

Enclaves

*"Within the enclaves, purpose becomes identity.
Blood shapes the path, duty shapes the soul."*

The Enclaves are specialized collectives within the Order of the BloodBrothers, each serving a distinct purpose that strengthens the clan's presence across Gallia. These groups operate with autonomy, bound by loyalty, discipline, and the core values of the BloodBrothers. Each enclave plays a vital role in shaping the future of BloodHaven and the Order as a whole.

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Blood Guard

The Blood Guard

“I am his shield and his spear.”

The **Blood Guard** is an elite enclave of sworn warriors entrusted with the protection of **VoidLock GraveHeart**, Grand Marshal and Leader of the BloodBrothers.

They are chosen for more than strength alone. A member of the Blood Guard must possess discipline, vigilance, courage, and an unwavering loyalty capable of enduring fear, hardship, and sacrifice.

Wherever the Grand Marshal walks, the Blood Guard remains near. They stand between him and every blade, threat, betrayal, and darkness that would seek to endanger his life or the future he has sworn to build.

The Shield and the Spear

The Blood Guard embodies two sacred duties: to serve as the **shield** that receives the blow and the **spear** that answers it.

As the shield, they guard the Grand Marshal's life, secure his passage, and remain watchful wherever danger may gather. As the spear, they respond with decisive force when a threat can no longer be contained through vigilance alone.

Theirs is not a ceremonial position. Every place beside the Grand Marshal is held with the understanding that a Blood Guard may one day be required to place their own body between him and death.

Selection and Bearing

The Blood Guard does not accept those who seek the title merely for prestige. Its members are selected from among warriors who have already demonstrated loyalty, restraint, courage, and the ability to remain steadfast when others falter.

A Blood Guard must be capable of acting without panic, obeying without losing judgment, and protecting without surrendering to reckless aggression. Their bearing reflects the seriousness of their oath: watchful, disciplined, and prepared.

Once accepted, the warrior's previous reputation matters less than the vow now carried. From that moment forward, their honor is measured by the constancy of their watch.

Duties of the Blood Guard

The responsibilities of the Blood Guard may include:

- Protecting the life of VoidLock GraveHeart.
 - Guarding his passage through halls, roads, councils, and contested lands.
 - Identifying and responding to threats before they can reach their mark.
 - Standing watch during gatherings, ceremonies, negotiations, and times of unrest.
 - Defending the Grand Marshal's vision and the future entrusted to his leadership.
 - Holding the line when retreat would place others in danger.
 - Giving their lives, if necessary, rather than abandoning their sworn duty.
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The Blood Guard Creed

“By the blood that binds us, I vow my unwavering loyalty to VoidLock GraveHeart, Grand Marshal and Leader of the BloodBrothers. I am his shield & his spear, steadfast in the protection of his life and vision. With honor I am committed by his side, ready to face any threat, any darkness. In loyalty I pledge my life, knowing that no sacrifice is too great to ensure the future of the BloodBrothers under his guidance. By blood I am sworn, until my final breath. My loyalty shall never break, by my blood I swear this Creed.”

The Creed is not spoken as ornament. It is the defining promise of the Blood Guard and the measure against which every member is judged.

The Unbroken Watch

Members of the Blood Guard understand that protection is not limited to open battle. Many threats arrive quietly, hidden behind familiar faces, peaceful words, or moments when vigilance begins to weaken.

For this reason, the Guard's watch does not end when weapons are lowered. They remain alert in silence, observing entrances, movements, changes in behavior, and every subtle sign that danger may be drawing near.

“*The shield does not sleep while the life behind it remains threatened.*”

To stand among the Blood Guard is to accept that loyalty must be renewed through every action. Their oath lasts through peace and war, light and darkness, until duty ends with the final breath.

Blood Hounds

The Blood Hounds

“They do not hunt because they are hungry. They hunt because an oath has been wounded.”

The **Blood Hounds** are oath-bound hunters entrusted with pursuing those who knowingly betray the Blood Oath. Their name does not describe beasts, but the relentless purpose of the men and women who carry it.

They are trackers, investigators, and executioners of consequence, trained to follow the traces left behind by broken honor. When an Oathbreaker attempts to disappear into distant lands, hidden settlements, or unfamiliar identities, the Blood Hounds are sent to find them.

They do not pursue ordinary deserters, rivals, or those who simply lose their way. Their hunt begins only when sworn blood is deliberately betrayed and the offender's name is entered upon the **Blood List**.

Hunters of Broken Honor

The Blood Hounds follow no common trail. They study the abandoned belongings, severed loyalties, frightened witnesses, secret agreements, and altered habits left behind by those attempting to escape judgment.

A changed name may deceive a stranger. A false story may satisfy a magistrate. Distance may weaken the memory of ordinary pursuers. None of these things erase the Blood Oath.

“The Blood Hounds hunt the scent of broken honor.”

Their greatest weapon is patience. They may follow an Oathbreaker across roads, borders, courts, wilderness, and years, gathering every fragment until the path can no longer be concealed.

The Blood List

The **Blood List** records the names of those who swore the Blood Oath and later betrayed it knowingly. A name is not placed upon the List for carelessness, disagreement, or simple failure.

To be named an Oathbreaker is to be accused of violating a vow entered freely and sealed before witnesses. Such a declaration is not made lightly, for once the name is entered, the Blood Hounds may be called.

The List serves as both record and summons. It remembers the oath, the betrayal, and the consequence still owed.

“An oath may be broken by the tongue, but blood remembers what was promised.”

Selection and Training

Blood Hounds are chosen from among those who possess uncommon patience, perception, discipline, and resolve. Strength may aid the hunt, but brute force alone does not make a Bloodhound.

They are trained to read trails both visible and concealed, question witnesses, uncover false identities, recognize patterns of flight, and enter hostile places without revealing the purpose of their arrival.

Their training may include:

- Tracking across wilderness, settlements, roads, and contested lands.
- Investigation of disappearances, betrayals, and hidden affiliations.
- Disguise, infiltration, surveillance, and covert pursuit.
- Recognition of forged documents, false testimony, and altered identities.
- Capture and restraint of dangerous Oathbreakers.
- Close combat and the swift elimination of threats when capture is impossible.
- Preservation of evidence for judgment upon return.

A Bloodhound must remain unmoved by bribery, deception, threats, and personal attachment. The quarry may be a former companion, respected warrior, or trusted friend. Once the hunt is lawfully called, sentiment cannot be permitted to erase the oath.

The Calling of the Hunt

The Blood Hounds are called by oath, not by cruelty. Their purpose is not indiscriminate vengeance, nor are they permitted to hunt for personal pleasure.

Their task is to bring the Oathbreaker before the consequence of the vow they once chose. Whenever possible, the accused is returned alive to confess, answer the charge, and accept judgment.

The hunt may end in one of three ways:

- The Oathbreaker is captured and returned for judgment.
- The Oathbreaker returns willingly and accepts the consequence of betrayal.
- The Oathbreaker resists until no path remains but death.

Once called, the Blood Hounds do not abandon the trail because it becomes difficult. They stop only when the debt of the broken oath has been answered.

The Path of Return

The purpose of the Blood Hounds is consequence, not senseless slaughter. An Oathbreaker who repents, returns, confesses, and willingly accepts judgment may bring the pursuit to an end.

In that moment, the Blood Hounds become still. The hunt has fulfilled its purpose because the accused no longer flees from the oath or denies the consequence attached to it.

Repentance does not erase betrayal, nor does surrender guarantee mercy. It simply returns judgment to the place where it belongs and prevents the hunt from becoming an endless trail of blood.

“Run, and the trail continues. Return, and the oath itself shall judge what remains.”

Duties of the Blood Hounds

The responsibilities of the Blood Hounds may include:

- Investigating suspected violations of the Blood Oath.
 - Locating those formally named upon the Blood List.
 - Recovering stolen records, relics, weapons, and protected knowledge.
 - Identifying accomplices who knowingly conceal or assist an Oathbreaker.
 - Capturing and returning the accused for judgment.
 - Preventing further harm caused by continued betrayal.
 - Delivering final consequence when surrender and safe capture are impossible.
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The Hound's Silence

Blood Hounds rarely announce the beginning of a hunt. They do not send challenges, demand recognition, or offer the quarry time to prepare.

Their arrival may first be noticed through quiet questions in a distant inn, an unfamiliar traveler watching a road, or the sudden disappearance of those who helped conceal the trail.

By the time an Oathbreaker knows the Blood Hounds have found them, the hunt is often already nearing its end.

“You may flee the hall in which the oath was spoken. You may cross every road beyond it. You cannot outrun the blood that heard you swear.”

The Memory of the Oath

The Blood Hounds exist so that the Blood Oath can never become an empty promise. Without consequence, even the strongest vow eventually becomes little more than ceremony.

They are the pursuit that follows betrayal, the answer to those who mistake distance for absolution, and the living reminder that sworn blood does not forget merely because the one who spilled it wishes to be forgotten.

To the faithful, the Blood Hounds are protectors of the oath. To the guilty, they are its memory made flesh.

Black Bloods

The Black Bloods

“No contract is greater than our honor, and no reward outweighs the cause we defend.”

The **Black Bloods** were formed soon after the founding of the Order of the BloodBrothers. They are a mercenary enclave of battle-tested knights and warriors who accept contracts throughout the lands of Hallowmere.

Tempered by the heat of combat and hardened by the trials they have survived, their blood is said to have turned black—a lasting mark of resilience carried by those who have endured where lesser warriors would have fallen.

Renowned for their courage, discipline, and honor, the Black Bloods undertake contracts both great and small. Those seeking their service know to look for them within **BloodHaven**, where offers are presented, examined, and either accepted or refused.

Mercenaries of BloodHaven

The Black Bloods are warriors for hire, but they are not blades without principle. Their services may be sought by settlements, travelers, allied houses, merchants, commanders, and others in need of experienced protection or military aid.

Their contracts may involve:

- Guarding caravans, travelers, and valuable cargo.
- Protecting settlements, strongholds, and important persons.
- Hunting dangerous creatures, raiders, and hostile forces.
- Recovering stolen property, relics, or captured allies.
- Reinforcing defenders during sieges or periods of unrest.
- Escorting expeditions through dangerous or unfamiliar lands.
- Providing disciplined warriors for battles that require trusted strength.

No contract is dismissed merely because it is small, nor accepted merely because it promises wealth. A humble plea may carry greater worth than a noble's chest of silver.

The Blackened Blood

The name **Black Bloods** is tied to the belief that the trials of battle have changed those who carry it. Their blood has been darkened by hardship, sacrifice, and repeated passage through the violence of war.

Whether understood as a physical mark, a sacred transformation, or a symbol of endurance, blackened blood represents a warrior who has been tested and has not broken.

“Fire tempers the blade. Battle tempers the blood.”

To bear the name is not simply to survive combat. It is to return from it with courage intact, honor preserved, and the strength to stand again when another worthy cause calls.

The Law of Contracts

The Black Bloods do **not** accept every contract presented to them. Each offer is measured against the principles, mission, and greater purpose they are sworn to uphold.

Payment alone cannot purchase their service. Contracts that demand cruelty, dishonor, betrayal, oppression, or action against what the Black Bloods stand for will be refused, regardless of the wealth or influence offered.

Before an agreement is sealed, the purpose of the contract, the identity of those involved, the expected dangers, and the consequences of success are carefully considered.

A contract may be accepted only when the cause is judged worthy and the work does not violate the honor of those being asked to carry it out.

Contracts They Will Refuse

The Black Bloods will not knowingly accept work involving:

- The murder or persecution of innocent people.
- The defense of cruelty, corruption, or deliberate oppression.
- Betrayal of trusted allies or protected settlements.
- Attacks motivated solely by greed, hatred, or personal vengeance.
- The concealment of threats that would endanger the wider lands.
- Any act that violates the principles for which they stand.

Those who attempt to deceive the Black Bloods into accepting such work may discover that the warriors they intended to hire have instead turned their attention toward the deception itself.

Honor Before Payment

Once a worthy contract has been accepted, the Black Bloods pursue it with discipline and resolve. Their word is treated as part of the payment exchanged, and abandoning a sworn agreement without just cause is considered a stain upon their name.

They do not promise victory where none can be guaranteed. They promise only that the contract will be faced with courage, that those under their protection will not be lightly abandoned, and that the warriors sent will give the task the full measure of their strength.

“Coin may secure the contract. Honor determines whether it is accepted.”

Seeking the Black Bloods

Those wishing to offer a contract must seek the Black Bloods within **BloodHaven**. The nature of the request, the payment offered, the expected opposition, and the purpose behind the work must be stated openly.

An offer does not guarantee acceptance. The Black Bloods reserve the right to question the petitioner, investigate the circumstances, alter the proposed terms, or refuse the contract entirely.

When an agreement is accepted, however, the petitioner gains more than hired swords. They gain warriors whose reputation rests upon courage, endurance, and the belief that a contract worthy of their blood must also be worthy of their honor.

Ember Exchange

The Ember Exchange

“From a single ember, a thousand hearths may be kindled.”

The **Ember Exchange** was formed soon after the settling of BloodHaven, during a time when resources were scarce, roads were uncertain, and alliances remained fragile.

What began as a necessary exchange of food, tools, materials, and skilled labor gradually became a vast network of merchants, traders, negotiators, craftsmen, and caravaners. Through their efforts, distant settlements and crowded cities were brought into contact with one another, allowing goods and knowledge to travel where isolation once stood.

Today, the Ember Exchange serves as one of BloodHaven’s most important centers of commerce, connecting those who possess resources with those who can put them to use.

The First Kindling

The origins of the Ember Exchange are traditionally traced to an event known as the **First Kindling**.

In BloodHaven’s earliest days, its settlers found themselves divided by shortages and uncertain loyalties. No single household possessed everything it needed, yet nearly every household held something another lacked.

Rather than allow scarcity to turn neighbor against neighbor, the settlers gathered what they could spare and placed it before the common fire. Grain was exchanged for tools, timber for medicine, labor for protection, and knowledge for safe passage.

That gathering became the first flame of organized trade within BloodHaven. The practice endured, growing from a simple exchange around a shared fire into the far-reaching network now known as the Ember Exchange.

"The first trade did not make BloodHaven wealthy. It allowed BloodHaven to survive."

A Network Across the Lands

The trade routes of the Ember Exchange extend far beyond the walls of BloodHaven. Its members travel between isolated outposts, rural settlements, fortified towns, busy ports, and distant cities.

Through negotiated agreements and carefully maintained routes, the Exchange carries resources from the places where they are plentiful to the places where they are most needed.

Goods commonly passing through its network may include:

- Food, grain, herbs, and preserved provisions.
- Timber, stone, ore, metal, and construction materials.
- Tools, weapons, armor, and crafted goods.
- Medicines, alchemical ingredients, and rare natural materials.
- Livestock, textiles, leather, and household necessities.
- Maps, written records, rumors, and knowledge of distant lands.

The Exchange does more than transport goods. Its members establish trusted contacts, negotiate safe passage, settle disputes, and preserve the relationships upon which long-distance trade depends.

Balanced Reciprocity

The Ember Exchange is guided by the principle of **balanced reciprocity**: every worthy trade should strengthen all parties involved.

This does not require every exchange to be equal in coin or material. A farmer may offer grain in return for protection. A mason may provide labor in exchange for tools. A distant settlement may grant passage through its lands in return for regular deliveries of medicine.

What matters is that each side gains something of genuine value and that no agreement is built entirely upon exploitation.

"Trade that feeds only one flame leaves the other hearth to die."

Through this principle, the Exchange seeks to create lasting relationships rather than fleeting profit. Prosperity is viewed as strongest when it can be shared, renewed, and carried forward into future dealings.

The Moonlit Market

The **Moonlit Market** is the most visible gathering of the Ember Exchange within BloodHaven.

Held beneath the night sky, the market brings together local craftsmen, traveling merchants, hunters, farmers, apothecaries, collectors, and representatives from distant communities. Lanterns and firelight illuminate rows of stalls while goods, stories, contracts, and rumors pass between those gathered there.

For the Ember Exchange, the Moonlit Market is more than a place of commerce. It is where new trade relationships begin, old agreements are renewed, and distant travelers are welcomed into BloodHaven's growing network.

The Exchange helps organize the market, connect buyers with sellers, arrange larger contracts, and settle disagreements before they threaten the peace of the gathering.

Some come seeking practical necessities. Others arrive with rare curiosities, unusual materials, foreign crafts, or knowledge gathered far beyond familiar roads. By dawn, many leave carrying something they did not possess when the moon first rose.

Trade and Influence

The strength of the Ember Exchange is not measured only by stored wealth. Its true influence lies in the relationships it maintains across the lands.

A guarded road, an honored agreement, or a trusted caravan may prove more valuable than a vault of coin. Through commerce, the Exchange opens paths between communities that might otherwise remain separated by distance, suspicion, or old grievances.

Its members understand that trade can accomplish what force cannot. A single agreement may prevent conflict, restore a struggling settlement, or transform a former rival into a dependable ally.

Duties of the Ember Exchange

The work of the Ember Exchange may include:

- Establishing and maintaining trade routes across Hallowmere.
 - Organizing caravans and coordinating the movement of goods.
 - Negotiating contracts between merchants, settlements, and craftsmen.
 - Locating scarce resources and identifying reliable suppliers.
 - Supporting the Moonlit Market within BloodHaven.
 - Settling disputes involving trade, payment, or broken agreements.
 - Building relationships with distant outposts, towns, and allied communities.
 - Ensuring that commerce strengthens BloodHaven rather than exploiting it.
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The Enduring Flame

The Ember Exchange carries forward the lesson of the First Kindling: survival becomes prosperity when people are willing to place something of value into the common flame.

Every caravan dispatched, every agreement honored, and every stall opened beneath the Moonlit Market adds another ember to that fire.

“So long as one road remains open and one honest trade can still be struck, the flame of BloodHaven will not go dark.”

Hollow Aegis

The Hollow Aegis

“We stand between the living and what waits beyond the veil.”

The **Hollow Aegis** was formed soon after the founding of the Order of the BloodBrothers by **VoidLock GraveHeart**.

It is a collective of individuals whose lives have been touched by the supernatural. Some were drawn together through an attunement to nature, spirits, unseen energies, or forces that exist beyond ordinary perception. Within the brotherhood, they found others who understood the burden of such awareness and freely chose to bind themselves through the **Blood Oath**.

The Hollow Aegis seeks knowledge of supernatural beings, disturbances, relics, and phenomena so that peace and balance may be preserved throughout Hallowmere.

The Shield Against the Unseen

The Hollow Aegis serves as a safeguard against dangers that cannot always be faced by steel, walls, or ordinary understanding.

Its members investigate strange occurrences, disturbed places, spiritual manifestations, unnatural changes in the land, and individuals believed to be under the influence of supernatural forces.

Their purpose is not the destruction of everything unknown. The Hollow Aegis seeks first to understand what has been encountered, determine whether it poses a danger, and restore balance whenever possible.

“Not every spirit is an enemy, and not every monster bears a monstrous shape.”

Supernatural Attunements

No two members of the Hollow Aegis experience the unseen in exactly the same way. Each possesses a particular sensitivity, affinity, or field of knowledge that shapes how they serve.

Known attunements may include:

- **Nature Attunement** — sensitivity to the health, corruption, and unnatural disturbance of the land.
- **Spiritual Attunement** — awareness of spirits, lingering presences, and those who have not fully passed beyond.
- **Veil Sensitivity** — the ability to recognize disturbances, weaknesses, and influences associated with the Veil.
- **Relic Affinity** — an instinctive awareness of objects carrying supernatural influence, memory, or corruption.
- **Ritual Knowledge** — familiarity with wards, bindings, cleansing rites, protective markings, and supernatural traditions.
- **Empathic Perception** — an ability to sense emotional, spiritual, or unnatural changes within another person.

These differences allow members of the Hollow Aegis to confront threats that no single discipline could fully understand.

Seekers of Hidden Knowledge

The Hollow Aegis gathers information concerning all things supernatural. Accounts of apparitions, cursed objects, altered creatures, forgotten rites, unnatural weather, and places where reality behaves strangely are carefully recorded and compared.

Members may travel great distances to question witnesses, examine disturbed sites, recover dangerous artifacts, or determine whether an old legend hides a genuine threat.

Knowledge gathered by the enclave is preserved not merely for study, but so that future encounters can be faced with understanding rather than fear.

Protection and Intervention

Every member of the Hollow Aegis is sworn to protect others from supernatural forces. At times, this also means protecting individuals from themselves.

Those touched by the unseen may become consumed by obsession, corrupted by power, manipulated by spirits, or driven toward actions they would never have chosen freely. In such cases, the Hollow Aegis may intervene before the danger spreads further.

Intervention may involve protection, containment, cleansing, guidance, or removal from a place or object exerting harmful influence. Force is used when necessary, but understanding and restoration remain preferable whenever they are still possible.

“Sometimes the one behind the shield is also the danger it must contain.”

Duties of the Hollow Aegis

The responsibilities of the Hollow Aegis may include:

- Investigating reports of supernatural activity.
- Identifying spirits, cursed objects, corrupted places, and unnatural beings.
- Recording folklore, rituals, sightings, and unexplained events.
- Protecting settlements and travelers from supernatural threats.
- Containing dangerous relics and sources of corruption.
- Performing or supporting wards, cleansings, bindings, and protective rites.
- Assisting individuals affected by possession, obsession, or supernatural influence.
- Determining when an unknown presence may be approached peacefully.
- Restoring balance where the natural and supernatural worlds have been disturbed.

The Burden of Awareness

To perceive the supernatural is not always a gift. Members of the Hollow Aegis may witness things others cannot see, hear voices others cannot hear, or sense dangers that cannot easily be explained.

The enclave exists partly so that no attuned individual must carry that burden alone. Within its ranks, unusual experiences are examined without ridicule, fear, or immediate condemnation.

Each member is expected to watch over the others, recognizing that prolonged contact with supernatural forces may alter perception, judgment, and identity. Even those who protect others

must sometimes be protected in return.

The Vigil Beyond the Veil

The Hollow Aegis does not claim to understand every force that moves through Hallowmere. Its members know only that ignorance allows hidden dangers to grow without opposition.

For this reason, they continue to seek, observe, record, and intervene wherever the unseen threatens to disturb the balance of the world.

“We do not fear the dark because it is unknown. We enter it so that others will not face it alone.”

Blood Masons

The Blood Masons

“Stone remembers the hands that shaped it.”

The **Blood Masons** are master builders, stonecutters, and architects known for traveling across Hallowmere wherever their craft is needed.

They raise keeps, halls, bridges, fortifications, monuments, and other structures built to withstand both time and hardship. Their work is recognized for its strength, precision, and the subtle marks they leave carved into the stone.

Masters of Stone and Timber

The Blood Masons possess knowledge gathered through generations of building across different lands and environments. They understand how to work with stone, timber, iron, mortar, and the natural foundations beneath a structure.

Their craft extends far beyond the laying of walls. They are responsible for planning foundations, measuring weight and balance, designing defensive positions, reinforcing aging structures, and ensuring that every completed work can endure the conditions surrounding it.

“A wall is only as strong as the ground upon which it stands.”

Builders Across Hallowmere

Blood Masons rarely remain in one place for long. They travel between settlements, strongholds, remote outposts, and growing communities, bringing their tools and expertise wherever

construction or restoration is required.

Some journeys lead them to established cities in need of expansion. Others carry them into unsettled lands where the first foundations of a new hall, bridge, watchpost, or fortification must be laid.

Their work may include:

- Constructing keeps, fortified halls, and defensive walls.
 - Building bridges, roads, gates, and watchposts.
 - Raising homes, workshops, storehouses, and gathering halls.
 - Repairing structures damaged by war, weather, or neglect.
 - Reinforcing foundations and aging fortifications.
 - Carving monuments, memorials, and lasting works of stone.
 - Surveying land before new construction begins.
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The Mason's Mark

Blood Mason structures often bear subtle marks carved into foundations, cornerstones, archways, or hidden supporting stones.

Some marks identify the hands responsible for the work. Others record the date of construction, the materials used, or warnings intended for those who may repair the structure generations later.

These markings are rarely obvious to the untrained eye, but another Blood Mason can often read the history of a structure by examining the symbols left behind.

“The builder may depart, but the mark remains.”

Strength Through Precision

The Blood Masons believe that lasting strength begins with careful preparation. Every measurement, cut, joint, and supporting stone must serve a purpose.

Speed may be necessary, especially during war or disaster, but haste is never permitted to replace sound craftsmanship. A poorly placed stone may weaken an entire wall, while a well-planned foundation may hold for centuries.

Their reputation is built not upon decoration alone, but upon the knowledge that their structures remain standing when hardship comes.

Passing Down the Craft

The knowledge of the Blood Masons is preserved through direct teaching. Experienced builders take apprentices beneath their guidance, instructing them in measurement, stone selection, carving, structural planning, repair, and the proper care of tools.

An apprentice begins with simple labor and observation before being trusted with foundations or load-bearing stone. Advancement comes through patience, practical experience, and the ability to produce work that can be trusted.

To become a master is to demonstrate not only skill, but judgment—the ability to understand what should be built, how it should be built, and whether it will endure.

An Enduring Legacy

The Blood Masons leave their history behind in stone. Long after a traveling company has moved onward, the halls, bridges, walls, and monuments they raised continue to shape the lands around them.

Their greatest works are not always the largest or most ornate. Sometimes their legacy is a bridge that keeps a road open, a repaired wall that saves a settlement, or a simple hall that becomes the heart of a growing community.

“Build not only for those who stand here today, but for those who will inherit the stone.”

Crimson Circle

The Crimson Circle

“You spill blood, not secrets.”

The **Crimson Circle** is a secretive, adrenaline-charged fight club within the Order of the BloodBrothers. It serves as a brutal proving ground where warriors gather to test their strength, skill, and survival instincts against their peers.

Those who enter the Circle do so knowing that victory is never guaranteed. Weapons clash, strategies are tested, and blood is spilled beneath a shared oath of secrecy. For some, the Circle is a spectacle. For others, it is a rite of passage through which reputation must be earned rather than claimed.

The Rules of the Crimson Circle

First Rule

“You spill blood, not secrets.”

Second Rule

“What happens in the Circle stays in the Circle.”

Third Rule

"Every match continues until surrender or the last breath. Mercy is earned, not given."

The Arena

The arena is illuminated by crimson torches and surrounded by an atmosphere of secrecy and dread. Its location is never permanent, shifting from one hidden place to another so that its gatherings remain concealed from outsiders.

Within the Circle, rank and title carry little weight. A fighter is judged by what they can endure, what they can overcome, and whether they can walk away when the contest is finished.

Victory and Reputation

Victors of the Crimson Circle are rewarded with respect, whispered legends, and, on rare occasions, valuable spoils offered in recognition of exceptional prowess.

The greatest reward, however, is reputation. Names proven within the Circle travel quietly between warriors, carried through stories never spoken beyond those permitted to hear them.

The Crimson Circle thrives upon the thrill of combat and the bonds forged through shared hardship, rivalry, and bloodshed.

Umbral Hand

The Umbral Hand

“No truth remains hidden. No mark escapes the Hand.”

The **Umbral Hand** was formed soon after the founding of New BloodHaven. It is a clandestine and lethal enclave composed of elite assassins, spies, infiltrators, and seekers of hidden truths.

Known for their silent precision and unwavering resolve, the members of the Umbral Hand operate beneath the binding terms of **The Shadow Pact**. Their work is carried out beyond public knowledge, where secrecy, patience, and decisive action are necessary to protect the balance.

The Three Shadows

The Umbral Hand is overseen by select followers devoted to three of the Old Gods:

- **Araknavar, the Widowmaker** — patron of silent death, woven fate, patience, and inevitable consequence.
- **Umbravix, the Phantom Tail** — patron of stealth, deception, cunning, espionage, and unseen passage.
- **Noxvar, the Shadowed Raven** — watchful keeper of concealed knowledge, distant observation, and truths hidden within darkness.

From Araknavar, the Hand learns patience and the certainty of the final strike. From Umbravix, it learns to deceive the eye and move where none expect. Beneath Noxvar’s watchful gaze, it seeks the truths others have buried.

Selection and Training

Members of the Umbral Hand are chosen from among the most cunning, disciplined, and resourceful BloodBrothers. Every candidate must demonstrate an ability to remain unseen, act without hesitation, and preserve secrecy even under extraordinary pressure.

Each assassin and spy is trained in stealth, infiltration, surveillance, subterfuge, close combat, and the arts of silent death. Some are also instructed in shadowed rites and forbidden practices that allow them to obscure their presence, strike without warning, and disappear before pursuit can begin.

An agent of the Umbral Hand is not merely taught how to find a target. They are taught how to understand it: its habits, weaknesses, loyalties, fears, and the unseen threads connecting it to the world around it.

Purpose and Duties

The Umbral Hand carries out covert operations involving threats that cannot be confronted openly. Its members safeguard secrets, uncover concealed dangers, infiltrate hostile circles, gather forbidden intelligence, and remove those whose actions threaten the balance.

Their missions may include:

- Espionage and counterintelligence.
- Infiltration of hostile organizations and hidden gatherings.
- Recovery or destruction of sensitive knowledge.
- Surveillance of suspected traitors, oath-breakers, and hidden enemies.
- Protection of secrets whose exposure would place others in danger.
- Elimination of threats that cannot safely be confronted in the open.

Though their presence is rarely acknowledged, the influence of the Umbral Hand can be felt wherever a secret is protected, a hidden danger is uncovered, or a seemingly untouchable enemy vanishes without warning.

The Blessing of the Hand

Before certain missions, chosen followers of Araknavar, Umbravix, and Noxvar gather to prepare the assigned agents. Through guarded rites, invocations, and sacred markings, the assassins may be blessed beneath the influence of all three Old Gods.

These blessings are believed to sharpen instinct, conceal passage, guide the strike, and reveal what the target has attempted to hide. Such rites are reserved for missions of exceptional

importance and are never performed before those outside the Hand.

Secret Titles

Certain members of the Umbral Hand may bear titles known only within its hidden ranks:

- **Nocturne**
- **Vindicator**
- **Darksworn**

The meaning, authority, and requirements of these titles are not disclosed beyond those entrusted with them.

The Law of Silence

“Those who know do not speak. Those who speak were never meant to know.”

Because of the clandestine nature of the Umbral Hand, its existence is not discussed openly, even among the BloodBrothers. Its missions, members, rites, and places of meeting are known only to those who have already been entrusted with that knowledge.

No written roster is displayed. No public summons is issued. No agent confirms the Hand's involvement.

To outsiders, the Umbral Hand is rumor. To its enemies, it is often recognized only after the silence has already fallen.