

# NIGHTLIFE OF THE LIVING DEAD

It's cold out, that damnable cold that treats the thickest wool like tissue paper. My legs, exposed to the chill night air, aren't numb exactly, but they're getting clumsy, unwieldy. I wonder if they're freezing solid. The neon glow from the window of Lucy's seems like it should provide some warmth, but that's the thing about advertisement: it reels you in with that glow, only to leave you stranded in the chill with watered-down beer. I *will* the stolen blood inside me to move, to circulate, and am rewarded with a little comfort in my legs and a growing hunger in my stomach.

I sigh (one of my favorite affectations), which makes me feel slightly better, and am considering going back inside when Harold finally pulls up in his ancient truck. One of the headlights is out, and I take a second to appreciate that as a metaphor for the man's entire worldview. Even though he's half an hour late, he honks his obnoxious fucking horn, and it takes everything I've learned from the Dragons not to lose it and kick out the other light with one of my snow boots.

The door opens as I reach for it, and Springsteen's new single is on the radio. Harold's already picked up Darryl (probably why he's late), and the latter's sitting bitch. He smiles at me, that irritatingly ingratiating smile full of promises — you know, that guy who always smiles like he gets you, like he *knows what it's like, man*. I get in beside him, hauling my backpack into my lap before pulling the door closed.

"Nice place," he says with a smirk. His bright white eyes appraise Lucy's. Harold spins the wheels on the parking lot slush when he slams it into reverse, just before the truck lurches backwards. The truck's a standard transmission, with one of those shifters that rises from the floor. Darryl has to sit with his legs spread, one foot on either side of the axel well, and Harold's calloused hand rests lightly on the shaft that protrudes from between them. I smirk, glad for the small blessing of being the last in.

"Thanks," I answer dryly. He glances at me, and he knows what I'm thanking him for. He *gets it*.



We meet up with Robyn under the El station at Madison and Wabash, just south of that stretch of Wabash called Jeweler's Row. It's late on a Sunday, so all that shit's closed, but the bright white neon remains, illuminating the street, promising diamonds, rings, necklaces, the usual. One of the trains rumbles overhead, sending a cascade of icy water down from the rusty buttresses.

Robyn descends from the station like a goddess, frightened pigeons scurrying before her, an avian honor-guard. Must be something she's exuding, because I feel it, a tight knot in my useless stomach. She's wearing this white jacket with shoulder pads to make the Bears proud, over a top as black as night. The whole thing serves to highlight every angle of her features. She's a born predator, an art deco snow leopard. Darryl takes a step back from her, so I know he feels it, too. Only Harold seems unperturbed. Power of faith and all that shit, I guess.

“Knock it off,” Darryl grunts. Robyn smiles demurely, that false “Who? Me?” innocence, and that riles me up again... the monster inside me, I mean. I take a moment, close my eyes and chastise the unreasoning Beast until it calms. I realize I’m on edge tonight. There’s a tension hanging in the air like snow, barely registering to my senses. My companions are blind to this, of course. They’re blind to a great deal.

“Showing off ain’t getting it done,” Harold mutters in his hick drawl. He follows it up with something he must have heard in church: “One can exult in the monster without exalting it.” I wonder who told him that. Those words seem ill-fitted to his rustic tongue. Robyn catches it, too.

“Oh, Harold,” she purrs. “If you’d stop listening to the blather of old dead men and give an ear to your soul for once, you might find what you’re really looking for.” Harold shrugs.

“He’s a jealous God, and there ain’t no gods before him,” he answers, pushing his aviator frame glasses up his narrow nose before brushing snow slush from his moustache.

“We’re Damned, right?” she answers with a question. “Damned from birth? Why not enjoy it?”

“It’s too cold and too early for argument,” Darryl cuts in, always the mediator. He glances at his watch. “Do you think it would kill him to be on time for once?” he says, expertly transforming Harold and Robyn’s rivalry towards one another into annoyance with the errant member of our little coterie. I watch one of the pigeons take flight for an iron perch slung under the tracks.

“If Kenneth had an appointment with the dawn, he would still manage to be ten minutes late,” Robyn intones, imbuing her words with the heavy weight of ritual or prophecy, like Kenneth’s incessant tardiness should be the focus of a lesson or something. I glance at her, meeting her eyes just as they finish giving my wardrobe a look once over. She smirks slightly in disapproval of my heavy coat and Wednesday Addams dress. “We all have our place in this, right Molly?”

“One man in his time plays many parts,” I answer in Shakespeare without much enthusiasm, then nod towards Kenneth’s approaching limo. “We have our exits. And our entrances.” The car stops beside the three of us, allowing us a moment to commune with our blurred reflections in the polished paint before the doors unlock with a resounding click.



Kenneth’s a bit of an asshole, and he reminds me of that fact as we make the three-block drive to the front entrance of the Art Institute, the Matriarch’s favored Elysium, in his stretch Lincoln. The car is immaculate, the wood accents polished to a shine, the leather seats cushioned precisely enough. He’s somehow even managed to make it *smell* like a brand new vehicle. Or maybe it *is* brand new. Maybe he goes out and buys one of these every month. I don’t *think* he’s that rich, but with those Invictus you never know. Of course, the whole illusion of wealth and power is broken every time he opens his mouth.

“We wouldn’t have to trot out this dog and pony show every month if you kids would grow up and get real jobs. It’s all about money, guys, and money’s about thinking outside the box.” I’m not sure what this means. Kenneth has a tendency to speak in buzzwords and high-priced corporate jargon. He looks at Harold. “It’s about showing up in a real car, not a rusted-out P.O.S.”

“This your *real car*?” Harold almost growls the question. “Good luck hauling a damn *canoe* in this.” I rub the bridge of my nose, surprised for a moment when my fingers bump into my glasses. I don’t need them, not since the change; I only wear them for gatherings. Arthur, my sire, says they make me look smart. Even among the dead, appearances matter.



**“It’s not meaningless ritual,” Darryl interjects before the talk can devolve into a fight about whose car is bigger than whose. “It’s about solidarity. It’s about appearances.”**

**“Solidarity? What the fuck is solidarity, anyway?” Kenneth asks. “We’re dead, D. I’m not running the fucking vampire Salvation Army out of my fucking limo. Or is this more Commie shit?” He smirks, flashing a little fang. “Hey, tell me. Your blood as red as your politics?”**

**Darryl rolls his eyes. “Consider it enlightened self-interest, Ken,” he replies. “That’s a concept you can respect, right?”**

**“How precisely is it in my best interests to give you four a ride to the big party?”**

**“We arrive together and we’re sending a message. We’re saying that we’re a coterie. That you fuck with one of us, you fuck with all of us.” Darryl spreads his hands to indicate all four of our little group and gets this earnest tone in his voice.**

**“No, I get that, man. And I get how you hanging out in my shadow makes you look all cool. I get that. What I’m trying to figure out, and maybe you can help me here, is what’s in it for me.”**

**“Not everyone respects the all-mighty dollar, Kenneth darling,” Robyn answers, “or even that you’re the prim’s kid.” Kenneth’s expression sours, which brings the slightest smile to my own lips. His sire is a bit of a sensitive spot for him. “But even they’ll think twice about harming you to get back at your sire when they remember that you’ve got Harold backing you up, or that you know a blood witch like me. Or like Molly, of course.”**

**I shoot her a strained smile. Blood witch indeed. Robyn thinks that the Dragons stole some defiled version of the magic that her own religious practices. She doesn’t get that there’s nothing magical about what we do. But vampires take even more time to adopt the new than does the mortal herd. When you live for centuries, it can take a little time to adapt.**

**I’ve tuned out Kenneth’s response. Just as well... we’re at Elysium.**



**I’m fond of the Art Institute. Especially tonight, with the light snow dancing about the still, silent lions that stand sentinel at the entrance. One of Shark Bostow’s boys is at the door, checking us for Beasts and reminding us of the rules of Elysium: no weapons, no blood tricks. We pass the inspection easily; none of us have learned to mask our inner predators yet. The rules, though — I shake my head as Kenneth hands over a set of knives, Robyn surrenders a curved ritual blade and Darryl produces a .38 special from his waistband. The hound tags each and hands them over to a breather to be taken to the coat check.**

**“Better safe than sorry’s all I’m saying, toots,” Kenneth whispers in my ear as we move deeper into the museum, past the marble stairs that lead up into the second-floor galleries. I shy away from Ken. He either fed on his way or is wasting blood, because his breath is warm on my ear. Fucking creep.**

**Lillian, Mistress of Elysium, greets us in Gunsaulus Hall, which connects the two halves of the museum and spans the rail tracks that run between Michigan and Columbus. The hall also houses the museum’s collection of European arms and armor. She’s like those weapons, really: beautiful, deadly and incredibly old. She smiles, her fangs slightly extended, and I briefly consider fleeing for my life. Instead, I offer my own stiff smile as Robyn bows to her.**

**“Good evening, priestess,” Robyn says in quiet reverence. Kenneth rolls his eyes. I’m tempted to do so as well, if only due to the massive snake Lillian wears draped over her shoulders like a feather boa. I can’t shake the feeling that it’s looking at me. Its tongue flickers out, and I take a step back.**

**“Greetings, Kindred,” Lillian replies, sparing me a slight smile. “The festivities are being held in the garden tonight. It seemed too fair a night to do anything other. There you will find comfort in both Vitae and society.”**


**“That sounds absolutely lovely,” Robyn answers. “Thank you for your hospitality.” Right, lovely. I’ve heard enough about the Circle’s philosophy of pain to know that she’s set us out in the open garden specifically because of the chill. At least the high walls should shield us from the worst of the wind coming off of Lake Michigan. We had seen that darkened abyss on the drive up, its surface frozen with ice, slowly undulating and pulsing as if alive.**

**I shake the image from my mind as we enter the next hall, the one that circumscribes the garden and offers a view of the Kindred below. Only the light from the upper halls and a few widely spaced lamps illuminate the bizarre menagerie of the ages. The young Kindred, our so-called contemporaries, have brought out their best Nehru jackets, polyester suits, new wave ruffles and leathers. The elders, unmovable stones and logs jutting from the swirling stream of neophytes, display fashions from every decade of this century and the last. Stranger forms move among the crowd, Kindred dressed in costumed garb ranging from the almost non-existent to the utterly absurd. One Kindred, wearing a gold Speedo and a pair of wings, speaks to a woman whose red spandex bodysuit and white plastic accessories grant her the appearance of a gaudy piece of futurist furniture. They don’t hide it, how far they’re willing to go to keep up, to get noticed, all for a brief moment of attention from monsters who were old before our parents were born. As we gaze down on them, I feel the anger and the desire within me fight one another, encouraging me to either flee or kick in the window and fall on the other vampires in Beast-fueled wrath. I take a step back from the glass, drawing the eyes of my coterie.**

**“You okay?” Harold asks, and I spare only an instant to fantasize about tearing those pitiful eyes from their sockets before nodding.**

**“Yeah. Just. You know. Unnerved.” I shrug. Kenneth laughs lightly and turns on his heel, leading the way towards tonight’s convocation of the Damned.**





# NEW WAVE REQUIEM

Sample file

*By Jason Bolte, Christopher Simmons,  
Alex Scokel, and Eddy Webb*



## CREDITS

**Written by:** Jason Bolte, Christopher Simmons, Alex Scokel, Eddy Webb

**Additional Material by:** Justin Achilli, Kelley Barnes and Kevin Talbot

**Playtested by:** Kelly Bragan, Ryan Jones, Jay Pitchford and Jeremiah Rastegar

**Creative Director:** Rich Thomas

**Developer:** Eddy Webb

**Editor:** Anita Hager

**Art Director and Book Design:** Craig S Grant

**Interior Art:** John Christopher, Marco Nelor, Federico Piatti

**Cover Art:** Erik Jones

Sample file



**WHITE WOLF PUBLISHING**  
2075 WEST PARK PLACE BOULEVARD  
SUITE G  
STONE MOUNTAIN, GA 30087

© 2009 CCP hf. All rights reserved. Reproduction without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden, except for the purposes of reviews, and for blank character sheets, which may be reproduced for personal use only. White Wolf and Vampire: The Requiem are registered trademarks of CCP hf. All rights reserved. Vampire the Requiem, Werewolf the Forsaken, Mage the Awakening, Promethean the Created, Changeling the Lost and Hunter the Vigil are trademarks of CCP hf.

All rights reserved. All characters, names, places and text herein are copyrighted by CCP hf.

CCP North America Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of CCP hf.

This book uses the supernatural for settings, characters and themes. All mystical and supernatural elements are fiction and intended for entertainment purposes only. This book contains mature content. Reader discretion is advised.

Check out White Wolf online at <http://www.white-wolf.com>

PRINTED ON DEMAND.

# NEW WAVE REQUIEM™

## CONTENTS

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD .....	03
INTRODUCTION .....	10
DECADE OF EXCESS .....	12
THE NIGHTS OF MODERN KINDRED .....	20
LEAN AND HUNGRY TYPES .....	24
TELLING STORIES OF SIN .....	38
A GOOD MAN BAD .....	44
APPENDIX .....	66

# INTRODUCTION

This is a historical book for **Vampire**, set in the 1980s. At first blush, the idea seems ludicrous. “The 80s in a *historical* book? It wasn’t that long ago! And wasn’t the 80s full of neon spandex, goofy characters and feel-good movies?” But as you dig in, you find a strange and turbulent time. Old trends seem strange and bizarre in the light of the 21st century. It was a time of peppy optimism, but it was also a time of insider trading, hate groups and a race to Armageddon. It was a time when unknown diseases were killing us while computers took our jobs and the Japanese were ready to buy all of our land. It’s a place very much like our world, but a little different. Just like the World of Darkness.

**New Wave Requiem** portrays a very specific view of the 1980s. More specifically, it’s an unabashedly American view of the 80s, spun through a dark lens. It’s not just about Raybans and big hair and Members Only jackets. It’s about a generation that’s been told that greed is good. It’s about over-the-top fashion worn by bands that want to be rebellious but still make it on MTV. It’s about Russia still trying to be The Enemy in the middle of perestroika and Chernobyl. It’s about the fear of AIDS invading our bodies and the technology invading our homes. The zeitgeist is very playful and energetic, but this is still the World of Darkness. The idea isn’t to play in a radically different setting, but to show how even three decades can impact vampires more than they care to admit.

## THEME: SPEED OF HISTORY

At what point does yesterday become yesteryear? When do your memories move from “just the other day” to “history”? Mortals have a tough enough time when the fate of a company or a country can change in just one day. How do eternal creatures like vampires handle a society that’s moving ever faster, turning yesterday into history with more and more frequency?

**Vampire** stories frequently address the conflict between the static nature of the Kindred with the reality of a changing world. **New Wave Requiem** takes this conflict and kicks it into overdrive. Fast-paced neonates use tools that older vampires don’t even know exist, let alone understand. On the other hand, these newcomers are so focused on the now that they don’t even glance back to see what’s coming up behind them. In many respects, it’s the conflict between young and old vampires writ large, on a chaotic stage where no one can possibly anticipate what’s going to happen next.

## MOOD: SIMILAR BUT DIFFERENT

The 1980s are close enough to the modern day to make the setting feel similar, but as you look at it further there are

enough differences to make it feel alien and foreign. There’s a similar mood in vampire society, that feeling that it’s *close* to what vampires have understood for ages, but it’s also just a little different than they understand it to be. **New Wave Requiem** doesn’t take vampires into a wildly dissimilar locale like ancient Rome or the Dark Ages, but to a place just different enough that the details stand out more. It’s just alien enough that you feel a little off-kilter all the time, trying to remember how things got done without cell phones and the Internet. It’s the details of the setting that really sell the story, and by placing a different emphasis on various parts of the **Vampire: The Requiem** setting, a new world emerges, one where the bright neon glow makes the shadows appear all the darker.

## How to Use This Book

**Chapter One: Decade of Excess** is a quick and stylistic breakdown of the culture of the 1980s in the United States. It’s light on historical accuracy and heavy on aspects useful and dramatic for a **Vampire** chronicle — just enough to give those who never experienced the 80s a sense of how things were, and to provide a refresher for readers who only hazily remember how things were twenty to thirty years ago.

**Chapter Two: The Nights of Modern Kindred** changes gears and breaks down the culture of the time from a Kindred perspective. What’s it like to be a vampire at this time, or a neonate recently Embraced into the Danse Macabre of the 80s? This chapter also gives hints and suggestions on some of the problems that 80s Kindred specifically have to deal with during this decade, from internal schisms to an increasingly fragile Masquerade.

**Chapter Three: Lean and Hungry Types** goes even further, exploring how each of the clans and covenants looks at this time in history, and how the clans have adapted. Individual characters may not conform to these stereotypes, but it gives broad strokes as to how each faction is dealing with such a rapidly-changing world. It also shows some of the conflicts unique to each group, the tools that they have developed to deal with them, and how some of the bloodlines and covenant factions are fairing during this time.

**Chapter Four: Telling Stories of Sin** is a chapter of Storyteller advice for **New Wave Requiem**. It covers techniques and obstacles to make your chronicle feel uniquely 80s, some optional rules to drive home various themes and moods, and a slew of story seeds to give you ideas on how to put together your own chronicle. It also points out potential pitfalls that can result from a **New Wave Requiem** chronicle, and how to work around them.



**Chapter Five: A Good Man Bad** is a story set in 1983 Chicago to help you kick off your chronicle, or just as a one-shot story between sessions of your current chronicle. It's set in our Storytelling Adventure System format, which not only gives you advice for setting up and running the story, but also easy ability to move scenes around as needed. It's designed to work with **World of Darkness: Chicago**, but that book isn't required to use this story.

The **appendix** provides a complete five-character coterie for the 80s, ready for players to use at the gaming table, or to utilize as inspiration for their own creations. There are also sidebars provided to make the starting characters a little more powerful and well-rounded, if you want to start the chronicle off at a later point in their collective Requiems.

## INSPIRATIONS

### Movies

- *American Psycho*
- *Salem's Lot*
- *The Breakfast Club*
- *Wall Street*
- *Near Dark*
- *Scarface*
- *The Lost Boys*

### Musical Bands

We could list hundreds of these and still not scratch the surface of 80s music, so here are just a few random references to get your brain spinning. We've also provided a "mix tape" of inspirational music in the sidebar.

- 7 Seconds
- Adam Ant
- Beastie Boys
- Bon Jovi
- Culture Club
- Depeche Mode
- Eazy-E
- Foreigner
- Guns 'N Roses
- Megadeth
- Ministry
- NWA
- Pet Shop Boys
- Queensryche
- Sisters of Mercy
- The Police
- AC/DC
- Anthrax
- Black Flag
- Circle Jerks
- Dead Kennedys
- Dio
- Falco
- George Michael
- Madonna
- Michael Jackson
- Misfits
- Oingo Boingo
- Public Enemy
- Run-D.M.C.
- Talking Heads
- XTC



### Television

- *Dallas*
- *Miami Vice*
- *Hill Street Blues*

### Video Games

- *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*





Sample file

PIATTI



# Decade of Excess

*These days they call it the “decade of excess,” but at the time it was just how things were done. We were vampires for fuck’s sake, and whatever we wanted, we took. It was the land of the greedy and the home of the strongest, and every second you had to be the biggest bastard, because there was always another bastard waiting to take your spot.*

– Lord Kenneth Bryce, Invictus

For most of you this is a familiar time. Video has killed the radio star. Wall Street boils over with the feeding frenzies of stock market sharks, and neon gives the nights a new and lurid glow. This is the “me” decade, a celebration of selfishness and greed. It is the heyday of over-the-top hair metal and the goth subculture.

And it is a confusing time for the Kindred, who are so used to stasis. The 80s were a decade of unprecedented and radical change. Epochs seem to flash by at breakneck speed, and watershed moments are so common as to seem mundane. Even ageless creatures, who have seen history repeat itself time and again, find themselves defeated by the paradigm shifts that threaten to overwhelm the entire world and leave the Kindred utterly adrift.

## THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE


The United States of America is a lumbering, decadent juggernaut, and its citizens know it. Half of the populace rebels against the excesses of the last decade, while the other half tries to find ways to reach greater extremes. The country is under the stewardship of Ronald Reagan for most of the decade, as he presides over the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the first war on a concept, the “war on drugs.” It is a transitional time for the American people, as well as the Kindred. The American Dream lays battered and savaged on the altar of Vietnam and it isn’t about simply making it, anymore. One percent of the population holds ninety-nine percent of the wealth and power in the country, and that means that to make it, you have to *take* it. In other words, American society is catching up to (or regressing to) the level of Kindred society.

The United States is a huge country. It is difficult for residents to truly grasp the sheer scale of the nation. For the Kindred, it is even moreso. In many ways, the Kindred society of the larger cities resembles the walled keeps of medieval society, serving as bastions against the wilderness and the terrible things that lurk in the dark. Even as humanity gathered by the campfires in its youth, vampiric society gathers around the urban cores. Travel between the cities is even more fraught with peril in the 80s than in modern times. Miles of farmland and forest separate the cities with long and winding highways. Large swaths of land still stand uninhabited, or



### *That's Not How I Remember It!*

This book is not about the 1980s. It's about the *feel* of the 80s. More specifically, it's about the feel of the United States during the 80s. This is a cinematic treatment of the time period, not a textbook. Some things will be omitted while others will be warped by poetic license. This isn't intended to belittle any particular aspect of the decade, but the World of Darkness is not our world, for all its resemblance. If the choice must be made between realism and an awesome story element, err on the side of awesome.



worse, are populated by creatures disinclined to be friendly to a stranded or lost vampire. The wild is being subsumed and covered under a layer of concrete, but such sprawling annexation has only begun. The vast stretches between the cities are still feral and terrifying places for the Kindred. Small towns where everyone knows everyone else are common outside the large metropolises, and the xenophobia is tangible. Strange rules and superstitions govern these small town mentalities, despite the more rational mindset of the urban centers.

**CHICAGO**  
This is the worst of it. The south side of Chicago, like Detroit and Miami, is a battleground. Many people consider low-income neighborhoods like the infamous Cabrini-Green Housing Projects to be beyond salvation. The police are afraid to go there without SWAT backup, and criminals rule their territory by fear and oppression. In Cabrini-Green, hope is flickering out and the curtain that divides Kindred and kine is tattered. A coterie of ruthless, sadistic vampires hunt for sport in the graffiti-lined, dilapidated buildings, tearing doors off their hinges and leaving their victims scattered through the halls. And still, the tenants see nothing. They know nothing. Averting their eyes, they don't even have the energy to pray that they won't be next.

Only miles away, downtown Chicago is becoming a hotspot as a location for filming and tourism. Ironically, it's also quite safe, as long as you stay within the Loop. As the 80s begins, Chicago becomes the first city to elect an African-American to the office of mayor, and a long process of taking back the south side is started... though real progress doesn't become apparent until the next decade.

### **DETROIT**

In Detroit, the steelworkers mourn the loss of their jobs when U.S. automakers abdicate their thrones to foreign imports. As the years pass, the metropolis itself becomes a ruin rivaling post-war European cities, as scores of citizens

move into the suburbs leaving thousands of buildings crumbling and unoccupied. Riots and violence haunt the city, which competes with Miami for the title of "murder capital of the United States" for much of the decade. These are the killing streets, home to the rawest of the raw. The reborn American punk scene resurges in clubs like the Hungry Brain, transient venues that pop up for a few months and disappear, leaving a disproportionately influential legacy. Vampires haunt the abandoned buildings, making their deals in dilapidated rooms torn apart by scavengers who make extra money by ripping out bricks and selling them to construction companies. The Nosferatu are ascendant in the vagrant city, while the Ventrue scatter to the winds, heading for more densely populated climes like Chicago. The power structure of Detroit's vampiric court is fractured by the mass exodus, leaving large holes for Kindred with an eye towards the long term to step into. The Prince likens his title to being the lord of Dresden after the bombs, and yet he remains, clinging.

### **LOS ANGELES**

The glamour of Hollywood is still strong, but this is the decade of the rock star. Musicians make more and more elaborate music videos, and their names are easily as recognizable as the names of the movie stars. Outside of Beverly Hills, West Hollywood is hit hard by the AIDS epidemic, and East L.A. is an endless turf war between the various street gangs. Grauman's Chinese Theater doesn't seem like a big draw for the Kindred, but the sheer power focused in Los Angeles is a siren call that few Invictus can resist. To mortals, the power lies in the megawatt smiles of the superstars on the silver screen, but the Kindred focus on the producers and dealmakers, the real players of the game.

Many Kindred see themselves reflected in the debauched lives of the movie stars and musicians. The downward spiral from stardom to has-been to addict reminds them of the futile struggle they endure nightly. The Prince of the City of Angels has a strict rule against feeding from or embracing celebrities. Behind the scenes, though, the vampires of Los Angeles play a dangerous game. They hunt precisely the people who could expose their secret to the world. So far, their exploits have only become fodder for the mountain of corny vampire films produced throughout the decade.

### **MIAMI**

The "Magic City" is possibly the second most powerful metropolis in the stew of American culture, behind New York. Miami in the 80s evokes images of cigar boats and sports coats over pastel shirts. But it is also one of the central hot spots in the War on Drugs, as a major entry point for Colombian smugglers and their cocaine. It is the location of the Mariel Boatlift, where a vast number of Cuban undesirables were dumped on American shores after Fidel Castro emptied the prisons and asylums of Cuba, loaded the inmates into boats and sent them to America. Police liken the influx to an invading army raping, pillaging and burning its way through the city. The drug wars are reality to the residents of Miami, where Colombians are known to modify vans into



“war wagons” — with pop-out gun ports and reinforced steel sides — for use in their attacks on Cuban drug dealers. Police corruption is at an all-time high, as background checks and requirements are waived simply to fill uniforms. For a large part of the decade it is inadvisable to go anywhere in Miami-Dade without a firearm. The contrast of Miami’s sun and fun tourist-trap reputation with the skyrocketing violence makes the city a perfect place for the Kindred to simply let loose. So many people are murdered in the city that the coroner’s office has to borrow refrigerated trucks from a local fast-food chain to store the overflowing bodies. A vampire’s victims are likely to simply get lost in the shuffle, and many Kindred are only too willing to take advantage of the city’s distraction.

## NEW ORLEANS

The Crescent City remains stable in the 23rd decade of Augusto Vidal’s rule. The 70s and the 80s are a time of distinct and heavy oppression in the city, as Vidal continues his feud with the Circle of the Crone. The city itself remains in the strange limbo between faith and decadence that has always defined its existence. Catholicism vies with Vodoun and other alternative religions for the hearts and souls of the city’s inhabitants, while endless parades sway down the streets of the French quarter, celebrating everything from Easter to Fat Tuesday.

In 1984, New Orleans hosts the Louisiana World Exposition, the second World’s Fair in the city’s history. The fair itself is a flop, garnering the distinction of being the only World’s Fair in history to declare bankruptcy during its run. Some pundits blame the low attendance on the Summer Olympics, hosted in Los Angeles at the same time, but others refer to the destruction of a large chunk of the city’s business district. They say the planners unearthed something in the demolition that even willfully ignorant mortals could feel, something that told them to stay away. Within the Kindred community, Vidal banned hunting at the fairgrounds, but that didn’t stop a few Mekhet from disappearing through the Expo’s gates, never to return.

## NEW YORK

During the 80s, as ever, New York is the vital beating heart of the country... but the blood that runs through it is cold and predatory. This is the age of Wall Street. Vicious young men in pinstripe suits batter each other on the trading floors every day, caught in a cycle of buy or sell and shifting alliances that even a harpy would have difficulty keeping track of. The Invictus watch the carnage, rewarding the survivors with initiation into an even more elite group of bloodsuckers. New York City is mecca to the Invictus, a golden city of opportunity for the brightest and best. In reality, it is a vicious gauntlet, ready to tear the weak apart and leave them mewling on the floor, begging to be shipped home to whatever small-town court they came from. But nothing can stop the Invictus who has convinced himself that Manhattan is the place for him.

New York is no stranger to drug wars and mob killings, and vampires feel right at home in the city that never sleeps. The

nightclub scene is peopled with oddities who make the most eccentric Kindred look nearly mundane. The Limelight is the place to be seen among the nascent club kids movement, though with all the press coverage and flashing cameras it is not without risk. The club kid politics are an amusing sideline for many Kindred, a breath of fresh air from the life-and-death repartee of the Manhattan salons.

## POLITICS AND CURRENT EVENTS

Across the country, it is clear that traditional values are slipping. Something must be done. The yuppies look at the shambles of their country, the legacy bequeathed on them by their hippie parents, and they rebel. Conservative politics and a religious revival rule the day. Divorce is on the rise while promiscuity and drug use are tearing America down around its citizens’ ears. The country’s spiritual leaders are tanned and perfectly coifed men in tailored suits admonishing against sin while they fill their coffers. Reagan’s policies make existence both easier and more difficult for the Kindred. His laissez-faire economic policies make many vampires extremely comfortable, while his war on drugs destroys others’ livelihoods.

## THE COLD WAR

In a perfect example of how Americans in the 80s deal with their problems, the president has built up satellite weapons (part of the Star Wars system) to protect against the enemies of democracy. What was a slow-burning propaganda war is suddenly waiting for a flashpoint that could come at any time. An underlying current of paranoia and fear rests at the heart of the 80s. Even the Kindred exist in the tense shadow of nuclear threat. There is no true immortality, and global thermonuclear war would almost certainly be the extinction of both Kindred and kine.

But the Kindred are nothing if not contentious, and even they take sides in the conflict between mortal ideologies. Communist Kindred face off against champions of democracy in Elysia as well as other, less diplomatic encounters.

## THE BLOOD SCARE

For the first time in all but the oldest of active Kindred’s memories, vampires have been confronted by a worldwide plague that is borne in the central facet of their existence. HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) or GRID (the Gay-related Immune Deficiency) — depending on the part of the decade — has the potential to change everything for vampire society, and is a hot-button topic in courts all over the world. What does a blood-drinker do when blood suddenly becomes a toxic substance? AIDS is largely ignored by the administration for the first half of the decade, and is viewed as a problem of homosexual society. Research is stifled by lack of funding, and little is understood about this virulent new disease. Rumors spread like wildfire through the Kindred community. Some Sanctified glory in this new plague and use it to proselytize. A sure sign, they say, of God’s wrath, a plague directly out of Revelations, sent to destroy humanity