

# THE MOONLIGHT RAMBLER

September 2003

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## Games for September

♀ What: Vampire Cam/Anarch Game  
♀ Where: UCR, Sproul Hall room 1340  
♀ When: Sept 13 & 27; 7:00 pm

♣ What: Garou Game  
♣ Where: UCR, Sproul Hall room 1340  
♣ When: date not yet set; 1:00 pm

## Socials

Current socials are after games at Dennys.

## Charities

Currently there are several Charities going on, contact Jason Wallace for details. There is also a National Blood Drive going on.

## The People who do the Work

There are many people who put in contributions of time and effort into this chapter. Below is a list of important people and their positions.

★ Chapter Coordinator: Mike Brown  
★ Venue Storyteller: Andrew Hemond

## This Month's Contributors

★ *Toniette Holden*

★ *Cat Christensen*

★ *Mary Wior*

★ *Andrew Hemond*

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## Malkavian Musings

*In the grand scheme of things where do we lie in the food chain. By that I mean we believe we are the evolutionary better to the mortal's right. Yet it is because of them we survive. Their life blood ensures our existence. Without them we perish. We pretend to be that which we are no longer and it is said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Even amongst our own kind we hide our true beasts underneath the shell of our formal mortal selves, believing to be better but always longing to be one again.*

*So we hunt them, well more to the point we lure them, with the promise of drugs, sex, money or some other mortal vice that we, as the dead, have long since lost the lust for. We trap them using their own needs and desires, we take them to some hotel or a dark back alleyway and it happens. Some amongst us say beautiful things to them; others say nothing at all choosing to be direct and brutal. Any way we approach it the end is all the same. We are the ones who become trapped by our "victims". We place our fangs against their flesh, and then we fall into our sweetest sin. For one brief fleeting instance of reality we are alive again filled with everything we can no longer be.*

*We are consumed by memories and emotions that are not our own, but oh how we wish they could be. The flood of ecstasy runs over us like a tidal wave bringing with it the true knowledge that in this state we are truly helpless in the kine's embrace. Too soon we are unmercifully ripped from the one pleasure not denied us. We find ourselves alone again and set apart from them. Warm from the freshly given vitae, we still feel cold and void of everything thing we once were. Secretly we long for that moment again, just one more moment where we are returned to life. The next time you are feeling invincible step ask yourself this, if mortals do not need us yet we depend on them for our survival, what does that make us... the predator or the prey?*



*Alexis  
aka  
Cat Christensen*



## FULL MOON – A NEWS REPORT

It seems like the crazies are always coming out on the Full Moon just as the superstition states. Recently at a local hospital nurses and security got a little more than the normal zaniness that seems to happen around Full Moons. A man came in not longer after dark claiming to be a werewolf and begging for help. He created a disturbance when nurses did not respond quickly enough to his demands. Eventually security was called and after a brief altercation the man fled but not before leaping out a third story window. The man seemed unharmed by the fall and ran away. One of the security guards suffered minor injuries as he claims the man "clawed" him.

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## Don't Sell Yourself Short

Tidbits, Gossip, Knowledge, Lore... no matter what you call it, it translates to a form of power. While each clan has certain innate powers of the body or mind, it is often not what you know how to do but who you know... and what you know about them.

Look at it like this, you may know what you can physically do and know your own limitations. You may know what you can do with your mind, and possibly how it is limited. Yet what are these things compared to the secrets you can learn. If you can manipulate the memories and minds of others, the true depth of such a power lies in that knowledge of whom around can do it to. If you move faster than the average kindred, wouldn't it also serve to know who can move faster than you?

In speaking of powers of the mind, do not forget that one of the most important is one's ability to listen. I have learned more about our Society in one evening of listening to others speak than I did in a year spent with my sire. In listening to others I have also learned to listen for what is not said. Remember that half of what you is dissembling, if not outright dishonest. Yet the other half? Guard what you learn and who you learn it from. A wise man once said Knowledge is Power. Kindred would do well to listen and learn.

*Ravienne (aka Toniette Holden)*

## DOWNTOWN DISASTER

It seems like a strange string of events led up to a horrible pile up on Mission recently and authorities are still trying to piece together what happened from camera footage and eyewitness testimony. The list of injuries is great and police have confirmed there were several fatalities in the traffic accident following a bizarre turn of events at the Mission Inn. \*Cuts to a camera footage of all the people that were running around the mission Inn in that large group\* There seems to have been an altercation between this group (Shows Silver, London, Daniel, Lane and Luca all proceeding to a staircase) and these men who were working on an investigation inside the Inn (Shows the men in black suits running towards the doors of the Inn and running along with them is a woman in a top hat and a very ugly kid with a deformed head). The investigators then fled in a van along with the woman. Then according to witnesses a gun battle occurred between an individual on a bike and those in the van. The biker ended up crashing his bike which turned a bad chain of events into a catalyst for this (Camera cuts to a helicopter over a scene with a massive car pile up and several cars on fire. The van is visible on its side with several cars crushed against its bottom). Eye witnesses claim that several individuals climbed out of the car and went over the edge into the River channel below. Several people say they saw something leap like a blur out of the window and claim something from the van struck their hoods. Police are still trying to investigate what exactly occurred but so far they have very few leads into the case. Several bodies were found below the accident site but police are not commenting on the condition they were found in.

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## The Position of Prince

There are a lot of misconceptions about the power and position of Prince in a city. This is understandable as there is a rather dichotomous view of pryncedom. How the Prince sees it and how everyone else does. The position of prince exists as the nominal head of a city. It is a position of power only because the one who holds it must have the power to do so. It is like many things in Vampire, a careful dance of what one can get away with.

The Prince is usually a cainite of great power, wielding a large amount of influence within the mortal society and usually no small amount of charm. What a lot of people do not understand is that the position is precarious at best. Only someone with great skill and guile can retain it because a Prince only keeps his position for as long as the vampires of the city accept his power over them. This is something many seem to not understand about a Prince. The Prince himself sometimes sets himself up as a feudal lord, holding "court" and keeping watch over his "subjects". These so-called subjects though, either by choice or inaction, allow the Prince whatever power he holds over them. A Prince therefore must work hard to not be hated by them because if he is seen as too tyrannical all the kindred of the city need do is to kill him. To prevent this, a Prince must be careful with how he enforces his edicts and also in what edicts he creates for the city. The Vampires of a city swear no oaths of fealty, they are no vassals in kindred society, and there is no feudal system within the Camarilla. The Prince is only prevented from going to far if the Kindred act though; a tyrant can do whatever he wants in a city of cowards. The problem is when a Prince tries to enforce his will and lacks the force or allies to do it, the city turns on him and his reign ends. It is a very precarious balance a Prince must strive for. So what is a Prince supposed to do?

The Prince's job is to keep peace within the city and protect the Masquerade. He is an arbiter for Kindred affairs and the authority for the Traditions. Beyond that his authority wanes. Though what he does to accomplish these goals can be powerful acts indeed. Many kindred do not pay much attention to the Prince past what protocols demand and pay only lip service to his position. Elders are completely different story as many consider themselves far beyond Princes due to their age and tend to ignore young whelps who attempt to order them around. Most Kindred at least pay some attention to the Prince to hear anything that might pertain to them. Most though have plenty of other things to keep them occupied then the whims of their supposed "leader". The Prince though is not easily ignored though. Princes usually hold their position because they wield vast temporal power. One may choose to ignore the edict of a prince only to find their haven is in the way of a new road or that it has been condemned. Therefore it is important that the Prince choose carefully

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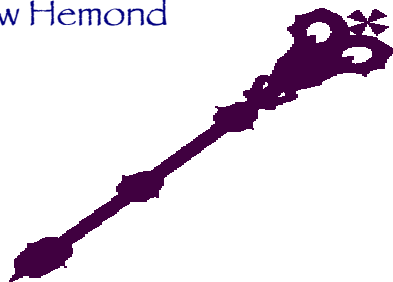
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what demands to make on the city. They must play a careful balancing act of what they think they need to do and they believe the Kindred of the city will put up with. Princes who push to much lose their position and power but, Princes who do not make decisions and use their power can find themselves in a similar position as if they had done too much. A smart Prince knows what he can get away with and does it. A foolish Prince either forces tyranny upon the kindred of the city with no way to enforce it or does nothing and is not feared or respected by the Kindred of the city.

So why do it then? Why take that risk and play such a dangerous game of tightrope walking? Well some might say the benefits more then make up for it. As final authority on the Traditions in an area the Prince has a lot of advantages. Firstly, the Prince has the right to sire progeny and can control the influx of progeny from the other Vampires in the city. Secondly, the city is her Domain and there are several rules that apply to people entering one's Domain. Thirdly, a Prince wields a good amount of political power within the sect. Fourth, feeding, a Prince can control where people feed and nothing survives without a food supply. Fifth, the sixth Tradition gives a Prince significant power over his enemies; when one considers the ability to destroy those who oppose you one can see why there is such an allure to being Prince. Also, as long as the Prince is keeping the city stable he can usually garner support from the Elders within the city. These benefits are usually enough to lure most people towards thoughts of praxis but they would do well to remember the price of princedom.

Andrew Hemond



## Advertise

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## Free Publicity

The Moonlight Rambler provides free announcements for community events that are open to our exclusive circulation.

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## Downtown Riverside in the WOD

The city of Riverside was founded by John W. North and Dr. James P. Creves in 1870, and incorporated in 1883. Silk and oranges were early industries. For a long time Riverside was known as the "Tree City" because of the vast numbers and varieties of trees planted and maintained by the city. Even now, the City of Riverside has over 96,000 trees in its care. Riverside now has 28 neighborhoods, each with their own flavor and history.



The original square mile of Riverside is now known as Downtown. Bordered by Mount Rubidoux on the west, the downtown area is the most densely populated part of Riverside. It's skyline sprouted almost overnight in the 1960s, and makes up for its lack of spread in height and density. Shops of all types line the first, and sometimes second floors of the buildings, while office space extends the buildings skywards like desperately grasping fingers. There are more than a few alleyways that are so narrow that sunlight only hits the street a few times a years, and then only for the briefest of moments. The buildings come in three shades on the front - dark red brick, dull deep gray, and grimy sand, but most fight such a constant battle with graffiti on the sides that you cannot tell what color they should be for the first few floors.

The Downtown neighborhood contains many landmarks. The most famous of these landmarks is the Mission Inn. Built in 1876 by Frank Miller, this Spanish style home turned hotel has served the needs of many famous persons. Under the building there are catacombs that have been closed to the public since the late 1970s when the guided tours of the Mission Inn stopped going through there. While it is the cities first and best known Elysium, no Kindred can be found there.

One side of the Mission Inn dominates the center block of the tourist section of Riverside: three blocks of colorful shops and eateries that make up the Downtown Walking Mall. During the lunch rush, the area is crowded with tourists and businesspeople competing for outdoor tables under a decorated variety of trees. From before the dawn until shortly after one AM when the bars on the surrounding blocks close, the downtown mall is full of people under the watchful eyes of a private security firm. The stores in the walking mall change faster than one might expect, some barely last 6 months, although a few have lasted so many years that no one knows when they moved in.

The Cultural District of Riverside runs along Mission Inn Ave and includes the Municipal Auditorium, Art Museum, Municipal Museum, and Library. Two important cultural buildings are not part of the district: the walking mall has isolated the historic Fox Theater, and UCR's Photography Museum is located a block away

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on the walking mall. A few blocks away is the Life Arts Building, where many events not prestigious enough for the district itself take place.

Downtown Riverside has two parks: White and Fairmont, but neither is considered safe during the day, and only the bravest of souls venture there after dark. The parks once drew tourist crowds for the variety of rare trees in them. As the gangs took over the surrounding areas, they claimed the corners of the parks as turf. As their power grew, so did their control of the parks, and now the city cannot find anyone willing to spend enough time inside the parks to properly care for them. Several of the rarest trees are now dead, with skeletal branches drooping and flaking away. Many other rare and once beautiful trees are sick and wilt reproachfully at any one brave or stupid enough to wander into the parks.

The parks do contain entrances to the expansive sewer system, as do the catacombs of the Mission Inn and numerous alleyways. The sewer system is under Riverside is convoluted as earthquakes have collapsed sections and new sections were built around them. Plans for a subway system were not aborted until after quite a few tunnels were dug out in the early 1990s. Homeless people shelter in the ends of the tunnels, but not even the heat of summer can convince them to venture too far in.

Although public transportation exists in the form of busses and trains, most people take cars when traveling into and about Downtown Riverside. Parking along the street is common during daylight, but after dark the cars hide in underground parking structures patrolled by private security firms that somehow manage to do an amazingly incompetent job at prevent stereo and car thefts.

Welcome to the Riverside of the World of Darkness gamers. I hope you enjoy your stay in our interesting city.

Mary Wior

## **The Problem of Prestation**

Prestation, the act of exchanging boons is such an important part of Kindred society and therefore important to the game itself. The problem is that many players are loathe to become part of the system and go against the setting by either giving out favors for free with no rate of exchange or avoiding it entirely. This does a disservice to the venue as a whole because the system of Prestation is part and parcel to the Status based society. What is stranger in my eyes that, despite coming from a credit based culture themselves, many players seem to not understand the basis for Prestation. But Prestation is simply this, when a vampire receives a gift or favor, she is beholden to the giver and honor-bound to repay them in a like fashion.

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Prestation is very simple, reduce it down to the concept of credit. Say I extend you the credit so you can get that stereo today that you might be otherwise unable to afford. Now, a few weeks down the road I may come to you and ask you to repay the credit I extended to you so that I can get something I want. Simple, no? Take it another step. You want to know about say, tigers. I happen to know a lot and so I tell you that I can teach you but it is going to cost you. A few weeks later I might return and ask you to explain internal combustion engines (because that is your thing). It works out simply thus, people extend the trust that you will repay them (hence why this is like credit) for a favor today. Then down the road when they want to call the favor due it is like you are repaying the loan they made.

It gets a little more complicated after that but those are the basics. Next you have to look at the status angle which ties into boons. Say you are a Kindred with 5 status and possibly a position. I am Joe Nobody but it just so happens that you owe me, and owe me big. You have to treat me as if I am above your station. You would have to be respectful in all manner of ways. This is one reason why people avoid them but will deal with this later. The other complication is level. Many people do not understand how to differentiate between levels of boons. Sometimes asking for much more than the favor is worth. A good guide is this: if the favor is momentary or perhaps for only an evening then it is Trivial, if the favor lasts for more than a single night or it might require some expenditure of resources then it is a Minor boon, if the favor lasts a long time or requires a lengthy application of resources or is costly to the giver then it is a Major boon (teaching disciplines falls under a Major Boon), if you shed blood or are placed in a potentially life-threatening situation then it is a Blood boon, and finally if the person actively risks their life then it is a Life boon.

So why do people avoid it? And why is that so wrong? Well simply put the Kindred society is designed to rely on this simple act of exchange. Nothing is free in the world of Vampire: The Masquerade and no-one should do something without looking out for themselves. Many people do not like this but the analogy is similar to our adult life. Credit plain and simple, without it you cannot get a place to live, a car or just about anything expensive. About the only way to build this credit is to end up owing people to get access to commodities in life. Our own society is moving away from money-based to credit-based. Your ability to repay is much more important than what you can do now. It is the same for Kindred society. You need to owe to be accepted. Vampires that are not tied down in some way by Prestation are not trusted and why should they be? Nobody is willing to lend them credit and nor are they willing to accept favors from others. What could be more suspicious?

Andrew Hemond

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Send comments and submissions to Andrew Hemond  
(sturmcrow @ hotmail.com)

Check out the online version of the newsletter at  
<http://www.geocities.com/malkavsget/news.html>

## Guidelines for Submission

For any of you interested in making submissions to the newsletter, check out our simple guidelines below (note unless the article or announcement is truly pointless it has a good chance of being printed):

- Please, we desire that submitted news articles be relatively impartial and factual. Also, the majority of news articles are IC for local players, so whatever you submit may become common IC knowledge. Most news articles will use names of who submitted them, unless you request that we do not use your character's name (an NPC reporter will be named then). So please tell us that you wish to be Anonymous. Note though that any articles showing personal bias will ALWAYS be attributed to the character that submits them.
- IC Announcements are welcome, of any kind, be they personal, clan related, citywide, etc. These will also ALWAYS have your name tacked onto them.
- Ads may be run on request. You will have to pay for them somehow (IC) and we do not guarantee they will be read. We reserve right on where the ads will be placed, hey if you get enough people to make ads we can have an ads page. They must be acceptable (check with Andrew Hemond) and will of course be IC. They can be like classified (help wanted, looking for buyer), propaganda, etc.
- Prose, poetry, fiction, and other works of "art" will also be accepted. There will be a separate section for these. Make your stories believable, we will not to print stories that are written merely to make you look good. Also, we prefer to have the stuff fit into the WOD and the Camarilla storyline (if it's a work of fiction). Toreadors might love this section, but be reminded that Toreadors aren't the only ones that can be creative. Pictures and drawings will not be accepted at this time unless already in gif or jpg format.

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