

The Return of Blacula

A 'Vampire the Masquerade' RPG scenario by Tadeusz Cantwell

for

Gaelcon 2008

Introduction.

The game is set in L.A. The city comprises a loose confederation of vampires (Anarchs) who uphold the Masquerade. But do not follow the Camirilla and who equally oppose the Sabbat. They oppose the politics of Princes and councils which is based on status and age rather than ability.

The Theme.

As always in this set of adventures, the theme for the players is that they get screwed over. Requiring them to find a way out that satisfies Prince Ivan. For Mamuwalde it is his new unlife he faces. A life complicated by the centuries old battle of vampire politics.

The Location.

The scenario takes place in a mansion in the Hollywood hills. Run by the self-named Prince Ivan. He hosts parties in the mansion, which he has declared an Elysium for these occasions. This makes him a Prince of sorts. However any vampire who can secure a place to meet safely can declare they have an Elysium. Since these parties have been run since the 1930's, time has conferred a mythic power to Prince Ivan and the place.

The Host.

Prince Ivan is more than just an anomaly because of his name and the length of time he has survived. Several other things don't make sense. The first being he acts like a film vampire more than one educated by an elder. People presume it is because he is Malkavian, this being his manifestation of madness. Others point to his Butler, a power behind the throne and reputed mage of great power himself.

Film and character.

The film starts with Prince Mamuwalde and his wife Luva in 1780. They have come to Europe to petition for the end of the slave trade. Dracula instead turns him into a vampire and lets his wife die in the crypt. When he awakes in LA in 1972, he kills the two interior decorators who bought the castle contents. Overcome with the need to feed he starts to lose his humanity. Seeing a woman who resembles his wife he tries to regain his lost world with her. After she is shot in the final showdown, he reluctantly turns her into a vampire. However she is staked and presuming she is gone, he walks into the light. Telling his pursuers there is no need to destroy him. He accepted all is lost and there is nothing he can do but end his existence.

When NPCing Blacula it is important to remember the following. 1) Try and speak in a slow deep voice and avoid modern words. 2) He has dignity and a strong self-assurance in his own rights. 3) He was in life a leader of a tribe renowned as hunters. So can resort to violence if his way is blocked. But will not fight blindly and can use deceit if needed. 4) He refers to himself as Mamuwalde, Blacula being the name Dracula gave him.

Prince Ivan's intervention.

Watching the events unfold Prince Ivan was affected by the nobility of Mamuwalde. As Mamuwalde emerges into the light he is taken away and illusion of a rotting corpse placed to fool the humans. From there he was placed into torpor. But the mercurial Prince Ivan has left him in Torpor. Wakes him for a party and then has his mind wiped again.

The PC's are a hippie, child of the crack generation, WW2 vet, ex-1800's slave, ex-film producer, punk rocker.

The Scenario. Scene 1

The PC's begin in a limousine going to the party. None have been to the mansion before, but are privileged to have received an invite. They were waiting at a bar, having arrived early. When they

were told the limousine had arrived. They hadn't expected to leave for another three hours. Let the player's roleplay before they arrive.

Scene 2

The PC's arrive at the mansion. The place is very quiet. The preparation's for the party are still underway. The work is being done in a haphazard way. People are arguing and no one is there to issue clear instructions. The limousine door is opened. The chauffeur looks up expectantly at the large double doors. The PC's can file out. The double doors burst open as a young man charges down the steps. He has a mobile phone to his ear. He holds it out to the PC's and says, 'Prince Ivan wants to talk with you'.

Let a PC decide to take the phone. Prince Ivan speaks with an accent that would put a ham actor to shame. He presumes they are the party organisers that the man in front of them has hired. Prince Ivan explains he will arrive at the party late. He expects it to go well without him. Prince Ivan's reputation precedes him. He is a friend only if things are going his way. Once he has expectations of people he will not let go and they are trapped. There is no excuse for failure.

The Butler can come and reinforce the point if need be. Also there will be over a hundred disappointed vampires in the city who will know their names. This may be an Anarch city, but freedom can be an illusion.

The young man is Errol a servant entrusted with the job. He was supposed to hire professionals to do the job, but decided to do it himself and keep the money as a 'bonus'. The players will have to intimidate that info out of him. There are life wards in place, so the Butler will know if someone is dying/ has died. No human/vampire can be killed/destroyed without the Prince Ivan's permission.

They will have to organise the workers. Some simple clearly made orders will do. Don't bog the player down. The party is very disco in its feel. Blaxploitation was early 1970's with some '60's influence still there. Soul music was extensively used and popularised in this film. So a shopping list will have to be put together and the minions sent off to do stuff.

Scene 3

Next is the waking of Mamuwalde. Errol has forgotten to watch the film for inspiration. If the players watch the movie gives them a brief summery. He takes them down into a studio crypt and leaves them to prepare the star guest of the show. If the PC's call him Blacula, he will be extremely angry, that is the name Dracula gave him.

It will be a surprise to Mamuwalde he is still a vampire. That being awakened in the crypt will bring back bad memories because that's where he heard his wife die. He saw no other vampires in LA the first time. His only other experience with a vampire is of the racist Dracula who embraced him. Tina is dead, why should he need to continue existing. The PC's are going against his wish to not exist. By the time they have convinced him to trust them and meet other vampires the party is starting.

Scene 4

The PC's will be asked by Errol to arrange a grand entrance. He will be introduced to Vampire society. All kinds of race and creed will be here. Some will make references his time in LA, like they were long ago. Others can't seem to get into character and talk about modern things. A Nosferatu will seem very creepy and asking difficult questions. After the pleasantries are over he will see Tina and then a woman dressed as his wife Luva at different places in the room. He will be in shock and not know which way to turn to first. He will be perplexed. The PC's will need to step in and control the situation.

Scene 5

Tina's story. She is the woman whom he took for his wife. She had been staked, put into torpor and presumed dealt with. She was taken away and told Mamuwalde was no more. A friend of a friend managed to get her an invite to the party. She wishes to fulfil the promise she made to live with him forever. She reacts badly if told he will be mind wiped.

Scene 6

The woman who appears to be Luva is a human who has had her face changed by magic and her mind implanted to believe that she is his original wife. The plan is to disrupt Mamuwalde's mind and cause a scene at the party. A Tremere, Ravnos and Lasombra are behind this to show Prince Ivan he is not as invulnerable as he thinks.

Scene 7

Prince Ivan arrives. Calls on the PC's for a report on the party and so he can meet them in person. After he lets them go, there charge is no where to be found.

Mamuwalde is lured away by three plotters. He is informed that Prince Ivan will have his mind wiped and put back into torpor after the party. They show photo's of him at previous parties as proof. He will seek vengeance on Prince Ivan in an open attack on his territory. Once he flies off into a rage, the plotters will promptly leave the party.

Scene 8

Prince Ivan has set up the party to test who will protest against him. This is something that betrays the Anarch way of thinking. Aware of the perception of his power he declares the party a failure and tries to have him taken away. So it is through him that Tina was invited. He also planned to see if anyone had any real designs against him. And so the scheme of the three vampires will be as much of a surprise to him and the crowd.

Let repercussions of that last for as long as possible. The PC's will react to save the situation. Let them sweat it out for awhile. Perhaps letting there schemes be on the verge of failure.

Prince Ivan will call party to order and demand an answer from the PC's. He will give out for ruining the party. Some lone voices will protest at the treatment of them and Mamuwalde, others at the party being disrupted.

Prince Ivan tells the PC's they must argue Mumawalde case at to the party. Does a vampire who threw his life away have the right to another chance?

As usual the Prince is more interested in theatrical drama, then a real meaningful conclusion. To have the vampires of the city engage in open debate, would be a spectacle to relish.

Vampire powers list

Dominate

You can implant a one word command. (Manipulation + Intimidation)

You can mesmerise and implant commands. (manipulation + leadership)

Auspex

You have heightened senses that cover sound, smell, touch, hearing, vision. (narrate the effect)

Celerity

Each point gives you an extra dice turn

Presence

You have the power to make people intensely attracted to you. (Charisma + acting)

You have a dread gaze that combined with showing your teeth etc can drive mortals insane.
(Charisma + intimidation)

You have the power of entrancement that can convince people to follow you and serve your needs
(appearance + empathy)

Protean

Your eyes can gleam red which allows you to see in the dark (No roll needed)

Fortitude

This makes you tougher, giving you one extra dice to soak damage.

Gordon Marshall

The 1960's was a quest for enlightenment among those with the vision to see that the so called elders had limited everyone's viewpoint with fear, war and injustice. By seeking the new way with drugs, living in communes, and altering the structure of society, your viewpoint could never again be clouded with banality. Your embrace into the world of vampires came when you met a strange woman who was as extreme as you wanted to be. But talked with old fashioned words and thoughts. This baffled you until you woke as a new being. Not human, but vampire. With the potential to be a beast or fight to be enlightened. This was your true path. To struggle harder for your humanity harder than any human would have to. Thus be able to show them the way.

So instead of hide you went back to the commune to continue to preach the need for a new society. It was also a handy place to get blood. That you use your powers to hide your lack of ageing is a minor lie for the greater good.

Roleplaying Tips: You are a leader and a hippie showing people the new exciting way to live your life.

Common Knowledge: Prince Ivan's party is at an Elysium. This means vampires and humans are assumed to be safe. Officially people can only be killed with Prince Ivan's permission. His butler is reputed to be a mage who can sense when people die. It is an honour to be invited to the party, even if they can hold surprises. Once Prince Ivan expects you to do something, you have little choice left.

Your disciplines

Dominate 2

You can implant a one word command.

You can mesmerise and implant commands.

Auspex 1

You have heightened senses that cover sound, smell, touch, hearing, vision.

Humanity 7: You have a normal level of humanity compared to most humans. Some things you care about, some you don't, depending on the circumstances. Like most people you are shocked by excessive violence against innocents and would have empathy with them.

Willpower 5: You are certain that yours is the correct course of action. You have worked through obstacles to do what you needed to do and so far nothing has moved you from your path.

Deb Wise

You were a child during the crack epidemic in 80's New York. You turned from being a fashion conscious child into a street junkie by the age of 16. By 18 all vestiges of your Mickey Mouse like youth was gone. Disowned by your parents. Friends dying around you. One night some rich scum decided to slum it in a drug den. They laughed and scoffed at your soiled cloths. From the stupor of drugs anger boiled. You hurled a torrent of abuse at these arrogant bastards. Recalling how good you looked as a child. That the system let drugs destroy the black community, to put them back down.

Amused by your rant they gave you some drugs. But were saddened that they were as much to feed a habit then for the purity of pleasure. They took you away to teach you how to feel pleasure again.

Removed from the bottom of the heap you regained yourself respect and sense of purpose. This did not fully gel with the hedonistic lifestyle of the Toreador. So you moved to L.A to have some distance. You live in a ghetto area, but have the money to live for affluently. You live the ghetto fabulous life, being bright bubbly. Dressed in a mixture of name and no name brands. Finding pleasure partying with friends, like you should have done as a teenager. Without the fixation of finding pleasure.

Roleplaying Tips: You are friendly easygoing, but inside are as steady as a rock.

Common Knowledge: Prince Ivan's party is at an Elysium. This means vampires and humans are assumed to be safe. Officially people can only be killed with Prince Ivan's permission. His butler is reputed to be a mage who can sense when people die. It is an honour to be invited to the party, even if they can hold surprises. Once Prince Ivan expects you to do something, you have little choice left.

Disciplines

Celerity 2

You can do 2 extra move per turn

Presence 3

You have the power to make people intensely attracted to you.

You have a dread gaze that combined with showing your teeth etc can drive mortals insane.

You have the power of entrancement that can convince people to follow you and serve your needs.

Willpower 5: You are certain that yours is the correct course of action. You have worked through obstacles to do what you needed to do and so far nothing has moved you from your path.

Humanity 5: You are distant from the world in terms of cause and effect. You can watch people in pain or cause people to feel pain without feeling guilty.

John Hanson

You came home after serving in the U.S army from D-day to the fall of Berlin. Tough and hardened to the point of fanaticism. You and your men slogged through the war with a strong moral centre. Your strong conservative streak held you in high opinion of your commanders. You were only to happy to serve.

Back home that moral centre led you through a successful life in the 1950's. Working as a bodyguard and aid to strong Republican leaders. Making secret raids against those unpatriotic American communists. Then ran for local town councils to keep government on the right path. Your efforts were noticed and you went into protection again in the early sixties when new ways were threatening the rightful social order. You were contacted by a shadowy group who struck deep into these hippie leftist scum.

In the mid '70's you were inducted into membership of the ultimate in conservative organisations. The Tremere vampires. Strangely you have an interest in blood magic.

Roleplaying Tips: You combine the traits of a military officer and a strongly disciplined father.

Common Knowledge: Prince Ivan's party is at an Elysium. This means vampires and humans are assumed to be safe. Officially people can only be killed with Prince Ivan's permission. His butler is reputed to be a mage who can sense when people die. It is an honour to be invited to the party, even if they can hold surprises. Once Prince Ivan expects you to do something, you have little choice left.

Your Disciplines

Dominate 1

You can implant a one word command.

Auspex 1

You have heightened senses that cover sound, smell, touch, hearing, vision.

Thaumaturgy 3

A taste for blood allows you to know how much blood is in a vampire or mortal.

A touch from you can cause Blood rage, in which you trigger a vampire spending of blood to achieve something. Like increased strength

Blood potency can make your blood more powerful for a short time. Making your blood like a higher generation vampire.

Humanity 5: You are distant from the world in terms of cause and effect. You can watch people in pain or cause people to feel pain without feeling guilty.

Willpower 7: You are strong in your determination to do what you want. It is hard to put you off either by argument or by other means.

Elijah Johnson

You were born in Africa before being captured as a slave and shipped to the U.S. You lived on a typical large plantation. You were valued for your strength, but that made you hard to contain. However escaping and making it relied on your ability to survive the hunt. You escaped by fighting those who chase you. Not content to start a new life you sought ways to fight back. Searching in the occult you found gangrel who were impressed by your focus.

You went back into the south and hunted the hunters. To give those who choose to escape more of a chance. As time went on you developed a habit of fighting almost every night. Laws may change but hunters still stalk the night. The end of slavery in the south did not end the suffering of your people. You became a horror to fight human horror. Moving and striking to make the threat seem greater than it really was.

As time went on the fights became more personal and you began to act for yourself. This has taken you away from the great war. The politics of today are of less concern to you. The political landscape has changed and it is no longer your fight.

Yet you still have the link to the descendant's of your ancestors. But in essence you hunt those stop people who try to escape unlawful bounds.

Roleplaying Tips: You watch and wait to strike. When you strike you strike to kill.

Common Knowledge: Prince Ivan's party is at an Elysium. This means vampires and humans are assumed to be safe. Officially people can only be killed with Prince Ivan's permission. His butler is reputed to be a mage who can sense when people die. It is an honour to be invited to the party, even if they can hold surprises. Once Prince Ivan expects you to do something, you have little choice left.

Your Disciplines

Fortitude 2

You have two extra dice to soak damage

Protean 1

Your eyes can gleam red which allows you to see in the dark

Humanity 7. You have the humanity of the average person on the street. You may turn a blind eye to small things that benefit you. Overall you don't deliberately do harm to others unless an extraordinary events occur.

Willpower 7. You are strong in your determination to do what you want. It is hard to put you off either by argument or by other means.

Night Star

To you the punk rocker icon is the all. You spent your teenage years perfecting the image to the detriment of all else. Your parents yelled, your jock peers attacked on you. It just made you embrace the culture and lifestyle more. By 16 you disappeared into the night, with a very pick wardrobe. Taken in by an old rocker who ran a house for those who don't want to go home.

You drifted from bad to band, drug, drink, sex and back to more bands. Practising in this house until the right people came along. After years of being on the scene your name was known. You were able to hook up with others with experience and dedication. And found cult celebrity status around the California area. After a few years the band collapsed and you were back to step one. Just a little older and not quite a reckless teenager any more. Instead you became the right hand of the old rocker. Slowly he brought you into the Brujah. Where rock, leathers, angst and fighting the elders was brought to a awe inspiring level.

Roleplaying Tips: You live to party as a rocker and project yourself as a punk rocker icon.

Common Knowledge: Prince Ivan's party is at an Elysium. This means vampires and humans are assumed to be safe. Officially people can only be killed with Prince Ivan's permission. His butler is reputed to be a mage who can sense when people die. It is an honour to be invited to the party, even if they can hold surprises. Once Prince Ivan expects you to do something, you have little choice left.

Your Disciplines

Presence 3

You have the power to make people intensely attracted to you.

You have a dread gaze that combined with showing your teeth etc can drive mortals insane.

You have the power of entrancement that can convince people to follow you and serve your needs.

Humanity 7. You have the humanity of the average person on the street. You may turn a blind eye to small things that benefit you. Overall you don't deliberately do harm to others unless an extraordinary events occur.

Willpower 5. You are certain that yours is the correct course of action. You have worked through obstacles to do what you needed to do and so far nothing has moved you from your path.

Chip Abrams

The 1930's were the golden age for the studios. Just below the studio heads were the producers who saw a film through from beginning to end. The writers were lowly scum to churn out words. Directors stroked the vanity of actors. You knew and understood the needs of the studios and the public. Delivering quality content that made the studios money every time.

Behind the scene was the money of the mafia. Brought to justice by the screen. Left free to get rich and stay rich from corruption and crime. You were brought into this hallowed world of these wealthy characters, who were as enamoured by glitter of show biz as the common person.

Dabbling in their world you achieved a wealth and refinement beyond the gregarious Mafia Dons. Retiring to a world of money speculation, high society parties you gained power and wealth. Used to guiding many people to a common goal in the studios was excellent training.

You caught the sent of an even more rarefied society that for many years seemed beyond your grasp. Not one to give up, you climbed higher in society in pursuit of them. Finally there seemed no where to go, but still you looked. Eventually impressed by your search the Venture brought you into the true high society world. Having long since fallen from the public eye. Your disappearance was no shock. Especially in the fickle world of Hollywood.

Roleplaying Tips: You are content with your power and position. Smile and nod in a way that shows you are in control.

Common Knowledge: Prince Ivan's party is at an Elysium. This means vampires and humans are assumed to be safe. Officially people can only be killed with Prince Ivan's permission. His butler is reputed to be a mage who can sense when people die. It is an honour to be invited to the party, even if they can hold surprises. Once Prince Ivan expects you to do something, you have little choice left.

Your Disciplines

Dominate 1

You can implant a one word command.

Fortitude 1

This makes you tougher, giving you one extra dice to soak damage.

Presence 1

You have the power to make people intensely attracted to you.

Humanity 5. You are distant from the world in terms of cause and effect. You can watch people in pain or cause people to feel pain without feeling guilty.

Willpower 2. You are a coward at heart and will not stand up for yourself if you are threatened, but try and hide or grovel before the mighty opponent.

