

Inside this Issue

- 1** What's New?
News from the DC
- 2** A Note From the DST
- 3** The Story Behind the
Influence
- 6** New Boy in Town
Sounds of Desire
- 7** Rumors and Quotes
- 11** April Schedule

The Dark River Society
is an official Domain of the
Camarilla™.

Undercurrents

What's New?

By Sami Corbitt, Editor

Hello Undercurrents readers,

Welcome to the March/April edition of Undercurrents. I'd like to thank everyone who submitted this month and I hope that more of you will be submitting things for the future editions.

This issue we have a character flavor piece by Stretch Scholz, an exposé on influence whoring by Mike Blank and an article from our new beloved DST, Ian Harris. We also have two heavenly photographs by Matthew Skipper and several delightful shots from the new Undercurrents staff photographer Carrie Hirsch. Make sure to say "cheese" for Carrie during the games. So far she's done a fabulous job capturing our characters' candid moments. I hope you enjoy! Ω

News from the DC

By Paula Watt, DC

Hi everyone,

After a tumultuous couple of months, things are finally beginning to calm down. An overwhelming majority of members voted to transfer the domain as a whole to the new White Wolf Camarilla



organization. Individual members will still have the option of transferring or not transferring their membership. Current members who transfer their memberships before April 15th, 2002 get a free two-year extension on their memberships. When you get your new WW number, be sure to give it to your coordinator. If you choose not to transfer, be aware that you will be considered an expired member after April 15th.

Now that White Wolf is running the organization, we could be in for a lot of changes within the next few years. For now, everything stays as it is. This includes your prestige, MC, characters and experience. All Code of Conduct and rules supplements will work exactly as they did before the transfer. Assume everything is to be done in the same way; they'll let us know if anything changes.

We have a few more MC increases: Chris Dolan, Carrie Hirsch and Caelan Clark to MC 2; Tony Gowell and Emily Douglas to MC 3; Mike McMahan, Amanda Plageman and Stretch Scholtz to MC 5. Congratulations guys & ladies and keep up the good work! We also have a bunch of new members: Ben Buchanan, Dennis Vaughan, Fred & Missy Barrell and Henry Faust.

The domain web site (<http://www.darkriversociety.com>) has been moved to the [larp.com](http://www.larp.com) web server. It should be fully functional, and has a new, more watery look. All experience expenditures, influences and downtimes should be done via the web site. As always, if you spot something that doesn't work, let me know.

Effective March 1st, Ian Harris is serving as the new DST. He can be reached at drs_dst@yahoo.com. Remember that all DST (or higher) approvals must first be submitted to your CST, who will take care of escalating it to the Domain level (if required).

Finally, remember that you can always come talk to me if you have concerns. I tend to suspend belief on rumors until I've heard something directly from the source. One of my jobs is to mediate inter-chapter disputes and disputes with the rest of the coordinator staff. So, if you are having trouble with anyone on the coordinator staff, or with a member of a different chapter, let me know. I can also help with OOC matters that you don't feel comfortable talking about with your chapter coordinator.



Prayer Light By Matthew Skinner

However, be aware that if you are skipping the chapter coordinator level entirely, I will want to hear your reasons for doing so. Ω

A Note From the DST

By Ian Harris

Hello everyone. As you are probably aware by now, I was recently elected the DST for our fair domain. I just wanted to take this opportunity to restate some of the things that I will be doing while in office, for those of you who may not have heard by now.

I am running a Settings project and have appointed Daniel Wair as my ADST - Settings to assist me in this regard. What we will be doing is attempting to fill in the gaps in the World of Darkness of Nashville. Your characters do not exist in vacuums. They don't cease to exist in between games. Okay, maybe in a reality sense they cease to exist between games, but I am not concerned with reality, I have no power over it and generally it doesn't affect me. In an in-game sense, they all have homes that they go to while they aren't getting together with all of the other PCs. I

want to populate the neighborhoods around those homes, create interactions that your PC would have if they were a real person.



To do this, I need your help. Some of you have already sent me this information. Others of you have not. I want you to think long and hard about

where your character lives - what part of town, if possible even the street. Describe their home to me. Do they live in a hovel, or a large estate in Belle Meade? If an estate, what sort of rooms does it have? How is it decorated?

Where does your character work? *Does* your character work? If they do, what do they do? Where is it? What sort of businesses does your character involve themselves in, either in an ownership sense or customer sense?

I will take this info and Daniel and I will compile it and we are going to create some very large maps which will be brought to games and displayed with very common IC locations for everyone to see. I think this will enhance the roleplay experience in our games.

Also, I would like to announce that Anton is my primary ADST and will be in charge of Sabbat. So far, he has done a wonderful job. If you were at the Sabbat game, you have seen the results of the work that he did to craft a very difficult story and get it to flow smoothly throughout the night. Admittedly, it wasn't perfect, but we're working on that.

My e-mail address is drs_dst@yahoo.com - you may e-mail me with any question you may have, and usually I'll get you some sort of response within 24 hours. If you would rather call me, my home number is 227-9736. If I'm not there, leave me a message and I'll get back to you. Ω

The Story Behind The Influence

By Michael Blank



[Headline] Acme Trucking Settles Case, Declares Bankruptcy

Sounds like a typical set of news items huh? Well, all of this can easily be generated through creative use of influence. Influence use does not have to be simplistic and boring. It can be creative, subtle, and exciting.

[Headline] Madness Sweeps Central Tennessee, Hundreds Slain

[Headline] Body Count Continues to Rise in Mass Hallucination

[Headline] Visions and Deaths Attributed to Chemical Leak

[Headline] EPA Begins Investigation into Acme Trucking for Possible Violations

[TV News Teaser] Vanderbilt biochemists in conjunction with the Tennessee Dept. of Health and Safety and the EPA give evidence that the chemical leak was responsible for hundreds of deaths. Details at 6.

[Headline] Class Action Lawsuit Brought by Survivors of Tragedy

[TV News Teaser] Political and Religious leaders around the area came together today to console and support the victims of the tragic events of the last month.

[Radio Advertisement] "Have you lost a loved one due to the negligence of the transportation industry? No price can be put on their meaning to you, but you deserve compensation for your grief and loss. Call the law offices of Skreuem, Over, and Under to ask about your rights."

A well-built network of influences can provide the opportunity for nearly continuous role-play with characters that you could normally never hope to meet. Through use of influences, you can make allies and enemies that you never knew existed, you can set up plans and plots to conquer or protect, and you can build a power base that is virtually a level playing field for all characters (with the notable exception of Vampires having unlimited influence retainers.) Along with all of this, use of your Influences gives you the opportunity to act as a storyteller for a brief period.

Below you will find the listing of the influence report that generated news stories similar to the ones above. Please note that the levels and actions spent have been removed to protect the guilty.

Bureaucracy xX

- X Actions - Get insiders to help retrieve and lose the physical fingerprint records for John Smith (John Doe's Character)
- X Actions - EPA findings show a massive chemical leak (on the day the wyld energy poured forth.)

Church xX

- X Actions - Grow (Introduce me to high level priests as a rich patron. Share private communions with them where Mr. X will bleed into the chalice from his lip. Then they will drink.)

- X Actions - Have church give moral support to the survivors of the tragic day.

Finance xX

- (Done for last game) X Actions - Building my limo fleet larger and adding new drivers.
- (Done for last game) X Actions - Purchase a hotel with a secure lower floor with no windows and 2-3 exits.

Health xX

- X Actions - Blood tests on victims show residual traces of a deadly hallucinogen.
- X Actions - Grow (Move into positions that Drs killed on Wyld day left open.)

High Society xX

- (Done for last game) X Actions - Having hotel basement decorated.
- X Actions - Grow (Throw benefit for the survivors of the leak.)

Industry xX

- (Done for last game) X Actions - Acquiring a large armored car.
- X Actions - Grow (Use news story about chemicals to sabotage enemy companies)

Legal xX

- X Actions - Begin class action suit against company that transported the chemicals.
- X Actions - Manipulate the attorneys of the Transport company to force them to settle out of court, driving them into bankruptcy.

Media xX

- X Actions - Release a story that shows that the chaos of the day the wyld energy came through was caused by a leaking shipment of chemicals being sent through Nashville. Hallucinations and death due to exposure were normal side effects of this chemical.
- X Actions - Conceal manipulation of story.
- X Actions (Contacts xX)- Watch for Masquerade breaches.

Occult xX

- X Actions - Have people research what the origin of this surge of energy was. (Bob explained the basics.)
- X Actions + X Allies Actions - Grow (Scoop up those who have lost faith due to their misery into my cult)

Police xX

- X Actions - Getting people with access to the database to help provide codes for the FBI Fingerprint database. (see underworld)
- X Actions - Cease any investigation which could lead to paranormal origins of tragedy.
- X Actions (Contacts xX) - Watch for Masquerade breaches.

Politics xX

- X Actions - Grow (Lots of support for the survivors of the tragic day makes my candidates much more sympathetic to the people.)

Street xX

- (Done for last game) X Actions - Having street people watch the pickup spots for signs of a trap or for people following the limos.
- X Actions - Have street people testify that they saw the trucks leaking chemicals. (Were drinking at the time. See University influence.)

Transportation xX

- (Done for last game) X Actions - Securing my own transportation around the city.
- X Actions - Grow "We at Black Rose Trucking take safety as our

highest priority, as we know it is yours." (Use the destruction of another trucking company to pick up more business for mine.)

Underworld xX

- (Done for last game) X Actions - Securing a set of rooftop guards to watch for non-authorized (i.e. non-limo) approaches.
- X Actions - Getting an expert computer hacker to hack in (using the codes from my police contacts) and replace John Smith's fingerprints with someone like



Prayer Dark By Matthew Skipper

Abraham Lincoln's. (on file with the Smithsonian)

University xX

- X Actions - Generate scientific "evidence" that the chemicals that were leaked could be neutralized by high enough quantities of alcohol in the blood.

- X Actions - Grow (My scientists produce results, therefore must be more valuable.)

As you may have noticed, this character is influence heavy, but this character has spent under 30 xp to build the empire listed above. How? Let's take a look.

First, how can I get to this level of raw, unmitigated, unnatural power. Muhahahaha!!! Sorry... Where was I? Oh, yes. How do I build a character for influence use without crippling the character?

The first item to consider is "are you a Kindred or another type of creature?" This will determine whether you can afford to branch out greatly. A Garou with an 11 trait max is limited to 58 total levels of influence, with 5 levels of retainer, while a Kindred with the same trait max can buy a new retainer every time (s)he hits a ceiling. The Garou, Mage, Mortal, Changeling, or Wraith (right) can ill afford to take up his/her limited amount of influence potential with levels of Church that (s)he cannot think of a use for, while a Kindred who has built up 6 levels of Church has, at

Next comes character creation. Of course, your choice of Clan, Tribe, Kith, etc. will usually give you at least 1 level of influence, but for raw influence potential, I have 3 words: Allies, Allies, Allies.

Properly used, you can get more mileage out of 5 levels of Allies than you can any other 5 free traits/ xp that you can spend. Need a quick, secure place to hide out? Allies is a level 5 Underworld contact. Need to get out of town fast and unseen? Allies is a level 5 Transportation road to freedom. Need that one last monkey skull for your ritual? Level 5 Occult, baby! Allies can support any action you wish to take and act as any type of influence you need. It can even be split up, acting as 1 level of Influence for each level of Allies you allocate. In addition, you can use it to recruit people with special skills. Need some research done for you, a vault broken into or painting painted for you? For each level you allocate, you can get a person with 1 level of a skill to aid you. 5 Allies equals a level 5 Ability.

Not to be sneezed at next to Allies are

only gather information. You can use Contacts in the same way as Allies but for informational purposes only. They are not going to or don't have the power to stick their necks out for you.

Last, I recommend actual Influences themselves. When you build influences with XP or Free Traits, I advise that you focus on just a few influences at high levels. The reason that I suggest this is, high levels of influence take significantly more actions to grow than low levels do. To demonstrate, let me give you a character progression for a character whose only focus is growing influences.

The character has Allies 5 and 1 level of influence from his character type. Remembering that you get 2x your level of influence in actions and it costs your current level of influence squared (or 6, whichever is greater) to grow to the next level, the chart below emerges.

As you can see, in just 6 months, 5 free traits applied to Allies can triple their worth and then some. The above character now has 5 levels of Allies and 11 levels of influence, one level of

| Month | Action | Total of Growth Plus Banked Growth | Current Levels | Cost to Grow to New Level | New Level | Banked Growth after Growing |
|-------|---|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Inf. A x1 + Allies x5 = 12 Actions | 12 A | Ax1 | A6 | Ax2 | 6 A |
| 2 | Inf. A x2 + Allies x5 = 14 Actions | 20 A | Ax2 | A6 | Ax3 | 14 A |
| 3 | Inf. A x3 = 6 Actions Inf. B x0 + Allies x5 = 10 Actions | 20 A 10 B | Ax3 Bx0 | A9 B6 | Ax4 Bx1 | 11 A 4 B |
| 4 | Inf. A x4 + Allies x1 = 10 Actions Inf. B x1 + Allies x4 = 10 Actions | 21 A 14 B | Ax4 Bx1 | A16 B6 | Ax5 Bx2 | 5 A 8 B |
| 5 | Inf. A x5 + Allies x5 = 20 Actions Inf. B x2 = 4 Actions | 25 A 12 B | Ax5 Bx2 | A25 B6 | Ax6 Bx3 | 0 A 6 B |
| 6 | Inf. A x6 = 12 Actions Inf. B x3 = 6 Actions Inf. C x0 + Allies x5 = 10 Actions | 12 A 12 B 10 C | Ax6 Bx3 Cx0 | A36 B9 C6 | Ax6 Bx4 Cx1 | 12 A 3 B 4 C |

the most, wasted 2 xp if (s)he never uses that influence.

Contacts. Contacts can be your eyes and ears in the world of Influences, without taking up valuable actions to do so. Think of Contacts as Allies that can

which could not have been bought with XP. Had the same character split his free traits among 5 different influences and bought no allies, it would take 3

months just to reach level 2 in each level 1 influence. To grow without the aid of allies takes a minimum of 2 months of all out growth. The more influences you have, of course, the less impact that Allies have, but they make a great emergency reserve just in case you have blown your whole wad for the month already with your influences.

So you want to be a whore? An Influence whore that is... We have generally fallen into calling influence heavy characters by this term, at least in the circles in which I travel. Why is this? Because whores get paid for putting out. Not only can you get things for yourself with influences, you can get others that don't feel like investing the time into influences to give you things for using your connections. Boons always make Vampires happy.

When you define your character, here is one final note to think on. How you interact with those you control is important to defining your character. Can a Humanity 5 character really get away with dominating and blood bonding scores of mortals? Can you say "Virtue Check?" Can a Garou with 6 Rage get away with seducing lots of mortals? Not and keep them around for morning.

Use your influences to help define who and what your character is like. Use them to make a public face. But also remember that others can see this face from time to time. Others can include NPC's and PC's from other venues. Send messages through your influences. Make contacts with some of these people. Deals can work for you or against you, but they can always make the story better, somewhere for someone. Ω

New Boy in Town

By Stretch Scholz

Monday, November 10, 1999

I am newly arrived in the old town. It has grown much since I was here last. Indeed last time I was alive, young, and full of promise. The ferries are not here and mules no longer tow barges.

On Spring Street is a hotel. It is not the building I remember but it will do. Across the bridge beside it sprawls the center of the Metropolis I have been sent to. The rent is monthly, local calls are free and the man behind the desk is not inquisitive. We agree on terms and I receive a key. I park my car, pull the coil wire and unpack the garment bag and few possessions. A bus locker key hangs close about my neck, nagging my old wound. I take a quick glance at the map, take my papers from the water tight bag, arranging and then reinserting them. I am ready to walk into town.

As I stroll in the early night I see what has changed and yet remained the same. The city flows about me as I move through it toward the bus station. I casually move to the locker and pull out the contents then make my way to the lavatory and enter a stall. A smelly man follows me but after waiting outside the stall is unable to get any opportunity to make a move. I smile as I notice a station guard taking time to wash his hands, comb his hair. Possibly he thinks I am here for the "trade".

I take out the papers and read through them. They are not much help but now I know who is Prince here, how to avoid his places and that I search for the Society of the Dark River. I chew the

papyrus and allow the others to hear me vomit and spit. The money in the bag I secret about my person. I leave after washing my hands and face.

Next I find myself walking to pawnshop. In a few short moments I am accosted by an employee eager for a

"good people" they say. I know why. I explain in a grave tone, "I don't drink much and I suffer from a very nervous stomach but I'll come."

We visit a liquor store and then pop off to an adult dance club. The scene is not mine but I try to blend. My new friends have decided to take some of my welfare into their concern and talk real business with me. I tip all the dancers and get a lap dance from one. The possibilities here are interesting to contemplate. Though I hunger, a perfect gentleman I remain. I have yet to observe any of my kind here.

At 2 past the high hour we hail a cabbie and go to a bar on Elliston. I socialize but notice nothing offering delectable or even appetizing qualities. I take a walk around and find a coffee shop that also serves beer. I order one and begin casually moving through the place seemingly sipping at it. Pouring a good half of it on the ground outside I move back through and then set the half empty beer on the bar and leave to find my companions. It is not long before they decide to go to an after hours club. There I stay only until 4 and promptly take my leave walking toward the hotel. After only 3 blocks I am roused by a constable in a cruiser. Upon showing my identification and explaining my destination

he offers to give me a "lift". I peer deep into his eyes for a moment and smile as I accept. Sure enough he is looking for a companion, his mind tells all. My meal is truly delectable. He remembers compassion, my nails on his thighs, and a true bliss. In truth my feeding from him, a different thing.

Jenner Ω

Sounds of Desire

By Michael Blank

Your sable hair was what I saw first.
Sitting in the park, eating tuna,
smelling the pretzels from the stand beside me. You spun past,
hair like a midnight breeze whirling through the day.
The whir of your skates and your panting breath raked across my mind.
When you fell, I rushed to help you,
the warm brown of your eyes
made me want to take you to bed then and there.
We tried to learn about each other over coffee,
but it was like trying to learn art by running through a museum.

I asked for your number.
It was your scent on the paper that made me call.
Like a damned drug made of musky cranberries calling
for more of its own. It called.
It called and we met for drinks. I hated scotch then.
You taught me to love it with your memory.

I always told you not to drive so fast,
but you loved speed, thrilled over the sound of your hair
slapping the headrest to the rhythm of the wind.
Spinning your car into the night,
you took a dance with that shadow lover.

After the accident, you wouldn't let me see your eyes anymore.
Maybe the IV had frozen the warmth and you were ashamed to show it.
Seeing the lines and tubes tethering you, I hated myself for wanting you.
But your panting breath and the whirring respirator does that to me. Ω

sale before closing. It is almost play to suggest to his mind my likable qualities and that we have met before. I am fortunate that they let me stay till closing chatting at me as I purchase a good pocketknife and other tools as well as a fabulous leather jacket. They insist I wait outside till after they close in order to go "hopping" with them. They don't know why they like me, I am



Rumors and Quotes

Kindred Rumors

Logger is taking the Harpy out on a date.

Kindred Quotes

Mareun of the Anarchs: "Logger why they hell do ye have chainsaw?"

Logger response: "It's a birthday party. I brought it to cut the cake."

"Sami they're molesting your weasel."

- OCC quote from Joshua

Sabbat Rumors

The city-wide Vaulderie is a blatant attempt by the Archbishop to put us all under his direct control, eliminating our free will.



Aleksandr & Stanford By Carrie Hirsch

While gossip among women is univiersally ridiculed as low and trivial, gossip among men

especially if it is about women

The Camarilla has sent out a call around the country for fighters to help them out. A dispatch will probably roll into town next month, in retaliation for our little display.



Father Dominic & Dr. McCoy By Carrie Hirsch

is called theory, or ideas or fact.
-Andrea Dworkin

That Thing under MTSU is actually a product of Lasombra and Tzimisce experimentation, placed there by Cromwell to test (and punish) the packs.

That Pantheon pack set the forest fire on purpose, to try and take out the Bratovich home.

Yeah, but they also took down the power plant in the first place, to help with the various missions, so who cares?

Sabbat Quotes

"Come hither, oh shiny one."

- Brad admires Matt Skipper's costume

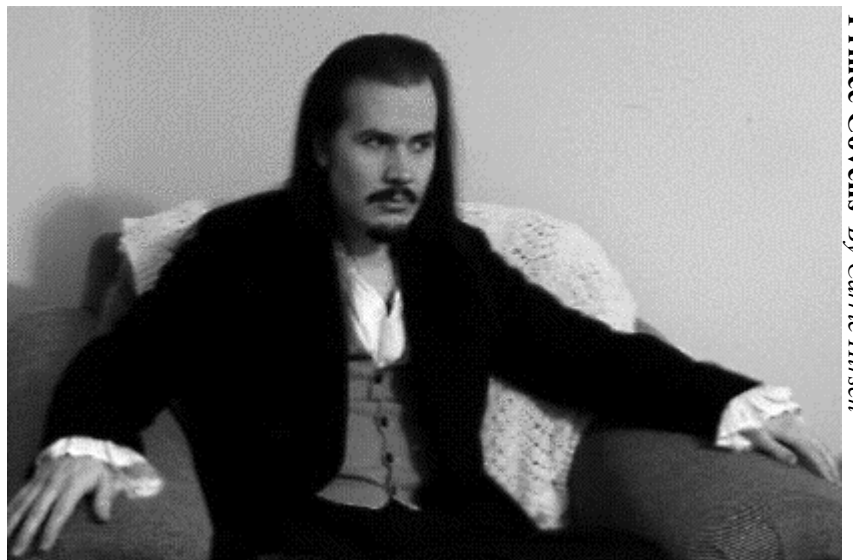
"No way, man. We're talking Crouching Tiger, Hidden Garou here."

- Mara comments on her pack's mission



Avery Taken by Chris Dolan/Edited by Carrie Hirsch

Why does Prince Covens look so on edge? Could it have something to do with this rebellious beauty, Avery?



Prince Covens By Carrie Hirsch

Mage Rumors

Sandor is just coming to the mansion to case the joint, and at the first opportunity is going to rob the place bare.

There are werewolves out around the club. You can hear them howling every now and then.

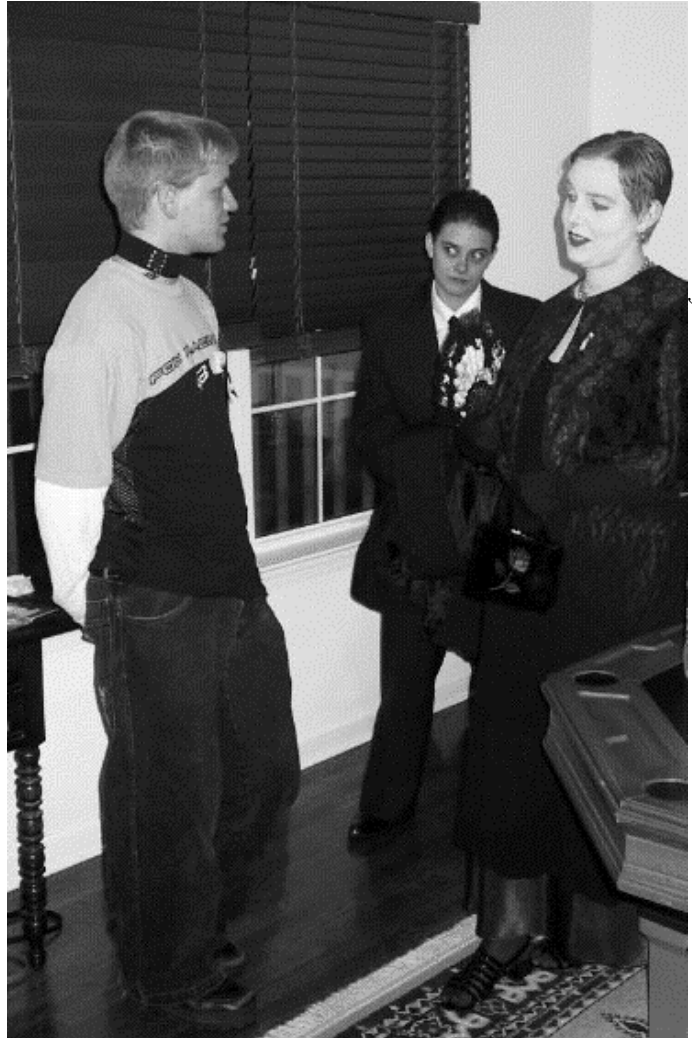
The house is alive.

There's a mage going into Quiet and no one knows who it is. Whoever they are, they're the reason for the hobgoblins and all the weird stuff that happens with the house.

The crazy mage is Melody.

No, the crazy one is Desmond, the one who was sucking Quintessence.

No way, the crazy mage is Christian.



Court Pleasantries
By Carrie Hirsch



Merilee
By Carrie Hirsch

Mage Quotes

"If you meet the Buddha on the road, kill him."

"I don't want to kill anybody. Killing is wrong."

- Bao and Melody have radically different world views

"Oh, god. Jericho's convinced the Doctor to try and build a better vibrator."

"We'd better seek cover."

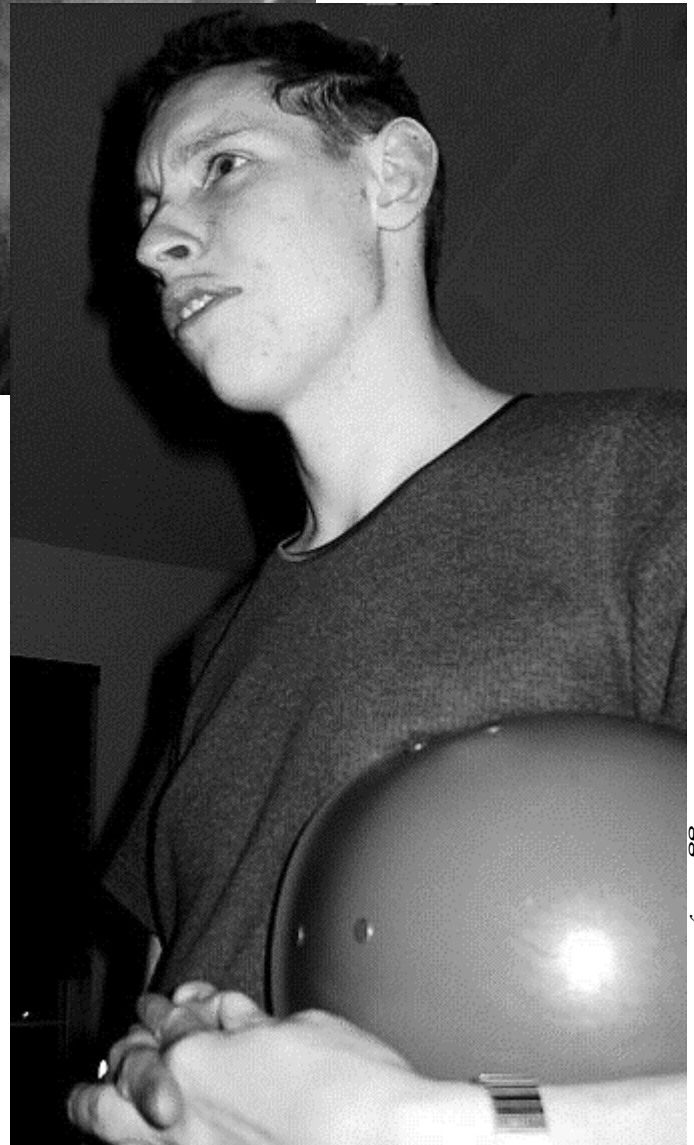
- Emily and Jeremiah prudently withdraw from the action

A little sincerity is a dangerous thing, and a great deal of it is absolutely fatal.
- Oscar Wilde

.
. .
. .
The material printed here was gathered through keeping an ear open during the games, and through direct member input. Some of the rumors are true and some are false. They're things that your character might have heard IC, react accordingly!



Clarice By Carrie Hirsch



Logger By Carrie Hirsch

Could the rumors be
true?
Is there something
blossoming between Clarice
and Logger?
But what about the
Prince
... and what will Vern say?

April 2002 Schedule

| Sun | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|-----|----------------------------|---|-----|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 7:00 pm T.N. Kindred Game | 6 7:00 pm Mage Game |
| 7 | 8 | 9 7:30 pm DBR Meeting | 10 | 11 | 12 6:30 pm WW Card Game Night | 13 3:00 pm Garou Game |
| 14 3:00 pm Domain meeting | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 7:00 pm Mage Game | 20 7:00 pm DBR Kindred Game |
| 21 12:00 MS Walk 2:00 Pool Party | 22 | 23 7:30 pm T.N. Meeting | 24 7:30 pm Chapter/ST Council Meeting | 25 | 26 | 27 7:00 pm Sabbat Game |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | |

Your elected Officers

Dark River Society

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Paula Watt | Domain Coordinator (DC) |
| Mike McMahan | Assistant Domain Coordinator (ADC) |
| Andrew Anderson | Asst. Domain Coordinator (ADC-HR) |
| Ian Harris | Domain Storyteller (DST) |
| Anton Andreev | Assistant Domain Storyteller (ADST) |

Technocratic Nation

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Adam Steinberg | Chapter Coordinator (CC) |
| Amanda Plageman | Assistant Chapter Coordinator (ACC) |
| Kay Adams | Chapter Storyteller (CST) |
| Mike Adams | Assistant Chapter Storyteller (ACST) |

Days of Bitter Rage

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| Chris Simpson | Chapter Coordinator (CC) |
| Tony Gowell | Assistant Chapter Coordinator (ACC) |
| Brad Thompson | Chapter Storyteller (CST) |
| Winn Keathley | Assistant Chapter Storyteller (ACST) |