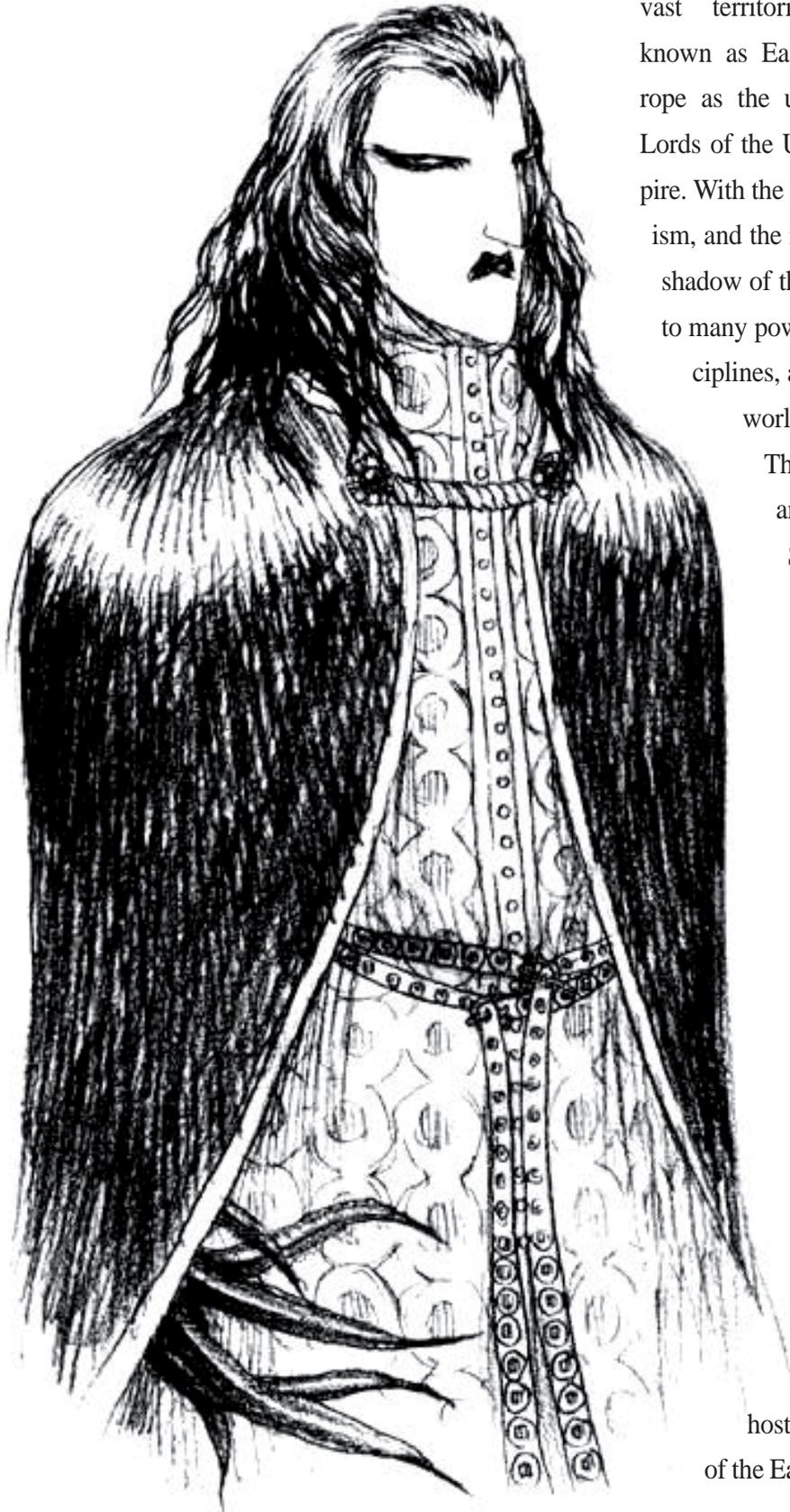


creation from all the minions and forces of stagnation; she fed the world, giving fertility to the soil and to the body. But, when her husband Apsu was killed, she went mad and decided to end all creation in her grief. This irrational action pits her against all the other Gods and one of her offspring, named Marduk, the resurrected savior-like hero, was talked into opposing her.



Voivode

[Tzimisce]

The Voivode were once the most powerful and feared of all clans ruling the vast territories now known as Eastern Europe as the undisputed Lords of the Umpyr Em-

pire. With the downfall of warrior feudalism, and the rise of the usurper Tremere, they are now a shadow of their former selves. Still, the clan has access to many powerful sorceries, self-knowledge, many Disciplines, and great eldritch lore taken from the otherworldly depths of the darkness beyond the grave.

The Voivode consider themselves apart from and superior to the rest of Kindred Kind. Spirits reborn in the Chthonic world of darkness and sensation as children of the Dragon, the Dark Mother, the Great Beast of the world beyond the grave soil, from whence all fertility, flesh and blood arises, the Voivode are Lords among demons. Unlike the paltry petty vampire blue-bloods and scheming politicians, the Voivode are a warrior nobility, rugged War Lords and dark witches - priests of the mysteries of the Great Dragon below the world.

Fiercely territorial, they are fixated on the land that they dominate, guard and or corrupt. Voivode are exceedingly private beings, placing great value on the sanctity of their haven. In fact, the clan has an entire series of elaborate protocols based around hospitality. Guests invited into a Fiend's haven are protected with the host's Unlife; trespassers are pursued to the ends of the Earth and punished in gruesome and lingering





fashion. Surprisingly, Voivode havens, or “manses,” are not necessarily comfortable or well-kept in the manner of Ventrue or Toreador dwellings. The amenities of mortals matter little to the Fiends.

If the Abyssal are the heart of the Sabbat, the Voivode are its soul. Even other vampires grow uneasy around these eerie Kindred, and the clan’s nickname of “Fiends” was given to it in nights past by horrified Kindred of other lines. Tales speak of

crippling disfigurements inflicted on a whim, of ghastly “experiments” and tortures refined beyond human or vampiric comprehension or endurance.

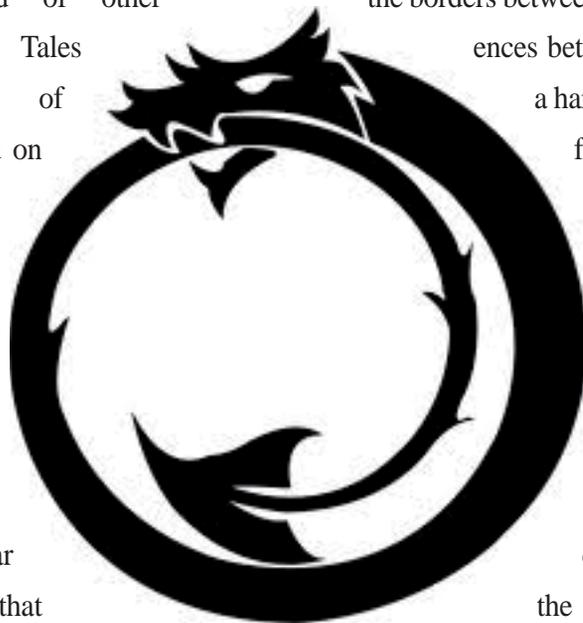
This fearsome reputation often seems unwarranted at first. Almost all Voivode are reserved and insightful, wise beings, a far cry from the howling war packs that rampaged through the Black Forests and

who now fill the Sabbat ranks. Most Voivode appear to be rational creatures, formidably intelligent, possessed of an inquisitive and scientific bent, and unyieldingly gracious to guests. Kindred who treat with the Voivode, though, realize that the Fiends’ human traits are the merest veneer over something. . . else. For millennia the Fiends have explored and refined their understanding of the vampiric condition, bending their bodies and thoughts into new and alien patterns.

The clan has many dark points of its history. However, bargains with demons, twisted experiments, and unforgivable sins have yielded powerful weapons. In the Ancient nights of the Umpyr Empire, the Voivode divided themselves into

camp; the Refugees and the Conquerors, the Voivode and Tzimisce. While the Refugees believe they have escaped hell by returning to this middle-world, they know they do not belong here, and as such they avoided the affairs of the mortal world and often remain in scholarly pursuits and introverted insular isolation. Conquerors, on the other hand, believe that they invaded this middle-world and seek conquest over it. While the Conquerors delved into the depths of the Pit again and again, bringing back secrets and other creatures of the dark world, often seeking to breach the barriers, open the gates to hell and create pockets of the eternal night in the middle-world, the Refugees were far more cautious of what they brought back to the waking world with them, seeing such lack of respect for the borders between worlds as foolishness. The differences between these two camps were never

a hard-line, and the two camps mingled freely, holding it as an ideological distinction. Much more significant differences can be found between the Voivode (meaning “War-Lord,” from whence the Bloodline was named) and the Tzimisce (meaning “mixed-together,” the camp that gives the Bloodline its modern name).



Those who focused on the physical world, the warrior way of unlife, the obligations of rulership, stewardship of the land and governance of Chthonic spirits, Kindred and the creatures of the dead were Voivodes, while those that focused on the spirit world, Kuldunic witchcraft and mysticism eventually became known as Tzimisce





when they brought back the Flesh-crafting Discipline of Vicissitude from their Underworld soljourns. Flesh-crafting consumed the Tzimisce and spread through the Bloodline like wildfire, transforming them into ever more alien horrific creatures. The Tzimisce claim that Flesh-crafting enables them to see the fluidity and malleability of the physical world, though old Kuldunic mystics and Voivode who avoided Flesh-crafting say it is an infection from the depths of hell come to earth. Tzimisce are most certainly tied to the Conquerors, as they flesh-craft living bodies into creatures from the Below, making of them vassals for dead creatures to be reborn into this world.

The Old Voivode held many revenant tales of Kindred of their kind rising from the grave without aid of the Embrace to give them an anchor to their body, rising like resurrected messiahs for love, hope or other profound motivators. The Order of the Dragon were Voivode followers of the last such legend, Vlad Tapes. Similarly, Voivode legends tell of revenant Umpyrs who bore or sired children after their rebirth as creatures of the dead world. The living world's descendants of the Dragon were called Strigoi, known throughout the tribes and clans of eastern Europe as witch-doctors and emissaries to the grave, they used their Kuldunic mysticism to make soil fertile and bring about bountiful crops (or curse the crops and make them wither and sicken). The Strigoi family produced *Strigoi Vu*, truly living vampires, who actually generate

Kindred Vitae in their veins, age slowly, feel the Beast in their souls, but who are born human-umphyre hybrids, able to walk in sunlight without fear and most significantly, able to procreate. *Strigoi Vu* are said to be in their pupa stage, and they will slowly transform into *Strigoi Mort* (Living Dead full blooded vampires) or, upon their first

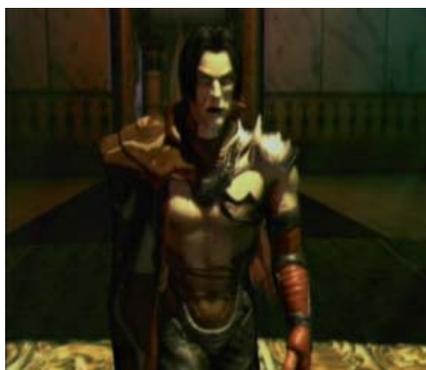
death, they will rise again as *Strigoi Mort*.

While younger Fiends might be described as merciless or sadistic, elders of the line simply fail to comprehend mercy or suffering - or perhaps they do comprehend, but no longer consider the emotions relevant. Potent sorcerers, the Fiends dominated the region's mortals as well, in the process inspiring many of the horror stories about vampires. Clan after clan conspired to uproot the Voivode, but it was the sorcerous Tremere who finally succeeded. Indeed, as some tell the tale, the Tremere used captured



Voivode vitae in their experiments to become immortal. For this, the Voivode hate the Tremere unrelentingly, and Tremere who fall into the Sabbat's clutches typically suffer a hideous end at the talons of the Fiends.

During the Great Anarch Revolt, the Voivode clan turned on itself, as the Tzimisce mystics utterly dominated the clan, and the division between the younger Tzimisce radicals and the elder conservative old Voivode led the few remaining Voivode Elders to go into hiding. Meanwhile, Vicissitude spread, if not by being adopted by ancients, then by Diablerie. Thus, some say the Anarch Revolt started as a tool of the Tzimisce in enveloping their own clan with their flesh crafting ways. In the ensuing struggle, the younger Fiends destroyed many of their elders and demolished what was left of their power bases. Certain Sabbat whisper that the clan managed to find and destroy its own Antediluvian progenitor,



though the Fiends will neither confirm nor deny this tale. Now the Tzimisce serve the Sabbat as scholars, advisors and priests. Many of the sect's practices originated in the customs of the clan. By exploring the possibilities and limits of vampirism, the clan hopes to discover the greater purpose of the Kindred as a whole. If this means

the wholesale destruction of the archaic Antediluvians, the razing of the Camarilla, and the vivisection of millions of mortal victims, well, all experiments have their consequences. The Tzimisce seek physical and spiritual purification and perfection, though their interpretations of these concepts are often alien or incomprehensible to humans and sometimes even to other vampires.



They often “fleshcraft” themselves into forms they believe to be beautiful and/or terrifying. The most common Path of Identity for a Tzimisce is called the “Path of Metamorphosis”, and is a replacement for their lost humanity. Tzimisce with this path only have one goal with their whole existence: to become so powerful that the whole world becomes part of themselves— Azhi Dahaka, when the world becomes a part of yourself, a sort of inverted Nirvana.

Disciplines

Ferallity

As the supreme predators of the night, Voivode are able to commune with the bestial spirit of animal predators of the living world.

Auspex

Spiritually aware beings, Voivode see with mystic vision, trekking with spirits, tasting emotion, peering into minds and sensing mystic forces.

Domination

The spiritually high-born of the Pit, the Voivode command the lesser minds of others through their force of will and their terrible gaze.

Vicissitude

The Tzimisce are known for their body altering technique, called Vicissitude or, less formally, “fleshcrafting”.

Tzimisce can supernaturally alter the bodies of living and unliving organisms, even to the point of melting them. For this clan, body alteration is an art and a philosophy. In the modern ages, most Tzimisce are prescriptive social darwinism,. Sooner or later, many Tzimisce become totally lost in this detached and inhuman way of thinking, often losing all contact with the concepts of mercy, compassion, or moral ethical

values, as understood by the human mind.

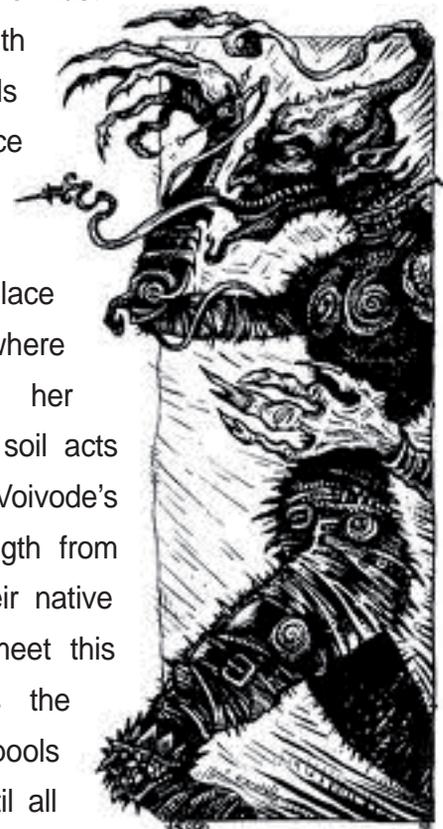
Bestialism [Zulu]

Many old Voivode are shapeshifters, transforming their bodies into draconic demonic beasts of the underworld.

Despite their many Disciplines, Voivode develop their Disciplines no more quickly than other Kindred, and most still only practice three of these Disciplines.

Voivode Weaknesses

Voivode are very territorial creatures, maintaining a particular haven and guarding it ferociously. Whenever a Voivode sleeps, she must surround herself with at least two handfuls of earth from a place important to her as a mortal; perhaps the earth of her birthplace or the graveyard where she underwent her creation rites. This soil acts as a conduit for the Voivode’s spirit to draw strength from the Underworld, their native reality. Failure to meet this requirement halves the Voivode’s dice pools every 24 hours, until all



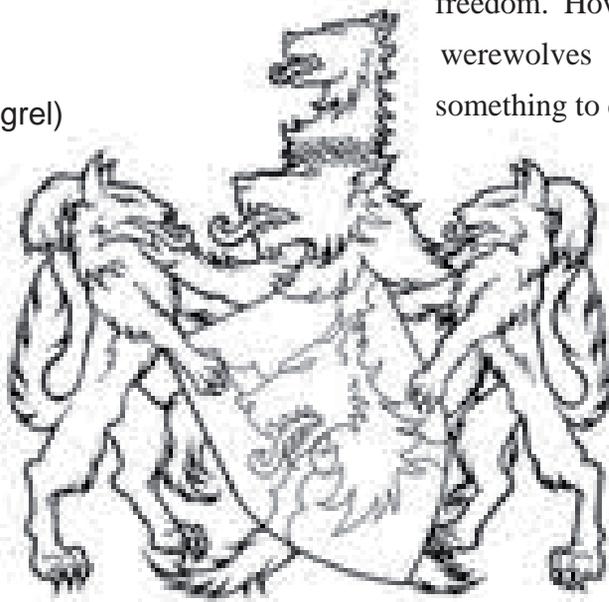
her actions use only one die. This penalty remains until she rests for a full day amid her earth once more.

These nomadic loners spurn the constraints of society, preferring the comfort of the wilderness, rejecting the shackles of a pseudo-civilized unlife for bestial freedom. How they avoid the wrath of the werewolves is unknown; perhaps it has something to do with the fact that the Gangrel are themselves shapeshifters.

Beasts (Gangrel)

The Gangrel are predatory feral demons, creatures of the Pit. Unlike other Umpyrs, the spirits of Gangrel seek to return to the primal nature of the living world. Like the Brujah, Gangrel are fierce warriors; unlike the Brujah, Gangrel ferocity does not stem from anarchic rage, but from animalistic instinct. They are among the most predatory Kindred, and love to lose themselves in the thrill of the hunt. Gangrel have a keen understanding of the Beast in their souls, and prefer to spend their nights in communion with the animals whom they so emulate. Of all vampires, the Gangrel are perhaps closest to their inner nature.

The Gangrel usually have little contact with, or regard for, the rest of Kindred Kind, shunning most Kindred societies in favor of a solitary un-lifestyle of hunting, feeding and travel. Through the long nights of ancient past, the Gangrel haunted the vast forests of Eastern Europe. The Gangrel tentatively served the Voivode Umpyre Lords as warriors-scouts, and in return they were given free reign in the Fiends land. Like their Nosferatu cousins, after the fall of the great Umpyre Empire the Gangrel hesitantly joined the Camarilla (though an equal number of them harbor among the Sabbat, and most are really Independents).



When a mortal speaks of a vampire changing into a wolf or a bat, she is probably speaking of a Gangrel. They favor self-awareness, self-reliance and self-confidence, and often turn to introspective contemplation of their own beasts from which spiritual insight and supernatural power can be gained - the mad-eyed savages are frequently revered as vagrant wise-men with unique perspectives on the vampiric condition and are unrivaled in the ease with which they summon

