

CRUSNIK

THE SHADOW HUNT

[Note: This is write-up as it was given to me in an email from the creator of this game. (- MrGone)]

The idea I got really came from watching Trinity Blood, in which I was impressed with (and subsequently stole) the idea of the Crusnik, a creature described as a kind of vampire that preys upon vampires. Of course I was thinking something *other* than a Vampire with the Flaw, Methusillah's Thirst. Where it all started is that one of two Mages that are brothers, both belonging to the same Fellowship, the Order of Hermes, was transformed due to events in game. He eventually became the equivalent of the exact opposite of a node in a way, a Quintessence Vampire as it were. His condition was worsening, and he would often find himself draining objects that held any Quintessence in them. In cases where these were vessels in which someone's soul was stored or he accidentally drained another Mage, he would get something similar to a Diablerie mark. Each time that he used more Quintessence in a scene than he had of these consumed souls, he would overload and roll his Quintessence. Ones didn't take out, but the **ONLY** Quint he kept was what he rolled in successes. This of course would make him hungry and the vicious cycle would continue.

Over the course of several games, he wound up finding the tomb of a Crusnik that woke and told him that he had once been like this. It is worth note that I let it be known that while the circumstance of his transformation was different, that others like him have existed before when they failed to become Liches. The only escape was death, but the Crusnik offered him up his own soul saying it would make him like he is now, just as one had done for him before. He warned that he would still thirst, but that he would no longer be a walking danger to everyone he knew and eventually risk devouring himself when there is no longer any other Quintessence to be had. He accepted, purposely drained the Crusnik, and became one himself. I have since gone into vivid detail about the Crusnik. What I have come up with is as follows:

Crusnik come in three varieties. These are the Sanguinous, Theourgic, and Familiar Crusnik. First, it is worth noting that while the Crusnik (which are rare) have different thoughts as to how they actually came to be, that Abel is supposed to be responsible for them. Crusnik do **NOT** Embrace. Only Abel, when he was brought back across the Shroud could do this, however he also created a potion called "The Blood of Wrath," and this rare formula can turn someone into a Crusnik, at which point they are automatically a Sanguinous Crusnik. Crusnik differ from Kindred in that they they are immune (usually) to sunlight, and while having a foot in the grave, they also have more of a foot in life. Where the older mummies were half-way between life and undeath, it would be easiest to say that the Crusnik are closer than that to undeath, but they have an unusual spark of life in them, even allowing for children to be born. More about Crusnik mechanics afterward, but first, the three lines of Crusnik are:

SANGUINOUS: These are the Crusnik either born of a mortal fed the Blood of Wrath, or they are the Vampire-born and come from Kindred who feed upon the elixir from the blood of the First Crusnik (the Blood of Wrath). The catch on the later (Kindred) being fed the potion is explained in the weakness of the Crusnik (below), but indeed this could be as bad a problem for a mortal if they're particularly monstrous.

Strength: Immune to sunlight, except when employing the greater power of the Crusnik (Crusnik-specific Disciplines). Under those circumstances, the Crusnik will take Bashing damage from sunlight. Unlike normal Bashing Damage however, while it is halved for them, it can only be soaked if they have the Vampiric Discipline of Fortitude.

Weakness: If a Sanguinous Crusnik's Humanity drops below 7, its immunity to sunlight weakens. Sunlight does Lethal Damage. This supersedes the rules for sunlight damage explained above and is in affect at all times. Below Humanity 5, all Sunlight immunity is lost. At a Humanity of 2, the Beast stirs and the Crusnik's own hunger consumes it. Death is automatic. No Sanguinous Crusnik may follow any Path other than Humanity.

THEOURGIC: Magic-birthered, they come from rare Mages who either consume the Blood of Wrath and survive (roll Arete [or if in Dark Ages, roll Foundation] diff 6 & botch) or who manage the equivalent of a "diablerie" upon the Crusnik. Magic that specifically drains both the Quintessence and the very spirit of the Crusnik will cause this. (In the game I'm running it was possible for that twisted mage to do this via "feeding" due to his unique nature and it counted as the same thing.)

Strength: Theourgic Crusnik soak damage as vampires do. They heal damage with Quintessence drawn from the vitae that they drink.

Weakness: New Theourgic Crusnik are incapable of using Crusnik or Vampiric Disciplines, but they may mimic them with their own (superior) powers. On the down side, as they age, they lose their magic. Only after becoming powerless can they learn Disciplines and are then restricted to Blood magic, Fortitude, Potence, and one and **ONLY** one Crusnik Discipline. Their Affective Generation (see more on mechanics below) is always that of the most potent vitae that they have in their system. Theourgic Crusnik can become Sanguine Crusnik if Embraced by a vampire, if they make a successful roll on their Willpower vs a resisted roll of their Humanity (both at a Difficulty of 6).

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The transformation in this case automatically strips away from the Crusnik as many points of Humanity as the number of successes on the Willpower roll after those cancelled by the Humanity roll. (In other words if the Willpower roll had 5 successes and the Humanity roll had 3 successes, then the Crusnik would become Sanguinous and instantly lose 2 points of Humanity, the difference between the 5 and the 3). Should the roll between Humanity and Willpower result in a tie, then the player decides if his character simply dies or if the transformation takes place. In this situation, the character automatically loses 3 points of Humanity. Needless to say this makes for a very bad situation for a Sanguinous Crusnik transformed from one of these.

FAMILIAR: The fated-born are the rare surviving children of a Crusnik and a mortal, or if one is to believe unsubstantiated stories, of two Crusnik.

Strength: Familiar Crusnik heal damage with blood points as vampires do. They start play with 3 dots in Crusnik Disciplines and one dot in either Potence or Fortitude. They also soak damage as if they were Kindred. Familiar Crusnik age at half of the speed of a normal person until they reach adulthood and then they cease to age any farther. At this point, they affectively have the Mage Merit: Unaging.

Weakness: Familiar Crusnik gain the Clan Weakness of whatever vampire from whom they drink. Should they feed upon multiple Prey, then they gain the characteristic Flaws of the most potent Vitae in their system at the time. Where such weaknesses involve sunlight, the Crusnik is affected by sunlight, however the damage is considered to be Lethal and not Aggravated. If Embraced by a vampire, a Familiar Crusnik has the exact same chance of becoming a Sanguinous Crusnik as any of the Theourgic Crusnik with the same rules applying.

THE DISCIPLINES OF THE CRUSNIK

Crusniks are capable of learning any of the Disciplines of the Kindred, but with the sole exceptions of Auspex, Celerity, Dominate, Fortitude, and Potence, this can only be done through actual lessons, which means convincing one of the Prey to teach them. In all cases, the difficulty of any Kindred Discipline is a +1, and the Experience points necessary to buy the Disciplines of the Prey is a cost of 15 for a dot in a new Discipline and a Current Rating x 9 to increase said Discipline. Crusnik can never learn the Disciplines of Prey at levels above five. Crusniks have their own Disciplines which are easier for them to use. Crusnik Disciplines are learned at a cost of 7 for a new Discipline, and a Current Rating x 6 to increase said Disciplines. The Crusnik's own Disciplines help them to function as predators of vampires. They are as follows:

(Actual level powers on these are still under construction.)

Ambrosica: The ability to detect the blood of Cainites and recognize ghouls, revenants, dhampir, and Kindred for what they are. At higher levels this even allows for the detection of lineage and aproximate power level. ☐

Clarity: The Crusnik's power to enhance his hand-eye coordination and reaction time when preying upon Kindred. recieve bonse in a manner similar to how Potence affects Strength rolls. This Discipline only works when in the presence of the Prey. At higher levels this includes being in the presence of ghouls, revenants, and dhampir. ☐

Quell: The Crusnik's power to redirect the Prey's Beast, instill fear in Kindred, mask his own nature from the Prey, or even at higher levels to gain Willpower through the Beast of his foes.

Vitalis: The power to grow weapons and armour from the Crusnik's own blood. Higher applications allow for the growths to feed off of the Prey, and even to a limited extent, to Fly.

Other mechanics in the game include such things as Affective Generation. A Crusnik who has not fed can use his own blood to fuel his powers, but the cost to do so is double the normal cost, or they can instead sacrifice a Lethal level of damage in place of a Blood Point. Generally speaking, Crusniks have a Blood Pool of 10 just as any standard mortal and most of the younger Kindred. Affective Generation comes into play when the Crusnik feeds. For the duration of time in which the blood of his Prey is in his system (or for 3 days time if it's still there), the Crusnik's ability to store blood and the limits on how much blood he can use in a single turn is depicted by the Generation of the Cainite consumed. Should there be multiple blood types, the most potent is always counted as the Affective Generation. As that blood dwindles away, the next most potent blood is counted, and so on and so forth.