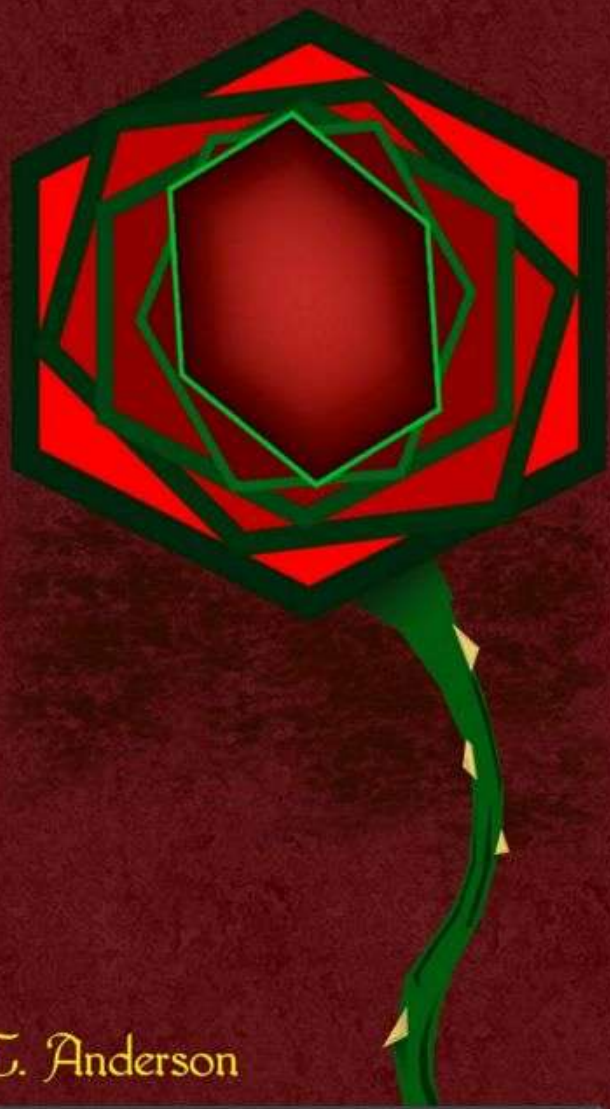
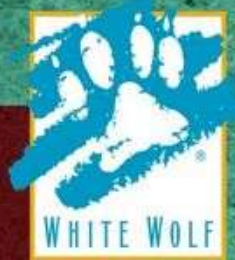


Red Rose Journal



By T. Anderson

STORYTELLERS
VAULT

FICTION



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Table of Contents

Brujah -----	3
Toreador -----	30
Ventrue -----	45
Tremere -----	66
Nosferatu -----	82
Gangrel -----	112
Malkavian -----	123
Endnote -----	133

Preword

Hello, this was a project I did for my original playthrough of Vampire the Masquerade: Bloodlines. If you want talk about my work, say you like it, say it sucks you can catch me on Twitch @ MrBigTAnderson, and that is the same on Instagram. All this was just meant for practice of my writing and for something that I hope you all like because I really enjoyed the game. I did all the art for the book as well, good or bad it is all on me and I don't mind playful jabs, but I do hope you enjoy some of the stories here.



Brujah

Some days were worse than others. There was once a title of a book he had come across in his travels questioning if robots dream electric sheep. One could use the basis of that question to form another. Do kindred dream of bloody sheep? Maybe the odd Malkavian, but he couldn't say he didn't. All of his dreams were just bloody messes.

Before the power bestowed him by his master he was just a Shepard in what would be known as western Germany. A small town of less than a hundred people burning in his dreams as the battle that turned him repeated over and over making sure he never forgot the horror.

Smoke of the houses choked the air as what few people that had gotten out were soon dealt with by either Sabbat skirmishers or the Camarilla shock troops trying to keep them out of the area. Many of the details would start muted before they picked up. It didn't matter though because it was always about them.

They didn't so much as care as try to keep everyone out and if something happened he would remember a young neonate then stabbing a Sabbat through a human with his saber before breaking it off and continuing the fight.

He remembered her burning in the fire so far away he

couldn't reach her. She was going to burn by the approaching fire. Only for someone to crash in behind her and take her for a snack as he watched.

Through the waves of heat it was a sight he would always remember as the tips of her red mane flayed about while he was over her draining her of life and his of his love. He remembered taking the poker and getting it nice and warm before taking a couple steps and jumping in the fire before his target could turn.

Driving the poker in to his back had gotten it's attention but he didn't care. They were all going to die there as the dream continued. Glaring down to her the lovely green eyes of his wife were soon lost of all spark and that drove him to gather what was left and pull the vampire spinning into the growing flames. While the attacker was flung away he dragged his beloved out hoping maybe there was something that could be done.

There wasn't. There would never be. What came next was a scene of her grave dug up in the grazing land standing over it. His master would come up after she was buried and placed a hand on his shoulder explaining how the Sabbat are trying to kill all who oppose.

Responding to him he only exclaimed his hatred of the Sabbat and their attacking as well as the lack of care from the other side, the one he was soon informed were the Camarilla. If they had just saved her all this would be manageable as the thought would flit in his mind.

Making the deal his master soon informed him of a third side, the Anarch's in which he was a member. The group for free choice away from the war of the Sabbat and the politics of the Camarilla, both groups seemed to be guilty to him.

Turning to his soon to be master he could remember dropping to his knees in front of her grave full of fire to get some kind of revenge on what they had cost him. Pleading with him to join the fight his master would acquiesce solemnly explaining there was no going back only for him to nod.

He understood and his embrace would begin surrounded by his masters flock. Waking up, the last scene made him jump before he thought on the sheer detail that flooded him. Smelling the dew on the grass, the puffs of cotton against a large crescent moon with speckled of stars seemingly shining in memory to her.

The pebble against his knee as he lead for his revenge before the eventual embrace, he could trace the size seemingly as fresh as if it had just happened. Except it didn't. Pulling the lid of his coffin open he was more then seventy five years into his second round and he had learned a lot since then.

Being the 'True' Brujah and not a thin blood had given him access to abilities he would only dream about while human. His own master had even given him the beginning to learn about how time flowed and he could even sense it blowing.

For forty years the Sabbat bowed to his master and the Anarchs of Europe in the area before finally being executed en mass back to Africa where it seemed was their last hold out as they tried digging everything relatively Kindred related for a chance at power.

He had learned a lot in those years despite never seeing the sun again. It was something he didn't mind losing as he could look at photographs of all kinds on the things he had still problems learning about.

One big thing was the internet, it seemed like a wondrous invention that could be used to learn from so many different minds that it was a font of knowledge, something he really wished he and his wife had while human and alive.

Still his knowledge wasn't complete on a subject he would try using it on. Originally his master got one for communication and taught him how to use it as they made it from one field to the next. Forty years of battle was what led after that night. Drinking only what he needed from the innocent and getting a little extra from the guilty his penchant to destroy then was something he was still proud of despite not knowing what honor it was.

Forty years a fighter made one exceptionally good and they knew his master was coming. Demyan Ivanov would never take the title of master, rather accepting being called as "Mr. Ivanov" he once joked how despite being damned his name meant roughly "follower of god's grace".

Those forty years he ran with a group of other children of Ivanov, learning the ways of the battlefield and of the True Brujah. Sometimes as he would fight the Sabbat or skirmish with some unfriendly Cammy's.

He would see one of the others fall from a mistake like

leaving one side open or getting simply outnumbered. Something he would always remember as the burning rage that filled the back of his mind would overpower the beast, and despite many elder's some vampires could still feel emotions.

He felt pain for example so he wanted to take it out of them ten fold which was going to be paid at any cost.

A small sound from his own laptop pulled him from the ennui of sitting there in his own memories. His master had let him into the kindred world teaching him some of the special abilities of the True Brujah, but in the setting of the Anarchs in the city he could only wonder how anything got done in the city.

The group had some heavy hitters in the city with Smiling Jack being found. He had even gotten a tie in with some of the neonates of the nosferatu in the area, which was a welcome influence in case any information needed to be found. The long eared clan could not be beat and were really the best spies out of all the clans he felt.

His job was simple, to keep an eye on Nines in case his idea got too big for the reality around them, or if the baron Isaac had put too much pressure on Nines or the Camarilla in town. Luckily the Tremere prince was much more thoughtful in his action than Lacroix, the last prince.

Walking in to the office as he made it to the city he could see the sheriff and he knew there would not be a whole lot of fight compared to him. Despite a couple hundred years it was often what one did with their time and he had used it to get power fast, his master had been known in some circles for some amazing experience fighting in the Jihad.

For some reason he was sent out as the group presence and the movements of some bigger subsections of their favorite slaughter target was beginning to move in. Normally it was something that both of them and maybe even more of their group would go through, something was coming that he could just feel in his gut but couldn't put it all together mentally.

From the computer it was clear that there would be more to look at in the coming nights and that he should be aware there would be some action coming. Equipment was being sent and could be picked up at the baron's office in a night.

Picking up his jacket after reading he had to wonder what

the others thought about all this. Locking the door he he was soon going to the elevator before walking out of the posh hotel that may have had some of the disgusting beasts in it.

Walking to the last round some of the kine were there for a cheap place to drink not knowing their place in the food chain. Moving past the bartender, the fat unintelligent oaf whose only use he could find was to make watered down versions of popular cocktails he saw one of Nines' gang of rabblers looking at him with a wary glance before pointing up the stairs muttering

“The true Brujah comes back to check on us otherwise fine kindred. Up the stairs your majesty....”

She really could be sweet, he thought, if she just opened up a touch to others because the rough exterior was not going to make friends with his master and pennies to pounds, nines and his crew would go down except for maybe one.

“What's shaking, haven't seen a newbie-truebie for a while. I thought you guys were all extinct!” Jack bellowed

A man whose reputation preceded him the Brujah powerhouse and technically elder, Smiling Jack. He smelled like whiskey and was in full biker garb but he was also a warrior for a couple hundred years fighting the Jyhad on many fields before falling back to Los Angeles. Wrapping an arm around him he saw the bottle and shot glasses already on the counter.

“You are one to talk! My master had fought by you in the strait. He was most likely the last one, right? Wulfgang cheerfully replied.

“C'mon we can chat over here, tell me you can do the pocket watch thing?” He wondered.

“Barely! Watch.” Wulfgang exclaimed

Pushing a glass over the side of the table he managed for moment to focus his vitae just as his master had shown him and to

all that had seen the glass was falling at a much slower pace. Even coming up to see the redhead was watching the glass almost hit the floor seconds slower then it should have before it was pulled back up.

“My master can go back in time only about a day. Can't do anything but watch and learn, but it helps for recon immensely.” he quipped to the previous pirate.

“Interesting, is that the discipline of the True Brujah?” Someone queried.

Coming out of the bathroom was the one and only Nines Rodriguez, a glimpse of a blood doll behind him sat in the half open stall.

“It is. Hard to learn, and trying something outside your ability leads to final death or torpor. So plenty of reason many don't even try.”

“Alright, it looks like everyone is here, get up here everyone! If you don't run with Nines, you got no need to be here we got plenty of fresh tables downstairs for you to enjoy.” Jack trumpeted to the bar shoos everyone out of the top level while the rest of kindred came up.

The second floor of the bar was soon filled with the half dozen bodies of lieutenants and Smiling jack around him. For a moment it looked like it could have been thousands or dozens as long as people were honest. His gaze seemed to give that effect which was a powerful show of presence that even the older vampires in the are have heard about.

“Everyone, this is Wulfgang, some of you may know him already but he is here to help us with the oncoming Sabbat attack.”

A murmur ran through those assembled before he continued.

“We have reason to believe either now or in December there will be a concentrated effort by the Sabbat to control the city. Tzimisce fleshcrafters were found in the Sarcophagus issue, we all remember, so we know that they have some people ready to throw down. If you find them no mercy clear the streets. Isaac is even sending his gargoye friend to help if we get really in the weeds.”

“We got the baron backing us, and we got this guy. He is the childe of the one of the most brutal Brujah in recent history. He was in the push across Europe and helped get the Sabbat to stay in Africa for a period. Care to explain what is going on from here?”

Coughing before stepping into the center of the circle Wulfgang looked to those around him and began.

“Hello, I am Wulfgang Van Brommel. Wulfgang works well, if you have a question raise your hand, we will get to them in a moment. I am here because we have reason to believe that a large force of Sabbat is going to make a play on the city to control the port. If they do so it will choke up every other sect not allied with them. Very simply due to their successes against the Camarilla on the east coast after the Ivory coast escape they will be trying to get all the ports here and we are close to a very big one.”

“In short I am here to help fight in the battle. I am of the True Brujah bloodline, don't blame me, that is what is called. I like to think that it just means I am truly just a Brujah, like you. Now. What other Anarch elders are worried about is that if they are going to lose the port is the costs of their equipment and connections going to raise due to scarcity and we are simply not going to allow this. We are the Anarchs, we live for a better world, and to help with that, myself and more so my master will be coming after he finishes up some business in eastern Europe.”

“How old are you?” asked Skelter

“75 and most of that was getting experience in the push across Europe towards Africa. We had been in many battles so while not an elder in age I do have some experience more on the

war front then in urban settings if things go truly chaotic, I will be able to help everyone here make sense of it. Jack can attest the rules for straight warfare differ from the skirmishes we have heard about, maybe he would like to explain what some of those difference may be?”

“Ya, I can do that, get back in line I got it.”

Clapping his hands he had gotten everyone's attention dismissing the previous speakers presence before speaking plainly.

“Listen, we still got to follow the masquerade out there, and they will not care. At that point is just rip their heart out before they get a chance to strike back. When they attack there will be more presence and if we don't hit back harder and faster our butts are going to be ash before sunrise. Stay sharp, get armed, if you want to learn a special way to kill 'em faster then do it now. This guy is okay. But his master is someone I know, we will have some backup. The problem is finding them out. Now get out of here we all get things to drink and others to do!”

Rubbing the bridge of his nose with a smile he could feel Skelter come up to his seat.

“75 years hunting the Sabbat. Man I heard about that thanks for giving us the heads up, but I don't think they will let us know anything going on until it happens so I will try to talk to some that may know. Try to enjoy the city while you can.”

Nodding at the veteran the thought rankled in his head even as he talked with Nines and Jack. Looking at his watch there was still many hours left and the city was big enough he could find something to do. Halloween was around the corner and even though it was a city he had an idea there would be some celebrations, there had to be something to do.

The next night he got face to face with the fact that after receiving his equipment he was still bored as hell. Which meant he need to get some art supplies. His last mechanical pencil remained the neck of the werewolf that had crossed them, and he hadn't

ordered the special ones yet so anything would do. From his hotel he could see there was still some places open he hadn't thought of. Finding a store on its last hours though he had stepped in to the brightly fluorescent shop.

Balls of colorful yarn, sketchbooks, the smell of paper and wood in the air, it made him feel like it was just right. He could see others crane their neck at his size. Before his embrace he was a natural six foot two as the would say here in the states.

Combined with the bloodline he made an impressive silhouette that some would not be taking their eyes off of. Kindred problems. Picking up the pencils, ink, placing a sketchbooks in the basket their was enough there to take his time until the target decided to pop their collective heads. Checking out the soundtrack of the city told of the problems unfolding around him.

Walking back with his bag of supplies a shriek came from one of the side alleys and in it he could clearly see a man with a blade against a smaller woman who was bleeding lightly from the smell. Sighing in what could be disgruntlement the man was just one of the local gangbangers that tried to slash him as he got closer.

She sat against the wall and for a moment he went back in time to before. He was human and she was still alive before the vampire struck. Studying her she seemed to be the spitting image of his dead wife, of course he knew that wasn't the case but how it made him feel gave him a flash of sympathy before bright blazing rage just under the surface.

The level of it only echoed by his inner beast. Dropping the bag he put his hands on the chest and neck of his attacker lifting him while he took slight cuts from the blade he carries. Blood buffing and his leather duster gave him enough protection to barely feel but it still annoyed him because she looked like her. She wasn't her but she would be safe if he had anything to say about it.

“Care to tell me why you are robbing this woman” He coolly whispered.

Getting spit on he had turned to her and with the warmest smile he could muster.

“You may want to close your eyes miss, this will not be pretty.” The ice in his tone chilled the alley.

Seeing her cover her ears and shut her eyes made him want to rip the throat out of this gang banger who thought he could touch her. Taking a step back the thought made him realize what she was but there was still some business to handle.

“You can't stop us. We're everywhere vato.” He struggled.

Crushing his ribs slowly he lifted him up the wall making sure to never lose eye contact so he could understand what would happen if things got any worse.

“That is fine, be aware, while I am here she is safe and if no one wants to respect that then...”

Pushing a hand in he could hear the muffle of breath and the snapping of bones into a lung.

“I am letting you go, so you can tell everyone. I see her harmed and that will be the very least of your problems.”

Dropping him to the ground he ran out of the dark space with what little wind he could get supporting himself against the buildings Turning around he knelt to her level.

“He is gone miss. You can open your eyes now.”

Pulling up at him his heartstrings pulled for the first time in near a century as the visage of her was right there. A life lived happily and this reminder made him feel things that had been lost for many years.

“Miss, my name is Wolfgang. You are safe.”

Jumping forward she had wrapped around him the best she could a face of gasps and looking up to the taller Brujah before noticing the cut on his forearm

“Oh my god, do you need an ambulance? She stated with a hand over her mouth.

Looking at the wound he could see it would heal up soon but pulling his jacket off he soon procured his sleeves to cover it while his vampire body did the job putting itself together.

“I will be fine, I heal well. Would you like some company to wherever you are going?”

“Uh-Yes, I would love that actually, if you are up to it, the police don't do jack shit around here, I tried to fight him off but well.”

“I understand. I have had a life that has given me some ability in such moments, I am glad I could help you miss...?” He fished for her name as respectfully as one could.

“Casey. Casey Neights. Nice to meet you Wulfgang. It is so good to see someone who can treat people with a little respect.”

Smiling both made their way up to her apartment while on the way it seemed clear she had no idea that he was kindred which made the True Brujah were often calm and logical but when he looked at her he saw a lot of things that made him feel a lot of emotions.

More then he would try to feel and trying to have some polite conversation he could also see that there were more threats then just the random drug pusher.

Trying to disassociate he could only get tangled in the mess a little more with each step as they made it through the entrance of the building to see the leering front desk man trying to add up what Wulfgang was and the fact that he would only made him believe he wanted to make a go at either dating, which despite not being together so long her personality seemed to be very averse to anyone remotely slimy.

The front desk man was shifty enough the Tzimisce wouldn't want him as a ghoul and while some people liked that for other reasons the didn't want anyone like that near Casey.

Casey was his touchstone, a bridge for him to be close to human again, and he had to play carefully because he didn't want to be the one who enslaved her or used blood bond as a cop out. If he could maybe down the line he could embrace her and they could have one of those few moments where they lived hundreds of years happily until whatever happens next or Gehenna whichever came first.

That would take time and for now telling her he was a kindred would only make her thing she came out of the frying pan and into the fire and that was just not going to happen, too much was at stake.

Walking on the elevator her voice was pulling him back from his frantic paths of thoughts.

“Wolfy, you okay? it looks like you were trying to kill him with your eyes. “

“Wolfy? Ah yes well I just didn't think highly of him that's all.”

“I know what you mean, he always leers at my ass when I am trying to go to work or something. You got some good instincts on you though. Most people let him slide until it's apparent. I can see why your parents named you Wolf-gang.” She chuckled in a way that brightened the elevator that made him want to keep her safe.”

“Will I see you again?”

Looking down at her in a moment the doors were already open and they were mere steps from her place.

“If you would like to.” Wulfgang replied quietly

Smiling she agreed to wanting to meet him again, at her place, in a few nights after work. The last thing he to make sure was writing on a piece of paper form one of the new scrapbooks he jotted down his phone number in case anyone bothered her, He

could be called on and there would be no problems getting whomever they wanted in line.

Taking back to his apartment he had realized he still had one call he had to make. Nosferatu were a powerful source of information gathering in the kindred world and he was aware there was a number of them in L.A. Pulling his phone out he had a few calls before getting on the line with one of the older ones by the name of Imalia.

Asking for a favor she dropped his call to her recent child who was more human than he was but sometimes that meant a little mercy as well explaining the situation about Casey and the gang he wanted to be kept up to date with who was aiming for her and how if he could set up some kind of protection.

Babcock was his name and it had seemed that he didn't have the power some of his elders did. That did not stop him from making a deal though on the basis of what he could do and what he wanted. Hearing about the meeting with the Anarch had gotten a few of the other clans on guard and Babcock wanted to get it straight. Explaining that they were setting up for a strong Sabbat fight in the streets the deal soon came down to what he could do.

A single favor, called in at any time against making sure he kept her safe whether by relaying information or by killing any untoward types until he could get her to at least understand what he was.

Simple enough, a deal both soon agreed.

The next night Babcock was already on the case dropping voicemails on the phone. Defending their land for their gang were the 12th street Reapers a group of drug dealers who are not above the worst to make sure that no one bothers them.

Unfortunately, for them they had continued to keep an eye on her apartment even going so far as knocking on the door and trying to persuade her to pay a protection charge before things got real bad. He had to take care of a recent hideout of theirs before going to see her and knowing she was scared enough to call him three times in fear for her life made the beast rattle against the mental chains.

In one of the dilapidated old sheds from one of the bigger buildings he was able to sneak his way in to see the 4 of them around the table with another in an even smaller room. He guessed

it was a bathroom as their conversation made their way to her and how the “German fat fuck” would get his. Standing up from the darkness of the corner many were shocked for him to punch his way through the table shattering it and dismissing their card game for something more high stakes.

Three minutes was all it took to get the information and in a moment of clarity he had washed his hands of the collected blood, bone fragment and soft tissue that had gotten stuck under his finger nails.

Even more so if he had just dropped his duster off back at him he could go back to her place where they would talk and she would be comforted by him and all that was what he wanted so using a rare touch of celerity he rushed back to his abode sticking to shadows in a big bloody blur.

Reaping the reapers was fun but he had bigger problems and getting back to her apartment she was still very visibly shaken despite professing how much he came by on short notice.

Walking in to her home was something special, and he didn't know why, it was one of those things that made him wonder if she really was a re incarnation from the past. Red hair and fairly short with a petite bust and wide hips she was really a spitting image of her.

Blinking a couple times the apartment was decorated with a mish mash of old posh furniture and a collection of folding chairs and tables. In the living room was a large couch that he could see counted as her bed from the sheets and pillows and the smell of it being worn in.

Behind the couch on the breakfast bar was a bunch of drawings, hers he would have to guess in some sort of collage like someone's father was so proud that he pinned everything up. Looking at those blue eyes he could see why the hypothetical father would, despite her beauty, she boasted a set of talents with charcoal that he find very high despite the lack of experience on the planet.

She was a third his age but unlike her he didn't show it that much, a thought that made him chuckle darkly mentally gauging any relationship. Sitting on the couch she had made herself warm under the blankets when she turned on the TV to the news.

“Breaking news bulletin! Four found mauled and dismembered in a modified utility shed less than thirty minutes ago. The police have told us that all four are part of the 12th street gang that has been causing problems for the people. We cannot show you scenes of the shed as it was very gruesome, there were more parts than bodies and it seemed who or whatever had gotten the drop on them had done it all by hand or by tool!” The pasty announcer reported.

“You made sure they wouldn't hurt me, they said they would do things and they grabbed me, you did that didn't you Wulfgang.” her tone was cold it was something that made him wince before the words hit him.

His pale skin blanched further as he didn't think of any excuse for her and she was bright enough to put it that when someone drops in to her life against the threat and people who comprise that threat are annihilated. In his mind he had wanted to get a couple months and let it lead on that maybe in the back of her mind she would figure out that he wasn't human but she could enjoy him just the same.

“I did destroy them, yes.” he replied mechanically.

She looked at him strangely for a moment. Before pointing at the screen.

“You mean that? I thought. I meant. You just weren't trying to get in my pants and paid the gang to do it?” She wondered.

“I did not pay them, no, I really just saw you last night and just felt like I should help you, like I should protect you. So I did.”

Pulling himself up he felt like he had stepped over a line trying to get to the door before he felt someone grab his hand making him pause in mid step as she was clasped in his hand trying to pull him back to the couch. Accepting her wordless invitation she began to curl in to his side and in his lap curled in her blanket where an arm

draped across her.

“So what are you? I don't know about you but humans cant take what you had yesterday and go to a gang banger hideout to do that.”

Pulling up the sleeve to show the cut already healed he had her attention and more evidence proving his story. He draped an arm around her waist pulling her close to him while he rested his head on hers. Opening his hand to feel the various callouses she began to talk

“You know I used to think things like werewolves, and genies are myths, but meeting you, I don't think they may be just myth, there may be a whole world out there that people just don't see. “

“Werewolves exist and quite frankly they are a huge pain in the ass. Genies I have seen and they are often the mystical version to lawyers. Learn the lingo or you will find yourself loop holed to oblivion as my friend would say.”

“So are you a werewolf?” she wondered.

Turning in his lap and looking at him in her blanket he could almost ask the baker from his memory to get a couple sweet rolls, but it wouldn't work.

“Nope, I am something different altogether, I can't give you details right now because of our rules, but we don't like the sun, we can eat the garlic and silver doesn't do much good.”

“Garlic? Silver? Why would you tell me that when yoooooh. I get it”

The realization of what he was coming to her was a step to fast for him. From it though, the fear she had shown had washed away for a vision of calm and content that made him wonder if it was as big a worry as previously feared. It was nice though for everything to just stop and enjoy the moment, she knew what was

going on and despite everything that could happen she wasn't running away.

All of it was just a moment of bliss before the Jyhad and gang violence tried to knock on their door again. It was something of an oasis in a time where they were few and far between. Feeling his phone rumble in his pocket the moment of oasis was soon disappearing before his eyes because everyone that called would be there to tell him something was coming or that new information had been found that may be changing the oncoming battle.

Pulling it out the number he knew it as the Baron's from Hollywood. That was something that made him wonder how bad something had gotten for the big man of the Anarch in the area.

Simon Abrham was a man of few words, his time in the area had given him a long tenured reach and despite his first visit earlier any call to the office seemed like a big warning bell. Barons were the powers of the area.

When the Anarchs at the bar wanted to do something there was very little in the way and they just went out to go do it while when the Baron called you there was less meeting and making a plan and more established rules about what you could do and say.

Positions like that demanded respect and in doing so there was so much you could do, but also there was the other side of the coin that when you got called on you had to get the job done. They would never call on you to say hello and he knew that.

Getting out of the building he could tell a couple of the cabs would give him a ride from downtown to his office the night sky. Clouds of purple and black tufts floated lazily for the half hour that it took to get there the wind smelled of lavender and night rain.

The complete difference from the warmth of apples and cinnamon and wool that was right under his nose less than an hour ago. Sitting against the aged leather seats waiting for the destination to come up made him think how different the two moments were despite being so close to each other.

Living for so long in such an active way led one to get introspective about such differences to really enjoy the varied things the unlfe could bring.

Granted, all the power was nice but having the small moments like that made it all have a reason. Fighting the Sabbat was the main reason for so long and now protecting Casey made

him feel like there was some balance that he didn't know he needed. It was a balm that he didn't know he needed.

All of it soothed him in a way that made him comfortable standing in front of the office before walking down the alley to the heavy wood door decorated with the stained glass design in bright colors that shined with the light from the back alley light.

Sparkling with the light beams everything seemed to glitter and glow before he turned the doorknob opening to the richly furnished office. Behind the oak desk sat the Toreador that owned the Baron title and had done so since before the issue with the Ankanan Sarcophagus saga.

Standing to full height he cleared his throat showing his teeth for a moment in a grimace of what was to come and already there was word of a skirmish coming via the parking garage near the last round.

Isaac wanted to show the Sabbath off right there and make sure that no Camarilla were needed downtown while the only thing he could think of was how it would be close enough toward her that his new friend, his touchstone, his kine would be at risk.

Anger flared before the look in his eyes took the baron for a moment who caught the moments pass by slowly in a reflex of the ability that separated the true Brujah from the rest of them. It wouldn't be needed but it would sure feel good to get it out he thought to himself. All that could happen was a full massacre, there could be no survivors just in case and word had gotten that there would be a fight.

Trying to call her to stay inside and lock the door. Only connected him to some jackal laughing while the sound of a couple gunshots went off and the whimper of her hurt. They had found her. They had followed the entire time, they had followed him, and now now they tried to make him fall back. Unfortunately all they did was invite destruction.

The last round was empty of everyone that wasn't connected to the Anarch movement they were getting ready and it was very clear by how he had come in that even Damsel saw someone less calm and more ready for a fight.

“Think you ca...!” The sound of tightening grip on flesh had called everyone down where Jack pulled the newcomer off

Damsel. He had been informed through his own means that there was an injured human and the Sabbat were not one for taking hostages.

“Wonderful time to find your touchstone kid, but we are all trying to make sure she gets out okay.” Jack joked

Skelter had pulled Damsel up who had tried to ask what was going on before Jack cut her off saying that until she found her touchstone it wouldn't be understood.

Jack looked at his eyes and saw the blink chilling anger of those lost years and self hatred and replied with all the sympathy he could dryly muster. Life was not one should be angry for he thought and unlife was just the same but they had to move and quick for her to have a chance.

Getting the few together it was quick run to to the parking structure where Jack had wanted to go on ahead to have some fun while Skelter, Damsel and Wulfgang would clear the underground structure floor by floor.

Wulfgang hated himself as he stood against the other two ready to go, the pit in his stomach wanted to swallow him up. He couldn't stop it. One day and he felt somewhat normal, somewhat because she was just her and he was targeted by the foolish Sabbat who wanted to make a point on his misery.

Skelter could see the look as he pulled his head up and unsheathed his knife the blade dressed in a white powder that made Damsel hiss and back away,

“White phosphorus, burns vamps to ash with a couple slashes, no fuss. My normal blade has a dispenser in it but this will work for what we have to do.” His tone made Skelter nod making sure that Damsel would be the rear guard.

Coming back from Vietnam a kindred, there were plenty of people breaking down. Plenty of ways that you could put oneself together, and he had seen what Wulfgang was doing three times out of all the candidates and those three people had put forward the greatest bloodbaths he had ever participated in.

Each one had made death an art form and he had felt like he was watching a master and the vibe he had gotten from those

dealers of bloodshed he was getting from the emotional true Brujah.

Offering a small bottle of white powder Wulfgang scanned it before shaking a little into the sheath of his knife tossing it over his blade before handing it back. Hearing a phone ring, damsel had responded and answered that Jack wanted to start.

The structure was six floors with plenty of parking spaces and even a couple sewer outlets so there was a possibility of more coming in. Boosting with celerity Wulfgang wanted to let them know what they had caused and decided for a shock and awe treatment. Ghouls tried shooting the shadows only to find joints twisted and all their blood drained there bodies stacked in the center of the route of the floor before Damsel and Skelter watched as Wulfgang raged from the shadows dashing through the shadows.

On the first floor it had taken thirty seconds to kill seven low level ghouls and kindred. Some in garish manner as arms were bent back in a warning to anyone that may escape. Standing at the ramp to the second floor Damsel and Skelter seemed ready to join and this time were ready to dash off in sync as one of the ghouls saw the trace of a form from the bottom of the ramp.

Damsel drained him fast enough that he was gone before he hit the ground and like a plague of death they unfurled on the second floor. Wulfgang was just wanting to find her. His knife glided though enemy vampires, ghouls found themselves drained in moments, the scents gave them away and he would make sure that with his power usage he would get every bit of blood he could.

No reason to go low if one didn't have to. The rush of seeing someone just tagged with his knife slowly erode to ash made him sing because there was plenty to go for that and even Skelter was had found the trick very effective lacing a couple with minor wounds before finding them dead before the kill shot.

Going to third floor he could feel a lot of kindred. The forces were gathering to fight. Seeing the vent made him think there was a way to get the drop and pulling a couple of the handguns from the piles of ash before decided that a little white phosphorus round was going to be effective. Damsel looked at him shaking a small amount in the clip before rolling it back and forth wondering if such a thing was illegal by the Geneva convention.

“Damsel, I understand your whole thing is being for the

people, but these Sabbat have done enough that I got called in. Then they decided to take one of the greatest chains a kindred has to their humanity. My touchstone. So if you want to bring the Geneva convention. You can stay up here, ring them up, and when I get done if I have one left I will use it on your phone because there is no rules here. No mercy, no love between sides. Sabbat vs Anarch Vs Camarilla and if I need to bring in mustard gas, then I will”

The calm demeanor made her angry. His cool tone made it worse and she was ready to argue about what was ethical before Skelter jumped in shaking his head before Wulfgang began walking off with his new ammunition ready to go.

“Can you believe this one? There are ethics you know. I mean There has to be some things one cannot do Skelter? Right?”

“I don't know. I had a touchstone and I lost it. I was nearly frenzying for a year so I know how important it is for him. On top of that he is handling these things in a way I wouldn't expected.”

“What do you mean?”

“I thought when we talked before were we getting some book read officer, When he said 75 years of experience, I didn't believe it, but just how he handled everything so far makes me think like we are holding him back like he his holding rank. I remember a heavy gunner back before I was embraced. We were all good soldiers but he was a genius on how to kill the enemy. I think we got another one like that.”

“I don't think so, he just seems like a fucking snob.” Damsel chided.

“Willing to make a bet on it?” Skelter wondered.

At the bottom of the ramp Wulfgang was waving his compatriots down before Skelter came down alone.

“Hey how are you doing I got a problem?”

“Did you nick yourself on your knife? I do have surgical jelly, that stops the burning.”

“Did I? No. No no. I know you haven't really let loose, and I got a bet with Damsel that you can't clear the floor in under two minutes. Want to earn a couple blue blood packs and work it out?”

They had all moved to the back corner next to a large moving truck in a large shadow that no one could see in. Putting down his knife and guns. Damsel eyed him up before the cold eyes of the man running gauntlet caught her.

“You want to see what happens without weapons? You got it.”

Counting him off everyone could see more than fourteen between the two main roads and two in the little path between them. The last three seconds before he began was the most crucial for those sorts of bets as Wulfgang thought over first moves like a game of chess.

What would be best he decided on was making sure no one came up from behind. Running back he dashed in to the person draining him in the few moments before his friends had thought to look in his direction.

Number two fell to a stealth neck snap. The third had his gun turned up and fired enough times bringing the rest of them coming toward the entrance in the span of the first thirty seconds the majority of them were standing there wondering what was going on while a familiar form dropped from the vent far in front of Damsel and Skelter.

Four, five, six, seven, eight, nine was when he got caught. Thinking there was still three in the group in front of them he made use of celerity dashing someone into the shadow were they were soon dropped out of it devoid of color.

Catching eleven unaware he had turned in fear shooting twelve before another neck snap. Three left only to turn in to the path and find an extra one he forgot. Putting his hand over the mouth of the offending he would have to figure there was still a

good forty five seconds left.

Crushing the spine, even for a ghoul was the end of the road and the now three left for sure Wulfgang mentally admitted in thirty seconds had a smile. Skelter could only count off the snaps and screams his watch in hand before the last one finished up. Right after the last one's death gurgle could be seen the watch stopped at 1:53.

“OH DAMNIT! I OWE YOU FOUR BLUEBLOOD PACKS” she raged.

Looking over the work it was clear he was being rather professional at least until he was out of sight. Walking through the small path next to elevator the sick angle of the lower jaw and spine made him nod about how that was more he was expecting.

Until he turned the corner where the other three were in a pile, or at least the majority of pieces were. One looked like his heart had been ripped out as well as the sternum. A pool of blood had painted the gray cement red in places.

“Go on down I am taking a faster route.” Wulfgang pointed at them as he had gotten an idea from the elevator he had passed.

Jogging back it had taken a fair amount of force to open the locked doors but as soon as they were forced open he had been able to drop down to the elevator car on the bottom floor. Pressing the button for the floor the doors opened to the surprise of the forces. Going to his knife holster he realized in a rare error that he hadn't picked them up.

Snapping the necks of the elevator guards a couple guns were easily procured and despite the lack of a knife, a fire axe was still in the red case on the wall after he had gone back to the ramp.

A quick moment in the shadow had allowed him to dress his weapons with the phosphorus before coming back out with the weapons meaning drastically changed. From the shadow he could see the level of goon was higher just by the body armor and there would be information or possibly more of her here as the various units scrambled to deal with the assault on now three fronts.

Walking into the light he had fired a shot off to bring

attention to himself where a collection of goons had tried to make their names before he introduced the axe to them in the case of kindred or drained them like a juice box in the case of kine. He could just stand and let it happen making sure to dodge a couple shots or defend if need be.

After six or so victims the only thing was that they were slowing down and he could not let them escape for what they did.

“Where are you! You wanted to follow me I thought we would talk face to face! He screamed to the rest of the floor.

No response as he made his way slowly forward.

“I never knew Sabbat to be cowards, I thought you were into animal partners and destroying the kine, but cowards as well, who would have guessed.” He spoke to the air.

“SHUT YOUR MOUTH!” A voice replied from the garage.

“Come out here and make me, and she had better be alive or so help me my insults will be the least of your woes” Wulfgang threatened, his hand tightening under the head of his bloody axe

“If you can find me Brujah, I doubt your mind's eye can understand my hiding to you. Obfuscation is a skill I am well versed....” He began to boast.

The sound of a gun loading and aiming at the vampire leaning against the box truck was soon followed by a bullet knocking him into view.

Fingering the burning wound he was clearly stronger then the dopes before “Ahh, white phosphorus. Not bad. You are from Russia?”

“No, but my sire is. Where is she or I will make every part burn”

“She is in the truck. All you have to do is beat me and my

forces to get her.”

“Kill the assamitehole and get the girl. One question though. Assamites were usually out of politics, why are you helping the Sabbat?”

“Since you are only a Brujah, because we want Gehenna to bring the antediluvians back so we can kill them and grant us their power, and this will be a grand battleground now come at me mongrel and meet your better.” He threatened

Celerity was activated and soon Potence to grant him the most power and speed he could possibly get. Something they didn't have normally made him need to get close. Assamites were well known for their weaponry as well and the warriors among them were some of the worst he had to fight.

Getting in close to take a slice with his knife he would be able to get a shot with his fist. In every exchange it was something of an even play as his hands could really do some damage, but he needed to get the axe in. Pulling at the handle of the truck a knife was soon set through his hand burning all the way while he tried to pepper his rib cage with extra shots.

What he didn't think of was getting his own slammed on pinning their hands together as he tried to pull away before realizing how far up it had gone. His other hand had bent the blade the best he could around to make sure that neither of them were going anywhere in there condition without heavy injury.

“We are bound together, what is your plan mongrel, can you kill me before she bleeds out?”

The shift of his axe had made his point as he tried to tie his arm against him only for the Sabbat to find Wulfgang the much stronger especially with Potence running. Taking an extra moment to use a blood buff he found the ability to handle the axe one handed.

Knowing the chemical would not end him it had to be some serious trauma that had gotten the vampire down. A gash across the midsection had only wounded but an idea had let him smile.

“Mongrel? Here is what I think about you.” Wulfgang retorted.

Dropping the weapon a small bottle was soon jammed into his wound before a hard knee had stopped him cold and bent over.

“You touched her.”

Another knee in the midsection nearly dropped him to the floor.

“You hurt her....”

A hard impact in the rib cage as he was screaming in pain had even caught the attention of the hurt women in the truck.

“and I will end you” He promised.

On his knees he had made the effort to try and climb up his attacker while Wulfgang sat on the truck bumper. The wide eyes of the warrior going black as his body slowly turned black and to ash with the chemicals and damage letting his hand go free despite the large piece of metal looped through it.

Tossing open the truck he had seen a major dilemma. Something he had thought about but times were tough and he had to make a call quick or she would be lost.

“Forgive me, Casey” he whispered to the victim.

Jack had been making his way around on the fifth floor where a good number of resources had been left about. Information about the Sabbat was rare and a couple of the moments he was waiting he had lock picked some small caches that he could take back to his haven and the Last Round and while he had begun to hear ruckus from upstairs it was Damsel and Skelter that had been coming down the ramp. When they had met up he had found out that Wulfgang was down below taking a hop on the elevator they

had begun to make a slaughtering field of the floor.

No one had spoken of the last floor and moving down the ramp the scene was something of a war zone as well. Moving around the first turn a large ring of bodies lay in the center of the road under the halogen lights before rushing around the second turn where the box truck had sat there, its back end opened. A pile of ash next to the back end while Wulfgang sat with Casey.

“Is she dead?” Skelter asked.

“No, but she would have been, she had been cut up from an Assamite and we had to really fight. I had to feed her my blood so she can survive.” He looked solemnly while Jack stepped forward.

“Did you say Assamite? They aren't even in the Sabbat,”

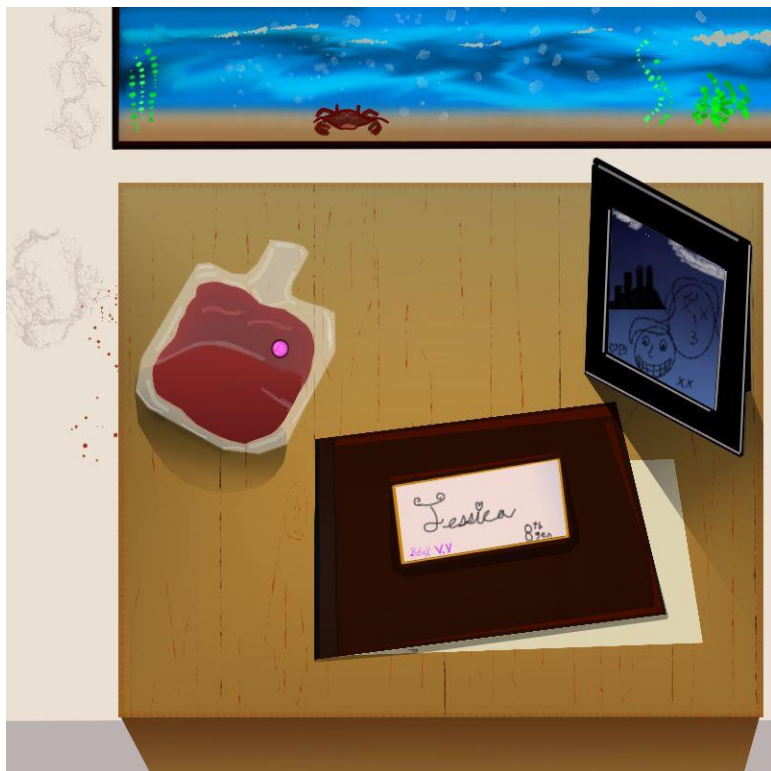
“Have you seen their daggers?” Wulfgang asked.

“Well yeah,” Jack shrugged.

Tossing the bent metal to him Jack looked at it pursing his lips before looking to his charges

“Shit, that's an Assamite dagger all right, and it has the crest of their warriors on it. That, is really going to fucking suck. I can tell Isaac. Get her back to her place, keep an eye on her, and I will send some ghouls to tape it up, hopefully she can survive.”

Looking down at her sleeping as peacefully as one could despite the wounds it was all he could hope for.



Toreador

She could not believe it! The prince had agreed to let her sire a childe and she knew who to pick of course and she was just thrilled as the news came from VV at the Vesuvius, her mind was spinning. It was something of a status to have a childe and after the events over the winter holidays she could bring her love in to the embrace of the kindred.

It may not be forever for their love but it would be a very long time she understood and for a very long time to be that happy was something she could be ecstatic for. Her ghoul, her boyfriend would be joining her and walking out of the club pulling her collar up there was a list of things to get ready.

Her haven would be easy enough for two and her fridge was already stocked with enough blood bags. It was easy enough with what she did, while not too powerful she had a fair amount of

clout in the clan because of VV.

Her sire was the elder of the clan, the representative of the clan fro the primogen in the city and one of the nicest souls she had ever met. Since becoming kindred even she has had to get her hands dirty to some degree mostly using what little self defense she had learned as a kine until they passed out, but she got what she needed out of it.

For everything that she had seen and heard of. Of blood magic and time stops of all the little secrets in the shadows and the feeding on the kine, she could not even think Velvet Velour has even struck someone. That was a portion of her that was innocent. Her efforts to keep it so was something she could actually very much respect.

Making her way downtown there was a feeling of calm after the battle and many of the powers were still taking count of everything. She had just come in from Las Vegas after Velvet was doing a show. They had hit it off and when she had left she had gotten robbed and shot, Velvet had made a decision to save her and the embrace opened her up to this whole new world she could bestow to another.

Walking through the polished brass and clouded glass doors of the Ventrue Arms hotel the deskman, a ghoul of a high ranking Ventrue pumped his arm in celebration for her. One she returned with a wide smile before setting off to find him. Turning the corner in to the bar the young man behind the counter was mixing a cocktail of what looked like grenadine and blood.

He was tall and semi thick looking more like a bouncer then a bartender but his personality had led many to be friendly enough that he became a mainstay of the place.

“James, we got approved! I just got word” She giggled

James turned and waited a moment, the words registering with him has there were some not privy to the kindred in the room. Figuring out what and why she was so happy he began to tear up as she walked over to him.

Vaulting over the bar she was spun in his arms as the vampires around had different reactions then the kine. The general reaction though was congratulation as it was still something to be

happy about unless you were wary of them already.

“Oh Jessie, that is amazing, and have you made your decision?”

“Of course you big oaf, what do you think I am here for” She rested her head on his shoulder defined, but not overly so and with a fair amount of mass. She could already think of how the embrace would work with that.

“Take some time off and tell your boss. The doorman knows. I am going to go get everything ready.” She squeezed him just enough to lift him off the floor before heading out the list of things that would be needed starting to get longer as she felt lighter then air.

It was going to be tonight and James would be hers. James had been her ghoul for a while, he had come down on hard times and after putting in a good word he had gotten the bar tending job which led to wondering about the kindred.

One of their meetings. he had wondered what everything was and she could only tell him if he would take a little of her blood to form a bond. Remembering back he was such a clod that he offered some of his as a gift for whatever value it meant which she gladly took.

That was the start of their blood bond. They had gone through with a full blood bond drinking each others blood two more times. He got the blood bond effect while she got a nice snack at a time where her job was beginning to grind on her.

Everything seemed like it had to be relearned in this new world despite being the same Hollywood she had gone to when she was just seventeen. Despite everything she tried to make the most of it, Isaac Abrams was her grand sire and she was a movie buff which led to some spirited conversations when she was allowed as he was the leader of the area.

He seemed to find it enjoyable talking about his work in the film industry taking a moment to step away from the issues of kindred society. It still was just one of the many moments that made her wonder how she couldn't see all this before.

Her embrace was one of the most magical moments of her life, granted afterwards was difficult for about a month but she was ready she knew what was going to happen. The embrace was something that took time and hurt like hell because of the changes of the body. You did die when you were embraced but you still felt it so she needed some things to dull the pain.

Stopping on the corner she realized that she was near frenzy as well and he could be the same. Luckily Velvet was taken by a very old vampire which led her to have some good juice, as she also learned the higher the generation the more power the vitae naturally has.

Velvet was a seventh generation which made her eighth and would make James ninth. The rumors went that thin bloods were popping up around the fourteen and fifteen generational mark Not her problem luckily. Her clan were not known for great warriors which made it easier to corral as she had seen come embraces, she had been usually sent to help some of the newer but she had never taken stock of what was really needed. Heading back to Vesuvius she knew her sire would help if she asked.

The strip club was going through one of the better business nights and after telling the bartender she needed to see her she was told to wait up in the VIP room and she would be there in ten minutes. Sitting on the fake leather seats the bright back lit lights on the wall showed posters of girls wrapped around poles with fake names.

Each of them she knew were making a lot of money as the club had done very well even on the worst nights, even recently she heard they did a food drive for an orphanage on VV's request. She was sitting with her hands on her knees and spinning her thumbs in her hands as she heard the familiar clack of stiletto against the steps getting louder.

Her sire was coming to view. The busty, voluptuous Velvet Velour in her glory and corset fresh from her dancing twiddling a small stack of crinkled bills no doubt pulled from various places.

“Hello Jessica, I thought you would be doing something right about now” she mused.

“I know, the thing is, I have helped with enough people in

their embrace but I don't actually know what is needed to make it as painless as possible.” Jessica fidgeted.

“Mm-hmm that is a problem, first you need to make sure your windows and any outlet of light is barricaded, if someone frenzies they don't want to break it in the day and turn to ash. Blood of course, I would say blood packs just to get the motor running and when he comes to his senses, well you can have some fun then.” Velvet calmly explained.

“Anything else I can do, I don't want him to be in pain.” Jessica wondered

She pouted sitting next to her childe wrapping an arm around her shoulders.

“James? “ She asked.

“Yes, are you going to tell me its a bad idea?” She fearfully asked

“Absolutely not, you two are made for each other, but unfortunately as delicious as the embrace is, the afterwards is rather unpleasant. If you can get some blood pack and mix it with some strong painkillers it will have an effect but it will not be as strong as you think. “

“I can dose him?”

“Oh yes, it makes some things interesting. Try going to some 420 events and take a bite of someone, you will be unwound for a good while. “ She licked her lips at the memory.

“Well I may give that a try later. Thank you V.V I am going to go and let the beautiful girls dance.”

“Oh Jessie you can dance here, there are men and women who prefer a more petite model, keep it in mind in case you don't like doing errands.” answering with a wink she began to make her

way back downstairs.

Back at the apartment she was lucky to live in a place that offered no windows, the kindred presence was strong enough that it was taken into effect.

It wasn't the greatest of places but a two floor studio would definitely work for their needs and the cement walls would give a lot of trouble for a frenzying vampire. The only real escape was the vent and she had made sure to place her extra boxes in front of it so unless he liked tossing a dozen boxes of clothes and random items he couldn't go anywhere.

She needed some drugged blood and that meant she had to go see the prince of Santa Clara. Ms. Voerman owned the blood bank in the area as well as a night club making it a prime spot to get resupplied on bags, even selling her own vitae on occasion for some prime profits.

Admitting the girl had some moxie to do such a thing it was a problem that she was a monopoly in the area, She could set the prices or ban people completely and had done so to great effect to get something out of it. Having that even Isaac had to respect her demands at times allowing her some supplies and sales routes in the area.

Mixers was blood that had been prepared to some degree to get a certain effect and she did sell it as the grapevine had informed her, but it also had informed her that it would be at great cost and one had to talk to her in person which could be a bit disturbing.

One other thing was that there was another Malkavian that was talking business in the area specifically downtown buying up a skyscraper that had gotten the attention of a few people. Nothing had happened yet except for talks with Ms. Voerman.

It was strange that such power came from such a small province but it made her on guard as she went into the asylum with a heavy wad of cash in her pocket. All she could hope was the price was named, stock was on hand and it was an in and out deal.

Making it through the entrance of The Asylum the bright colored lights were waving on the dance floor while the people on it flailed in what they hoped was to the rhythm. Leaning over to the bartender his sausage finger pointed to an elevator under the stairs that went up to her office. Thanking him profusely she dropped a

twenty and tried to avoid the various people trying to get her to dance. If anything was a positive it seemed that some people were on some things.

The elevator was something of a chamber separating the two areas with the plush green interior and polished brass, it was actually quite nice despite the dance floor made her wonder if Gehenna started. Walking out the door was closed her and for a moment she wondered whether to knock or to announce her presence before the strong voice had called.

“Come in” a voice barked.

Walking in the office was large and seemed like a tale of two people with one person being the very studious business minded but had no version of fun while the other used the space full of satin sheets and bright paints for some kind of adult playroom.

“Prince Voerman, I presume?”

Giving a smirk to the title she had taken her hand for a firm shake

“Yes that is me. Glad you have kept up on power in the area, anyway let us get down to business.”

Sitting on either side of the large maple desk the women sat with her hands folded in front of her before speaking again.

“I hear you are in need of some special stock of blood, is that correct?” She queried coolly

“Yes ma'am I want my childe to have the easiest possible experience and I hear this can help.”

Nodding for a moment she had taken a piece of paper, scribbling furiously on it before reading it and looking at it.

“Ah first childe, that is always a special thing. Generation?”

“I am eighth and he would be ninth. My sire got hit by a very old one”

Opening her eyes for a moment she nodded as she put it all together.

“You are a childe of Velvet? And only eighth generation, very interesting. Shouldn't have any issue of him going to be a thin-blood. So yes this would help, but here is my problem. I don't have a whole lot of stock so I need something from you.”

Paling as much as she could she hoped it wouldn't be too dangerous.

“My sister, rambunctious as she is while not a Toreador has a lot of respect for your sire, and if you can get Velvet to let my sister dance at the club for a couple weeks, I think I could give it to you”

“I don't know if I can, but I will try. If I may ask why does she want to dance there?”

“No earthly idea, but she is willing to cover the cost of the blood if you get it.” Smiling as she answered

Jessie soon made her way out of the office. The small waiting room gave her nowhere to sit as she dialed the number to her sire.

“Jess! How is it going? “VV asked happily the sounds of a full club at work behind her.

“Um, it could be better, listen. I have a question. How are you with the Voerman sisters?

“Hmm I hear Jeanette is a little vixen, Therese is a bit of a prude but looks good. Interesting for a Malkavian family? Why do you ask?”

“It just so happens Therese Voerman will give me the supply of painkiller spiked blood, if Jeanette dances there for three weeks. Does that sound doable?”

“Jeanette? Dance here? Let me see, is she there?”

Walking back in, Therese was typing on her computer. After handing over the phone Jessie could only hold her breath as they discussed details and exchanged pleasantries. It didn't seem so bad on the surface but there were things under the surface she may not have been aware of. Five minutes of suspense had led to her hanging up the phone handing it over softly in her gloved palm.

“Well, that went much better than I had thought, give me your address and I will have it delivered tonight. You will find them marked with a pink sticker and the regular blood will be green.”

“Regular blood?”

“Oh yes, this helped me immensely I am tossing in a little of the regular product as a bit of a thank you. If you want to work with me again let me know, I am sure we can come to a deal.”

Her grin unnerved her it wasn't sadistic or shady, it was legitimately happy and considering her history that made it more unnerving than anything else.

Back at the apartment though a large black chilled foot cooler and the fridge were filled with blood with stickers of pink and green associated to what was in them and it felt it seemed that she could go ahead with this the last thing was there was some part of her that made her wonder if she could pull this off ?

If she screwed up then he was dead and gone and she would be stuck alone in the undead knowing one of the best pieces of it was pulled out because of her own stupidity. Sitting on the couch, the blood seemed to stare at her with the weight of what it

would be needed for.

Pulling out her phone she had to call someone and VV was out of the question as she was bothered twice she couldn't bother her again. Scrolling down the contacts she needed someone with authority and experience.

“Isaac Abrams.” The old man answered the phone after it rang twice his tone clear and cold.

The day had been recently uneventful, a small lull in the action between Sabbat attacks and Camarilla politics, answering the phone he had first thought from her tone that there was some creature trying to keep her hostage.

After a couple moments of her gibbering she had found the worry to be completely unwarranted. She was nervous about siring her first childe and wanted some information. Raising an eyebrow he had to try not to laugh at her emotional storm, calming her down it had been a few moments of letting her worries blow out before he could get a strong word in.

“Jessica, drain him completely and then let him drink from you. Just do it one after the other and you will be fine the more you worry the more of a chance you will make an error.”

Rubbing his nose there was a small smirk under his hand as she had been a bit of a bright kindred, and the addition of her being a fan of movies and knowing him had made him swell with pride, she had been growing closer to his life and to hear her scared of screwing up also made him wonder how he had gotten through his own first experience.

“Listen dear, take a drink, get some wine if it helps, relax however you need to and just enjoy it. You know it works and it has sounded like you have gotten everything covered, if you truly want to feel better I will have my sheriff check in to make sure everything is going alright. If things go badly he can contain the situation” He administered the tone like a teacher giving a pass on a quiz

“Thank you uncle Isaac I really appreciate this. I-i I just need to relax.”

“Good girl, go relax and enjoy the night, goodbye.”

Hanging up the phone softly he could only shake his head for a moment about how the youth were sometimes ill equipped for what the world threw at them. Despite his own thoughts it was clear he had to call the sheriff to check in for any rampaging kindred. Dialing the number after the thought it was clear to him that maybe he needed to relax a bit himself. His neck was getting a bit stiff.

Back at the apartment Jessica was pulling one of the boxes of wine they had. While alcohol would not do much it was the action and the smell that made her unwind. After the three or four boxes and some blood she was ready to at least not have a fit.

Dropping the box on the coffee table next to a blood pack she had really hoped there was no problem but also understanding how one could overthink it she opened the box and drank from the bag like she would a blood doll before turning on the television.

James was coming back to the apartment. The word had already gotten out that he as going to be embraced that night and some of the adventures had already come back to him. Hearing her had to go talk to the baron of Santa Monica was something he had to raise an eyebrow at.

Everyone had talked about the Voerman sisters coming to Hollywood which made some of the older Ventrue women bristle as they had already caught many of the ears of the younger or more powerful kindred. Some show had even been set up at the Vesuvius and posters had already been sent to all the kindred hot spot for a couple weeks.

It had been a long night for her already and as he got off the elevator walking on the tiles to the apartment door the blood bond had told him she was inside and somewhat disturbed. Something was on her mind and turning the door handle she had a pair of empty bags half pulled from the wine boxes. The look of her trying to clear her mind watching children's cartoon made him chuckle.

“Hey dear, I heard you had a long night.” He smiled

closing the door before dropping his backpack.

Tossing the backpack down he dropped on the couch next to her resting heavily against the back cushion. Feeling the slight buzz from the alcohol she had finally been able to get her mind down. Cupping his face he could feel her power before she had come in for a kiss.

Soft feathery touches one to one was simply making her life light up She had a different set of emotions but while she was human and there would be little butterflies floating in her stomach. While being a kindred it felt more like silky touches something that would make her smile at the sensation it brought and wonder how things could go.

He looked up his big brown eyes against her near black ones she could barely keep her emotions and looping her arms around him. She could only understand them in that moment there was no fear, there was no disgust or self doubt.

Leaning in and getting the first bite he could feel her fangs sink in but it wasn't painful, it felt good like an electric current going through his heart and feeling her close to him. Pulling her closer he had begun to feel his breaths shorten.

Moment by moment he could feel the blood drain from his neck and the bond between them was growing he could feel it and despite how bad, this was physically destroying his body. It was killing him, but the bliss it brought made him feel like an angel, like he was on a cloud and his own little guardian was there watching him and with every gulp he felt ready. Drawing her close with the last of his power to give her the best hug, to show her, to tell her that everything is okay and she should be happy.

The motion was noticed as she broke the bite for a moment to look at him the color from his cheeks already draining. Arms around her back pulled her in and his breath was shaky but she in that moment was going to go through with this. Ending his life soon he had taken his last moments to catch a few drops.

Pulling him his head dropped on her shoulder the lack of breath a sign that she had drained him dry and soon the second step of the embrace would have to begin. Laying him out on the couch she dropped to her knees clutching her hand as hard as she could the nails cut into her palm bringing forth the vitae that would cause

him to survive as a Toreador.

Brushing his hair lightly she smiled before taking her hand to his mouth dropping small drops of scarlet life into him. Leaving her hand over his mouth she could feel herself beginning to fall asleep as the callings of the past efforts started to wear on her. Catching a breath she could drop her head on the cushion for a moment and take a nap there was still a lot of time to go through.

Asking herself once if vampires dreamed, she always would think no, but resting in front of him made her also feel something from their bond, a sort of vibration that made him the center of everything.

Being a sire was a watershed for her, it made her wonder, and to such a degree that she dreamed, visions of the blood bond all of it seemed to mesh well in a scene that made a couple moments.

Time stretched and yawned in front of her it made it all seem like a couple seconds and a couple hours and the visions began to morph as if they were painted in front of her. She watched the childe, her love get up from the couch and begin to move and work through the motions of being a kindred, coming back into the world as one who would never see the sun.

It was strange to see everything in such an action, but it made what her heart was swelled in the small actions that he got through. Jessie felt something like pride that her childe was doing well.

A heavy pounding on the door pulled her from the morphing painted scenes back to the tiled floor of the apartment. She opened her eyes slowly. The cut on her hand still draining into him.

“Isaac sent me! Is all well?” A demanding voice asked.

Booming and heavy the voice carried through the door and the cotton of her mind enough to where she could respond. Somewhere she would have to guess it was a Brujah but that didn't matter. It was one of the odd moments of clarity before she answered.

“I'm sorry yes. I am feeding him the vitae now.”, she

weakly mewled.

The tone of her voice made her realize the whole thing had done more damage to her emotionally yet with her lover there, ready and becoming one of them it was something of a hope that she still had enough to keep the momentum.

Losing him at that point would destroy her so after hearing the pounding steps of the sheriff away from the door she had once again dropped her head to the cushion before letting the day pass them by.

James was in unbearable pain the first night. Screaming and grasping for air the first blood pack that was spiked seemed to take the edge off, but it was clear that his systems were done. After the unbelievable high of being embraced he had begun to feel the burning pain of his human systems withering and dying in short order.

Holding her to him after the first blood pack, the wear on her seemed apparent and it would be for a few days as he would rightly assume. To help it along he handed her a laced blood pack to help her through while his own system wracked him with pain.

He would say the pain was like some taking a grater to his insides. It felt horrible and according to Jessie it would be the case for a few days minimum. Luckily one of the major hurdles was the first feed which the blood packs he used took care of.

A rampaging vampire was always bad, even if it was a Toreador, but here in the apartment it just seemed like a sick couple trying to get well. In some perverted twist on the old drama scene he still felt as much at home as any sitcom that would use it and James trying to walk from the chest near the coach made his way back to his seat next to her.

Smiling slightly she had enjoyed what it had done to his body giving him new power despite the pain and even in the rebuilding process her looks had told him that he had been embraced well. Pains of his grating insides was dulled even further with the smell of mint and shampoo, with her weight in his arms.

Pulling the remote, he had heard there was some new movie about blood drinking faeries that was getting traction and watching it with her was something that makes time slip on by. Sometimes the best part of living with another you loved was just

the small things, how great everything looked even when they were not at their best.

Simple things that despite the world around them, James thought, of kindred and mages, or werewolves, and curses there was something in it that allowed such happy little things to exist, if one looked for them, he was happy he did. Unlife wasn't so bad despite the aching gut and after a while he could get used to it. All he had right now was perfect for him. All in all it was just the sort of thing he was happy to have. Her with him happily enjoying the rest of their days.



Ventru

Five hundred years ago a great battle was had in what was Kajikistan. He had walked long and far from china to fight for his uncle that had made it a couple steps up the political ladder. The

night was warm and while the sand was warmer, the grass felt like it was dewing well before the moon dropped from the sky, he could look down and see the little droplets of water and watching it there was something in his soul that felt off.

He was there to protect the storage of food that the farm had grown, he was going to help his uncle sell it, they would be richer, he could bring his family to this new land that felt more like the beach without the ocean.

On that night though, when the moon was full and the grass dewed early his uncle had made sure to lock the doors tighter then ever before. A pair of deep iron locks hung from the door as a few of the other guards circled.

The wind came from the wrong hill and something stood in his spirit that told him to go back. It was instinctual, something that was not said more then felt on the grass and sands. Looking around again he had seen a guard run in to the dunes lit blue by the light of the moon only for a shadow faster then Djinn to come out and snatch him away, screaming was there only for a moment before it went deathly silent.

“Hold fast, something is out here with us..” Hem uttered to the other guard before gripping his pike.

His partner nodded pulling his spear out of the grass and brandishing it as they stood back to back.

It had taken a single moment for their lives to change. Black streaks! Shadows barely in the line of vision came over the sand dune as he has his back to his partner and they attacked with ferocity that made any natural creature fear for itself.

Screams were muffled and looking further in to the small house for his uncle it was clear that whatever these things were had killed him off, looking in the window he could see his uncle grabbing at the air as the creature snapped at his neck.

“Beasts from the underworld.. We must stay observant. Zhen. What can you see?” Whispering behind him the answer made him realize there was nothing he could do.

“Zhen, is no longer of the living,”

Snapping around he saw the form of his partner lifted and still in position as he would be except for the fact of a white human looking beast with blood dripping from its lips.

“Life-eater... LIFE-EATERS!” He had screamed while he could.

The couple left in the building had heard before he had gotten punched. The force of which had sent him back across one of the pens to the building and without looking he could tell his chest plate was bent around the force of the punch.

After coughing up a spatter of blood he realized there was more that had been damaged by the strike. Walking up to him the black shrouded figure. Opened itself as a couple of its compatriots gathered around him.

“What will you do, guard, you are the last one breathing.” His tone was snide and it seemed like he was one of the palace types, soft but for some reason blessed with unholy power.

“I will...die. Like a soldier. Fighting... and then you have nothing butthe SANDS!”

His last attack had been to swing his pike from his position and with the edge catching two of them their faces had begun to turn from snide victory into anger at the disgrace. He looked back on it that it was a good way to go and feeling the bite he knew he gave it everything ready to embrace death.

It was unfortunately not to be. Waking up in the storage building he felt a burning anger in his veins that made him roar at the night sky. A small piece of paper was wrapped in a ribbon from his uncle's robe.

“Dear Guard, You were ready for death. So we gave it to you. Unfortunately we also decided to give you life. As of now you are a Ventrue. Long Live the Camarilla.”

Five hundred years, and those last four words burned him. Life never seeing the sun had led him around the world multiple times. It had gotten the vampires that made him this beast and they had been made to ash. His family had been informed of the change, eventually, but he was a demon, a creature of the night, a soulless life eater and despite that he had looked to the time as a sign of spiritual challenge.

While those centuries had crept by he had learned a lot. One of the few moments of happiness he had was watching humanity grow from the farmers and herding to the booming technological marvels that had been going right from the dirt.

Los Angeles was one of the bigger cities on the west coast and recently the Anarch's had been gaining steam in the area usurping the Camarilla and the Sabbat for the control. There was still problems from various groups but with the Anarch movement was finding those with the beliefs closest to his own and that was interesting considering the clan.

Ventrue were the poster boys for the Camarilla, they were known politicians and despite their disciplines for speed and their ability to sway other had given them a leg up the ladders in other movements.

He was a swordsman. Despite having a pike, when he went back to his family he had been given his sword, based on the models of Japan and after a couple tweaks it had served him well, it was his mighty steed. When the motion picture came around it was his Silver to his Lone Rider and he knew it.

Being so close to Hollywood he had watched as the lights of the buildings blurred as the taxi went by his suit and bag nearly blending into the dark fabric of the seats. A small thought popped about how he could try to get some memorabilia from one of the western movies he enjoyed.

That was something that could wait for later as there was plenty in Chinatown to get a handle on, having some of the best armaments in the area from the rumor had made him wonder what was needed for that to be the case. His experience had told him that there was always a need when people stocked high power items and there was never a stockpile just for the sake of someone having a collection.

Exiting the cab as they pulled up a large gray building with

light blue lights seemed to stand against the sky, the letters “Fu Syndicate” turned off. Across was the red temple gate that marked the entrance to his new supposed home while he gathered some things.

Pulling his items he had easily carried them in his arm before checking the time turning left there was the fact of getting a place that would be accommodating to his kind.

He couldn't remember what the man's name was. Kine were often times flickers in his life and he did not care to spend the space if he didn't need to. From the smell of slightly sweet perfume on some of the items he could tell there was a woman, younger, and looking from the picture on the desk most likely his daughter.

She was smiling over him flashing a peace sign while he sat on the cement bench. Everything had been set up in advance, easy enough and with a simple nod of the head he was handed the key and told where his new home was.

Walking out of the doors of the Red Dragon there was a scent. Something he recognized between the incense and the cologne of men. Across the main walkway was an alley he was going to use were no less than three people currently making mischief on the various poor souls that got in their way.

That was going to stop. Pulling his sunglasses down he felt his blood begin to boil in his veins and the very thought of ending them began to fill his ears. Snappings of the beast were strong, but he knew who was stronger.

His jacket was over his bag and sword, it wouldn't be a contest if they tried and as sure as the stars glittered one of them stepped in front of him smelling like the dregs of a Colombian field.

“Man, how about we do this nicely...”

Popping a small switch it wasn't a moment before the jacket was tossed on to him while flailing he gathered himself gripping the handle of the sword and swinging it in the sheath at the blinded man who was sent back to his colleagues well past knocked out as he fell limply to the cement.

Looking to the two remaining both had a moment where they pondered their chances and deciding they would be able to

beat him if they attacked at the same time they were soon proven wrong as the covered sword made swung powered with a boost of celerity and sending spinning back from the force to the dance club behind them.

Collecting his jacket and case all three had dropped to the walkway with little more then the occasional gurgle of pain. Finally, making his way to what would be his haven until the task had gotten done there was some Camarilla bruisers forcing the Anarchs to hang back and while he felt he wouldn't have too much of a problem it was strange by some thought for the Ventrue to be called upon by the Anarchs to help defend their beliefs, but he truly felt they were worth defending and maybe would make it eventually one step closer to the bridge between kine and kindred.

The entire idea of the masquerade bothered him, it was something that was needed at this case, his time had shown him what happened if people had learned of the creatures in their midst. The past six months had been difficult in the area and while the main powers were gathering their forces there had been some skirmishes that had sent the alliance of Camarilla and Anarchs against the Sabbat who had been trying to shut down every port going into the United States.

This was a hotly contested point and the temperature was going to rise as only this and Portland were left standing for Anarchs. While despite all the flouncing and stomping the Camarilla couldn't get the cities they had lost to the Sabbat. As it was explained to him if the Sabbat had every port then they could choke the vampire markets by simply allowing their own dealers in. It would be a trade war with vicious consequences.

His job, simply was not to let that happen. Large battles were planned and trying to keep the masquerade while all that was going to be difficult. For his part though he was being paid handsomely, including his own haven in Hollywood proper which made it a lot easier.

The first meeting in person with Isaac Abrams would be something to really gauge the future on as it seemed he was younger yet still had an air of wisdom, needed for the younger movement.

Making his way to Hollywood proper was a bit of a learning moment even for him. Despite the love of motion pictures,

particularly westerns. Seeing where they came from made him realize under the paint a lot of places were really the same. This careful contemplation was being brought to the meeting.

A smell.

“no.”

Turning from the from the Vesuvius. Running at full speed, using his discipline he was a shadow ready to strike her. Bringing his sword won he only had caught the clawed glove that made her some fearsome those years ago.

“Why, are you here Zarena? I thought I killed you in Rome.”

Growling under her matted hair she pulled both of them in to the darkness where no kine could catch them still struggling against the blade.

“I don't go down so easily, Bo-bo zo why don't you be a gentlemen and instead shove this sword UP YOUR ASS!”

Pushing back she had taken a swipe with the clawed hand trying to disembowel him only for him to dodge back into the bush the next swipe had missed wildly cutting a small tree down. Before she could register the third swing he had caught the arm stepping in and pulling her over him in a hard throw that had made her land against the cobblestone accent of the stoop behind the mausoleum. It was also clear that their noise was beginning to attract attention despite the room.

“Zarena, I am being nice. Next time I will end you with this and send you back to the pit you were spawned from.”

“Big words, but can you pull it off after all Rome seemed like your best shot. I got to see the Cammy prince for a job. Toodles, bo-bo.”

A feral leap over the graveyard wall and the problem of his rival, his greatest pain the backside, his sin against the world was going to be here, in the same city for a period of time with him, He would drink himself to sleep if he could.

Snorting as he fixed his suit and sheathed his sword he was mad at her because while he had not admitted it. Rome was his best shot. How those Gangrel survive some of the worst was beyond him.

“Bo Wu? Pleased to meet you. Isaac Abrams, welcome to my barony.”

Sitting on one of the overstuffed leather chairs it was a simple meeting discussing the kinds of problems they had dealt with in the past and the major force moving in. Camarilla enforcers would also be present and as it stood there was no violence between the sides as any major action between the two may allow the Sabbat a point to strike. If that would happen the damage could be enough to wipe one of the forces out and folding over his hand he explained it curtly.

... between the Camarilla and the Sabbat. The Camarilla are not so equipped to fight in a civil war here, they will need to work together and the new Tremere prince has been open to thinking about such factors. Strauss is definitely in contact but that is better than the sycophant before I would like the Camarilla here if we can manage that.”

“Baron Isaac, if it is your will then it is my duty, as long as I get paid. I just want to make clear, that I will be getting the haven, a blood doll, a cash flow, and open travel in and out of the barony as needed.”

“Oh and I would like some movie memorabilia. Six shooters, chaps, cowboy hats. I liked the westerns when they were coming out.”

“Done, anything else?”

“Yes, there was a Gangrel woman that attacked me and was heading to the Camarilla, can you confirm she is not going to be part of the group as well?”

“Unfortunately Ms. Zarena can only be confirmed that her services have been acquired by them. If you have any issue please try to keep it away from any other kindred or kine. I will tell the prince what I have told you. “

Nodding his head, Bo Wu wanted nothing more then tear her to ribbons. Unfortunately as the baron has just said, it wouldn't be looked well upon. Some part of him chuckled, as a Baron of the Anarch is saying he cannot kill someone contracted by the Camarilla because of the Sabbat.

It was true Vampire politics at work and while Isaac was better then most by his standard he was still a politician which put him about two steps above rank and file neonates in his eyes, but there was business to be done. Besides as he was walking out nothing would have been happier to get some revenge but there was also the Sabbat presence coming in that had to be prepared for.

Honestly, if he could toss the Sabbat in the sun and the Camarilla with a snap he would have done some until his fingers were sore and making his way to Chinatown it was clear that some new faces were in the group.

New faces as he pulled up that were carrying Glock 13's and a couple seemed to be unusually pale for kine. Someone was looking for him and he didn't want to show himself until he figured out who it was, could be the bucket heads, could be.

Stopping from a moment he realized that to him both groups were bucket heads, the charging yelping soldiers on call from the elders able to only point and see the carnage. Sheer, mitigated, unadulterated idiocy.

Taking a walk down the wall he was able to step in Chinatown through a side alley and catch one of his trackers off guard. Giving a nice welcoming hug around the neck, Bo had found him very forthcoming about the plan as far as he understood it.

Pulling him out of the shadows behind the dumpster he took the two turns to the main courtyard where he noticed the rest

of them making sure to keep his new hostage with him to show off what he may have learned. Pulling the blade out in one swift movement.

It was the sound of the sheath hitting the ground that alerted those that someone had a weapon, which got the rest of the guards to pull the guns from before. Holding it to his new side piece's throat it was going to get messy if someone did not want to step forward and luckily before the cops had come running around the corner out from who knows where one of the more veteran henchman had come forward, hands up in show of mock surrender.

“Prince Geoffries said you got on one of our agents, and that we had to keep an eye on you. Not trying to hurt anyone, we understand of the situation, just please, let our guy, go.”

Looking over his sunglasses he could see the various people from behind the black lenses shifting with their weapons, if they did it would be a masquerade violation a sizable one and if they fired first it would be okay for him to defend himself. Defending in this case being taken to the point of fighting back until there was no one to fight back against.

“Isaac told Geoffries the situation, this little show does not make me willing to trust you if you trying to spy on me. As for Zamora, tell her after this, we are finishing our little business right afterwards. Now....”

Spinning back the flat of the blade had hit the agent hard enough to send him closer towards the negotiator of their group. Pulling the sheath from the ground he had put the sword back into it before walking away.

The show of two ready to walk in his way trying to block him off made him a little angry at the sheer disrespect by the younger kindred. A quick turn of his head had shown that many of the people and police had already made their ways away from the coming chaos.

Click-Clacks of shows on the street fell in formation behind him where the negotiator wanted to talk again thinking he had the power he had gotten two words out.

“Now, you..”

Being a couple hundred years older than everyone else in the fight was a downright displeasure. Bo shook his head as the thought held true once again swinging the sheathed sword in a spinning strike bastioned by the celerity he had picked up in his last tour of Europe before coming to America.

Pulling it through the air had registered a whole new sensation like it was trying to keep it back and only with great focus send it through the natural resistances causing a sound not that much different like castanet's or coconuts falling against each other as the sheath made contact against bone before pulling his sheath blade back in to his side.

If any kine had watched they would most likely think of it a some crazy martial art and he would like to leave it at that. There was nothing to teach as he saw it. Sometimes one would be brave enough if they saw to ask him. Checking again there was no one coming from the various alleys leaving him to think there was no one but him and the unconscious in circled on the ground.

Zarena and the Camarilla really had to send better hit squads. His first mission for the barony was coming up and he needed to get some rest, and refill his blood. Already on his phone was a message from Isaac about not killing the Camarilla, he would have to correct, that he didn't however if they didn't get out of there before the sun came up it would be the kindred own fault if they fell to final death.

Tossing the sword to the couch he would have to sharpen it tomorrow night and grabbed one of the blood packs already stocked before heading to rest for the day. She was hopefully staring at a beautiful sunrise. It would only bring him peace enough to sleep for a few hours.

Waking up the first time he was going to be cranky. There was rustling, and sounds of someone trying to be quiet, the doors were locked and the windows were the same. Cracking one eye open he had seen the figure looking over his desk looking for a spot for something, or perhaps a particular something. Looking at the windows, no sunlight had been allowed him, which mean he was arisen early.

Turning back to the bed the figure tried spying him to see if he was still sleeping, he didn't need to show he was breathing, he didn't. It was however clear that after a quick leap out of bed the figure was kine, unready to deal with the speed.

His voice tinged with the accent he had tried to hide in most moments he had wrapped his arm around the offenders neck squeezing him tight making him flail trying to escape before the strength of the grip nearly knocked him out.

“Tell me why you are in my apartment, and I may let you live.”

It was a sheer whisper as he clawed at the arm to try and speak his case.

“This guy in a suit, he said to put something here and that I would get paid 500 dollars, I didn't know that you could URGH!”

Having his teeth dig into the warm throat for the first time made him happy enough, he hated waking up early. Taking the device it had seemed to be a small device used for listening. Tossing it in the microwave for two minutes he was sure that outside he would be able to see someone going ballistic from the sounds.

From the opposite side of the curtains he could see that dusk had fallen making it safe for him to at least look only for a pair of people in the alley across to start dashing away. He really hated waking up early, but seeing it was closer to night then day there was just a couple extra hours that he could use to get ready.

Pulling his sword and walking over the cold body, he would have a few more things to do, but the treat of some warm blood was a needed shot in the arm for what was coming. Sabbath had been called in already and he had been told where a small group was, out at the old train station. It was clear what he was wanted to do, go in, find those moving, and make them stop moving, in any way one can and extra points for destroying anything they were thinking about using for.

There would be another mission as it seemed the habit of picking up old bases had been throughout the branches of the area.

He could have a couple as backup, but after the day, a nice rumpus room full of targets was the kind of anger management that made undeath tolerable. Full of guns that did absolutely nothing to him made him the happiest kind of bloodthirsty.

Riding out to the station there was little action going in or out and it was clear after to rosy sky had dulled to the usual speckled navy blue that night had truly begun. Closing the door of the cab, the steps leading up were once magnificent, engraved brick on each level on every step until the doors. It would have taken another moment to really see the workmanship before a thirty eight had made its way out the window before a shot was fired grazing his cheek for a moment before he dashed in.

Some people would always be nervous taking a sword to a gunfight, unfortunately they didn't know how the tight hallways of the station and the train yard behind it would actually favor the sword as the gun would need to aim and fire while the sword and a proper swordsman would just need to slice.

Kine stunk up the air, and with it the smell of ego, of thinking they were the highest on the food chain, it all made him want to enjoy the work. Taking the blade out the sheath was kept at the holster at his side before he began making his way out.

He didn't want to let anyone know but it seemed they a were already agitated as he cleared the second floor of the last of sentry slicing his throat without a notice of the bodies resistance to the blade. Blood rained from the wound as he looked to the patterns of train cars wondering what had gotten everyone talking, it had seemed like everyone had done so at once. It couldn't be they found the bodies, no one else had come up that left that something had gone on, their was communication and they were being warned.

Hopping down as the closest bodies were walking back his sword was crying for some blood as well and as he flitted through line after line of defense and the concentrations of kindred rose higher it was clear they had no idea what was coming, but they had known that something was coming.

By the time the main train repair building was reached he had counted no less then seventeen bodies before reaching the door. There was a hobo, who had said there were going to be a fight if he had gone, but after telling the hobo, that he may want to

leave and that he expected one the vagrant ran off only after going a distance before seeing the small pile of bodies out of sight from the main building causing him to erupt.

“HOLY SHIT! THESE GUYS ARE DEAD!”

Laughing for a moment, he was having too much fun and if the Sabbath kept it up they may be gone by sunrise. Making his way into the vent had to first be put in the sheath and now Bo had the pleasure of hand to hand combat with a bunch of ready to die kindred and blood bags who tried giving him a headache.

Humming a lullaby from his days as a Kine there was little going on below. The first vent only showed a tank. Moving forward for a moment he looked back down to see an honest tank, ready to run, fumes pouring out of the tailpipe. One of the bodies had begun to scream.

“Alright! We got ourselves some new toys, remember, no mercy, no survivors, if you make it you're in the Sabbath as full kindred. The Cammies are hitting our Downtown base so we need to start getting everything together! GET GOING CHUCKLEFUCKS!”

Bo dropped from the vent wondering how many people were in there, before not caring if final death came he figured it was good to go out in such a way where many could enjoy the shock wave, Zarena was still alive, but he would be away from her.

Small peace in the worst case made everything much easier to handle and hitting the barrel of the howitzer he had begun to take his claws and slash at every throat between him and peace of mind for the night.

A thrumming of running semi automatics made the growing headache that much more unpleasant, a small side effect, it was somewhat psychological according to some shrink back in Alsace.

He didn't care just as long as it stopped, and it would when the knuckledraggers pretending to be intelligent lifeforms currently trying to end him would stop existing.

Ring-Ring Ring Ring

“Isaac Abrams, Bo, tell me how is the station going.”

The note that the baron was writing was paused, the point of the pencil broken as he had listened to it, but he couldn't understand.

“Care to repeat that I may not be hearing you correctly”.

“A tank, military grade. Isaac, they have got some serious military hardware here and it would have been nice if you would have told me.”

The phone was quickly hung up as the baron made his way rushing out the door to hail a cab.

Sitting in the tank, Bo was sticky from the combat. His suit was ruined between the sweat and the various other fluids he didn't want to think about. There was at least one set of brains on the floor somewhere when the gun operator tried to get friendly with him.

Looking around it was a roomy vehicle, something that could definitely be useful for those longer jobs, or making entry into an enemy base.

The kine could make some magnificent things if they tried as he sat in the silence, a small drip coming off one of the panels where the body rested bifurcated. Texting the baron he tried to at least warn him to bring something to cover his shoes as it was a mess.

Isaac was not in a good mood though, apart from seeing the mess of body parts it was clear there was some military hardware, the sheer ability to get a tank into a city unseen was something he was unclear how had happened.

Pulling his hired hand back it was time clearly to talk about the next step as it had seemed as Isaac explained as they walked out past a police officer, while Bo was completely splattered with blood that the Camarilla dropped the ball.

Hearing the words exchanged between the baron and the Tremere prince it was clear they had screwed up when the first

words he had heard were his apology about the job. Musing in the chair, without the bloody jacket he knew how politicians hated to take the blame on anything especially to rivals hearing who he had thought to be Strauss soon come on the line.

Heading the Tremere in the city he seemed to have the ability to persuade the prince being his lord as well of his superiors in the clan scheme. Strauss did not seem like the political type, he seemed work, willing to sell everything at the alter of his one true goal, whatever it was he would hope he didn't find himself cross it. Blood magic was a nasty bit to fight against as most of the elders could do some amazing things that made fighting them a walk through the underworld and he wasn't about to sign up for that for any amount.

There was at least a hundred or so, leaving a hundred blood mages of varying degrees able to pop up at the doorstep did make Bo wonder something aloud.

“Elder Strauss, if your numbers are what you say they are, why don't the Tremere have a bigger factor in the actual battles. I could have used someone like that at the train station, and the magic is powerful, I have seen it in multiple cities.”

“Because, elder, as you may have surmised while we do have the number we have our own clan issues with other groups that we didn't want the Camarilla to inherit.” His tone was low like there was menace to it, or maybe he had an issue, but it seemed there was truth to the words, Malkavians were for some reason missing for the most part as well. Cities always had at least a small population of each of the major bloodlines and even a couple of the lesser known usually.

It was clear listening though that after everything the Sabbat knew there would be a grandstand. They wanted to fight and after getting backed on two different fronts it was already clear they were replanning.

Unfortunately it was also very clear that they had let themselves be known as an unfortunate soul had delivered a note to each side written in what looked like blood.

Three separate areas were found and the Nosferatu were not

happy. As the forces without the Tremere definitely lacked the additional range, the Malkavians without their insight and obfuscation made it so the Camarilla lacked any major spies, as also the Nosferatu were low on the numbers after a set of missions building the defenses.

No tunnel rats, no psychos, no blood mages, and he was stuck at a base with someone who wanted to kill him. Zarena had been chomping at the bit, being another elder the two of them were bound by their contracts not to hurt the other until the affair was over and even so they had been put together by the Camarilla prince to spite Bo for his tongue, and she wanted to get paid. It was truly the move of a small, insipid prince trying together his power while getting his strings pulled, Bo watched as the last few people were going in to the building, it seemed the gangbangers had been pulled into the affair.

“Joy, they brought me lunch, think you can keep up or will you break a nail?”

“Zarena, last time in Egypt I took much more then just your broken nail, Or do mongrels forget after they get spayed.”

The response got her to growl, and him to smile as they looked from around the corner the shadows extending over both their forms.

“We go in and give no mercy, no quarter, and afterwards we can wrestle one another to see who watches the sunrise.”

Zarena turned her head shaking her dreads before puling her claws and setting them on. Dashing out of the shadows Bo had to admit it was nice to know that she was bound to help her. Isaac had informed that she was paying back a favor owed and that she couldn't hurt him to do that.

How could test his luck as they zipped around the building looking around for an entrance. The old supermarket had a loading entrance that was easy enough to open and soon as he had unsheathed his sword and took a deep breath of the the blood, kindred and kine waiting to be spilled, it was clear the fun was

ready to begin.

He could barely contain his joy as he went through it was almost like the noise was washing off his worries the bullets couldn't find him, they were looking for something else entirely and his blade was sweeping with the laziness one would with a broom on a summer afternoon.

His lazy strike though bifurcates people, and a couple of the first had found that out one turning to ash. Aisle by aisle while not having her back he could at least understand the joy it was to see all the wannabes try to get together and play kindred.

No, he was kindred. Zarena was kindred. Hundreds of years old with battles all over the world seasoning them to be something both more and less than human, the skills are so much higher, he could take any blade and guide it better than most machines, but to do that one loses the point of many things until the undying rage makes you hold one thing and keep it close, in their cases their individual happiness.

They had this base because there were other elders here and he was going to kill them, maybe diablerize them, who knows, he sure didn't. It was all just trying to clear everyone before the real fun started.

“Where are all the real MEN!”

Zarena, he though always had a way to call attention to herself, and to answer a man with a gun had popped out from the office on the second floor shooting through the window hitting her. It should have been a hit she could have shrugged off, but because he was also bound to help her instead of going up he decided to walk back to the front doors of the store opposite from the wall of the office and wonder what had gotten her so worked up until he had realized the amount of still burning flesh.

“Phosphorus rounds. Can you continue?”

“Does it look like I can? What is this stuff? I can usually tank this crap all the live long day what makes this different.”

“Because you raggedy twit, when you decided to take the

shot, they dipped that shot in a chemical that burns, and you burn easily. Now that we know that you are going to be much weaker and I need to be on my guard so pardon me.”

Dropping down the stairs it seemed a large machine gun was being hefted before Bo pushed Zarena head first to the ground. The bullets tore through the shelving leaving proof there was no true cover in the store and that if he had a moment he had to make a sprint.

Taking his way around the side it was difficult for someone to see what wasn't there and running up behind him he made no effort to stop spearing him with his sword as he held the trigger down until the clip was empty.

Falling off of it it seemed there was not a thing there save for a few more grunts. Except for the number of people coming in and how many the were killed the numbers didn't get close to matching. Holding the Machine gun that nearly buzzed the store in two thinking about it would be a nice toy to take back. Wonderful thing about being an Anarch was no customs to think of, what wasn't wonderful was what he had to do next. Tossing a blood bag to her one of the few he kept in these situations she looked up to him.

“I need to know where the others are, we killed about thirty and that leaves another twenty missing get yourself together, tell me where they are.”

Using the Auspex She could see a number of people below and looking around she began her meal on the bag and turning the process of trying to find the door something that grew in importance as they made their way in the employee dining room, messages from Isaac had shown heavy casualties from the other two points.

There would be no backup by the phone message, Zarena didn't like the news as a piece of fake wall was pushed away to reveal a steep staircase cut in a narrow passageway going deep under the store, why anyone would have that installed just made him shake his head. It was a point that made Zarena wonder out loud who was so pompous to do such things.

A rare point of agreeing between them it was clear that everything was going to drive them to at least work together, which was fine provided they didn't get in the others way it could be feasible the winding halls began to be ever more so.

Following the path it had come down to what seemed a natural formation. Where she had gotten the first kill land the from then on it everyone knew they were being attacked, it didn't help that his scream was left uncovered for all to hear soon causing a bustle of activity somewhere down the path. Finding the activity inviting both found themselves energized coming up with their weapons after dispatching their unusual alarm

Bo wondered if he could keep her injured enough to make it an easy kill. Diablerie was something he didn't want to do but having to take the blood of a long time foe like that. Well it wouldn't make him unhappy to get a little power from her.

Something that would help him down the line. The act of drinking of another vampire was something that made him feel uneasy. Despite being intensely frowned upon by any other kindred if it was ever found out there would be some backlash.

Jumping in the smell of gunpowder and blood, of sliced flesh and of adrenaline made him feel like it was just for a moment whether she felt the same way or not the thought of the crime fell from his mind as his form, the world, and even the beast all fell away.

It was in a moment. Peace. Something that was rare for him but he would take even if had to be next to her. That moment where everything could fall away and all that was left was the pit in his stomach where he could just hate everything in front of him to dust.

Handing another blood pack to his teammate she was taken back from it, or maybe it was his stance but he was ready, his final death may be coming, or more of the kindred may be removed, or the world at the end through some grand scheme may be better because of them.

Pulling his sword the pit of hatred cultivated being taken from his rest came back as the first chamber gave signs of the resistance they would face. Holding her claw for a moment the bag offered soon gave her enough juice to almost feel up to snuff in case she would need to get in a fight with her Ventrue fair weather

friend.

Until she looked how he looked forward in to the chaos that was coming. It was that moment, that their meetings, their fights, their problems, clashes, everything, finally made a sense. She had an epiphany that made him all seem a lot more understandable if not sympathetic.

Rushing in the flash if ill intent the handle on his sword, the lack of fear in his eye, it wasn't how he was honorable, she could see to the depths that he hated what he became. Going so far to eschew the Camarilla for the Anarchs, rare for one of his clan.

He wanted his final death. There were rules of course, but as she understood looking at him. It seemed like it was a cross section of all those moments as he checked himself over, more his blade and his supplies. wanted to destroy everyone and everything that stood in his way. It was clear there was something darker then any beast any other kindred had to deal with. The self loathing of what he was was as clear as looking at a pebble or a creature, it had its way and that was that.

“Wanna see a nice trick?” She asked her eye brow arched a little.

Turning his head she melded back in to the earth, something afforded to a discipline of the Gangrel and before she dissolved she whispered to him to wait until the screams started. Looking down at his sword in the darkness of the cave it was clear to himself, whatever he was he wouldn't diablerize her, others wouldn't but as soon as she got the second blood pack in her there was too much effort for too little reward he told himself.

Part of him wanted it all to end while another wanted them all to go with him and another said if he was going to be on this earth then he may as well do the most to make it as good a place as possible. Hearing the first shrieks from the chamber he grabbed his weapon and moved forward at unnatural speed just blank with only the peace that he just had to clear the facility.

Such moments of peace made this kind of a life worth living at least for another day and as he turned in to the first lighted area the smell of gunpowder and adrenaline coming back to him he knew there had to be something else, anything else, otherwise why

would they even exist?



Tremere

Maximillion Strauss was a Regent, a blood wizard, and the master of the prince of L.A after they had to get some foot hold with the Camarilla. The year after the Ankarani Sarcophagus was rough for his clan in the city as the Camarilla headed by the young prince Lacroix had been justifiably taken out of power, but it left his clan in a bit of a hard spot one that left his clan in the area out of power for a time.

Sitting in the darkness of the chantry with the firelight guiding him he saw one of his tools, a chessboard, something he would often use to help illustrate his plans. After 2005 a Tremere was tapped for the prince of the Camarilla of the city, he made

inroads with the Anarchs to at least have a civil peace going and after the issue with the Sabbat being purged from the city which almost blew up the complete political landscape.

That was completely different matter. The elders above him knew of his capability and he had been navigating his way up the ladder, he couldn't be stopped with the problems some of his detractors had tried to force on him as the poison to his reputation.

Which lead to a problem. A very big problem. The Malkavians were making a move something big. It seemed strange that those who had been normally so sincerely serving to the Camarilla had begun to show some movement. Not just in L.A either as word on the grapevine, whispers under whispers had said how the circulatory system had been suddenly backed by a group of Malkavians.

Something no one really thought of then but then combined with the sudden business coming up to Malk families made him wonder why suddenly the seers, those whose madness often brought wisdom are now telling them to do something so unusual. Flames flickered throughout the room as one of the younger neonates barged in clearly out of breath.

“Sir, I just got word, she thought it was strange and wanted to voice such a thing but Prince Voerman would see you”

Pulling himself from the wine colored plush he spared one last look to the chess board on the coffee table, the riddle seemingly unanswered while he began to make his way to the smaller community of Santa Monica.

Since the issue those couple of years ago he could see the community beginning to turn the corner due to the money through many of the machinations. The money sent through dummy accounts filtered through dummy companies whose purpose was only a couple of jobs.

It was a plan, something that was much more then just the club of the asylum and something that was needing a little more money just from looking on the outside then he knew the Voerman sisters had. Which lead to a few questions as he was driven to the club.

Where was the money coming from? How was that amount

of resources coming in? Where would there be enough in the city that would back them without anyone, kine or kindred knowing? Who would willingly do that without something equally heavy as collateral? There had to be some form of agreement if someone else was brought in, and he knew there was. Often being the case the biggest questions were the simplest, who, what, and more so, why?

The moments rankled in his head bouncing unhappily like ball bearings loose in a broken toy and he could sense that there were too many missing pieces for even him someone who prided himself on his wit and intelligence to figure out.

Luckily, being the regent had given him some supplies to direct in learning some of the issues regarding the situation. It didn't give him a lot, but it gave him enough to learn that something was very off with the whole thing.

He had learned long ago about the sisters, how they inhabited one body, it wasn't they strangest thing he had dealt with. For what few crossings they had the business minded one was almost pleasantly acidic to talk to, the last time he had to deal with the other one, well he couldn't tell how long it took to get the perfume out of that duster with the way she hung all over him.

Still that could be years ago, and this was something of a situation that was evolving daily it was something that made him wonder how his clan should handle it, should they even be informed, and while all these thoughts were going on, who had organized all this?

There was a power player it seemed as he opened the doors to the Asylum exposing himself to the blaring dark synth music and pulsing multi colored lights. Live music was playing and many people had come to see them do whatever they thought was singing while a large tattooed troll of a man nodded at him from behind the brass inlaid bar pointing him to the right to the elevator up to the office.

Days like this he felt a ghost of a throbbing headache from the sheer lack of everything that the kine were exhibiting, they could go out and paint a picture, watch a sunset, go climb a mountain, and while he could do so much easier, he had to beware his place when the same came up or face turning to ash and his final death.

The doors closed and as it climbed the single floor he could feel something, more than just one presence as he held his bag, he made sure to fill up on blood, not knowing if this would be an assassination attempt. His gut was something that had steered him well and before going in he took the moment to go the side table and check what ordinance he carried in case he ever had to defend himself.

A short katana, and a colt. Everything was well in working order while on the side of the door he could only hear silence. Reacting hard his gut was warning him to be careful, walking in after putting his weapons in the holster it was clear they were not alone.

Despite the near bifurcated office by styling it was clear someone else had made themselves a seat behind the main desk where they were currently sitting. While Therese Voerman had her outfit in all black or more of charcoal gray the one behind her was a clear white.

What he couldn't tell was gender. For some reason he could feel the tugging of his mind in to place he did not will it until the result came to him that shocked the one in white enough to stand and give a couple claps.

“

Regent Strauss? Well done. I tried to make this as welcoming as possible. I know you had been watching our little deals, and I try to see what you know and you send my discipline back. It is rare to find someone who can use their power in an Elysium. Let me introduce myself, first I just wanted to see what I was dealing with. Clearly its something more of an equal then just a pain..”

Therese Voerman turned looking at her guest before turning at Strauss, his face one of blank non amusement, the glasses sitting low on his hooked nose before an out of character grin lit his features. Sitting down in the chair before the desk.

“A Malkavian strong enough to use the madness network, that would explain why no one else would hear of it. So I take it you have been one of the main proponents, but you have a king, knight. What game is this playing.”

Pulling a manila envelope from his case it was tossed on the desk while the Prince made every attempt to try and understand what was going on before trying to throw weight around in some way to bully themselves, but as he looked towards the pair it was clear, just as he was with the prince in la, the one in white was the superior to Voerman.

“Flowery language, Strauss. I am shocked that you put it together this fast we had a timeline that no one would find out for another year, year and a half or so.”

Watching them bounce their head left and right seemingly in energetic thought. A moment where the pressure seemed to mount where he could feel the one in white try to push at his mind before he pulled at the gun under the duster. Before the pull faded back to the darkness leaving the two masters there a chess game again with more information but there was still some things left.

“You think you can kill two Malkavians like us?”

“Regent of my ability, fully stocked, weapons, versus, two Malkavians, it doesn't matter who you are, the odds are in my favor, if we need to go that way.”

“I thought we were going to talk to him? We do not want to anger the Tremere! What are you doing?” Therese Voerman whispered back in anger before she had gotten a hand in response silencing her.

“Do not worry, your friend here is just seeing what kind of an ally I would make, isn't that right?”

Jumping up on tiptoes it was clear the idea was at least partially correct by the bliss on it's face.

“OH YES, I Like this one, Strauss was his name?”
Shouting emphatically clapping in small bursts before coming around to the front of the desk.

Leaning back it was clear there was some feminine features, the curve of the hip, and the heels were signs to that while the musculature and the shoulder seemed more defined like a man. Whether seemingly fit or some discipline was in play he couldn't defend he could feel the one in white extend its hand.

“C.J just C.J. No. mr no ms no whatever else. We are dealing with something a little bigger then just Santa Monica.”

Shaking C.J's hand it was clear there was more to the tale and as he was brought up the speed the majority of the night was spent explaining to him all his details, his questions, having him open to the information with a simple offer and a deadline.

Clapping, happy, chipper, there was something underneath, a clear concise quality he could at least respect, and it was clear some were in their clan as the moves were as the were sitting painfully in his head almost jangling with the repercussions they could cause.

He had left easily enough but sitting in the chantry the chess board was turned this way and that as the paperwork he as he was given was clear to anything as to his moves. It was as simple as in or out. In the clan there was a group who felt the time of the Camarilla had come and gone and it either was time for them to fall to another power or time for the Anarchs to rise and currently they were in the phase of gathering resources.

Serious resources as he saw the ledger, not just money, books, artifacts even that he would love to study with. It was clear that going up the ladder with this sort of intel may not be the best idea as he felt that what it held, well he could see that it would bring no small amount of scrutiny.

Outside his own lord he had one other regent who may want to join, it would be a long shot as they had been so cast into the shadows even to the Tremere that he had to wonder if they existed still. His lord had been already informed of some of the situation right after he got back.

He had a moment where he thought releasing a formal invitation to the magisters would be a good way to bring more to their side as despite power structure if there were no pawns then the side was severely hampered until they could replenish.

His own Magister had come in she had heard something was brewing and was pulled from her duties to help inform him, a rare request but one she enjoyed seemingly. As she entered it had been with a message from the lord, saying to not inform any other lord, and to make the call for him and his chantry, and that he would send them a wealth of supplies coming and if things had made it to split that he wished him well.

The message as she read it made her heart drop until she saw the papers on the table. An alliance was coming into effect and the players were an interesting set by any other standards. It was clear that many believed the rules of the masquerade were fine, but the players and the vile nature of those at the top had left the Camarilla with a bad taste.

Reading over the papers two years ago the Malkavians began dealing with the Followers of set and had come to an agreement that had allowed them their allegiance and a few other things provided they got to study the madness network. Something Strauss would liked to have done as well.

A sizable section of Ravnos jumped in after set and a sub section of the Nagaraja. It wasn't the majority of any race but if it was added to the Anarchs it would provide the military dominance that could give some unity to the vampire world. Without the Anarchs there was still some feelers out there to high end Brujah, and the some of the lead Gangrel were on board all of them each had their own contract they wished certain things but as long as they gave as good as they got they were willing to work together.

At the head of this for the building step was the Malkavian for the Camarilla and the Anarch side and the Followers of Set for the Sabbat side. They had access to both sides they can take forces form both sides and it was clear as his Magister was reading over the stack of papers the weight of everything. It was clear the whole clan would not back them.

Reading the note from his lord gave him some feeling of comfort as there may be some ability to split the bet as what they were talking about, how the Camarilla were antiquated and dying seemed to hold some merit, after all if it wasn't for the Malkavian, Tremere, and Brujah, the Camarilla would be all but dead.

Which lead to the question. In or Out? If they were right

and anything they could get a shake at some of those resources would definitely help the Tremere aligned with them he would be the highest Tremere on the pole, but he needed to know who was going to join him.

Across the table the weight of the facts seemingly made it clear to him made her nearly break down. She knew.

He knew.

They were in.

Writing a note of the various houses he could think that would join he had to move quick. Any group that wanted to join him may leave to a new sect of Tremere but it may also be a reason it survives.

“Nicole, do you remember how to contact the ones in Jerusalem. Regent Mara's chantry?”

Nodding her head after a last sob the pain of having her clan split was going to have to be shaken off as there was still a lot of people who needed help.

“Good, listen before we go any further, I need to know if you will join me or not. If not I will ask my lord to send you to another chantry, but you will be missed and needed here, especially with the growing situation.”

“No, High Regent, I am just. ... This is big. I will stay, maybe some of the other magisters will join and from there we can get the other regents to join. “

“Good.”

Another hour passed as they began to get on the same page of aligning with this group. Hoping that there was something positive for the clan. All he could do was play and learn as he went, sometimes there was time for shadowy plays, but he started making outright plays and sometimes that is what worked.

They had two days to get proof of backing after bringing up everything, after putting together. After some time they had the list of the secretive, the lost, and those who maybe want to join in this

situation and despite everything it may be only accounted for ten percent of the Tremere population.

Calling his apprentices in they were made to do his bidding giving each a message that was easily enough to print and send to the various holes in the wall that they had to go to. Some may never comeback it was so dangerous, but Strauss looking down at the chess board on the table knocked over a couple black pawns removing them from the checkerboard.

No less then a couple hours removed from the messages going out did the pyramid start whispering with something going on. It seemed that no one knew yet and those that knew were staying silent for the sake of some things. Some kindred did believe in loyalty after all, but it was all that was keeping him and more important, his chantry safe.

Knowing this could be the choice that leads to final death. Lords of other realms began muttering about to regents about secretive messages being pushed to dark corners of the clan and they would like to know who is allowing this. Running back through the doors he was ready for the stress of the night to be over before his magister had seemed rushed.

“Regent! We have a lot of people here for you. It seems we may have a chance with this”

“Wonderful, bring them in. Send blood packs because I thought this would be a short night and I think we could all use a bit of a boost. Get the elder vitae”

Tying up her red hair almost reflecting in the firelight he could feel the presences of a few notable vampires coming his way. If they were judges, he would be killed, his chantry would be purged, and the Tremere of the city would go back again. Except when the group was pulled in it was less a group of hard nose Tremere justicars and a group of people willing to listen including a familiar nosferatu.

“Gary, I believe my invitation was to tremere houses, however this may concern you so why don't you stay for a spell.”

“Sorry to crash the party, but the grapevine was ripe and I wanted to hear this myself. I may be able to put my two cents on this as the clan elder of the area.

Telyavic House Elders, Regent Mara, as well as representatives from the remnants of the Goratrix, the Auram Guild, and a high ranking member within the house of Trismegistus and Rodolfo. Members of the brothers of absinthe, the house of the wrym, the unbowed mundanes and the covenant. The nosferatu elder of the city and himself. This room made it feel like he had some ability to put this together.

“Good evening everyone, I thank you for your speed in such an affair, if you can read the papers on the table and pass them around. This will be a serious conversation about a split in the clan.

It had earned a chuckle until someone had exclaimed what they were reading. One by one each person had read the packet held together by a staple, even Gary who had been deobfuscated looking in to the room.

“So we all know why we are here, who is in, what do you want, and what do you want to give.”

“Well we all serve the pyramid, we need to break that first.

“I can help with that. My chantry can break blood bonds.”

That made the silence go complete to mute levels. Blood bonds being negated or broken was something that really gave the life to the possibility of the contract

“I can act as information, we can help bring more Nosferatu in until you pull the trigger. We are in. Just pay us and respect us.

The rest of that night and part of the morning had gone in to a list of negotiating that would give them the majority of what they wanted and would allow them to do things they never dreamed of.

They could teach anyone blood magic and they didn't need

to bind any poor souls. Before they had gone to rest it was clear that Gary and Mara would be coming with him for different reasons.

Mara was her own regent and while he was a rank higher in circles it didn't matter with what she brought to the table. Everyone else had a day to get a gem to him as a token of their willingness to proceed and a short note of what they could when they decided to pull leave. While he wouldn't get everyone he had sent a note out to respond back at least he had gotten all of his apprentices back, which was a small grace.

That night was one of the longest nights in his whole unlife. Most of it was spent getting what he could done before waiting. There were going to be deliveries and he wished them sent right to his library door while he read a crime novel instead of a spell book.

Despite some of the kine being absolute headaches some could put together a good tale, and Caleb Carr was a favorite of his. Maya was out reading the spell book he would have been reading otherwise as she had not spent any time in it she found his library a peaceful place and having two regents was oddly calming as between the two of them a problem was truly halved between them. First was from Patricia Von Bernstein one of the heads of the order of the wyrm, sent a message of what she would pledge with a blood red cassiterite that was marvelous to look at.

Germany was heavily under her control already and despite being demoted once there was no lord in the area and she was already being talked about to get her position back it seemed that it was going to be a good idea to have her in the group just for her being a sleeper within the tremere noble class.

The Brothers of absinthe had sent a rock of another form specifically red coral in an absinthe bottle and while they didn't have the numbers they did have some of the chemicals that set followers could use and the experiments would be nice to keep an eye on.

It seemed as time went on that he had made his point as the Trismegistus sent a ruby, while Auram sent a wine colored stone he wasn't sure of but looked like it had some ability. Rodolfo did not feel comfortable joining at this junction and would not leave any information to others that may impact their chances.

These stones were something of a sign, how everyone

would be coming in to the trade and with Regent Maya and her bombshell, and some help from the Nosferatu they may have a combination of things that could make to getting their clan a second chance if he was right.

If he was wrong he still may get out of this well because of the sheer number of opportunities he would be presented with. He could go in and be loud but he knew what he wanted, he knew he had to overshoot some in trade and despite looking at the words on the page of the book in front of him he just couldn't think about the scene in the book opting for more of the scene of what was going on.

The growing stack of stones, a demoted lord, the possible learning of artifacts from the followers of set, it was a chance that was purely once in a lifetime and he had to take it. Going to the end of the night it was clear the pyramid had begun to sniff around the chantry as some of the Justicars had been sighted in the city.

Something had tipped them off or maybe so much we coming out of the chantry that he had been found out by just output versus input, he would have to think about the next time he had to do something like this. After twenty four hours it would be easy enough to just see where the cards lie, but now he still had to hide because there were a couple groups that would love to keep things as they are because change in the pyramid was looked upon as then enemy despite it never losing to anything not even the kindred.

If they had even seen a lord skateboarding in the 80's then they would have a fit. Knowing of such a thing made him smile as it was more then just a lark it was pure screaming for the sake of tradition that made some of the older Tremere shake there head wondering how some of them could get so stuffy.

It was rare for him to laugh but doing so in such times was something he really needed. The pressure of the situation was coming to a close and maybe everyone could go home and have a nice few nights after this. He could see the other chantry and hopefully get his blood bond broken.

Tremere often go through a ritual where they must a drink mixed with the blood of the seven elders. Being the ritual of such power and being a clan where blood bonds were so easy to build something like the Transsubstantiation of seven made everyone at least partially bound to the top of the pyramid.

Clearly being able to unbind oneself from them made it useful to go further than what they wished and even create a second power structure within the clan. He had to be careful as 8th generation was not the lowest gen he still had enough knowledge to take what he had and turn anything to his advantage even against a rampaging 4th or 5th generation ready to fight.

There were things that had to be taken into account and he was thinking one of those were the growing number of thin bloods. The caitiff were low on the totem pole but in an alliance where it would be based on their ability they may come up with something and even Strauss would relish learning blood alchemy in exchange for the basics of his blood magic.

“Are you ready for tomorrow?”

“Yes, I think there is enough here we will get a good deal for the clan. I just hope I am making the right decision.”

“We shall see” He wondered aloud.

C.J and Ms. Voerman sat at one side of the table, it was a simple negotiating set up the building was one where the room seemed to cost more than most buildings in Santa Monica but it made a point and the point that he had to make was that he was bringing everything to bare.

Walking behind Mara freshly blood broken, and Golden behind him there was an air of riding on the razor's edge like holding what would be in here could change the vampire world for generations and it felt good in some cases. Dropping the gems on the table had gotten the attention of the pair while he read off the pledges from the various groups and their capabilities.

The numbers C.J kept adding seemed to go up higher as he kept reading them off number after number and while it added up to only about 5% of the Tremere on the whole it was still 5% of a bunch of mages some of which were the most occult, most powerful in various sects that would meld well to some of the others in the alliance. That was before Mara dropped the big one, being able to break blood bonds was huge, it was the mythical

thing to try and she had it and he was proof of it as he told them they could go fuck the pyramid.

CJ was shocked while Therese was blank trying to put it all together that they had what they did. While the Nosferatu wanted a simple contract it was clear that they would get whatever the Tremere get in solidarity and that was something agreed upon. Having some Nosferatu would mean the beginnings of double agents to the network of information and that was important to fighting the Camarilla.

Sitting down finally in the center of their group it was clear they had the power to ask for a little more so he made sure they did. Putting together the contract he had made he also put together another list of demands that would be the ones to be easily pulled in negotiations as they came up except something had occurred.

Handing both off to Therese she had left for a moment to another room seemingly to check with some of the others in the alliance from a secure connection. She seemed to rush out as quick as possible while CJ made a bridge between their hand and rested their chin. Making winky eyes at all three and Gary firing back with a pick up line so bad it made her laugh enough to lighten the mood a bit.

The demands seemed massive but the numbers they were pushing, the things that could just be proven was a hard trade for their side. C.J. thought they would pick up a utility player when they found they may get a game breaker, and as much as they loved getting top trade capital for what really was utility cost it wasn't set yet. And looking at everything he was still a little unsure of something.

“Straussy I didn't know you had the nuts, but you came through big time I could see why lords were so high on you. Mara, I heard about you but I couldn't find you I am glad Strauss did. Gary we found someone as perverted as me and isn't creeped out, always a plus. Nosferatu in the system is always a bonus.”

Coming back with the papers held to her chest she was clearing her throat to get their attention. Therese had returned with a soft smile.

“The alliance has approved your full list of demands”

Everyone blinked.

The first page was easy enough. Tremere wanted access to items for study and any magical research that may be going on for the sake of compiling and ease of finding in later years. Access to supplies of the alliance for knowledge on how the basics of blood magic worked and that seemed to be a big plus right there and with the Treyavic as well in the fold it allowed multiple schools to be in play which made the deal it seemed very appealing so far. So Tremere gets the resources, they teach blood magic, they have access to items, research and any knowledge of the others.

The full second page was completely ludicrous though. Percentages of income from the alliance coffers the creation of a library of their assorted knowledge and even a school for their disciplines that would be somewhere of his choice.

Protection in case the chantries aligned were struck. Blood of choice from the circulatory systems selection on call and even free travel between all territories currently held by alliance members. The list was bizarre and cost more than he thought they would even think of.

“Well this was an easy one. I thought you would want the world or something, I think for the proven value of what you brought, it has been pretty equal. How about we toss in some perks like if you want to go to a show or something, because honestly some of these like the library and the school, that helps all of us, good idea too. We' will add a little extra something something and that is it?”

“I get some too right?” Gary raised his hand pondering to the white clad malk.

“Yup, you and your nosferatu are bound with the tremere. We got a building for you already down on third it has sewer options, good internet and no windows. No dripping either”.

“Strauss, my clan thanks you for the move. By the snacker

snick out of all negotiations this was quick..”

“So Strauss, Mara, Gary. Here is what is going to happen in the next 5 years. We are going to make some big moves and after about three we will decide as a group if we want to be established as a power by ourselves, by the rules of the masquerade, or do we go and join the Anarch's. Do you all have any idea which way you want to go right now?

“Independent if possible”

“On our own”

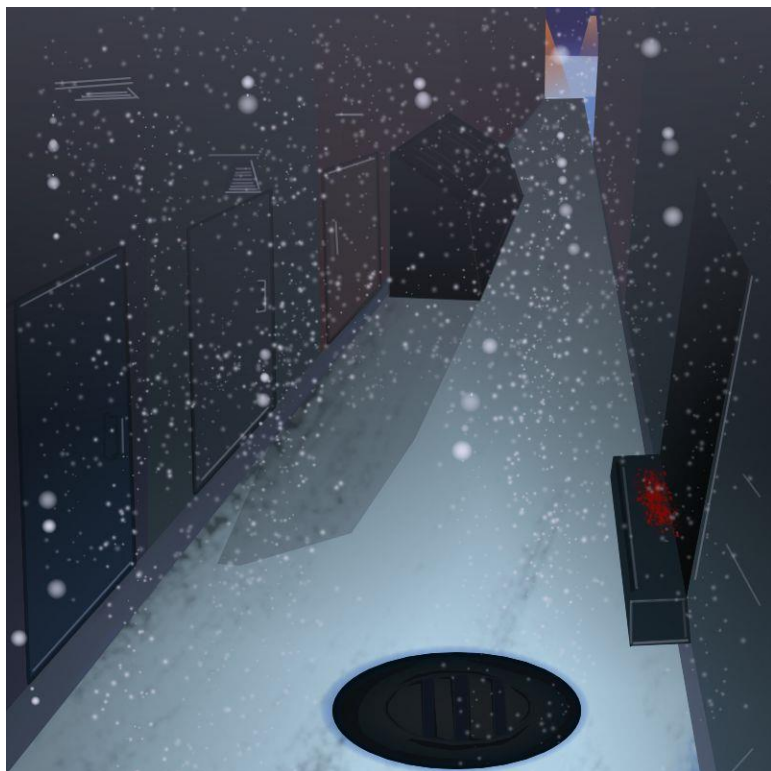
“Don't care”

“2 to 1 for autonomy that is about what we are working with overall too. So in the next year get all your supplies together and tell everyone to do the same, money, blood dolls, if it can be used gather it up.

Next year we will begin to show ourselves to the other kindred so don't be worried if people start looking for things. We are not going to be violent but we are going to show how we don't need to be.

The Anarchs will make their move, the Sabbat will get jumpy we will help fight the Sabbat, group agreed on that already. Anarchs fight Camarilla we will go back and make the split physical. Between the existence and this split is going to be about two years and after that another two years to really galvanize us together in everyone's eyes.

Congress members will be picked two per clan and one elder who is there for life. That way we all have to work for each other or none of us get nothing. Holding their hand out it was shaken with intent that a whole new alliance would be born and an entire new power would be coming to the world of the kindred.



Nosferatu

Rare powdery snow began to fall on the area. Giving everything another edge that some enjoyed and others would rather sleep through, with a warm blood bag and maybe a bottle of vodka or whiskey to wash it down depending on who they were.

He couldn't see anything then going up, granted his master told him to be careful and even the elder had warned him that people could see his footprints in case he was being chased. After wrapping a cloak around himself he could feel himself brighten, despite looking the way he did there was still a reason to smile.

When he had died as a human or when he was born as a vampire, there were so few times to see snow in the area that it was really a treat and it was one that he was going to take advantage of while he could.

Granted the area was not a great place to be, crime had run rampant, but he was told he should be happy because if he didn't

there would be no way to get the blood he would need to survive. Between his thoughts and the entrance to the sewers he didn't mind taking a nibble on a couple rats, as he had thought smiling to himself.

Better vampires have had to do it to survive and as he could tell there was no reason to nibble on a kine unless there was need. If there was a need then he could go on some mission for another Nosferatu and just bite on whomever is in his way.

Pulling himself through the sewers despite the freezing temperatures the familiar cover near Mr. Tung's residence was soon opened before he scampered out. Many of the other regulars walking about were already where they were going for the time leaving the rare scene of almost no one in the street near the diner and the club as he peered through the chain link fence in one of the dark spots of the yard.

More flakes were beginning to fall while he began to jump fences in to the junkyard where the powder of everything covered many of the annoyances like broken glass or a still burning piece of metal from a knocked over can fire. Thinking better of it he dropped back over only for the sound of life to have him hide behind the half open silo while he began listening to who and what it may be.

Luckily, his kind were blessed with long enough ears and his hearing being one of the better senses he had while he was human carried over spectacularly.

“Babcock, you really need to be aware of who is around you.”

The sound of Mr. Tung made him jump halfway up the silo, only for him to come down and see him currently smoking a cigarette leaned up against the silo that served as his home in his best attempt at the Marlboro man made the younger kindred come back to.

“Remember kid, just because you are good at sneaking around doesn't mean someone can't get the drop on you. He took a long drag before blowing in the night air a plume of tobacco smoke

a couple feet in the air before continuing Last I checked we had nothing going on right now, so I am guessing this is a little bit of free time, in any case here is a blood pack, I don't have a use of it and since you managed to actually get our last little favor done without a peep, call this a little snack for the night on me.” He drawled playfully

Receiving the bag he had only begun to put it away before Bertrum began walking off waving behind him as he headed inside the silo for what he could gather some rest or some items. In any case the young Nosferatu named Dylan Babcock began to make his way from the shadows to see what was going on in Santa Monica.

What he soon found the answer was absolutely nothing of interest. Save for the snow which was fine enough for him as it stood. No one was talking about anything interesting and the Voerman sisters were both out despite the club looking like it was half full of people, but still that was leaving him no one that would really give him the time of night here.

He had to make sure that none of the kine saw him, he was a monstrous looking thing with sores and a head that reminded him of a golf ball went nuclear, but he was still happy he got the chance to at least have a second play at life for what little time he had of it.

Getting back into the sewers he had an idea at least making the first stop in Hollywood where he could take some time thinking about this came to be. Despite being kindred he was still very young only a couple years old, but after taking to it with gusto a few of the others in the enclave found him to be an optimist. Some, his master and even the elder found it a nice change of pace with the regular doom and gloom of their existence. Pulling out a cell pone he was going to head to the stores for some five fingered shopping. While making his way to the sewers the various signal boosters glowed in the corners as he began sending the text messages he would use to see what was needed back at the enclave.

It was going to be a couple minutes before he stood in his tracks wondering if he should ask his master about Christmas before thinking better of it. One of his first replies was from a tech

savvy member he had little interaction with if he could grab anything called a GTI 13-5. It was some kind of computer part that he knew, after a moment though a picture of the box was soon sent giving him a little more comfort replying if he could find it he would bring back a couple before asking.

“What do kindred do for Christmas?”

No reply.

It was strange but not unheard of in his own mind as he tried to put things together. After all why would vampires celebrate another being who came back from the dead, many of them would just spin a finger. Before texting a question like that, he decided to take a little time to at least grab some items, and one female vampire in particular. Something she could use especially and soon a little Christmas cheer would be coming early.

Looking at the clothes for women in the darkness of the Hollywood store he soon remembered he had no idea about her measurements. Pursing his mouth he couldn't text her, and he was pretty sure that asking was going to tip her off, she was pretty smart.

She was one of the few that always was up for a conversation despite him being what he was. Grabbing what he thought would be some safe bets he soon had to get everything else he could before dropping off a portion for later.

Not many would go into the sewers at 1:30 am and in less than ten minutes he could say it would be picked up by his compatriot who was lucky to find at least two of the cards in his box for his computer.

The bag of fabric bounced as he made his way in to the downtown hospital, decrepit and bloody if he didn't know what had caused it he would have a problem. He did though and the fact the bag was for her.

She had said when he was first exploring the place that she was not going to be there long, except one thing had led to another and soon she was spending a couple years downtown collecting the artifacts that many of the other vampires on both sides would not

even think about making her a bit of a third party for the items.

Pisha would know about Christmas in kindred culture without giving him the political spin. Walking through the final door she could hear a kine mewling in pain which made him wince before she spun ready to fire off some ability that would have made his holiday season a bit rougher.

“Friend! Pisha. It's Dylan.”

He had already begun to sweat as the markings on her face and light eyes made her look exotic, but also very dangerous, and once he said that she reminded him of a tiger which was a compliment enough in her eyes to smile lightly.

It wasn't lost that tigers if angered could wreck a lot of stuff pretty quickly and despite being hardier then the normal human he was sure in a fair fight he was ash if she wished it. Waving his hands showing he only had the bag and his cloak she went back to her meal soon killing her prey before he found his seat on one of the higher lips of the morgue body storage cabinets.

“Be wary young one, Christmas is coming and that is not a good time for our kind.”

Tossing the bag on her table next to the book she held open her meal would hold very well in the cold both of them knew.

“I actually wanted to ask about that. This is my first Christmas I can actually be coherent for so I was wondering what is the deal? Kindred don't celebrate it? Jesus a vampire or something?”

Pisha was a kindred of few words, and more often she could communicate in just her look. Before going to the bag she had just turned her head to him with half questioning eyes shaking her head.

“No, young one Jesus was not a vampire, some rumors say he was a very powerful magician, but not a kindred, and what is this bag you brought me?”

She looked at it with some curiosity before opening it to see the contents. Where Dylan hopped off his seat to her table.

“I went to do some five fingered shopping and got these for you, early Christmas present, or whatever we celebrate instead.”

A small comforter and pillow adorned with cartoon tigers was soon set on the clean stand before a set of clothes was produced in the same deep green the tatters of her dress was. The pair of pants seemed like a pair of jeans that would be to her eye a bit baggy. It would be more comfortable to wear she would find that way before looking him once over.

“Child, you do know I don't feel the temperature as much as normal kindred?”

“Uhhhhh, No. I did not. You just seemed like you may be cold wearing well what was left of that dress. I was there in the store so I grabbed it. Sorry.”

Looking down Pisha had to admit that her green cocktail dress had gotten a bit ragged, and the new outfit would allow her to get in and out of the population easier. Her guest had seemed a bit depressed at her last comment, social interaction was a weak point since she had decided to take a more nomadic approach.

“Thank you I could use some new clothes and the bedding will make the body storage more comfortable, but you should be up to date on why a lot of us don't celebrate the holiday.

Each bloodline has different reasons but all of them could be placed in two major categories. First, is that kindred are more of a target by hunters, the holy day tends to give them a boost and some regularly strong hunters will be tough for some elders on until about the 28th.

Second, a good number of the older bloodlines has events in their history where a massacre of their kind has taken part on this time, whether from other clans, whether from the Sabbat and

Camarilla feud or even from hunters as before.

Many times some of the older vampires will look at anyone trying to celebrate as a traitor to all of kindred kind. I do appreciate the gift. Especially the pillow and blanket, but you need to learn that anyone else could have looked at this as a sign of possible mutiny and had you put to final death.”

The last words barely echoed in the hospital halls before they looked at the area under the weight of the last few syllables. Downtown was the best place for him to think. Plenty of ways to get around with no one able to watch. Anarch and Camarilla still squabbling over everything as it was explained to him, but that wasn't the problem.

Christmas was one of the happiest times of the year when he was human. It was sad kindred didn't do anything on the whole, he could remember when his mother would make all sorts of cookies and treats while a couple packages would be placed under the tree with care for him to wake up and open.

In the depth of his self depression he could see down the wall a small group of people, smaller then adult beginning to run away from a police officer the crunching of snows making him stick the shadows as Elder Golden's secrets of staying unseen kept from gathering any attention.

His master Imalia would be less then pleased getting in the bustle as any person that ran away would be a masquerade violation. That was trouble he just didn't need for any reason. Still listening to how everything was going on he could hear the police catch up to what turned out a bunch of young children no older then ten each.

Listening from the other side of the parking garage wall cloaked in the darkness of the building and his own actual cloak. A small idea began to seed itself in his head as the kids talked about trying to keep a small toy while the officer who with what seemed to be great satisfaction ripped the toy from one of them hard enough to drop the child to the snow. They began to talk about the home and soon all of them began to head their way back.

Babcock only had the plan to follow. He could sell it, he could. The kine need hope a little and some of the kids, if they had something nice happen to them he could sell it as a long term kine investment plan. Something that gets the people happier so they try

to be more than just guttersnipes, which granted he was the kindred version of.

Popping into the sewers behind him it took some time to figure out where they were going. Glancing from a crack he had to watch them far enough away that no one would notice. Turning one way and another he had seen them go down an alley to a building that left him with little option but to get his cloak about him and start walking in the darkness behind him crouched as low as he could to give no one a chance of seeing him unless they tried to and had a light bright enough to cover the entire alley.

Between the bricks of the buildings the asphalt and various trash to the side of everything there was an aroma that he could guess was strong enough that no one would tell he was there despite his romps through the sewers.

He wasn't going to be caught unless something surprised him, and Mr. Tung's words made sure to keep him suspicious of every possibility like Master Imalia taught him even walking in their steps the best he could to not lead any extra prints. Soon the children were led to a small building that looked to be built like a small church shed with a sign over the entrance, he couldn't read it yet but he planned to when they had all gone.

Watching from a pair of garbage cans ill equipped for the size of their job he could see the police officer take the kids to the door before knocking on it. The door opened to an older woman in nun's garb. Surprised there was a nun in the city so filled with every evil known to man and otherwise the police soon explained how they were caught in possession of a stolen toy and that despite the holiday season.

Granted Babcock couldn't hear the rest, he was getting his blood drained either way. Being that much of a prick was something that had to be taken care of and he had worked up a bit of a thirst. He could hear the police beam as he took the toy away from the kids and could even hear the various other orphans he found out in the small building wondering how everyone is handling it.

Putting his thoughts aside the lights soon were turned off as the police began to walk away. Feeling his pupils dilate on his target he knew how this had to be done but he could at least enjoy it. No killing this time, but granted he could at least make him look like a

fool for a couple hours.

Taking a breath the last few milliseconds ground down to nothing as he could feel each move to his goal like to movement of a clock, sure of itself and of its purpose. Pulling the man in blue away soon he was getting some nourishing vitae while the prick pulling toys from kids during the holiday season would soon hopefully be looking like Frosty.

Seeing the small stuffed toy he could see it was a stuffed cat looking like either a stuffed tiger or lion depending on who you asked. He was just reminded of Pisha and the kids and how sometimes things could be done if he could just play the game of politics.

Climbing up the ladder he could spy through the window to see the bedding situation was rough at two per bed including a larger person he had to guess was the nun in the back, the light of her nightlight giving everyone some comfort.

Kine or kindred, it was rough to see that many people so utterly crushed from their situation. It did give the seed enough food to grow in to a full blown idea and Elder Gary could make the call. Placing the stuffed toy at the step of the building the sewers was soon opened and all signs of any kindred was soon gone leaving the flakes beginning to drop again on the alley way with no proof that anything was out of place for a moment except for the slightly moving manhole cover as it fell back in place.

The nosferatu coven was an easy trek from the sewers, the maze of tunnels was home turf and if he could get down here in any situation he would have home advantage able to weave through the turns of paths and pipes while many others had to converse with every map posted on the way.

Anyone chasing him would soon be lost while he made his getaway. It was nice to know that anytime any hunter or some poor soul trying to chase a shadow would soon be ankle deep in water that was none too pleasant for many street walkers to deal with.

Picking up the box where he had dropped it earlier in the night it was all in the order he left it leaving him to believe he would be one of the few lifeforms down there save for the rats. Turning down one last hallway the metal of the pipe began to turn to the vision of rock signifying entry into the domain of the Elder

Gary Golden.

Lady Imalia would be in her own room, but he had to make a couple deliveries to the couple others that filled their rooms. Parts for computer for the schrecknet, some drawing pads for himself, various pieces of makeup for Lady Imalia and a couple six packs for the Elder. Imalia had to okay it first so after giving everyone but her and the elder their delivery the first step for his idea had to be put in play.

Imalia was a Nosferatu born from a supermodel. From what others had told him she was vain to the point of annoyance which was the reason Elder Gary had turned her. For supermodels it would have been a world easier if they were something like Toreador or even Ventrue as many deemed them the best looking clans in the Camarilla.

Nosferatu were the classic creatures of the night and not pleasant to look at by any of the other clans expectations. He just shrugged because although she looked different he didn't think she looked any worse. The normal welts, boils and scars had not touched her face and with heavy lashes and lips he was always sure that someone in the world would find her attractive just in the creature from the trading card way instead of the kindred way.

Still she tried to put makeup on to see if she could do anything about her look and it would take more supplies each time as she experimented. While she was not boastful about it since he was turned she was still focused on looking better.

Opening the blue wooden door to her room Imalia was laying on her bed her leather vest shining what little light there was from the sin bin sign on the far wall the drip in one of the corners gave a standard timing that was annoying to some or comforting to others and she was luckily comforted it seemed by it, never wanting to put a bucket down for it.

“Lady Imalia. I went out to check the snow, and I did some shopping I grabbed you some of the new brand releases.”

The line had gotten her from the bed tossing the magazine to the pillow behind her as she begun digging through the box at full speed moving everything about as she pulled everything into a small pile on her mattress while she made sure there was nothing

left in it but the booze for the elder.

Surprised by the speed every time he could only smile the best he could as she looked at the pile before checking her stores.

“For the last time, just Imalia not “Lady Imalia” I am your master but I do not want that stuffy sounding title.”

Holding the box while he peered at the beers he was wondering how to approach the subject before she just asked in her brusque manner

“What do you want to talk to Gary for?”

“I want to make a Christmas for an orphanage of kine” stating back.

“Try again, think about what you need and what can be gotten for it before I even give you the nod.”

A moment passed listening to the drip of the water and the hum of the neon sign behind them painting everything a soft bubblegum. She could see him thinking about what his plan was going to be.

“I want to.. lead a project to gift a kine orphanage with a array of Christmas presents. So that..the kine are happier and because of that become better food for us as well as possibly go further in their own lives as a form of a long term investment program?” His tone was questioning, something Gary would catch.

Putting her hands on his shoulders. She explained it back to him.

“ You want to attempt a kine investment project to increase the nourishment from those in the areas through an emotional response to a planned set of gifts given. Repeat it.”

“I want to attempt a kine investment project to increase the

possible nourishment from those in the area through a planned set of gifts.” He repeated to both of them.

Shrugging she turned around pointing him off to Gary's door before dropping her hands to her hips. Imalia was a fan of the holidays, he knew but no one could celebrate it as Gary would look it as a sign of possible mutiny.

Elders were much different then neonates when it came to emotions some of the younger ones would try to be as human for as long as they could chaining them as tight to their humanity as to not let the beast get any headway.

The older one got though the farther one remembers they are from the creatures they once were. Some say they couldn't have emotions but Babcock just thought it was a set of different emotions, one that people may not have put the time toward studying as there was no such thing as a vampire psychologist.

Maybe that was something he can think about bringing about as well as the clear dinner table was in the center of his elders room all he could think about was stowing that little idea for later.

“What's dragging snaggletooth, I heard from Kristoff that you had some plan to talk to me about. I take it the beer is to make it go your way.” Popping out of the scene Gary Golden leaned against the table.

Pulling a six pack out he pulled the tab. Alcohol was a vice he continued for no other reason that he liked to and bringing some meant buttering the old Nosferatu up as he tried to remember how Imalia spelled it out for him. Shifting a breath in his lungs nervously he was about to launch in the script before a long clawed came up.

“Just give me the 4-1-1, you got some of the other neonates excited about it, just jam me the basics and we'll see how this hand falls.”

“I want to set up a Christmas for an orphanage, we know this shit sucks and they aren't even kindred. If we make them

happy it may do wonders for others around it, Christmas cheer makes blood much more palatable.”

One blink, two blink, three blinks and a long drag off of the can. Airs of casual banter were pulled away as a fierce eyed Gary looked through him and all he could hope was to agree. Despite the lingo his elder was very bright he felt save for the movie marathons. He had just learned about animated movies and still wasn't sold on it.

“The Camarilla will not be happy but find it harmless, the Anarch's will like it for sure. Net boom there, not wrong on them being a bit better to handle, and I know you all want to try to at least feel a little like them again.”

Shifting the can behind him he pulled to his full height standing up straight, towering over the young neonate.

“Burning the blood sniffing, doll drinking, pains in the neck up there, why not because I know some of the Ventrue will be questioning it moaning the whole night and that is a bonus for sure, snaggletooth.

The caveat is I want you to take the reigns, call it a test, start using some of that influence you have been gathering and get this all set. Remember, no one can see you but maybe someone else like a Tremere would be fine to go topside and help.”

Obfuscating in the environment the weight of the second six pack was pulled from the box dropping on the table gently before Babcock dropped the box already running through who would be able to give him a hand. Vampire life had been a bit of a crash course of trade and influence on top of the whole undead second try at existence.

In all honestly despite the jobs he had pulled successfully he hadn't many people that owed him one, but someone who had some connections he could definitely use. Brujah artists were rare, but one he knew owed him and it was time to cash in.

Despite everything with little pull may bring a problem there was still a couple races who were more human then others.

Throwing the door to his room wide open he couldn't stop thinking as he kept running through to the small desk against the rock wall from the left a small drip on the back right corner was coming down from some broken pipe somewhere.

The Toreador would mostly have a couple to help out, they loved this sort of stuff walking between the worlds of kine and kindred, the Anarchs comprised of mostly Gangrel, Brujah and the occasional Malkavian would have some takers.

Making the world for all was their main thing and despite the problems with the Camarilla there was some in the power structure he would think would be able to give the odd piece of information.

Pulling his thoughts together he could hear the shuffle of some of the other Nosferatu, they would most likely want to join, at least the newer ones. Pulling out the chair and dropping himself in the pencil began to start scribbling notes only occasionally hitting his nails on the desk. Pisha may want to do something if he could sell it to her.

She gave a warning but with the okay from his elder there had to be some wanting to help get all this together. Having two nights to get everything together before Christmas proper seemed tough in his position but it also gave him some energy and even then that was enough time to do what they need to. He hoped.

Gathering his notes on paper he soon had a short series of things that needed to be done and even a couple of the other neonates jumping in as soon as the whispers of the plan began fluttering out.

Kristoff would do it if he could pick up a couple of the comic books for himself, easy enough that he was sent to find some toy stores they could get into in the Hollywood area quickly with a haul of soon to be stolen gains.

Calling his friend who had his own problems there was a bit of meeting in the middle as he was trying to figure out how to get some art supplies as he had found a touchstone. Learning that touchstones were useful to the older vamps he began to keep his eyes out for some art supplies letting his scout know.

Wulfgang would be happy to deliver everything after they had gotten out of the sewer with supervision if he could get those art supplies before new years for some kind of get together he had

gotten with it.

Pisha he had found shocked that the elder was allowing all of this but knowing there was some kids in such a situation pulled on enough heart strings that the nagaraja was soon able to come together to find some other items that could be useful, even willing to get in the field all at the cost of anyone that gets in their way be taken for her dinner.

All he could hope was that no one would get in the way of such things because as much as he loved the company of the nagaraja knowing how she got her vitae was a bit scary considering how nice she could be.

She did have some ties to help with getting some supplies that she would not talk about only that it would be a great place for them. Standing at the top of the empty parking garage he was needing some info about how many he needed toys for looking over the side he could see the alley where the police officer had led them back just a night before.

Lights were already off but managing a well timed Auspex had told him there was still some action going on under the roof. The auras of three small kine were trying to sneak past someone laid out which he had to figure as the same group.

Pisha was walking from around the corner it seemed ready to intercept them. Clearly more powerful he couldn't figure how far she could sense these things but in her new clothes she had caught up to the kids as they tried running back around the corner the young girl holding the stuffed cat he had left.

Turning into the alley she could obviously sense them as the kids began to explore for the night as another snow began to fall. From the alley she vaulted the railing to the parking structure before making her way up to him it was less than a few seconds despite the few floors of asphalt and concrete stopping anyone else to speed so quickly.

“This wear does allow me to go out without suspicion, thank you for that. Where are we with everything?”

“Getting intel on how many we need to get toys for plus some things for the orphanage would help. I got you getting some supplies although you haven't told me where.

“Neonate, a being like myself has many secrets. You won't get any negative response from this. I actually find this quite charming. Like a child trying to help a rabbit den through the storm. Your elder clearly has some new ways of thinking.”

Seeing him gaze from the top of the structure to the building she had only spied the small building a moment before she had replied.

“Twenty-Four plus the three that walked out and it looks like two adults.”

Twisting his head in question she only looked to the sky letting the flakes fall on her as he stood there wondering before shaking the thought. It was clear she could still be a dominant predator of the night despite her studies and sometimes thinking about what else she could do made him nervous even though he was a friend.

“Kind of nervous now, not going to lie. Did you get a response from the Toreadors?”

After a laugh at his comment and side gaze she responded that Velvet, the elder of the toreadors in the city was signing off as well and her club was raising donations for a special night with all her girls, on the caveat that either Pisha dance at the club for the charity night at the Vesuvius or they get a couple chocolates from the patisserie in the higher end district.

Informing him that she would not be dancing at such a place in such conditions he had to note they were stealing from a candy shop as well. The list was becoming longer but right now between a pair of good Nosferatu it did not seem that bad but was beginning to feel weighted, as all the break-ins had to be done seemingly tomorrow night. Having a club behind them for charity even though many wouldn't care if it was Christmas or Gehenna still would at least provide some relief.

Buzzing on his phone the Anarch's were soon signing in with some support from both the baron and even the legend of

Smiling Jack rallying the crew at their bar when he heard some of the Ventrue were against this project.

Smiling Jack and the crew would pickup what they could from their bar and if there was some need to raise a little havoc. Although the thought of needing such things if anything went bad he could just make a call and one of the finest hell raisers would go and work on his craft on the holidays. If he could also find anything fun for his group it would definitely make Gary happy as well.

All these connections began to make his head spin, but taking it one step at a time he had to get some items for no less than four different kindred with two more that, as he looked back at Pisha, he didn't want to get anywhere close to bad side on.

A big supermarket may be a good hit as well, except the nearest one of those would be outside of Santa Monica by ten minutes by car. There was a Trader Joe's a little closer but only by a couple minutes and they had a fair number of things that were supposedly good. Deciding on the bigger store there was now a need for a two pronged attack of thievery.

He either had to go top off with some of the things and go to the specialty shops or go to the box store. Kristoff would be getting some backup. Snow falling on both of them he could see Imalia jumping in both for an excuse to get out as well to rob a store that big blind.

Between the two of them a lot could make it in the haven and Imalia would love to try and pocket half the makeup department. It would be a big score but a lot of good would be possible.

“Care to go to Hollywood proper Pisha? I could use some help, and it looks like you are enjoying the time away from the hospital. Tomorrow is going to be big I feel.”

Thinking a moment the deal of her having her on her own business made him feel uneasy and he traced the emotion the best he could to the new feelings of being a kindred. Having her around may also lead to some needed backup in case things did not go to plan.

Agreeing where to meet both had sooner then anyone else

could lookup and notice jumped over the side to the alley wondering how badly this could be. Walking out the sewers to their meeting point the idea of having his emotions morph because of what he was stuck in his mind rolling this way and that. There were times where he would react to something and not understand why he just reacted the way he did.

Hearing the rats skitter across the shallow ice allowed him to think before the sounds of another set of footsteps crawling out of the access point pulled him from his attention.

“C'mon Pisha. You cant get the drop on me here.”

The only response from the pipe was a familiar chuckle

A chuckle that more stuck in his bones than anything made him wonder about everything. Shuffling it away it was very clearly Pisha getting out of the pipe as he waited for her to begin their journey. Tonight was the big heist and if they did everything they could it would be good for everyone with a nice bit of fun or food depending on how things went.

“Well, they are already heading to the main store. From here on we are on our own.”

“A neonate nosferatu with an elder nagaraja. Do you feel comfortable?”

Pairs of footsteps began to echo in the sewer as he held silent for a moment.

“Honestly, I don't know. I know you can kill me before I get the chance. Part of me I think is very afraid of that. On the other side I do look at you as a friend Pisha. I enjoy our talks and this new world as best I can. It just has been on my mind that am I changing as well?”

Solemn echoes faded as the pipes began to change shapes narrowing from one set of tunnels to the next.

“Yes, young one you are. What you are describing is the relationship each kindred has with their humanity. From my experience your clan has a bit of a difficulty keeping it close, and hearing how you like our meetings is an effort of that. This entire situation was brought out about because of your grasp on what made you human before. Remember sometimes it is good to have that close and other times you need to be the beast to survive.” Her words rang more in his head than the currently lifeless tunnels.

Babcock could only look at his feet as he held the bags, slung over his shoulder ready for the philosophy to end and the actual business to begin. Coming up at the point he read about earlier it was soon all about to be about finishing this up before wondering if what she said was good or bad.

Willing his arms to lift the heavy metal lid for a second he got a lay of the street before entering the utility alley. Despite being Rodeo drive he realized that being solo with no word from either Anarch or Camarilla prince was going to be a lot of trouble if another group was in control of the area. Running to the candy shop his teammate was looking at the back door when a sense of foreboding came over him.

Looking up the various cameras had been unplugged going down the street making sure no one was going to catch whatever was going on here. It was a tell though that both of them realized because to neither of them nothing had been done.

“Why does this feel like a trap?”

Taking a breath he could hear Pisha use a discipline, her auspex to look within the shop.

“Kindred, in the shop. We were set up, and they know we are here.”

“Then why are they not attacking?”

“I am not sure, however if things go bad I may still need food, if they are the only ones available...”

“Pisha as long as the job gets done, we don't break masquerade, and all of us get back safe, take them back for groceries if you want.”

The same chuckle that stuck in his bones resonated as she began to stretch like a tiger waiting for a fool to drop in the cage.

It was explained as he walked in the back door, that despite how one may feel the physical action of adrenaline was simply not apparent in kindred. Something he was currently thankful for while Pisha took on behind him slipping in to the shadows unseen by anyone, and if he wasn't feeling the ever so soft vibrations behind him then he wouldn't of thought she had left.

He could remain slightly cool and aware of his surroundings they may be stronger but he was sure what was waiting in the shadows currently trumped everyone save for some high end explosives.

“Nosferatu!” The voice boomed as he walked into the kitchen.

“We heard you were coming, that Toreador ghoul wasn't getting enough of his master's vitae and with some careful negotiating we found them more then willing to give you up. I doubt that you would know this was a place owned by a third round Giovanni, not many do....”

In front of a set of metal tables was three what looked like Sabbat lowlifes ready to strike with the one who was talking glowing his eyes at them. Each step was measured as he looked around as two of them had brought some low power handguns. It would hurt, but not kill.

Guessing the one in the center was the senior he could also hear her growl behind him. Between the lack of lights on and no one really skilled enough to notice from anything else it was her world and he was just standing in it, in pure honesty they all were.

“So Giovanni like chocolates, kind of surprised. Any reason why you are here though? I mean if your master would like some I

have no problem packing a little parcel for you.”

Across the table the pair of bright red eyes guffawed at the comment before growling at him Pisha was next to him whispering how these guys needed to talk more.

“No, not Giovanni, let the inbred mafiosos burn, but taking out a Nosferatu makes our master's jobs a lot easier as they try to help cleanse from the city the Camarilla and Anarch filth”

Nodding it was then clear all three were Sabbat. That made everything much more important.

“Well since I guess I am going to die, he could feel her hand on his shoulder ready to go, can I at least get all the details of what my death is going to be tripping off? I mean I am just one Nosferatu, and only a neonate.”

Playing the weakness there was a moment where it was going to be taken into account. He needed this info for anything to play going forward.

“Fine, we are going to strike the city, kill the baron, kill the prince and while the first words go out we are attacking the primogen of the area. Toreador, Ventrue, Tremere, Brujah, Gangrel, and even your elder will soon be meeting his final death.”

The smug delivery didn't hit for him because he could hear her practically thrumming with rage. When the tiger was on your side he felt a little safer then anyone would expect, but no one currently noticed as a shadow shifted from his right going around the table in some horrific speed all three of them fell silent before the sounds of ashes hit the floor twice.

Pisha had gotten around to the one across the table currently with her hand around his throat another ready to start digging at his entrails.

“Pisha, can you eat kindred?” he asked eyes closed but surely creating the image of their position from his scuffling the floor and

soft moans of pain.

“I don't know, nagaraja are more known for eating human, but if we keep him alive long enough then who knows.”

Soft sounds of various small pieces of flesh and liquid began to drop on the floor. All he could hope was he could get some more info.

“So Sabbat, maybe if you give me one more piece of intel I can help you out before my friend goes to town. Can you tell me when this attack was going to start, and where you guys are coming in from?”

A moment of silence passed, another one after that before the sound of something turning soon was followed by a gurgle.

“S-Santa Monica Beach by boat, Hollywood we are holed up at the top of the fancy hotel, the Giovanni gave us the rooms as a response at being mocked by both sides, and the rest of the city we are striking from the building we-we had across from the Anarch bar. We are due to start in 20 minutes, now please- call off the bitch.” His fear and occasional whimper of pain made him smile.

“I said I would help, and I will. I need to go outside to let some interested kindred know. Pisha, please do not get any blood on the sweets we still need to take them back.”

Walking out the door he could any attempt he made to talk only to be smothered before he closed the door back in the alley. Calling his own elder first the data was parsed out with a compliment was given by Gary to the sounds of chaos coming from within the shop that was seemingly exploding with activity and dying down all in the same few minutes.

Hanging up the small burn cell phone and dropping it in its pocket in his cloak the door was reopened before the aroma of iron and other tissues were soon perfuming the air. Pulling the various chocolates out of the various fridges and display's he had made

sure to try and wrap it all up as tight as possible on the same metal table the unfortunate souls lost their second lives around.

Standing back to full height the twin pinpricks of white lined with small detail made him aware that all three were now ash. Commenting that what she had was a feast and despite some of the odd flavor she felt sated for the time being.

Picking up a couple bags the had begun to turn out the door before he realized that the other stores were also out and most likely were not going to respond to anyone tonight.

They had found it was easier to simply drive away in the snow. On a pile of goods in the back of a car what was previously belonging to their attackers. She looked in the back as he opened the passenger door opened before realizing she was driving. Bags of expensive items of sort stuffed the bag and while there was a little complication at one of the stores who had another camera inside that was still on.

Worming around that though the backseat was full with ill gotten gains as they made their way back, hopeful that their would be no need for anyone to pull them over. Getting back in to the city after a couple minutes wrapped in his cloak he could see the police had other problems as cars raced around a corner in triplicate after what seemed another of the Sabbat vehicles.

Looking about he could see the various factions banding together, but he knew where his role was tonight. Driving into a dark corner of the parking garage both of them sat there while his burn phone was vibrating nonstop. Jack had called in his usual manner asking him if he could do this again next year.

Calling in every so often he even had thirty seconds of a couple kindred singing Jingle bells in the middle of what sounded like a firefight in the hotel hunting down the Sabbat before they got to the baron and the newer prince who was a childe of Strauss until the filled it with a better candidate.

However he wasn't sure how his number was gotten by but Velvet had wanted to talk to Pisha after dialing him up. Staring out the windshield while she had talked about some details of the night. It had felt that there was some unnatural precedent to kindred wars on the holiday.

That wasn't the thing he was worried about as a troupe of them with a big Brujah holding a couple large bags of Caine knows

what followed by a pair of Nosferatu smiling to anyone that could see them in the darkness of the parking structure.

Five vampires, a carload and a half of stolen goods to be split for the various people and as the items began to be opened up and looked at it seemed in the middle of all this bloodshed he could still pull this off. With a single exception that crashed his mental plan as everyone pulled the items in small piles for the various parties involved.

“We need to drop this off tonight.” The realization hit him.

All of the fighting a lot were enjoying but he soon figured how with that here would be a lot of people looking at the various incidents and with that a lot more presence by unwanted parties. They had one shot to get it right and he was worried that having it cool off or even still going would be a lot worse then if they did it now.

Wulfgang began to send the items with various people to help with getting everything moving and he would have to go with Wulfgang to deliver the massive bags of cheer they had compiled. Pisha was soon gone to Vesuvius delivering her chocolate to the Toreador with every innuendo one could think up soon to be used. Imalia had gotten Kristoff to pick up their hauls for the haven.

Leaving the various items remaining for the Brujah he sat shoulder to shoulder with as they began to walk up the parking structure keeping to the shadows in case any unfortunate kine or kindred tried to stop them. No one else seemed to be in the structure as they had climbed to the top level. A layer of untouched white powder was soon crunched as they carried what they could only after they had seen their target realizing they could have just drove it up. It wouldn't have mattered. Babcock thought to himself that his was doing more bad then good before the Brujah began to speak to him.

“Neonate, you did what you wanted to, sometimes that brings unwanted side effects. It does not matter if it was intended. The world was going to do so and you were the one who tripped the machination of fate.”

Sheepishly looking to the older Brujah.

“That apparent?”

Nodding his head in response he soon continued as he began to look around the building.

“I have lived long enough to know when someone wonders if what they had done has committed more bad to the world then good. Take the good it will do and go on to your next night and..”

Three hurt bodies were running into the alley. He couldn't believe it. His mind scattered while he watched form above and as they made it closer he screamed more and more mentally as they had begun to go to the orphanage guns drawn before kicking down the door.

He couldn't understand what was going on. Wulfgang had followed him as he jumped off the structure landing behind him as he jet in to the building scooping as much snow as he could noting the hearth still going in the main room.

A feeling of power, of drive stored through him and he felt like a live missile, like a bolt of judgment, like everything good or bad in either the kine or Kindred was stopping him make this orphanage happy.

He could feel the eyes of the injured Sabbat on him for the split second he had before running in the building soon tossing a heavy handful of snow at the fire, weakening it while he drew his hand back a charge lighting up in his right hand.

A couple gunshots were heard from the Mother superior of the orphanage. While the sound of a small spark and sand falling came from the stairwell. More gunshot rattled the kids together at the back of the room while she stood in front of them trying to give whatever would be coming up. Only for no one to come up, the only thing that she had was a strange voice deep and powerful telling them to stay up there while the bad guys were being removed.

The tone sounded both human and something far worse as she prayed to her lord three more Sabbat were well past ash. Final deaths was something he didn't want to cause but pulling back and

sinking his hand in the second of the three the feelings of elation as a Kindred were only matched as he began to load the living room with their gains.

Wulfgang made his way up the stairs hands in the air with an understanding smirk trying to explain the situation somewhat while he looked at his claws below. He had taken a life and while he had full reason and was attacked he had gotten his understanding of his inner beast.

Why Imalia was so cruel at time, why Mitnick wanted to dominate the data of enemies to the clan, how Gary didn't care for either the Camarilla or Anarch preferring the chaos sometimes, or even Kristoff making sure there was no one able to squeal on their missions. he had not actually done anything like that but he now understood how strong the beast was as it pulled the chains.

Staring at his hands he loved this second life but he also learned the heavy risks for the first time crashing in to his thoughts as he mechanically pulled the items about. Filling the room it was explained that he could not say who he was or his friend but they had gathered a large donation to the orphanage for the holiday and luckily were in time to save them.

The Brujah saw the far away thoughts in the younger's eyes and could feel his pain. It was part of growing up again in the world of the kindred, but while all that was going on he was commanded to wrap in his cloak.

Wanting to see what had become of them Wulfgang had to explain something how he was not really happy to be seen so he would be in his long cloak. Pulling the remnants of the door back together for a moment the kine made her way down the stairs to them and only saw what little ash she would guess came from the hearth.

Toys of various sizes and colors filled the room, the smell of chocolates from his disaster of a robbery, so numerous what they stole gave the kids a nice little treat, clothes from Wulfgang's run and Pisha's package that was already wrapped tight in a shoe box. Folding her hands over her mouth in joy she ran to the cloaked figure in a warm hug before calling the kids down followed by the tower bringing up the rear of kids that soon squealed as they saw what was left for them.

He could smell the blood but as the kindred urges grew he

could remember when he was one of those kids and seeing them smile despite the heavy perfume of iron and carbon in the air it was a moment that made him happy.

Close to half an hour had passed before out in the alley a pair of forms were seen coming down with a few more forms behind them. From underneath the cloak he couldn't tell much, and he had to thank Wulfgang for taking the talking portion, it was soon realized that Velvet in a rich red fur coat and Pisha in her sweater and jeans had come with ghouls bringing the haul from Vesuvius.

Food packed in boxes, stacked three high and growing in number in the corner as the ghouls unloaded from somewhere around the corner of the garage would give them at least a couple weeks of time.

The understanding of such sent the nun to hug the Toreador and the Nagaraja only a few hours removed from her meal of Kindred flesh unknown to all kine in the room. All four of them watched in the back corner as the club's donations were arranged in the front corner as the kids bounced and played with their new toys.

Pisha and Velvet talked about the now dead ghoul low enough that no kine could hear. All the while dealing with the kids as a couple meandered near them. Velvet had even gotten to show a young girl how to braid her hair easier which was a scene that would live with him for a while. Right next to the original kids taking the stuffed animal to Pisha in wonder as her own facial tattoos made them think the same thing.

She just bared her fangs and hands like the jungle cat the young girl of the small triad had before everyone chuckled unknowing the teeth were real.

“A moment outside, young one?” Wulfgang lead him out as the shock of everything he had learned today was still apparent under the cloak.

Leaning against the parking structure in the alley Babcock could only wonder how everyone else handled the two sides to the second life before the older man spoke.

“Tonight was a learning experience?”

“.....yes. I am sorry. You all did wonderfully. I just. It really struck me tonight. We are monsters.”

Shaking his head softly he dropped a hand on the shorter vampire before explaining.

“Remember as people we all have abilities, strengths and weaknesses that we must deal with to grow. The only thing that has changed we have an additional set of those as kindred. If we forget that we may as well watch the sunrise because their will be nothing to this world left for you. Tonight you learned how you have to keep those things in balance and especially why. You learned everything about the Sabbat in this and stopped an attack that would have cost many more their lives. Take the victory lap, young one, all things together this was a grand success and you got your name on the top of it.”

Making their way back inside many of the toys were already being moved to the dorm upstairs while the three women were talking as Velvet and Pisha soon pointed over to Babcock putting him on the spot as she moved forward it was him who had to balance everything mentally.

“They told me, you put this all together, everything. The strip club raising food, the toys and candy, the gold coins in the box. I do not even know how you got them. This was exactly what we needed, as we can sell them to the museum or some collector after your friend told me about them.”

Pulled from his thinking he looked up and carefully nodded trying to not show anything that would break the masquerade with the Toreador elder watching.

“You are a godsend, all of you. I do not know how you managed all of this, but I just need to say thank you.”

He could smell the blood. Everyone's in the room and even

then he could start to see who she was. This woman who gave everything for her views and her belief needed help and whether by fate or by divine comedy he was there.

It was he who gathered a bunch of the damned to make something of a Christmas dealing in favors for a group who was forgotten by nearly everyone else. She was also smarter then he expected as she leaned in to continue her conversation.

“Listen, I know you are troubled, and I... I understand that your kind and mine may not see eye to eye, but coming to help them.” she nervously stated.

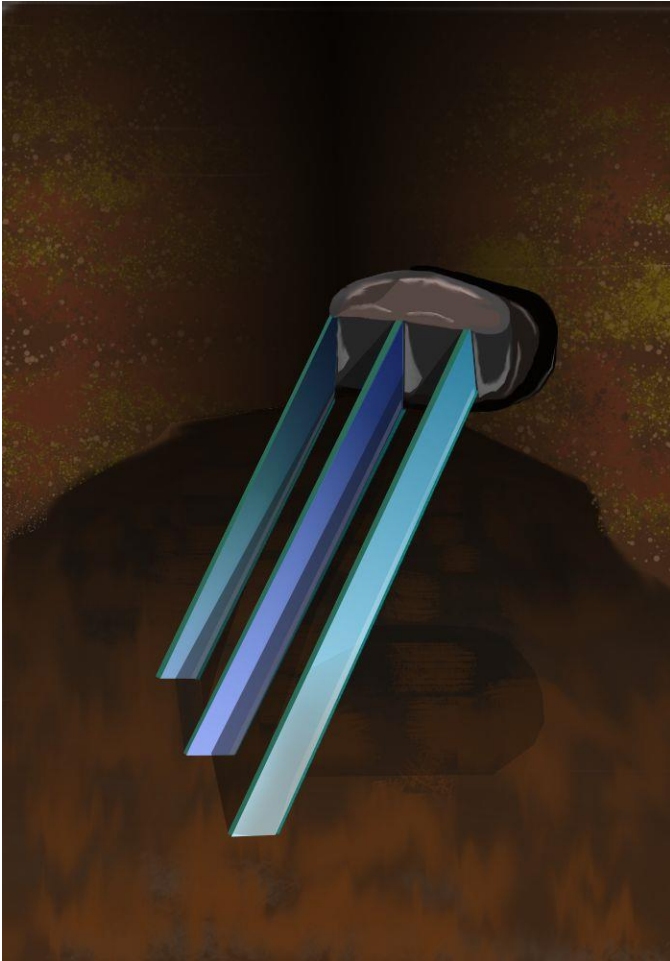
“It gives me hope, and I needed that.” she finished calmly.

Gathering together the four them began to leave a bunch of kids from the window waving them away. Wulfgang soon was walking Velvet back to her club “as a gentleman should” Leaving him and Pisha again to go back to the hospital.

“Gold coins?” He questioned as they dipped in the sewer.

“Back when I was in Spain. A lot of little trinkets came my way that I thought would be valuable after a couple hundred years. A shoe box of stacked gold coins from the 1700's would be interesting to use but she should get some more use out of them then I did.” She replied.

Nodding the night was well over, the sky would be beginning the morph from dark indigo and snow to warmer clouds as the sun began to rise. Tomorrow would be another night in the kindred Jyhad, but they all had this moment to keep them grounded.



Gangrel

First was hundreds of years when she could be a neonate or barely out of it he was just claimed and he had taken one of the cows the farmers in her area had been using for food. He didn't know who or what he was but it was clear he was still surviving and he needed to be brought down a bit.

The fronds of the plants would get in the way and while as the memory went she realized she wasn't a neonate she was just young in unlife and dumb as a post.

They had met while he was still crying over what he had become, it was easy enough to follow, he hadn't known how to deal with this abilities and there was still some curve to it although the

cave he had taken for his home at the time had been a good cover against the elements as monsoon season was coming.

No one liked being rained on hard enough that you couldn't see where you were going even if you had beast sight, thankfully echo location worked well on land as well as underwater.

Clashing the first time it was clear he didn't know how to use his abilities but that he was a competent fighter able to hold himself with a staff against her with sword. She remembered that with a smile, the claw she would adopt soon after that was much more friendly to her style that was back when she even would wear skirts at time. It was strange after being run off they would ever meet up again. She only cackled mentally as that was the first of many meetings throughout their unlives as they grew and maybe snapped a little mentally it was clear that there was going to be some fun.

They wouldn't see each other for another 50 years where they clashed on opposite sides in the battle of the Camarilla versus Sabbat in the area and she was just digging how they did there business, what was wrong about being a vampire, be proud of it.

'Aren't you supposed to be proud of what you are?' she noted. The battlefield was a bloody mess at the end as they did remember each other. He came for her trying to understand why someone like her would join the Sabbat.

The battle was one of her favorites, it was one where the beast in her was sated like it had been to a feast she had killed many a prude and while some of the Sabbat she had learned since then were not what she liked now, what she liked turned into the Anarchs but at that time after she had begun cutting up the opposition she had also gotten a reputation of a hired hand, in case you needed something dead you could go find her and she was proud of the work she did some of them were difficult little toss bags that really deserved it and others less so but they knew where they were going and accepted the lot with as much dignity as could be provided.

Closing her eyes thinking about it the sand beneath her bare feet her cat eyes reacting to moon bright in its crescent form while some puffy clouds lazily scooting by the only passage of time. Oh and of course the hundred or so Camarilla bucket heads, some in

armor on the opposite of them. They obviously never had been in a fight and those who had worn grass armor found themselves better off than those who were so heavy they begun to sink in the sand faster.

Despite your disciplines sometimes you still sink like a brick and she wouldn't be surprised if one poor bastard went to torpor because of that still waiting for blood under the sands encased in a can for everyone's protection.

Bo had come with grass armor because of course he would, he also came with hair as well although like many other things in his life it was running fast. With his pike he actually had gotten the better of a group of Sabbat shovel heads who thought the best way to attack is to chew on the blade with your neck.

After finding out how well that worked Bo was credited as being some force on the field while she actually did some work and the thought of that made the animal in her growl because she was the better hunter and she wanted to prove it then.

It was clear some of the guys she had to kill were higher level but the sheer unadulterated arrogance he threw off was just something she wanted to flay off his skin and shove down his throat. She had just gotten her claw and swung beautifully under the moon the white of the light against the metal painted everything in purples except where people died, that was red and the clash made something so poetic to her, like a piece of art you would find in the galleries she would frequent.

Bo wasn't artistic he was purely just about getting the job done and that made the smugness that much worse then. She could barely stand him. The next night they found each other on the field and clashed for the sake of finally being able to kill the other, and it was something both enjoyed with great venom and vigor.

She was the bestial, the natural, the artist and he was the cold, the Ventruer, the politician, he wasn't even a clan that would go to battle normally but he handled his weapon as well as anyone and despite minor nicks to both sides they were at a stalemate. Her powers were good but he was swift enough in mind to counter them and that led them to just go in circles.

Next was a hundred years late during the war, whichever one she couldn't remember fun time for her though. She went over to jolly old England where Bo was doing something boring and

they had to go have words that may or may not involved one of them getting tossed into London bridge, like the side.

He didn't fall in the river due to his reflexes but he didn't get lucky enough to stay out of the puddles in the fog. Hearing the large splash on the cobblestone before him swearing made the moment worth it on its own.

It was clear she was ruining his afterlife and then, that was a good thing. Fuck knows why he was there but he was guarding something and she had to get in. When she had gotten back she had found out that he had taken her attention for enough time that they had moved the target so Bo had gotten the last laugh but he was still all wet, that was a bit of a tie at the end.

Rome was the big one. It had been a few hundred years from their last meeting she had become independent with the rest of the Gangrel because fuck the Cammy's and he was trying to exterminate someone for the boot sniffers. I turned out to be more serious then she thought because it turned into an all out brawl that bounced between buildings and turned into more then a few accidental breaking and entering crimes. He was not backing down and neither was she.

While she couldn't figure out why he as so angry he was clearly angry about something as he pushed for everything he could even getting a couple swipes with his new sword. Finding him a little more serious made her more hectic swiping with her claw and using her power to manifest another causing a fair amount of bleeding from particularly nasty swipe on his left side the claws can cut even kindred if he wasn't careful he would find out more in gruesome detail.

Except she knew he didn't, what he did do was manifest his disciplines in a way that nearly tore her in two. She was able to stumble outside barely holding herself together before dropping to the ground where she could dissolve into it and heal up. A nice little trick of the Gangrel bloodline while he would think she had been finally dealt with, but that all lead to L.A

L.A. Los, Fucking, God Damn, Angeles and that was what she now recalled it after finding out they had to work together, and be cordial Bo was the kind of warrior that would kill then try and be a team player.

It seemed that this time despite the battles that something in

him had been the driving force driving so deeply that even the beast had to step aside which was most likely, as she thought about it the reason there was such a rift between them, something unspoken, it was more than a cow, then being on different sides, she was bound by her nature, that being one with the beasts of the world, while he had found something stronger.

His own self loathing had made him something stronger than many of the others she had come across and taking the second blood pack it had occurred to her that after everything he had done it was only because he was trying to find his way that they had clashed, he really had not done anything different than any beast, he had no lord, or anyone to show him the way.

Phasing back in the earth she hoped there was some human she can drink from because despite the blood pack helping there was nothing better than straight from the source and as she phased forward the walls were clearly not covered, their mistake as they went through the sweeps and phasing out under the stairs she tapped a can lid against a stair catching the attention of one of the shovel heads holding his gun like it would protect him.

One blood bag drained later she began her task with vigor. Taking her claw and slashing at the back of one of the main kindred in the room setting off the screams and gunfire that would call her backup.

Rushing in they all had their backs trying to shoot at her while he was drawing his sword like he was a god damn samurai and it was awesome! Loving every minute she could barely stay ahead of their fire until it finally stopped. The plan was to go in split the room in half and kill everyone on your side which seemed like something simple enough they could get behind it and going in to the next chamber as they ran in it seemed to work with their skill sets as the enemy didn't even blink twice before they descended slashing at veins and raining the humans for blood only to stab the kindred to final death. When the path diverged the problem was to either split up or continue as a tandem and not knowing what may be coming the smart money was to stick together which was easy enough, but then left or right.

Bo actually had a point that it didn't matter because everyone was dying anyway. Heading right it made as much sense as anything and following the path was clearly the wrong way but

it made for sabotaging any further action after finding a closet filled with guns that was soon filled with a bunch of metal pretzels.

Feeling some fire in the belly again there was some poor Sabbath bastard that made the mistake of having his shirt open and claws did a fair number of damage turning his innards into outards to all the others and they weren't happy of that. Too bad they didn't have too much to say about it at that point.

Racing back the other ways was where all the important crap was. If computers and servers were there then they had to figure there was something important and Bo managing to crack his way in after she got the password from a local.

Getting some info written down she had to defend the desk while he found some flash drive to use for the data. Six Sabbath with guns versus one angry girl was perfect for her because after the doors closed behind her the screams of their pain immediately started and she made sure that one person unfortunately got thrown to the ceiling... fourteen feet up.

That fall was more the big splatting exclamation on the end of his life, and she was sure he was gone well before that. Hopefully, because that sort of a fall always seemed to suck, even as a kindred she hated falling from high places.

Moving on with the information it was clear some bigwig was here as she realized the mark of some high end Sabbath crests were here, could be a Tzimisce she figured and explaining the thought process he began to think on how to dismantle the fleshcrafters and talking how they were often weak at the joints and despite being fleshcrafters, working with it led to strengths in the flats but the joints were often at risk.

She often found that despite everything attacking the main spine of the creature would do enough damage but that would mean getting their back to you. It was a conversation that both actually felt cordial to the other without being forced.

There may be something of a possible partner here as they began working together they were so different that if they could look past it she thought they could make a good team and she was busy figuring the way to get him on her side because a good partner was worth his home in blood dolls.

From the number of defenders it was clear that someone or something of importance was getting close the creations were big

and lumbering but as one got the drop at her from the water she could see him jump and drive his sword in the hollow between the clavicle and shoulder and slice in wards waving the sword in the creatures body until it turned to ash.

Getting back to her feet she got revenge on the next on kicking it after a running start hard enough that she could feel the bones in the jaw break and move due to the force and she was proud of that, damn proud of it as the creature stumbled for a moment, trying to charge a shot before disintegrating humans were fading out and the rooms were getting smaller while the creatures were clearly more abominations of odd pieces.

After a couple of them though they could have been made of doll parts because they were not smart enough break the strange team that was being gelled in the tunnels. After a pair of crawlers and three trolls she had to guess they made it by the lacquered iron doors clearly out of place in such a setting.

Minus all the blood and ash that was now behind them of course because then it looked a little more like a matching theme, but opening the door, the smell of flesh and organ was the odor that seemed to settle on everything making sure to not get out for a long time and as they walked in it felt like they had been waited for.

That thought was correct as a pair of the spiky cactus looking twits came out of the shadows exclaiming how we were ruining everything and how there was no way we could get out. Bo said we would kill them, I agreed then cactus's thought they were big and could get in a fight, then one of them transformed in to something that was much bigger, and as I got smacked into a wall that was much more welcoming to my form then I originally thought, found out he could fight.

All comedy aside it was strange to be in such a position but one had clearly been holding back and knowing that, two to one I removed myself from my vertical impression and jumped in as Bo's sword went flying.

It was enough for me to get a couple strikes in on his fleshy undercarriage. If there was any proof that we could be a great team it was this. We knew these combos. I slash left then Bo would come back with a right liver attempt, I would hit the leg and he

would strike the ribs.

While this was a combo we had done to each other to go in quick succession while cactusmon's evolution tried to decide which one to hit or block was getting carved whole sale on one side and softened on the either.

Taking a moment to retrieve his weapon I had gotten caught and was in a game of strength with this things new form which looked like if an angry goat got bit by a werewolf. What he didn't manage was me rolling back and taking him over me right in to a willing strike as he went by the strike had hurt him from his wince and trying to grab it before charging back in where we had his number. Each strike of ours went wholesale while he got blocked enough he could have been called lego

Left swing, blocked I strike, he strikes at me only for a quick slash at a leg. He tries a wide sweep only for a stab in the foot and a punch in the junk I can smell his fear, he is wondering what is going on all his plans are unraveling as he tries a final strike vertical hammer only for both of us to side step each way and strike in leading the first cactus to turn to ash. I honestly had to laugh because after the big swing, he was strong, he couldn't catch a thing because we had his number.

It was sad but something was being said by the second one that I couldn't hear. I was honestly laughing too hard that I didn't notice anything until Bo took his sword, stabbed it in the ground and removed his suit jacket, now nearly stained to red from black. Something had actually pissed him off. I was ready to take a step back and watch the show because I was a skilled warrior we just took the bigger one, unless this one had a couple degrees of ass kicking and magical potion of bullshit he was doomed, and it was going to be funny.

“Stay out of this one.. Please”

“Don't worry, I know that face, I am just normally the one who causes it, I am going to watch from here. I get some entertainment and cactus twit gets pulverized.”

He made some threat that I thought was more for his own comfort because let me put it like this, there was ass kickings, there

were the ones that were legendary, then there are fights where one of the participants were clearly out of there game and with that face and uneasy cactus man 2, the cactusing was my bet was this was going to be a public service announcement level of dumbassery.

In short, fucking hilarious.

Dude got to summon his little butt-fumbles and Bo decided to let them surround him before giving some discipline backed pimp slaps that wasn't even fair, and the look on his face. Bo hadn't even tried and the Tzimisce was clearly hoping that would work I am sitting next to the sword wondering exactly how much mist you will get turned into.

Only for a blade to be produced and swung into a blocking hand. Bad move, and let the hurty screamy pain commence! Celerity is fun to watch in a fight because it looks like at the level he had it running he was more tenderizing his body for the Nagaraja, you didn't hear punches you heard solid tone. Think the punch, thwack except just solid because it never stops by the time the next one happens you still hear the last one. After about thirty seconds of a full barrage that any boxer would crap their pants from if they could see there was one backhand, backhand and the dude ate wall. Behold the pimp slap! Oh it was glorious, anyway comes back grabs sword, pokes dude, til ash, we make sure nothing is left. Clear the room. Lets get out of here.

We get out in front of the store its still fuck all' o clock at night but we need to see what is going on so waiting for a cab.

“Bo, we worked damn well in there.”

“We did do well Zarena”

“So I got a question, why are we fighting each other?”

Bo looked from his sword, stood up, and shook his head, the action had been so natural that he never questioned it.

“How about instead of trying to kill each other for no reason we work together for more money, because I know something there is something big coming up and I think you want to join this. We are going to wreck the cammies one way or another.”

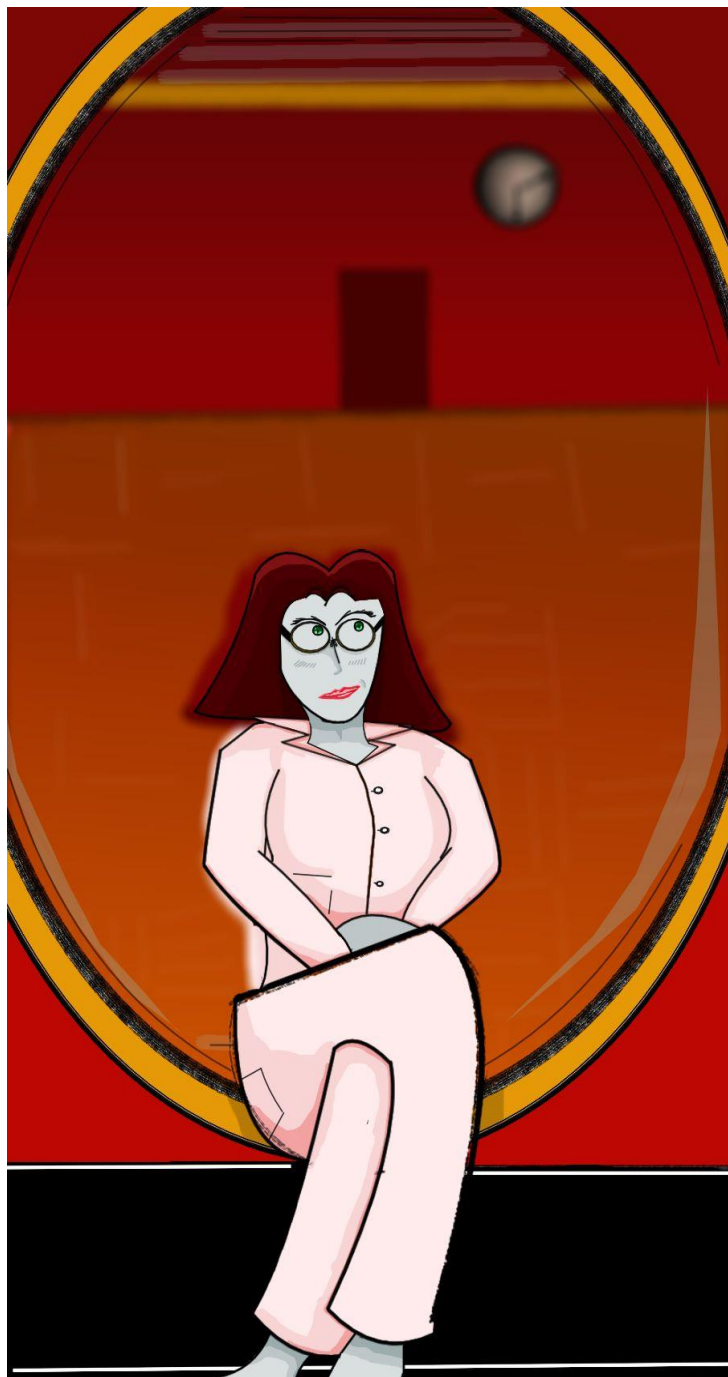
“Didn't they hire you though?”, he wondered

“They paid full price plus extras”, she answered smugly

Nodding, he would at least want to hear this thing going on between the malk's and the Gangrel it seemed some other subsections of other clans were in on it too and he felt like it may be something that made the world better if after all a better version of the ruling party would come out then use it.

Taking the cab, both of them found the city in tatters but Isaac was still kicking and it seemed he had to step in at times when areas got too hot near the kine. Seeing the old film director wiping blood off his hands with a rag was amusing but it seemed the fighting was over for the time and the Sabbat were routed, the only thing was the data he had found. Given over it was meant and received to be a bonus that would be delivered to his haven.

Back in Chinatown at his haven dawn was coming, and Zarena had made her point going back to her own haven leaving him to think about it. While the night had been packed with more than he expected it made him wonder if maybe he found a reason, being a team member and helping the kindred evolve. It was a thought that helped him get to rest easier than he had in recent memory.



Malkavian

It was a long year. Getting everything together to this point without everyone figuring out had been a problem that no one wanted. Ventrue sniffers were getting a little curious but finding out the Malkavians were late to the investment party it was soon just dismissed.

If they had pushed further they would have found out how hard they clan was pushing for everything because forgetting to invest would not hold on to a full 100 million dollar push. It could have been messy but there was few more that could handle themselves in the times of clarity that saved them.

LA had been a city in turmoil but through chaos new ideas can often bloom and they did their best contacting through the madness the Voerman who introduced them to many of the kindred in the area and informed to many of the others. They were hoping to get some roots in the area as it was a close to a port and could be sued for bringing in supplies.

Many people knew of the Camarilla but those who knew also had a basic knowledge that it was corrupt at the highest levels, that it was an old boys club that would breed favor currying for the sake ones comfort instead of the other vampires.

Getting this together was crucial to make sure they had the supplies and the lines to get anything and anyone wherever they wished. It had taken time but it had been done to satisfaction by a lot of people. Next was finding things to help defending it and from there it grew to the point that they had gotten close to their timeline again.

Getting this plan was something a few of them, CJ included was keen on because it was clear after some details they had gleaned from their madness that the Camarilla was getting too old and was not changing and there would be a power vacuum in a lot of areas.

Many of them wanted the group to be more accepting group as while the Camarilla said every vampire was a part of their house they only acted cordial if you were belonging to one of the clans that had value to the Camarilla, which was, Brujah, Tremere, Nosferatu, and of course the Ventrue. Everyone else was considered ghosts until they were needed and even then it had to be

important for you to get respect. The whole thing felt wrong to them and, they did not look well upon people who were different, a person should be judged on their actions and the content on their character and it is some of the people of house Malkavian that got some of the other Clans together to bring this to light.

The question, the really big one was how was it going to happen because there were already rumblings in the power structure of the Camarilla about things not going exactly too plan this year when it comes you can't fight wars if you don't have supplies and they already having to deal with some of the dummy companies to get some supplies in.

There is a couple groups of them fighting the Sabbat in port cities for control under the radar. That would be a big move and despite trying to be methodical and slow it has been showing some progress taking some cities on both coasts and even Hawaii getting into a bit of skirmish territory.

Everyone had Sabbat but they had a group of people willing to put the boot to them and kick them out, CJ was happy that the group was them. Followers of set, Gangrel, the occasional Ravnos now some of those groups will be rounded by a tremere which would make for well rounded skirmish group to go in to a fight and poke the enemy until they poke back.

Malkavians were never really known as a military force since ancient Rome and while then they had some great rulers they also had some crap ones and a couple of them soured the pot for millennia. Feeling the phone buzz it was clear that despite the deal the work would never stop, popping it open the person was exclaiming that a business had dropped and that they needed to know what to do.

Explaining how to take the funds needed to buy them out the call was soon ended and hoping the order was followed where they could have a good new company that most likely with a polish will be making more money and will have built in supply lines they could take advantage of.

The whole thing with Strauss was a trip and a half and gong down the couple stairs on the side of the building it was clear that things may be changing quicker then expected. If anyone was watching then they should be scared, and if they get in the way there would be no remorse because they had a chance and now

there was nothing left but to start over before all of kindred kind takes the hit.

That was something that couldn't happen because the kindred needed to band together for the next generation. Dealing in LA though there were strange moments trying to defend all of that. If anything it was strange to be found out by the whispers of Tremere apprentices watching them and legitimately it made CJ nervous because the prince was Tremere.

The blood mages were secretive and while there was splintering in the clan they had been able to keep the majority together due to their training they had undertaken. While getting some roots down in the area he had found that he had gathered the eyes of some of the apprentices of the Tremere Regent.

That was the worst case scenario for a while because getting found out would leave to the Camarilla sniffing up their tree and that would end everything they were planning. It was clear after a few weeks that he had been investigating what was going on and after a couple days seeing the blood mage apprentices around there work it was only a matter of time before there had to be contact, because the prince was also Tremere and it was told the prince of the LA area was actually a childe to the regent meaning crossing him meant a major foul and a lot of incoming fire.

It had taken two full days before the Regent decided to call for a meeting. Something that was rare as many times people would just sit and wait until the other person came to them. Offering to stay it was clear from the bald man when he walked in that he had some grasp but he did not know enough to put it together.

Poking around it was clear that what they were doing was just to see the power of the guy and being able to defend against the dementation was a nice start. While Therese was trying to figure what was going on they had their own mental battle and CJ was impressed with the Regent who had been able to figure out with some of the other moves that had been going on. So after thinking who it was there was really one move...

Cut them in and see what they do.

After they were informing the Regent, the Malkavian officer was hoping they could sway the regent and at least one chantry over to them because that would give them some ability In

the blood magics.

Only for the Regent to call in some heavy favors or something and come back with some of the groups hiding in the shadows ready to join when they go the word. It was a wonder the blood mages didn't push him as a face of the clan because, CJ thought, the ability was clearly there to bring people together for your cause.

Luckily their loss was their gain the bombshell they dropped was big as well getting some nosferatu as well as a regent who can break blood bond with evidence was the big one, they honestly could have asked for half of everything and that would have been accepted

Nodding to themselves, it was a good deal, there was a lot there but some of it helped them, some if it was bonkers, but how often do you get a chance int to learning blood magic and the nosferatu information net, and the proof of blood bond breaking, that was clear enough for them who knew many couldn't even speak anything negative about the pyramid. That was a big coup, and Malkav was happy to have them on their side.

Walking back to the apartment they had claimed it was clear they were not going alone. The weight of another set of eyes were upon them, it didn't seem to be a dog of the prince or the sheriff as both were under command to the child of the regent they just signed, and he didn't seem like the one to double cross so early.

So the question as the walked to the hotel was who was following them, whomever it was it felt interesting like it wasn't something they could understand right off the bat. Entering the door they could feel the presence following them and going up the elevator it had been a moment before they realized where the person had been hiding. Watching from the top a dark ponytail swung in when the doors opened to try and catch them only to look around and get a pair of heels in the gut knocking the stalker back in the doors of the empty hall.

“Ah you must be Pisha. Next time could you please just ask like a normal being”

Coughing lightly they seemed to lightly barb them before

walking to their apartment turning back around with ah and on their hip inviting them to follow. From the information Pisha was was a Nagaraja, a flesh eater, but very studious she had left after the Anakran sarcophagus incident only to come back for more artifacts taking up her post in the old hospital.

It also seemed that Nagaraja was at least a little smitten. Entering the apartment door it was clear from the posture that she had been looking at something on the seat of their pants.

“So why are you stalking me, can't be for my sparkling personality, so that means you heard something?”

“Yes one of the Tremere apprentices helps me on some items and handed me the note to read before heading to his appointment, I wanted to see if I had a place in this as well. I understand that my kind aren't looked upon well because of our curse but it seems like we can actually be a part of the society in this case and as a member I would really enjoy that.

“Nagaraja? Hmm well you have to have some magical ability if memory serves, please take a seat. I wouldn't be surprised if we had a few already in the ranks, I would just say your feeding, we would have to come up with a safe solution, suicides, or death row inmates, or something like that. It would be nice having someone in the black hand able to bring more to our side, and don't mock me I know they exist too.”

Pisha nodded before blushing slightly. Something had also crossed her eye and CJ wanted to see how bad it was. Being what they were romance was a unique thing but if Pisha wanted to give it a try then they would at least do that.

Walking over in the white suit CJ dropped down next to her and could see her begin to blush fierce enough that their had to be some explanation.

“Pisha.. Pisha... Are you there? “

The look on her face said absolutely not so to help explain the situation CJ undid the fist button of their pants before taking a

Pisha's hand and shoving it down.

1...

2.....

3.....

Looking up at the tiles CJ wondered when that stain got up there a full 8 seconds late before Pisha restarted and came back to reality shrieking for a moment before holding her hand and looking at them.

“There is a reason I don't do Mr or Ms. So if you are still blushing after that I don't mind dancing with you a couple time to see how we work.”

“Yup, you see when I was a child my parents really didn't know how to handle all this, loved me all the same, bit rough though. It wasn't too bad though, just skipped the mr. mrs, he, she, crap told people to call your majesty, ruler of the universe, your future boss that sort of thing use whatever is easier for you.”

How did you get turned though?

“Like the rest of the kindred I got bit, after a club someone got the jump on me drained me and gave me a second life and the funny part is my head was screwed up then trying to figure all this out but experience is great, I am clearer now then I was then.

Being like this in the 50's wasn't the greatest pick for time, but what can you do. Anyway I enjoyed this life I called it my getting shit together time, and I did, granted sometimes the issues get to me a little but I had been dealing with it all my life, now I actually have people who at least understand it.”

“Do you ever think that maybe you were cursed I mean I don't want....” Pisha was stuttering she could not believe it she wanted the floor to swallow her up.

“Do I think that my body was a curse? No, you can't think like that, or it will consume you, doesn't matter if you are kine or kindred. Besides one thing you learn after a while, everyone has strengths and weaknesses, I learned that my form I have a ,unique set of them, and I try to maximize them now. I like me because of all these things so is my body cursed? No.”

“Pretty wise for a neonate.” She uttered.

“Do not even start, I earned my position I don't know how, but Malkav picked me so I am here.” CJ explained with a chuckle

“Well. Is there a place for me here? “ Pisha pondered

“Absolutely, and I even got a spare coffin in the apartment if you want to rest here for the night as well.

“ Thank you, I would like that I don't know why but are intriguing I would like to talk with you tomorrow night, minus the stalking and kick if possible.”

Draping their head on the shoulder of the Nagaraja it was clear that despite not being the biggest story now the company was pleasant enough to enjoy the story so far.

“Next time, we can actually work for it to putting your hand down my pants.: Cameron chided.

Pisha, blushed as best she could, thank goodness Babcock couldn't see her there wouldn't be a coherent word coming out for hours.

End Thoughts

I originally did this as a project to pair with my gameplay on Twitch and it took a lot longer to get done but I am glad I did it. Worst case scenario, we can all laugh at how crap this is. Best case I get some literary award. I am thinking no one will care or maybe a couple people will dig it. In any case pay what you want. I understand paying nothing. I meant this originally to be free if you like it then “hey great”. I would you rather read it then give your money if you like it. You can do so on my twitch page.
(mrbigtanderson)

In any case I got this done. Dross or Gold, I learned from it I hope you enjoyed it to some degree and hope you have a good night.