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Introduction: How to Use The Book of Nod

4

Preface

5-11



A Brief Word on The Chronicle of Caine

12-18

The Chronicle of Caine

19-61



A Brief Word on The Chronicle of Shadows

62-64

The Chronicle of Shadows

65-93



A Brief Word on The Chronicle of Secrets

94-96

The Chronicle of Secrets

97-115



Appendix: The Known History of the First City

116-123

Afterword

124-133

Lexicon

134

Introduction:

How to Use The Book of Nod

The Book of Nod is not designed to be the definitive book on the nature of vampires and their founder, Caine. There are no game mechanics within. The reason behind this is that The Book of Nod is meant to be 100 percent setting material. Ideally, Storytellers will use The Book of Nod as a prop in either their Masquerade Mind's Eye Theatre game or their Vampire: The Masquerade chronicles.

They may also use it to seed their games with an authentic culture: the culture of the Antediluvians which filters down from Caine himself. Want to make an Elder seem ancient and ultra-conservative? Have him quote from The Chronicle of Shadows. Want to give players the sense that they are close to the Antediluvians? Have them find a tablet with a fragment of the Chronicle of Caine on it. Want to scare them with threats of Gehenna? Have a Malkavian quote The Chronicle of Secrets to them.

Sh

Sample file

p r e f a c e

I cannot tell you the naked fear I feel, putting down these words for once and for all. Perhaps I will regret them. Perhaps they will never see print. Yet, it is my nature to report this. It is, as they say, in the blood.

My sire, and his sire before him, followed this great and glorious work. Indeed, our very nature has been shaped by this quest; we are unable to stop searching for knowledge. We are of the Mnemosyne, the Memory-Seekers. Specifically, we have been commanded to search for the Book, the tome of all Kindred lore, which is a collection of writings by Caine, his childer and his grandchilder. It is this Book, supposedly first written in the land of Nod, east of Eden, that captures our daytime nightmares and makes every night a painful journey from ignorance towards truth.

Still, I savor every moment of my unlife. I savor the feeling of the crinkly old skins through silk gloves, turning them page by page. My hands shake with pleasure while holding soft, cool lights and reading ink that was newly dried when Charlemagne was young. I savor the gentle, quiet terror of reading cuneiform tablets that threaten to crumble at my very presence. More than that, perhaps more than immortality itself, is the quest that burns within me. It is the search. I have traveled all over this world, perhaps even more than any other of my bloodline.

Where my eternal quest takes me, I shall know no fear! Though small of frame and frail of body, my

heart is strong and my blood stronger. I am not afraid to go to those shadowy places where the far-flung fragments of our Father's teachings lie resting!

I have gotten lost in the raw brutality of New York, sipped tea with the Governor of Kingston, made life-long enemies in Johannesburg, hired the best diggers in all of Cairo, fought to get through to Casablanca, learned about ancient steel and ancient monuments in Toledo, dug in the white cliffs of Dover, barely avoided a deadly brawl in Dublin, sneaked past watchful eyes in Brest, and liberated ancient tomes from a monastery in Cologne. I have saved fourteen sacred scrolls from the torch in Berlin, sipped the best coffee and talked to the greatest Austrian scholars in Vienna, learned ancient Sumerian from a Methuselah in the hidden tunnels under the University of Prague, and braved the coldest winters Oslo had to offer.

And yet, I did not do this by my wits alone.

Barely a night goes by that I do not thank our Founder for his foresight in providing me with the secret ways of hiding, the way to see beyond sight, and the voice of command that seems to come so easily to our line, and I have long blessed my warrior friend Karsh who taught me the secret of seeing in the dark and sleeping in the earth.

And yet, I wonder what else our Founder provided us with. My sire and his sire seem to have fallen under a horrible curse. A madness, dark and quiet at

first but soon growing to a terrible loss of coherent thought and communication, has seemed to strike them. Can I be far behind? My Tremere friend has written me, saying that the burning need driving my bloodline might be the cause of the madness. It must be true, for I cannot fight the burning desire for more knowledge. It is as difficult to resist as the need for sleep or the need for blood.

It is perhaps this madness, that which I fear the most, which has compelled me to go to press with this translation in haste. Know that I do not intend to break Raphael's fragile Masquerade by putting these words in print. It is my intent that a scant ten score of these books be printed, and that none of the copies of this book be given into the hands of the sons and daughters of Seth (as our Father commands us in The Chronicle of Shadows).

I must publish this now, however. It is the most complete collection of the Chronicles of The Book of Nod that has ever been gathered. No other translation, not even Critias' Codex of Caine, has been as complete.

And yet it shames me to say that this is not the complete text. Far from it. I have seen whole fragments go up in smoke as flames consumed ancient buildings. I have touched a complete Book in the tomb of an Antediluvian, and watched it crumble to dust.

I know that in the catacombs under the fabled Lost City of Gold, hidden deep in the Amazon jungle, there are thirteen stone fragments said to contain specific

words to each of the 13 tribes of Kindred, but I only glimpsed them once before I was forced to flee. And so, I can only boast to having part of the puzzle: the largest part to ever be assembled, true, but still only a part of the whole.

I have chosen English as it is my native tongue. It is, in my opinion, the one language which most ably dances between the ancient concepts of Sumer, the noble language of Ancient Rome and the stentorian incantations of Medieval Germany. I must beg forgiveness for its glib simplification in some cases. However, I will forever defend my choice. The King's English will serve well, especially since so many of the original texts are forever lost to me.

It is perhaps particularly perverse that I follow the threads of memory to each fragment of this Book, and yet I know that there are those out there who harry me at every step. I know that Amelek has himself had a hand in thwarting me once, and other Methuselahs as well. It is difficult to find, for example, lists of the names of the Antediluvians and the Methuselahs, for they know that in names there are power, and they, out of fear that some mage would learn to control them with it, have blotted their names out of the histories, where ever they have been recovered.

I have luckily managed to discover a few of them, but I suspect these to be falsified names that were created by the Antediluvians to throw me off the trail, so I offer them here. This may be the only way in which we may identify certain Antediluvians. Furthermore, I have

fallen into the habit (regrettably) of referring to the founder of a clan with a nominative of the clan's name. For example, "Malkav" equals "Malkavian." This is, admittedly, sloppy scholarship but I have been left with no choice. Once I learned the true name of Brujah's Antediluvian and discovered my own name carved in my forearm the next evening, I promptly swore to never again seek the names of those founders.

I am quite sure that, even as I write these words, there are agents of the Jyhad who are following me. I will not join the common room downstairs tonight, for last night I indulged in some wine-sotted blood and saw a woman with silver-grey eyes looking at me. She was wearing Ventrue's scepter-sigil on her cloak, I know it was her, watching for me, searching for me, sent by Ventrue to harry me. No matter. I will write the truth and the rest of you be damned!

I have attempted to compile these textual fragments into some kind of coherent story, at least within the contexts of the various Chronicles. Where you see an ellipsis, know that there are more words on that particular scrap, but that it has somehow been lost, erased or hidden from me.

I wait now only for a package from London to finish this missive and have done with this book. This package will carry one of the only copies of the Codex of Caine left in existence, and will be the last piece in my complex puzzle. I look forward to touching it, holding it, with great expectation. And if any of my brothers or sisters comes near it, I will ... I will send them to the

death of Fire! Let Michael's holy sword brand them, for
all I care. No one has come this close. I will reign trium-
phant amongst my kind.

With triumph,

Aristotle deLaurent

Aristotle deLaurent

Sample file



A Brief Word on
The Chronicle of Cainé

It is unimportant that this part of the Book of Nod is not comparatively accurate with the standard biblical canon. What is important is that we have, perhaps for the first time, a personal viewpoint on the events surrounding the days after the Fall. Caine tells us in his own words what his motives were, and although it is quite possible that this story exists only to shape our idea of him, we can assume that there must be some element of the truth in his tale. His account is, after all, the only eyewitness report we have to rely upon.

Ah, our dear Father. In some Islamic myths, the translated Satan figure is thrown from Heaven not because he hates mankind, but because he loves God too much to bow to any other but God, and he will not serve man. It is perhaps that Caine shares in this love: he so loves his brother that he cannot think of any other worthy sacrifice to the One Above. Surely Caine could not have had any other reason to sacrifice his brother. He could not know death, having been born before Death was something humanity had experienced.

Other figures of that time also play instrumental roles in the Book. Surely it is not purely mythological trans-literation that causes Lilith to appear in this story, for she is a figure in the oldest of the Hebrew Midrashim. Having been cast out of Paradise first, she would recognize Caine for one who had been in the light of heaven and subsequently cast out. There are those among my colleagues who believe that this stanza should represent the idea that Lilith, mother of magick