

Oblivion: Hecata

Description:

Oblivion is a mysterious, unpalatable power that most vampires rightly fear to use, witness, or fall victim to. Only vampires of Clans Lasombra and Hecata wield it with any frequency, and even they do so tentatively. Oblivion requires cautious masters who know the power's risks, as no other Discipline reaches into the Underworld and allows its manipulator to extract tangible darkness or furious spectres. Oblivion is the darkest of arts. Notably, while the Lasombra are prone to expanding their repertoire of Oblivion powers, the Hecata focus their energies on developing Ceremonies (see p. 208). Ceremonies take longer, but are required for communing with and making passage through to the lands of the dead.

Characteristics:

- Oblivion allows for the manipulation of creatures and substances originating from the Underworld.
- When the Hecata use this Discipline, they tend to channel the entropic nature of the Underworld and its surroundings, decaying flesh, calling forth spirits, and posing a dangerous risk to the living.
- Oblivion projections and spirits sustain damage from fire and sunlight, counting as vampires with Blood Potency 1 in this regard. They also take one level of Aggravated damage per round from bright, direct lights, and may also be damaged (Superficially or Aggravated) from blessed weapons and artifacts, depending on the strength of the blessing and any True Faith of the wielder.
- Oblivion's powers are ineffective in brightly lit areas.
- Daylight and rooms without shadows are particularly prohibitive, preventing the Discipline's successful function, though ultraviolet light and infrared light places no restriction on the Discipline's use. Moderately lit rooms apply a one die penalty to the Discipline roll involved.
- The use of these powers takes a heavy toll on the psyche of the user, and many powers cause Stains as the numbing emptiness of Oblivion seeps into the spirit of the wielder.

Type

Mental

Masquerade threat

Medium-High

Spirits rarely show up well on cameras but are obviously unnatural if witnessed in person.

Blood Resonance

Psychopaths and the emotionally detached. Blood empty of Resonance.

Note

When making a Rouse check for an Oblivion power, a result of "1" or "10" results in a Stain, in addition to any Hunger gained. If the user's Blood Potency allows for a re-roll on the Rouse check, they can pick either of the two results.

Powers:

Powers - Level 1:

Name & Requirements	Description & Cost	Dice Pools	System	Duration
Vampire the Masquerade: Cults of the Blood Gods				
Ashes to Ashes	<p>Destroying evidence of feeding is a common necessity among vampires who leave screaming, resisting vessels, especially when those same vessels end up dead. This power enables a vampire to destroy a corpse by introducing their vitae to its body. This power does not work on vampires, but does work on animated cadavers.</p> <p><u>Cost:</u> One Rouse Check</p>	Stamina + Oblivion vs Stamina + Medicine or Fortitude	The vampire makes a Rouse Check to expend vitae, and introduces the vitae to the corpse. Unless the corpse is animated, the body disintegrates over three turns with no test necessary. If it is, the user rolls a contest of Stamina + Oblivion vs Stamina + Medicine (Corpses with Fortitude may resist with Stamina + Fortitude). If the user wins, the animated corpse dissolves in five turns, minus the margin (minimum one, and disintegrating corpses suffer physical Impairment). On a critical win, the corpse disintegrates immediately. On a total failure, the corpse putrefies but does not disintegrate, and is subsequently immune to this power from any user.	Variable

The Binding Fetter	<p>The vampire closes their eyes. Upon opening them, the irises of their eyes display a dull reflection of their surroundings and they can identify objects or locations important to ghosts. These “fettters” act as icons that bind the dead to their existence. Knowing if an object is a fetter allows a necromancer to better manipulate the ghost. Fetters emanate variable auras, some bursting with vitality and glowing gold light, others radiating decay, or odors important to the bound wraith, such as the smell of freshly baked bread, gasoline, or cigarette smoke.</p> <p><u>Cost:</u> Free</p>	N/A	<p>On activation, the user’s senses become supernaturally attuned to the energies of fetters, and they may identify these auras by sight, smell, and their other senses. While this power is in use, the necromancer is distracted from other activity around them, conveying a –2 penalty to all Awareness, Wits, and Resolve linked rolls.</p>	One Scene
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Powers - Level 2:

Name & Requirements	Description & Cost	Dice Pools	System	Duration
Vampire the Masquerade: Cults of the Blood Gods				

<p>Fatal Precognition</p> <p><u>Requires:</u> Auspex 2</p>	<p>It is said by many necromancers that the Lady of Fate rules the Underworld through her Stygian servants, and through communion with her certain death-dealers have learned this power. Fatal precognition allows a vampire to scry any non-vampire and experience a vision of their impending death, whether it's due a minute from now or several decades away. The Kindred's eyes turn black and they stand, sit, or lie completely still as the fate plays out in their mind. Fate can of course be cheated, though there's a cost for doing so.</p> <p><u>Cost:</u> One rouse check</p>	<p>Resolve + Oblivion</p>	<p>The vampire must be able to see or hear their target when they use this power. After rolling Resolve + Oblivion (Difficulty 3 or more at the Storyteller's discretion), the vampire becomes paralyzed in place as the vision plays out, preventing them from any form of physical or social interaction for that turn. The higher the margin, the clearer the vision. A win grants sight of the corpse, and with each point of margin an additional clue is provided, such as the manner of death, time and place of death, or the name and face of the first living person to find the corpse. A critical win on this roll grants the vampire a vision of crystal clarity, along with a sense of the motive, if the target is intentionally killed. A total failure renders the vampire blind for the remainder of the scene, and unable to use this power on the same target again. If anyone attempts to subvert the fate observed in this way, they find everything working against their hubristic ambition. Add one to all Difficulties while working to directly circumvent the precognition as cars break down, storms erupt from nowhere, and people become hostile for no reason. This penalty applies until the prophecy is fulfilled or avoided, or the current story</p>	<p>Until fulfilled, avoided, or the story ends.</p>
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Where the Shroud Thins

Vampires with an affinity for Oblivion can sense locations where the Shroud between the world of the living and the Shadowlands thins. Though this Discipline doesn't directly tell a vampire why the Shroud between worlds is thin in a certain place, it may be due to a grisly murder that took place there many years before, or because necromancers have frequently used the location to summon spirits, or it might be a location of holy or unholy resonance, among other reasons. In locations where the Shroud is thinnest, mortal health suffers and use of the Oblivion Discipline becomes easier, if the vampire knows how to harness the gap in the Shroud.

Cost:
One rouse check

Wits + Oblivion

Following a Rouse Check, the player rolls Wits + Oblivion (Difficulty 3) and on a win may determine the density of the Shroud in their nearby area, as large as an entire building or landmark. On a critical win, this roll reveals whether the Shroud's density recently changed. On a total failure, the power backfires and gives a false reading. Without use of this power, Oblivion users cannot benefit from a thinning of the Shroud. The following table expresses the different degrees of Shroud density, and the effects they have:

Density	Possible Cause	Effect
Impenetrable	No deaths, consecrated land	The shroud is closed to all
Thick	A place of Joy, long ago a death took place	No effect
Thin	A death recently took place; melancholic mortals frequent here	-1 Difficulty on oblivion rolls
Frayed	Manv	-2 Diffic

One scene

Powers - Level 3:

Name & Requirements	Description & Cost	Dice Pools	System	Duration
Vampire the Masquerade: Cults of the Blood Gods				

<p>Aura of Decay</p>	<p>Kindred with a strong connection to Oblivion find the Discipline affecting the world around them, making plants wilt, animals and humans grow sick, and food go bad. Some harness this aura as a power, polluting vitality with rot, and speeding up the erosion of life. This power does not speed up the decay of dead bodies.</p> <p><u>Cost:</u> One rouse check</p>	<p>Stamina + Oblivion vs Stamina + Medicine or Fortitude</p>	<p>The vampire makes a Rouse Check. Following a Stamina + Oblivion roll (Difficulty 3), unintelligent organic and inorganic material within 5 yards/ meters of them suffers — plants turn black and die, food rots in its packaging, and even bricks start crumbling. Material affected in this way can become toxic to ingest, if for instance this power is used in a kitchen or a water supply. Such toxic food and drink, if consumed, can be expected to inflict two unhalved Superficial Health damage in the following scene to the individual who eats it, and for each scene thereafter until treated with an Intelligence + Medicine roll (Difficulty 3).</p> <p>If anything living is caught in the aura, it makes a Stamina + Medicine (Those with Fortitude may resist with Stamina + Fortitude) contest against the vampire's activation roll. For every point of margin the vampire has, the victim suffers one point of unhalved Superficial Health damage. This damage is slowly applied throughout the scene. Repeated applications of the power in the same scene have no effect on the Health of mortals already affected.</p> <p>The power is an aura</p>	<p>One scene</p>
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<p>Passion Feast</p> <p><u>Requires:</u> Fortitude 2</p>	<p>The relationship between vampires and their need for blood as sustenance is well known, but when a vampire needs to spend an extended period in the Shadowlands, or wishes to torment a spirit, this Oblivion power allows them to subsist on the passions of wraiths.</p> <p>Wraiths have no bodies, nor do they have blood. Instead, their raw emotions drive them. Love, hatred, greed, or even a need for vengeance might keep a wraith around after their former body's death. An accomplished necromancer can feed on these passions for a time, enabling them to survive without blood for longer than their fellow Kindred. The feeding manifests as a swirling vortex of power between the wraith and the vampire's maw, as the vampire doesn't need to actually bite down on anything to consume passions.</p> <p><u>Cost:</u> Free</p>	<p>Resolve + Oblivion vs Resolve + Composure</p>	<p>A vampire with this power can drain a wraith of their passion. While in close proximity (three yards/meters or closer) to the wraith, they may roll a contest of Resolve + Oblivion vs. the wraith's Resolve + Composure. A win for the vampire inflicts one Aggravated Willpower damage to the wraith and reduces the vampire's Hunger by one for the remainder of the night. That Hunger returns on the following night regardless of Rouse Checks, as the feeding is only a nepenthe to dull the vampire's hungry urges. Feeding from a wraith may merit a Stain at the Storyteller's discretion, as the consumed passion dulls the wraith's reason for being, likely sending them down a path to self-destructive acts. The Storyteller determines the number of passions a wraith possesses (though five or more is rare), and may deem that the wraith becomes an uncontrollable, murderous spectre once all passions have been consumed.</p>	<p>Passive</p>
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Powers - Level 4:

Name & Requirements	Description & Cost	Dice Pools	System	Duration
Vampire the Masquerade: Cults of the Blood Gods				

<p>Necrotic Plague</p>	<p>Kindred scholars claim Oblivion pollutes everything it touches, with this power as a prime example. Through touch alone, a vampire might poison a mortal victim's blood, imbuing them with a disease that wracks and ravages their body. Most dangerously of all, this disease runs the risk of being contagious, and might inflict the same harm to other mortals.</p> <p>Necromancers schooled in medicine have enough talent to make this power appear in the form of specific illnesses, sometimes including those that died out in decades or centuries past. Regardless of how it manifests, the symptoms will eventually disappear even without medical treatment, whether or not the victim survives.</p> <p><u>Cost:</u> One rouse check, Two Stains</p>	<p>Intelligence + Oblivion vs Stamina + Medicine or Fortitude</p>	<p>The user makes a Rouse Check and then rolls Intelligence + Oblivion while touching their victim. If the victim is weak (a baby, elderly, unwell, recovering from an illness, dying, or with 3 unmarked Health boxes or less), they are automatically infected. If the victim is healthy, they roll Stamina + Medicine (those with Fortitude may use it in place of Medicine), resisting the disease if they roll more successes than the vampire. This power cannot be used on vampires. Storytellers may decide spreading such a horrific disease warrants Stains.</p> <p>Victims of the disease take one Aggravated Health damage at the start of every scene following their infection. The victim suffers from the disease for a number of scenes equal to the user's Oblivion rating. The sickness cannot be medically treated, as it is supernatural in origin, but it is healed through drinking vitae. If the player rolls a critical win when activating this power, they can choose to make the disease communicable via touch, with subsequent recipients suffering the disease for one scene fewer than the victim by whom they were infected. If the player rolls a total</p>	<p>One turn to activate, variable length of condition</p>
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Powers - Level 5:

Name & Requirements	Description & Cost	Dice Pools	System	Duration
Vampire the Masquerade: Cults of the Blood Gods				

<p>Skuld Fulfilled</p>	<p>Necromancers can be described as fate's greatest meddlers, as they have a way of interfering with the destined paths of lives and spirits. Occasionally, however, necromancers may seek to serve fate by punishing those who cheat it. This power enables a vampire to reintroduce illnesses to victims who recovered from them, break bones long-since healed, and eliminate the immunity to aging ghouls experience. While this power doesn't work on vampires, it is an effective way of cutting through their servants and ensuring debts to fate are repaid, without having to come into contact with the recipient.</p> <p><u>Cost:</u> Two rouse check</p>	<p>Stamina + Oblivion vs Stamina + Medicine or Fortitude</p>	<p>The vampire makes two Rouse Checks as they expend sufficient vitae to coat both their palms and their face with blood as they recall the faces of their victims. If the user succeeds in a contest of Stamina + Oblivion vs. the victim's Stamina + Medicine (Those with Fortitude may resist with Stamina + Fortitude), the targeted individual is affected by a serious condition they've historically suffered and recovered from, such as treated cancer, a broken bone, or a disease — including one gained through Necrotic Plague (p. 206) — with any debilitating effects from this condition occurring immediately. The condition's effects are for the Storyteller to determine, but they should be severe (See the Crippling Injuries table for inspiration, Vampire: the Masquerade p.303). If the victim is a ghoul, this power removes their immunity to aging and eliminates any vitae in their system, potentially resulting in older ghouls dying or even disintegrating where they stand. On a critical win, this power may kill the victim by stopping their heart completely if the user wishes. On a total failure, the vampire cannot use this power against that individual again.</p>	<p>Variable, dependent on whether the condition is treatable</p>
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<p>Withering Spirit</p>	<p>This power channels raw entropy via rapid spiritual decay, affecting vampires as well as kine by targeting the victim's spirit. A vampire using this power risks Stains, as it can completely obliterate the victim's spirit, preventing return as a wraith.</p> <p><u>Cost:</u> Two rouse check, Stains (variable amount)</p>	<p>Resolve + Oblivion vs. Resolve + Occult or Fortitude</p>	<p>The vampire makes two Rouse Checks to expend sufficient vitae to coat both hands, and touches the victim. After rolling Resolve + Oblivion vs. the victim's Resolve + Occult (Those with Fortitude may use it in place of Occult), the victim suffers two Aggravated Willpower damage for each point of the vampire's margin. The attack erodes the victim's spirit until they're a broken husk, and if Impaired by this power they will not return as a wraith after death.</p> <p>Storytellers may decide that the spirit-destroying nature of this power warrants Stains, though as always, an appropriate Conviction may mitigate these.</p>	<p>One turn</p>
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Rituals:

Unless otherwise noted, performing a Ceremony requires a Rouse Check, five minutes per level to cast, and a winning Resolve + Oblivion test (Difficulty = Ceremony level + 1). Ceremonies usually require additional ingredients or sacrifices to mingle the caster's vitae with. Unless otherwise stated the caster can only perform beneficial Ceremonies on themselves. Ghouls of necromancers or thin-bloods drinking from empty temperaments gain temporary access to Oblivion powers, but not to Ceremonies. Ceremonies each have a prerequisite Oblivion power. This requirement acts as a gateway for necromancers that blood sorcerers need not pass through. At character creation a player can choose one Level 1 Ceremony if they have at least one Oblivion power noted as a prerequisite for that Ceremony. Characters can buy new Ceremonies at the cost of the Ceremony's level x 3 experience points, providing they meet the power prerequisite as well. Learning new Ceremonies during play requires both experience and time, as well as a teacher who knows the Ceremony already. Expect a Ceremony to take at least the square of its rating in weeks to learn.

Note: Past and future products contain Oblivion Ceremonies and powers that may match well with those presented here. If these books are available, the Storyteller may feel free to suggest alternate pre-requisite powers.

Rituals - Level 1:

The Gift of False Life

Through use of this Ceremony, a vampire can raise a corpse or group of corpses to perform simple, single or repetitive tasks.

Prerequisite Power:

Ashes to Ashes

Ingredients:

A human body (or multiple bodies), a small concoction of blood, phlegm, and bile.

Process:

After applying the concoction to the corpse or corpses and performing the Ceremony, the affected bodies animate into a form of false life. They follow a single command from the vampire, providing it's simple and the corpse is physically capable of performing it, such as "sweep the floor," "hold this door shut," or "walk around the house perimeter." They have no ability to think or calculate, so conditional or complicated commands such as "attack the next person to walk through this archway," "drive this car," or "build a shack" do not work. They may be directed towards a specific target for attack or other action if the necromancer points at them.

System:

The player makes their Ceremony roll and upon a win they raise a number of corpses equal to their Oblivion rating, or the number of bodies they have prepared (whichever is lower). A critical win doubles their Oblivion rating for the purpose of determining corpses raised. The mindless corpse's animation ends when it is destroyed or it concludes its task. These corpses do not defend themselves from attacks, and decay as normal; the Ceremony does not grant them any form of immunity to the elements or time.

Mindless Corpse:

Standard Dice Pools -- Physical 2, Social 1, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes -- Health 4, Willpower 1

Exceptional Dice Pools -- Intimidation 4

General Difficulties -- 3/1

Special -- Mindless corpses take Superficial and Aggravated damage in the same way as vampires, except they are immune to sunlight. They cannot heal or mend damage, and rot at least one Superficial Health damage each day. They cannot be mentally dominated or influenced as they are bound to their master. They do not react to motion, words, or interference from anyone but their

creator. Mindless corpses may always contribute to Teamwork (see Vampire: The Masquerade p. 122) for menial labor such as digging, lifting, or pushing even if they lack skills.

Summon Spirit

This Ceremony enables a vampire to summon a spirit from the Underworld.

Prerequisite Power:

The Binding Fetter

Ingredients:

One of the targeted wraith's fetters, a photo or other visual depiction of the wraith or their signed name, the caster's vitae.

Process:

The necromancer pours their vitae over a wraith's fetter, and studying the picture or signature, calls out the wraith's name. The wraith feels their fetter's call, and begins a journey from their location in the Underworld to that of the caster. Though geography has differing scales in the Underworld, a journey may still take several nights if the spirit is on the other side of the world. If the Shroud is thin enough in the summoning location, the wraith is pulled through the veil between worlds by the fetter's strength. The summoned wraith is under no obligation to serve the vampire upon being called and may act with hostility if they feel the vampire is threatening their fetter, which may be an object, a building, or even a person. Alternatively, the wraith may be grateful for the summoning and the possibility of companionship.

Wraiths summoned in this way do not manifest physically, but as shadows on the walls, quavering silhouettes of their living selves, from which voices might emerge. Wraiths speak the same languages they did in life, unless they've gone to the trouble of learning new ones in the Underworld.

System:

The caster daubs the fetter with their vitae and makes an Oblivion Ceremony roll. The wraith cannot pass through the Shroud if it's impenetrable in the Ceremony location (see p. 205), and moving the fetter after the Ceremony doesn't help, as the wraith's ability to pass through the Shroud disappears if the fetter leaves the Ceremony site. The wraith disappears at the end of the scene unless a separate Ceremony is used to compel or bind them.

Rituals - Level 2:

Awaken the Homuncular Servant

Necromancers use this Ceremony to create spies and stalkers out of body parts such as hands or skulls, or small dead animals like rats or foxes.

Prerequisite Power:

Where the Shroud Thins

Ingredients:

The required body part or animal carcass, the weapon used to sever/kill it, a small concoction of urine, fecal matter, and semen.

Process:

The caster coats a blade (or other device suited to the task) in a gross cocktail of bodily fluids, and uses it to cut the targeted appendage off its root limb or body, or kills the small animal (which cannot be larger than a small dog and cannot fly, regardless of whether it has wings). After massaging vitae into the target, it comes to life as a homuncular servant, unfailingly loyal to its master. The homunculus can scale walls, hop (even if it lacks the limbs to do so), and hide effectively. While it cannot speak or perform tasks requiring deep thought, it can telepathically communicate single images to its creator.

System:

The necromancer's player makes an Oblivion Ceremony roll, and after doing so, gains a homuncular servant that will spy, follow, or intimidate at the necromancer's command. If it strays farther than 100 yards/ meters from the vampire, it falls inert, only awakening again once the vampire enters that range. Otherwise, it remains active for a number of nights equal to the number of successes rolled. A critical win on the roll keeps the servant active forever, while a total failure destroys all components involved in the Ceremony.

Homuncular Servant:

Standard Dice Pools -- Physical 1, Social 1, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes -- Health 3, Willpower 2

Exceptional Dice Pools -- Athletics 4, Stealth 6, Intimidation 4

General Difficulties -- 3/2

Special -- Homuncular servants take Superficial and Aggravated damage in the same way as vampires, except they are immune to sunlight. They cannot heal or mend damage. They cannot be mentally dominated or influenced as they are bound to their master. They do not need eyes or ears to perceive everything around them as someone with unimpeded vision and hearing might. They can telepathically broadcast a single image per scene to their master.

Compel Spirit

This Ceremony allows a vampire to bend a wraith to their will.

Prerequisite Power:

Where the Shroud Thins

Ingredients:

A wraith's fetter, the caster's vitae, an item (or threat) sufficient to damage the fetter.

Process:

The vampire must be in close proximity to a wraith in order to use this power, typically through use of Summon Spirit (see p. 209). The necromancer casts a handful of their own vitae in the wraith's direction as they hold a destructive item to the fetter (a knife, a hammer, a gun, or potentially holding the fetter over a fire) or speak threatening words that the wraith believes. The vampire and wraith engage in a contest of wills. If the vampire gains domination over the wraith, the wraith must serve as the vampire decrees, at least temporarily. If the opposite occurs, the vampire is left mentally debilitated and the fetter disappears from their grasp.

System:

The vampire's player makes an Oblivion Ceremony roll vs. the wraith's Resolve + Composure (or Willpower, if these traits aren't defined). If they have no way of physically threatening the fetter, the player must also make a Manipulation + Intimidation roll (Difficulty equal to the wraith's Resolve + Composure).

If the player rolls more successes than the wraith's resistance roll on their Oblivion Ceremony roll, the vampire can command the wraith to perform a number of moderately difficulty tasks (spying, research, answering questions truthfully, etc.) equal to the number of successes rolled. For every two successes, the vampire can instead command the wraith to perform a difficult task (such as attacking someone, doing something repugnant to the wraith's sensibilities, etc.). On a critical win, the vampire can demand any action from the wraith, and it will try its best to complete the task. The wraith remains in the vampire's service until the end of the chronicle or until it has fulfilled its master's commands, at which point it returns to the Underworld with an eternal enmity for the necromancer.

If the wraith wins the contest, the vampire suffers the margin in Superficial Health damage. The wraith then re-enters the Underworld.

The compulsion placed on the wraith ends immediately if the vampire attacks them. If the vampire harms the threatened fetter, the wraith suffers between one and three Aggravated Willpower damage (depending on the importance of the fetter) and the wraith is sent back to the Underworld to be tormented by, and possibly converted into, a murderous spectre (see Vampire: The Masquerade, p. 377).

Rituals - Level 3:

Host Spirit

This Ceremony allows a vampire to open their body to possession by a ghost. The benefits of having a wraith ride one's body come in the form of an enhanced physique, access to whichever

memories the wraith chooses to share, and the wraith's voice offering the vampire advice. The wraith can take complete possession of the vampire if they wish to, which some necromancers view as a blessing to be experienced, and others deem the main reason not to use this power. Allowing a wraith to control one's actions for a night is an effective way of confusing and mollifying the Beast, as well as demonstrating physical prowess and knowledges the vampire may not usually possess.

Prerequisite Power:

Aura of Decay

Ingredients:

A gift to be made as tribute to a wraith (whether the wraith values it depends on the individual), a parasitic bug, two teeth extracted from the vampire's mouth

Process:

The vampire must be in close proximity to a wraith in order to use this power, typically through use of Summon Spirit (see p. 209). The necromancer presents a tribute to the wraith, sometimes in the form of alcohol poured on the wraith's gravesite, or a bag of coins to be buried in the earth, or even the freshly decapitated head of one of the wraith's until-recently living enemies. The vampire then pulls two teeth from their mouth, usually with pliers, and bites into a parasite with their remaining teeth. The vampire then opens their mouth and the wraith can choose to jump inside, inhabiting the vampire's body.

System:

The vampire's player makes a successful Oblivion Ceremony roll. If the wraith agrees to the proposition, it then enters the vampire's body and can remain for a number of scenes equal to the successes rolled on the Oblivion Ceremony roll. With the wraith inside them, the vampire gains +2 dice to all Physical Attribute rolls and +2 Health until the wraith departs. The vampire can hear the wraith in their head, with its advice, cajoling, or supportive words provided by the Storyteller.

A wraith can choose to assert its possession instead of acting as a passenger. If the vampire resists, they make a Resolve + Composure roll vs. the wraith's Resolve + Composure. If successful, the wraith's influence is rejected. If failed, the wraith steers the vampire until the end of the scene, though it can't make the vampire do anything self-destructive. On a critical win, the wraith is ejected entirely and returns to the Underworld. On a total failure, the wraith can make a vampire harm themselves, but returns to the Underworld after the first injury is sustained.

A vampire whose body succumbs or is voluntarily opened to the possession attempt finds all Willpower damage healed once the wraith departs, as the spirit subdues the Beast for as long as it is present.

Shambling Hordes

This Ceremony enables a necromancer to raise a group of aggressive, walking dead minions.

Prerequisite Power:

Aura of Decay

Ingredients:

A human corpse (or multiple human corpses), a fresh human sacrifice.

Process:

The vampire must have a separate corpse in addition to a human prepared for sacrifice. The vampire murders the sacrificial victim, spilling their blood on the corpse or corpses intended for animation. If the Ceremony is successful, the corpses stand (the recent sacrifice does not), revived with the fresh blood, and serve the vampire's commands, even moderately complex orders such as "kill everyone who enters," "groan if you see anyone pass this way," or "terrorize that neighborhood." Unlike the corpses raised using the Gift of False Life (see p. 208), these animated dead do not sit idle if left without commands, instead attacking anyone around them except for their master.

System:

The player makes their Ceremony roll, possibly incurring Stains in the process depending on the Chronicle Tenets and the Storyteller's discretion. Due to the amount of blood spilled in this Ceremony, the caster must test to resist hunger frenzy (Difficulty 2). Upon a win a number of aggressive dead equal to the necromancer's Oblivion rating or the number of prepared bodies (whichever is lower) receive the gift of animation. A critical win doubles their Oblivion rating for the purpose of determining corpses raised. Corpses animated this way do not decay and only enter repose if commanded to by the vampire, if the vampire meets final death, or if they are destroyed.

As per the normal rules for temporary Advantages like these (see Vampire: The Masquerade p. 180), their continued usefulness beyond the current story must be ensured with Experience — such as through the Retainers Background (see Vampire: The Masquerade p. 196) — or the aggressive corpses may become unstable and unruly.

Aggressive Corpse:

Standard Dice Pools -- Physical 4, Social 1, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes -- Health 6, Willpower 2

Exceptional Dice Pools -- Brawl 6, Intimidation 5, Awareness 3

General Difficulties -- 4/2

Special -- Aggressive corpses take Superficial and Aggravated damage in the same way as vampires, except they are immune to sunlight. They cannot heal or mend damage. They cannot be mentally dominated or influenced as they are bound to their master. They do not need eyes or ears to perceive everything around them as someone with unimpeded vision and hearing might. Bites from the aggressive dead inflict +2 Aggravated Health damage to mortals.

Rituals - Level 4:

Bind the Spirit

Vampires with access to this Ceremony have the ability to bind wraiths to specified locations and people.

Prerequisite Power:

Necrotic Plague

Ingredients:

A wraith's fetter, the caster's vitae, the sacrifice of an innocent human, sufficient salt to surround a property or individual. If the target for haunting is an individual, the necromancer must possess something of their body, such as fingernails, hair, blood, or skin.

Process:

The vampire must already have a wraith under their control using Compel Spirit (see p. 210). The vampire kills an innocent human (though innocence is subjective, this tends to apply to the young, caregivers, and genuinely pious individuals) in or close to a location or person they want their wraith to haunt. Subsequently, they mix their vitae with sufficient salt to surround the target for haunting, and paint a circle with the mixture. The wraith's fetter is placed somewhere within the location or the target's possession. From this point, the wraith is forever bound to the target, unless the vampire cancels the Ceremony, the fetter ever moves from the location or individual's possession, or the wraith is destroyed. Binding also ends if the necromancer attacks the wraith. Most wraiths bound in this way are furious or melancholic about their plight, and their mood affects the area around them. Many necromancers use this method to defend their havens or haunt their enemies.

System:

Following the steps of the Ceremony, the vampire may incur Stains from the murder depending on the Chronicle Tenets and the Storyteller's discretion. They make an Oblivion Ceremony roll that cannot be resisted, as the wraith must already be compelled for this power to work.

The wraith is bound in perpetuity to the location or individual targeted, with no duration applied to this Ceremony's effects. Any emotion the wraith feels intensely during its binding affects the inhabitants of the location or the individual to whom it's bound, with each person affected suffering -2 dice to all rolls made to resist acting or feeling the way the wraith feels. Therefore, an angry wraith may make vampires more inclined to frenzy, while a depressed wraith might make a mortal more likely to stop self-care. Bound wraiths have the same powers as spectres (see Vampire: The Masquerade, p. 377).

Split the Shroud

This Ceremony allows a vampire to create a tear in the Shroud through which wraiths can pass and vampires with the correct Ceremonies can physically enter the Shadowlands.

Prerequisite Power:

Necrotic Plague

Ingredients:

A scalpel that's been used to cut into someone living, chalk or charcoal, a silk sheet, a human sacrifice.

Process:

The vampire hangs a silk sheet over a wall in a place where the Shroud density (see p. 205) is standard, thin, or frayed. They then murder a human sacrifice against the sheet, usually via some manner of bloodletting, and as blood coats the sheet, cut it open with a scalpel. The Ceremony widens the portal between the world of the living — which wraiths call the Skinlands — and the Shadowlands. Wraiths who enter the Skinlands via this method take to haunting locations and people, indulging in their passions, and possess humans if their powers allow for it. Some treat the vampire with gratitude for splitting the Shroud, while others enjoy harassing the necromancer responsible.

System:

The caster kills the human sacrifice, which may result in Stains depending on the Chronicle Tenets and the Storyteller's discretion. When cutting the silk sheet with a scalpel, their player makes the Ceremony roll (with –1 Difficulty if the scalpel was used in the human sacrifice). Due to the amount of blood spilled in this Ceremony, the caster must roll to resist falling into hunger frenzy (Difficulty 2). For every success on the Ceremony roll, the Shroud's density reduces by a level, down to being absent.

Following this Ceremony, vampires can access the Shadowlands with Ex Nihilo more easily, but importantly, if the Shroud rating is reduced to absent, wraiths can spill into the Skinlands as they see fit for the remainder of the chapter. Once the chapter concludes, a Shroud density of absent increases to frayed and the gateway for wraiths closes.

Rituals - Level 5:

Ex Nihilo

This Ceremony enables a vampire and their coterie to migrate into the Shadowlands, though doing so comes at great risk.

Prerequisite Power:

Withering Spirit

Ingredients:

Masks for each participant, a bowl containing sufficient quantity of the caster's vitae so each participant might coat the soles of their feet in it, two coins of any value per participant.

Duration:

Until the power is deactivated or the vampire is destroyed

Process:

Few Ceremonies of Oblivion come with as much doubt and fear as Ex Nihilo, the ability to migrate into the Shadowlands. This Ceremony enables a physical crossing into the lands of entropy. Vampires who physically enter the Shadowlands may interact with wraiths as if they were solid, but cannot carry objects beyond those on their person with them. Vampires destroyed in the Shadowlands disappear in a vortex of blood and ash, sucked into the false earth beneath their feet.

Ex Nihilo appeals to a great many necromancers and mystics who want to study the Shadowlands without the impediment of a time limit. It's an unmatched method for interviewing ghosts and exploring the necropoli — the cities spirits inhabit. It's also incredibly dangerous, as many wraiths — especially spectres — seek to destroy vampires, draining them of their Willpower, and there's always the risk of meeting the ghost of someone the vampire slew years earlier. Such wraiths tend to hold a grudge.

The vampire must have used the Split the Shroud Ceremony within this chapter, in the location they're currently occupying, in order for Ex Nihilo to function. If the Shroud density is reduced to absent, the caster and any companions may enter the Shadowlands from that point, if they don masks to cover their faces, dip or paint their feet in the vampire's vitae, and carry a coin in each hand.

System:

The user makes three Rouse Checks (sufficient to expend the required vitae) and expends a Willpower point to prepare for the crossing. They then make their Ceremony roll. If successful, the vampire, a number of companions equal to the number of successes rolled, and any objects on their person may then enter the Shadowlands.

The Shadowlands follows several rules that do not exist in the world of the living:

- Wraiths are capable of physical attacks on vampires (see Vampire: The Masquerade, p. 377 for an average spectre's stat block) but some are also capable of attacking a vampire's Willpower specifically, as they drain a vampire's passion. Defense pools against Willpower drain, which a wraith can attempt up to 3 yards/meters from the vampire, are made up from the vampire's Resolve + Composure, vs. the attacking wraith's Strength + Brawl. This attack inflicts Aggravated Willpower damage.
- Though there is no sun (and therefore no daytime) in the Shadowlands, the vampire must still Rouse the Blood every 24 hours. With no sunlight, they are able to operate without rest.
- Vampires in the Shadowlands cannot interact with the world of the living in a meaningful way. They can only touch or speak with living creatures by ending this Ceremony, which takes the expenditure of a Willpower point and another Rouse Check in a place where the Shroud isn't impenetrable. They can see snatches of motion through the Shroud, and a Discipline such as Auspex may enable them to spy from beyond the veil, but for the most part, anything viewed has a Difficulty 4 or more to perceive.

- Vampires can use their Disciplines in the Shadowlands just as they can in the land of the living.
- If a vampire is compelled to feed in the Shadowlands, they cannot obtain sustenance from wraiths without the Passion Feast power (see p. 206), but can feed from mortals or other vampires with them.
- Oblivion absorbs individuals who lose all Health or Willpower in the Shadowlands. They leave no wraiths if destroyed.
- Vampires cannot bring wraiths out of the Shadowlands without a Ceremony such as Summon Spirit (see p. 209), which must be used in the land of the living to have this effect.

Lazarene Blessing

This Ceremony enables a necromancer to bring a freshly-dead body back to life, though not how its relatives and friends might remember it.

Prerequisite Power:

Skuld Fulfilled

Ingredients:

One human sacrifice, incense, the heart of any mammal, powdered silver.

Process:

The necromancer burns incense to perfume the air before performing an act of human sacrifice, cutting the heart of the victim out and replacing it with the heart of another mammal, though it doesn't need to be stitched in and working for the Ceremony to function. After pouring a bag of powdered silver over the open eyes of the dying or dead mortal, the vampire invites a wraith to take the deceased mortal as a host. Wraiths cannot be forced to possess a body, but few refuse the opportunity to walk around in semi-living shoes again.

System:

Killing a mortal for this Ceremony may incur Stains, depending on the Chronicle Tenets. If the replacement heart was likewise taken from someone the vampire murdered, that murder might also incur Stains. Following a successful Ceremony roll, a wraith can enter the freshly-dead body and live in it as if it were their own. The wraith must be present during the act of sacrifice.

The possessed corpse will wake bearing the wounds that killed it, though the replacement heart is functional (no matter its origin or placement) and the body heals one point of Health damage upon possession. The remaining Health damage recovers with time. The body possesses the same Physical Attributes, Disciplines (if a ghoul), and Backgrounds it had in life. Social and Mental Attributes, Skills, and any form of morality rating match those of the wraith.

This possession lasts indefinitely, or until the possessed body dies again or the wraith is exorcised

from the host. The body gains no special resistances to harm beyond Disciplines it might have possessed in life.

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