value. It helps if their victims-to-be knew them before their decline into a brute: it's disorienting, even heartbreaking, to see a sire or a childe reduced to an attack dog with its fangs at your throat.

This writeup is for a Neonate vampire reduced to a Brute.

**General Difficulty:** 5/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 2, Mental 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 10, Willpower 3

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 8, Intimidation 8, Stealth 9, Survival 7

**Equipment:** thick leather armor

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1, Celerity 2, Potence 2

**Humanity:** 1

**Blood Potency:** 1

**Special:** The Brute is all but mindless, except for the hunting instincts of an apex predator. It is immune to Dominate and Presence, and can't be intimidated.

After the Detroit fiasco, FIRSTLIGHT doctrine calls for implanting decapitating bombs into a Brute's neck, or at least filling the core of their leash with det cord. On receipt of a code phrase, a remote operator triggers the explosives, destroying the thing.





### Variant: Tzimisce Monstrosity

Most Brutes have some vestige of their identity left. If they were rescued – or turned on their handlers and carved a bloody path to freedom – they could return to what they once were. The Monstrosity is too far gone. There's no hope of return, and they don't care. These Monstrosities are a type of Wight, and they aren't acquired by rendition but by hunting: they're the most dangerous blankbodies, in terms of pure brutality, and the easiest to hunt because they lack all intelligence. The Eighth Division bags them, locks them up tight, and unleashes them as shock troops. Wights don't survive many missions: it's much easier to destroy one than try to subdue it all over again.

This profile describes a moderately powerful Tzimisce vampire reduced to a Wight. This creature is no longer recognizable as something that once had a human form: it's a bristling, salivating, hulk of muscle and spines, with beady black eyes that open and close everywhere except where eyes should be.

**General Difficulty:** 6/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 2, Mental 3
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 15, Willpower 3
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 9, Intimidation 8, Stealth 8, Survival 9
**Disciplines:** Dominate 2, Fortitude 3, Potence 3, Protean 4
**Humanity:** 0
**Blood Potency:** 3
**Special:** The one lingering trace of the Tzimisce blood in this monster is its possessive nature. Once it has tasted the flesh or blood of its prey, it pursues them relentlessly and adds three extra dice to rolls to do so.

Like the Brute, the Monstrosity is all but mindless. It is immune to Dominate and Presence, and can't be intimidated.

## Cleaver

The Cleaver is a vampire asset – or agent – of the Coalition who has managed to hide their true nature from the conspiracy. They may have been Embraced against their will while working with the Coalition, or perhaps they are a sleeper left over from previous Camarilla penetrations of the national-security bureaucracy or the Vatican. Regardless of their origin story, the Cleaver now does their best to keep their head down and fit in.

They survive by hiding among mortals and keeping up an ironclad personal Masquerade. As a vampire they are fairly knowledgeable about the inner workings of vampire politics, but have to be careful not to expose their nature to the rest of the team. The few Cleavers still within the Coalition take on roles as influence peddlers and fixers, use their supernatural powers sparingly, and loyally protect their mortal family, not their vampiric Clan. Disloyal Cleavers rapidly attract the attention of FIRSTLIGHT or SAD counterintelligence, or of Leopoldite Censors – and then their loyalties resolve, finally.

**General Difficulty:** 5/3
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 7, Mental 8
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Melee 7, Stealth 7
**Equipment:** Fireplace poker, smartphone
**Disciplines:** Auspex 3, Dominate 3, Obfuscate 2
**Humanity:** 7
**Blood Potency:** 2
**Special:** The Cleaver adds two dice to any pool to resist or contest any attempt to detect them as a vampire. They also have the following Backgrounds: Influence 4, Mask 2 (Cobbler), and Retainers 2.

## Daywalker

Thin-bloods, full of seething resentment for vampire hierarchies, hatred for their misguided or selfish sires, and grudges against the many other so-called Kindred who've wronged them, make easy targets for the Coalition. Many can be lured to the hunters' cause with ease. Sometimes they come of their own accord.

Once on board, some Daywalkers live a double life, feeding information to their Coalition contacts about a specific blankbody or a whole group. When their luck runs out and their cover is broken, they disappear into a secret facility, safe from harm. Or they catch a stake to the heart, or a garrote around the neck. The Coalition doesn't have to do right by monsters.

Some Daywalkers come to the Second Inquisition not in pursuit of a grudge but because they despise what they are. They occupy a strange, liminal place in the Coalition table of organization hierarchy – if they're not dusted the moment they walk in, that is. They're not mortal, but maybe there's hope for their redemption. The inclusion of a Daywalker into a UTR team badly degrades unit cohesion: the new recruit is either a dangerous predator best kept at arm's length, or a nearly-human victim deserving of pity and support.

**General Difficulty:** 4/3
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** One combat skill at 6, Politics (Kindred) 6, Streetwise 7, Subterfuge 7
**Equipment:** SPF 100 sunscreen, wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, handgun or combat knife, GPS implant.
**Disciplines:** Potence 1 or Auspex 1; Thin-Blood Alchemy 2
**Humanity:** 5
**Blood Potency:** 0

## Lordless

The Lordless is a former ghoul who broke their Bond, and now hates vampires as much as they once loved them. When they switch sides they become powerful allies to the Coalition. They've been inside blankbody networks for decades, in some cases centuries. They've seen more than many actual vampires and because of the Bond in which their master put so much trust, they know their secrets and weaknesses.

Once the Lordless has had their revenge on the master they served, maybe even the whole hierarchy of the city, their work isn't done. A lot of their knowledge is transferable to other locations and operations. They understand Camarilla and Anarch hierarchies and processes, and how to disrupt them. They're well placed to make contact with other ghouls and turn them too.

The Lordless described here was once a ghoul to an Ancilla or young Elder.

**General Difficulty:** 4/3
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Etiquette (Kindred) 8, Finance 6, Politics (original faction) 8
**Special:** The Lordless knows a great deal about the politics of their native city and the faction their master came from. When they assist another SI operative in investigating a blankbody, negotiating with one, or disrupting their schemes, they add 4 dice to the lead operative's dice pool on their home turf, and 2 dice for dealing with the same faction elsewhere.

### Variant: Lordless Assassin

This ex-ghoul isn't content to ruin their master's life by deceit and manipulation. They're going hunting. Even worse, their master trained them to fight and kill. The Lordless Assassin now drinks from a turncoat vampire in the Coalition's employ (or a torpid prisoner in a secure facility), temporarily becoming their ghoul in exchange for some morsels of power they can use to hunt other blankbodies. They tell themselves they can quit the vitae again whenever they want. Maybe it's true.

**General Difficulty:** 5/3
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 3, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7, Awareness 6, Brawl 7, Firearms 8, Stealth 7, Technology 6
**Equipment:** Compound crossbow with wooden stakes, garrote, thin-blood alchemical poison, assortment of tools for breaking and entering
**Disciplines:** Celerity or Potence 1
**Special:** The Lordless Assassin still has numerous contacts amongst their master's faction or court. Some still owe the former ghoul a debt, or remember them fondly. In the course of their hunt, they can convert one failed roll into a success.

### Variant: Vitae Tweaker

Some ghouls never had a master. They heard a rumor about vampires, and that drinking their blood gave you power, and they believed it. So they went

hunting for the ultimate high. Most of them died. Some of them didn't. In Los Angeles in the 1990s, the Young Blood cycle gang built itself on vitae drained from Kindred who found themselves slower than motorcycles. The cartels eventually broke up the Young Bloods, but enough of them escaped to other cities to keep the dream alive – the dream of magic blood that makes you superhuman.

Vitae tweakers generally wire into the city's drug trade somehow. They often cross paths with thin-blood alchemists, who often hang with the same fixers and shop in the same marketplace.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 3
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 5
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 7, Drive (Motorcycle) 7, Firearms 6, Melee 7, Technology (Repair Cycle) 6
**Equipment:** Motorcycle, chain lasso, sawed-off shotgun, big stupid pistol (Desert Eagle or equivalent), helmet, phlebotomist's lancet and vacuum syringe
**Disciplines:** Potence 1, or another dot of the Storyteller's choice
**Special:** Vitae tweakers hunt in packs. For every additional tweaker on a motorcycle or otherwise part of the gang, add one die to their initial attack or ambush pool. Reduce this bonus by half for ongoing pursuits, hunts, etc.

**EXAMPLE**

**The player coterie made a ghoul out of a banker that was laundering money for criminals linked to the Russian GRU. When the ghoul was discovered and questioned, the coterie was identified by the Second Inquisition. Since you're using the GRU in your story, you've decided to make a Wet Team (p. 57) OPFOR. This gives every hunter in the force Mask 3 and the Zeroed advantage. Looking at the Wet Team's Common Force Mix, you decide the force will primarily contain Warriors and one Black-Bagger. Looking at the Possible Extras you also decide to give them access to stealth helicopters. You name the OPFOR "The Clean Team" and decide they're a group of former Mafiya hit men that the GRU sometimes calls in when they want to deny their involvement in a potentially messy operation.**

# Building OPFOR

The OPFOR (Opposing Force) is the team that hunts your players' vampire characters. When building this force consider what part of the Coalition they answer to and how the player characters got on their radar. Each OPFOR is a unique character in its own right, with a history and way of doing things that shapes and drives the story of their hunt. Fleshing out this backstory not only gives the OPFOR greater narrative impact, it also helps the players understand and counter this force.

## OPFOR Backgrounds

OPFORs often come with built-in Backgrounds and even Merits and Flaws. The force holds these characteristics in common, along with two traits (Reach and Scope) that help define the limits of their capabilities within an operation. They function like coterie Backgrounds (Corebook, p. 196); generally assume the team's commander has access to these dots if needed on a roll.

Some Backgrounds depend not on the type of OPFOR but on its parent organization: FIRSTLIGHT and IAO teams can generally call on Resources ••••, while the other Five Torches have to watch their budgets, and local hunter clubs may have nothing more than a panel van and shotguns.

Regardless of their type or parent organization, most OPFORs come equipped with military grade weaponry such as M4 carbines or AK-74M assault rifles, along with stakes, body armor, and sturdy pursuit vehicles. (In some countries, even Chaff and Monster Squads can muster impressive amounts of firepower.) More advanced weaponry or specialized toys are available to individual foes based on their Antagonist role, but some OPFOR types give access to specialized ammunition or vehicles in their Possible Extras.

### Reach

Reach is a trait that defines an OPFOR's operational limits. While an OPFOR can work outside of this parameter it is not a decision they take lightly as the

force loses any benefits it usually gets from its type when working beyond its Reach. This trait also reflects the OPFOR's understanding of its strategic role in the Coalition. You can use Reach in any relevant Mental pool rolled by the OPFOR as a whole, to represent briefings, familiarities, and training flexibility.

| Reach | |
|---|---|
| • | Local, only operates within a city or province |
| •• | National, only operates within a country or under very specific conditions |
| ••• | Regional, operates within a group of allied or bordering countries |
| •••• | Global, borders and international law do not hinder operations |

### Scope

Scope defines an OPFOR's standard tactical procedures and readiness. Escalating beyond these limits requires the direct intervention from a superior in the conspiracy, and unsettles the OPFOR troopers. Add Scope to the combat pool for the OPFOR in One-Roll combats (Corebook, pp. 298-299), or split it among the OPFOR hunters in a more granular fight. Storytellers might subtract Scope from Social pools used by the OPFOR on human targets: no alderman likes having a black-ops kill squad show up in their district! A wise OPFOR gets Influence first, to soften the blow, or keeps its visible Scope down.

| Scope | |
|---|---|
| • | Legal, uses bureaucracy, forensics and police/paramilitary forces |
| •• | Semi-Legal, uses public data mining and proportional military force |
| ••• | Illegal, uses hacking, torture and indiscriminate force |
| •••• | Supernatural, uses occult powers, prophecy and mystical artifacts |

## OPFOR Force Mix

OPFORs comprise many individual Storyteller characters. To the vampires they hunt these hunter teams may seem like a faceless group of stormtroopers, but each has their own story that brought them into the Second Inquisition. When building these teams start by choosing the OPFOR's type as this informs what kind of Antagonists will be most common in the team, their overall goals and what kind of tools they'll have at their disposal. While it might not be possible to flesh out every member of a UTR team sent to capture the Tremere Primogen, the OPFOR's primary Storyteller characters should have some depth to them starting with their Antagonist role and organizational allegiance within the conspiracy. Even just briefly noting how these individual Storyteller characters became inspired by the Second Inquisition (or if they just go where they're sent for a paycheck) can also give them a lot of depth.

A standard UTR OPFOR ranges between a squad (9-12) and an understrength platoon (20-30) in numbers, usually led by a Social specialist with a large core of Physical operators and any supernatural specialists they can get. A fully fleshed out OPFOR also has a Fixer or Techie who handles the logistics of the operation and two or three investigators usually drawn from the Techie or Sleuth roles. The listed Common Force Mix for each OPFOR type refers only to the most likely members, those most key to the listed mission. Every OPFOR brings a Hitter or two of some sort, for example.

## Types of OPFOR

The Coalition is a conspiracy of many parts, and even on the ground floor hunters find countless ways to organize themselves. When creating an OPFOR choose a type from the list below or invent

**EXAMPLE**

**You decide "The Clean Team" will have 15 members. Their leader is a former KGB Blackmailer named Sacha who was recruited into the Eighth Direction while in prison. The Clean Team is mostly composed of former criminals Sacha either met in prison or blackmailed. They are a mix of Warriors, Snipers and Clearance Specialists. A Hacker and a Detective round out the team's investigative capabilities, while a thin-blood Daywalker known as Pervez sometimes freelances with the team when needed. Lastly, a Politician named Michael cleans up after this OPFOR in exchange for favors from the Russian government.**

your own. Each type provides a suggested Reach and Scope for the OPFOR, and some likely Advantages. The writeup lists the most common types of Antagonists in the OPFOR along with the common Resonances of their blood, though only the most foolish vampires would seek out these hunters for that. Lastly, possible extras underline the story elements, equipment, and vehicles that the OPFOR would have available to it on most missions beyond the standard loadout. These OPFOR types should be used as guidelines and are in no way exhaustive.

### Auditors

Blankbodies are masters of infesting mortal institutions with their sycophants and blood slaves. While the Coalition remains fairly confident that their own numbers remain clean of blankbody influence, the danger still exists. This is especially true of large bureaucracies and governments that cannot be monitored continuously. Auditors ferret out blankbody influence in the Coalition members and in other mortal institutions. When they find it, they rip it out and trace the corruption back to its source. Their role as internal auditors especially has made them few friends in the Coalition or elsewhere. Particularly savvy blankbodies know to target these hunters when they come sniffing around. Auditor teams most often come from the ranks of FIRSTLIGHT or SAD, or from Society of St. Leopold Censors.

- Reach: •••
- Scope: ••
- Allies: ••
- Influence: ••
- Enemies: ••

**Common Force Mix:** Bear-Leader, Blackmailer, Burrower, Hacker
**Common Resonances:** Melancholy, Sanguine
**Possible Extras:** XScopes, heavy data mining



### Cenacle

The Vatican's Entity and the Society of St. Leopold use Cenacles as proving grounds for young hunters and vigilantes unused to working in modern units. Fresh recruits and vampire hunters who have worked alone for years are thrust together under the direction of a seasoned hunter determined to whip them into a working combat unit. Cenacles often target weaker blankbodies in daytime raids, but they take on any mission in service to the Society. While the constant churn of recruits means that these OPFORs seldom achieve operational excellence, they are a constant source of innovation and experimentation.

- **Reach:** • or ••
- **Scope:** •
- **Allies:** ••
- **Contacts:** •••
- **Special:** Cenacles have a high turnover rate and suffer no organizational penalties when losing or gaining a significant number of new recruits.

**Common Force Mix:** Amateur, Burrower, Lone Wolf, Nullifier if available
**Common Resonances:** Choleric, Melancholy
**Possible Extras:** Safehouses, artifacts (especially regalia and relics)

### Chaff

The Five Torches can't respond to every alarm with a full UTR strike force. Sometimes they send one or two operatives in to recruit or suborn a local SWAT team, militia, or street gang into fighting the local blankbodies until the grownups can get there and clean up. The Chaff OPFOR doesn't always even know it's fighting vampires ... at first.

- **Reach:** •
- **Scope:** •
- **Allies:** ••
- **Special:** Chaff members have poor morale against vampires at first; until properly blooded the OPFOR must make a Willpower test to stay in the fight each round (roll once against the listed Willpower for a sample antagonist)

**Common Force Mix:** Amateurs, with an occasional Sniper or Warrior; led by an SI Bear-Leader or Lone Wolf
**Common Resonances:** Choleric, Melancholy
**Possible Extras:** Home-brew explosives or napalm

### Minotaur

Also called guardians, Minotaur OPFORs protect an important location or secret of the Coalition. While their operational objective is defensive, most Minotaurs seek to proactively destroy the area's blankbodies as part of their guard duties. The Society of Leopold's Condottieri define this OPFOR type.

- **Reach:** •
- **Scope:** •••
- **Influence:** ••
- **Special:** Add two dice to the OPFOR's pools to resist the discovery of their base or safehouse, or to protect their charge in combat or by other means

**Common Force Mix:** Clearance Specialists, Snipers
**Common Resonances:** Melancholy, Phlegmatic
**Possible Extras:** Claymore mines, laser tripwires

### Monster Squad

New to vampire hunting, possibly unfamiliar with the Coalition as a conspiracy, but the Monster Squad has joined the Second Inquisition nonetheless. The Monster Squad may not be aware of the nature of the threat they are hunting, or might hunt multiple types of supernatural creatures. A Monster Squad rarely leaves their hometown and their quest to destroy vampires often starts from a desire to protect their neighbors. In short they are a band of amateurs who decided to team-up and try their hand at wiping out bloodsuckers. Often, their only advantages are luck and their deep knowledge of their home turf.

- **Reach:** •
- **Scope:** •
- **Contacts:** •••
- **Special:** Monster Squads can ignore a Domain's Portillon rating when escaping from vampires.

**Common Force Mix:** Amateurs, Dealer or Detective, Weaponer
**Common Resonances:** Choleric, Sanguine
**Possible Extras:** Safehouses, panel van or big powerful SUV, silver bullets

### Night Watch

These teams work to maintain what's left of the Masquerade for the Coalition, not to protect the vampires but to keep society from grinding to a halt. Night Watch teams keep fairly stationary but travel to clean up particularly big messes. Bribes, threats, and media manipulation are all part of their job, but they are still hunters. Nothing heals the Masquerade faster than destroying the supernaturals that tore its fabric.

The UK's SO13 have the most effective Night Watch OPFORs in existence, though their focus is often less on the protection of mortals and more on the liquidation of blankbodies. Perhaps a Night Watch's most important goal is to prevent the normalization of vampirism. The only thing more dangerous than allowing the blankbodies to dominate humankind would be allowing them to integrate or make peace with us.

- **Reach:** • or ••
- **Scope:** ••
- **Resources:** •••
- **Influence:** ••
- **Common Force Mix:** Snipers, Hackers, Gentrifier or Politician

**Common Resonances:** Melancholy, Phlegmatic
**Possible Extras:** Drones, XScopes, fast pursuit vehicles, safehouses

### Praetorians

This OPFOR specializes in the protection of VIPs and places of particular importance to the Coalition. Hedgehog cities (p. 155) have a near permanent Praetorian presence. These squads are very limited in their operational purview but have access to the full might of the Second Inquisition. Only the deadliest implements of war are out of their reach and even those can be called upon if their charges are in peril. The Condottieri of St. Leopold serve



as the Entity's Praetorians; FIRSTLIGHT has (not enough) read-in cells within the U.S. Secret Service and Diplomatic Security Service.

- **Reach:** •
- **Scope:** ••••
- **Influence:** •••

**Common Force Mix:** Warrior, Clearance Specialist, Sniper, Socialite
**Common Resonances:** Melancholy
**Possible Extras:** Drones, MRAPs, safehouses, heavy weapons, XScopes, artifacts, incendiary ammunition

### Recce

Before the eradication teams go in, someone has to find their targets, and that someone is Recce, also known as Recon, Scouts, or The Hounds. FIRSTLIGHT, the GRU, and JTRG insert Recce teams into Kindred-dominated cities or into well-defended hunting grounds in Open Cities (p. 149). BOES and Leopold prefer to build Recce around a small (one or two) cadre of specialists, mostly using local hunters who know the city well.

- **Reach:** •••
- **Scope:** ••
- **Contacts:** • add one dot per month deployed
- **Influence:** ••

**Common Force Mix:** Burrower, Detective, Dealer, Black-Bagger, Tails
**Common Resonances:** Sanguine, Phlegmatic
**Possible Extras:** Drones, XScopes, safehouses, surveillance net

### Rovers

FIRSTLIGHT, the GRU, and even the Vatican keep many different private military contractors (PMCs) on speed-dial, to take on problems in places the Five Torches can't easily or immediately enter. ESOG and Brazil's PMEX often stiffen a Rover OPFOR as "target specialist" cadre. Despite their reputation as vigilantes and mercenaries, one auto-da-fé usually converts Rovers into dedicated upholders of the Second Inquisition. Rovers often deploy to clear out blankbody nests that have grown up in rural areas, or to back up other OPFORs badly outgunned by their adversaries.

- **Reach:** ••••
- **Scope:** ••
- **Contacts:** ••

**Common Force Mix:** Bear-Leader, Breacher, Lone Wolf, Snatcher, Warrior
**Common Resonances:** Phlegmatic, Sanguine
**Possible Extras:** Pursuit vehicles, armored SUVs, APCs, heavy machine guns, mortars, helicopters

### Saviors

While all hunters in the Second Inquisition wish to see the world cleansed of blankbodies, Saviors understand that vampires are just a symptom of a very sick world. An unpopular doctrine within the Coalition, FIRSTLIGHT and the Newburgh Group deprecate it least. (In the Society of St. Leopold, the so-called Sanbenito movement embodies this type.) Saviors believe that they can use vampires to solve the underlying problems of the world such as climate change and environmental collapse.

- **Reach:** •••
- **Scope:** ••
- **Influence:** •••
- **Enemies:** ••

**Common Force Mix:** Canary, Deprogrammer, Flagellant, Snatchers
**Common Resonances:** Choleric, Melancholy
**Possible Extras:** Artifacts

### Special Deployment Team (SDT)

Also known as Snatch Squads, these UTR teams specialize in capturing blankbodies and transporting them to secure locations. Other specialized transfer teams then render the targets to a black site where they can be processed and interrogated. These teams put a premium on acquiring high-value targets mostly intact, but they use lethal force if necessary. Snatchers are often associated with FIRSTLIGHT and the FBI's SAD, but the GRU Eighth Direction has also had some success

with rendition. Since SDTs regularly operate across national borders without legal sanction, they often have to plan their operations around hostile local law enforcement.

- **Reach: ••••**
- **Scope: ••**
- **Enemies: ••**

**Common Force Mix:** Snatcher, Breacher, Deprogrammer
**Common Resonances:** Melancholy, Sanguine
**Possible Extras:** Stealth helicopters, armored SUVs, robotic dogs

### Task Force

The highest echelons of the Coalition charge a Task Force with a particular mission or quest, usually under the strictest secrecy. The Task Force may often have to put aside vampire hunting in search of a long lost artifact or powerful secret that could give the conspiracy a strategic edge. Unlike other OPFORs, the Task Force often tries to avoid engaging blankbodies to stay focused on their core objective whatever that may be. The Task Force gives the Storyteller the option to put the hunters on the defensive as they try to keep their secrets out of the player character's hands. The GRU often use Task Forces to hunt down artifacts and other mystical objects.

- **Reach: ••••**
- **Scope: •••**
- **Allies: •••**

**Common Force Mix:** Black-Bagger, Burrower, Detectives
**Common Resonances:** Choleric
**Possible Extras:** Drones, stealth helicopters, XScopes

### Traitors

This OPFOR secretly works for the vampires and they might not even know it. Either a blankbody such as a Cleaver (p. 49) has infiltrated the team itself, or they've become subborned at a higher level. They may never know the truth as they carry out missions that furthers the agenda of the undead. After taking this OPFOR type, choose another one as the cover type for this one.

- **Reach: ••••**
- **Scope: •**
- **Special:** Gain all of the benefits and drawbacks of their chosen cover OPFOR type

**Common Force Mix:** Amateur, Cleaver, False Flagger
**Common Resonances:** Melancholy, Sanguine
**Possible Extras:** As their chosen cover OPFOR Type.

### Wet Team

The signature OPFOR of the GRU Eighth Direction and the Gladius Dei, Wet Teams are UTR squads laser focused on the elimination of dangerous blankbodies with the precision use of violence. (The term comes from the old Russian slang for assassinations, "wet work.") Also known as Dust Teams, they limit their use of local assets and rely on their own skill to get close to their targets and destroy them. Unlike other OPFORs, Wet Teams do not capture when given the chance and usually only target one or two blankbodies for destruction before pulling out of an area. Wet Team operatives develop elaborate cover identities and have their old lives completely digitally zeroed out.

- **Reach: ••••**
- **Scope: •••**
- **Mask: •••** (Zeroed)

**Common Force Mix:** Warrior, Flagellant, Black-Bagger
**Common Resonances:** Phlegmatic
**Possible Extras:** Stealth helicopter, incendiary ammunition and explosives

## Example OPFOR: Special Deployment Team 'WHITEHORSE'

FIRSTLIGHT mostly provides intelligence taskings for IAO strike forces and UTR teams stationed at American bases around the world. But much like

the CIA it interpenetrates, FIRSTLIGHT likes having its own backup paramilitary units for operations a little too special to be shared outside the family. WHITEHORSE combines a political action team with a UTR squad of CIA vets, redeployed specops, and mercenaries. The UTR troopers have been read in on the blankbody threat but have limited knowledge of the Coalition's global reach and strategic alliances.

FIRSTLIGHT usually calls on WHITEHORSE to close down impromptu efforts by rogue blankbodies to expose their existence to the public, or to capture high-value targets identified as emerging imminent threats. WHITEHORSE missions necessarily require complex, fluid handling. If all they needed was to set a haven on fire, FIRSTLIGHT has IAO strike teams or the FBI for that.

WHITEHORSE works out of forward operating bases and safehouses that put them within striking distance of their targets.

- **Reach: ••••**
- **Scope: ••**

### Operational Procedure

FIRSTLIGHT teams are supposed to follow a list of standard operating procedures when neutralizing or apprehending blankbodies, but WHITEHORSE's prolonged time in the field and high success rate has made them more comfortable with improvisation. They clean up messes and slap down fast moving enemy plots to subvert the Coalition's cover story. When WHITEHORSE activates, they understand the tactical environment may quickly shift from a covert snatch job to open kinetic operations against heavily armed supernatural hostiles.

WHITEHORSE follows this checklist as best they can, but aren't afraid to take shortcuts when the mission objectives require;

1. **Ping:** A FIRSTLIGHT analyst determines that an active threat is underway and vets the data streams with the Heartbeat algorithm. If Heartbeat determines the probability of a false positive is low a FIRSTLIGHT action order is issued to WHITEHORSE's CIA Field Supervisor Lori Olson. Olson coordinates with their Political Liaison Cesar Ward to determine how to prepare the operational area for action. The FIRSTLIGHT Strike Team preps and deploys to an over-the-horizon staging area to hurry up and wait.
2. **Mark the Targets:** Olson reads in her Target Analysts, Fixers and Technicians. Usually these are CIA or NSA careerists cleared to work for FIRSTLIGHT, but if the operation is on US territory, Olson uses SAD investigators instead. Working with Olson they use the processed data provided by Heartbeat to profile and identify the blankbodies while en route to the operational area. A three-person work crew is drawn from this team to probe and determine the target's course of action in the Feedback phase.
3. **Feedback:** Political Liaison Cesar Ward prepares local authorities for the operation with a cover story in case things get loud. Olson and Ward then direct the work crew to observe and penetrate the decision making space of the targeted blankbodies. This usually starts with Patrick Ngyuen bugging their vehicles and private areas while Ming Hewitt uses her eyes on the street to track their movements. Once their herds and havens have been pinpointed Mohammad Kassim infiltrates their inner circle as a Blood Doll.
4. **Deployment:** The UTR squad deploys to a safehouse near the operational area acquired by Olson and briefed on their targets by Hewitt. Ward and Olson cut off potential escape routes for the blankbodies by targeting their assets and influences with local interference. At this point Olson briefs Aqsa on the operation; Aqsa then coordinates with Mohammad Kassim to taint the blankbodies' herd. (She also feels out the local Alchemist underground.) Nguyen disables any secondary vehicles owned by the targets and rigs their primary vehicle with an explosive. This is an insurance policy in case the blankbodies evade the Strike Team. If the mission calls for direct air support, Olson requisitions a helicopter.
5. **Execution:** The UTR squad gets the green light. Kassim and Aqsa pull back from the operational area. Two armored SUVs containing

eight members of the strike team converge on the primary blankbody nest during the early hours of the morning. The team receives final orders: Burn or (more rarely) Bag. Olson cuts power and communications around the blankbody nest using her local influence. On a Burn order, WH Fire Team Alpha takes point, entering the target site and destroying every man-sized target within. WH Fire Team Bravo acts as mobile reserve ready to take down any blankbodies that escape the perimeter. On a Bag order, Bravo takes point, backed up by Alpha as perimeter. They restrain all blankbodies in sunbags (Corebook, p. 378) and place them in the SUV's reinforced coffin compartments. In either case, WH Fire Team Delta provides overwatch, and air support if necessary, and a third armored SUV containing WH Fire Team Charlie waits in reserve in case the blankbodies attempt to hunker down. Ward activates the cross-media cover story and seeds fake social media posts where useful. A hostage situation or terrorist militia is blamed and local police block roads into the area.

6. **Exfiltration:** Once the Strike Team has dusted (or secured) the targets, they rendezvous at a pre-established exfiltration point. On a Bag mission, Olson informs them of the rendition area, usually an airstrip outside the operational area already under FIRSTLIGHT or CIA control or cover. From that point, FIRSTLIGHT transfers the blankbodies to the nearest sunny black site by air. Ward covers the fallout generated by the operation, while Olson secures any financial records left behind by the blankbodies for future investigation by FIRSTLIGHT forensic accountants.

## SAC/PAG Team

### Lori Olson, CIA Field Supervisor

Lori's advancement in the CIA is a credit to her ambition, but FIRSTLIGHT approached her because of her legacy. In its early days FIRSTLIGHT prioritized loyalty even over proven skill. In Lori Olson they found an officer with a long family history in the agency's Political Action division. The CIA was in her blood and FIRSTLIGHT leveraged that bond to get her on board. Since then she's proven a capable manager with an almost intuitive sense of how blankbodies slink through the shadowy corners of finance and politics. She sees WHITEHORSE as a model for Coalition operations and sees other hunters as a potential vulnerability that could expose the entire conspiracy. She has reached out to a few "wizards" elsewhere in the Coalition to second to WHITEHORSE if the situation calls for supernatural escalation.

Lori tries to balance quick action with preparation. Invading and subverting enemies' decision-making process keeps them off balance so that her team can move in and exploit their unexpected weakness. This means isolating the tools blankbodies use to empower themselves and turning them against the monsters. They need blood and darkness. So she poisons the blood and turns on the lights. Olson understands that blankbodies use the cracks in the system to hide themselves. She also knows that while paranoia is a necessary virtue in her line of work, trusting her team is the only way she can make progress.

Lori Olson is a Gentrifier.

### Cesar Ward, Political Liaison (Retired NSA)

For almost 30 years Cesar Ward worked in the NSA as an analyst, manager and programmer before moving to the private sector in the early 2000s where he made a killing as a tech investor. He spends most of his time now on his sprawling Wyoming ranch surrounded by his children and grandchildren. Despite his long service record in the NSA, Ward was only recruited by FIRSTLIGHT after he retired. His Rolodex includes an eclectic list of government officials, spies, and industry leaders and makes him a one-man PR machine. WHITEHORSE depends on his connections to cover their tracks and grease the wheels of their operations.

Unknown to FIRSTLIGHT, Ward actually became aware of the blankbody threat in the early 1990s when his daughter Leticia was turned into a ghoul by Camarilla agents infiltrating the NSA. He helped target their enemies for a decade, alter-

nately hoping for his daughter's Embrace and for her death. When Leticia vanished during the first wave of IAO attacks in 2002, he went to work for FIRSTLIGHT under cover of retirement. (SAD agents with top-shelf security systems and XScopes protect his ranch and his remaining family.) He doggedly hunts the vampire threat, while simultaneously trying to find and protect his daughter using his access to FIRSTLIGHT databases and back channels.

Cesar Ward is a Hacker with Politics 7, Resources 5, and Influence 3 (Tech Community).

### Patrick Nguyen, CIA Field Technician

Pat never thought he'd end up working for the government, let alone a globe spanning conspiracy to hunt vampires. He was always a tinkerer and grew up taking things apart and putting them back together in his family junkyard outside Houston. He wanted to be an engineer but life had other plans. When organized criminals set up a chop shop in his family's business, Patrick quickly got caught up in the hustle. He had a talent for taking cars apart and the money kept his dreams of engineering school alive. He even started a side business of his own, modifying vehicles for street racing with elaborate nitrous injection systems. Unfortunately his talents also didn't go unnoticed by the police.

Patrick first met Lori Olson in a Texas holding cell. She was cold and matter of fact with an offer that would change his life and he jumped at the chance. He didn't know all the details at the time, but one of his customers was a vampire and Lori wanted to put a little something extra in his Beemer. That first job was the hardest, but since then he's learned so much from the agency and he's never looked back. When Patrick thinks about his victims, he imagines the look on their face when they turn the ignition. The confusion when the car's engine doesn't turn over smoothly. The shock and realization when they feel the heat and fire through the floorboards. That first time was hard, but now he can only smile.

Patrick Nguyen is a Mechanic (Black-Bagger).

### Ming Hewitt, DIA Operative

Prematurely aged by years in military intelligence, Ming is used to being overlooked. She started her career as an officer in ONI but her talent for human intelligence brought her to the attention of the DIA and she was soon working on the National Joint Terrorism Task Force. At NJTTF she worked with officers from all over the U.S. intelligence community and her talent for recruiting informants in communities of color was appreciated by old hands that were suspicious of over-reliance on signals work. Ironically it was the tech savvy Cesar Ward who recruited Ming into FIRSTLIGHT through his NSA contacts at NJTTF.

Ming is unsentimental about her work. She knows that creating networks of paid spies and snitches in vulnerable communities is corrosive to democracy, but she's fighting monsters. Once the world is safe from blankbodies and the rest there'll be time to repair the damage done. Until then she focuses on the mission.

Ming Hewitt is a Mother Hen (Tail).

### Mohammad Kassim, CIA Operative

Originally recruited as a target analyst by the CIA to develop profiles on extremists in North Africa, in 2008 Mohammad was wounded in the field and dragged off into the night when a forward operating base was overrun by a pack of blankbodies. Mohammed and several others were fed upon and dominated by the blankbodies in a ritual ceremony in the deep desert. While the others in his group succumbed to the domination, Mohammad was somehow able to resist and over time regained full control. Though he had to overpower and kill one of his former colleagues, he was able to signal FIRSTLIGHT forces that had been tracking the blankbodies. Most of the monsters escaped, but Mohammed was now a novel recruit for the Second Inquisition.

Despite several medical examinations it remains unclear why Mohammad can resist the subversive power of blankbody blood. Regardless of the reasons, his time in the desert changed him. Mohammad relishes his time hiding among the undead's

herd and takes a perverse pleasure in the feelings of betrayal and satisfaction that well up in him whenever they feed from his blood. He works closely with Aqsa, feeling a bond with her close to the bond he briefly had with the blankbody killers. Mohammad is often the one who directly poisons herds with Aqsa's concoctions.

Mohammad Kassim is a Blood Doll (Cuckoo) with something like a Short Bond (Corebook, p. 181).

### Aqsa, CIA Ghoul Asset

Captured by Society of Leopold hunters outside of Oran in 1998, Aqsa was slowly weaned off Vitae by enforced fasting and constant prayer. She was on her way to Egypt with her master, who had been recruited for the beginnings of the Gehenna War by someone she knew as "the Emir." In 2002, her testimony proved extremely convincing to American CIA agents in the process of establishing FIRSTLIGHT. The Society turned her over to FIRSTLIGHT as a source of intelligence, and she broke her fast on the first of several captured blankbodies in 2004. Her relapse disgusts her, but she tells herself she can't help it – and the eagerness of her FIRSTLIGHT handlers to weaponize her condition doesn't help either. A fumbled FIRSTLIGHT mission into Cairo blew her cover; she remains hunted by the blankbody faction the Emir represents.

Olson has recruited her with the promise of a final, scientific cure for her addiction, and with a record of competence unusual in CIA operations. Aqsa believes that FIRSTLIGHT, unlike the Vatican, captures blankbodies to study and cure them. The team's problem solver when they come up against the supernatural, she has thrown herself into the study of alchemy as a possible middle ground between blood addiction and mundane mortality. She usually sets up a lab at a safehouse procured by Olson but away from the rest of the operational team; when possible, she makes contact with local Alchemists to secure elixirs in exchange for various controlled substances her CIA connections provide her. She improvises readily in the field when the team encounters unique threats, or the standard operating procedure seems inadequate.

Aqsa is a Ghoul XTechnician (p. 29) with Physical 6 and Occult 8 (Alchemy) instead of Science. Her special ability crafts elixirs instead of gadgets, with an Occult roll instead of Technology.

### UTR/WH Strike Team Elements

### SFC Roy Vaughn: WH Bravo, SOCOM

The tactical commander of the WHITEHORSE UTR Strike Team, FIRSTLIGHT recruited Sgt. Vaughn after he was wounded in the Balkans by an unidentified supernatural entity. Vaughn has a distinctive facial scar and usually wears a black patch over his left eye. He leads operations at the head of the WH Bravo fire team. If shit hits the fan Vaughn directs fire from his Charlie and Delta support teams while Leland Moss and WH Alpha fix enemies in place with suppressing fire.

Roy is a Clearance Specialist with Leadership 7 and Mask 2.

### Fatima Maness: WH Bravo, CIA

Fatima is a young operator added to the team after a recent KIA. She has had limited contact with the supernatural but is a veteran of covert snatch and grab operations. She's curious to see blankbodies in action but understands they are dangerous and deceptive creatures.

Fatima is a Snatcher.

### Cliff Carnes: WH Bravo, PMC

After being drummed out of the Marine Force Reconnaissance, Cliff Carnes drifted in the grey limbo of private military work for almost a decade before he was recruited into FIRSTLIGHT. Cliff is usually a calm presence on the field but the recent death of his squadmate Malcom Freeman has rattled him. Cliff uses a picture of Freeman and himself as the lockscreen on his smartphone.

Cliff is a Snatcher.

### CPL Faris Amer: WH Bravo, SOCOM

A veteran of the Vienna operation, Corporal Amer is a jovial and popular squaddie with a million war

stories. His time sifting through the rubble of the Vienna master nest and cleaning out the blankbodies that survived made him the unit's de facto vampire expert.

Faris is a Snatcher with Occult (Vampires) 6.

### SGT Leland Moss: WH Alpha, SOCOM

The team leader of WH Alpha, Leland fought with force commander Roy Vaughn in the Balkans and assumed he was KIA until he was recruited into FIRSTLIGHT. Moss is curt and to the point, but doesn't throw his people into danger unnecessarily. He knows his team's job is to clear out any blankbody countermeasures and pin down any opposition while the rest of the team flanks them. This means WH Alpha often takes casualties.

Leland is a Breacher.

### Hiram Contreras: WH Alpha, ESOG

Since FIRSTLIGHT teams have limited knowledge of the supernatural, ESOG recruits are sometimes embedded into UTR teams. Hiram is a young but sour faced hunter. His religious faith and penchant for hand-to-hand combat has not always made him a popular member of the WHITEHORSE family.

Hiram is a Flagellant.

### Clyde Page: WH Alpha, CIA

Brought into WHITEHORSE on the recommendation of senior leadership in the CIA, Page is an operator with powerful friends. Although it's unclear why Clyde wanted to work on the frontlines of the Second Inquisition, his fascination with fire borders on the mentally unstable. Page's hands bear the signs of old chemical burns and while he rarely has opportunity to use it, he meticulously maintains his vintage flamethrower.

Clyde is a Firebug (Clearance Specialist) with an M9 Flamethrower

### Evan Watkins: WH Alpha, DEA

Evan Watkins has come a long way from dismantling vehicles looking for smuggled drugs and money. Tearing apart havens for FIRSTLIGHT looking for vampires hidden in the walls is Evan's dream come true. A gambling addict in recovery, Evan was close to the end of his rope when the Second Inquisition gave his life new meaning. Nothing compares to the thrill of playing hide and seek with the undead.

Evan is a Breacher with Awareness (Concealed Objects) 7.

### Omar Daley: WH Charlie, CIA

Murder didn't came naturally to Omar, but his country needed him and if he had to sacrifice his morals in its defense so be it. When FIRSTLIGHT recruited him from the CIA he thought the work would be more challenging but easier on his conscience. In actuality it has been a bore as he babysits the back lines in case of an ambush or counter attack. In his time in WHITEHORSE he's decapitated three blankbodies and he's not really sure why everyone's so scared of these things.

Omar is a Warrior.

### Eileen Harrison: WH Charlie, CIA

Promoted to field work from a CIA workshop, Eileen helped design new Model XM11 flamethrowers and shotgun-based stake launchers for the Second Inquisition. Now she's tasked with developing and testing a new generation of weaponry that can be covertly put into the field and deployed in extreme situations. Eileen often gets caught up in the excitement of using her new toys against blankbodies and this can make it easy for her to lose sight of the collateral damage her weapons inflict.

Eileen is a Weaponer with an SUV mounted 20mm autocannon (Damage Value +8, divided among multiple targets in its firing arc). It can also be mounted on a helicopter.

### SPC Jonathan Luna: WH Delta, SOCOM

Specialist Luna provides long-range support for his team as it breaches blankbody nests. On most missions he never fires a shot, but when needed he concentrates fire on targets designated by Roy Vaugn or his spotter Arlene Knudson. Jon is a skeptic and still has trouble accepting that vampires exist. He's begun collecting evidence of WHITEHORSE's

activities in the field in hopes of discovering FIRSTLIGHT's real agenda.

Jon is a Sniper.

### CPL Arlene Knudson: WH Delta, SOCOM

Corporal Knudson acts as Luna's spotter and backup during missions. Her primary task is to alert her partner to targets of opportunity and defend their position from being overrun. Arlene is superstitious and has undiagnosed OCD. Before missions she repeats catchphrases to herself and compulsively repeats simple tasks such as tying her shoes.

Arlene is a Sniper, but usually carries a shotgun with Dragon's Breath shells. She has a helicopter pilot's rating (Drive 5).

## Example OPFOR: Cenacle of St. Margaret

The faces of the cenacle's members change and the list of names read aloud in memoriam at the annual night of remembrance grows ever longer, but the Cenacle of St. Margaret has been in operation since the seventeenth century. With an excellent track record and immense amounts of experience amongst its senior members, this cenacle is seen as a proving ground for talented but inexperienced Leopoldite agents. They're rotated in and out regularly, both to provide training to more up-and-coming agents and to make sure the blankbodies don't recognize operatives by sight.

Operational command is a safe house near the city limits, but the cenacle's operatives do a lot of work in the field.

- **Reach: ••**
- **Scope: ••**

### Operational Procedure

The Society of St. Leopold didn't survive for eight centuries by drawing attention to themselves. The Cenacle of St. Margaret moves slowly, advancing their operations in a steady but almost imperceptible drip. They have strong connections with a network of local contacts, well-established processes for passing and receiving information from them, and can pull in operational support from other organisations affiliated with the Second Inquisition as needed.

If all goes well, operations flow as follows:

1. **Alert:** An informant, a news report, or a tip from contacts in FIRSTLIGHT (or other setting-appropriate intelligence agency) triggers an investigation. The first step is always vetting the lead: cross-checking it with other sources, doing as much as possible to make sure it's not a trap or a simple mistake.
2. **Ground work:** Sister Dorothy taps her network of local informants, putting meat on the bones of the data analysis. She follows up rumors at street level, city hall, and in any relevant subcultures, while Adrian uses his connections in local politics and high society.
3. **Research:** Finding common monsters is comparatively easy. The powerful ones are always well hidden. This is where David Colon comes into play, digging into local archives and bodies of knowledge. There's always a record somewhere, and vampires – especially powerful ones – don't travel much. A combination of genealogy, cash flow, and other approaches, cross-referenced against the leads Dorothy and Adrian acquire.

Results that don't have direct bearing on the current case go into the cenacle's archives. They become "general knowledge" allowing leaps of logic, speeding up future investigations significantly. There's a lot of unverified but accurate knowledge about the city's Kindred in the cenacle's database.

4. **Observation:** Tailing, listening, monitoring, courtesy of Matt Lusardi. Documenting movements, routines, identifying other coterie members/close allies, and haven(s).
5. **Auto-da-fé:** A rapid, targeted strike against the blankbody or -bodies identified. They choose daytime raids against moderately powerful monsters, but sometimes opt for night strikes against weaker ones: it's easier to get an entire coterie at the same time, that way. The Gladius Dei team takes prisoners, preferably retainers or thin-bloods: people with some humanity left in them, and who have reason to betray the real monsters.

## Vicars

### Adrian Clairmont

According to official records, Bishop Adrian Clairmont was excommunicated seventeen years ago. He's loudly queer, extremely outspoken, and generally a PR disaster for the conservative church. Adrian is all those things, but his excommunication and overt rejection of the Church also provides excellent cover for his work for the Society of Leopold. Nobody suspects him of possessing a bone-deep faith, or of being a soldier of Christ.

Adrian's excommunication followed his first encounter with a blankbody and covered for his recruitment into the Society. He trained under FIRSTLIGHT agents and with IAO teams, and he maintains good relationships with those agencies. His fieldcraft is solid: he can tail a target, handle a cover identity, and occasionally nail a headshot. However, his real talent is the bird's eye view. He can prioritize, assign resources, and juggle commitments. That's what he does as the Cenacle of St. Margaret's Abbé. He makes the big decisions about when to act and how, and he holds the fate of his team and the city's blankbodies in the palm of his hand.

Adrian only gets personally involved in operations when his high society contacts are required: he's a big personality, on every guest list, and he gets to places Sister Dorothy could never dream of accessing. His biggest weakness is his visibility: if anyone ever connected him to the Inquisition, he'd have to retreat to the black site, cutting off an important cenacle information source.

Adrian is a Bear-Leader with Fame 2.

### Sister Dorothy Murphy

Dorothy has been many things in her sixty-seven years of life: con artist, convict, mendicant Carmelite nun, social worker, and now agent of the Second Inquisition. For the last thirty years, she's been all of the last three simultaneously.

Sister Dorothy works closely with the city's unhoused population, at the head of a legion of volunteers running soup kitchens, day centers, and on-street check-in programs handing out blankets, toiletries and food. And she believes in it, passionately and devoutly. She gets more funding for the endeavor from the Society of St. Leopold than she would from any other source and she makes good use of it. She also keeps those people safe from the monsters she's been aware of for nearly forty years.

Dorothy knows everyone who uses her shelters.



She's there day and night, and she makes a point of making friends. Most of her service users would die for their tiny, chain-smoking, neck brace wearing ("for my arthritis") surrogate grandma, with her brand of brutal honesty and tough love. She also knows everyone who matters in city bureaucracy. Sister Dorothy is the Cenacle of St. Margaret's information gatherer and manager of informants. Once an alert is raised, it's over to her to sift through rumors on the street, ask questions, and check in with her contacts at city hall.

Dorothy's network is broad, but she cares too much about her informants: she's reluctant to expose them to danger or leave them in harm's way, and this sometimes limits the use she gets out of them.

A combination of a Glock-42 (light draw, low recoil) and True Faith (•••) mean Dorothy's not an easy target but if she's left exposed in a combat situation something's gone terribly wrong. If so, backup is exactly one voice command to her smartwatch away.

Sister Dorothy is a Detective, with Insight 8 and Influence 2 in the city.

### David Colón

David is nearly sixty, and in his forty years of working for the Vatican and then the re-canonized Society of St. Leopold he has seen unimaginable horror. His field days as an exorcist and assassin are far behind him, and he and his C-PTSD (symptoms: difficulty regulating emotions; nightmares; flashbacks) have fallen back on his seminary training. He's the cenacle's archivist and historian, digging into city archives and the collections in university libraries to dig up background on operational targets.

Often his discoveries reveal vampiric holdings in unexpected places: a long-forgotten connection to the family of the local police chief, a 'family interest' in a local art scene or theatre, or ownership of buildings and land rented out through a complicated network of holding corporations. Resources, Contacts, and potential Havens, in other words. It's shocking how often blankbodies don't even bother changing their name and David can find continuous records going back eighty years or more. They were fat, complacent parasites until very recently and that makes David sick. He's intent on making sure the vampires remember what it means to be afraid.

Bravo-Twos keep a close eye on material that could reveal their secrets and David is extremely paranoid: anyone he interacts with in a library, archive, or special collection could be a Renfield. New people scare him, and when he's scared he gets obsessive, ferreting out everything there is to know about a subject. Upon occasion this distracts him from the task at hand, maybe even enough to miss something obvious.

David is a Burrower, with Contacts 3 (archivists, librarians) and Allies 3 (wealthy benefactor of a private occult library).

### Matteo Lusardi

Sometimes Matt wishes he had a business card so he could put "hacker for the Vatican" on it. He's the Cenacle of St. Margaret's tech guy. From monitoring phone taps and listening devices, to hacking vampiric communication networks, to helping David maintain his database, Matt is always busy. Far too busy. He's overstretched, and his superiors use that as an excuse to keep relying on Sister Dorothy's informants over his technical solutions. Usually he gets involved in an operation after the target has been identified and profiled (stage 4).

Recruited while still an undergraduate from a private Catholic university in Milan, Matteo has never been anything but a Society of St. Leopold asset. He's never had a visible, public life and he's never not known about blankbodies. He feels like he's missed out: he watches the general public go about their lives and he envies them their blissful ignorance. However, he doesn't feel any kinship with them. They're herd animals, and Matt is their shepherd. He'd never admit it, but he firmly believes he has more in common with the vampiric predators who hunt human beings than with the idiot mortals themselves. On some level he thinks of the blankbodies as equals, like two rival intelligence agencies in a glamorous spy drama. He thinks he's capable of building alliances with them, of operating with professional respect.

He's very wrong, and if the local Kindred ever

learn of this delusion abduction and possibly a violent Embrace will follow.

Matt's a Hacker, with Willpower 4.

### Special Attaché Lisa Klein

Lisa came into the Second Inquisition the hard way: in handcuffs and a straitjacket, in the hands of the cenacle's Gladius Dei ops team. Recently Embraced, Lisa had already turned to religion as a way to try and rise above her monstrous nature. She viewed her capture as a chance for salvation, and she convinced Adrian Clairmont of that too. He's always had a weakness for underdogs.

Before her death, Lisa was a psychiatrist. Now she's reskilled as a deprogrammer. Her understanding of vampiric cults is invaluable: she can talk to captured ghouls or thin-bloods on their own terms and earn their trust in a way few others can. She can empathize, or appear to. She uses her own experience as a promise of a better future – she doesn't mention that she spends most of her time locked in a black site basement – and breaks down her subjects until they spill their secrets and lead the cenacle to their next target. She values it, too. Every other monster who sees the light is evidence that her own struggle for humanity is more than deluded optimism.

The rest of the cenacle look at her as an example of the Lord's power, a miracle made flesh: a vampire servant of God. It would tear them apart if they knew that occasionally her resolve weakens and she sneaks offsite to feed on something more substantial than blood bags.

Lisa is a Deprogrammer, with the addition of:
**Disciplines:** Auspex 2, Fortitude 1, Presence 2
**Humanity:** 7
**Blood Potency:** 1

### Secondments

The Cenacle of St. Margaret runs like a well-oiled machine and is a model of patience and discipline. Therefore, talented new recruits are sent there to train, most commonly under Dorothy or David, from whom they learn to run networks or read cryptic hints in crumbling paper trails. At any given time, the cenacle has an additional 2-3 operatives with Social or Technical focus attached to it.

### Gladius Dei Canons

Gladius Dei are the Society of Leopold's front liners. Once the investigation is complete and the plan set in motion, they're the ones who risk their lives taking on, and taking down, the blankbodies. Personnel turnover is high: even with relics and the best info Dorothy, David and Matt can provide there's no getting around the fact that vampires are deadly.

The Gladius Dei team live full time at the black site. It's too dangerous for them to be in the city proper, when at any moment they could be recognized from a second of camera footage or a run-in with one of the rare few monsters who survive encountering them.

It's safe to say the entire team has PTSD, in varying degrees and presentations. As their chaplain, Damian Marshall does what he can to counsel and support them but the job takes its toll on every agent.

### Marina Ferrara

Marina heads the cenacle's Gladius Dei squad. She's been a soldier for Christ since she was sixteen in Manaus, and at thirty-two she's lost track of her dust count. Marina's unshockable. She's survived blankbody traps, seen teammates die in horrendous ways, and learned from every mission, successful or disastrous. She's also learned to think on her feet, making split second decisions on instincts she fully believes are a gift from God.

Marina accepts that her job comes with a short life expectancy, and that no matter how good the intelligence gathering work beforehand, the situation on the ground changes quickly. However, her team are highly trained elites. They're not irreplaceable but it would be a huge waste to let them die if it doesn't significantly advance the Leopoldite cause. She'll pull out of an op if it gets too dangerous... but she'll be back.

Marina is a Warrior.

### Owen Byrne

Where Marina is calm and collected, her 2IC runs hot. Owen's an ex-CIA assassin and his world changed when he realized there were worse things in it than narcos and terrorists. Owen is always first in,

and first to draw blood. When he can get away with it, he supplements the team's standard loadouts of handgun and rifle (with bayonet: anything's a stake if you're skilled enough) with a two-handed sword he's had blessed and that he regularly sprinkles with blessed oil.

Owen does not like to lose. Even when the rest of the team is ready to pull out, he'd rather fight to the last and hopefully take one more bloodsucker down with him.

Owen is a Warrior.

### Rob Kelly

Rob won't rest until there are no more monsters in the shadows. He's nothing less than a fanatic with the fire of his beloved flamethrower reflected in his eyes. As far as anyone can tell, Rob doesn't have hobbies or interests. Just that flamethrower, and an encyclopedic knowledge of the local bloodsuckers that rivals David Colón's.

He recites prayers as he strides into battle, hissing and whispering in broken Latin as his holy fire flares up and prepares to sweep a room clean. The last word many blankbodies hear is a snarled "Amen."

Rob is a Clearance Specialist.

### Damian Marshall

Damian is an enormous man, and an enormous show off. An absolute mountain of muscle with a boyish grin, he's the squad's demolitions expert as well as their chaplain. A former Marine who found God and was then found by the SI, Damian enjoys his job. More than he should, probably. It's satisfying to blow a big hole in a wall and let the sun stream into a crypt. It's even more satisfying to keep his team going, keep their spirits up, with prayers and services as well as amateur counselling. He's never short of a joke or a quip, especially when the mood is grim.

Damian's the only one of the cenacle's Gladius Dei team with a family. Not in the city, of course. His ex-wife and three kids all live out of state and haven't heard from him for five years. But they exist, and that's a weakness just waiting to be exploited.

Damian is a Breacher.

### Evan de Witt

Evan's never been afraid of the dark, just fascinated by it. He was dabbling in the occult when the Society of St. Leopold found him and recruited him. He lives and breathes arcane secrets, spending every waking moment searching for new rituals that allow him to pierce vampiric occultism and illusions, and extend that protection to his team.

Evan looks out of place on the Gladius Dei team: he's pale, skinny, and clumsy, and he's barely competent with a firearm. But he's the one who stops vampires from disappearing, or suddenly appearing, or mazing the minds of the rest of the team, so he's an asset to be protected even if he is eerily quiet and prone to weird, highly specific, predictions of doom.

Evan's researches, in addition to things Lisa's subjects have told her, have persuaded him that drinking vampire blood would significantly increase his powers. He hasn't tried it yet, but it's tempting.

Evan is a Nullifier.

### Natalie Bassett

Natalie was shocked to discover her origin story was not unique or even uncommon: her sister got tangled up in a sex cult that turned out to be a blood cult, died, and Natalie turned vigilante to put a stake in every monster who'd been part of the society. She had six hits under her belt already when she stumbled into a Leopoldite operation and nearly blew it. They recruited her because it was safer than letting her keep screwing things up for them, but she's turned out to be useful. Natalie's self-reliant (to a fault) and a generalist who can fill most roles as needed.

Natalie likes night fights and up-close finishs: she wants to see the monsters suffer as they die. If bait is needed, she's the first to volunteer.

She's been reprimanded twice for continuing vigilante activity when the cenacle doesn't move fast enough for her liking, but it's real hard to get kicked out of the Inquisition.

Natalie is a Lone Wolf.


MK
2021

# *Chapter Two:* SPECIAL WEAPONS

*The most powerful weapon on earth is the human soul on fire.*

— MARSHAL FERDINAND FOCH

Working for a hunter organization allows you access to better tools for the hunt. Clandestine agencies can supply hunters with military-grade weapons and bleeding-edge tech, mystical bodies provide artifacts and relics to level the field against supernatural foes. This chapter provides only a small sampling of the wonderful toys black budgets and centuries-old arcane treasuries can bring to bear.



## Arms and Materiel

Everything in this section (and more) exists, paid for by your tax dollars and deployed in public or in secret. Police and military gear overlap more and more, and even a cursory trawl through the news or websites devoted to security can uncover even more examples.

### Weapons

While shotguns and stakes have centuries of vampire-stopping tradition behind them, there's no need for your loadout to be stuck with Stoker.

#### Active Denial System

A relatively new development in crowd control techniques, the Active Denial System (ADS) is informally known as a "heat ray." Vehicle mounted, its use is limited to outdoor operations and perimeter security (driving escaping blankbodies back into a building, away from civilians, for example). The ADS emits a pinpoint accurate ray of intense heat, up to and including second-degree burns. That's just for crowd control: the Second Inquisition turns up the heat.

The ADS does no damage until the third consecutive turn of exposure, after which it does 1 Superficial damage each turn. Anyone (including blankbodies) in its area of effect must make a Resolve + Composure roll to avoid backing (or running) away; the Difficulty increases by one each turn of exposure. An amped-up ADS does Aggravated damage.

### Compound Crossbow

Crossbows are an efficient and time-honored stake delivery method. Compound crossbows use a system of cables to increase the bow's power. With a draw of up to 200 lbs. they hit hard: easily hard enough to shatter a blankbody sternum. A called shot to the heart is no easier with a compound crossbow, but that raw power means if you hit the organ, you'll pulverize it.

Compound crossbows deal +2 damage.

### Flare Gun

Flare guns are available as pistol-shaped weapons or a launcher attached to a rifle. Either way, they fire standard sized strontium- or potassium-based flares. Calcium flares are also readily available, and useful in underwater environments (flooded crypts, city sewers, etc.). They're legal and relatively easy to obtain, so while UTR teams carry them as distress signals they sometimes resort to as weapons, a Farm Team or Amateur might make them a primary weapon.

Flare guns deal 2 Aggravated damage. They also add 1 Difficulty to Composure and Terror Frenzy tests for one turn when used in an enclosed space.

### Variant: Road Flare

Road flares are great street-legal incendiaries. Once lit, use Strength + Athletics to throw one at a target. A road flare deals 1 Aggravated damage. If not thrown immediately, they cause 1 Aggravated damage to the wielder as molten residue drips onto their hand.

### Garrote

A military-issue garrote consists of a length of piano wire between two wooden handles. It's capable of decapitating a target in one smooth motion and it's equally effective on blankbodies and mortals.

The penalty for a called shot to behead is reduced by 1 die when using a military garrote. The damage bonus is +0, but if the user can sneak up on a target by winning a Dexterity + Stealth vs. Wits + Awareness contest, they add the margin of that roll together with the margin of their attack roll to calculate damage.

### Long Range Acoustic Device

The Long Range Acoustic Device (LRAD) crowd control weapon is sometimes known as a "sonic cannon." It weighs 300 lbs., so usually remains vehicle mounted, used in outdoor spaces. An LRAD blast induces headaches, panic, and hearing impairment and it works just fine on blankbodies.

Anyone in an LRAD's firing arc must make a Stamina + Composure test (Difficulty 4) to resist 3 Superficial damage each round. If they fail, they are panicked (-2 dice to Composure and Intelligence tests) as long as the sound lasts. Vampires who are panicked for 3 consecutive rounds must make a Frenzy test.

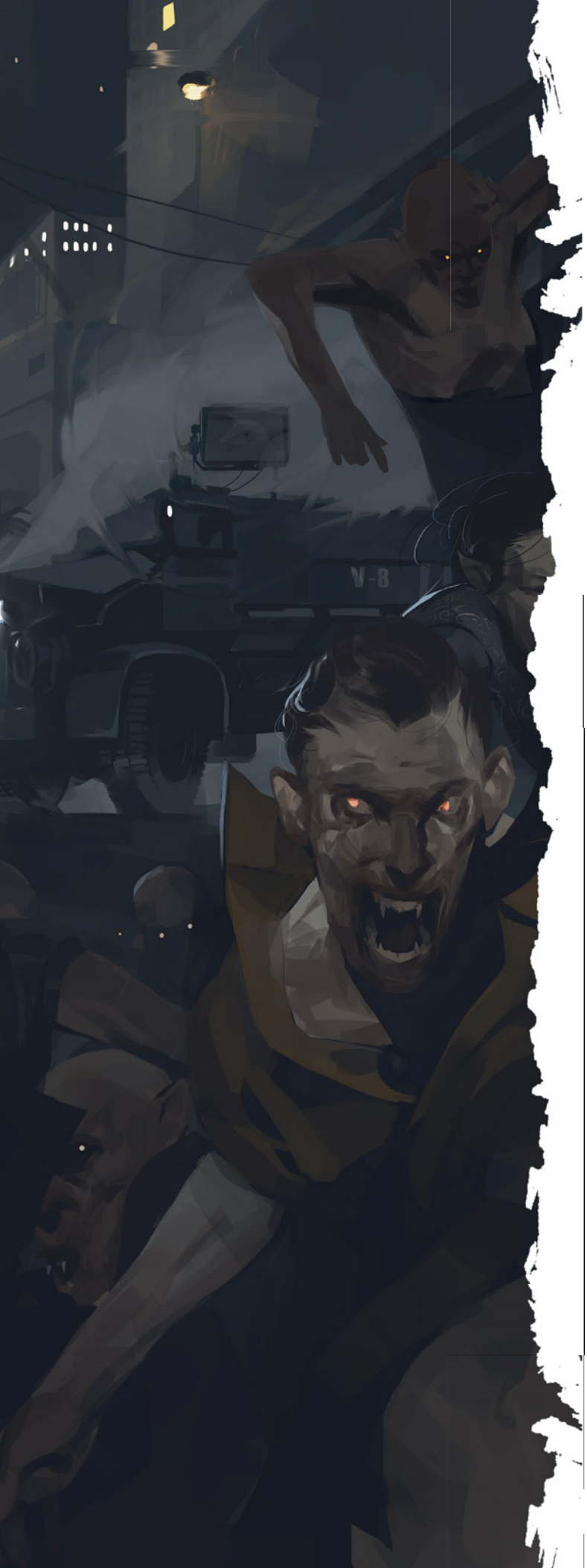
### Nightwatchman

The ESOG's Nightwatchman (Metronotte in Italian) is a shortsword disguised as a regular baton. It can be carried without fear of drawing attention to oneself, unsheathed in a moment, and used as a regular sword. A Nightwatchman is a treasured possession: it's been through hell and high water with its owner, and it's often customized to reflect that. Some are marked with body counts, others with lines from scripture, or just given the name of a saint or loved one.

The Nightwatchman is also optimized for beheading: a short, straight blade that cuts clean. The penalty for a called shot to decapitate is reduced to -1 with a Nightwatchman. It does +2 damage.

### Riot Foam

Riot foam slows down a truck so it will certainly hinder a blankbody, even one with unnatural speed. Unless they're also as strong as a truck.



Riot foam is not a preferred tool for UTR operators: it's difficult to target precisely, meaning it's hard to stake or behead a blankbody afterwards. Plus it's fire retardant, so you can't even burn one. Sure, some agents say enough foam can immobilize a vampire and you can leave it for the sun but that's unlikely. It's mostly used where there's a significant chance of civilian presence or a team is facing a monster with super speed.

Riot foam doesn't cause damage. Instead, a target's speed is reduced to a slow shuffle, or human walking speed for vehicles, until they're cleaned off (the least pleasant use for baby oil). Vampires hit with riot foam use Strength instead of Dexterity in Athletics tests to use Celerity powers.

### TASER

A self-defense favorite, TASERs fire electrodes attached to the gun itself, which deliver an electrical charge that interrupts voluntary control of the muscles. TASERs deal Superficial damage, but their primary benefit is to stop a target from escaping. In fact they usually stop a target from doing anything except collapsing to the floor and twitching.

A TASERed target must equal or exceed the amount of damage taken (after halving, for vampires) on a Composure + Resolve roll, or be incapable of acting for the next turn. TASERs do little to harm vampires, who do not rely on electrical impulses to animate their muscles, but they work just fine on ghouls.

### Water Cannon

Calling these crowd control weapons "water" cannons doesn't do them justice. The high-pressure, high-velocity, vehicle-mounted cannon can fire any liquid at its targets. Dye, for later tracing and identification. Tear gas (admittedly, not useful for blankbodies). Gasoline — to set up a hail of incendiary bullets or a Firebug strike.

In theory, a filled water tank could be consecrated and used for Holy Water, but that would require an operator with True Faith, which is uncommon even in the Society of St. Leopold.

Water cannons deal Superficial damage. Dye

fired from them lasts for several days. Coating a target in gasoline increases subsequent damage from fire by 2. If by some miracle the hunters have a tank full of holy water, treat it as sunlight damage.

## Ammunition

In addition to the standard Dragon's Breath and Raufoss incendiary ammunition (Corebook, p. 380), hunter loadouts include many different loads.

### Armor-Piercing Rounds

Armor-piercing rounds are made of harder metal, less liable to deform on impact. Because they keep their shape, they rip through most forms of body armor instead of compressing and being stopped. They're as trivial to blankbodies as any other bullet, but excellent for neutralizing armored mortal or ghoul bodyguards, which many vampires count as a regular part of their retinue.

Armor-piercing rounds reduce a target's Armor Value by 2.



### Breaching Rounds

A breaching round, also known as a "master key," is a shotgun shell designed to break up on impact. It blows the lock or hinges off a door without hurting anyone behind it. It also, if fired directly at a human being, blows chunks out of them. A standard shotgun shell does much the same damage to a door, so UTR teams use breaching rounds mostly for extractions: retrieving team members or informants taken prisoner by blankbodies, when it's important to control who comes to harm.

A shotgun loaded with breaching rounds functions exactly like one with standard ammo, but there's no chance of it hitting multiple targets or ricocheting.

### Flash-bang Grenades

A flash-bang, or stun grenade, produces a momentary flare of light and deafening blast sufficient to blind and confuse those who see it for a few seconds. UTR teams use it to disorient targets when they begin a raid, or to cover their escape.

Use Dexterity + Athletics to throw a flash-bang, and contest with a Wits + Resolve roll. If the viewer wins the contest, they are only disoriented (-2 dice to Wits pools) for one round. Otherwise they are unable to see at all. Eye protection adds 2 dice to the Wits + Resolve roll.

### Plastic Explosives

Plastic explosives like Semtex and C4 have the advantage that they can be set well in advance, and detonated at a distance using detonation cord or a timer mechanism: when the cord ignites or the timer triggers, a spark detonates the explosives. UTR teams use them for breaching buildings where breaching rounds won't do the trick, or as traps. Alternatively if a blankbody's just too dangerous to take on, a few bricks of C4, and the complete destruction of a building over its Haven, might do the trick.

Setting plastic explosives requires an Intelligence + Technology roll (but see Corebook, p. 410). As a rough guide to usage, 200 grams of plastic explosive destroys a car, and inflicts 7 levels of Aggravated

damage. Add another 3 levels of damage for each additional 200 grams, and increase the blast area accordingly.

### Rubber Bullets

"Less lethal" projectiles, rubber bullets can still cause serious bruising, break bones, or blind a target. They're sometimes used when a UTR team wants to take a ghoul or a mortal retainer into custody, but are close to useless against blankbodies.

A firearm loaded with rubber bullets deals Superficial damage to mortals as well as vampires.

The so-called "wooden bullets" used for crowd control are stubby discs loaded into a shotgun casing, and also don't do Aggravated damage to anyone. You can fire a stake from a shotgun barrel (replace the shot in the shell with a wad), but it only penetrates a vampire's sternum when fired at nearly point-blank range, like a stake-launcher (Corebook, p. 381).

### Thermite

Thermite, a mixture of phosphorus and metal oxide, burns at 2,200° C. It burns through steel and asphalt, and burns flesh from bone. Prolonged contact burns bone to ash. Hence its SI nickname "instant crematorium."

Thermite has obvious uses for forcing entry: it's a "sticky" explosive that can be planted, ignited, and left to detonate. It can also be fired in specially constructed grenades (it requires a magnesium fuse to spark). Once ignited, thermite is extremely challenging to extinguish. Smothering is ineffective (the required oxygen is in the thermite itself), as is submersion in water. Thermite burns for upwards of half a minute.

Thermite is relatively easy to make (Intelligence + Science roll, Difficulty 3), and can be bought in small quantities as a welding supply. Thermite inflicts 3 Aggravated damage each round, for 3 rounds.

Introducing thermite to a sleeping blankbody is every Inquisitor's dream, and every hunter has their own fantastic method to use. Mixing thermite with a Tzimisce's jar of dirt, for example ...

### Thermobaric Munitions

Thermobaric munitions, mostly found in UTR loadouts in the form of rifle grenades, create slower, more intense explosions than standard explosives. UTR teams consider them an efficient way to clear a room, or at least win an early advantage by setting everyone inside it on fire, as well as forcing entry: one of these grenades can do major damage to a structure. They're called "bunker busters" for good reason.

Thermobaric grenades inflict +5 Aggravated damage (compared to +4 damage for regular rifle grenades), and set what they hit on fire. They add three dice to rolls to damage structures.

### White Phosphorus

White phosphorus is pyrophoric: it ignites on contact with air. It's used in some incendiary grenades, but primarily for smoke grenades. Like flash-bangs, UTR squads use them to cover their arrival and departure, but also to provide an advantage against blankbodies with mind-altering abilities.

White phosphorus reduces dice pools that rely on vision by 3 dice. It renders Dominate powers that require eye contact ineffective, and provides +2 dice to resist the effects of Presence.

## Armor

In Ephesians 6:11, St. Paul advises his readers to "put on the whole armor of God, to stand against the wiles of the devil." The Coalition suggests adding other armor in the field.

### Chainmail

Chain mail isn't as effective as kevlar but it makes a statement. Traditional, steel chainmail mostly says "I care far more about aesthetics than protection" but modern alternatives made with titanium alloys or other advanced materials have their uses. The Society of St. Leopold is particularly enamored with chainmail: nothing says "holy crusader" like a full suit of armor.

Steel chainmail has armor value 3 (1 versus bullets) and imposes -2 dice on Stealth tests and -1 die on all other Dexterity tests. Lighter, modern

chainmail has armor value 3 (including bullets) and no Dexterity penalty. Modern chainmail is usually covered in a textile outer layer that muffles sound (negating the Stealth penalty) but some agents — mostly Leopoldites — opt for the grand gesture of visible chainmail.

### Kevlar Vest

Kevlar vests, flak jackets or similar body armor provide substantial protection (Armor Value 4) but comes at the cost of flexibility and speed (-1 die on Dexterity tests). A little clumsiness is a small price to pay for surviving an op, so for most UTR teams it's part of the standard field loadout.

Kevlar also happens to be flame-resistant (provides Armor Value 1 against fire), meaning it's the default choice for Clearance Specialists wielding flamethrowers, or anyone working alongside them.

### Neck Protector

Neck protectors aren't especially protective, but they are discreet. A standard motorcycle neck protector can be hidden under a bulky coat and a carbon fiber one fits under a scarf or a high collar. They're popular amongst hunters without access to better gear, such as Amateurs and the Farm Teams on pp. 142.

A motorcycle neck protector or equivalent — or arm protectors, or other armor that covers one specific region of the body — provides has an armor value of 1 (0 against bullets). All neck protectors, including carbon fiber or other materials designed for athletic use add 2 dice to Strength + Brawl rolls to resist a bite attack.

### Riot Shield

Riot shields have a lot of advantages: they're easy to put down if, for some reason, an agent needs to pass as a civilian. They're a defensive weapon, too: it's not difficult to shove an assailant away with the force of one. Made of clear polycarbonate, they don't impede vision.

Police riot shields have an Armor Value of 3 (0 if the user is surprised from behind), and 0 against ballistics. The SAD and BOES provide a variant that's somewhat bulletproof, providing Armor Value 1 against ballistics.

## Mundane Gear

Just stuff you might find lying around the safe house. All organized Five Torches teams have access to all of it; Amateurs need Resources to get it.

### Battering Ram

Police issue battering rams apply 3 metric tonnes of force to door locks, and need just one person of average strength to operate them. Lockpick guns make for a quieter ingress, but a battering ram makes an entrance. Teams use them when they want to make a stir.

Battering rams are a favorite tool of UK police forces, and SO13 know them as the Enforcer.

Battering rams add 3 dice to any test to force open a door.

### Dental Pliers

Once a blankbody is dragged in for interrogation, the fang rippers come out. It's just sensible risk management. It's also an excellent threat: even if the blankbody expects to survive the interrogation, their dignity and pride is forever ruined.

Removing a fang requires a successful Strength + Medicine or Brawl test against a restrained target. Many Coalition personnel like to fill in the extraction site with molten metal or bone putty, in the belief it stops blankbodies from regenerating their fangs.

Removing a fang inflicts 1 level of Aggravated damage. Removing all fangs, and filling in the gaps in the jaw, inflicts the Baby Teeth Flaw (Corebook, p. 182).

### Fiberoptic Scope

A fiberoptic scope is a flexible bundle of optical fiber with a lens at one end, attached either to an eyepiece or a camera. They're used for peeking inside small spaces: the inside of locks or machines, or even inside the body. UTR teams mostly use

them for the first two reasons: they aid in lockpicking, understanding and disarming traps or security measures, or very subtle surveillance when inserted under doors or around window frames.

Fiberoptic scopes add 2 dice to tests for any of these purposes.

### GPS Trackers

The Coalition uses GPS trackers to keep track of surveillance targets, and to keep tabs on their own personnel, especially Cuckoos or others in high-risk positions.

GPS trackers affixed to vehicles are usually magnetic and smaller than palm-sized. Spotting one on a vehicle requires a successful Wits + Streetwise or Technology test, but removing it is simple. Personnel trackers are the size of a watch face, and usually sewn into clothing, worn inside shoes, or stuck to the underside of an actual watch. Finding them is a Difficulty 3 Wits + Streetwise/Technology test.

An active GPS tracker adds 4 dice to any test to locate the wearer.

### Ground Penetrating Radar

Ground penetrating radar uses radar pulses to image subsurface features and locations. It penetrates metres of dirt, solid concrete and rock. It finds its way to the deepest Nosferatu sewer or Tzimisce crypt, or beyond the stone walls of the best warded Tremere chantry. It will spot a hidden room or bunker, as well as trace power lines or water pipes that lead to one.

Operation is easy and subtle: teams pushing one of these lawnmower-sized devices around can easily be mistaken for surveying teams or utilities workers.

Using GPR requires a Difficulty 2 Intelligence + Technology roll.

### Laser Microphone

This small, easily hidden microphone uses a laser beam to "read" sound vibrations. They're tiny and discreet, and the Coalition's go-to for audio surveillance. The mic needs to be attached to a flat surface that can vibrate in response to sound — commonly a window or a painting. Windows are ideal: the mic doesn't even have to be placed inside the room.

The pickup range on laser microphones is limited: an exceptionally large room can stymie them. However, they're hard to find (Wits + Technology roll, Difficulty 5).

### Lockpick Gun

Lockpicking requires a delicate hand and extensive training. Or it requires a device that fires a steel rod at the lock, releases the cylinder, and sticks a fine metal rod in to open the lock. Much faster than normal lockpicking, a lockpick gun takes a matter of seconds to open a lock. It's also quiet: a soft punch and click sound.

A lockpick gun adds 4 dice to a Dexterity + Larceny roll to pick a lock.

### Night Vision Optics

Night vision optics, usually goggles, but cameras and recording equipment too, come in two variations: ambient light enhancing, or infrared. Ambient light enhancing optics are cheaper (not a concern for the IAO, but definitely so for Farm Teams), and have longer range but need some light to work. Underground, or in a windowless room, they're ineffective. IR optics have a shorter range, but they'll work anywhere. The latest U.S. military NVO system, the ENVG, combines the two. Snipers in control of their environment are better off with light enhancers; teams moving through a nest or lair find IR less risky.

Of course, blankbodies don't radiate in IR; they're not invisible, but they only show up in contrast to their background. Infrared-only goggles reduce Awareness pools by 1 die in tests to spot vampires. Of course, pitch darkness reduces that pool by 2 dice...

Attackers can forcibly remove night vision equipment with a successful grapple (Corebook, p. 301).

### Restraints

It's hard to take prisoners without restraints. Zip cuffs are one size fits all, and an agent can carry dozens or hundreds of them: great for busting a cult or party of mortal servants. They require a Strength test (Difficulty 5) to break, but can be cut by knives or talons relatively easily.

Handcuffs are sturdier, and reusable. They require a Strength test (Difficulty 6) to break, or a Dexterity + Larceny roll (Difficulty 4) to slip free.

Hobbles include bars that keep wrists or ankles a fixed (with a metal bar) or maximum (with a nylon leash) distance apart. They're used when prisoners need to be transported — from a vehicle to a facility, for example and can't be trusted to walk. Tearing free or escaping has the same Difficulty as handcuffs, or worse if the hobbles are Coalition-issue.

Chainmail Hoods exist explicitly for rendition missions against blankbody targets. Micro-woven aramid fiber-and-ceramic "chainmail" cuts off the subject's sight (and Presence attacks) and blocks their bite and speech (and Dominate) with thick aramid padding. A titanium-reinforced aramid cord pulls tight around the subject's neck, keeping the hood secure as long as their hands remain restrained. (Even unrestrained, pulling off a cinched hood takes the wearer's whole turn.) Putting a hood on an unwilling blankbody is a called shot, removing two successes from the Dexterity + Brawl attack. However, if the user sneaks up on a target by winning a Dexterity + Stealth vs. Wits + Awareness contest, they add the margin of that roll to their pool for the hood attack.

### Tactical Ear Buds

Tactical ear buds combine hearing protection — extremely valuable in environments with explosions, gunfire, and sometimes sonic weapons like LRADs — with communication. They balance out sound for clear audio, and come with a microphone for clear, carrying speech. The most advanced models incorporate health monitors, reporting status to operational command.

Tactical ear buds also add 1 die to Composure tests in combat situations.

# Vehicles

The Coalition uses a wide variety of vehicles and weapon platforms in its pursuit of blankbodies. Transport vehicles and drones are fairly common, but a few instruments of war are only brought out to play when a major blankbody infestation or power center is uncovered.

For the general purposes of urban combat, assume that vehicles can absorb as much Aggravated damage as their highest Armor levels. Civilian vehicles only grant their full Armor rating to characters sheltering behind the engine block; other vehicles extend more protection as mentioned.

## Transports

These vehicles carry reinforcements into the hunt, and prisoners out of it.

### Police / Pursuit Vehicle

Local hunters and law enforcement make use of these sturdy sedans to pursue blankbodies and convey captured targets to a processing center. Often the trunks of these cars include a shotgun, body armor, first aid kits, a portable defibrillator, and bolt cutters.

Civilian vehicles' engine blocks have Armor 5; the rest of the vehicle provides Armor 2 (1 vs. bullets).

### Surveillance Van

The classic white van jammed with surveillance equipment. Although they come in many varieties, those used by the Coalition usually monitor cell phone audio, capture texts and use video surveillance. To detect blankbodies they also carry thermal imaging cameras or portable second-generation XScope cameras (p. 82). IAO and FIRSTLIGHT teams also have access to XKEYSCORE, allowing them to search through the target's emails, social media, texts, and video in real time with assistance from the Heartbeat pattern recognition algorithm.

### Armored SUV

Commonly used by Snatch Squads and the Russian mafiya, they can plow through most soft obstacles and only explosives or supernatural powers can disable them. FIRSTLIGHT and GRU teams prefer to use heavily armored black Escalades with two to four soundproof, secure coffin compartments in the back for the safe transport of captured blankbodies. Their side and rear Armor is 8, their front cab and engine have Armor 10.

### APC / MRAP

Armored Personnel Carriers and Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles are common among militarized police forces in the US and South America. While law enforcement versions of these vehicles are often mounted with searchlights and LRADs (p. 70), military APCs/MRAPs mount heavy machine guns and tear gas launchers as well. APCs have all-over Armor 8; MRAPs have all-over Armor 10.

In particular IAO has diverted a fleet of RG-33 MRAPs to Coalition forward bases in North America and Europe. These unmarked MRAPs can carry a squad of six to eight operators and boast a turret with a remotely operated modified CROWS weapon system that controls a .50 caliber machine gun (Damage +5, Wits + Firearms dice pool can be split among multiple targets) with daylight thermal video camera, laser rangefinder, and XScope sights (add 2 to the Firearms dice pool).

### Support Helicopter

Police helicopters have Armor 3, and mount spotlights; riot-control copters also mount tear gas dispensers. Their overwatch adds at least 2 dice to any police pursuit pool.

Five Torches forces use large-bodied mixed-use military helicopters such as the U.S. Black Hawk or the Russian Mil Mi-24 Hind to rapidly deploy forces to blankbody hotspots. They have Armor 8. While primarily used as troop transports (each can carry a squad plus gear), in a tight spot they can lay down suppressing fire with mounted heavy machine guns (Damage +5). Some carry rocket pod systems capable of launching salvos of incendiary mini-rockets (Damage +5 Aggravated).

"Stealth" variants increase all detection Difficulties by +2.

### Drones and Robots

Roll Wits + Technology to operate drones and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), usually over a secure, encrypted WiFi connection. Most civilian and police drones can be "driven" using a tablet; military drones use more specialized channels and controls.

### Tactical Drone

Flying man-portable "backpack drones," some as small as Frisbees, can be launched into the air by hand. They mount ultraviolet night-vision video and thermal cameras. FIRSTLIGHT uses the Hornet nano-drone variant, a short-range UAV the size and shape of a hand flashlight. Small drones are hard to hit (Difficulty 3 or operator's Technology, whichever is higher), but easy to kill.

### Global Hawk Drone

Capable of continuous flight over mission zones, FIRSTLIGHT and IAO use video streams from these unarmed drones to monitor and inform Coalition operations. They use UV night-vision video and thermal cameras.



### Predator Drone

Armed drones come in several varieties. Only FIRSTLIGHT and the GRU currently deploy these weapons in support of their Second Inquisition forces. FIRSTLIGHT uses the deadly MQ9 Reaper drone, usually armed with the R9X "Sword" missile (Damage + 8) specifically designed to limit collateral damage and cut targets in half. The GRU's Orion armed drone uses KAB-20 guided bombs (Damage +10) with an explosive payload similar to the AGM-114 Hellfire missile.

### Tactical Spider Robot

A small multi-legged robot the size of a dinner plate, a spiderbot has the equivalent of 2 Health and no Armor to speak of. SAD, SO13, and ESOG use spiderbots to recon havens and other hard-to-reach areas and seek out blankbody resting places. Most come with UV night vision and thermal imaging. A secret GRU variant can latch on to a victim (Brawl 5) and self-destruct with an incendiary explosive (Damage +2 Aggravated).

### "Spot" Robotic Dog

SAD, SO13, and ESOG deploy this four-legged robot chassis roughly shaped like a dog mounted with video cameras and XScopes. In combat Spots can shove and tackle (Brawl 7), though their primary purpose remains scouting. They have Armor 3.

FIRSTLIGHT Snatch Squads have added a modified "hangman" attachment, a push-button deployable wire loop that can snare a sleeping vampire's limb and drag them out of a haven. ESOG and SO13 often use the hangman to simply drag the blankbody into the sunlight.

### Unmanned Loitering Swarm Munitions

Usually launched from ground vehicles or aircraft, these small autonomous drones silently fly in a hold pattern around an area until their target is identified. Packed with explosives, they crash themselves into their target (Damage +2 for each drone). Only IAO and GRU-N58 have access to these weapon platforms (AV Switchblade and Flock-93, respectively).

### LAST RESORTS

**As the Gehenna War heats up, the Five Torches can't help but stoke the flames. These aircraft seldom appear over Western cities, but as Vienna demonstrated, "seldom" doesn't mean "never." We don't provide damage or armor values for these apocalyptic weapons systems, because if it's come to ground zero, it's too late.**

### AC-130 SPECTRE GUNSHIP

**Retired from active military service by the United States, these massive C-130 cargo planes mount two 20mm M61 Vulcan cannons, one L60 Bofors 40mm cannon, and an M137 105mm cannon. With the ability to circle targets for hours, the AC-130 brings precise and deadly close air support onto the battlefield. IAO conspirators saved a handful of these gunships from retirement and loaded them with incendiary ammunition and ultraviolet dazzle lasers. FIRSTLIGHT deploys them against blankbody concentrations in active war zones and deniable areas. Only the most powerful supernatural creatures can survive their onslaught.**

### B-2 SPIRIT STEALTH BOMBER

**Arguably the most powerful tool in the Second Inquisition's arsenal. The B-2 requires special care for IAO to bring to bear against blankbodies since their actions are closely monitored and this risks exposing the FIRSTLIGHT conspiracy to the world. The B-2 can carry almost any compliment of high-yield bombs, but it is the twin GBU-57A/B Massive Ordnance Penetrator deliveries that make it the trump card in FIRSTLIGHT's hand. These weapons can tunnel deep beneath the surface and devastate the most fortified crypts, caverns, or buried ziggurats.**

# XTech

Only FIRSTLIGHT has the budget and facilities to make XTech gear available, with a very few exceptions mentioned in the specific gear writeups. (The Order of St. Leopold tightly controls the Red Gas, for instance.) Japan's TID and a few German corporate inquisitors deploy similar XTech in very urgent circumstances; the GRU may have some black-market variations in a warehouse somewhere. It's expensive, rare, and only issued to teams who can make a strong case for it.

### Basal Ganglia Masking Agent

This nerve agent operates on the basal ganglia, the region of the brain responsible for motor control in mortals, amongst other things. When it reaches blankbody soft tissues, it somehow temporarily suppresses the vampiric ability to shapeshift, fully or partially. (No teams have successfully survived to report testing it on werewolves.) A standard BGMA canister completely fills an unventilated area the size of a large room at the start of the round after it's unleashed, at which point all tests to activate Protean powers are at +2 Difficulty.

Agents should wear masks when working with BGMA: it has serious effects on mortals too (+2 to Dexterity tests).

Some BOES and SO13 field teams concoct their own version of "skin-keeper" from wolfsbane and other folk remedies, deploying it in smoking bottles; Leopoldites deploy both BGMA and other expedients in swinging censers accompanied with Latin prayers. Concoctions brewed by herbalists increase Protean power test Difficulties by half the maker's Occult (rounded down).

However it's administered, BGMA disperses in approximately five minutes.

### Bloodborne Diseases and Parasites

Inquisitors seek to dismantle each and every perk of being undead, including freedom from infection and disease. In sealed campus labs and underground government facilities, researchers work on engineering bacterial infections and parasites to devastate undead bodies and brains. (Plenty of bacteria flourish in corpses, after all.) The GRU leads the way on these mixtures, although FIRSTLIGHT is not far behind.

Hunters administer these agents through dosed vessels, contaminated supplies of "dead" blood, or via injection — a normal tranquilizer dart suffices. Currently the GRU has three favorite strains, but their repertoire grows all the time.

Diagnosing infection requires an Intelligence + Medicine roll (Difficulty 3, 1 if the blankbody has previously encountered that specific strain).

#### C. Hydeii

A bacterium delivered by parasitic fungi, C. hydeii wreaks havoc on the victim's brain, reducing impulse control, making them prone to outbursts of rage, and even frenzy. It manifests on the first night after being dosed, as the blankbody brain reawakens. Not only does this reduce an ingenious foe to a monster, it means other blankbodies often race to euthanize the afflicted before they break the Masquerade. They make their Intelligence, Composure, and Frenzy tests at +2 Difficulty. A "Hyde infection" runs its course in 10 minus the victim's Stamina weeks.

#### EV-H07

A spinoff from British research into hoof-and-mouth disease, this engineered enterovirus enters the blankbody system via infected blood. In mortals, it causes narcolepsy and sleep inversion (-2 dice from Resolve pools for a week after infection); in blankbodies it triggers the biomechanical shutdown known as torpor. A blankbody who drinks EV-H07 in blood must win a Stamina + Resolve test against a Difficulty equal to 1 + the amount of Hunger slaked by the drink. If they fail, they fall into torpor within an hour, lasting until the next sunrise.

#### KOL-05

The GRU derived KOL-05 from botulism, and it causes similar symptoms: muscle cramps followed by paralysis. Total paralysis. It's a Snatcher's dream. If not treated, a KOL-05 infection runs its course in 1d10 minus the victim's Stamina days. Treatment

requires an entire blood transfusion: emptying the victim's veins and refilling them with fresh blood. The process leaves the blankbody in torpor for 24 hours after completion. Kindred can also deliberately starve themselves at Hunger 5 for two days, emptying themselves completely of blood. This, of course, has its own dangers.

### Necrophage Cocktail

Necrophagic parasites devour a dead body from the inside out, an excellent remedy for a powerful foe you would prefer not to fight directly. Once administered, the victim makes a Stamina + Stamina test each night on rising. If they fail, they take one level of Aggravated damage. Necrophages remain active for 6 minus Stamina weeks.

### GPS Chips

Normal intelligence and law enforcement agencies don't have access to implantable GPS chips yet (the on-market solutions are too big, and battery life is a problem), but FIRSTLIGHT and JTRG (and many other Western agencies) do. Small enough to implant in a blankbody, GPS chips leave only the tiniest red welt at the implant site — and on a blankbody, that mark heals quickly. Blankbodies who come back from FIRSTLIGHT or comparable facilities should assume they've been chipped. Some teams carry "stingers" the size of an ear-piercing gun to implant chips on subjects in the field.

Implanting a GPS chip with a stinger requires a Dexterity + Medicine roll (Difficulty 1); a conscious, unwilling subject can contest that roll with Wits + Alertness to notice that something more than a regular injection just happened. After implant, an Intelligence + Medicine roll (Difficulty 4) spots the implant site, after which a Dexterity + Medicine roll (Difficulty 2) removes it. A successfully implanted GPS chip gives +2 successes on tests to locate a subject.

### Phased Motion Detector (Screamers)

Blankbodies have an uncanny ability to sneak up on a mortal, disappear from plain sight — or hide there, and generally act like creeps. Phased motion detectors continuously emit microwaves and trigger



an alert. Sometimes that alert goes to an operator's monitor, more often it's an ear-splitting shriek that warns everyone in the area that there's a blankbody in the area. Of course, it's accompanied by a ping showing exactly where the predator is, usually on an agent's smartwatch or similar multi-use device.

Once a Screamer goes off, everyone in the area can make a Wits + Awareness roll vs. the vampire's Resolve + Obfuscate. If they succeed, they see the Obfuscated vampire.

Spotting a Screamer before it's too late requires a Difficulty 2 Wits + Technology roll: they appear to be discreet black boxes stuck to a wall or dropped on a floor.

### Sunrise Bomb

Another grenade, and another of FIRSTLIGHT's proudest achievements. The sunrise bomb (aka "the purge," "the day trip," or "sunseeker") simulates sunlight as bright as equatorial noon and covers an area the size of a ballroom. The opportunity to use a sunrise bomb is one of the highlights of a night raid: there's no point breaking them out if the vampires are tucked up in separate, lightproof boxes. No, it's best to unleash one at Elysium and watch the monsters run.

Sunrise bombs are a "welcome" weapon: a first barrage. Hunter teams don't expect to destroy vampires with them, just send them running, panicked and unprepared, into ambushes and fire teams. Sometimes literal ones, with flamethrowers.



Sunrise bombs simulate the effects of direct sunlight (Corebook, p. 221) and force vampires to succeed on a Composure test or flee via the nearest accessible exit. Covering the grenade before it detonates prevents the light from spreading and deals 7 levels of Aggravated damage to a vampire who does so, but has no effect on mortals. Covering the grenade after detonation achieves nothing.

### Tanglefoot Trap

These useful little gadgets come filled with fine wires that unspool and tangle at a rapid rate. They detonate a split second before they're touched, activating by motion detection. They can really ruin the night of a fast-moving assailant, causing them to trip or stumble and slowing them even after they navigate past the trap.

After triggering a tanglefoot trap, the target suffers +2 Difficulty to Athletics rolls. The trap also renders the Celerity powers Rapid Reflexes, Fleetness, and Blink ineffective until the user spends a full turn untangling themselves.

### Velum Sanctuarii

Its official name is the Latin for "Holy Veil", but everyone except the stuffiest Leopoldites calls it the Red Gas. The Order of St. Leopold keeps tight control of this experimental weapon, releasing it only for the highest-value targets: Princes, Primogen, and Elysiums or Conclaves. Nobody outside the highest ranks of the Order knows its true nature: some speculate it comes from the holiest possible matter such as the grave dust of St. Peter beneath the Vatican. Others believe it a purely theurgic weapon.

Inquisitors deploy the Red Gas from sprayer tanks, either man-carried or dispersed from the back of a truck pulled up to the door of a sealed target. Blankbodies see the gas as red mist, hear horrific wailing and screaming, and their bodies begin to wither. Mortals experience no effects at all, although BOES troopers whisper that the gas looks redder to you the more sinful your nature. The Red Gas causes 2 levels of Aggravated damage to blankbodies in each turn of exposure. Most blankbodies don't stay in an affected area long enough to die of the gas, but it's certainly possible. More often, they flee into a waiting Gladius Dei strike team ready to escort them into Final Death.

### XScope 3/SD

Blankbodies know the XScope (Core Rulebook, p. 378) as a cumbersome device like an airport scanner. This describes the first-generation XScope 1 systems, which could be fooled with Blush of Life; the XScope 2 more resembles a large video camera. The second-generation XScope 3 systems combine basic readouts with advanced medical software, requiring Blush of Life and a Composure + Stamina contest vs. the operator's Resolve + Technology.

The second-generation XScope 3/SD weighs twelve pounds, mounts on a shoulder, and flashes its readout to a heads-up display in an eyepiece. FIRSTLIGHT continues to push XScope tech in sophistication; the GRU works on miniaturizing XScopes down to the size of a monocular, or a rifle sight. Fortunately for the Kindred, the GRU mostly has to make do with first-generation resolution software.



# Artifacts

Throughout the ages hunters have found objects of mystical power that have enhanced their own abilities or protected them from the creatures of darkness. Artifacts come in many forms, but since the Coalition's collection comes mostly from the vaults of the Vatican's La Entità their artifacts tend to be art objects or relics of dead saints. The FBI's SAD and the Russian-backed Akritai have their own artifact collections, but they are even less generous with them then the Vatican. (The Brujah masters of the Kremlin destroyed most of the artifacts they could reach, denuding the imperial Russian vaults.) Artifacts vary in power and rarity but the Vatican's archivists have spent centuries cataloguing and preparing them as a secret armory for supernatural war. These are but a few of the weapons in the Coalition's secret arsenal and the most powerful of them have yet to be revealed.

When using or inventing artifacts in the chronicle, Storytellers should try to keep them strange, unique, and individual. Don't treat them as generic weapons or (worse yet) as ammunition; every saint's finger-bone should have effects evoking its particular origin and that saint's character.

## Icons

These artifacts usually take the form of large installations or tapestries, but since stone weathers time better than most materials many surviving Icons are statutes or carved reliefs. Created by arcane artists, or using powerful kabbalistic geometric ratios, Icons affect any vampire that beholds them, or in some cases any vampire who crosses their "gaze." Normal mortals cannot perceive their powerful mystical auras; vampires often can, even if they don't want to.

Russian hunters and the Akritai often carry inlaid, gilded, or painted images of saints called ikons. Like Relics, they require True Faith to use, but they don't usually have any preserved body parts in their construction. Use the systems under Relics (p. 84) for ikons.

While most Icons protect sanctuaries from the supernatural, some have been used to trap or contain particularly dangerous monsters. The SAD vault contains objects that ward off not just vampires, but werewolves and extra-dimensional creatures. The Coalition suspects that Icons protect many places of worship in the Middle East and Asia, but has officially adopted a policy of non-interference with these objects. That said, FIRSTLIGHT inserted covert teams to rescue Icons from ancient sites endangered by ISIS vandals, and they (or the Arcanum) may have looted other Icons during the occupation of Iraq.

### Bernini's Faceless Angel

Never completed during his lifetime, this set of model statuettes and sketches are attributed to the famous sculptor though none of the planning work is signed. Originally conceived as a massive bronze statue built on multiple overlapping flattened toruses, even the models of the work are hard for the eye to fully grasp in three dimensions. The topology and patterns of the work (the so-called "Bernini Cross") make supernatural creatures uncomfortable, but vampires seem especially susceptible. Jesuit computational mathematicians have mapped the Faceless Angel pattern onto a wire-frame design, but it so far resists being recorded or broadcast, or rendered at all in two dimensions. A dedicated laptop running the Bernini Cross diagram on a deep-field monitor partially reproduces the effect, and some safehouses come with Bernini systems disguised as high-end TVs.

**System:** While all supernatural creatures recognize the Faceless Angel pattern as dangerous, Vampires that see it must immediately test for Terror Frenzy against a Difficulty of 3. Vampires that resist this frenzy are immune to the Faceless Angel for the rest of the night, but during that time the image sings to them with a barely perceptible and almost taunting hum regardless of the distance. This song can interfere with the vampire's day sleep but usually fades with the next setting sun. Brujah that come upon a Faceless Angel make a Fury Frenzy test instead and risk being overcome by a

deafening chorus that directs them to destroy any other vampires within their arms' reach.

### Enochian Sarcophagus (Unique)

A strange and ancient stone coffin covered with etchings that seem Babylonian or Late-Empire Egyptian; it has resisted all attempts to open it since its discovery in 2000. The SAD has held it locked in a vault in West Virginia for almost 15 years, but witnesses continue to report seeing the Sarcophagus, or at least hearing from those who have seen it, all over the country. The Sarcophagus subtly calls to elder vampires for miles, invading their dreams at first and then whispering to them in their waking hours. While the dreams never reveal its contents, the Enochian Sarcophagus promises power and fulfillment. The Tremere and Setites use the Al-Farabi process to mute its call in cities where they have chantries, but even this countermeasure erodes over time.

**System:** When this Icon activates in a city, those with Blood Potency of 5 or greater (and Ventrue of any Blood Potency) immediately feel its presence. These vampires can no longer reduce their Hunger below 1 through any means unless the Sarcophagus is in their possession. The Blood Potency threshold for its effects drops by 1 every six months the Sarcophagus remains in a city.

### Occulted Bosch Triptych (Unique)

A painting on three lacquered panels that are hinged together, this triptych is believed to be the fourth work in a set of altar pieces by Hieronymus Bosch. It was hidden by the Vatican because of its perverse subject matter but its profound power against the undead was discovered when a pack of vampires were destroyed attempting to steal it from the archives. The work is entitled "The Penitent Farmer" and depicts a lone figure travelling through a blood soaked dreamscape before finding solace with a divine feminine figure. The two then become one before a city of fantastic utopian architecture. The work's eschatological meaning is a closely held secret within La Entità but its power against the damned is unmistakable.

**System:** Vampires that look upon the panel burn with inner fire, carbonizing their hearts and traveling along their dead arteries until it consumes them, leaving a pile of ashes. They take a number of Aggravated wounds each round equal to the number of Stains they currently possess. This damage can only be reduced with Fortitude powers. If multiple vampires look upon the panel at the same time, then the damage inflicted upon them individually is equal to all Stains possessed by the assembled vampires. Toreador vampires can delay the damage by completely succumbing to their Clan Compulsion, becoming frozen in place. Their Stains still count for the total damage inflicted by the Icon and they suffer all the delayed damage once their trance is broken.

## Relics

The Society of St. Leopold provides its Faithful servants (including the BOES, and sometimes even FIRSTLIGHT or IAO) with Relics, created from the remains of holy figures, saints, and (some irreligious sorcerers claim) supernatural beings. The Akritai use ikons (p. 83) instead of saints' bones, but the effects remain the same. Relics focus and sometimes amplify True Faith, and indeed become useless chunks of bone or mummified flesh without that trait. Relics that add points of True Faith never add it to those without that trait. Most Relics also curse any vampire (or sometimes any inhuman supernatural figure) that attempts to use them.

A hunter can only gain the benefits of one Relic per scene, no matter how many they carry.

These sample Relics show a range of relic effects, but as with all artifacts, the Storyteller should introduce specific, individual aspects and powers of any Relic in play.

### Ashes of St. Godard

St. Godard of Rouen banished the dead from Rouen Cathedral, and his ashes still reach into the realms of the dead.

**System:** One marked by these ashes can see incorporeal foes, including ghosts and vampires in mist form. Any wooden weapon they wield (such as a stake) can damage such enemies normally. They add one dot to True Faith.

### Avicennan Heart

A mystic with True Faith specially prepares these mummified hearts (using formulae adapted from medieval medical texts attributed to the Persian philosopher Ibn Sina, and a Difficulty 4 roll of either Resolve + Occult or Resolve + Medicine), and buries them with prayers beneath the threshold or hearth of a dwelling. When a vampire enters these places the heart quietly beats and marks the undead by their sins.

**System:** Upon entering a dwelling protected by an Avicennan Heart a vampire loses any benefit from using Blush of Life and gains all of the drawbacks of having a Humanity of 3 (Corebook, p. 238). This curse does not change a vampire's personality or actual Humanity. Ministry vampires also suffer Hunger increases by +2 as their own heart begins to throb and beat in time with the Heart of Ibn Sina. If this increases their Hunger to 5, the vampire gains a Stain and suffers from a Compulsion to find and possess the hidden heart that beats in the house.

### Cross of Tertullian

This fervent defender of the Faith encountered the living dead and drove them back with the words of Christ. A cross crafted from his vertebra, chased with silver and hawthorn wood, rebukes the childer of Caine.

System: A vampire presented with this Cross subtracts its current number of Stains (minimum one) from all its rolls to resist (or overcome) True Faith. The wielder adds one dot to True Faith.



### Franciscan Aspergillum

This aspergillum (a device used to sprinkle holy water) has a splinter of bone from Saint Francis worked into the handle.

System: Using it to sprinkle holy water across a room creates an aura of tranquility. Vampires exit Frenzy, and will not attack if not attacked. It adds 4 dice to any attempt to treat, resist, or mitigate insanity or madness, including the effects of Disciplines. The wielder adds one dot to True Faith.

### Parietum of St. Polycarp

When burned at the stake by his persecutors, the fires failed to consume Polycarp of Smyrna. He extends his protection to servants of the Church who carry his skull fragments even today.

**System:** The hunter gains +3 Armor against fire, and 3 extra Health levels when in the presence of fire. They add two dots to True Faith in the presence of fire.

### Reliquary of Agios Nikolas

Built by Akritai rites now lost, these small lockets allow the hair or teeth of a venerated hunter to guide and protect the wearer. Less than a dozen remain in existence.

**System:** A hunter wearing this Relic passes through magical wards and protections without triggering them. If the hunter detects the protection, they add three dice to pools to dispel or defeat them. Mundane and electronic defense mechanisms are unaffected. If a vampire feeds on a hunter wearing this Relic, it gains no sustenance, and cannot slake Hunger until it gives away something of great personal value to a stranger.

### Shroud of Sant'Ellero

St. Ellero di Galeata revealed a lamia to the nobleman Olibrius, converting him to the Faith of Christ. Pieces of his shroud (about two feet square of dark homespun cloth) protect the wearer against the wiles of the undead and demonic when held to the face.

**System:** A hunter with the shroud over their face can see vampires in their true form (counteracting Blush of Life, Obfuscate, Protean, etc.), appearing as a figure glowing through the shroud's weave. Wearing the shroud does not make targeting or identifying a vampire harder, but it subtracts two dice for any other visual task. The wearer also gains +5 Armor against any supernatural powers that draw from the abyss such as Oblivion. They are also immune to any form of possession, and add two dots to True Faith.

### Armamenta

Not necessarily weapons; armamentum merely means "equipment" or "utensil" in Latin. Crafted individually or in very limited numbers, often from extremely rare or deadly materials, they require no special training to use. However, those without extraordinary gifts find them balky, refractory, or outright cursed. As a general rule, any total failure with Armamenta while used by normal mortals does 1 point of Aggravated damage (Health or Willpower, whichever makes sense in the moment) to the user or some other unintended target.

### Censer of Absolution

A simple silver-clad incense-burning censer; both the censer and the incense are Armamenta. When correctly lit, dark orange smoke pours forth from the container. While the smoke mildly irritates to mortals, vampires and their blood slaves become sick on the stolen blood in their veins.

**System:** Once ritually lit (Dexterity + Occult), the censer burns for the entire scene and fills a large area with smoke. Any vampires that end the round in the smoke have their Hunger increased by +1 as they begin to retch up blood (up to a maximum of Hunger 5). While prolonged exposure does not increase their Hunger further, the retching removes a die from all the vampire's pools. Ghouls in the smoke must make a Willpower test (Difficulty 2) or become incapicitated with nausea.

### Dagger of Akkad

The instructions for the construction of these weapons were found in a dig site in Iraq in the 1950s, but the Vatican has only recently been able to produce a limited number with resources and technical methods provided by the Akritai and the IAO.

**System:** These daggers inflict Aggravated Health damage against supernatural creatures and have a damage value of +1. Vampires wounded by these daggers bleed profusely, and their Hunger increases by +1 at the end of the scene (up to a maximum of Hunger 5).

### Serre du Garou

Supposedly carved from the claw of a werewolf, this cruelly hooked dagger measures a little under six inches from tip to ivory pommel. Usually, leather windings prevent the wielder from gashing their palm on it.

**System:** This dagger deals Aggravated damage to Kindred. While the blade is exposed in the light of the full moon, the wielder can sense any Kindred within three meters of them. Werewolves can also sense such a blade, and want to take it back from its human desecrator.

### Waxen Poetica

The SAD locked samples of this dangerous red wax in their vault over five decades ago as part of an unsolved murder investigation with suspected supernatural involvement. The SAD reopened the case recently when a vampire calling themselves "the poet" left another burned victim encased in this living wax. While the original samples remain in the vault, some of the wax from the second crime scene has been cleared for field use.

The wax "comes alive" when exposed to blood, so SAD agents keep it in fragile two-chamber canisters that mix the two components when broken. When the wax touches blood it boils and grows to cover anything it touches until it's exhausted the blood supply and rapidly cools back into its inert form, usually living behind a victim boiled alive and covered in the unnerving substance.

**System:** The activated wax causes 3 Aggravated Health wounds of heat damage every round it touches a victim and continues to grow as long as it remains in contact with a blood source. A coin-sized patch of wax covers a grown man in two turns and can quickly fill a room if three or more victims are exposed. Fire extinguishers and other retardants can slow and reduce the damage caused by the wax at the Storyteller's discretion.




VACANCIES
SMOKE SHOP
PIPES TOBACCOS
CIGARS HOOKAHS
ACCESSORIES
OPEN
MK
2021

*Chapter Three:*

# Dangerous Games

*"Well, you know what we have to contend against; but we, too, are not without strength. We have on our side power of combination—a power denied to the vampire kind; we have sources of science; we are free to act and think; and the hours of the day and the night are ours equally. In fact, so far as our powers extend, they are unfettered, and we are free to use them. We have self-devotion in a cause, and an end to achieve which is not a selfish one. These things are much."*

— VAN HELSING, IN DRACULA

The Second Inquisition counts within its righteous embrace spies of all stripes, technicians and analysts, highly trained shock troops, and the quiet church neighbor with the surprisingly complete home metal shop. In every realm the blankbodies operate, from high society to the wet, dark streets; to the high-tech, fast moving world of business and finance, to their shadowy Havens and Elysiums, the Coalition has developed tactics to thwart them.



## Standard Operating Procedures

The Coalition doesn't rely on a single tactic. Each of the Five Torches is different, and each of their targets calls for a bespoke approach. However, they draw from a playbook of tried and tested tactics, remixing and adapting them as required to hit a target's specific weaknesses. If the tactics here don't seem appropriate, make new ones. But these approaches do work.

Hunters find their targets in one of three ways: through their feeding, the activities of a coterie, or through a network of informants. How they identify a target impacts the action they take, so every

tactic described here makes note of which Predator Types and Coterie Types it's particularly relevant to.

Some of the Five Torches are particularly fond of, or occasionally reluctant to use, certain tactics, and we note this along with any variations they habitually make.

At the end of the chapter you'll find a Response Algorithm, (See **Anarch**, pp. 186-189) to guide you through the process of turning up the pressure and escalating a Second Inquisition threat, as well as some Projects to reflect the less dramatic aspects of their work.

## Threat Level

The power, precision, and pace of hunter teams depends on what level of threat they pose in your chronicle. Some of the tactics here are appropriate at all threat levels (e.g. Hunting Pattern Analysis; Community Informants). Save major, destructive, auto-da-fé actions for chronicles where hunters pose an active, or even central, threat.

Remember above all that the Second Inquisition isn't a hammer to punish or frustrate players. It's a toolbox to add tension and drama to a story and compel Kindred to rethink complacent attitudes towards mortal threats. In game terms, it's not interesting or fair to throw in antagonists characters have no hope of opposing. Within the World of Darkness, even the Coalition has to justify their tactics and resources. The Church doesn't bring superweapons like the Red Gas to bear on a coterie of bumbling neonates, and a UTR team's ability to deploy any of these tactics assumes their superiors have declared an operation high enough priority for them. In game terms, that priority often comes directly from the threat level you've defined, or that the coterie has demonstrated they deserve.

# Investigative Tactics

Many vampires think that if they just keep their heads down and don't do anything that would catch the attention of the Second Inquisition – engage in power plays, maintain a high profile, get into fights – they stay off the radar. They're wrong. Most investigations start with a red flag. A news headline, a police report, a subtle pattern in medical data or social media discourse, a tip off from an informant. In modern nights, where everything is recorded, monitored, and interrogated no hunting tactic goes completely unnoticed.

Hunters look at the vampire's effect on the world around them and the people who inhabit it. Somewhere there's a clue, a string to tug on. It's easier to pick off individual vampires: numbers can give an UTR team an edge. However, it's easier to spot a coterie at work. They have more of an effect on the world around them; they leave ripples.

The Coalition (and an intelligent Farm Team) always tries to split up a coterie rather than take on the whole group. They observe and monitor, collecting data that tells them the vampire's Haven or hunting pattern, and strategize based on that information. However, different coterie types leave different traces and the Coalition has evolved playbooks for all of them.

## Data Analysis: Hunting Patterns

Most blankbodies have hunting patterns, in which case data analysis can forecast roughly when they'll strike, where, and the profile of their preferred prey.

Blankbodies feeding on animals aren't as subtle as they think they are. Either local wildlife or vermin populations are suspiciously low (it takes a lot

**NO DICE, JUST DANGER**

**Many of these tactics come with systems to determine their mechanical impact. To emphasize the unknown threat, and provide a frisson of chance, some require only the Storyteller to roll. Too much of this can slow pacing and diminish players' sense of agency, turning what should be a game of personal horror into "Storyteller solitaire." To combat this tendency, feel free to plug in numbers or select results based on the hunter team's quality: poor results for amateurs and new-fledged Coalition teams, average results for most Coalition or Leopoldite hunters, or excellent results for truly elite foes. You can do the same even for contested rolls, turning them into tests against the General Difficulties (or half the ability pools) given in the Antagonists chapter.**




of rats to feed a vampire, and those missing pet posters are a real problem), or there's a large population of animals: urban aviaries, zoos, crazy cat ladies.

Animals have people who care about them: zookeepers, veterinarians, rescue charities (these are great for locating havens: neighbours will report noise or droppings). Local pest control have a line on why their jobs are getting easier. Any of these people might have seen a predator at work as a fleeing figure, or a suspicious visitor.

Analysis of hunting patterns is as quick as the blankbody is voracious. Each time the blankbody feeds, the lead analyst makes an Intelligence + Technology (sometimes Streetwise or Survival, depending on methodology) roll to spot the pattern. When they reach 10 successes they have a full profile of the predator and can anticipate where they will strike next. Appropriate Contacts or Allies add 2 dice to the pool.

Effective Against: Blankbodies with Prey Exclusion; Farmers; Commando coteries

### Countermeasures

The best thing a vampire can do is consciously change their hunting pattern, accounting for their own biases and habits. This turns the hunters' pattern analysis into a contested roll against the vampire's Intelligence + Stealth or Survival. Each success on the vampire's roll reduces the analyst's successes by 1. If the analyst acquires no successes three tests in row, they lose the trail and cannot start the search again for at least a month, when they might reasonably have obtained new insights. The analysis starts again with zero successes.

Additionally, Farmers can move their prey into their Haven, but that's not a guarantee of going unnoticed.

## Community Informants

Predators who move around and strike at random are harder to catch. They don't always hunt close to their Haven, so the Coalition has determined the best forecasting tool is community informants in hunting grounds. Even trained operatives can't cover enough ground themselves, but local civilians all have pieces of the jigsaw puzzle. Get a team on the ground, make friends, and start assembling a picture.

This is also the best approach to catching blankbodies who feed on sleeping prey. Their victims don't know what happened to them, but they know they don't feel great. They have weird marks they

mistake for insect bites, or feel anemic and run down. They go to doctors or complain to their friends. There may not be any sign that their homes have been broken into but something's not right: a window doesn't close properly, they have a feeling someone's watching them. Victims are paranoid and looking for support, and a local neighborhood watch group or homeowners' association can pick up on it quickly.

Community informants don't only work for geographic neighborhoods. They're just as effective at cracking open scenes and subcultures.

Occasionally this is a job for a Cuckoo, Socialite, or Detective but more often it's allocated to a Dealer or a Mother Hen: a strictly backstage role in charge of maintaining and extracting intel from networks of contacts.

Building up community trust requires an Extended Manipulation + Streetwise or Etiquette roll (one roll per week). At 10 successes, the network of informants starts to bear fruit, and the SI team identifies the Predator or Coterie type operating in the area, their past victims, and likely next targets.

Effective Against: Alleycats; Sandmen; Scene Queens; Fang Gangs

#### Variations

The Society of St. Leopold finds it easy to befriend priests and their congregations, and it's highly fruitful. Their informants take on non-threatening cover identities such as visiting nuns.

The Newburgh Group loves a Neighborhood Watch group, and excels at manipulating middle-aged busybodies into states of paranoia. Cover identities as local police officers or local government employees serve them well. The SAD preys on homeowners' associations in a similar fashion.

Teams from the Eighth Direction often struggle to place informants: the general populace in former Soviet nations proves suspicious of attempts to elicit information from them. The Orthodox church often presents opportunities, and agents sometimes pay local youths or others in need of cash, to keep alert for unusual activity or strange rumors.

BOES don't have the patience for long-term community information gathering. They prefer to use local police resources to gather dossiers on their likely targets. Deploying BOES on watch duty wastes a lot of time, in which blankbodies are busy killing innocent bystanders.

#### Countermeasures

A vampire's Contacts or Allies in the community make it harder for the hunters to get a foothold. Each dot in those Advantages reduces their foes' dice pool. These Contacts and Allies might also choose to warn the vampire of suspicious newcomers asking questions.

The most effective way to counter this tactic is to be embedded in the community oneself, able to spot early signs of outside interest before the Coalition gains any meaningful information.

## Data Analysis: Herds and Cults

Vampires who prey on their own cults, herds, and family members are discreet but not impossible to detect. Their feeding leaves medical traces (groups of people prone to colds and other immune system disorders, for example). Data analysis reveals sickly family lines from patterns of missed work days, medical visits, even shopping patterns that show high purchase propensity for iron-rich foods or supplements.

If they find a family line, the Coalition goes down it themselves. They find the most discontented members of the family and recruit or blackmail them, or simply use Lamplighters to find the places where their undead relative sleeps away the day.

Meanwhile, some blankbodies tell their prey exactly what they're doing... and then they go right ahead and talk about it, cryptically or overtly. "I just gave blood!" status updates (when there's no blood drive in the area), participation in online kink communities, or at offline play spaces can all clue in a knowledgeable observer. Victims who know what they're participating in inevitably want someone to talk it out with, and it's shocking what you can find communities for on Tumblr.

Social media analysis also works on blankbodies who use fame to surround themselves with

minor cults. Paparazzi, tabloids, and gossip blogs are a FIRSTLIGHT agent's best friend. Plus, every famous person has at least one jealous enemy. Start a rumor about a celebrity you suspect, and see what comes back.

A good Hacker anchors this set of tactics, but Informants and Deprogrammers shine when it's time to move in closer to the target.

- This tactic only works against blankbodies with a Herd or, at the Storyteller's discretion, one with a group of followers and hangers-on that they don't feed on. To employ these types of data analysis, roll: An Extended Intelligence + Medicine test to analyze medical data. The Difficulty is equal to three times the blankbody's Herd rating (the more people they feed on, the more subtle the effects). The first three rolls are one week apart, and subsequent rolls one day apart.
- An Extended Intelligence + Technology test (with two days between rolls) to scrape online and social media data and compile it into a meaningful analysis. The Difficulty is equal to three times the blankbody's Herd rating. Each point of Fame the target blankbody has adds 1 die to the Analyst's pool, but each point of Influence increases the Difficulty by 1. A blankbody must have at least one point of Fame for this approach to be effective.

To convert a member of the Herd or cult into a Coalition asset:

- Make an Extended Charisma + Persuasion test, with Difficulty equal to the target's Willpower. Some kind of tangible reward is usually necessary: money, drugs, whatever the target's weakness might be.

Effective Against: Cleavers; Consensualists; Osirises; Blood Cults;



### Variations

BOES have become terrifyingly efficient at this approach. A number of Toreador in Rio de Janeiro gathered cults of personality around themselves before it became evident this laid a glow-in-the-dark trail. BOES analysts have so much experience telling a blood cult from a bunch of groupies they add three dice to their pools for this tactic.

Social media (and regular media) monitoring also turns up strange tabloid stories about werewolves fighting vampires — usually nothing, but sometimes the best way to find a group of Watchmen.

### Countermeasures

Diversify. Lock up your Herd: they leave most of their traces when they interact with the outside world. Dominate your victims into silence or make sure they forget. Blood Bond a long-term playmate.

The best defense for a famous or influential vampire is that the Coalition needs proof before disposing of a public figure. A high profile can make an operation so tricky it's not worth the investment.

## Data Analysis: Academic Specializations

History. Genealogy. Anthropology. Folklore. Forensic accountancy. These varied disciplines all contribute to the hunt in similar ways: Burrowers painstakingly crawl through records, looking for discrepancies that are not only indicative of blankbody activity but provide useful strings to tie them in, weakening them until an ESOG team or other frontline force can neutralize them.

This tactic doesn't come into play until informants, different strands of data analysis, or other approaches have yielded a name to investigate. Given a name, historians, genealogists and folklorists find historical evidence of their target: age, friends and family, connections to other known blankbodies, and even the likelihood that they possess each of the supernatural powers — mind control, preternatural speed, etc. — tracked by specialists. Psychological profiling remains a developing field of blankbody study, because blankbodies simply don't think like mortals. But the SAD (and from another direction, the GRU) have ample files on psychopathic killers that improve their findings steadily.

Occasionally, this research turns up likely blankbodies, otherwise neglected because they're active during the day. The Coalition only learned recently that that's not necessarily a hard line they can draw anymore.

Burrowers especially target blankbodies' Touchstones, providing significant leverage over the blankbody in question. Forensic Accountants (p. 24) track the blankbodies' money flows and hidden accounts. Anthropologists specialize in vampires embedded in scenes and subcultures. They track the flow of influence, the roles played by different people — or the same person with different names — and identify the people with too much control, or who have been around for too long. Historians and archivists find the same faces in photographs going back decades: a Jazz Age flapper who reappears as a London mod, then as a Shoreditch hipster. They track down people who've personally interacted with the probable blankbody, gather firsthand accounts, and develop a profile of likely holdings, goals, and powers.

This tactic requires an Extended dice roll, with one roll per week. The nature of the research determines the dice pool, and the effect:

- Identifying Discipline powers: Intelligence + Occult. Each successful roll identifies a Discipline power.
- Pierce Masks: Intelligence + Investigation roll, requiring 3 times as many successes as the Mask rating, identifying the real identity of the blankbody along with information on their assets, properties owned, and their known hangouts.
- Identify Touchstones: Intelligence + Academics or Insight; Difficulty 6. Each successful roll identifies one Touchstone.
- Psychological profiling: Intelligence + Insight or Medicine (Psychology); Difficulty 3. For each successful roll, learn one of the following: Predator Type, Coterie Type, Clan, Sire, Childer, one Attribute score.

Effective Against: Cleavers; Scene Queens; Tremere; Cerberus coteries; Day Watchers

### Variations

The Newburgh Group specialize in discerning a blankbody's powers, with a particular knack for identifying Oblivion, Necromancy, or Blood Sorcery powers. The SAD tends to go straight for the bank account. BOES and the Eighth Direction delight in finding Touchstones, and threatening them or taking them hostage to draw a blankbody to them.

The Society of St. Leopold has an immense archive of their own, and because that's always their first port of call and it's infamously incomplete when it comes to non-European vampires, they're slower than the other Fires: it takes them an additional week between their first two rolls.

### Countermeasures

Each dot of Mask Advantage increases the Difficulty of the inquisitor's roll by 1.

A vampire can obscure their trail or remove themselves from physical and digital records with a successful Extended Intelligence + Academics or Technology (use the lower) roll. For every 3 successes, the Difficulty of the hunter's roll increases by 1. When the vampire reaches 10, they are gone. They gain the Zeroed Mask Advantage (Corebook, pg. 191).

## Intelligence Assets

The Coalition intertwines inextricably with the espionage and intelligence agencies it formed from. Thanks to its powerful links with such organizations, it doesn't have to do much of its own legwork. The CIA, JIC, and other agencies already track any and all threats to national security at home and abroad. Thanks to intelligence sharing between allied nations, they hold an extremely detailed picture of political dissent, high-level arms and narcotics trading, cults, and any other activity that could be construed as threatening national security.

While this doesn't immediately call to mind blankbody activity, there are plenty of Anarchs who are, or were, under observation at some point in their lives, or who associate with people who still are. Equally, there are blankbodies who attract cults of personality or religion, and these in turn attract notice.

After Felicity Price freed herself of vampiric influence, she added a number of other red flags to NSA and ECHELON monitoring algorithms — this time, monitoring intelligence agents and operational outcomes for any of the behaviors Price had exhibited: secrecy, "dabbling" in projects, requests for assignment to specific teams, high proportions of suboptimal outcomes suggesting data leaks, and many others. Suffice to say that blankbodies who attempt to infiltrate or influence intelligence agencies are rapidly identified and neutralized.

A blankbody appears in an intelligence database entirely at the Storyteller's discretion, based on their actions during the chronicle, in their background, or even in mortal life (for those recently Embraced). Some of the effects of using intelligence databases are easily quantifiable, others are not.

- Roll Intelligence + Academics to establish either known associates or locations where the target has been frequently spotted. The process takes a week.
- Roll Intelligence + Investigation to identify and collate known tactics, weapons, etc. for a blankbody. With 3 or more successes the analyst can even make some educated guesses about Disciplines. This has no impact on dice rolls but does ensure that when the UTR team comes face to face with a blankbody, they know exactly what gear and personnel they need to take them down.
- For internal affairs investigations into intelligence personnel, use Intelligence + Insight vs the target's Composure + Subterfuge.

Effective Against: Anarchs; Nosferatu; some Osirises; Champions;

### Variations

The Society of St. Leopold isn't closely attached to a specific security agency; they have to work through partners (usually the CIA, or Italy's AISE) to complete this kind of work, and it takes twice as long. This isn't true of "internal affairs" investigations: the Society's Censors exist specifically to root out heresy and supernatural influence, and have centuries of practice doing so.

### Countermeasures

The best defense against this tactic is a good Mask: every dot of Mask adds 1 point of Difficulty to the analyst's roll. An Ally in the relevant security agency adds up to 2 points of Difficulty.



# Channelizing Tactics

Once they find that first clue, the hunters move in. They apply social and economic pressure to make hunting difficult, or infiltrate a vampire's network and move in on their Haven. They have set playbooks for every way a blankbody can feed itself. Military-minded inquisitors call this phase "defining the battlespace," or "channelizing," putting pressure on the enemy to force them into mistakes or into offering battle.

Once the net starts to close, there's little chance of escape. The best thing a vampire can do is sever all ties with their locale and move on to a new city. The next best thing they can do is take a long hard look at their habits... and change them. Fast.

For any Channelizing roll, the hunters can add one die for Informants in the blankbody's circle; add two dice for a Canary (p. 20).

## Blood Supply

There are only so many places to get blood without hunting. The Coalition can keep tabs on all of them. They tap into the local black market (blood banks, criminal networks, butchers) using informants, data analysis, and law enforcement and criminal contacts. It's safe to assume anyone buying blood regularly is a blankbody or one of their servants. Once they've identified suppliers, the Coalition either reduces the supply or contaminates it — or both. Having law enforcement threaten parts of the supply chain scares them into shutting down, destroying supplies (even a change in temperature will do it, but so will blowing up a truck), or hurting suppliers drives up prices.

If the supply comes from a local blood bank or hospital, sabotage or interruption forces blankbodies to underground suppliers the team can more easily control.

Once the targets have only one or two viable sources of bagged blood, the next step is to pollute them. Heavy metals and polonium are favorite choices.

A Coalition agent makes a Manipulation + Streetwise roll, for every source of blood they identify (no more than one a week), at Difficulty 3. For every successful roll, it either becomes more difficult or more expensive to buy bagged blood. When it becomes more difficult, a blankbody looking to buy must make a Manipulation + Streetwise roll, with the Difficulty increasing by 1 each additional time the hunters restrict supply. When blood becomes more expensive, a vampire must have a minimum of 1 dot of Resources to buy. The Resources requirement increases by 1 each time the hunters increase expense.

Heavy metal poisoning is a slow method of weakening blankbodies. Each time one feeds on contaminated blood, they reduce their maximum Health by one. They experience sluggishness and a nagging hunger (can't reduce Hunger to zero). It's hard to diagnose: Intelligence + Medicine, Difficulty 3.

Polonium poisoning is a different beast. A single contaminated blood bag inflicts 8 levels of damage, but a blankbody can discern something's wrong after a single sip with a Wits + Science roll. They roll Stamina to reduce the damage, with an extra 2 dice if they have the Iron Gullet merit.

Effective Against: Baggers; sometimes Hunting Parties

### Variations

The Eighth Direction is particularly fond of polonium poisoning, and takes credit for originating it. The SAD not only restrict supply, but replace it with their own suppliers, forcing vampires into their debt for blood. Leeches on the hook often give the operatives names of other blankbodies in return for food.

BOES never use poison. They choke the supply, forcing blankbodies into acts of open murder to feed. That gives away their identity, making it easier to find their Haven and burn it to the ground.





### Countermeasures

The best response to this tactic is for a vampire to apply pressure of their own. A successful Charisma + Intimidation or Resources roll (against a Difficulty equal to the Coalition agent's margin) negates the effect of one Coalition market shift.

Introducing a new supplier and keeping the hunters ignorant of them is a viable Project.

### PICKY EATERS

**Ventrue and other blankbodies with a restricted diet make easy prey for hunters. They can't just switch to a new food source, and it's easy to spot their patterns. Whatever tactics they're using, when agents investigate a blankbody with Prey Exclusion, they add dice equal to the value of the target's Prey Exclusion flaw or Bane Severity. This also applies to Hunting Party coteries who specialize in particular types of prey.**

## Common Enemies

It's rare that the Coalition considers an alliance with its prey, but not unknown. It's just as rare that a blankbody would consider a pact, however short-lived, with those who hunt them. Nothing is impossible, however, and there are some blankbody threats best handled co-operatively.

When the Coalition initiates contact, usually via a written or digital message that can't be traced, along with instructions for a dead drop reply, it's usually because they face a threat they can't handle alone, such as an elder too tightly protected for mortals to ever penetrate their defenses, or too well-hidden for them to find. They approach another blankbody, usually an ambitious or frustrated one that their Cuckoos and Tails have already identified, and convince them to make a power play. The Coalition provides the tools, and the blankbody crafts the opportunity. The Coalition deals with a major threat, and the blankbody moves up a rank — or several. Some hunters agree to forget their little helper exists, afterwards. A few of them even mean it.

On the flip side, vampires sometimes "throw to the wolves" those who commit the most revolting crimes – diablerists and traitors — or the crime of being in the Prince's way. Anyone the rulers don't have the resources to take out themselves becomes fodder for the Inquisition.

This type of work turns up (or develops) turncoats such as the Lordless and the Daywalker.

Identifying a subject requires an Intelligence + Streetwise roll. Making contact requires Charisma + Etiquette or Stealth. Convincing a subject to help requires Manipulation + Persuasion. If applying this tactic against players' characters, don't make dice rolls: cut straight to making contact, and determine the outcome through roleplaying.

**Effective Against:** Blood Leeches; Elder vampires; Commando coteries; Fang Gangs; Plumaires; Regency coteries

### Variations

BOES often uses this tactic as an opportunity to send in a sniper or assassin against their temporary ally when they're done with them.

The Newburgh Group often requires a certain amount of incriminating information, future blackmail material, before agreeing to meet with a blankbody who approaches them. The Society of St. Leopold draws out the process through several increasingly risky exchanges and meets — a test of faith, as it were.

### Countermeasures

The most effective way to counter this tactic is to not make enemies, or to sell them out first. Good luck with that.

## Gentrification

Blankbodies like certain conveniences, just like anyone else. They need people on the streets, whether they're barflies or people with nowhere else to go; a nice, high crime rate that stops cops from responding to every minor incident; to put it cynically, they need to be surrounded by people other mortals don't care about. What they don't need is law and order, communities where people take too much interest in their neighbors, and an end to homelessness, drugs and petty crime.

So naturally, when JTRG and FIRSTLIGHT want to make an area hostile to blankbodies, they start by making it really quite nice for mortals. A certain subset of mortals, anyway – specifically affluent, usually white ones. Their Politicians and Gentrifiers move in, clearing away undesirable elements.

Gentrification works especially well in a historic or otherwise distinct neighborhood – one where people will pay to be the first into an "up and coming" area. In an area with these desirable traits, the Resources cost for gentrification is one dot lower.

Often, the artists and students come first. The chic bohemian set, who are easy prey for vampires: they eschew tradition, live dangerously, and enjoy the fearsome reputation of their rough neighborhood.

The gentrification process follows common steps:

- Promotion. First, the area is promoted as a place on the edge of prosperity: somewhere cool and 'authentic', and more affordable than other choices. A new crowd of people, overconfident and maybe a little naïve, moves in. Vampires who feed on them actually find it easier to hunt, often experiencing reduced difficulty during this stage, which lasts for 12 months, minus the Gentrifier's successes on a Charisma + Politics roll.
- Simultaneously with Promotion, long-time residents move out of the area. This also benefits the leeches: rumors cease to swirl about them, and local history is forgotten.
- Investment. Even FIRSTLIGHT can't afford to rebuild an area on their own. First they need to attract investors: a six-month process that requires an Extended Charisma + Finance roll. Chain stores move in, new apartments and homes go up, and the original wave of bohemian immigrants is replaced by young families seeking an affordable home. At this point, a blankbody's Contacts and Influence in local groups, or the size of their local Herd, drops by 2, to a minimum of 1 dot. If a blankbody's haven isn't bought and demolished by developers, it loses 2 dots of its rating as the area around it changes.
- Cleanup. No drugs, no homeless people, no food banks, no easy hunting grounds. The difficulty of hunting increases by 2. Late night venues close, there are fewer people on the streets.
- Policing. Neighborhood watch groups, homeowners associations, and increased police presence (and willingness by residents to call the cops) all increase. Hunting increases by an additional 1 point of Difficulty. At the Storyteller's discretion, some blankbodies with Prey Exclusions (e.g. drug addicts, people of a specific race) may not be able to find food in their territory at all.

**Effective Against:** Scene Queens; Champions — who are often so pleased to see their area changing, they don't see what's coming until it's too late; Nomad coteries — it's hard to return to a place that's changed utterly; Marechal coteries

#### Variations

The Society of St. Leopold prefers a more ground-up approach. They tend not to work through Politicians, but local church organizations. The effects are similar: crime, drug use, and homelessness drop, and eventually the area gets "cleaner." This approach lacks both the first wave of newcomers, and the major investment. Havens remain unaffected, but blankbodies don't enjoy the brief phase of easy hunting either.

For gentrification operations aimed at a specific blankbody Domain as opposed to the neighborhood at large, see the Special system for the Gentrifier (p. 18).

#### Countermeasures

Blankbodies with strong local Contacts, Allies, or Influence who start counteracting the gentrification before it reaches the investment phase can start a grassroots movement to oppose it. They roll Charisma + the highest of their relevant Backgrounds each month, reducing the Gentrifier's Charisma + Finance result by that amount. If, at the end of the six months of Investment, the Gentrifier has fewer than five successes, the gentrification attempt fails and the area reverts to its original state.

## Surveillance

This is a very simple, and very useful tactic. One or more Detectives or Lamplighters target a blankbody, spending weeks or months tracking the blankbody's movements, gathering information on the places they visit, the people they meet, and the things that matter to them. Sometimes the goal is to track a blankbody to their Haven, sometimes to assess a new recruit's loyalty, and sometimes it's simply to map out how the city's power flows.

Most teams prefer to switch out the shadow at regular intervals: nothing is more suspicious than seeing the same face in the crowd several times over months. There's also a natural tendency for the shadow to want to become involved. Sometimes

they start to sympathize with their targets and others they feel duty-bound to intervene to save their victims.

The shadow rolls Wits + Investigation every week that they follow the blankbody. On any roll that accrues three or more successes, they learn:

- A Touchstone
- A Discipline power
- A Background
- The identity of another blankbody the target regularly associates with

**Effective Against:** Nomad coteries; Maréchal coteries as a way to reach the Prince; Questari; Vehme

### Variations

BOES employs this tactic with the sole intention of identifying a Haven (or, better, an Elysium or other meeting place). When they accumulate twice as many successes as the Haven rating, they learn its location. For every additional week of surveillance, they learn one of the Haven's features.

The equivalent of Shadowing for a location is Surveillance, most often practiced by SAD and the Eighth Direction: a Black-Bagger plants surveillance devices, and the team listens to the collected intelligence. Substitute Wits + Technology for Investigation, but results are the same.

### Countermeasures

Spotting a shadow requires a Wits + Awareness roll. It starts at Difficulty 5 in the first week of surveillance and reduces by one each week, to a minimum of 1. Once a blankbody spots a shadow, further rolls to do so are Difficulty 1 until they go a full month with no surveillance.

Misleading a shadow requires a Contested Manipulation + Stealth roll vs the SI's weekly Wits + Investigation. If the blankbody wins, the shadow gains no information that week. It's probably easier just to kill the poor, vulnerable operative, unless the blankbody wants to feed them specific misinformation.

### Disinformation

**The Five Torches constantly innovate, developing new technology or repurposing existing tools. Their toolbox grows all the time but it takes time and money to fill it. Research and development is expensive but talk is free: it's much easier to scare leeches with talk of superweapons and hyper-advanced tech than to build it. Most of them aren't particularly tech savvy; those who understand the tech are often too low-placed to counteract credulous elders and ancillae spreading falsehoods.**

**Disinformation campaigns "nudge": they guide blankbodies' behavior in ways that benefit the Coalition. Current opportunities include:**

- **Convincing them that 5G uses the same frequency as ADS, and thus 5G phones could be weaponized, keeping them using low-tech solutions like dead drops and landlines, which are easily monitored.**
- **Claims that there's a bloodborne disease (that transmits to blankbodies) loose in a population, to push more undead to blood bag feeding where the Coalition can easily keep tabs on them.**
- **Claims that speed traps contain advanced third-generation XScopes, to keep vampires from travelling intercity by road and therefore keep them where the Coalition can see them.**
- **Spreading disinformation is best handled as a Project (Core Rulebook, p. 415; for a worked example see p. 108).**



# Operational Approaches

Once the investigation and social maneuvering is complete, it's time to strike. The wet work teams go in, stakes and special weapons fly, and the local vampire population is significantly reduced. These approaches to combat vary almost as much as the blankbodies they're conducted against. What follows are examples, and every one will need to be tailored for a specific target. When designing combat operations, keep in mind what the UTR team have already learned about their targets through investigation and surveillance, and plot accordingly: these are smart enemies, and they use every advantage.

This chapter can't cover major operations like the storming of the Vienna Chantry: those depart from any standard operating procedure.

## Rendition

Rendition is just a fancy word for kidnapping. Sometimes elimination isn't the goal: the hunter needs additional intel on a blankbody's associates or projects. With informants and all of the other investigative tactics at the Coalition's disposal, they only use rendition when there's an urgent information need and no alternative. FIRSTLIGHT performs or tasks the vast majority of Rendition operations, and even they have cut back to a minimum following the 2012 Detroit debacle. GRU-N58 has slowly been building their rendition pace back up after a steep fall-off in 2008.

Rendition requires detailed knowledge of the target's routine: deliberately taking on an entire group of vampires just to bag one is far too high-risk. A Lamplighter observes for as long as they can — not more than a few days, because the team needs information ASAP. When the Lamplighter knows when and how it's easiest to find the blankbody target alone, A Cuckoo or a lowly Informant lures them somewhere the team can strike.

- Once per scene, roll Dexterity + Stealth for the Lamplighter's observation, vs. Wits + Awareness.
- Roll Charisma + Persuasion for the Cuckoo's (or other bait's) lure, vs. Composure + Insight.

Snatch Squads always pack full sets of restraints, including a chainmail hood (p. 76). A couple of Warriors take on the target, ideally with support from a Nullifier (p. 40). The aim is to capture, not destroy, so the weapon of choice is stakes, launched from a crossbow or hammered into the chest the old-fashioned way.

Note that just taking a prisoner from a different type of operation, for example stuffing a lone survivor into the back of a van, is a different matter and isn't described or treated as rendition. It's also not something the Coalition does very often: if they're taking on a group of blankbodies, they came to eliminate.

Rendition is usually followed by interrogation, then one of three choices: recruitment, deterioration into a Brute (p. 47), or the Final Death. There's no good outcome for a blankbody: even if they make it back from whatever black site they were interrogated at, their fellow monsters will never trust them again.

**Effective Against:** Loners; people who won't be missed; Neonates; Regency coteries — relatively weak blankbodies in exploitable positions of power



## TORTURE

Their war against vampires constantly tempts the Order of St. Leopold and every state actor (and plenty of private operators) in the Second Inquisition to cross every legal and moral line. Some of those lines barely existed to begin with: the CIA and GRU barely played by the rules even against each other, and the Inquisition has explicitly allowed similar extreme measures since the 15th century. Spying, blackmail, kidnapping, murder, and imprisonment are standard operating procedures for such organizations, and torture of both humans and vampires becomes more common among their ranks. The use of torture is a common hard line for many groups, but if your Storyteller and players consent to depicting or being exposed to the concept of torture in play, then keep a few things in mind.

Torture is a sensitive subject to approach in any context. Especially in a game of operatic horrors and cinematic soldiers, avoid presenting torture in a cartoonish or flippant manner. Torture violates people, by explicit design. The U.S. Military Code of Justice, the Geneva Convention, and the laws and mores of every civilized country consider torture a crime against humanity. Repressive and openly authoritarian states torture routinely, but developed democracies torture in the shadows, concealed by euphemism as with "enhanced interrogation techniques" in the CIA, or fobbed off on third parties via "extraordinary rendition," or even legally permitted under so-called "defense of necessity" circumstances as it remains in Israel.

## NO EXCUSES

Torture is not just criminal, but ineffective. Multiple studies on the use of torture have shown that while information is always extracted, the victim often says whatever their abuser wishes to hear in order to stop the pain. Torture cannot compel anyone to tell the truth, and on some level those who use torture know that fact. Resorting to torture indeed corrupts nations and organizations into lying, excusing brutality, or evading the truth about their actions.

So what purpose does a criminal, ineffective, and corrupt technique serve in a **Vampire** game? Simply

put, torture is revolting and shocking. It elicits extreme reactions, and sometimes a horror story requires extremes. Torture also identifies the villains of the story. Player characters face moral and ethical choices while burdened with a monstrous nature – those same choices can break or corrupt mortals, plunging them into depravity without the excuse of the Beast. Second Inquisition torture signals to players that evil also exists outside of their own afflictions.

## VAMPIRES AS VICTIMS

Depictions of torture remain best reserved for off-screen moments and implied threats. For outcomes against player characters, use the system in the Corebook (p. 415). Ideally, the rest of the coterie can break the captured Kindred out of the transport plane or holding pen before things get to that point. That said, to clarify the kind of violence the Coalition allows itself to use against humans and vampires alike, here we present a non-exhaustive list of techniques adapted by the Coalition from their patrons' previous experiences in Chechnya, Afghanistan, Iraq, Ireland, and elsewhere.

Despite their pursuit, study and extermination of vampires, many hunters only have limited understanding of their weaknesses. Since torture is a blunt instrument, this generally confines their torture methods to three implements.

## FIRE AND FEAR

Coalition assets likely discovered blankbodies' phobia of fire during the first confused missions in 2002. Over the next two decades, FIRSTLIGHT and GRU psychologists slowly built a working theory of operant conditioning, using everything from brands and heated pokers to thermal lances to slowly convince their prisoners of their helplessness. (De-fanging a target with dental pliers contributes mightily to this reaction, when it happens.) This doesn't make fiery threats any more reliable than other tortures, of course.

## SUNBOARDING

"Sunboarding," as FIRSTLIGHT torturers euphemistically call it, is any scenario that uses the sun's light to threaten vampires with death. Just as interrogators use waterboarding to threaten a victim with drowning, inquisitors weaponize sunlight to terrify vampires with grievous wounds or even death until they talk. This usually entails restraining a vampire and allowing thin beams of reflected sunlight to advance towards them until they comply or are burned. The restraints are often basic, but particularly sadistic hunters have invented iron maiden-like devices to entrap their victims in a sarcophagus that can let in small beams of sunlight as needed. Keeping a vampire awake during the daytime and out of frenzy are the most complicated aspects of this procedure.

## BLOOD DEPRIVATION

One thing the Coalition does know about vampires is that they hunger for blood. While they may not realize how constant or urgent the hunger is for most vampires, they do know that depriving a blankbody causes them extreme discomfort and pain. This is a slow but relatively safe method of torture from the hunter's perspective. The hunters are less familiar with the particulars of frenzy, but a starving vampire will tell you anything you want to hear for a drop of blood. Some torturers leave a saucer of blood just out of reach of a restrained or locked up vampire for days, unable to reach it as it slowly spoils and clots in front of their eyes. Others bleed the vampire slowly, allowing the hunger to fill the void left behind.

The blankbody's Hunger rapidly increases by 1 for each success on the interrogator's Manipulation + Medicine roll. At Hunger 5, the blankbody tests for a Compulsion as if they had suffered a bestial failure. 1-9 results in Hunger, 0 in the clan compulsion. For a Caitiff or thin-blood, don't roll: the result is always Hunger. A blankbody under this compulsion will do or say anything to sate their appetite, and the Interrogator is quick to offer a blood bag.

### Variations

FIRSTLIGHT Snatch Squads are highly skilled and well equipped, usually with XTech such as a Tanglefoot Trap (p. 82).

Some Newburgh Group agents like to think of themselves as a little more sophisticated than their compatriots. They arrange more complex Rendition operations baited with prey precisely to a blankbody's taste, with poisoned blood, See Blood Doll, pg. 16), and strike while the target is weak: injured or lethargic.

The bait rolls Manipulation + Subterfuge vs the blankbody's Wits + Resolve to essentially seduce them into feeding. They're wearing a GPS tracker and often a listening device (depending on the blankbody's known feeding style) so their team can reach them quickly and intervene if things go wrong. If the team knows where the blankbody will go to feed, they often include a sniper, positioned to ensure the bait's safety.

### Extortion

Winning Hearts and Minds (WHAM) is a common catch phrase among hunters from the military, and it's a credo that espouses the conversion of potential hostiles to the cause of the Second Inquisition itself. Their focus is to identify the psychological and emotional levers that drive a blankbody, and use those to turn the captive into an asset or pawn. Tricks learned from the darker corners of counter-insurgency serve the Coalition well. Before capturing the Kindred the hunters identify mortals or pets that are important to them, perhaps even inadvertently discovering their Touchstones.

The hunters then inform their prisoner of this identification, with an implied (or explicit) threat. Some FIRSTLIGHT interrogators manipulate recordings of those valued mortals to create seeming torture soundtracks, audible from the next cell. Vampiric powers can make this tactic tricky as some blankbodies possess exceptional perception; interrogators find it best to starve and weaken the subjects beforehand. Other interrogators go ahead and grab the Touchstone as a convincer.

### Countermeasures

Don't walk alone. Wear a tracking device in the hopes that someone finds you, or at least the location you were abducted from. Stall for time.

Once a vampire is in the back of that black van, there's no effective countermeasure except to try and broker a deal: someone else's life for theirs, or turning their coat and becoming a Coalition source.

## Recruitment

The Coalition needs informants and spies at every level of blankbody society, and occasionally even allows turncoats to become full-fledged operators. Most field personnel remain extremely reluctant to recruit or use them, for excellent reason. In October 2012, a blankbody "recruit" (and an unknown number of theoretically "safely imprisoned" captive blankbodies) turned key personnel in the SAD and FIRSTLIGHT offices in three states, betraying a city-clearing operation in Detroit and getting several dozen police and UTR troopers killed. But sometimes, recruitment seems like the only possible way of getting to a target that's worth more than several dozen lives.

Recruiting ghouls (or, in extremely valuable cases, blankbodies) is effectively the same process as recruiting double agents. Find a weakness, turn it into a lever, and pull it quickly or slowly. Cuckoos, Informants, Burrowers and previous blankbody traitors all feed information to a Coalition handler: vengeances and rivalries, transgressions that might become blackmail material, disaffection, emotional bonds and Touchstones, or lingering religious beliefs are all fodder for the recruitment process.

Handlers combine approaches: a favor for a SAD agent, or a job supplied by a False Flagger can become blackmail material. An emotional bond with a Cuckoo can lead to disaffection or a vendetta. The more strings the handler has to pull, the better. Recruitment is a slow and gradual process, though it might appear sudden to a blankbody. The handler slowly manipulates them into a position where saying yes to treachery is easy; sometimes the blankbody knows they're dealing with the Second Inquisition, other times the offer of recruitment

only comes at the first face-to-face meeting.

Under normal circumstances the Coalition doesn't consider "walk-in" recruitment; that is to say, recruitment where the blankbody initiates contact voluntarily. It's hard enough to be sure of the loyalty of a carefully screened recruit chosen by specialists. It's impossible to trust a blankbody's motives for approaching an organization that wants every one of their kind destroyed.

This tactic plays out in the following stages:

- **Observation:** A Detective or Lamplighter, or occasionally a Cuckoo monitors the blankbody for months, ascertaining whether they're a viable candidate for recruitment. This takes the form of an Extended Intelligence + Investigation roll, requiring 12 successes. Rolls are one month apart. Observation can continue up to 20 successes, reducing the challenge of manipulating the target.
- **Manipulation:** The blankbody is slowly guided into a position of vulnerability: their money runs out and they have to make some bad deals; they almost breach the Masquerade, only to have their ass hauled out of the fire by a new contact; they learn a secret about an elder that could ruin them if the elder ever finds out they know; that type of thing. Make an Extended Manipulation + Politics test, requiring 20 successes, minus half of any additional successes on Observation. Rolls are one month apart. Manipulation can continue up to 25 successes, making the Approach easier.
- **Approach:** The handler makes contact and offers the blankbody a place with their agency, and protection. Roll Manipulation + Subterfuge vs Composure + Resolve. The handler receives one extra die for every excess success in the Manipulation phase.



The Storyteller should never reduce recruiting the chronicle's protagonists to mechanics. Play out the approach, and leave the decision to turn to the player, not the dice. Depending on the group's social contract such a plotline might be worth discussing with all of the players beforehand: a traitor in the coterie is not right for all groups.

**Effective Against:** Malcontents; Thin-bloods; Cerberus coteries — sometimes turning someone on the inside is the only way to gain access to a relic; Sbirri.

#### Variations

BOES tend not to recruit blankbodies, though they will occasionally consider it for the Duskborn: their mission is far more burn than turn. The Eighth Direction does not recruit former Anarchs, and especially not Brujah. Russia only just crawled out from under leech influence and they're not eager to welcome the monsters back in.

The Society of St. Leopold is not, in principle, opposed to the recruitment of suitable blankbodies, but they must demonstrate that they are both repentant and penitent, and commit to never feeding on a human being. Ventrue recruits are therefore unlikely.

#### Countermeasures

For the same reasons recruiting protagonists isn't reduced to mechanics, opposing that recruitment also depends on roleplaying.

## Assassination

The Coalition infiltrates wet workers into a Domain, feeding ground, or other location they know the target blankbody will visit. FIRSTLIGHT sanctions an Assassination when it's simply too dangerous to storm a location by day, shooting and burning: when blankbodies have enough knowledge of the local Coalition operation to carry out reprisals, when there are too many mortal retainers and servants and someone higher up has decided they can't justify the collateral damage, or when the only opportunity to reach a target is when they are out at night amongst civilians.

Hunters also deploy this style of operation against blankbodies with cover identities that put them in the public eye: a "lone nut" or "stalker cult" assassination is tabloid fodder, but it doesn't prompt the same public investigations and spotlight lawyers as a full government raid would.

The team usually comprises one or two Warriors, sometimes with a Sniper positioned where they can take out an escaping target as a last resort. If the team anticipates high security or doesn't feel confident they know the lay of the land, they'll take a Lone Wolf or a Weaponer with them.

The team ideally brings XTech, or an ally with arcane or psychic gifts to overcome the obvious risk of a blankbody Obfuscating away.

Effective Against: Single targets; individual members of Maréchal coteries

#### Countermeasures

Fight back; reach somewhere highly public, and hope it's not in the sniper's line of sight.

## Day Strike

This is the one hunter tactic every blankbody fears: a strike team arriving at their Haven while they sleep behind the door. In some of their nightmares, they awaken for long enough to see the stake aimed at their chest or the fire consuming their home.

Day strikes are messy but highly visible. They're not appropriate for Havens in the nice part of the city — unless the team have pulled some strings with local government and law enforcement in advance, which carries the risk of tipping off the target or another blankbody. For a coterie that lairs together, they're ideal: taking out five or six blankbodies in one strike is too tempting; for that much value, consequences can always be ironed out.

The team incorporates one or more Breachers to deal with security measures, a few Warriors or Lone Wolves (at least one per blankbody target) to do the dirty work of staking then beheading, and preferably a Nullifier to suppress certain key disciplines. For high-tech Havens, a Hacker works away back at base, or in an armored van nearby, suppressing any alarms and calls for help. In most circumstances, a Black-Bagger has already been running surveillance for quite some time.

Politicians and Socialites clean up afterwards, minimizing media ripples and investigations.
**Effective Against:** Most blankbodies; coteries/ shared Havens.

### Variations

BOES pioneered the block-by-block strategy: a number of daytime strikes, co-ordinated and continuing until the teams have hit every known target on the map. SO13 and Eighth Direction observed this tactic with great approval, and have adopted it themselves. The major point against it is that it unsettles mortals and makes the news, and those agencies exert subtle (and unsubtle) pressures to control that element.

### Countermeasures

The best countermeasure is just not to be there when the strike happens. A blankbody might notice surveillance (either by Black-Baggers or Shadows) in advance, or have the right contacts to hear of a large-scale operation about to go down when law enforcement and city authorities are informed in advance. Failing that, high security including ghouls and others awake during the day is the next best defense.

## Night Strike

This is the best resourced – because the most dangerous – that hunters ever undertake., (See Night and Fog, p. 156, for reasons Night Strikes sometimes get approved despite the danger.) With IAO or other first-rank actors, no expense is spared, and every possible asset is made available. A Brute is unleashed to wreak havoc and provide a distraction while Breachers and Hackers crack security — or an Informant or Cuckoo opens the doors. Multiple UTR teams with heavy weapons strike at once, some with specific targets and others merely there to do as much damage as possible. Clearance specialists hose down the area with white-hot fire.

The team uses sophisticated crowd control tools to panic, confuse, and hinder their targets. Burrowers and Lamplighters have already figured out all possible exits from the building's plans and surveillance, and there more trained killers waiting at each one.

It's a highly efficient massacre, and while hunter casualties may be high, it's always worth the price.
**Effective Against:** Gatherings of all kinds; Plumaires

### Countermeasures

This operation is the jewel in the Coalition's crown. The only hope is that the haven has an exit the hunters haven't found yet.

## Auto-da-Fé

ESOG and their protégés in BOES specialize in the auto-da-fé. The team doesn't just breach a Haven or Elysium and eliminate everyone inside. They burn it to the ground during the height of the noonday sun, and chase down and execute fleeing, burning survivors. The auto-da-fé isn't just an effective tactic, it's a threat.

It works best when the target is not only secure but well-known in Kindred circles. Arson in a dull, residential district where some nobody Caitiff makes their home is far less effective than firebombing a Harpy's Haven, because the purpose of the auto-da-fé is to spread terror, and panic those who live to bear witness to it.

In the week after an auto-da-fé, all blankbodies aware of it make Composure tests at +1 Difficulty. Consecutive weeks of fiery terror impose further penalties to a maximum of +3.
**Effective Against:** Anyone.

### Variations

While BOES like to be up close and personal when they conduct an auto-da-fé, Eighth Direction much prefer mortars from a distance. They'll bring an entire building down if they need to.

### Countermeasures

If the inquisitors are comfortable and embedded enough that they can commit an auto-da-fé, it's too late. This worst-case scenario happens when the Kindred don't deal with the threat quickly enough, and why smart ones go to any lengths necessary to stay under the radar.

# Second Inquisition Projects

Some actions by and against the Second Inquisition are part of the long game. Like pest control, they're a steady, ongoing effort to reduce harm. In such cases they're best handled as Projects using the rules in the Corebook (pp. 415-421). Some examples of Projects that work against the Coalition follow, along with some examples of Projects run by the Coalition for Kindred to oppose.

## New Background: Operational Resources

Every hunter team or cell has a finite amount of people, weapons, money and time. All of these limitations are summed up in the team's Operational Resources background. Use it to determine how many Projects a team can manage concurrently: farm teams low on cash and contacts are probably only positioned to track down one blankbody at a time; a FIRSTLIGHT team in a key target city might work on turning a traitor to their side, locating a Primogen's Haven, and working to counteract a blankbody building contacts in the mayor's office.

If you plan to run Projects either for or against the Second Inquisition, assign the local hunters (or local Coalition representatives) a total Operational Resources score for the purpose. (As a rule of thumb, Operational Resources should generally be within one dot of the OPFOR's Reach background.) Then decide how much of their Operational Resources they can commit to a given Project.



## Map Blankbody Networks

The reason that FIRSTLIGHT, or the Society of St. Leopold, or their peers, pose a danger is because they understand blankbodies. They're smart enough to make sure they do the job properly: they don't just eliminate stupid monsters who make themselves targets, they follow them back to their coteries, sires, and the city's hierarchy. Whether Anarch or Camarilla, knowing how the social bonds of the city hold blankbodies together helps the Coalition identify possible traitors, candidates for blackmail or intimidation, or high value targets whose final deaths would destabilize the city and make the Coalition's work easier.

**Goal:** Create an accurate map of the city's blankbody networks and power structures, for subsequent manipulation (+5 dice on rolls to identify connections, apply pressure, or manipulate).

**Increment:** Usually weeks. Anarchs, being less hierarchical than the Camarilla, may take twice as long (increment in 2-week periods).

**Stages:** identify most visible blankbodies; map first-degree connections; connect networks; profile weaknesses and vulnerabilities.

**Scope:** 3. This is an intensive Project which, if successful, pays off in long term future benefits.

**Launch Roll:** Academics or Technology + Operational Resources, Difficulty 5

**Backgrounds to Commit:** Operational Resources; one dot per Canary, Dealer, or other crucial informant (losing the dot gets them killed or turned)

**Suggested Goal Rolls:** Intelligence + Academics, Etiquette, or Politics; Wits + Subterfuge.

**Failure:** If this Project fails, the team misunderstands connections, mistaking visibility for power, or falling for blankbodies' attempts to disguise their alliances or enmities. Attempts to manipulate these networks are made with -2 dice.

— No resources. Working in the dark, and with no support.

• Highly limited. A few scraps of intelligence and inadequate firepower.

•• Basic. A team with a specific mission and the resources to carry it out.

••• Well resourced. Enough money, guns, and people to staff one major op, or a couple of minor ones.

•••• Important, experienced team in a high priority location. Able to run more than one major mission concurrently.

••••• Top priority mission. What the team wants, the team gets.



### Counteracting this Project

**Detecting:** Kindred with better, or larger, personal networks are more likely to realize people have been observing and asking questions. Roll the higher of Mawla or Status + Investigation. One success reveals that a hunter's investigation is afoot; two or more reveal the number on the Project die.

**Affecting:** The blankbody or coterie plants false evidence, plays up (or down) their closeness to other locals, or fabricates feuds or alliances to throw the hunters off the scent. Manipulation + Persuasion, Etiquette, or Politics.

**Utilizing:** The coterie might make themselves look insignificant, or more powerful than they are; they might tempt the hunters to approach one of them as a possible traitor and thereby infiltrate the local SI network. Both of these purposes require Manipulation + Subterfuge rolls.

## Undermine a Background

The Coalition's primary goal is to eliminate blankbodies, but it's hard to disappear someone in the public eye, with millions of dollars, powerful friends, and global fame. Sometimes, the only way to make a target viable is to weaken them, cut them off from their friends and advantages. It makes it harder for them to see the hunters coming, harder to move against them, and less likely to escape when a field team goes in for the kill.

**Goal:** Reduce a target blankbody's Background by a specified amount. This is usually to zero, but even a small reduction can be beneficial.

**Increment:** Days for a reduction of up to 2 dots. Weeks for more substantial backgrounds.

**Stages:** scope out Backgrounds; select a target Background; dismantle it.

**Scope:** 1 + intended reduction to Background.

**Launch Roll:** Highly dependent on the background affected and the tactics used. For example, Finance + Operational Resources to reduce Resource; Politics + Operational Resources to reduce Influence; Streetwise + Operational Resources to reduce Contacts; Subterfuge + Operational Resources to reduce Allies or Mawla; Investigation + Operational Resources to reduce Mask

Difficulty 2 + Scope.

**Backgrounds to Commit:** Operational Resources; one dot per Gentrifier, Politician, or other major influencer (losing the dot gets them turned or killed)

**Suggested Goal Rolls:** Intelligence + Academics, Etiquette, or Politics; Wits + Subterfuge.

**Failure:** If this Project fails, the Coalition's resources become tied up in untangling the mess; it takes weeks to extricate themselves cleanly. Operational Resources decrease by 1 dot for the same duration the Project was in progress (e.g. a Project that ran for 4 weeks before failing reduces Operational Resources for the same length of time).

### Counteracting this Project

**Detecting:** Affected Background + Intelligence. One success reveals that a hunter's investigation is afoot; two or more reveal the number on the Project die.

**Affecting:** The target might move Resources around with Intelligence + Finance; shore up an alliance with Charisma + Persuasion; work up a publicity stunt to maintain Influence or Fame with Manipulation + Persuasion; retain a Mawla's respect with Charisma + Etiquette or Politics.

**Utilizing:** With the same rolls as those to affect the Project, the blankbody can entangle the investigators for twice as long as a failure would dictate. They might, at the Storyteller's discretion, be able to increase the targeted Background by 1 dot: creating a news story that makes them more famous, shifting some of their money into a safer, offshore account where it makes more money etc.



## Against the Inquisition: Cleanup

Slipping away from the Inquisition's notice is easier said than done. A blankbody might throw them off the trail for a while by countering one tactic, but once they're in the Coalition's databases, they're there forever. The Second Inquisition will be back, no matter how many times a known blankbody escapes their grasp. Slowly and painstakingly, a blankbody might be able to erase all traces of themselves, but it's dangerous: if they're detected, they rocket up the Coalition's target list.

**Goal:** Remove the Known Blankbody flaw.

**Increment:** Months. This Project can't be initiated if the Coalition have actively pursued the vampire within the last month.

**Stages:** Identify all records held; locate a weak point (technological, personnel, or other); incrementally remove records.

**Scope:** 3

**Launch Roll:** Resources or Influence + Investigation. Difficulty 5.

**Backgrounds to Commit:** Influence, Allies, Contacts, Status.

**Suggested Goal Rolls:** Intelligence + Technology; Intelligence + Investigation; Manipulation + Subterfuge.

**Failure:** When a player's character fails at a Goal Roll or otherwise loses control of a Project, they reduce the Backgrounds committed to it (Corebook, p. 416). This is a particularly dangerous Project and if the blankbody fails they incur additional and immediate heat from the Second Inquisition. Move up one step on the Response Algorithm.

Don't roll for counteracting a player's plans, just throw some good old-fashioned complications at them in the course of play.

## Against the Inquisition: In From the Cold

Whatever the organizations themselves might say, the personnel recruited into the Second Inquisition are not above reproach. Some of them can be bought, others seduced or blackmailed, and some have an attraction to the alluring concept of vampirism that borders on a fetish. It's very possible for a blankbody with something to offer to turn an inquisitor into an asset. Successful completion of this Project doesn't guarantee friendship or loyalty, but does convert a Coalition agent (or other major hunter) into an ally... until they regret their betrayal and confess everything to their superiors.

**Goal:** Convert a Coalition agent into an Ally, with a Background value one less than the Project Scope.

**Increment:** Months or years.

**Stages:** Identify a target; identify weaknesses; make contact; apply pressure.

**Scope:** 1 + intended level of Background.

**Launch Roll:** Contacts, Resources or Influence + Manipulation. Difficulty 1 + Scope.

**Backgrounds to commit:** Resources, Influence, Fame.

**Suggested Goal Rolls:** Intelligence + Insight or Investigation; Manipulation + Persuasion, Subterfuge, or Persuasion.

**Failure:** If the Project fails, the vampire loses some of the Backgrounds invested in the project. They may also acquire an Enemy, in the form of the agent they tried to recruit or one of that person's colleagues and superiors. Alternatively, they may find themselves a Known Blankbody.

# Coalition Response Algorithm

The Coalition has set processes for escalating response. They know what works and what doesn't, and A leads inevitably to B. The Response Algorithm presented here (like the one on pp. 186-189 of **Anarch**) helps Storytellers think like a UTR team or regional agent-in-charge, and deliver an appropriate response to the actions undertaken by the players' characters. A Storyteller can use it continuously to drive the next step in the story, or mine it for ideas, or adapt it to their particular set of Second Inquisition antagonists.

Many of the steps in the Response Algorithm align neatly with Tactics presented earlier in this chapter; some don't, and require more explanation.

## Level 0: Under the Radar

The algorithm depicted here doesn't depict this level, but it describes the average vampire or coterie that hasn't yet done anything to draw inquisitorial notice.

## Level 1: Observation

### Data Analysis: Hunting Patterns

This analysis indicates the characters' predator type and possibly the goal of their coterie. Generally, characters feeding on bagged blood, Herds, animals, or consenting prey are assigned a lower threat level than those feeding on unaware or unwilling mortal victims.

### Data Analysis: Academic Specializations

This analysis determines quantitative data such as the characters' age, and thus an estimate of their strength, their Disciplines, and perhaps their Touchstones and Convictions: weaknesses that the Coalition can use both to understand and target them.

### Informants

The Coalition uses their networks of informants amongst blankbody societies, criminal underworlds, and other places where humanity brushes against blankbodies to gather information on the characters' activities, ambitions, friends and enemies.

### Data Analysis: Herds and Cults

Blankbodies who gather mortals around them hand the Coalition a ready made focus group to reveal information about them, wittingly or unwittingly. Analysts study these groups (usually online) or contact them (possibly as False Flaggers) to gather intel about the characters.

### Intelligence Assets

The Coalition searches the databases of its affiliated intelligence organizations for reference to the characters. Returning any records at this stage instantly elevates the characters to a higher threat level: these are creatures who could conceivably threaten national security.

## Level 2: Investigation

### Shadowing

This is the first recourse when the Coalition deems a target too dangerous, or insufficiently understood, for an approach that makes contact. An extended surveillance operation begins, with the intention of learning what levers Bear-Leaders can pull at Level 3: Attrition.

### Common Enemies

The Coalition approaches the characters' enemies amongst the blankbody hierarchy of the city, usually through cut-outs or False Flaggers, and attempts to agitate them against the characters, or provide intel on their weaknesses.

### Infiltration
A Cuckoo embeds in the blankbodies' Herd, network, or possibly even their coterie. Their purpose is twofold: to assess them for any possible inclination to work with the Coalition against their fellow blankbodies, and to establish their needs and weaknesses in preparation for Level 3.

### Interrogation
The Coalition grabs the characters' associates (Allies, or Touchstones if they know them) either through false arrest, a quick snatch in an SAD van, or a full-fledged rendition. Interrogation has three goals: gain intel about the characters, put pressure on the characters to break their pattern and reveal themselves, and if possible recruit the associate as a double agent.

## Level 3: Attrition

### Deprivation
Having established the characters' place in their threat list, the Coalition begins to act against them. At this point they chip away at resources, limiting the characters' blood supply, draining bank accounts, turning allies against them etc. The goal is to limit the characters' potential to harm mortals, and make them vulnerable to further inquisition action.

### Gentrification
The Coalition team moves against the characters' Domain and power base if any. Severing access to Havens and contact networks should force the characters into a rash offensive or a weakened defense; either way, the Coalition can more easily confront them.

### Deprogramming
If the Coalition team has identified the characters (or their ghouls) as potential assets, they target one or more of them for deprogramming and recruitment. Thin-blood characters often receive this kind of attention.

## Level 4: Confrontation

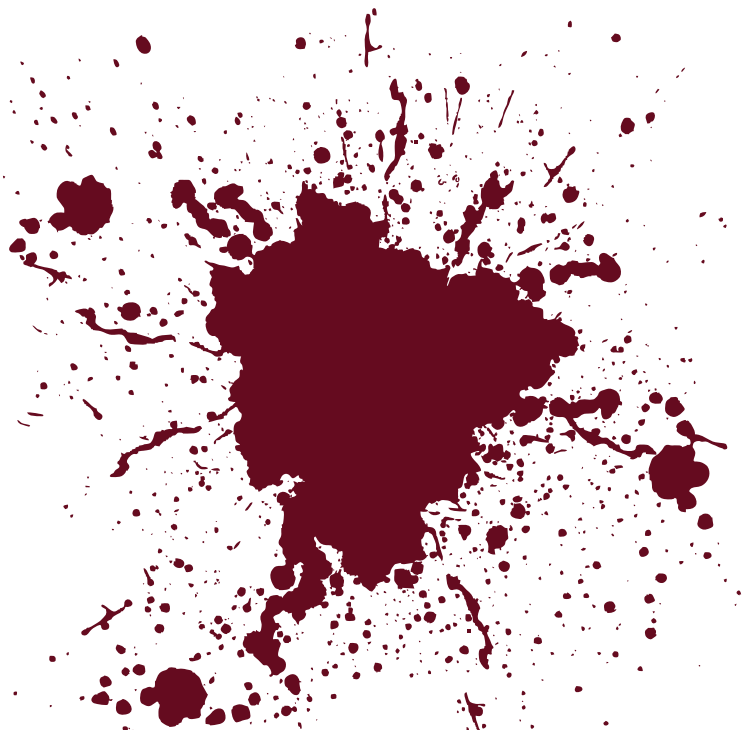
### Operation
A Day Strike, Night Strike, Assassination, or Auto-da-fe. The blankbodies have progressed so far up the Coalition's list of targets that there's no option but to exterminate them. There is no higher level on this branch of the algorithm.

### Betrayal
Presented with the choice of their own Final Death or the lives of others, the characters are given the chance to save their own skin. They surrender allies, Elders, whoever they can to the Coalition in return for survival — and maybe something more?

## Level 5: Induction

### Recruitment
Having sold out everyone they know and care about, the characters are offered one final, tough choice: join the Second Inquisition and undermine blankbody networks from within as Cuckoos, help Deprogram others, or become Warriors for the cause. They can of course choose to say no, but that way leads swiftly to Final Death.

This level essentially only exists for player characters; Storyteller character vampires almost always get dusted without regrets.




MK
2021

# *Chapter Four:* Fire Teams

*Wherefore we, being supported by the presence and power of our most dear son Frederick, the most illustrious Emperor of the Romans, always Increaser of the Empire, with the common advice and counsel of our brethren, and other Patriarchs, Archbishops, and many princes, who from several parts of the world are met together, do set ourselves against these heretics, who have got different names …*

*We ordain further, that all earls, barons, governors, and consuls of cities, and other places, in pursuance of the conmonition of the respective Archbishops and Bishops, shall promise upon oath, that in all these particulars, whenever they are thereto required, they will powerfully and effectually assist the Church against heretics and their accomplices.*

— *AD ABOLENDAM*, PAPAL BULL ISSUED BY POPE LUCIUS III,

ESTABLISHING THE EPISCOPAL INQUISITION (1184)

The Second Inquisition comprises many conspiracies. Every Bible study club, arms smuggling gang, hospital night shift, Facebook moms group, and police swing shift that takes up stakes to hunt an unbelievable threat necessitates a conspiracy. Some of those conspiracies interlock, unknowingly or by chance, within the greater movement. Not all of its participants use the same methods, or even pursue the same goals. At their basic level, however, they all burn with the sudden epiphany that vampires exist, and shudder with the terror that such a truth entails.

The conspiracies within governments, intelligence agencies, and non-state actors with the most power in the movement turn that terror into organized action. The so-called Five Torches at the highest reaches of the movement draw upon

immense tranches of information and funding, and translate their response into organized action. These five partners, along with an increasing number of second-party actors, allies, and assets call themselves the Coalition. To be sure, they almost never call themselves anything at all in public. The Coalition bureaucratically disguises the communications, planning, and liaison operations it requires behind even more anodyne and opaque acronyms like MLCCTSP (Multilateral Liaison Committee for Counter Terror Scenario Planning, devolved to working groups in 2017) or SMLCPASCE (Sub-Ministerial Level Consultation Program to Address Stochastic Crisis Events, spun up in late 2016).

Unfamous staffers and mid-ranking military figures hold bland daytime meetings about logistics and funding on the margins of summits and exercises. They pass memos in out-of-the-way conference rooms at G20 conferences, and exchange preprints on blankbody biology in very private seminars concurrent with the biennial World Conference on Military Medicine (one of the few international bodies the Vatican holds full membership in). Deniable servers whir, and boring bureaucrats shuffle funds in a glass-walled office building in Vienna officially assigned to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. An occasional "counter-insurgency expert" or "strategic threat analyst" comes through the building from Moscow or Washington or Rome after touring the ruins of the "Vienna terror site."

Bureaucracy and familiarity have increased their collective effectiveness, but blunted their focus. National interest and personal political ambitions often overshadow their zeal to quash the vampire threat. The Coalition has become a nest of overlapping conspiracies each with their own agendas, paranoias, and rivalries. It is the role of the IAO, FIRSTLIGHT, and the Vatican's La Entità to keep everyone on board and focused on the conspiracy's long-term goals when planning operations. This informal executive committee steers operational planning by dint of IAO's bottomless purse, FIRSTLIGHTs command and control, and La Entità's near monopoly on mystical countermeasures.

# United States

Arguably the most powerful of the Five Torches, the United States operates dozens of military and intelligence organizations with very little oversight and a seemingly infinite well of funding. At least some units in every U.S. military branch, and offices in almost every organization of the U.S. intelligence community, know that a supernatural threat exists. They may even have let a few of their ostensible political bosses in on it. So far these various U.S. agencies have agreed to wage war on the supernatural in secret, with a special emphasis on blankbodies because of their potential to pose an existential threat to the United States and their active attempts to undermine the American government through blood slavery and mental domination. To other major players in the Coalition, the U.S. presents a unified front, but domestically a hodgepodge of agencies actively compete against each other for jurisdiction and funding.

## FIRSTLIGHT

Synonymous with the Second Inquisition to most "clued-in" Kindred in the northern hemisphere, FIRSTLIGHT is the codename of the joint intelligence operation that gathers intelligence and directs action on the ground against "blankbodies" and other supernatural threats. Originally headed up by the NSA and CIA, FIRSTLIGHT has taken on an interagency life of its own as a conspiracy within the security apparatus of the United States of America. The dispersed nature of the organization within an already secretive regime makes FIRSTLIGHT very difficult for vampires to infiltrate. This is by design, and that paranoia is a hallmark of FIRSTLIGHT that touches every aspect of their work. There are no patches for soldiers in the global war on the paranormal, and many of those carrying out their orders will never know if their victims were mortal or not.

While the street stereotype of FIRSTLIGHT is the image of a tactical team kicking down a haven door, their obsession with operational deniability makes them prefer to deal with threats remotely

and from over the horizon. In 99% of cases, FIRSTLIGHT acts entirely through the IAO, SAD, or other agencies foreign and domestic, passing off targeting and tasking intelligence and providing surveillance support upon request. When FIRSTLIGHT cannot rely on their usual allies they often turn to freelancers and amateur hunters to do their dirty work, leaking just enough information to identify targets.

But just as the CIA has developed its own pocket military during the War on Terror for tasks it doesn't want to share with the Pentagon, FIRSTLIGHT saves a few special missions for itself. When a blankbody presents itself as a unique opportunity for capture, conversion, or study FIRSTLIGHT activates a Special Deployment Team (p. 57). FIRSTLIGHT snatch squads disguise themselves as SOCOM teams supported with armored vehicles, surveillance drones and stealth helicopters. While these teams usually compensate for their lack of occult knowledge with sudden, overwhelming firepower, the mission planners sometimes bring in specialists from the Vatican or turncoat blankbody assets on a case-by-case basis.

### Pressure Points

Since FIRSTLIGHT spends a great deal of time covering up evidence of the supernatural and searching for signs of vampiric influence inside other parts of the American government and the Coalition at large, they make gingerly use of thin-bloods capable of resisting or detecting blankbody mental influence. FIRSTLIGHT's operational head, Felicity Price, supposedly escaped ratface control while at the NSA. A staunch opponent of blankbody recruitment in general, she has been forced to admit that thin-bloods present a huge potential strategic advantage as double agents. FIRSTLIGHT often promises these vampires a cure for their condition in return for their service, but at the end of their usefulness Price prefers to trade them to the Swedes or other interested second parties for experimentation and study.

FIRSTLIGHT is not shy about using violence but its first concern is always its continued ability to operate without any meaningful political constraint or informed public attention. While they do attempt to hide themselves from blankbodies, FIRSTLIGHT's greater concern is the exposure of the supernatural's existence to the public and how FIRSTLIGHT has been conducting a global war on the paranormal in secret.

### FIRSTLIGHT (NSA) Field Agent

The FIRSTLIGHT field agent is a technical expert with high-level access to sensitive algorithms and digital backdoors that give them unparalleled access to the information landscape around them.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 7
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 8, Firearms 5, Subterfuge 6, Technology 8
**Equipment:** Pistol (Glock 17), hands free comms, laptop, stingray, Global Hawk drone with XScope
**Special:** When present with a UTR team, the Field Agent contests any attempt by a blankbody to covertly move through their area of operation with a Technology dice pool (9). Failure by three or more successes means that the UTR team has pinpointed the trespassers' current location, and tracked at least part of their movement. Supernatural powers such as Obfuscate can defeat this special advantage depending on the circumstances and the type of surveillance being used by the UTR team.

## Information Awareness Office

The IAO directs the U.S. military response to the supernatural, providing command and control for everything from covert insertions into a blankbody compound in Thailand to a deniable Predator strike on a Sabbat meeting in Mozambique. A submarine sinks a ship on the way to the Gehenna War, a container of thermobaric warheads finds its way into a Mexican cartel's arsenal, a billion dollars drops into the Society of St. Leopold's hospital network. In its spare time, it greenlights DARPA projects with anti-paranormal promise and launches XScopes on

### THE HEARTBEAT ALGORITHM

The IAO grew out of a desire to more effectively share and filter collected intelligence across the entirety of the U.S. intelligence community. Part of the reason behind why a small organization hidden on the back pages of an Intelligence Community flow chart has gained so much power lies in an algorithm known by the codename Heartbeat. Heartbeat was at first only a piece of the IAO strategy that collected data streams from various agencies such as the CIA, DIA, and NSA. That a great deal of that data was initially obtained illegally also meant that Heartbeat was only accessible to a select few. Now Heartbeat sifts through the never-ending waterfall of ECHELON's real time global data streams looking for evidence of vampiric and other supernatural activity.

GPS trackers, photo sharing sites, WiFi doorbell cameras, police stingray collections, fitness app biometric data, smartphone cameras and facial recognition software are all Heartbeat's unwitting accomplices in a never ending hunt for blankbodies. Just as the U.S. government can identify a practicing Muslim or a lapsed Catholic by collecting enough of their private metadata, Heartbeat finds the commonalities in a blankbody's digital footprint. Long hours of daylight inactivity. Relatively no participation with supermarkets, pharmacies or other businesses that sustain life. Frequent visitation to high risk or low information environments with above average missing persons or assault statistics, and so on.

FIRSTLIGHT has repeatedly attempted to take over control of Heartbeat from the IAO, but just as FIRSTLIGHT wants its own covert strike force, the IAO wants its own intelligence gathering system. Generally, the two agree to share raw Heartbeat product, but it's not entirely unknown for certain profiles to build up in Pearl Harbor well before they show up on monitors in Langley and Fort Meade. With foreign actors, the IAO proves even stingier with Heartbeat intel. JTRG's pipeline into GCHQ allows them to offer some degree of parity, and the Society of St. Leopold can usually get what it wants in exchange for a few relics in a Philippine cathedral. However, recent political tensions make the IAO reluctant to share anything beyond the most urgent intelligence with their Russian partners. While the IAO claims they need to prevent supernatural entities gaining access to Heartbeat feeds from third parties, most within the Coalition suspect it has more to do with how the data is collected. Sharing too much could allow their partners to reverse engineer the exploits and backdoors used by the U.S. intelligence community to gather this information in the first place.

Vampires fight the battle against Heartbeat every second of their unlife. Every hurried phone call or uncovered ATM camera photo creates a potential data point for Heartbeat to exploit. Most Camarilla domains have taken to withdrawing from technology almost completely and reverting to Cold War methods of covert communication with messengers leaving notes in dead drops and encoded in lost Napoleonic cyphers. Anarchs and other vampires use more direct countermeasures. Destroying street cameras, using burner phones, disguising their features, and targeting local law enforcement for revenge attacks. But in the end Heartbeat always wins, building an identifying pattern out of countermeasures and acts of defiance alike. In a perverse self-fulfilling prophecy, only toppling or dominating the IAO itself would put an end to the world's foremost digital vampire hunter.

spy satellites. The IAO classifies everything, and disguises what it can't classify as "training missions" or "counter-terrorist strikes."

Its director, Admiral Roberto Farrier, runs the IAO from Pearl Harbor using primarily Navy and Marine forces inside Pacific Command, but maintains a wide network of contacts in the Army and in other geographic commands who carry out off-book operations when they can. When they can't, Farrier calls on a company or two of deniable mercenaries or on foreign military commanders who want the U.S. Navy to owe them a favor.

While FIRSTLIGHT serves as the main representative of the U.S. at Coalition planning sessions, IAO retains an outsized influence on how blankbodies are countered and pursued globally. This influence partly stems from its record of burned havens and terminated leeches, but mostly from money. Master manipulators of the US government's undisclosed black budget, the IAO can channel billions of dollars direct cash payments or loan guarantees into the coffers of any organization that plays ball with the Coalition – and plays by IAO rules.

### Pressure Points

U.S. military doctrine, and the IAO doctrine that descends from it, treats overwhelming force and full-spectrum dominance as the keys to victory. Thus, the IAO tends to solve problems under the cover of military (or militarized law enforcement) operations. The massive footprint of the American empire engaged in a never-ending global war against terrorism and drugs allows them to do this with relative ease. This also means that IAO uses the full force of the U.S. military when unconstrained by a potential public relations blowback, or if they're desperate to protect the Coalition's own masquerade. Hellfire-armed Reaper drones, submarine-launched cruise missiles, SOCOM strike forces, and other weapons rain death on blankbodies wherever they gather in secret. Vienna and one or two similar operations aside, IAO hasn't pulled up the even heavier weapons in their arsenal. Yet.

Keeping their methods of data collection and their personnel connections secret and secure remain IAO's top rear-area priorities, as data and commanders willing to use it provide their institutional and bureaucratic power. No mission or target is worth jeopardizing Heartbeat, for example, even if it means endangering the lives of their allies and partners. The IAO often uses its role as the Coalition's piggy bank to encourage compliance when its partners and allies seem not to be taking IAO concerns seriously.

### IAO-Tasked SEAL

The IAO uses elite special operators from every branch of the U.S. military, as many as it can get given other national command priorities. But it especially relies on a classified, formally unnamed squadron of 100 Navy SEALs hidden in other units' rear-area personnel records, commanded by Lt. Cmdr. John Adams Neguin. The official combat strength of DEVGRU hovers around 1,300 – the extra hundred SEALs under Neguin call themselves the "Fourteenth Century," recognizing the medieval nature of their mission. Although capable of staging from any American or allied military base or airfield around the world within ten hours of an alert, "C14" trains and prepares at sunny Naval Base San Diego.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 8, Social 4, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics (swim) 8, Melee (stake) 8, Stealth 8
**Equipment:** Assault rifle (Heckler & Koch HK416), pistol (SIG Sauer P226), ENVG night vision, XScope 3/SM, thermobaric rifle grenades; literally anything else within the power of the U.S. military to provide
**Special:** In addition to standard special forces training in resistance to interrogation, C14 operators receive psychological conditioning to specifically resist blankbody mind control. They never count as "unprepared" for the purposes of Dominate or Presence. They add 2 dice to their Resolve when using it to resist a vampiric Discipline.

## FBI Special Affairs Division

Supposedly created in secret by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover to battle the Giovanni mobs and then to counter emerging occult powers within leftist youth movements, the FBI's Special Affairs Division (SAD) quickly fell out of favor after Hoover's death. In those early days SAD formed close ties to the Society of Leopold and other Vatican-backed hunters. Their orange-colored paperbound reports detailing the threats of communist vampire councils and counterculture shapeshifters no longer made their way to the West Wing. Despite their pedigree SAD's successes were few and being assigned there was often seen as the end of a career, not to mention their suspiciously high rate of death on the job.

Everything changed after IAO and FIRSTLIGHT began looking for willing conspirators within the U.S. counterintelligence and law enforcement community. While still considered pariahs within the Bureau itself, SAD now has powerful friends looking out for it at the highest levels of the U.S. government and relishes its role as the lead investigators of the Coalition, even loaning out special agents to foreign services in need of their expertise. SAD uses modern psychological profiling and crime scene forensics to identify, apprehend, and neutralize blank bodies. Unlike many other components of the Coalition, SAD has hunted monsters for decades and vampires are their specialty. When SAD confronts a supernatural threat they meticulously research their targets and comb through decades of case files and accumulated evidence for countermeasures. They prefer elegant and discreet solutions that leverage a monster's weaknesses to their advantage and leave the messy stuff to IAO.

### Pressure Points

As the only organization within the USG that has been actively aware and interacting with the supernatural world for decades, SAD has a deep analog archive of case files, incident reports and a vault of confiscated occult contraband. While SAD agents seem to take an unnatural glee in digging through their non-digital library of the bizarre, their vault on the other hand is strictly off limits except for members of SAD's executive team. Outside of the Vatican, the SAD vault is arguably the largest cache of mystical artifacts in the Coalition's possession and their reluctance to make its contents available to FIRSTLIGHT and others has caused tension with its American partner agencies. Both the IAO and FIRSTLIGHT suspect that SAD is hiding more than just artifacts within their vault and that their back channel ties to the Vatican may run deeper than anyone had thought. SAD's ability to supplement their budget with seized blankbody assets also allows them a degree of bureaucratic independence from IAO purse strings.

### SAD Special Agent

SAD special agents are the frontline inquisitors inside the United States. Through a mix of police science and applied folklore, they have developed a few reliable and discreet interrogative techniques to identify blankbodies.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Firearms 7, Insight 7, Investigation 7, Occult (Vampires) 6
**Equipment:** Pistol (Glock 19M), baton, FBI badge, handcuffs, police-style sedan
**Special:** SAD Special Agents are well versed in vampire lore and any attempt to pass as mortal when questioned by them has its Difficulty increased by +2. Vampires with the Cleaver Predator Type do not suffer from this drawback when they are in their Haven or among their Herd.



## ALPHABET INQUISITIONS

While FIRSTLIGHT is a conspiracy within a conspiracy, not every vampire hunter in the US government (USG) knows it exists or operates under its control. As the Camarilla hunkers down, their precious Masquerade has all but collapsed in some parts of the United States. This has created a scattered awakening to the truth about vampires within various departments of the USG. Disorganized, unsure and poorly informed, these vampire hunters can not bring the same kind of trouble to bear against a coterie but they are often more in tune with their local community and dealing with them too harshly could attract the attention of "real" hunters.

### ICE

Heavily militarized and able to freely operate on both sides of the US border, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is an organization deeply penetrated by FIRSTLIGHT conspirators because of its focus on transnational crimes, but ICE has grown so large that even FIRSTLIGHT is unaware that they're not the only ones using ICE resources to hunt for vampires. As the agency responsible for rounding up and deporting undocumented immigrants, ICE agents are experts at breaching homes and holding large numbers of prisoners. Their mandate also grants them the extraordinary power to interrogate and detain anyone within 100 miles of a US border: roughly 75% of the population of the USA. Independent vampire hunters in ICE find easy access to heavy weapons and an institutional culture that places a premium on following orders. Vampires that run afoul of hunters within ICE enjoy the classic paramilitary experience, complete with assault rifles, battering rams, flexi-cuffs and tear gas canisters.

### DEA

Another agency penetrated by FIRSTLIGHT loyalists, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is a strange mixture within the USG, combining both paramilitary and intelligence gathering expertise. While similar to ICE in that its mandate concerns illegal material crossing over the US border, the DEAs singular focus on illegal drugs has also allowed it to expand its operations into over sixty foreign countries where narcotics and other illegal drugs are either produced or trafficked. Unlike ICE, the DEA has a corporate culture more focused on criminal investigation as opposed to kinetic operations and corrections. While DEA agents have access to small arms, they often work with allied militaries when abroad and local police within the US. Hunters operating out of the DEA would have access to very high end surveillance equipment including wire taps, directional microphones, tracking microdots and stingrays capable of intercepting cellular calls and texts. Particularly motivated DEA hunters could even use their knowledge of local criminal organizations or cartels to frame the vampires as potential rivals and targets.

### CDC

While it would seem that an organization concerned with biohazards and contagious threats would have more than its fair share of vampire hunters, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) is a relatively small and underfunded agency that sits outside the USG's military-intelligence complex. The few independent vampire hunters that do operate out of the CDC have formed a secret working group of researchers known as ECLIPSE. They are primarily concerned with how vampirism spreads and in the development of a vaccine that would immunize humans against the embrace and stop blankbodies from reproducing altogether. ECLIPSE researchers are constantly in need of blankbody blood and tissue samples and readily trade narcotics and other restricted substances to obtain them. It's rumored that at least one cell of freed ghouls and amateur hunters makes a living supplying ECLIPSE with the parts they need.

### COG AND THE DEEP STATE

He calls himself Cog and he claims to be a whistleblower working for the shadowy deep state that controls several world governments through blackmail, blood magic and an ancient pact with moon aliens. While he offers no proof for any of these wild assertions, Cog lays out his manifesto in a series of cryptic and riddle filled essays that are still widely shared all over the dark web. Originally posted under the name incognito as a series of screenshots on a Youtube channel dedicated to UFO Robot Grendizer, Cog laid the blame for multiple terrorist attacks in Europe and Asia on face stealing vampires working for the deep state. Of the many conspiracy theories that have gained traction in the popular mind, Cog's in particular has drawn a cult like following from a wide swath of Americans trying to explain their own government's seemingly inexplicable actions.

The cracks in the Masquerade have grown as vampires have become politically fractured and all but openly hunted. While many world governments involved in the Coalition do their best to cover what traces of the supernatural they can, the dark web has allowed rumors to spread to a populace ill-prepared to tell truth from fiction. Unable to square their reality with the story provided by the media, many turn to these conspiracy theories to answer their questions. Why are their city's crumbling while fleets of armed drones patrol the world's skies? Why are their politicians unable to fight for them but so quick to go to war overseas? Why won't anyone just tell them what the hell is going on?

Cog has filled that gap with a strange and disjointed story hidden in a virtual easter egg hunt spread across multiple websites and USB geocaches. While the first few pages of his manifesto were made public they were incomplete, but between the lines were clues to where the rest of his story could be found. Each time a new piece of the manifesto is unearthed, his followers spend days pouring over the text and any accompanying drawings in hopes of finding clues to the next puzzle. According to Cog a great spiritual war is already being fought in the shadows and the dark corners of the Earth. All people, but Americans in particular, have a holy obligation to arm themselves in this conflict against these infernal forces.

In his later posts Cog even details the various strengths and weaknesses of several vampire families, as well as a method for interstellar communication through mirrors. The vampires and moon aliens aside, the ultimate mystery his followers hope to discover is Cog's identity. Since Cog uses the terms "flavor country" and "my delicious American brothers" so often in his manifesto, many believe he's the host of a discontinued cooking reality show turned CIA agent or possibly one of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Others suspect the culinary turns of phrases may actually hint at why the vampires have aligned themselves with the shadow government.

# United Kingdom

While the organizations that make up the UK branch of the Coalition have limited say in how the global conspiracy is run, their notable successes in London are seen as a test case for how other major urban areas can be purged of blankbodies. The Joint Threat Response Group (JTRG) and their sponsors in FIRSTLIGHT are eager to lay the groundwork necessary for a London style accounting and elimination of blankbodies in the EU, but the UK's Brexit withdrawal from the European community has deeply complicated that effort. Ironically this has postponed an argument that may threaten to split the conspiracy in the future, as few Coalition members outside of the US and the UK want SO13 "Headhunter Squads" in their major cities.

## JTRG

The Joint Threat Response Group answers directly to the United Kingdom working group responsible for directing vampire-hunting activity within the UK. JTRG is a small signals intelligence outfit that supports all Coalition activity in Europe. As the eyes and ears of the European branch of the conspiracy they use biometrics, facial recognition and XScope technology to track blankbodies and mark them for execution. This hit list is known as Chalkboard and is updated and shared in real time with all of the Five Torches. Though names are regularly crossed off, Chalkboard usually has about 300 targets at any one time and boasts a false positive rate of less than 8%. In London they maintain a massive surveillance program of cameras and XScope body scanners that allows them to guide SO13 directly to targets as they're acquired. JTRG is closely aligned with FIRSTLIGHT and the IAO, and as part of the ECHELON global surveillance program they are major contributors to Heartbeat though they have no direct access to the algorithm's output. While not capable of online data mining at the same level as the IAO, FIRSTLIGHT or even the Russian GRU-N58, the JTRG is second to none in video and audio surveillance despite its relatively small size.

### Pressure Points

The complete eradication of all vampires within London was made possible by JTRG breathtaking use of the city's intrusive surveillance and security system. Unburdened by concerns of privacy, constitutionality or public backlash, they provided the intelligence that allowed the Headhunters of SO13 to butcher blankbodies to extinction in the UK's capital city. Achieving blankbody zero ("BBZed") was a victory beyond the Coalition's best forecasts. Now JTRG's masters within the UK insist that a similar program of blanket surveillance be implemented in the European Union and the Americans are even willing to pay for it. So far Brexit and the thought of British eyes secretly ogling all of the citizens of the EU has provoked enough resistance to keep that plan off the Coalition agenda.

More troubling is the state of JTRG's BBZed program in London. They have become a victim of their own success as any increase in the blankbody population would deeply tarnish their limited clout in the Coalition and threaten the IAO funding they desperately need to survive. Everytime a blankbody nest is discovered in or near London, JTRG scrambles headhunters to erase the vampires before their presence is noticed outside of the UK. It also means that when systems failures occur in the sewers of London, JTRG often leaves the cameras dark for weeks in hopes of maintaining the illusion of BBzed.

### JTRG Technician

The JTRG Technician is responsible for supporting a UTR team that may have to disable or circumvent security measures present at a blankbody nest. Additionally they can crack encrypted data and use real time access to local video and XScope surveillance to help track a target.

**General Difficulty:** 3/1
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 4, Willpower 6
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 8, Technology 8

**Equipment:** Laptop, Spot tablet controller, Spot Robot Dog hangman variant (p. 78)
**Special:** Any vampire attempting to evade an operation with Streetwise or Stealth must win a Contested roll against the JTRG Technician's Technology Die Pool (8).

## SO13

Despite being less than a decade old, SO13 has more confirmed blankbody eliminations than any other organization inside the Coalition save the Society of Leopold. The commingled ashes of London's once powerful vampire court now rest in a dented tin urn, forgotten in the bottom drawer of a desk at SO13's headquarters. Originally the brainchild of the shadowy Newburgh Group that also directs the JTRG, SO13 recruited a core cadre of hardened police and military veterans personally victimized by blankbodies. Even Ishaq Khan, SO13's head of operations, is rumored to have lost all of his immediate family to a pack of blankbodies when he was a young child. The rugged former police captain prefers to lead from the frontlines and has repaid this debt a hundred fold.

While the Vatican's Entity admires their zeal, the rest of the Coalition recognizes SO13 as the most vocal element of the conspiracies' eradicator faction. To SO13's headhunters blankbodies are an undifferentiated and monstrous mass that corrupts humans by proximity. If they had their way the Coalition would expand its mandate to capture or kill ghouled blood slaves, so called thin-bloods, and even members of a vampire's herd. Their adoption of decapitation as a terror tactic, coupled with their ubiquitous use of face masks, has made it difficult for the leadership of the Coalition to sign off on expanding SO13's methods into the rest of Europe.

### Pressure Points

While technically not a major voice in the Coalition, SO13's great success in London means that its eradication policy is pointed to as a possible model for the conspiracy as a whole. While many in SO13 would love to see their methods enacted globally, their personal loyalty to Ishaq Khan and distrust of "softer" conspirators within the EU make them reluctant to share the details of their operations. Of particular concern to SO13 is the use of ghouls and thin-bloods by FIRSTLIGHT and the Russian GRU. Headhunter squads usually destroy these larval blankbodies when they are encountered to prevent them from metastasizing into more po-

### THE ARCANUM

**The Arcanum have kept their involvement in the Second Inquisition strictly secret and have only established direct channels in the UK with the Newburgh Group and SO13's commander Khan. Occult scholars and dilettantes with a long history of studying and battling against the supernatural, several prominent members of the English elite are counted among the Arcanum's secret membership. Their influence is partially responsible for the formation of the JTRG and they provide what mystical support they can to SO13's headhunter squads. While not as rich in occult artifacts as the Vatican or even the FBI's SAD, the Arcanists represent arguably the most organized force of practical sorcerers in Europe. Their expertise was vital in locating and defeating the magical defenses of the Vienna nest and the subsequent scouring of the ruins for valuables. While Arcanum libraries did profit from that attack, the Vatican soldiers on the ground claimed most of the mystical spoils.**

**On an operational level Arcanists provide support through briefings on esoteric threats and occasionally by using ritual magic to shape the battlefields. This support is done covertly and by request only, so as to hide their involvement from soldiers who might be captured or enslaved by blankbodies. While they won't admit this to their allies, the Arcanum's magical powers are very limited in comparison to the capabilities of blankbodies. The exact nature of their magic is unknown, but for the most part they've demonstrated an ability to divine mystically hidden locations and undo magical wards.**

tent threats in the future. While SO13 loans what manpower they can to operations outside the UK, Headhunters would likely revolt if forced to work alongside a vampire or former ghoul.

### SO13 "Headhunter"

The masked soldiers that "cleaned" London in one day. SO13 operatives assume that any blankbody is a potential daywalker and they never capture targets unless directly and specifically ordered to do so. While on a mission they use incendiary ammunition and thermite grenades, but operationally confirm hits by collecting the heads of vampires and ghouls they've destroyed. Their penchant for displaying these heads earned them their grisly nickname.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 3, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 8, Firearms 8, Melee (kukri) 8, Stealth 8
**Equipment:** Submachine gun (Heckler & Koch MP5), AN thermite grenade, body armor, kukri with high-carbon steel blade (+4 damage), MRAP
**Special:** Headhunters train to decapitate vampires in close combat. If a Headhunter scores a margin of five or more successes on a Melee hit with a bladed beheading weapon (axe, katana, kukri, Nightwatchman) on a vampire, the vampire is beheaded.

Headhunters usually only operate during the daylight hours and use masks and codenames to keep their identities secret when on the hunt. Any attempt to ascertain a Headhunter's identity with Backgrounds such as Contacts or Allies has its Difficulty increased by +2.



# Russia

While the Russian military has been ruthlessly destroying vampires within their own territory for over three decades, their role within the Coalition is often to temper operational overreach. The Russians are wary of any push from the US/UK axis of the Coalition to create a global rapid response force with a joint command. They know that any such force would quickly become the puppet of FIRSTLIGHT and would likely neglect threats that primarily endangered Russian interests. Moreover, the Russians know better than most that vampires are masters at corrupting institutional power to their own purposes. As long as the Coalition maintains distinct command and control centers it makes it harder for the conspiracy to be turned against itself or subverted. This is particularly true in cases where Coalition resources are employed in active war zones where it's often unclear if they're truly being used to target vampires. So far the Vatican has supported this position.

## GRU Eighth Direction

GRU-N58 (Napravleniye 58, the Eighth Direction of the Fifth Directorate) traces its origins to a secret military intelligence unit formed within the Soviet Red Army to root out vampire influence in their own military. Their successes eventually led to the discovery and destruction of a ring of vampires that had infiltrated critical sectors of the socialist republic. While the details remain a state secret, N58 considers itself the most successful vampire hunting organization within the Second Inquisition and only acknowledges the Vatican's ESOG group as operating at the same level of effectiveness. This often leads to operational differences when action has to be taken near Russian zones of influence as the GRU refuses to risk its assets unless it is given full access to FIRSTLIGHT raw intelligence. This can lead to further delays as GRU signals intelligence analysts pick over the little the Americans are usually willing to share.

On the ground, N58 prefers to use surgical violence. The overwhelming force doctrine exemplified by FIRSTLIGHT and the UK's SO13 is seen as counterproductive to the Russians who see themselves as professionals who are always keeping an eye on the long game. Small N58 UTR squads of well-coordinated (and fully briefed) Spetsnaz troopers destroy or capture their targets, then often plant captured paraphernalia from a rival blankbody faction. (To preserve plausibility, N58 often strikes just before dawn.) False flag operations are a specialty of the GRU, and N58 have even been known to disguise themselves as local paramilitary or foreign troops when on mission.

### Pressure Points

Behind their detached corporate culture the Eighth Direction is dedicated to keeping Russia free from vampiric control. They know that despite disinformation produced by Polish reactionaries claiming that the USSR was a blankbody puppet state, the GRU rooted out the few vampires influencing the Politburo by activating rival supernatural factions. Then psyops and applied firepower dissuaded other blankbodies from taking their place.

To the Russians the rest of the world has simply woken up to a threat that N58 and the Vatican had been fighting alone for years. While they believe that the Coalition serves their short-term interests, N58 also sees FIRSTLIGHT's information dominance as a potentially bigger threat to Russia than the vampires in the long term. In coordination with the Akritai, the N58 has begun to leak information to the Vatican and a few other partners in hopes of undermining their confidence in the US/UK lobe of the Coalition, most notably an extended XScope video of drone strikes carried out under FIRSTLIGHT operational direction that actually targeted mortal insurgents in Colombia. N58 has also penetrated the UK's JTRG Chalkboard program and have come to the chilling conclusion that it is a political hit list with very few vampires on it.

### GRU-N58 Psyops Specialist

The Psyops Specialist is usually attached to tactical squads for the purpose of covering their tracks and planting evidence that another group was responsible for their actions. While this often means fingering another nation for their activities, sometimes opportunities arise to pit blankbody factions against each other. The Akritai and GRU have a collection of heretical vampire texts that they modify with false prophecies and misleading clues that hopefully cause conflict.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 6, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Larceny 8, Firearms 7, Occult (Vampires) 6, Stealth 8, Subterfuge (Disinformation) 7
**Equipment:** Assault rifle (AK-74M), knife, torn SOCOM patch, KA-58 "Black Ghost" Stealth helicopter gunship
**Artifacts:** Book of Nod fragments (forged)

## Unit 242 Special Purposes

Unit 242 is a black budget paramilitary organization that answers directly to the top echelons of Russian military intelligence. Although initially tasked with acquiring and cataloguing occult tomes and objects acquired from neutralized blankbodies, U242's remit as a tactical force has grown as Russia's active involvement in the Coalition overseas increased. U242 specifically targets the leadership of blankbody communities and draws its recruits mostly from foreign paramilitary forces already penetrated by GRU's Spetsnaz special operations. This gives U242 some deniability when their operators are caught or killed, as Russia can easily disavow them as foreign terrorists. This methodology has also allowed them to augment their forces with vampires and other supernaturals. Particularly promising soldiers are taken to U242's Black Sea training compound and those that survive the classified ZMEI protocol find themselves imbued with many of the capabilities of a vampire but with only

a few of their weaknesses. Over time many begin to develop blankbody familial characteristics and drawbacks, but they seldom survive long enough for that to be a problem.

### Pressure Points

One of the strengths of ZMEI protocol wet workers is their ability to operate in hostile controlled areas with little to no support. They live off the land quite literally and feed on their mortal and vampire victims alike. This has had the unintended consequence of turning this group of vampire hunters into a powerful diablerie ring. Some have even been out in the wilderness for so long that they've adopted bits of the Sabbat's Gehenna War ideology. For these few their cannibalism has become an almost ritualistic need to empower themselves against unseen blood gods.

### ZMEI Protocol Thin-Blood Commando

While distrusted by other hunters, the GRU has found great success by employing thin-bloods as shock troops. Those who can operate in sunlight are given special training in wet work and are set loose on blankbody nests to disrupt any command and control they may have in place before conventional forces move in to destroy them in detail. While the Commando prefers to eat their victims, they are not above termination at distance if their target is very secure.

**General Difficulty:** 5/3
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 4, Mental 7
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 10, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 9, Brawl 9, Firearms 9, Melee 9, Stealth 9
**Equipment:** Sniper rifle (Heckler & Koch PSG1 7.62mm), garrote, knife
**Disciplines:** Fortitude 1 or one dot in any other Discipline
**Special:** The Commando is a Daywalker and can function in sunlight without taking damage, though they must still feed on blood regularly. The Commando's rifle is usually loaded with incendiary ammo.

### THE AKRITAI

**Aligned with the Orthodox Church, Akritai witch hunters have an old pedigree dating back to at least the Byzantine empire. While they have a similar reputation to the Vatican's Society of St. Leopold, the Akritai tend to prefer modern weaponry and rarely call upon occult powers. Russian intelligence penetrated the heart of the order in eastern Europe after WWII, purging the most stubborn during Communist rule. Most of the remaining non-Russian, independent Akritai died during a confrontation with an immensely old vampire in the Czech Republic in 2011.**

**Although it continues to present itself as an independent organization of witch hunters, it now operates essentially as an extension of the Russian security state and of GRU-N58. Many of the order's foot soldiers remain unaware of this subversion and N58 uses the Akritai to gain access to Coalition member nations that might be more wary of their direct involvement in an operation. The Akritai's reputation proves especially useful for the GRU's espionage within the Vatican itself, as the church is convinced that the witch hunters possess several relics from Constantinople. While Unit 242 covertly confiscated all of the Akritai's artifacts over a decade ago, the negotiations with the Vatican are allowed to continue in case an opportunity to turn a high-ranking church official into a spy presents itself.**

**Most of the Akrtai's esoteric training has been lost to time and purges; the order now places a greater emphasis on standard combat drills. The GRU keeps the few sorcerers that still practice within the order under heavy surveillance and only allows them to travel outside Russian territory if the operational and political rewards are very high. (Some Akritai sorcerers have been allowed into Georgia and Syria to excavate powerful artifacts under cover of the wars in those nations.) While the ruse of using the Akritai as a cut out is dangerous and complex, it has paid dividends in the past. At least one plot to destabilize a critical oil refinery was rolled up when Akritai priests were approached for support by supernatural terrorists who believed they had some ancient alliance in place.**

# Brazil

Closely aligned with the Vatican on an operational level, Brazilian forces have been hesitant to take a more active role in the Coalition outside of South America. The BOES has been quietly battling supernatural foes for decades without any support besides the occasional Leopoldite hunter. Within the Coalition they are seen as an extension of the Vatican branch of the conspiracy in the Americas and their lonely years holding the line against the blankbody threat are mostly discounted.

## BOES

The Brazilian Special Police Operations Battalions operate as geographically distinct organizations all over the country. BOES is a cross battalion command and training program that recruits dedicated squads within the SPOB for use as vampire hunters. While they do destroy vampire nests found in urban areas and favelas, BOES' main concern is protecting critical infrastructure such as government offices, military installations and oil refineries from blankbody influence. While BOES does suspect blankbodies may be common in the favelas they do not wish to ignite a war in the sprawling urban zones where their SPOB soldiers are often treated as an occupying force. When contact with vampires is suspected by informants in normal SPOB units, the call goes out to BOES rapid response teams that converge on the area by helicopter. Vehicle mounted XScopes and infrared are used to identify their targets, and the SPOB clear the area of non-combatants so that BOES has more flexibility in the type of ordinance they can use with limited civilian deaths. Their close ties to the Vatican also mean that BOES units often employ rare artifacts and other spiritual weaponry that are usually ESOG restricted access.

When hunting blankbodies BOES usually prefers to work in tandem with Vatican forces as backup but FBI's SAD has become a surprisingly dependable ally in Rio and Brazzaville. BOES tactical squads make liberal use of incendiary ammunition unless operating near a petrochemical facility or the mission calls for the capture of specific blankbody needed for questioning. BOES is fighting a holding action in South America and is depending on the Coalition to come up with a global solution to the vampire problem. Operationally BOES commanders are often willing to look the other way as long as blankbodies only operate in marginal and poor areas of society. This allows BOES to concentrate their forces on the protection of more politically critical areas.

### Pressure Points

BOES constantly has to make hard choices when confronting the vampire threat in Brazil. Though the military police that make up their foot soldiers are very well funded and have a veritable free hand to operate within major cities, the BOES fears vampire and criminal organizations still have a great deal of influence in SPOB despite their best efforts to vet their officers. Turf wars between different units of the SPOB have come dangerously close to breaking out into open violence and more than one SPOB commander has died under suspicious circumstances linked to organized criminal elements. How much of this corruption in the government and military is controlled by blankbodies is unknown, but it creates an atmosphere within BOES that swings between determined fatalism and paralyzed indecision. They pick and choose their battles carefully because they never know when an operation will expose the deep rivalries within the military and jeopardize their standing within the Coalition. BOES jealously guards its close ties to the Vatican and fears any scenario that would sever those connections or prompt FIRSTLIGHT to operate in Brazil without BOES sanction.

## Military Police Extraterritorial Operations (PMEX)

Formed at the request of the Vatican with IAO funding to handle blankbodies fleeing Coalition operations in South America, PMEX has grown into a cadre of special operators that specialize in quickly training up under-equipped local forces into serviceable vampire hunters. Legally restricted

from working inside Brazil, PMEX depends on Vatican command and control to direct its operations, which have expanded to include any operational area that has seen a sharp rise in blankbody activity without a local Second Inquisition response. While it avoids active combat zones and countries deemed within the sphere of influence of the US or Russia, PMEX now operates worldwide and targets border areas and other international seam zones.

Their Liaison Officers teach traditional methods of vampire hunting to militias and insurgents that often have lost family and friends to blankbodies terrorizing their communities. PMEX's "Machete Men" train them in the basics of staking and decapitation, and the construction of anti-vampire countermeasures to secure their forward positions at night. These countermeasures often consist of incendiary landmines or pitfalls filled with spools of razorwire. Unlike most of the modern Second Inquisition, PMEX often finds itself at a tactical disadvantage when facing hostile blankbodies and their success depends on the clever use of native forces and exploiting the mystical and psychological weaknesses of their foes.

### Pressure Points

PMEX operators are not indifferent or ignorant to the nature of the forces that they train and advise. Terrorists, insurgents, militias, war criminals, human traffickers and child soldiers are all fair students to the "Machete Men" if they mean to hunt vampires. While this has caused friction with both FIRSTLIGHT and the GRU, so far their funding and support has never been interrupted. PMEX refuses to be drawn into political or moral arguments about which groups they train, and the Vatican sees their notable preference for training so-called Christian militias a positive feature. In PMEX's estimation they are simply making the best of a bad situation and using the soldiers available to them in those places abandoned by the rest of the world. It's not their job to end human suffering or keep the peace. They destroy vampires.

### PMEX Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer is seconded to foreign police or military forces who do not have the capabilities to handle the vampire threat. The Liaison Officer is not discreet about his skills or what he is hunting, but trusts that Pai Leo or some other part of the Coalition will clean up the mess after the job is done.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 3
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 6
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Leadership 6, Occult (Vampires) 6, Streetwise 6, Survival 6
**Equipment:** Assault carbine (Taurus Tavor TAR-21 5.56mm), body armor, HE grenades, stake, Eurocopter AS532 Cougar support helicopter with XScope
**Artifact:** Dagger of Akkad, (See page 87)
**Special:** Mortal soldiers under the Liaison Officer's command benefit from their knowledge of vampires and the supernatural. Their soldiers can use the Liaison Officer's Occult skill as their own when necessary.

## The Vatican

As far as they're concerned the Vatican is the heart of the Second Inquisition and the driving force behind many of the Coalition's most successful operations. While the Vatican's forces may not always have the most modern or sound grasp on battlefield tactics, their knowledge of the vampire threat is far beyond any other member of the conspiracy. Supposedly the coordinating group behind the Vatican's vampire hunting efforts has an archive containing over 800 years of research and detailed descriptions of the powers and motivations of vampire overlords that may still be walking the Earth. Not to mention a storehouse of mystical artifacts that they loan out to successful hunters as trophies and badges of honor.

### La Entità (The Entity)

The decision makers behind the Vatican's involvement in the Coalition, the exact composition of La Entità is a mystery to even the other conspirators.

La Entità is rumored to be directed by nine unknown men selected from the church's hierarchy. This arrangement shields the Holy See from direct involvement in the questionable business of exterminating the world's supernatural creatures. La Entità has access to vast resources, a globe spanning network of religious safehouses and a deep bench of dedicated vampire hunters. While they had long coordinated the work of the Society of St. Leopold and other inquisitorial efforts within the Vatican, La Entità's efforts had always been small in scale and conservative in scope. The vampires' so-called Masquerade had been so successful that even others in the Vatican had begun to doubt the good work of their forebears, despite the trove of evidence they had collected over the centuries. They nibbled at the edges of the problem and struck what blows they could in a shadow war with the damned they hoped that seemed both endless and unwinnable.

Before the Second Inquisition the excesses and failures of the first Inquisition also weighed heavily on the leaders of the La Entità and stayed their hand from taking more dramatic action against the vampire threat. They knew from their own records that their past efforts to destroy the vampires had been corrupted by political and ecumenical infighting. The great work became an orgy of destruction that brutalized women and religious minorities. This stain ultimately undermined their authority and allowed the vampires to escape the fires of judgement while the innocent burned by the thousands. In the dark centuries between the two Inquisitions, La Entità bided its time and nursed the shame of their sinful forebears. Few believed there would be a next time, but if the opportunity came to them again, things would be different.

While the leaders of La Entità reject the criticism that the original Inquisition had more to do with terrorizing political opponents than hunting vampires, they accept that mistakes were made and that this time the Second Inquisition wouldn't be drawn into internecine conflicts. Now that they stand at the heart of a global enterprise of unprecedented power, they see their role as a compass always urging their partners towards their ultimate goal. They know the temptation to abuse the power of the Sec-



ond Inquisition for personal gain because it is the trap that defeated their predecessors. La Entita bears that burden and for the last millennium monsters have feasted on humanity and in gilded halls these men whispered mea culpa. This time the flames will find the last vampire.

Although their ESOG soldiers may be risk takers, La Entità is a voice of cold caution in operational planning. They see their work as a generational task and know that if the conspiracy is exposed it could give the vampires the time they need to regroup and counterattack. The Entity rarely commits its forces into mixed operations, preferring to offer single advisors on individual missions. It has made exceptions for the Brazilians given their close ties, but prefers to have full tactical control of an operation. For this reason, La Entità created ESOG, to provide command structures even in situations that require them to ally with other national units.

### Pressure Points

La Entità thinks of itself as the heart of the Second Inquisition in more ways than one. In their eyes everyone else in the Coalition is expendable in service to the goal. But the heart must keep beating. Just as they survived the collapse of the first Inquisition and the long years the vampires toyed with the earth and degraded belief in the divine, so too would La Entità survive a collapse of this Second Inquisition... and bide its time in preparation for a third. Much like the vampires they fight, the Entity understands the march of time not in years or decades, but in centuries.

To this end La Entita is always reluctant to commit the heart of its forces to any operation, much preferring its Russian or American partners to take the brunt of any mission. Part of the reason behind the creation of the hybrid Gladius Dei/ESOG cadres were to increase the presence of Vatican forces in Second inquisition operations without directly risking the units most loyal to La Entita itself. While the Gladius Dei are for the most part expendable, the ESOG are too important to be put under the command of anyone else. It sees ESOG as the key to its survival if the Second Inquisition collapses or is publicly exposed. These teams of trained slayers are its modern praetorians.

### La Entità Attaché

Operating under cover of a Holy See diplomatic mission, this "cultural attaché" serves the cause of the Entity by keeping watch for vampiric influence in diplomatic, academic, and artistic circles, and providing liaison services to other operatives of the Coalition. If he gets an opportunity to do a bit of discreet research in a local occult archive, or even borrow a text clearly left grossly unprotected, he does so.

**General Difficulty:** 3/1
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 7, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 9
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Insight 8, Larceny 5, Occult (Vampires) 7, Politics 7, Subterfuge 8
**Equipment:** Bible, one-time pad, crucifix
**Special:** The Attaché has decades of experience piercing vampiric lies. Oblivion and Obfuscate powers have their Difficulty increased by +2 when used in their presence. Additionally, they can attempt to pierce Obfuscate using Insight (8) with a Difficulty equal to the level of the power used.

## Society of St. Leopold

Founded by Leopold of Murnau and Pope Gregory IX during the first Inquisition, the newly re-canonized Society of St. Leopold spent the previous century as a disparate group of independent monster hunters. In the past their operatives pursued their targets with little to no official support in case they were apprehended by mortal authorities or turned by a powerful bloodsucker. While these lone wolf hunters still exist and pursue their personal vendettas, they are no longer the norm. With the rise of the Second Inquisition, the Society and its many suborders have formed closer bonds to La Entità. They still insist on operating as freelancers even when acting on Coalition intelligence or as Coalition UTR team advisors, but their own teams have adopted modern squad tactics.

Although each suborder has its own tactical doctrines as a whole the Society prefers to operate in small six man fire teams armed mostly with small arms and melee weapons. Unless they are working with local forces these fire teams are usually lightly armored and discretely dressed with concealed weaponry so that they can approach their targets without being detected. Society hunters are lightly equipped but sometimes armed with powerful Artifacts, and even Sorcerers have been known to labor alongside them as official anathemas loosen.

### Leopoldite Suborders

Many suborders exist within the society and while all see vampires as an existential and spiritual threat to humankind, they have developed many different philosophies and methods over the centuries. (Some suborders focus their attention on other supernatural beings, and thus don't usually play a major role in the Second Inquisition's efforts.) They can be found anywhere the Second Inquisition operates, as the Society expands its remit.

### Children of Lazarus

Founded shortly after the Revolution in Paris, this order of vampire-hunting fanatics allied itself with the conservative Opus Dei prelature in the 1930s. With the ascension of their ally Pope John Paul II, this maneuver paid off, and played a major role behind the scenes in the revival of the Inquisition under Ingrid Bauer. Considering vampires blasphemy incarnate, they revived the most brutal historical tactics for hunting them, and unlike most suborders, shared them widely. Their maverick hammer and tongs approach to hunting vampires makes them a poor choice for an ESOG team, but exceptionally effective lone wolves. Those that are recruited into ESOG are often given frontline roles as shock troopers. The largest suborder within the Society, they interoperate with Opus Dei chapterhouses in Europe and North America, but maintain their own safehouses and training grounds across Africa, India, the Philippines, and Latin America.

### Humble Brothers of San Rocco

Although they have many hunters among their number the Humble Brothers have a special mission to care for the poor and infirm, especially those who have been disabled by plague or mental illness. They have a special affinity for animals and are known to keep meticulous records concerning the genealogies of various vampire families from Europe and Asia Minor. They rarely practice Theurgy or other arts, and their quiet devotion makes them preferred recruits for ESOG. Based in Venice, the Humble Brothers are deeply involved in the city's restoration efforts and few know the city's canals and back alleys as well. Their streetwise cunning served them well during the last century when they were almost hunted to extinction by the vampires that controlled the city. The so-called "rats of Venice" earned their name by outsmarting their enemies and now it is the monsters who keep to the shadows.

### Sisters of St. Sebastian

A small order of emancipated nuns based in Addis Ababa, the Sisters of St. Sebastian were granted membership into the Society by a secret Papal Bull delivered to the Grand Master in the early 1990s. They are not the first sisterhood to be granted membership into the society, having an ambivalent relationship with the healing Sisterhood of St. Claire. The Sisters venerate the plague saints that guard humanity against the ravages of the Black Death and vampirism, a practice that came from the convent's original purpose as a sanctuary for lepers and catatonically insane.

Their members use rare gifts, experiencing painful prophetic visions that come at the cost of their health. Their most powerful practitioners are often scarred by pox and bear horrific weeping pustules. They rarely take part in ESOG teams because of the Vatican's overt preference for male candidates in these roles, but Sisters with particularly powerful divine gifts sometimes assist tactical teams on an individual basis. Those Sisters chosen for tactical service have an almost supernatural tolerance for pain and mental anguish.

### Order of San Carlo

One of the oldest suborders in the Society still extant, the Order of San Carlo is based in Seville and traces its origins to the Spanish Inquisition. Unconcerned with vampires, the founders of the Order of San Carlo bought their way into the halls of power with treasure stolen from prominent families that were accused of heresy and false conversion. While their past as torturers and thieves is not something the Order dwells on today, their dedication to the Second Inquisition is beyond question. They are one of the richest orders in the Society and maintain a covert training facility in the Spanish town of Constantina with the tacit agreement of reactionary elements in the Spanish military. The Order of San Carlo's pedigree, funding and well trained operatives make it a prime recruiting ground for ESOG and their hunters are often marked for command positions. While their hunters prefer to eliminate targets during daytime raids, when forced into battle they use incendiary devices to provoke vampires into frenzy and then put them down at range with high caliber rifles. Any corpses collected are usually staked and then burned unless a high value target is needed for questioning.

### Order of Sao Paulo

One of the larger new suborders in the Society, the Order of Sao Paulo is based in the Brazilian city of the same name. They recruit heavily from the local population and veterans of the BOES often find a second life serving as officers or advisers in this suborder. Their large size and well-established links to the Brazilian military make them common recruits



for ESOG tactical teams. Some of the most dangerous artifacts in the church's possession are entrusted to the Order of Sao Paulo because of their sober corporate culture and dedication to forging strong bonds between La Entità and the Brazilian military. On the ground the Order of Sao Paulo takes their role as modern day knights almost literally, preferring body armor, ballistic riot shields, and heavy bladed weapons in tactical situations.

### Friars of Tavelic

Sometimes called the Cult of the Friars, this small fraternal suborder is based in Zagreb but has chapters all over Eastern Europe. They are known for their obsessive veneration of martyrdom bordering on the suicidal. This has made them one of the most successful of the lone wolf chapters of the Society but completely unsuitable for recruitment into ESOG. The Friars are not reckless maniacs or mentally unstable zealots. In fact they exude the quiet dedication of men who have accepted that their fate is in the hands of the divine, to struggle against that is simply pride. When a Friar joins the order they take part in a ritual in which they are symbolically killed and resurrected before the bones of the order's first Grand Master. From that day on they are dead men in service to the cause of the spiritual emancipation of humankind. The Friars lack of fear is legendary and this can make them exceptionally deadly as hunters, willing to sacrifice everything in service to their faith. The Friars are also known to have close ties to the Russian Akritai and La Entità often relies on this suborder as backchannel to the Russians when communications break down between the Americans and the GRU.

### Pressure Points

The Society of Leopold is a sprawling organization with roots deep in the heart of the Vatican. It has never wavered in its mission to burn the filth of vampirism and the supernatural from every corner of creation. Sometimes its zeal has been exploited by those same forces or misdirected by human greed and cruelty, but the Society has survived these missteps and hopefully grown stronger and wiser. But in reality the deep wounds the Inquisition and its Church has inflicted upon humankind have not healed. As the Second Inquisition grows in power it perverts mortal governments in service of a hidden agenda much like the vampires themselves.

For instance, the Order of San Carlo happily trains a new generation of inquisitors while corrupting the upper echelons of the Spanish military with bribes and political favors. They plan for the day a government more suitable for an open war against the vampires and backed by the same military they are twisting to their purposes takes power. In Venice, fanatics among the "rats" plot to burn the city to ash after decades of being its most patient restorers.

### Lazarene Witch Hunter

The Witch Hunter is a dedicated soldier of the Society of St. Leopold from the Children of Lazarus. Armed with holy relics and trained against the forces of darkness the Witch Hunter is a frontline soldier that burns vampires out of tight urban spaces and into the open where they can be destroyed by the rest of their team.

**General Difficulty:** 4/3
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 6, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 9
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Insight 8, Intimidation 9, Occult (Vampires) 7
**Equipment:** Flamethrower (LPO-50 Soviet 3 shot), bible, cross, Nightwatchman shortsword
**Artifact:** Censer of Absolution, (See page 86)
**Special:** The Witch Hunter is resistant to powers of darkness. Oblivion and Obfuscate powers have their Difficulty increased by +2 when used in their presence. Additionally, they can attempt to pierce Obfuscate using Insight (8) with a Difficulty equal to the level of the power used.

## Gladius Dei/ESOG

Few things are as arcane as Vatican organizational charts and the Entity Special Operations Group (ESOG) represents an unintended outcome of the renewed power of the Entity. Long the strong arm



of the Society of Leopold, the warriors of Gladius Dei formed the cadre of the new special operations group when Ingrid Bauer negotiated her first deal with FIRSTLIGHT through the Entity. As a result, Gladius Dei serves the secret masters of La Entità while remaining subordinate to the Society of St. Leopold. Still more confusingly, as the Entity recruits ever more veterans into its ESOG teams, not all ESOG are Gladius Dei – and not all Gladius Dei joined ESOG. This is often a distinction without a difference on the ground as very few vampires are interested in checking the badges of the UTR squad hunting them through the sewers.

The Entity recruits further ESOG fighters from other military organizations as they near retirement. Its criteria include Catholic faith, expertise, and combat hunger. Despite being older than most of the soldiers of the Coalition, these zealots seek out the heart of the action, often taking on operations that confront vampires on their own turf. The Society often recruits younger, promising soldiers from Italy, Argentina, and other Catholic militaries as Gladius Dei members; the Entity funnels those with paranormal talents into ESOG Team X. This usually means that new Gladius Dei hunters are younger and less used to military discipline then the rest of their ESOG squad and bring the doctrinal quirks of their suborders with them. Both new and paramilitary, ESOG embraces these differences as tactical flexibility. Thus it's fairly common for a squad of black-clad ESOG troops armed with assault rifles to also contain hunters sporting riot shields and shortswords.

ESOG forces represent an attempt to bring the unique abilities of the Vatican's vampire hunters to the modern UTR squads that have become the backbone of the Coalition. As elite forces they carry the most advanced and experimental weaponry in the conspiracy's arsenal. And as the Vatican's elite forces, they deploy weapons nobody else in the Coalition has, such as the Red Gas. A typical Gladius Dei/ESOG squad wields submachine guns and ballistic riot shields, though many carry incendiary grenades and Nightwatchman shortswords specifically to deal with vampires. These hunters understand that bullets can slow or impair a vampire, but that final blows require fire or dismemberment.

Unlike many other Coalition soldiers, Gladius Dei/ESOG is usually called in when an active vampire threat has to be confronted during an active night cycle and often under suboptimal conditions — such as tracking a pack of creatures through an underground tunnel or assaulting a vampire stronghold. ESOG commonly acts in isolation, but teams up with BOES or IAO forces when the mission requires overwhelming force. These large operations are the only time Gladius Dei/ESOG squads operate without the Entity at the top of their chain of command.

### Pressure Points

Gladius Dei/ESOG forces are increasingly being deployed to active war zones where the involvement of vampires is not always clear cut. The Entity is increasingly concerned that their forces are being used to advance the political interests of the United States military, and not the long-term goals of the Second Inquisition. Their allies in the Akritai have fed this concern by leaking drone footage and other collected intelligence to the Vatican that confirms these suspicions. The Coalition has grown so large and powerful that the Entity is unsure how it could refocus the conspiracy on to the vampire threat if it truly drifted off target.

This increasingly leads the Entity to consider going public with the Second Inquisition as a last ditch effort to pressure the world governments to exterminate the vampires once and for all. Of course the public option is a particularly dangerous gambit from the Vatican's standpoint because the only thing they fear more than the collapse of the Second Inquisition is if the world powers decide to come to some kind of understanding or detente with the vampires. The Entity understands the nature of the vampire threat is one of spiritual evil, but they fear that some partners within the Coalition seem to think solutions other than extermination are possible.

### Gladius Dei/ESOG Recruit

A vampire hunter of the Society of St. Leopold recruited into the Gladius Dei to serve in an ESOG tactical squad. While used to operating independently and in small teams, the recruit feels at home as long as he's hunting vampires. He prefers to cut down monsters with his blade while his team deals with human blood slaves.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 3, Mental 4
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 8
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Melee 8 (Shortsword), Occult (Vampires) 6
**Equipment:** Shortsword, body armor, riot shield, incendiary grenade, pistol
**Artifact:** Ashes of St. Godard (See page 85)

### ESOG Team XIII Soldier

Recruited from a foreign military by a Vatican operative because of their military training and Catholic faith, the ESOG soldier is personally loyal to the secret masters of the Entity.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 5
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Firearms 7, Leadership 7, Melee 7
**Equipment:** Submachine gun (MP5), body armor, riot shield, incendiary grenade, knife, crucifix, MRAP
**Artifact:** Reliquary of Agios Nicholas, (See page 86)
**Special:** A seasoned veteran of the vampire hunt, the ESOG grognard can re-roll any failed test or contest to resist fleeing, surrendering, or yielding to vampiric influence.

# Partner Organizations

While only ten nations (or fewer) get a seat at the table when the Coalition plans their strategy, several countries make up the broader conspiracy and have tactical input when action happens with their borders or when using their assets. As with many second party partners in the Coalition these organizations have their own domestic agenda and national interests that will often take precedence over the broader needs of the conspiracy.

## Egypt: Homeland Special Program

A secretive part of Egypt's larger Homeland Security services, HSP infiltrates blankbody cults and support networks in North Africa and Europe to gather much needed human intelligence. As vampires have become more adept at avoiding signals intelligence collection over the past two decades, the need for human intelligence gathering has increased dramatically. Rather than sending in a trained operator undercover into these networks, HSP usually employs blackmail and threats to turn a vampire's human allies into assets. Financial debts, sexual orientation and imprisoned family members all become levers that the HSP uses to twist an otherwise loyal blankbody cultist into a spy.

While the HSP leaves the actual capture and rendition of suspected blankbodies to the IAO or FIRSTLIGHT, the HSP maintains a network of black sites where an unknown number of vampires from all over the world are kept for interrogation and study. These black sites are undisclosed locations not marked on any official map, but freely open to intelligence partners involved in the Coalition. While Egyptian security services have a long history of using torture on prisoners, the Coalition doesn't permit HSP to directly question foreign blankbodies kept at their black sites. Instead contractors or operatives from other member nations are brought in to conduct interviews and in some

cases torture the vampires kept there. Ironically HSP has limited operations in the rest of the Middle East outside of Egypt and occupied Gaza. In Gaza they use the same blackmail tactics in coordination with Israeli authorities to suppress Palestinian national aspirations.

## France: La Calcédoine

Closely aligned with FIRSTLIGHT and guided by the DGSE's Emeraude threat-identification system, La Calcédoine comprises a pragmatic group of specialists that are attached to regular military forces or gendarmes when blankbody activity is suspected. While on board with the broader agenda of the Coalition, La Calcédoine believes that vampires are part of a greater supernatural conspiracy they call la menace secréte. These French hunters often take action in tandem with their military forces in Africa and are known as expert interrogators. It's thus unsurprising that La Calcédoine prefers to capture blankbodies and squeeze them for confessions concerning their role in the secret threat. Currently they are the only second-party partner pushing for an open war, as their intelligence has led them to believe that a powerful vampire ancestor will soon arise and unite the undead against humankind.

### La Calcédoine Questionneur

La Calcédoine has a deep bench of interrogators that are specially trained to extract confessions from blankbodies and their human accomplices. Before the Coalition they plied their trade against insurgents in former colonies, but have been called back home to serve.

**General Difficulty:** 4/1
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 6, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Etiquette 8, Persuasion 8, Medicine 8, Intimidation 9
**Equipment:** Knife, cigarette case
**Special:** Questionneurs conduct their business in a prison or secure facility outfitted with specially designed implements of torture. While perfectly capable of extracting information without any special equipment, when they have access to all of their tools the Questionneur prevents their victims from regaining or healing any Willpower while under their power.

## Israel: Unit 8211

Although a very small group, Unit 8211 is valued for its ability to crack complex and proprietary information systems without the bureaucratic and legal hassles often encountered by the Five Torches. Outsourcing this kind of work to 8211 provides a shield of deniability to operators that might otherwise run afoul of copyright and espionage laws in their own countries. Usually this means dropping off a stolen smartphone or laptop with a Unit 8211 hacker and then returning the device before its absence is noticed. Blankbody daytime sleep cycles are both a boon and complication in these kinds of operations. A drawback of this joint work is that Unit 8211 may share any other information gathered off of these devices with Aman (Israeli military intelligence) or Mossad, and even with foreign services or non-state actors outside of the operation.

## Japan: Third Intelligence Department

The TID is mostly concerned with the influx of vampires into Japan's population centers as they are hunted and forced out of their shelters in other parts of Asia. They rely heavily on FIRSTLIGHT and IAO for both information and budgeting, but their operational security makes them reliable and discreet partners in any operation. TID has no official sanction in the Japanese intelligence bureaucracy and their lack of oversight often attracts zealous agents who see themselves as chosen for a special purpose. Their small size also means that they rely heavily on force multipliers such as drones and robots to make up for their lack of manpower. Despite their zeal, they do not take unnecessary risks with their personnel as they do not have a deep bench of recruits to replenish any losses. A typical TID deployment will be accompanied by multiple tactical drones for battlefield awareness and at least one robotic dog to deal with heavily trapped nests.

### FLASH FIRES

#### HAITI

**Once an open hunting ground for the Kindred, Haiti has become a dangerous country to be a vampire. The Masquerade was never well kept on the island nation and now it has all but unravelled in the face of the vampire hunters of the Toussaint Brigade. Haiti's hunters grew out of a decentralized youth network originally organized in service of a national strike. Haitian Kindred responded brutally to this threat to their power base but despite murdering several professors and public intellectuals in the movement's leadership the teenage protesters continued their campaign. Overburdened by the protests the state could no longer carry out the Kindred's will and a few vampires began to openly use their powers to cow the population back to work. Soon afterward, the young rebels organized into cells and began hunting for vampires. Unable to effectively wield the security services against them, neonates and ancillae fled Haiti en masse and left their sleeping elders to their fate.**

#### JAPAN

**Long thought a relatively safe place for Kindred to conduct business, Japan has seen an influx of vampires looking for a safe haven to ride out the Second Inquisition. While overcrowding had made feeding more difficult, it was only the brutal murder of Tokyo's Prince by heavily armed amateur "D-Club" hunters that alerted the Kindred that Japan's Masquerade was no longer intact. While multiple Kindred now claim to rule the city, the court is eager to crown anyone who deals with the hunters the rightful Prince.**

## Poland: Bureau IX

A paramilitary offshoot of Poland's Foreign Intelligence Agency, Bureau IX was officially created in 2002 during the country's reorganization of their intelligence services but its roots are much older. Some within Bureau IX claim the organization's founders were the last of the "cursed soldiers" that opposed Communist rule in Poland after WWII, who were guilty of atrocious crimes and genocide during the war. Whether this connection is true or not is immaterial, but the myth has inculcated within Bureau IX's leadership an extreme distrust of leftist political groups and Russian influence. In fact, some of Bureau IX's leaders have been warning the US about the supernatural conspiracy that controls the Russian state and international communist party since the 1990s. Bureau IX sees its involvement in the Coalition as a way to further integrate itself into the US and NATO security apparatus aimed at Russia. They are closely allied to the Vatican and want to expand their hunting activities within Poland but see the current democratic system as an obstacle to effectively safeguarding the country. FIRSTLIGHT intelligence and IAO funding have even been used to garner support from business leaders for a coup that would allow Bureau IX to more radically pursue their anti-Russian and anti-vampire agenda.

On an operational level, Bureau IX prefers to tackle vampires head on and are one of the few organizations in the Coalition that willingly plans night ops. While this aligns with the Vatican's operational doctrine it is often seen as a great risk by FIRSTLIGHT given the potential for media exposure. Despite this Bureau IX is still seen as an invaluable ally by the US/UK axis of the Coalition not least because of its willingness to deploy untested technologies against blankbodies.

## Sweden: G-Kontoret

A dedicated second party partner to the Coalition since the early days of the conspiracy, G-Kontoret's (G-K) "parent" organization specialized in economic espionage but relied on occult powers to steal secrets. While they have a rocky relationship with the UK's SO13, G-K is closely aligned with the JTRG and the Newburgh Group. In fact, G-Kontoret was founded by members of the

Arcanum that had reconstructed the archive of the defunct WWII-era T-Kontoret occult study group through black glass scrying circles. Although this is unknown to their allies, G-Kontoret believes their legacy archives point to a mystical weakness in the blankbody condition that may allow them to develop a treatment for vampirism. To this end they've begun experimenting on captured thin-bloods and have had some success in reducing the potency of the curse in their blood. This research requires an endless supply of ambulatory blankbodies. Since their attempts to force blankbodies to infect others in captivity have been unreliable, G-K often has to rely on FIRSTLIGHT and the Russian Akritai to supply new subjects.

# Farm Teams

The Second Inquisition is a phenomenon, not an organization. Felicity Price's shift from a Nosferatu asset to a vengeful hunter kick-started it, and gave it a home in the global intelligence community, but the movement goes far beyond the Coalition's first and second party components. While the great Elders of the Camarilla reel from the shockwaves of what the Coalition brought to pass in London and Vienna, neonates should be equally concerned with smaller, more localized problems.

Having access to military grade weaponry and a fearsome network of analysts, not to mention the ability to cover up the aftermath of almost any operation, is absolutely key to the Coalition's success. However, all it really takes to hunt vampires is a hunch and a sharp stake.

Beyond the first and second party organizations lie the farm teams: "minor league" groups not officially affiliated with the Coalition but part of the same movement, the same cultural moment. These groups range from local law enforcement officers aware that there's something strange about a pattern of recent deaths, to organized criminals whose business is being hit by the interests of an implacable undead competitor. Even further out on the fringes, hunters come from barely organized conspiracy theorists and lone wolves who saw something they shouldn't, or lost someone they love.

Farm teams make excellent antagonists for newly Embraced Kindred. They're an opportunity to show the atmosphere of fear and threat that pervades modern nights and allow these neonates to get their feet wet without the severe consequences of coming to the attention of an organization like FIRSTLIGHT or the Eighth Direction. Farm teams can serve as talent agencies for these greater organizations: a local cop or FBI agent encountered early in a vampire's unlife can reappear later with knowledge of their target, and as part of an SAD team.

## Law Enforcement

Where there are kine to feed on, there are people policing them. Local cops, FBI agents, Special Branch, Europol and others all take an interest in assaults, murders, and human trafficking, any of which can be signs of vampiric activity. Even low-key actions that wouldn't tip off the Coalition, such as a gunfight between Retainers or followers over a piece of territory, can draw the attention of the locals. They lack the equipment and, most crucially, the information that Five Torches UTR teams have access to, but that doesn't mean they're not dangerous. They make up for it in connections, local knowledge, and tenacity. Woe betide the neonate who underestimates the local detective with an eye for detail and a streak of paranoia.

Equipment available to law enforcement varies hugely across the globe. In Europe, they have to make do with riot gear, crowd control tools such as LRADs and rubber bullets (though, heads up, you can absolutely fire pointed wooden 'bullets' from the same weapons, and they are functionally stakes) and handcuffs, but in the USA and other places police forces have easy access to assault rifles, flash bang grenades, actual grenades and other terrifying military hardware. They can't always requisition that gear however, and the big difference between law enforcement and the Five Torches is that cops

can't tell their superiors they need to use lethal force on a nest of vampires.

Law enforcement, like most farm teams, don't know that superstitions about garlic, holy water, and the like are just that. At first. It usually only takes one successful hunt to figure that out. Because the "v word" is almost unthinkable, most law enforcement teams work slowly. They have to be patient, staking out (pun intended) feeding grounds, working their contacts in other law enforcement teams (vice cops see an awful lot), their informants and using the goodwill of the community to put people on alert for suspicious activity. Of course, in communities that are used to a hostile relationship with the police or feds it's hard for the cops to get a foothold.

Being hunted by law enforcement is the death of a thousand cuts. Feeding grounds invest in security measures, police presence makes streets safer for mortals, hangers on and suppliers (like that nice night porter who steals bags from the blood bank) become less willing to risk their necks or be seen with someone under suspicion. At first, their work is more frustrating than dangerous to vampires: everything takes a little longer, and they have to work a little harder. The damage a visit from the feds can do to a business relationship or professional reputation — or one's standing in the Camarilla — should not be underestimated. Over time, these hunters grow bolder. They close in on a vampire's Haven, or their Touchstones, and strike. Underequipped and few in number, they're careful to work in daylight, and never before they fully know the ground. If a vampire or their Retainers doesn't spot the cops during the planning phase, they might never know a strike is coming.

Law enforcement know nothing about vampire society, but their painstaking investigations are good at turning up connections within a coterie or higher up the city hierarchy. It's best to deal with them before they see too much and the Masquerade is shaken.

Retreating behind a screen of mortals who loathe law enforcement might be a vampire's best strategy for overcoming them. Killing them would be easy, but law enforcement mobilizes with an unslakable thirst for justice when someone hurts one of their own. A hasty rush to violence creates more problems than it solves. Kill more than one FBI or Special Branch agent, and it's a fast track to attention from the core of the Coalition. Turning them, on the other hand, is eminently feasible. Law enforcement officials are overworked and underpaid, and if a vampire can convince one that it's the least of their problems — only hurting criminals, feeding consensually, etc. — and accompany that blandishment with a regular bribe, they can frequently convert an enemy to an ally. Unless, of course, those agents are already receiving tips and cash from another mysterious benefactor who only comes out at night.

### Law Enforcement (Police Officer)

**General Difficulty:** 3/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 4
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 6
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 7, Firearms 7, Investigation 6, Streetwise 7
**Equipment:** Handgun or taser plus baton. With advance preparation: rifles, body armor, anything from the Mundane Gear section of Chapter 2. For large scale operations: LRADs, ADS, riot foam, and water cannons.
**Special:** Law enforcement have a network of local contacts that gives them an additional 3 dice on information gathering rolls in "their" neighborhood.

### Law Enforcement (FBI/Special Branch/Europol Agent)

**General Difficulty:** 3/3
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 5, Mental 6
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 7
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 7, Firearms 7, Investigation 7, Streetwise 7
**Equipment:** Handgun. With advance preparation: rifles, body armor, anything from the Mundane Gear section of Chapter 2. With local police

cooperation: Helicopters, LRADs, ADS, riot foam, and water cannons.

**Special:** Even when they're acting outside the scope of their official duties, these operatives can call on SWAT teams and other armed support such as a Breacher (p. 31) and Sniper (p. 34).

## Organized Crime

Organized crime might not seem like a likely origin story for vampire hunters but criminals and vampires' interest frequently intersect. Shadowy controlling stakes in business empires; using communities as shields and bank accounts; preying on the vulnerable or addicted; protecting their turf against interlopers. From the infamous Mafia, to the Russian Bratva, narcotraficantes, or postcode gangs, organized criminals' number one concern is protecting their interests. There's only room for one group of predators stalking the night in their city, and it's not going to be a bunch of walking corpses.

That's not to say all criminals are ruthlessly amoral. Plenty of them, especially those from Catholic communities, see vampires as crimes against God's design, or just as monsters. Some really do want to rid their domain of these walking nightmares, and count it as a victory for the forces of good. It's just not their primary reason for concern.

Organized criminals are different from other farm teams in that they're not likely to spot a vampire from their hunting. They may or may not care about that aspect. The major problem they have with blankbodies is that the vampires keep trying to take a bite out of their business. Alternatively, in cities with powerful and longstanding hierarchies, they want a bite of the vampires' businesses. Ventrue have the politicians' ears and siphon money off the most lucrative businesses; thin-bloods muscle in on drug trades; Tzimisce give "territorial" new meaning; and the "Brujah gangbangers" stereotype holds some water — as does "Brujah vigilante."

Organized criminals are the most similar to the Five Torches in the way they operate. They pull financial and social strings, bribing allies to come to their side or intimidating blood cult members into becoming informants. They've usually got technicians and hackers in their crew, committing digital fraud, harvesting personal data, or lifting blackmail material. They've got blackmailers. They've got their own traitors running from vampiric masters.

They're also similar to the Five Torches in the resources they can command. It's not hard to get the right arsenal together if you know the right people, and criminal organizations generally do. Although their pockets are deep, their budgets aren't unlimited and neither is their headcount. One expensive operation could wipe them out for a couple of months. Then again, they're the farm team most likely to field a damn tank with a flamethrower attachment or a mind-boggling quantity of explosives. There's a good chance they even bought it off the same intelligence agencies that make up the Coalition, or direct from the same suppliers.

By definition, members of organized criminal groups exist slightly outside of the law. If one or two of them die, law enforcement chalk it up to occupational hazard. If several of them die, law enforcement start out looking for a gang war and could take weeks or months to figure out that's not the cause, by which time smart Kindred are lying low. That means that, unlike other farm teams, violence really can be the smartest strategy. Outmaneuvering organized criminals, pulling those social and financial levers, becomes a game of chicken: at some point one faction is going to snap and set something on fire, and it's in a vampire's best interest not to wait too long.

Being hunted by organized criminals should be terrifying: a vampire has finally found a group as ruthless and determined as they are. It should, for that reason, also be a glimpse of their own reflection. Powerful leaders command ambitious soldiers and exploit anyone beneath them to gain an advantage. And, of course, a higher power — the leader of the family, the Sheriff of the city — might go over the feuding factions' heads and broker a compromise that benefits no one on the ground.

### Organized Criminal

Also see Gangsters, (See Corebook, p. 371).

**General Difficulty:** 3/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 4
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 6
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 7, Firearms 7, Melee 6, Streetwise 7, Subterfuge 6
**Equipment:** Handgun and knife or baseball bat. With advance preparation: anything in the Arms & Materiel list in Chapter 2, except XTech.
**Special:** Organized criminals know their turf. Not only do they have allies there, they know every corner. They receive +2 dice on Streetwise rolls, +2 dice on Stealth rolls, and anyone attempting to hide or go to ground on their turf has -2 dice on test to hide.

## Conspiracy Theorists

When an Internet community gets something into its collective mind, it's dangerous. They've identified — and misidentified — mass shooters and other wanted persons, gotten involved with manhunts based only on a few minutes of blurry video footage, and accumulated knowledge bases that rival prestigious universities (hell, Wikipedia is used more often than prestigious universities would like to admit). It's much easier to speculate from behind the shield of a keyboard and a high-speed internet connection that vampires and other monsters are real than it is to do so offline, face to face with skeptics. So it's unsurprising that several passionate vampire hunting communities have arisen online. With Kindred increasingly scared to interact with the digital world due to Coalition monitoring operations, it's harder than ever to nip communities of conspiracy theorists in the bud.

These communities seize on Internet rumors, photographs, local urban legends, and any other snippet of evidence as the start of a hunt. Some even trawl through forums like /r/letsnotmeet in search of credible accounts. Most of the time they're one hundred percent, profoundly wrong: their leads come to nothing, or lead to fictional stories or occasional hoaxes. If there were a handful of these people, they'd never get anything done, but there are thousands. The law of averages dictates that occasionally they'll stumble across a real vampire.

Conspiracy theorists' greatest weapon is the Internet. Through the otherwise laughable concept of "the wisdom of crowds" they dedicate hundreds of person-hours to tasks — like identifying the location in a photo or an account, or piecing together the exact movements of a "suspicious" celebrity — and come up with answers at speed some intelligence bureaus would envy. And that's not taking into account that there are usually a couple of people involved with access to specialist databases like police records or university archives.

Most don't ever intend to take on a vampire face to face, but even a small number of true believers with assault rifles and no concern for keeping things low key can cause trouble. More often they alert local law enforcement, SWAT a Haven, or pass information up to intelligence services (where it is quickly discarded). Most of that effort is useless, but the Coalition watches the most diligent of these communities, and often picks up investigations that look promising. So do other farm teams, from law enforcement to amateurs.

These communities might seem like the perfect target for a vampire to infiltrate and redirect but in practice the wisdom of the crowd generally filters out such attempts. The group as a whole quickly learns the truth of a bad tip, then learns not to trust the account who supplies it, and not to trust new or throwaway accounts at all. The best defense is



to simply fly under the radar... or find out who and where these people are, plant some illegal weapons or bomb-making equipment, and let the mortal authorities deal with them.

Being hunted by conspiracy theorists is a confusing experience. Many Kindred won't even know they've been reddited; those with a public profile might get a Google alert, or a link to a video or forum post speculating about them. For many, there's just a sense of paranoia. Did someone take a photo from a passing car? Are they seeing a lot of people in grey t-shirts and dark glasses tonight, or are they oversensitive? Why are the police knocking at the door? Vampires are more likely to find conspiracy theorists by working backwards from their impact — a SWAT team called to a Haven, or a contact suddenly going to ground — than to realize they're being hunted.

#### Conspiracy Theorist (Collective)

**General Difficulty:** 4/2
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical N/A, Social 3, Mental 7
**Secondary Attributes:** Health N/A, Willpower 9
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 8, Investigation 8, Politics (conspiracies) 8, Streetwise 8, Technology 10
**Equipment:** A whole lot of computers and free time
**Special:** Conspiracy theorist communities reduce the interval of any Extended test, online or off by one step (from weeks to days, days to hours, etc.).

## Amateurs

Amateurs are solo operators. In some ways, they're the classic hunters: they saw something that scarred them, lost somebody they cared about, or they were raised to believe in monsters and know one when they see one. Amateur hunters aren't especially dangerous, but they are tenacious. They don't present a physical threat so much as an external conscience: they're people who've been hurt, sometimes even by the very vampire they're now hunting. Yes, it would be easy to kill them but is it justified? What kind of a monster responds to a parent seeking vengeance for the death of their child with another bloody murder?

For some Kindred, amateur hunters are just an enjoyable opportunity to use their power on an unprepared, much weaker opponent. And sometimes that's fun. Why play a monster blessed with eternal life if you're constantly constrained by the rules and mores of the living? But doing so should take a toll on Humanity: murder can't really be called self-defence when the victim couldn't possibly hurt you. On the other hand, what happens when or if that hunter goes on to harm one of your friends? A childe? A thin-blood less able to defend themselves? What happens if they prove remarkably bad at spotting vampires, and end up as a serial killer who makes it harder for real vampires to hunt? Amateur hunters are great opponents to throw at a vampire with a conscience.

Unsurprisingly, amateurs don't have the best equipment. Most of them assume guns will do them no good against vampires, and they're right. They have hammers and stakes, maybe a crossbow if they're fortunate. Some kludge together explosives from fertilizer and bleach. Without body armor they rely on sporting gear like hockey pads and neck braces. A disproportionate number of amateurs have True Faith and some possess artifacts of supernatural power (p. 83), which is sometimes enough to make them truly dangerous against a lone vampire.

Amateurs' tactics are as varied as they are, but there's always a heavy element of luck. A would-be hunter stumbles on a thin-blood "drugs and vitae" operation. Their months-long vigil at a popular nightclub finally yields more than a drunk frat guy assaulting someone on the dance floor. They latch onto a minor celebrity who, they realize, is only ever seen at night. They work alone, so their ability to gather intel is limited. They move fast, and hit their prey at the first opportunity — which may be their first encounter. Some of them, especially those with a personal grudge, act in public: they figure a monster might hesitate or avoid using some of its powers in front of mortals. Yes, they're likely to be arrested afterwards, but that's a small price to pay for one fewer vampire on the streets.

Being hunted by amateurs is obvious and often embarrassing: like having toilet paper stuck to your shoe, or a stray dog following you. Alone, they're barely an irritant but they crop up at the worst possible times. Delicate negotiation with a rival? Hunter. Stealthy surveillance on the Prince's ghoul? Hunter. It can be tempting to play this for laughs, but it's actually an object lesson in "proper planning prevents poor performance": the hunter becomes a rogue element that has to be addressed in any plan, until the vampire is finally obliged to deal with them permanently.

On the other hand, countering amateur hunters is relatively easy. Often they're just looking for a target, any target. Feeding them information, personally or through a trusted agent, can redirect them onto a new target, perhaps a rival or enemy. A vampire might also choose to inform and equip an amateur, turning them into a skilled, dangerous hunting dog or hitman. It's risky, but the benefit of turning one into a thrall or ghoul is significant, and a hit of Dominate or Presence might be enough to achieve it.

Amateurs might have any set of skills or statistics; for a reasonably tough hunter, see Amateur (p. 31).

## Catching Fire

On their own, farm teams can be dangerous. What they lack in resources they often make up for in determination or deep webs of local contacts. But if a farm team does well and racks up a few hits they might come to the attention of one of the Five Torches.

Sometimes, this is a pathway to recruiting some or all of the team members into a first or second party partner of the Coalition. They might recruit one or two because not all of the hunters show the appropriate degree of intelligence, discretion, restraint or skill, or because only one of them survived a particularly bold strike. It's more common for the Five Torches to recruit from law enforcement than the other likely origins for farm teams: it's much easier to acclimatize an FBI or Special Branch officer to the Coalition's SOP and chain of command than a narcotraficante or conspiracy theorist. The Society of St. Leopold makes more exceptions than the others, for Catholic hunters anyway.

More often, "interest" never goes further than the Coalition making use of a farm team to further their own operations, or stand in for them in locations they'd rather not commit a full squad to. If a farm team looks useful, the Coalition starts by feeding them intel, which appears to come from their own informants or higher up in their organization. This starts as an occasional tidbit of information that helps the farm team clue in to a blankbody the Coalition wants dealt with, but over time can go as far as full dossiers on an individual, tips to their movements and vulnerabilities, or even outright advice from a full-fledged Coalition operative.

If a farm team proves their worth, they might gradually receive more material assistance. Weapons, armor, even XTech can make their way, in small amounts, to these small local operators. Occasionally they might even be loaned highly skilled personnel, for example a hacker or a deprogrammer, if the m.o. of a blankbody target merits it. These loans are always short term and mission specific, measured in days or sometimes hours.

The decision to help is based on whether the farm team might pose a threat to civilians, or only blankbodies. A bunch of conspiracy nuts jumping at shadows don't get the big guns. Instead, they're more likely to get warned off, or even executed by vampires the Coalition have tipped off. Better no allies than dangerous, incompetent ones.

Not every farm team that does well gets any interest at all: the Coalition is powerful but not omniscient. Some things never come to their notice, and a small group of hunters operating in a backwater city or a small country can go unnoticed. A Storyteller doesn't have to scale up the threat level, especially in a chronicle where the Second Inquisition exists only in the background, but it's always an option. Equally, it might be satisfying to let characters re-encounter a farm team that used to be the bane of their existence, and crush them like bugs when the coterie has grown more powerful and better connected.


MK
2021

# *Chapter Five:* Mirror Mazes

*To lose beauty in terror, terror in inquisition ...*
*... multiply variety*
*In a wilderness of mirrors.*

— T.S. ELIOT, *GERONTION*

All the tacticool gear and mystical relics, and even the most special of special operators, don't make a story by themselves. Storytellers mix these elements into their chronicles: shadows on the border or fires in the foreground, as they choose. They set them against the characters, showing them uncomfortable truths or offering unwholesome deals – or sure, just setting their haven on fire at dawn. Those interactions, that interplay, all that gunfire: whenever and however the antagonists meet the characters, that's when they become story. The following techniques, elements, and structures can help Storytellers decide from among all the options and knowledge in the rest of this book, and help deploy them for maximum effect.



## Story Element: Chronicle Structures

The Second Inquisition burns in hundreds of thousands of hunters' hearts worldwide, in every city where vampires think to rule. The Coalition and Five Torches operate across continents, with global scope, on every level from "watch-and-wait" solo operators to whole battalions of assault troops guided by satellite. Storytellers can likewise use the Second Inquisition and its embodiments or the Coalition and its agents on any scale they wish. Every Storyteller should create and customize their chronicle for their particular table, and that definitely includes the roles of the antagonists.

This section provides three overarching, chronicle-shaping approaches to the Second Inquisition. Feel free to combine them: a Tip of the Stake chronicle can become a Resistance and Attrition chronicle if the players' coterie doesn't manage to

throw back the initial assault. If they successfully weaken the IAO occupation force, the chronicle might then settle into an Open City. Even if you don't intend to focus the entire chronicle on the Second Inquisition, you can run any of these structures in the background or as a looming possibility: Kindred based in the generally Open City of Manchester can just take a quick overnight train ride and disembark in the full-fledged war zone of Liverpool or the occupied-and-surveilled "clean city" of London.

## The Tip of the Stake

Covert operations are only so covert: when FIRSTLIGHT sends the UTR squads into your waterfront, or the Society of St. Leopold designates your city for a new crusade, you know it soon enough. In a Tip of the Stake chronicle, your story becomes a war story. All your stories become war stories, told against a backdrop of rivals and clan-mates going up in dust in noon raids, or down in fire. Inquisitors zero in on human links between the Kindred and the daylight world: not just herds and tools but contacts and Touchstones get swept up for questioning and worse. Their panic or confusion threatens the characters almost as much as the guns and crosses of the invaders. The Second Inquisition pulls on every loose thread in your story, trying to drag you into the sunlight: they dominate the chronicle. At the very least, one or more of the Five Torches become a second credible "big bad" along with the Prince, or the coterie's opposing faction, or whoever else once ruled the city's night.

### In Chronicles

Some coterie types (Core Rulebook, pp. 197-199) flourish (narratively at least) at the Tip of the Spear. Cerberus coteries might have to defend their charge from the Inquisition, or resist the orders of the Primogen to divert their attention to the invasion. Commando and Day Watch coteries have clear roles on the front lines, striking back against the paramilitaries' support and medical teams or sowing confusion in their planners with daring sunlit raids. Maréchal and Regency coteries find themselves overwhelmed and attempting to keep their own position at court secure while making tactical decisions on too little information and rallying the city's Kindred to resist or go to ground. Nomads caught in the dust of the attack find their fluidity both a weakness and an asset: immediately suspected by the city's Kindred, they also seldom appear on the Inquisitors' target lists.

Fiery action sets the obvious tone for a Tip of the Spear chronicle, but it doesn't have to be nonstop gunplay. Kindred politics suddenly becomes a matter of unlife or death, played for literally the highest of stakes. Urgency, the fog of battle, sudden betrayals and losses, the peeling away of false allegiances; all add drama to wartime chronicles. Shake up the characters' world, twist the tension, and then send in the death squads every couple of weeks to detonate another part of your setting and set up the next shakeup.

### Getting Involved

**You're Drafted:** When the BOES rolls into your chronicle city, the Primogen calls up the players' coterie. In front of their mawali and rivals, the Prince offers them a domain where the Inquisitors have struck first or repeatedly. If they turn the offer down, they lay themselves open to charges of cowardice or even betrayal. But accepting the offer comes with its own costs. The coterie has new responsibilities, un-scouted hunting grounds, and collapsing defenses to desperately maintain. Does this offer show the Prince's trust – or his belief they are expendable to buy time for the real defenders? And what do they do when those "real defenders" show up to take their new domain from them?

**You're Targeted:** For some reason, FIRSTLIGHT chose the players' coterie as their primary target. Whatever makes their coterie special, that's apparently a key objective for Leopold or the Russians or somebody. Cerberus coteries probably have a guess or two, but other coteries might need to work out just how they got on the list. Did someone's sire get grabbed by the Israelis on their way to Gehenna? Did their rivals

(or some petty foe they never respect enough to suspect) drop a dime on them? If they made their bones in the 1990s, maybe their names were in a ShreckNET archive somewhere, and it's just the luck of the algorithm that they resurfaced today.

**Kelly's Kindred:** The SAD doesn't target the players' coterie – at least not at first. They players lurk on the sidelines when a raid takes out their most annoying rival, or weakens the defenses around their true Ambition. The Storyteller's job here consists of dangling advantages or treasures just tempting enough to get the coterie to risk getting obliterated by a collateral firestorm – or making enough waves to get onto St. Leopold's proscription list for real.

## Open City

The Coalition holds off attacking an Open City – for the time being. They don't ignore the city, but they're not quite ready to pull the trigger on a full-scale cleansing. They hold a watching brief, studying and surveilling, infiltrating the infrastructure and dredging up data. Practically, the UTR team or Leopoldite inquisitors become one faction among many in the city, an axe ready to fall ... some night, but not yet tonight. Open City chronicles draw from spy film and fiction, offering stories of balancing powers and deniable operations. The Kindred have time to learn who exactly is holding the torch – just as the Coalition has time to learn just where the Kindred hide from the firelight.

### In Chronicles

Open Cities offer plenty of opportunities for Fang Gang, Plumaire, and Hunting Party coteries to play multiple sides against the middle and build power bases and reputation. Champion coteries need to win human hearts and minds, while Watchmen must stay alert for the first signs of crusade. More desperate for sudden leverage than usual, the vampire power structure may suddenly prioritize the Questari objective – and possibly empower a rival coterie to pursue it. The Sbirri flourish narratively and thematically, although objectively an Open City constantly threatens to expose their true agenda.

Open City chronicles place political maneuver and the Masquerade front and center. The Primogen can't purge the local Anarchs without suffering unacceptable losses – but they can't allow the Masquerade to fray any further, either. Involve the players' coterie in these games of hot potato and last-tag, lure them into petty vendettas and perhaps occasionally reward them by vanishing one of their foes into the sunny embrace of the CIA. But whose name did that foe eagerly give up before the sunlight took her?

### Getting Involved

**Not a Sparrow Falls:** The Society of St. Leopold sends a cenacle into the coterie's city, and the Leopoldites begin connecting up to the local Catholic infrastructure: churches, hospitals, charities, police departments, local politics, and so on. One character's Touchstone works or worships within that sphere, and the Leopoldites want to recruit them. It's not just a casual coat-trailing, it's friendship and counseling and career advancement and support: everything they want and perhaps can't get from an unliving monster. Is this just a coincidence, or is the Society deliberately targeting the character through their Touchstone? What about when the Leopoldites begin helping another Lick's Touchstone?

**#ACAI:** The chronicle city's police department got a mysterious (but generous) government grant from somewhere: new equipment and cars, better radios and computers, drones and vehicles for "crime and riot control." One or two specialists came along with the money, trainers and maintainers mostly; a new deputy commissioner transferred in from another city eager to get to work. Kindred allies and contacts in city government (or in the police force) start feeling the heat. FIRSTLIGHT (or SO13 or BOES) seeds its cadre into the police force, planning to flip the whole force into Inquisition assets.

**Shadows in the Wind:** Behind the scrim of stalemate, deaths slowly accumulate – and not ones the Kindred caused. Independent occult scholars at the university, one or two thin-blood alchemists, a local hedge magician – they turn

up dead in locked rooms or with weirdly missing organs. An occultist consultant to the Entity (or to the Newburgh Group, or the SAD) has tracked a particular and powerful book to the city, and they want it, and they have a lot of favors to call in to help them get it. A Questari coterie might hunt the book themselves, or a Cerberus coterie guard it; Tremere might want the tome for its own sake, as might thin-bloods who want to step up their alchemy game. Nobody wants this to turn into a firefight – fires are even unhealthier for books than they are for Kindred.

## Resistance and Attrition

In a Resistance and Attrition chronicle, the battle is lost – for now. Some aspect or faction of the Second Inquisition dominates the city, its surveillance intense, its patrols regular. Most importantly, they control (or at least thoroughly interpenetrate) the city's power structures. In a heavily Roman Catholic city, perhaps the Society of St. Leopold commands the archepiscopal bureaucracy, appointing priests and hospital administrators, controlling the political machine that elects the mayor. In other cities, the Coalition might work through cut-outs; former CIA contractors going into local politics "to work for real change on the ground," or aldermen with indiscretions kept safe on a black server somewhere in Cheltenham or Munich. Either way, a bloodless corpse in an alley brings a swift response. The Masquerade has become the underground.

### In Chronicles

Blood Cult coteries were already underground, and Resistance and Attrition chronicles mitigate the threat of Primogen or Baronial reprisals; the same broadly holds for Fang Gang coteries. On the other hand, a Vehme coterie carrying out exactly such reprisals likely has the implicit support of most Kindred. If the elders got out before the hammer fell, a Regency coterie has to juggle reprisals against resistance. Does a Sbirri coterie in an occupied city encourage the crackdown? The Day Watch becomes even more vital when the city's eyes open wider at night.

The rhythm of a Resistance and Attrition chronicle resembles trance, not punk: slowly intensifying feel rather than fast-break violence. The steady squeeze of the Coalition constrains the coterie until they force a dramatic break – or get broken in response. "Rising tension" should be the Storyteller's watchword, rather than "rising action." See "Welcome to the Occupation," below, for more specific approaches to this kind of setting.

### Getting Involved

**The Cold Past:** A Kindred somehow connected to the player coterie appears in the chronicle city – but they're working for the Coalition now. (Select someone inspirational from among the Turncoats on pp. 46-51.) The coterie has stayed off everyone's radar until now – but their options widen and narrow at the same time. Do they turn in their "old friend" to the Baron? That might be announcing their own guilt by association. Do they use their old friend as a back-channel into the occupation, to get a few crucial advantages? Perhaps their old friend has an offer for them: help the Coalition roll up the resistance, and be conveniently left off the targeting lists.

**Mole Hunt:** The inquisitors know an awful lot about the Kindred's affairs in the city. None of the old ShreckNET data dump applies any more: those old havens and hunting grounds long abandoned. The Masquerade remains intact, surprisingly strong in fact; even the local Anarchs and thin-bloods keep it willingly after a few sudden renditions. So who's feeding intel to the SAD or SO13 or the Vatican from within the court? The Prince selects the player coterie to investigate – and if they don't find anything soon, it was clearly them all along.

**The Fifth Horseman:** A Kindred courier from another city appears on the doorstep of a character's haven, badly wounded and even poisoned by some Russian toxin. The coterie must shelter her from the GRU, and step up its hunting to feed her. (Does the courier have a Boon? Know a great secret? Promise great advantage?) Meanwhile, the occupiers have cracked down,

searching the city for the refugee. This story line works best for thin-blood or Anarch coteries, with no real ability to fob their problems off on older and more important Kindred. Or perhaps the coterie knows that the older and more important Kindred will kill anyone who heard the courier's message before they did.

# Setting Element: Welcome to the Occupation

As the new millennium ages, the Kindred lose their grips on city after city – supplanted not by rival vampires, but by their former prey. The tools they once used to pen up their kine are turned against them – police with secret agendas, all-seeing eyes in the night, inhuman accumulations of knowledge, and mysterious death from out of the shadows. The future, it seems, belongs to this Second Inquisition – and in some cities, the future has already arrived.

## Storytelling the Occupation

Stories under occupation have three crucial elements: choice, place, and threat. Every character under occupation – portrayed by the players or by the Storyteller – makes a choice every day: resist or collaborate. The Storyteller should remember that for the vast majority of mortals, collaboration seems to make not just pragmatic but moral sense – vampires are predators and serial murderers, and should indeed be hunted down. The switch-up comes when the Kindred align their plight with the other people being hunted down by religious fanatics or secret police: the occupation gathers more than just vampires into its fist. But individual Licks make individual choices, too – perhaps an autarkis prefers



destroying an overbearing Archon, or a thin-blood resents cruel elders. Even a recognized and accepted coterie might be tempted to do a deal, for a Touchstone or a neighborhood, or just to get a peaceful day's sleep.

Other choices the protagonists (and other Kindred) face include choices of alliances: who do you trust in the resistance? Who do you trust in the occupation? Choice of tactics: fight back, or turtle up? Slowly subvert the occupiers, at the risk of compromising your identity, or openly defy them, at the risk of a noontime dusting? Hunt or go hungry tonight? Stay and face the fire, or leave if you get the chance? Do you protect the resistance, even at the cost of your childe or your Touchstone? Dramatically, the best choices set two characters' Convictions at odds – or force one Cainite to decide between two of their own Convictions. Give every important choice the protagonists make a powerful, plausible alternative, ideally personified by someone they trust, love, or depend on.

All those characters, with all those agendas, inform your city and drive its development during the chronicle. If a supporting character starts to get boring or familiar – or too dependable – they change their choices, and die or inform or flee. As the occupation changes the characters, it changes the city. Add an element of the occupation to every story, a background detail or whispered rumor, if not a whole scene. Police raids break up hunting grounds, helicopters and drones whir overhead, unblinking cameras crop up on street corners, cell towers sport extra antennas.

## Your Own Private Inquisition

Occupation chronicles tend to personalize the local Coalition presence: identifying the local Leopoldite superior, or the FIRSTLIGHT analyst, marks a silent victory. From identification, players look for weaknesses and (hopefully more carefully) for strengths. The Storyteller should have answers ready: is the Leopoldite abbé full of doubts, or full of suppressed lusts? Is the FIRSTLIGHT overwatch preening and overconfident, or bent on vengeance? While the faceless hunters in tactical masks can stay mysterious (and thus scary) their bosses need to be human to make compelling foes. They make choices just like the characters: how convincing is this intel? Is this warehouse a trap? Can we play one blankbody against another, or should we speak only the language of fire? Tempting, twisting, and turning the opposition toward the choice you want plays to the strengths of vampires – and of Vampire.

### RANDOM RAIDS

**With everything else the Storyteller has to keep track of, running an occupation can get lost in the weeds. Once every game month, launch a Coalition operation: a raid, a successfully gentrified Domain, a targeted termination, something that reminds the players of the threat. Depending on your chronicle city's geography you might have a place in mind, or you can determine the target randomly.**

**Most paper maps (and many online ones) have grids overlaying them, as a location key. If not, it's easy enough to draw a ten-by-ten grid on a printed or Xeroxed map. Roll two dice and send the hunters to the location indicated, re-rolling if you get an impossible target like the middle of the lake. If you want another metric, make an Investigation roll for the local Coalition planner (Bear-Leader, p. 23) and use the result to determine the danger and damage to the local Kindred. A critical on that roll targets the Primogen or the main Anarch gang.**

**As the occupation intensifies, launch the operations more frequently: once every three game weeks, then once every two game weeks. A once-per-week pace indicates the Coalition has surged into the city, or believes they have almost won; they likely slacken again after three or so straight weeks of major operations. Coterie action can also shift the frequency of attacks: if they anger the occupiers, attacks step up; if they baffle or bluff them, the Coalition stands down a bit.**

# Thematic Element: Fire and Sword

This is an Inquisition, even the parts of it run on computers by American admirals and Russian atheists. Storytellers should play into those gothic, even medieval elements alongside the surveillance-paranoia and technothriller tones. Some examples:

- It's not likely that a player's character remembers the first Inquisition, but they may have lore handed down from their sire or uncovered in a dusty parchment (Core Rulebook, p. 388). When an elder describes those times to them, or they read the records, bring it to life with hood-

## THE SUPERWEAPON

**The superweapon has remained a core element, possibly the core element, of the technothriller story ever since Jules Verne invented the subgenre. Robur's Terror becomes the Soviets' Red October becomes Hydra's INSIGHT Helicarriers. The antagonists build it, and threaten the world with it; the heroes then destroy or steal it. Adding a superweapon to a Vampire chronicle can provide the spine of a single story, or become the climax of the city-wide war. Potential SI superweapons include:**

- **The Red Gas (p. 82) is already a superweapon: weaponized holiness that fills a space like a gas but doesn't disperse like one. Alternatively, consider a chemical weapon nanoengineered to be attracted to aerosolized vitae, flowing across the haven to the mouths and noses of the Kindred – the more recently they've fed, the faster it reaches them.**
- **A high-energy projector, emitting muonic plasma waves. When the waves hit solid walls, they transmit through the obstacle and briefly light up the interior like the sun. Its capacitors take days to charge, and release their energy in one burst, but the improved models should come on line soon, just after a few more field tests … and the really big one they're building in that isolated building on campus can blanket the city in a nanosecond, lighting up every interior surface at once.**
- **A powerful rite that boils the vitae in anyone who hears it spoken. Of course, it's in only one book, and in a dead language, but even a broken translation proves very effective. And every time the cantor speaks it, it gets clearer, as though Something wants it uttered.**
- **A biological-alchemical weapon, the Litharge, deployed in the blood of innocent 20-something civilians through adulterated sports drinks. It acts on the Kindred like borax on ants, building up in their vitae and slowly starving them to death. Possible variants include a radioactive tracer so the Coalition can track them to their lair, or a final catalyst that triggers frenzy when enough infected Kindred gather in one place.**
- **Just a really big tank, or deadly helicopter gunship, loaded down with "thermal lances" and Gatling cannon. Its armor invulnerable to anything short of a 105mm shell, its sensor package wrapped around targeting XScopes, it spells true death to any haven it's deployed against. All the Coalition needs is a big riot to justify bringing it out. This sort of superweapon makes more sense in a chronicle city already on the edge of (or in the middle of) a war zone, from whence the IAO or GRU diverts it from its mortal targets.**

**Whatever the superweapon, the story unfolds with hints and whispers. The characters hear of its building; maybe they spot (or interfere with) a Burrower gathering needed materials or a UTR squad capturing a crucial designer. Perhaps they follow up and see it under construction, then get driven off by extraordinarily stiff defenses. Or their first glance of it comes as it destroys some other haven, or stomps some Anarch street gang. When it moves against them, they fight it and lose, the only survivors. Now they have only a few nights to find its weakness and destroy it, before the Coalition turns it loose on every Kindred in their city … and perhaps the whole world.**

ed monks and flickering torches. If the chronicle takes place in Europe or Latin America, the site of an old auto-da-fé takes center stage. Run a Memoriam starring the characters' sires' sires to reveal something horrible from the past.

- Play up the resemblance between medieval knights and modern special operators: bulky body armor, riot shields, glints of streetlight off a helmet visor, colorful flash of a heraldic unit badge. ESOG even brings swords to a gunfight, for God's sake.
- Speaking of ESOG, the Society of St. Leopold literally exists to reinforce this inquisitorial theme. Even if the big bad in your chronicle uses U.S. Navy SEALs or Russian Spetsnaz, anyone can bring a Leopoldite observer. Every city in the Western world has a Catholic church, and every ambulance sports the red cross of the Crusaders.
- Even outside ESOG, soldiers might pick up on impressive sounding Latin phrases. Sure, the Kansas City SWAT team is unlikely to chant "Deus vult" or "Nobiscum Deus" before hitting a haven. But a police armored car might boast "fugiet a vobis" ("he will flee from you") stenciled across its front, or the SWAT trooper display "Vox Domini intercidentis flammam ignis" (Psalm 28:7) tattooed in a scroll around his arm.
- Fire, and plenty of it. Look at fire footage on YouTube or stream Backdraft to get a visual language for fire besides "it's bright and orange." Personify it, as it leaps from wall to wall to coffin, as though giving relentless chase to the character.
- Dying factories, dockyard warehouses, and urban pumping stations sport just as many wheels, racks, and chains as any Piranesi dungeon. Such a backdrop might begin as a Nosferatu haven – until it gets raided, and converted to an Inquisition staging ground and temporary interrogation center.



# Setting Element: Theaters of Operation

As described above, the Coalition approach to a city helps determine the chronicle structure. Overlapping with this purely narrative element, the FIRSTLIGHT or Leopoldite understanding of the city also affects the chronicle setting. Think of these four types of AO (Area of Operations) as the "in-game" strategy that complements the Storyteller's structure.

## Hedgehog

In a hedgehog, or fortress city, the Coalition aggressively moves to defend against any perceived incursion and destroy any perceived vampire activity. Hedgehogs require extravagant resources to defend, becoming almost impractical at scales of more than a few miles. Often the Coalition defends the "Green Zone" within a less-secure city as a hedgehog. Vatican City is a hedgehog in the much larger city of Rome, used as a base for aggressive patrols into the city by the Leopoldites, and by their allies and cutouts in the Carabinieri and AISI. FIRSTLIGHT would like to make Washington, D.C. a true hedgehog, but must settle for protecting the federal district between the White House and Capitol complex, the FBI building, and a few other core locations such as the Smithsonian. A ring of hedgehogs (Langley, Ft. Meade, Andrews AFB, and Camp David) surrounds D.C. proper, but the enormous, labyrinthine Pentagon can't yet be adequately defended.

Thus a city with a hedgehog AO in it can simultaneously play out Resistance and Attrition within the hedgehog zone and Open City or Tip of the Stake chronicles outside. Entering a hedgehog, even in a fully occupied city, feels more dangerous for Kindred: any camera might be an XScope, and every vehicle holds three stake-wielding Delta Force troopers with a chainmail hood and an open seat on a plane to Hawaii. Stories that move into or through a hedgehog recapitulate the "journey into fear" trope from spy fiction: amp up the paranoia and increase those Difficulties.

## Sheepfold

The Coalition counts a few cities as victories, "clear cities" in the jargon of the British bureaucratic hunters. The Leopoldites call these cities "sheepfolds," where their flocks can safely graze. Older and more cynical American operators call them "strategic hamlets," recalling a similar strategy from a less successful war. London, Honolulu, and Las Vegas head any list of successful sheepfolds, and the Eighth Direction claims similar success in the important Spetsnaz base and military staging center Rostov-on-Don.

But even London and Vegas have a few Kindred lurking deep under cover, or walking the sunny streets semi-secure in their Duskborn misdirection. Sheepfold cities work best for chronicles where the Coalition is always potentially present, but not there right at the moment – a sort of Resistance in Absentia. Both the Coalition and the Kindred mount only the most covert of ops, and as few of those as they can get away with. A regular Resistance and Attrition chronicle can develop in a clear city, as the Coalition slowly and unwillingly realizes their sheep aren't quite as safe as they thought. Lower-powered chronicles (thin-bloods vs. gangsters, perhaps) and Champion coteries work well in sheepfold cities, as do "third force" foes such as faerie or mortal wizards, who don't ping the FIRSTLIGHT radar as loudly as werewolves might.

## Front Line

Every arm of the Second Inquisition, and some that aren't even connected to the body yet, flexes its muscles against the Kindred. Wherever the Coalition has enough intelligence to mount raids and renditions, or enough firepower to launch them anyway, they do so in increasing numbers. As the millennium continues and the Masquerade frays, more and more cities wind up on the front line: Prague, Bogota, Liverpool, Marseille, Kigali,

Luanda, Portland, and scores more. Rio de Janeiro and Detroit, among others, have stayed on the front line since 2012.

Thus a front line city can host a Tip of the Stake chronicle, or a "late" Open City. The Coalition has made its move but not quite sealed the deal, so momentum shifts back to the Kindred. The shock has come, but the awe hasn't caught up yet. In a front line city, even an Open City might suddenly get an influx of inquisitors as FIRSTLIGHT dumps another billion on the problem. The characters might evade that deployment (or redirect it at their rivals) or be sent "over the top" to counter-strike the Leopoldite cenaculum or the glass-walled building near the airport with the really tough security guards.

## In Partibus Sanguisugarum

Every city belongs to God, say the Leopoldites. He just hasn't moved all His stuff into some of them. In the Dark Ages, as Muslims and Vikings and horse-nomads overran ancient dioceses, the Church referred to those bishoprics as in partibus infidelium, "in the lands of the infidels." Today, the Society calls cities it hasn't yet evangelized in partibus sanguisugarum, "in the hands of the bloodsuckers." FIRSTLIGHT just leaves the cities' dots red on the map ... for now.

Chicago, Berlin, and many other classic Kindred strongholds still count as IPS, even though most of them have some Coalition outpost inside the boundaries or nearby on a less-traveled highway. Consider these "early" Open Cities, where the Coalition still prioritizes gathering intelligence and scouting missions over full-throated firestorms. Spy stories in these cities become Cold War style counter-intelligence duels, seeking out the Coalition presence and neutralizing it as invisibly as possible. Day Watch and Watchmen coteries catch and stop Spetsnaz commandos or Leopoldite street preachers, and everyone waits another night for the war to start.



# Thematic Element: Night and Fog

Any intelligent vampire hunter surely attacks at noon, burning their torpid Kindred targets in their beds under a blue sky and a blazing sun. And indeed an increasing number of 21st-century war and spy thrillers feature daylight raids full of blinding lens flare and shining dust. Daylight raids work fine for attacks on other Kindred, to be discovered upon awakening. But players' characters deserve scenes that drink from the roots of vampire and espionage stories, and those roots grow best at night. So why does the Second Inquisition mount night raids in your chronicle?

- A high-value target doesn't leave their address lying around. You have to grab them when they show themselves, operating on last-minute intel that changes fast and expires faster. Yes, the ideal plan is to keep the target in sight and follow them back to their haven, but it's not that easy to follow something that can blink out of sight, jump over a cyclone fence, or turn into a bat. Sometimes a quick hit under the streetlight is the only hit you get.
- Hunters can't easily find blankbodies without stable addresses or hunting patterns to plot on a map. Gangrel move around by choice, and others might be homeless or hiding from an angry baron. Hunting such targets requires throwing out a surveillance net and waiting for the target to walk into it – and the target only walks at night.
- Mounting a daylight raid attracts passersby with cell phones, TV news copters, and possibly unwitting units of the police and fire department. It's much harder to cover up something burning on the 5:00 news than something burning at 5:00 in the morning. The Coalition has its own veil to maintain, after all, and often informational security trumps the other kind.
- Daytime attacks also risk unacceptable collateral damage: innocent shoppers or tourists or drug dealers wander past that haven all day. Better to spend the day scouting the site as thoroughly as

possible, and the evening assembling the team covertly. In the best possible case, you completely replace the citizens passing by with people who won't get their fool heads shot off when the balloon goes up.

- If you want to hit a lot of blankbodies, you have to get them when they're together – when they're awake. A lead on Elysium, or an Anarch gang moot, or a Toreador art show, or an alchemists' convention pays off much better if you can grab or dust the whole bunch of them. And that only happens at night.

# Story Element: Shoot or Talk?

Michael Mann's crime film Heat features some of the most viscerally thrilling gunfights in all of cinema. But just as important, it features a taut, subliminally intense dialogue between the robber and the cop laying out the emotional stakes for both characters. Storytellers must balance action and interaction in the chronicle, especially with antagonists like the Second Inquisition.

## Silencers

By and large, the more you know about antagonists in a horror game, the less scary they become. Show them in sudden overwhelming bursts – shadowy figures in hulking tactical armor breaching the haven — or in mysterious flashes – a robed woman seen holding an icon aloft just before things went to shit. Don't just give the players information about their foes, make their characters work for it by investigation and by surviving (even by fleeing) UTR squad attacks. Then break the pattern again: shift up timing and effects and resources as the Coalition responds to the characters' investigations.

The operatives and clerics of the Coalition don't explain themselves to the monsters they hunt. In many cases, they're forbidden to: not just by monastic vows of silence, but by NSA Associate Director Price's burned-in paranoia about Dominate and Presence and temptation and all the other things that the Kindred can do with their voices. The Detroit disaster still hangs over American hunters especially. "Never talk, never listen" remains standing orders for FIRSTLIGHT and IAO field operators. Rather than complete black ops silence, a Leopoldite canon or Akritai zealot might substitute white magic noise: endless chanting of Latin exorcisms, or singing of hymns.

## Speeches

But Vampire is more than just a horror game; it's a storytelling game. Story requires drama, which is to say characters in conflict. If characters – with needs, and drives, and frailties – emerge from the shadows of the Second Inquisition, then story emerges with them. Perhaps most of the paramilitary troopers vanish back into the shadows – except one wounded survivor. The robed woman never talks, but her ESOG bodyguard can't help bragging over a cringing Lick. As the pattern shifts, the coterie slowly pieces together the local Coalition command structure, identifying key players for pressure along with their pressure points.

One place that an inquisitor surely talks is the interrogation room, even if only in questions. Characters who run the risk of capture can learn much about their opponents' beliefs and aims. (Spy dramas utilize interrogation scenes as classic dramatic opportunities for a reason.) Somewhat safer, if usually slower, the coterie can goad the Leopoldite judge or SAD agent-in-charge into impatience or overconfidence. If the Coalition superiors keep silent for now, perhaps their informants or allies or tools can be persuaded to boast or complain or demand or bargain.

Both the Kindred and the Coalition crave information, and both give in to their cravings even when they shouldn't. Every inquisitor wants something, if only to re-confirm their belief in their cause. Does the BOES trooper seek righteous revenge for a lost sister? Does the Oxford occultist yearn to command the supernatural? Who's addicted to the chase, or to adrenaline, or to speed? Learning what mortals want – and offering a cruelly sweetened parody of their desire — should be second nature to vampires, after all.

# Thematic Element: Mirror Images

Killers stalk the night, the worst of them slaughtering with religious fervor and delighting in the hunt. These killers shelter behind powerful institutions: governments, police departments, spy services, cathedrals. Although riven by internal factionalism, they keep their code of secrecy sacrosanct. Their full powers and abilities remain mysterious, perhaps even to themselves. Remind you of anyone?

Neither the Camarilla nor the clandestine Coalition appreciates the many parallels between the two organizations, but that just leaves more ironic meat for the Storyteller to serve up. Extend the parallels: Anarchs see their own reflection in the increasing numbers of independent hunters drawn into the life but shunned by three-initial agencies, driven to street expedients rather than formal taskings. Further echoes resound as the chronicle builds:

- Especially in Open City chronicles, both Kindred and inquisitors play the spy game: dead drops, allusive codes, tails and shakeoffs. "The player on the other side" begins as an abstraction, and slowly steps into an intricate dance of move and countermove. When the players come up with something clever, their Inquisitor foe comes back with a defense – or uses the same tactic on them.
- Although strictly forbidden by both the Tower and FIRSTLIGHT, prisoner exchanges provide juicy dramatic opportunity along with establishing a literal equation between inquisitor and vampire. Who is worth trading for? Who do you abandon? How do you grab the top Leopoldite abbot in the city – or an oblivious archbishop – on twelve hours' notice, without breaking the Masquerade? And can you trust a prisoner who the other side allowed to live?
- Bram Stoker's Dracula pits science – Dictaphones, medical hypnosis, steam launches and railways — against monstrosity. A century later, they blend and overlap. A Gangrel looks through the eyes of a falcon, an untiring drone feeds images back to the SAD van. Auspex and XScopes, Kevlar and Fortitude, urban camouflage and Obfuscate, hunter flowing into the hunted and back again. Are those tiny red glows the eyes of a Nosferatu or the LEDs on a combat helmet cam?
- Play up the emotional similarities between Kindred and their hunters, especially the front-line operators. Both spend their nights whipsawed between paranoia and exaltation, both must ignore their humanity to survive ("Shoot that little girl in the face! She's one of them!"), both kill. Both exalt in their addictions, to blood or to adrenaline (or combat amphetamines, in many cases); both swear revenge on the destroyers of their comrades. Storytellers can drop dialogue overheard during a raid, or inhabit the too-familiar cold desperation of the warrior across the diner table at sundown.

## Hubris and Nemesis

In Greek myth, the goddess Nemesis opposed hubris, the act of challenging the gods. Nemesis represents not just justice, but payback: she carries both scales and a whip. Storytellers can present the Second Inquisition as the deserved response to the hubris of the Camarilla: they dared to rule mankind unjustly, and now mankind brings the scourge in their turn. Perhaps play up the ongoing rumor (especially prevalent among the Anarchs) that the Camarilla (or a specific prince) tried to frame the Anarchs for 9/11 and their sloppy subterfuge brought a new Inquisition down on everybody's heads.

More specifically, cast the Coalition presence in the chronicle city as a reaction to arrogant folly by its Primogen or its barons. Did their over-hunting ping the FBI profilers? Did they accumulate a secret archive that the NSA just penetrated? Did they whisper the location of a nearby Sabbat haven to the Leopoldites? Not just the high and mighty Kindred draw nemesis upon themselves: one of the coterie hunts the niece or college friend of a CIA analyst, and suddenly their jacket rises to the top of the FIRSTLIGHT inbox with a Terminate order already approved.



# Setting Element: Enemies of My Enemies

Every Cainite wakes up at night surrounded by enemies: rival coteries, enforcers from the other faction, enforcers from their own faction (or both, for unbound Licks), the Sabbat or Lupines or some other bestial outsiders. The Second Inquisition might not even make the list – which makes getting them to take other vampires off the list a tempting choice.

But how? Do you just call the local FBI office on a burner phone and hope that Special Affairs picks up? Do you affirmatively locate an inquisitor in your city and go through a mortal cut-out? Do you show yourself, and meet face to face? The more help you need from the Coalition, and the quicker you need it, the riskier things get. In the direst cases, you might have to actually take the field with them, turning your back on a lot of very amped-up Brazilian storm troopers with stake-throwing shotguns. The fact that plenty of your fellow Kindred still seem more dangerous to you than that decision may be the worst thing of all about the "enemy of my enemy" play.

## Storytelling Enemies of Enemies

There's enough doubt and uncertainty roiling the players' minds already: make the Coalition alliance a legitimate option if they go for it. Even if the local SAD agent-in-charge plans to turn on the coterie, there's no better way to lull them into dropping their guard than offering them real intel and real help for a while. If the coterie has a relatively non-murderous ethos (or they're playing Champions or similar) the inquisitor might even come to them first with a (relatively) honest team-up offer.

This allows you to slide into the paranoia and suspense themes that Second Inquisition stories batten upon. When will the sudden and inevitable betrayal happen? Should we go first through the door? Miscommunications, lost signals, insufficient backup – bureaucratic snafus, or deliberate slow-walking? Is that a priest talking to my Touchstone – is that priest a Leopoldite? Is our haven bugged? Special Branch says they've bugged our rivals' haven, after all...

This betrayal tension can build throughout the story, and like all themes it benefits from being personified by supporting characters. Any alliance between the coterie and the Inquisition goes through human intermediaries; both sides try to suborn the others' allies, contacts, and staff. As you roleplay those interactions, add twitches and pauses and looking away. You don't have to decide a supporting character's true allegiance immediately, or ever. A mortal pressured by both an inquisitor and a Cainite might well fracture under stress, becoming a double or triple agent or just helping whoever asked last.

The final danger in cooperation with the Second Inquisition is not betrayal... it's joining up for real. Thin-bloods and Caitiff who hate being condescended to, Anarchs who hate the Camarilla... plenty of Kindred might decide that the possibility of a sunny room beats the certainty of an Archon or a Blood Hunt. Perhaps the local Leopoldites have Sanbenito tendencies, and offer the coterie a chance at martyrdom, or even redemption... in exchange for a very full and detailed confession, and a few surprisingly enjoyable acts of violent penance.





# INDEX


## A

Absolved, 40
AC-130 Spectre Gunship, 78
Academic Specializations , 94
Active Denial System (ADS), 69
Against the Inquisiton: Cleanup, 111
Against the Inquisition: In From the Cold, 111
AISE, 95
Akritai, 127
Alchemist, 46
Amateur, 31
Amateurs, 144
Ammunition, 72
Animalist, 38
APC, 77
Arcane Effects, 43
Arcanum, 124
Armamenta, 86
Armor, 73
Armored SUV, 77
Armor-Piercing Rounds, 72
Arms and Materiel, 69
Artifacts, 83
Ashes of St. Godard, 85
Assassination, 106
Auditors, 53
Auto-da-Fé, 107
Avicennan Heart, 85

## B

B-2 Spirit Stealth Bomber, 78
Basal Ganglia Masking Agent, 79
Battering Ram, 74
Bear Trap, 15
Bear-Leader, 23
Bernini's Faceless Angel, 83
Black-Bagger, 23
Blackmailer, 15
Blood Deprivation, 103
Blood Doll, 16
Blood of Mandagloire, 46
Blood Supply, 96
Bloodborne Diseases and Parasites, 79
BOES, 128
Brazil, 128
Breacher, 31
Breaching Rounds, 72
Broker, 19
Brute, 47
Building OPFOR, 51
Bureau IX, 139
Burrower, 24
Busybody, 21

## C

C. Hydeii, 79
Canary, 20
CDC, 121
Cenacle, 54
Cenacle of St. Margaret, 63
Censer of Absolution, 86
Chaff, 54
Chainmail, 73
Chronicle Structures, 147, *See* Story Elements
Clearance Specialist, 32
Cleaver, 49
Coalition, 6
Coalition Response Algorithm, 112
Cog and the Deep State, 122
Common Enemies, 98
Community Informants, 91
Compound Crossbow, 70
Consent and Respectful Play, 8
Conspiracy Theorist (Collective), 144
Conspiracy Theorists, 143
Cross of Tertullian, 85
Cuckoo, 15
Cunning Folk, 37

## D

Dagger of Akkad, 87
Dangerous Games, 89
Day Strike, 106
Daywalker, 49
DEA, 121
Dealer, 19
Dental Pliers, 74
Deprogrammer, 16
Detective, 25
Disinformation, 100
Doctor, 26

## E

Enemies of My Enemies, 160, *See* Setting Elements
Enochian Sarcophagus, 84
ESOG, 134
ESOG Team XIII Soldier, 137
EV-H07, 79
Extortion, 104

## F

Faithful, 38
False Flagger, 18
Fang-Stinger, 47
FBI Special Affairs Division (SAD), 120
Fiberoptic Scope, 74
Fire and Sword, 153, *See* Thematic Elements

Fire Teams, 115
Firebug, 32
FIRSTLIGHT, 116
FIRSTLIGHT (NSA) Field Agent, 117
Five Torches, 10
Fixers and Faces: Social, 13
Flagellant, 39
Flare Gun, 70
Flash-bang Grenades, 72
Forensic Accountant, 24
Franciscan Aspergillum, 86
Freezer Fluid, 47
Front Line, 155

# G

Garrote, 70
General Difficulties, 13
Gentrification, 98
Gentrifier, 18
Ghoul Template, 35
G-Kontoret, 139
Gladius Dei, 134
Gladius Dei/ESOG Recruit, 137
Global Hawk Drone, 77
GPS Chips, 80
GPS Trackers, 75
Ground Penetrating Radar, 75
GRU Eighth Direction, 125
GRU-N58, 125, *See* Eighth Direction
GRU-N58 Psyops Specialist, 126

# H

Hacker, 26
Haiti, 139
Hammer, 25
Handlers, 104
Hedgehog, 155
Hit Man, 34
Hitters and Operators: Physical, 31
Holy Ground, 39
Holy Veil, 82, *See* Velum Sanctuarii
Homeland Special Program, 137
How to Use This Book, 7
Hunting Patterns, 90

# I

IAO-Tasked Seal, 119
ICE, 121
In Partibus Sanguisugarum, 156
Informant, 19
Information Awareness Office (IAO), 117
Intelligence Assets, 95
Interrogator, 34
Investigative Tactics, 90

# J

Japan, 138, 139
JIC, 95
JTRG, 123
JTRG Technician, 123

# K

Kevlar Vest, 74
Kidnapping, 101, *See* Rendition
KOL-05, 79

# L

La Calcédoine, 138
La Calcédoine Questionneur, 138
La Entità, 130
La Entità Attaché, 131
Lamplighter, 28
Laser Microphone, 75
Law Enforcement, 140
Law Enforcement (FBI/Special Branch/Europol Agent), 141
Law Enforcement (Police Officer), 141
Lazarene Witch Hunter, 134
Leopoldite Sicarius, 35
Lockpick Gun, 75
Lone Wolf, 32
Long Range Acoustic Device (LRAD), 70
Lordless, 50
Lordless Assassin, 50

# M

Map Blankbody Networks, 108
Mechanic, 24
Military Police Extraterritorial Operations (PMEX), 128
Minotaur, 54
Mirror Images, 58, *See* Thematic Elements
Mirror Mazes, 147
Mirror of Trust, 46
Monster Squad, 54
Mother Hen, 28
MRAP, *See* APC), 77
Mundane Gear, 74

# N

Neck Protector, 74
Necrophage Cocktail, 80
Newburgh Group, 11
Night and Fog, 156, *See* Thematic Elements
Night Strike, 107
Night Vision Optics, 75
Night Watch, 55
Nightwatchman, 70
Nullifier, 40

# O

Occulted Bosch Triptych, 84
Opening Gambits, 6
Operational Approaches, 101
Operational Resources, 108
OPFOR Backgrounds, 51
OPFOR Force Mix, 52
Organized Crime, 142
Organized Criminal, 142
Oswobodziciele Liberator, 17

# P

Parietum of St. Polycarp, 86
Party Planner, 23, *See* Bear-Leader
Phased Motion Detector, 80
Phone Phreak, 26
Picky Eaters, 97
Plastic Explosive, 72
PMEX Liaison Officer, 128
Police Vehicle, 76
Politician, 20
Praetorians, 55
Predator Drone, 78
Project Twilight, 11

Pscout, 40
Pstriker, 42
Psychic Surgeon, 17
Pyrokinetic, 43

# R

Reaper, 35
Recce, 56
Recruitment, 104
Red Gas, 82, *See* Velum Sanctuarii
Relics, 84
Reliquary of Agios Nikolas, 86
Rendition, 101
Restraints, 76
Riot Foam, 70
Riot Shield, 74
Road Flare, 70
Rovers, 56
Rubber Bullets, 73
Russia, 125

# S

SAD Special Agent, 120
Saviors, 56
Screamers, 80, *See* Phased Motion Detector
Second Inquisition, 6, 10
Second Inquisition Projects, 108
Serre du Garou, 87
Setting Elements, 151, 155, 160
Sheepfold, 155
Shoot or Talk?, 157, *See* Story Elements
Shroud of Sant'Ellero, 86
SI Lexicon, 10
Slayer, 33
Snatcher, 33
Sniper, 34
SO13, 124
SO13 "Headhunter", 125
Socialite, 21
Society of St. Leopold, 131
Sorcerer, 43
Special Deployment Team, 56
"Spot" Robotic Dog, 78
Standard Operating Procedures, 89
Story Elements, 147, 157
Storyteller Style, 7
Sunboarding, 103
Sunrise Bomb, 81
Support Helicopter, 77
Surveillance, 99
Surveillance Van, 76

# T

Tactical Drone, 77
Tactical Ear Buds, 76
Tactical Spider Robot, 78
Tail, 27
Tanglefoot Trap, 82
TASER, 71
Task Force, 57
Techies and Sleuths: Mental, 23
The Entity, 130, *See* La Entità
The Heartbeat Algorithm, 118
Theaters of Operation, 155, *See* Setting Elements
Thematic Elements, 153, 156, 158
Theme and Mood, 8
Thermite, 73
Thermobaric Munitions, 73
Third Intelligence Department, 138
Torture, 102, 103
Traitors, 57
Turncoats, 46
Types of OPFOR, 52
Tzimisce Monstrosity, 49

# U

Undermine a Background, 110
Unit 242 Special Purposes, 126
Unit 8211, 138
United Kingdom, 123
United States, 116
Unmanned Loitering Swarm Munitions, 78

# V

Vatican, 129
Vehicles, 76
Velum Sanctuarii, 11, 82
Vitae Tweaker, 50

# W

Warlocks and Clerics: Magical, 37
Warrior, 35
Water Cannon, 71
Waxen Poetica, 87
Weaponer, 28
Weapons, 69
Welcome to the Occupation, 151, *See* Setting Elements
Wet Team, 57
White Phosphorus, 73
WHITEHORSE, 57

# X

XScope 3/SD, 82
XTech, 79
XTechnician, 29

# Y

# Z

ZMEI Protocol Thin-Blood Commando, 127

# Second Inquisition

*The secret Church and the hidden State, hunting the hunters in cities and across continents*

An antagonists' guide to the rising Second Inquisition, this book contains:

- Opponents of your Kindred, and their special forces and equipment
- Information on the fires rising against the world's vampires, stoked by the Society of St. Leopold and the American FIRSTLIGHT black program
- New tools to expand your chronicles, including eldritch Artifacts, dozens of dangerous antagonists, and the tactics your coterie can use to fight back

RENEGADE GAME STUDIOS
renegadegames.com

WORLD OF DARKNESS
www.worldofdarkness.com

/PlayRGS @PlayRenegade @Renegade_Game_Studios

Manufacturer: Renegade Games, LLC. 306N West El Norte Parkway #325, Escondido, California 92026. Importers: Renegade France 52 Avenue Pierre Semard 94200 Ivry sur Seine France. P:+33 (0)1 77 37 60 47. Renegade Games, LLC. Juxon House 100 St Paul's Churchyard, London, England EC4M 8BU.
© 2021 Renegade Game Studios. All Rights Reserved.
Paradox Interactive®, Vampire the Masquerade®, World of Darkness®, Copyright 2018 Paradox Interactive AB (publ). All Rights Reserved.
Made in Seoul, Republic of Korea.

R 18+ CE UK CA

**Mature Advisory:** contains graphic and written content of a mature nature, including violence, sexual themes, and strong language. Reader discretion is advised.

LOT# 093021-1 $45.00
ISBN 978-1-7359938-9-8
54500>
9 781735 993898