M20 – VAMPIRES

By Eric Bullis

STATS
There are 3 character Statistics: Strength (STR), Dexterity (DEX) and Mind (MIND). Beginning characters get a total of 6 STAT bonuses to their STATS (normal people get 4 STAT bonuses). +4 is the human maximum for any STAT.

SKILLS
Normal people start at 0 level and begin with 4 skill points to distribute. Player Characters start at 1st level and have 8 skill points to distribute (with a minimum of 1 in each skill). Each time a character gains a level, he or she adds 4 points to skills (with a max of 4 + Level in any single skill).

Skills = Physical (PHYS), Subterfuge (SUBT), Knowledge (KNOW) and Communication (COMM).
Roll d20 + SKILL + STAT or higher than the given Difficulty Class (DC) to succeed.
DC 10 = easy, DC 15 = somewhat difficult, DC 20 = difficult, DC 25 = exceedingly difficult, etc.

Climbing or Swimming	= STR + PHYS
Dodging or Tumbling	= DEX + PHYS
Hiding or Sneaking	= DEX + SUBT
Detecting Lies	= MIND + SUBT
Diplomacy	= MIND + COMM

SAVING THROWS
STR + PHYS for FORTITUDE saves
DEX + PHYS for REFLEX saves
MIND + Level for WILL saves.

HIT POINTS
Hit Points = (STR bonus x 2) + 10 + 1d6/Level. If HP reach 0, the character is unconscious and near death. Characters heal 2+STR in HP per day. Vampires heal more quickly (see below).

COMBAT
Roll d20 + DEX bonus for initiative order. Everyone can do one thing each turn (run, attack, load a gun, use diplomacy, etc.) The only "free actions" are drawing a handy weapon or speaking.

Melee attack bonus = STR + Level
Missile attack bonus = DEX + Level

Add attack bonus to d20 roll. If roll is higher than opponent's Armor Class (AC), it's a hit. A natural 20 is automatically a critical doing maximum damage. If the total bonus is +6 or more a second attack can be made with a -5 penalty. Add STR bonus to melee damage. Using a Called Shot (to the heart) is frequently required. Called shots suffer a -4 attack penalty. Damage Reduction: the number is subtracted from damage if the weapon is not made of the prescribed substance.

WEAPONS
Unarmed = 1d2, Dagger = 1d4, Light Weapons = 1d6, Medium Weapons = 1d8, and Heavy Weapons = 1d10. Firearms: Small Caliber Pistols = 1d10, Large Caliber Pistols = 2d8, Shotguns = 3d6/2d6/1d6 (depending upon range), Rifles = 2d10, Submachine Guns = 2d8 (burst and/or auto-fire). Burst Fire: a burst directed at a single opponent takes a -4 penalty to hit, but success results in a doubling of damage. Auto-fire: an automatic weapon can spray a 10'x10'area with bullets. The attack must hit AC 15. If successful, anyone in the area must make a DEX check (DC 15) or be hit.

EXPLOSIVES
Fragmentation Grenades = 3d6 (20' radius), Dynamite = 4d6 (10' radius) +2d6 and + 2' per additional stick), Plastic Explosive (C4) = 6d6 (15' radius) +3d6 and 5' radius for each additional charge, Pipe Bomb = 3d6 (15' radius) +1d6 and +2' for each additional bomb.

ARMOUR
Light = +2 AC, Medium = +4 AC, Heavy = +6 AC, Shield = +2 AC.
Armour Class (AC) = 10 + DEX Bonus + Armour Bonus.

HAZARDS
Falling: 1d6 damage per 10', half damage on REFLEX save. DC = depth fallen in feet.
Poison: FORTITUDE save to avoid or for half, depending on poison.
Extreme Heat & Cold: Take 1d6 damage on each failed (FORT DC 15) save, per 10 minutes.

LEVEL ADVANCEMENT
Add up the Encounter Levels (Hit Dice of Enemy or Difficulty of Encounter). When the total = 10 x character's current level, they've advanced to the next level. Reset the total to 0 after advancing. Upon gaining a level, the characters add +1d6 to Hit Points, +1 to attacks, and +1 to all Skills.

TRUE VAMPIRES
"Vampire" is a template that can be added to any humanoid. Normal people become Vampire Spawn (described below). Those individuals who are 4th level or higher become true vampires (except that they are still under the limited control of their creator). Details of control, conversion and status are left up to the GM. After becoming a true vampire, the base creature gains:

+3 STR, +2 DEX, and +2 MIND. All hit points are maximized for the base creature's hit dice (with the new STR bonus added as well). They gain +6 to armor class and the ability to spider climb at will. The can charm or dominate a victim (Attacker's MIND + Level vs. Defender's MIND + Level). Vampires also gain a grapple attack (1d6 damage). When the grapple is successful, it allows for a secondary blood drain attack. This attack drains 1-2 STR per round, requiring a successful grapple to escape (which is tough, considering how strong vampires can become). Each round a vampire feeds, he or she is healed 5 hit points. Finally, the vampire gains night-vision and damage resistance 10 to all weapons that are not made of silver. If reduced to 0 hit points, a vampire becomes comatose, but can heal with feeding. Over the course of 1 day of rest, a true vampire heals all wounds.

There are some disadvantages to being a vampire, however. Exposure to sunlight causes 2d12 damage per round. A true vampire can be killed by bringing them to 0 hit points and then exposing them to sunlight, driving a steak through their heart, or by cutting off their head. During daylight hours, vampires must rest in a dark location. Finally, all vampires have a strong aversion to garlic.

VAMPIRE SPAWN
Spawn are the most commonly encountered type of vampire. They possess independent minds, but are compelled to obey the commands of their creator. When becoming a vampire spawn, the base creature gains:

+2 STR and +2 DEX, maximized hit points, +4 to armour class, a grapple attack (1d6 + drain 1 STR), spider climb (at will), night vision, and damage resistance 5/silver. Vampire spawn suffer all of the vulnerabilities of true vampires, and can be killed quickly with a called shot to the heart.

WEREWOLVES
Another common theme is the enmity that exists between vampires and werewolves. Here's a template that can be used for the lupine brotherhood:

+3 STR, +3 DEX, add 2 hit dice (character levels) to the base creature and focus skills upon physical and subterfuge. They have a claw or bite attack that causes 1d10 + STR damage (this attack ignores damage reduction if in beast form). Werewolves also have night vision, spider climb, and damage reduction 10/silver. The base creature now has two forms; the beast form has a faster movement rate and the scent ability, while the human form is capable of blending-in with normal society.

HYBRIDS
The creation of hybrids or "day-walkers" can be the central focus of a modern vampire campaign (especially if it defines vampirism as a viral infection rather than a state of religious damnation). Here's an example of a hybrid template:

+2 STR, +2 DEX, +1 MIND, maximized hit points, +6 armour class, immune to charm and domination, slam attack + blood drain, night vision and damage resistance 10/silver. The hybrid cannot spider climb, but is not harmed by sunlight. The only way to kill a hybrid is to reduce him or her to 0 hit points and then destroy the body.

Game Masters should feel free to create new hybrid forms. Some variants could include concepts of 'ancient blood' mixed with genetic engineering. Other variants could create out-of-control killing machines that require extermination...

CAMPAIGN SETTINGS

It is assumed that the characters begin their adventure as normal citizens or as vampire hunters. Eventually, through adventures, accidents and scheming, the characters may themselves become vampires, vampire spawn, werewolves, or even hybrids. A lengthy campaign may result in a series of complex allegiances and rivalries; in this sort of campaign, combat will take a back-seat to character development, interaction and plot. Here are some ideas:

1. Human society discovers the truth about vampires and launches an attack against them.

2. A centuries-long battle between vampires and werewolves spills-over into the "real" world.

3. A religious theme where the powers of faith fight against the damned. Holy water

4. A series of vampire virus mutations upsets the delicate balance of power.

5. A story of how a solitary vampire seeks redemption, revenge, power, or immortality.

6. A plot centralizing around how investigators uncover a vampire conspiracy.

7. A world where vampires and demons are pitted against angels and saints (more templates!)

8. Adventurers must battle ancient vampires who have gone insane through the millennia.

9. A complex web of different vampire clans and their schemes to dominate each other.

10. A hybrid experiment goes awry, resulting in a VERY dangerous new predator.