

## *Boons – Advanced lessons*

*An In Character document for the Camarilla role playing game*

My childe,

Your progress continues to impress. Who would have thought that one so young would find themselves standing as Priscus to our Clan? Perhaps I flatter myself to think that my lessons have aided in this rise. I will continue these lessons with some of the most advanced concepts of Society and Prestation.

### **Swapping favours**

We have always spoken in the linear when it comes to Boons being owed; one vampire owes another, and is called upon to repay the debt. However things are not always so simple.

Just because you do not hold a Boon over someone that you owe a favour does not mean that you cannot generate the leverage that you need to make them do as you want. Being a respectable member of Society, they will owe someone. All you need to do is consult the Harpies who will, for a Trivial Boon, consult their records and inform you of who your target owes, and how much.

From there it is a simple matter of approaching the holder of the Boon and making an offer for their boon, either to use it to your advantage or to trade it to you for Boons you hold, a Boon over yourself, or some action or favour you can perform for them.

If they refuse, then simply consult with the Harpies again – someone will hold a boon over them in turn. It is the interconnectivity of Boons that keeps Society functioning. Everyone owes someone. Thus Society and stability is maintained.

### **Legacies**

Similar to the concept of the Blood Boon owed for the death of another, a Legacy distributes the assets of a deceased, the last will and testament of a vampire. It can be a detailed or simple as you please. You can split your Boons between beneficiaries or grant them all to a childe, Vassal, Lord... or a loving Sire.

The Legacy is recorded in much the same way as entering a Boon with the Harpies, except that it requires at least one vampire who is not a party to the deal to witness it for the Legacy to be considered valid. The independent witness is there to verify the Legacy presented by the Harpy, preventing False Witness.

Unlike the Blood Boon, the Legacy is not invalid in the case of a Blood Hunt, destruction at the Prince's behest or failure in Monomacy. The Legacy is always valid.

A Boon gained through Legacy is generally referred to as a Hereditary Boon, but gaining it in that way makes it no less valid. Naturally it is worth keeping the beneficiaries of your Legacy a secret. After all, should another vampire learn of the massive Prestation

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debts that they could be entitled to should you come to an untimely end, then the temptation will present itself to hurry along that possibility. Best not to tempt fate.

### **Links between Status and Boons**

#### *Domain*

At the level of the Domain, Status and prestation ought to be like fire and smoke; where you see one, you will find the other. Each word that we equate with the different strata of society is really a description of the individual's standing regarding Boons. Someone Acknowledged as part of Society is considered worthwhile enough by someone for them to do that vampire a favour. They owe someone, usually the Prince who granted them permission to reside in the Domain.

Similarly, someone Recognised owes several others, and has probably picked up a Boon or two themselves. Someone Valued owes a great many Boons and is well entrenched in Society, enough so that everyone can recognise the Value they hold. It is likely that a Valued vampire owes someone in each Clan and Covenant, although this measure isn't as strictly enforced as it used to be.

It is only the Respected and Admired who are expected to hold more Boons than they owe. After all, you would only ask a favour from someone you respect enough to feel they can perform some service that you cannot.

This means that if someone holds higher Status than you they have already paid their dues to Society. If you give them a verbal slight, it is an insult to that debt already paid. Usually the way that this is dealt with it for the Harpies to enforce a Boon on the offending party. Society reinforces itself once again, as the value of a Boon is demonstrated, or the fool becomes Boon broken and is lost.

#### *Regional*

It has often been asked; since a vampire can only have significant Status in one Domain at a time, how does one become Respected or Admired in one's Clan or Covenant? After all, such words of Status are given only to those who hold considerable sway throughout their region.

This sway comes most easily from the foundation of Society itself; Boons. Holding Boons over Clan and Covenant members in distant cities demonstrates your far reaching influence. If you wish to demonstrate to another that you hold significant sway within your Clan, the way to do this is not to ask for testimonials from others about how respected or well thought of you are. These things are perception only, and perception changes easily.

No, if you wish to demonstrate far reaching sway, create a list of Boons. The Status and reputation of those over which you hold direct sway matters. Boons mean they must do

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as you will. Liking you just means that they will do what you want if they also happen to want the same, and that is no demonstration of power.

### **Apologies**

It really shouldn't need to be said, but some kindred don't understand good manners. If you happen to offend someone, you should apologise. This doesn't simply mean that you say you feel sorrow. Anyone can, like a whore, unpack their heart with words...

No, if you apologise for an offence, it only has meaning if you demonstrate that you mean it with action. Not any random action; the action that the offended party thinks is best. You will know what they think is best because that is how they will use the Boon that you give them. An apology without an offered Boon is lip service at best, and doubles the insult originally given at worst.

### **Conclusion**

What I have aimed to achieve is to demonstrate to you, my childe, the advantages and uses of Boons. These are the cornerstone of Society. Without them there would be anarchy.

Each of the five Covenants accepts the use of Boons as a way of valuing the actions one of us partakes for another. This is what binds us together, the uniting fact that overcomes all other differences. Carthians might want to elect a First Citizen of a Republic, Invictus want rule by a powerful Prince, yet both accept that it is right to repay a favour done, and that refusing to do this endangers the existence of all.

Boons prevent conflict. Or rather, Boons make conflict political and social instead of physical. Boon trading has never broken the Masquerade. War in the streets has. If all vampires enforce the use of Boon on one another, and individuals who refuse to conform to Society are isolated and removed, then there is never a point where war in the streets needs to occur.

Without widespread vampiric conflict it becomes possible for us to actually be immortal. Boons are the rules that keep the Beast in check, and keep a room full of predators being polite to one another rather than tearing out one another's throats.

Use Boons as if your very existence depends on them, for it does.