



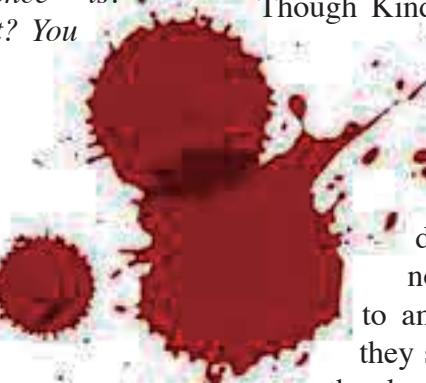
My Drinking Problem

The crux of the matter, really, is that drinking blood not only allows me to perpetuate my existence, but also provides a sensation unlike anything else this world has to offer. What is it like? My dear, words cannot describe it. Imagine drinking the finest champagne and the sensation of the most sensual lovemaking you've ever experienced. Overlay that with the rush the opium fiend feels as he takes that first breath on the pipe, and you begin to have some sense, some tiny, infinitesimal sense of what it feels like to drink the blood of a kine - excuse me, a living human being. Your modern-day addict will lie, steal, cheat and kill for their little tickets to Heaven. Mine is better, and it makes me immortal besides. Can you imagine the deeds I might commit to feed that hunger? Don't bother speaking possibilities; the truth that you can imagine. And I am considered to be a gentleman of my kind. Now imagine, if you will, some of my relatives, the ones who aren't so nice as I. They can - and do - commit acts that even I don't wish to consider. And here you are, poor little mortal, learning how fragile your whole existence is. Are you starting to be afraid yet? You should be.

The Blood is the Life

Vampires use their blood (also called Vitae) for a variety of purposes, the most fundamental of which is that vampires must use blood (or the life-force contained within it) to get up and move; every night, vampires expend a certain amount of their accumulated blood-energy to rise. Vampires can reconstitute or heal wounds to their body by using their reserves of blood. In addition, vampires can use the life-force of blood to enhance their physical attributes, becoming inhumanly strong, fast or enduring for a time, and to fuel their supernatural Disciplines. Vampire blood is used to perform the Embrace, passing on their vampirism by replacing a mortal's blood with the Kindred's own Immortal blood. Further, a vampire's blood can be given to a mortal creature to 'enchant' it, arresting the aging process in that mortal. Finally, Kindred Blood is terrifically addictive, and consuming it is like taking a powerful mind altering drug.

Immortal beings, Kindred cannot generate their own blood as they are unable to directly tap the well of life; that is the birthright and nature of mortality. Thus, blood is generally replaced by sucking it out of humans. While vampires can feed on animals, they



do not enjoy the taste of it and older vampires will acquire no sustenance from it. The life-draining process of taking blood is often called 'the Kiss' and through this Kiss, many vampires can hide the puncture marks of fangs by drawing up the life-force of their victims, causing them to heal those minor wounds made during feeding. Vampires do not have to completely drain a victim, although frenzied vampires are likely to do so.

The feeding process is highly pleasurable (arguably the only pleasure) for vampires, and can be an extremely pleasurable for victims. The Kiss is the process of drawing out a victim's blood, and is more than simply taking the material liquid from their veins. Those that experience being fed on through the Kiss feel as if a current of energy is running through their body, usually a paralyzing experience; for some, being fed on causes muscular clenching that runs through their whole body, while others feel their body loose all force of motion, releasing themselves into the grip of the predator. While the Kiss of some Kindred is orgasmically pleasurable, the Kiss of others is dreadfully painful.

Though Kindred need blood to animate themselves, if deprived of blood, a vampire will not expire; they are Immortal. A "starving" vampire grows closer and closer to a monstrous rage as the Thirst drives them mad, until the night they no longer have the blood within them to animate themselves, at which point they simply remain in slumber, entering the death-like slumber of the ages, called

Torpor. Kindred can remain in Torpor for centuries, millenia or indefinitely, awaiting the blood they need to rise again.

Once taken in, a vampire transforms their victim's blood, extracting its life-force and distilling that blood into the vampire's own cold thick essence; Vitae.

Vitae

In its most basic sense, Vitae is a term modern western Kindred might use to refer (wrongly) to blood in general, but specifically Vitae is Kindred Blood; the Blood of the Immortals.

A Latin term for "of life," which first came into vogue among the Ventre of the Roman Empire, Vitae is the primal essence of blood; more than just the physical substance, Vitae is the concentrated life-force within it. The "blood" in a vampire's body is so much more than the red syrup of plasma, platelets, hemoglobin and hormones that courses through mortal veins. Kin-



dred feed on the tepid life-force of mortals, distilling it into a concentrated serum of Immortality, a magical fluid of great power.

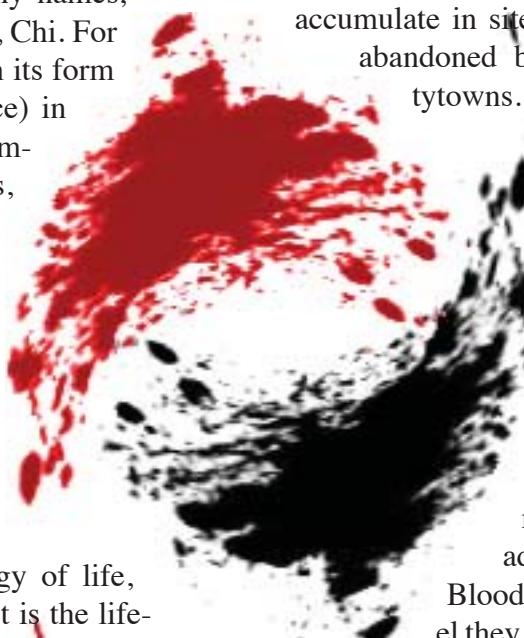
While the terms *Animae* (Greek; animating-energy) and *Prana* (Sanskrit; breath-energy) may be used to refer to Kindred Blood, these terms can refer to anyone's blood and to all life-force in general, even the subtle energy that courses through even inanimate objects, as evident in the swirling radiant auras that permeate the whole world and the flux of forces seen on the Astral Plane.

Red & Black

The energy of existence springs from creation, emerging from raw infinite potential, giving rise to and flowing through the patterns of the world, eventually resolving and ebbing into the Great Unmaking. This spiritual force is known by many names; *S'a*, *Ojas*, *Akasha*, *Quintessence*, *Chi*. For Kindred, this energy is known in its form as the life-force (and death-force) in people; *Prana*, *Animae*, *Vitae*. Vampires' bodies act as cauldrons, collecting and refining Chi into their various ichors and bodily humors. Chi absorbed by a vampire permeates the creature's corpse. It moves through their flesh as a thick Red liquid or a cold Black ichor.

Red

Yang Chi is the "kinetic" energy of life, known to some as *Ka* or *Sakti*; it is the life-force energy that all Kindred extract from their living prey and concentrate within themselves to animate their body and 'live'. It constantly seethes, constantly crackles from point to point, and constantly transforms itself. It flows through raging rivers; it rides on summer storms. It is present in the kiss of a lover and the spring of a tiger. Kindred, who are so cut off from the normal cycles of the world, find *Yang Chi* to be a heady, often euphoric, stimulant. *Yang Chi* undergoes some changes in the vampiric metabolism. Vampires may use "positive" Chi, but such Chi is a far cry from the relatively "pure" Chi found in a newborn baby or the light of the sun. *Yang Chi* of the sort used by Kindred is known as "Scarlet" Chi; it is a fierce, roiling energy, the distilled essence of torment, rage and lust. This scarlet Chi manifests as a seething, effervescent liquid that flows freely through the Kindred's corpse. The Blood-Points contained within Kindred are always 'Red' unless otherwise noted.



Black

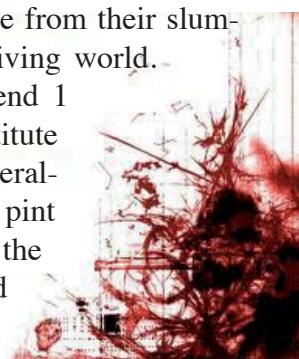
Yin Chi, by contrast, is the "potential" energy of Oblivion: energy at rest or in a passive state. *Yin Chi* also encompasses the energy of terror, depression and other "negative" emotions. At its ultimate level of development, *Yin Chi* is the energy of death, and it permeates the various levels of the Underworld. Most Kindred are unable to tap the decaying energy of *Yin*, though the *Vrykolaka*, and of course, the dreaded *Nagaraja* are known to be able to yoke this dark force, alternately known as *Tomas*, *Ghost-Blood* or *entropy*. The Discipline of self-refinement, *Dharma*, enables Eastern Kindred to consume and direct *Yin* death-energies as well, but this energy is far from pure, and the *Yin Chi* consumed, used and contained within Kindred is simply the darkest, dead-est flavor of the life-force. *Yin Chi* tends to "coagulate," to mystically accumulate in sites suited to it, such as graveyards, abandoned buildings and plague-ridden shantytowns. In contrast to the "kick" of *Yang*, vampires find *Yin* to be a sort of narcotic: dark, soothing, deceptively intoxicating. *Yin Chi*, per its nature, congeals into a viscous, blackish liquid. *Kuei-jin* refer to this stuff as "Black" Chi.

The amount and strength of life-force a being contains is usually measured in "Blood-Points." An adult mortal human contains about 10

Blood-Points, though for each Healthlevel they lose to sickness or injury, 1 Blood-Point is lost as well. This is not because the

volum of blood in their body has nessesaraly gone down, so much as their blood no longer holds as much life-force within it. As the human heals, they replenish their Blood-Points. Kindred contain Blood-Points as well; those taken from their victims, now transformed into *Vitae*. The amount of *Vitae* within a Kindred is likewise measured in Blood-Points of *Vitae*, *Sakti*, or *Chi*. Most Kindred must spend 1 Blood-Point each night to rise from their slumber, and reemerge into the living world.

Similarly, a Kindred can spend 1 Blood-Point to heal/reconstitute one of their Healthlevel. Generally, 1 Blood-Point is equal to a pint of blood, though the *Vitae* of the ancients is much thicker and even a drop can hold many





Thick and Thin

Blood Legacy

Not all Kindred are created equal. The Blood of some Kindred is drop for drop, thicker, stronger and more potent than other, thinner blooded Kindred. This is because some Kindred have gained a stronger vampiric inheritance than others. The measure of a Kindred's vampiric inheritance is referred to as their Blood Legacy, alternately called a Kindred's Generation by Cainites, but is usually simply referred to as the relative Greatness or Thinness of a vampires Blood.

Kindred of Greater Blood can contain more life-force within themselves, having more Vitae, though not possessing a larger volume of blood in their flesh. But, should they Embrace, the Legacy they pass on will be diminished by one step. In this fashion, each Generation thins the Blood, until all strength of vampiric Inheritance are lost; the truly Thin-Blooded cannot make Blood-Bonds, have none of the distinguishing characteristics of the Bloodlines of the Kindred kind, and they cannot Embrace another generation. The Thin-Blooded are generic creatures with no Disciplines innate to their breed. For this reason, Cainites refer to The Legacy of the Blood as Generation, and count it as the diminishing legacy of Caine, diluted over the span of 13 steps before it runs out. The Cainites believe that the proliferation of Thin-Blooded Kindred (called Cattifs) will herald the Apocalypse; their holy text, the Book of Nod, tells of several signs of this coming Judgement day including an age when the Blood of Caine will run like water.

The number of Blood-Points a Kindred can contain (the Blood-Pool) is determined by their rating in Blood-Inherency. While most Kindred cannot hold much more Vitae than a human has blood, completely filling themselves by the exsanguination of one adult person, Elders can slake their thirst on dozens at a time.

Perhaps even more significant than the amount of Vitae a Kindred can hold, The strength of their Legacy determines how far a Kindred can develop through their long Immortal years. The mortals can only attain certain heights of mastery of a Talent, Skill or Knowledge are limited by the short years they have

available to them in their flickering life-spans to dedicate to developing those Abilities. Thus, mortals are typically limited to a maximum rating of 5 in any of their Abilities. While a Kindred can spend literally hundreds of years training themselves in sword-play, most will tragically find that their development of their skill hits a glass-ceiling, a point at which, no matter how much more time they dedicate to it, no matter how diligently they train, and no matter how much effort they put into developing those skills, they cannot reach any higher heights than they have already gotten. This is because, sadly, a Kindred's personal potential is not their own. The potential of a vampire is the strength of their Legacy, their capacity for development is limited to the strength of their vampiric inheritance, despite the centuries of Immortality they may dedicate to reaching for greater achievements. This becomes all the more dire when you consider that a Kindred's Disciplines work much like Skills do, and thus a Kindred's level of mastery of their Disciplines is also limited to the maximum ratings of their Legacy. While Kindred of weaker Blood are often limited to the heights of mortal achievement of just one brief life-time, the Thick Blooded Ancients can attain a level of mastery of even mortal skills that seem superhuman, and their greater Legacy lets them develop their Disciplines to nearly god-like heights, giving them vast and profound control over the hordes of their weak blooded descendants.

Legacy	Gen	Blood Pool	Max Trait Rating	Potency	Feeding Habits	BPs per Turn
1	13th	10	5	1	Animal	1
2	12th	11	5	2	Animal	2
3	11th	12	5	3	Animal	3
4	10th	13	5	4	Human	4
5	9th	14	5	5	Human	5
6	8th	15	6	6	Human	6
7	7th	20	7	7	Kindred	7
8	6th	30	8	8	Kindred	8
9	5th	40	9	9	Kindred	9
10	4th	50	10	10	Diablerie	10
???	3rd	???	???	???	???	???

Those with thinner Blood can, however, claim the stronger Legacy of another- by Diablerizing them! While the Elders of the Camarilla look on this prospect with horror, engendering the Ancients with a hidden fear of the weak-blooded hordes, vampires of the Sabbat make a way of unlife out of this practice. As a Cainite Cult, the Sabbat call Diablerie "walking the

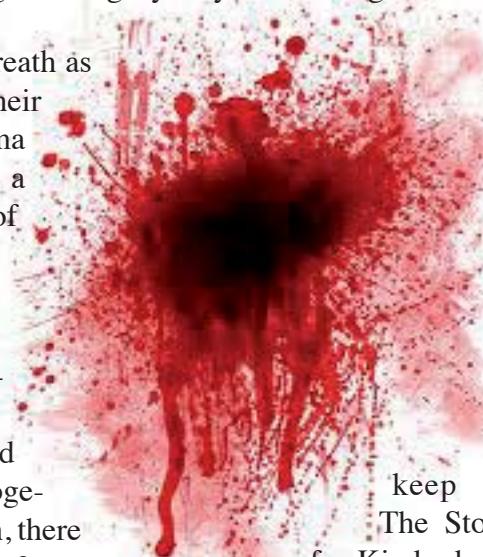
ladder of Caine,” as they believe each Diablerie of a Greater Blooded Anceint brings them closer to the mythic forebearer of vampire kind. Besides this monstrosus method of soul-consumption, there is seemingly no way for a Kindred to change the Legacy they were resurected with.

The Kuei-Jin all take the second-breath as Thin-Blooded Kindred, though their self-refining Discipline of Dharma has the exceptional ability to raise a Kindred’s Legacy by their degree of advancement in Dharma.

Blood Potency

While Legacy is usually a rigid hierarchy among the Kindred, with Elders possessed of great power and a fear of their weaker Blooded progeny, jealous of their master’s strength, there is another element to the degree of power a Kindred’s innate vampirism gives them; The degree to which a Kindred feeds and bolsters their vampiric nature. While there is certainly more to developing ones vampiric nature than what or who one eats, what blood a Kindred regularly feeds on certainly impacts their Potency. Kindred that feed on weak blooded animals will find that they are denying their vampiric nature, and their Blood will remain fairly impotent, while those that feed off of humans, or better yet, other Kindred, find their Potency growing strong. Torpor, the Kindred death-slumber through which they pass the ages without rising, diminishes their Potency dramatically. Similarly, using the magic of their Blood’s inherent power (such as Embracing a new Childer) drains a Kindred’s Blood Potency until they can once again build their Potency up. These are not the only ways in which a Kindred’s Potency increases or diminishes, but exactly what else can affect a Kindred’s sanguin strength is unclear.

The Wan-Kuei measure their Blood Potency as a function of the strength of thier Beast, or P`o. In fact, Kuei-Jin posses a rating in P`o from which they can syphon the Beast’s primordial force. A Kuei-Jin’s P`o score can be considered that Kindred’s Blood Potency. A character’s Blood-Potency (or P`o) determines how many Blood-Points that vampire can spend for any reason per turn (3-10 seconds; enough time to take one action). Thus, with impotent blood, a Kindred can only draw on a bit of the power of their Vitae at a time, while Potent vampires can shunt around large amounts of Vital Force at a time. Some Kindred are reputed to be so Potent that they can be sliced in half and heal that wound before the blade is done cutting,



as if they were immune to injury.

Kindred with higher Lagacies find it easier to raise their Blood Potency to a level comparable to their Inheritence, while thinner Blooded Kindred find raising their Blood Potency to be difficult and demaning regular and consistant boosts. Diablarie always raises a Kindred’s Blood Potency, no matter how Thin-Blooded their victim may be. At the begining of each Story (not each game-session), the Story Teller should assume that their Player’s Kindred characters have a Blood Potency equal to their Legacy , unless awakening from Torpor or having feeding practices that keep that Potency lower.

The Story Teller should allow the Player of a Kindred character to spend XP to raise their Blood Potency, so long as they have been feeding within the quality of prey needed to atain that level of Potency. A Player who’s character has been fulfilling their Kindred nature should be allowed to raise their Blood Potency for a reduced XP cost. Some actions will automatically raise a character’s Blood Potency, such as Diablarizing another Kindred, and such additions should be made immediatly, while other actions can insure a Kindred character’s Blood Potency will diminish, such as successfully Siring a Childer, and such deductions, should likewise be made immediatly.

P`o assumes that the more powerful a Kindred’s Blood Potency, the more powerful the Beast within them is. Thus, the followers of Xue’s Dharmas often roll their virtues against a difficulty equal to their rating in Blood Potency/P`o- and it is true that Kindred with higher Blood Potency seem more harried by their inner Beast, having to resist or contain their urge to frenzy much more frequently than the weak blooded. In the sevetenth century, Kindred philosopher and scholor Allegra DeMarco said “the more potent the blood the more it stirs the Beast’s heart in your Kindred breast.”

The Beast

The Beast refers to the innate demonic predator that awakens in each and every vampire upon their Embrace. The Beast stands in direct opposition to a vampire’s Humanity and is responsible for many of the debased urges Kindred feel on a nightly basis. In times of extreme duress the Beast can overwhelm a vampire and force him into a state of pure animalistic



fight or flight, which is referred to as Frenzy.

Western vampires usually call the dark spirit within them the Beast, in what is, I suspect, an attempt to demonize it by dissociation. Alas, merely giving the monstrous urge a different name is not enough to tame it. In the end the Beast always wins. If one survives long enough as a vampire, one is forced by one's own nature to do some obscene things. And eventually, one gets acclimated to committing those atrocities and moves on to new ones, and whatever was human in that vampire dies. When the last bit of humanity in vampire dies - and once you watch enough friends, loved ones and descendants pass into the dust of ages, it does die, rest assured - then the Beast takes over once and for all. The vampire becomes an animal. If you ever reach that stage, the odds are you won't even notice when you get put down like a mad dog.

If your will is strong, and you've got a decent sense of self, you can hold out for decades, centuries, even - I have spoken to a Kindred who is over two millennia old. But you are never, never free of the fear that the Beast will one night triumph, and that fear is what the Beast will use to bring you to bay. Of course, the best way to fight the Beast is to keep oneself in fighting trim, and that means eating regularly. Then again, eating regularly usually means that sooner or later, you start killing kine - mortals, pardon me again - and the more you kill, the easier the killing gets. So the Beast wins that way, as well. Even if you don't mean to, even if the process begins with an accident, sooner or later you get inured to the sight of a brand-new corpse that you're responsible for, lying dead at your feet. After the tenth, hundredth, thousandth or whatever corpse, it stops being a person and becomes an object, a vessel. A footnote in your history of the ages. And you, at that moment, cease to be remotely human.

The Beast has many disturbing characteristics, but its most notable is that of consumption; the Beast is the Hunger, the Beast is the Thirst. A Kindred in frenzy, possessed by the Beast, will gorge themselves without sasiation, guzzling down the red sticky fluid beyond their capacity to contain that blood, even as it seeps back out of their mouth. The Beast is the ravenous demon of hunger, a tormented shard of Oblivion in the heart of every Kindred.

The Beast is a cloying, selfish, insane and cowardly spirit, driven as much by want and hunger as by fear and hate. Ventruue scholor Hardistate De'Matise claims that it is the Beast, the unholy spirit of the Kindred, that so desperately and greedily holds on to life

that death itself cannot remove it from its bodily shell. Torpore, De'Matise says, is the slumber in which the Beast bides its time till it can once again resurrect itself.

The Beast has no virtue, though is a well of unyielding drive and force, which most Kindred try to stifle and others try to cultivate beyond its low and base state into something greater- to yoke the Beast. While some Kindred oppose the Beast within, denying it's urges and stamping out its influence through the Virtue of Self-Control, others instead seek to subjugate and ride the force of the Beast, directing its urges through the Virtue of Instincts. The Wan-Kuei Dharmas teach them to not oppose or repress the P'o (Beast), but rather to balance it with the rational higher self (Hun). This enables them to directly draw on its spiritual force (Demon Chi), but also permits the force of the Beast to seep into their consciousness, at times casting a dark shadow over their mind, giving the Beast a malignant intelligence unseen among other Kindred.

Kuldunic witches tell us that the Beast is the spirit within that was reborn as a native of Vulc, the Chthonic world beniegh the world, a world of darkness, flesh, sensation and urge. Similarly, the Wan-Kuei say that the Beast (P'o) is the demon-self, the self that is reborn in hell (Yomi), and the Vrykolaka say that it is the dark part of the soul, magnified by death and enlivened by Immortality.

Alternatly, the Succubae hold the Beast to be the growing pains of mortals becoming Immortals, their urge and hunger invigorated by exposure to the intoxicating ambrosia of raw life-force, the base drives of a creature tasting the life-immortal.

The Cappadocians, as well as some cryptic Mal-Koft, have said that the Beast's fear and greed may proclude willful self-destruction for most Kindred, but the Beast itself is always trying to murder the Kindred's soul.

No matter the cause for the nature of the Beast, it is actively consuming the higher-spirit of a Kindred, the Self, and over the centuries, it is said, that self will degenerate, till there is nothing but hunger left. This degeneration of the Self is the reason Kindred cling to their various Paths of Identity. Freedom from the Beast is often thought to be the true rewards of reaching the mythic state of Golcanda and the Dharmas all teach a Kuei-Jin to trancend the degeneration that slowly kills the soul of other Kindred.

Indead, Diablarie is the process of allowing one's own Beast to consume the spirit, the higher-self as well as the lesser Beast of another Kindred.