

Blood, Loss

Blood, Loss

A single-player story game
by Bill Garrett
ed. 1

garrett@peppermile.com

Special *GoPlay Northwest* layout by Graypaw

Introduction

You were **killed** by a vampire.

You have **become** that vampire.

And you have **five** nights to live.

Text in bold is a prompt for you to answer as a player of the game.

Text in italics is information that will guide how you make decisions and answer prompts.



You remember your life as it was, before the black shape loomed out of the night and took it away from you with piercing fangs and a blood-drenched grin.

Who are you? Or rather, who were you? What is your name? Your profession or life's work? What else do you remember about yourself? Answer for a fictional individual you will be portraying during the game, not for yourself.

Your blood, your mind, your soul, all flowed into the body of the vampire as it drank. Now you look down and see your own mangled corpse. The vampire's previous memories mingle with yours:

The vampire is an undead curse on humanity.

It cannot stand the pure elements: the sun's holy brightness, the cleansing heat of fire, natural running water, a shaft of wood through the heart, the touch of soil in which life grows, and more. A vampire may not cross over or touch such things.

It may not enter someone's home unless invited by a resident.

A vampire's greatest enemies are truth and conviction. It may speak lies, but cannot swear oaths or say anything that is wholly true.

It cannot bear to look in a mirror, for though it can wreath itself in illusions, the vampire always sees its horrific true self reflected there.

A vampire is repelled by anything held sacred by somebody present, such as church ground or holy water, and may be driven off by acts of faith.

A vampire's greatest need is blood. You must feed again within five days.

If you do not feed in that amount of time, you will eventually fall into an uncontrollable bloodlust and sate yourself on the next victim you find.

If you begin to feed, you cannot stop feeding until your victim is dead.

Animal blood, frozen blood, or synthetic blood do not suffice. What sustains the vampire is not plasma and red blood cells, but the act of sacrificing a life.

When - not if - you feed, your victim's consciousness will displace yours. You will curse somebody else with undeath at the cost of your own existence.

There are other memories, too.

You remember who killed you, and why. Decide, now or later on, whether you knew your killer, if so who it was, and why you were the victim - if there was a reason.

The **First** Four Nights

For the next **four** nights, you will spend your time coming to grips with your new reality, with the loss of your old existence, with the **hunger** pangs that come to dominate your waking moments. At any point, you may decide to skip directly to the **fifth night**. Skip to the fifth night immediately if you actually choose to feed on somebody.

You can play out each night immediately, or play them out once per real-life day if you wish.

Each night, you gain new control over your **vampiric** powers.

*The first night, you realize your **immortality**. You can only be destroyed by sustained exposure to a vampiric vulnerability, not mundane means such as bullets. You may not choose to end your own unlife, but others who know of your weaknesses may exploit them. You may tell others about your weaknesses, but cannot directly place yourself in a position of vulnerability - the vampire's survival instincts override your will.*

*The second night, you master your **superhuman senses**. You can see in the deepest darkness, hear a human's pounding heartbeat, and smell blood or fear from blocks away.*

*The third night, you can cloak yourself in a **psychic illusion**, making yourself look, sound, and smell human. Your disguise is anonymous and forgettable - you do not look like your old self. The disguise will not work on mechanical devices like cameras or mirrors. It will never fool anyone with strong faith or deep convictions.*

*The fourth night, you gain control of superhuman **strength and speed**. You can break walls and doors, kill with a punch, or leap great distances. You can move so fast, you seem to disappear or teleport. No pursuit can keep up with you, if you wish to escape something or someone.*

Each night, answer the following prompts.

Pick a theme for each night's activities. The themes are listed below. You can explore the themes in any order.

Decide if the vampiric prohibitions interfere with the night's activities, and how.

Decide if your new vampiric powers aid the night's activities, and how.

Decide where and how you sleep during the day. You can choose to stay conscious, but will be lethargic and unable to do more than speak quietly or crawl about during daylight hours.

Night's Theme: Denial

During this night, you want to convince yourself that the vampire state is temporary, or reversible. Perhaps you just believe that you're imagining everything. Maybe you're experiencing a fugue state. Anything's possible, right?

You must do something to support and sustain this denial. You might seek out friends, family, coworkers, medical professionals - anyone who will reinforce the message that *you are still you*.

Who do you approach?

What do you hope to gain by doing so?

What is their reaction?

What feeling does their reaction provoke in you?

If you feel anger, do you lash out? What happens?

If you feel fear, do you flee?

If your contact survives the encounters, what do they do next?

You might also try to return to the trappings of your normal life. You may try (and fail) to eat regular food. You might attempt going out in the sun. You may go to your old job, school, or other haunts. You aren't an uncanny mockery of life - you're just an average person!

Where do you go?

What mundane activity do you attempt?

How does it play out?

Who notices your attempts?

How do they react?



Night's Theme: Anger

During this night, your fear and frustration crystallize into rage. You didn't deserve to die! You did nothing wrong! And anyone who says otherwise is going to regret it.

You must do something to vent your anger. Perhaps you believe - or *know*, from your vampiric memory infusion - that somebody set you up. Well, they've got to go. Or perhaps your religious convictions tell you that vampires don't exist. Well, look how much your religious leaders knew, huh? They're probably liars and child molesters anyway.

Somebody's to blame. And you've got the power to make things right.

Who becomes the scapegoat who receives your blame?

How do you rationalize this feeling?

How far will you go to express your anger against your scapegoat?

What is the fallout of your action?

Is your scapegoat in any position to fight back (because you told them earlier about your vampiric prohibitions, for example)? What happens?

You may also decide that the larger problems in your life are somehow responsible. Maybe you took the bus and walked home the night you were attacked. Lousy crime-ridden neighborhood! Stupid slow bus that didn't get home until nightfall! Crappy cheap apartment, full of loud obnoxious neighbors! If only you didn't live here...

Do you vent your anger on the vexations in your life?

How do you rationalize doing so?

How does it play out?

Does anyone realize you are something other than human?

How do they react?



Night's Theme: Bargaining

During this night, you conclude that if you became a vampire, perhaps you can either reverse it, or adapt to it. If there's a devil, they say, there must be a god.

What do you believe, if anything, that would be relevant to supernatural vampirism?

How does your undeath reinforce or challenge that belief?

Does your faith allow for a reversal of your condition?

You might reveal yourself to a representative of your religion - if you have one. If you are not religious, you might decide on a faith to try. Alternately, you might try occultists, psychics, or scientists. You can pray, or meditate, or perform another meaningful ritual in hope of sensing something different. If you are a scientist (or consider yourself to be one), you might even perform your own experiments. There has to be something you can do.

Do you approach one or more experts? If so, who?

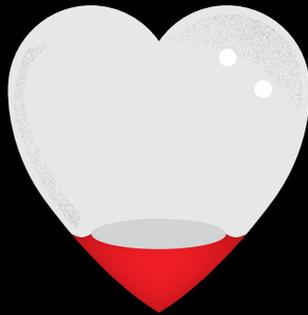
Who do you approach? What is their supposed expertise?

Are these people authentic, or frauds?

How do they react to your revelation?

Do you (or they) learn something new about your vampiric powers or prohibitions?

Do they tell other people without your knowledge?



Alternately, you may see your vampiric prohibitions as challenges - if you overcome them, you can become human again! You saw it in a television show once...

Which prohibitions do you challenge?

How do you do so?

In what way does it fail?

How do you react to the failure - try something else, tackle another prohibition, give up, or something else?

Regardless of what you do, nothing will reverse your condition or ease your growing bloodlust.

Night's Theme: Depression

Maybe this is how it's supposed to be. Maybe this gloomy, empty feeling is normal. Maybe everyone you've ever known and loved has run screaming from your monstrous mockery of a face. You were a pretty bad person in life, anyway. You might deserve this.

You feel the hunger. It lingers in your mind like that creepy weirdo at the bar, who raises their glass and grins when you peek over. Something's going to happen soon. You aren't who he wants. But he'll follow you if you leave the bar.

Soldiers throw themselves on grenades to save their comrades, right? Typhoid Mary refused to quarantine herself, and killed people around her out of stubbornness. Pushing people away makes you a hero.

How far do you go to isolate yourself?

If you had any successful social contact during another night, how does cutting it off affect you? How does it affect them?

Do you relent at all - looking through people's windows, listening in on conversations, tailing people you once knew?

Do you learn anything surprising or important by doing so?

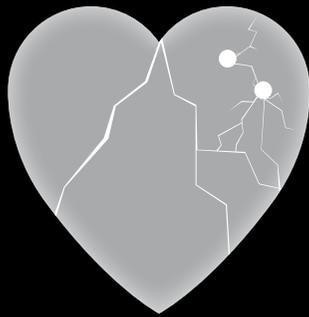
Perhaps you try sinking into your new role. You could steal a copy of "Dracula" from Blockbuster, if they were still open. Dress in black. Put on some face-paint. Try taking drugs, maybe they'll ease the hunger. Find out they don't work. Beat up the neighborhood drug dealers.

How do you spend time by yourself?

Is it satisfying, or not?

Do you try something you've never done before, or fall back on familiar banalities?

Did you learn anything about yourself by what you did?



The Fifth Night

Even immortality doesn't last forever.

You can't hold on any longer. Your affairs are as in order as they can be. You've used your unholy abilities in different ways - some good, some bad. Somebody is going to die, soon. You have one final power: you get to choose who, and how.

Somehow, you're calm about everything. If only you knew whether this feeling was normal. If only you could ask somebody else on the verge of death if this is how it's supposed to be. Maybe whoever you feed on will know...

You can no longer restrain your bloodlust, but you have some control until the end.

Whoever you feed on will inhabit the vampiric corpse, and your mind will dissipate.

You can leave some personal memories behind for your victim, if you wish. You cannot prevent them from learning the basic truths of vampirism. You cannot give your victim false memories unless they are false for you as well.

It is time to feed. Select your victim, stalk them, sink your fangs into their flesh, and meet oblivion.



Do you select a specific victim, or simply feed on somebody random?

If you picked somebody, what was your reason? To give them something, to take something from them, or something else?

Is your victim expecting you? Does anything happen between you before you try to feed?

Is your feeding successful? Or did your victim fight back, or something else interfere?

If you successfully feed, do you leave behind some personal memories?

If so, what are they? What did you hope to accomplish by doing so?

If you fail to feed, was it due to your victim's actions? A vampiric prohibition?

Did you enable your victim, deliberately or accidentally, to fight back?

Do you hold any hope of your mind or soul surviving? Will you be saved, or damned? Or is oblivion better?











