

# Bloodbound

A Coven Expansion

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# Chapter 1: Blood Magic

## Feats

### Blood Binding [15 XP, Sympathetic Magic]

**Prerequisites:** Sympathetic Magic 1, Taglock Binding

Blood is the most powerful taglock. With enough of it, you can forge an even stronger sympathetic link.

If you use blood as the taglock for Taglock Binding, it establishes a standard sympathetic link, instead of a weak sympathetic link.

### Total Bloodbind [10 XP, Sympathetic Magic]

**Prerequisites:** Sympathetic Magic 1, Blood Binding

A drop of blood is potent. *Soaking* the symbol in blood is simply overwhelming. If you soak the whole symbol in the target's blood while using Blood Binding, it establishes a strong sympathetic link. Soaking a typical hand-sized poppet or effigy requires 1 dose of blood, but larger symbols might require more.

### Blood Thicker Than Water [10 XP, Brewing]

**Prerequisites:** None

Blood runs in the family. You may create a person's blood by combining the blood of their ancestors in appropriate proportions. In the simplest form, you simply mix together the blood of both their parents. However, you may do this recursively: for example, you may form the target's blood from the blood of their mother and both their paternal grandparents in the correct ratio.

The resulting blood is treated as having come from the person for all purposes. It is now a taglock connected to them, and no longer to any of the ancestors. Volume is conserved, and thus this produces a total amount of blood equal to the total amount combined, which may be less than a dose. The blood may be mixed in any vessel, and doesn't require heating.

### Bones of the Ancestors [10 XP, Brewing]

**Prerequisites:** Brewing 1, Blood Thicker Than Water

Using blood from a person's ancestors is all well and good while they're alive, but much trickier once they're dead. You've learned a useful workaround, as long as you can dig up their bones or ashes. You may use taglocks other than blood when you use Blood Thicker Than Water, ignoring ratios, as long as you still use blood from at least one ancestor.

Doing things this way is more complicated, and thus requires a heated cauldron. The amount of blood produced is equal to the amount of blood used, ignoring all other taglocks.



# Chapter 2: Contracts

## Contract Law

Contracts are among the most complicated of all magics. In fact, much of the skill in using contracts lies in making them complicated enough to hide loopholes, or catches, to dupe the other party and come out on top. The other side of the coin is understanding them well enough to avoid being caught out by the same tricks.

Some players, and some GMs, will revel in this complication, loving the battle of wits as they open and close loopholes in the contracts they write. Others, however, will think it too much like work, preferring not to bog down play with such details. As such, there are two ways to use contracts in your game. The players and GM should agree on which method is being used before anyone takes feats from this chapter, to avoid confusion and disappointment.

The first way is to write them yourself—word for word. You can even put your character’s signature upon them—perhaps in red pen—and use the piece of paper as a prop around the game table. The GM might offer you the chance to make a test to spot a loophole, if they see one that you haven’t, but ultimately, the words written upon the paper are the words that form the contract in-game.

The second method is for you just describe the intent of the contract to the GM. The GM can then call for a test—possibly opposed by the other party in the contract—for your character to draft the contract. On a failure, the GM can invent a loophole to catch you out on, while on a success you write a clean contract, or could even catch the other party out.

Tests related to contracts use the Lore (Contracts) skill. Unlike most Lore skills, which are typically paired with Ken, most Lore (Contracts) tests will use Wit. Writing and spotting loopholes and

other tricks is less about rote learning, and more about outwitting the other parties to the contract.

## Creating Contracts

In-game, a contract is a magical agreement brought into existence using a written document, signed in blood. A contract consists of three parts: stipulations, penalties, and signatories. All three must be present on the written document. The words upon the document form the binding rules of the contract—any spoken agreements do not matter, only what is written.

There are two steps to creating a contract. The first is writing the document, specifying the stipulations, the penalties, and who the signatories are to be. The second is getting each signatory to sign the document. The document must not be modified during the second step. If it is altered at any point after the first signatory signs, but before the last signatory signs, then it becomes void.

Once the last signatory signs it, the contract takes effect. Every signatory is immediately, magically aware of this, regardless of whether they are currently present. From this point onwards, the document used to create the contract is no longer relevant. It can be modified, or destroyed, without affecting the terms of the contract itself.

Not just anyone can write a magically binding contract, although anyone can sign one. The contract must be penned by a person with the Signed in Blood feat in order to make it magically binding. However, the person who pens the contract does not need to be one of the signatories on it.

Several feats allow extra penalties or clauses to be specified upon a contract. The person writing the contract must have all the relevant feats for any additional penalties or clauses they use. However, several people can collaborate to write a contract,

and in doing so can combine their sets of feats to determine the contents of the contract. To do so, they must all have the Signed in Blood feat, and be able to pass the written document around, all taking turns writing upon it before anyone begins to sign it. People without the Signed in Blood feat may be involved in the discussion, providing input or even advice, but cannot help to pen the contract except to sign it.

## Signatories

A contract comes into effect when it is signed in blood, by everyone it is to affect directly. A contract must specify all its signatories as part of the main text, before anyone signs it. These specified signatories are the only people who may be directly affected by the penalties of the contract—they are the ones who have agreed to its terms.

A signature does not need to be a name; it is often just an “X”, or a paw-print. The important aspects are that it is made by the signatory, in the signatory’s blood, with the intent to sign the contract. Note that, although they must intend to sign the contract, they might be doing so reluctantly. A contract signed under duress is still valid. Furthermore, there is no requirement that the signatory has even read the contract.

## Stipulations

The first part of a contract, apart from the list of signatories, is the stipulations. These specify a set of things that must (or must not) happen, and which signatory is responsible for ensuring they occur. For example “Agatha must ensure that Brynston Tower falls by midnight,” or “Agatha must not tell anyone about the Sword of Queen Grima.”

Stipulations may specify a time in which they must happen, but they do not have to. It is not always necessary—“Agatha must not tell anyone about the Sword of Queen Grima” simply applies forever. But for cases where it is necessary, its omission provides a common loophole. For example, “Agatha must ensure that Brynston Tower falls” is a stipulation that Agatha can never be penalised for breaking, as there is always the possibility that it will fall at some later date.

If a stipulation is violated—and any one of the signatories becomes aware of the violation—then

the penalties take effect upon the signatory who violated them. If multiple signatories violate their stipulations, they are all penalised.

Note that, unlike most Headology, it is not only belief that matters. A signatory must be aware of the violation, but the violation must also have actually occurred. Also, note that the signatory who learns about the violation may be the same signatory who will be penalised for it—you can never get away with intentionally breaching contract. If there is some ambiguity about whether a stipulation has been violated, then the GM is the final arbiter. However, the GM may call for the signatories to argue their cases, perhaps with associated tests.

## Penalties

Accompanying each stipulation in a contract, there should be a penalty. One penalty may cover multiple stipulations, and violation of one stipulation may trigger multiple penalties. However, penalties can only affect the signatories who violated the associated stipulations.

Several varieties of penalty are possible in a contract, but only one is possible for a novice contract-writer: the liar’s curse. Others must be learned through feats. Every signatory upon a contract becomes aware when a stipulation is violated and a penalty takes effect.

If a penalty has a duration, such as the liar’s curse, then the contract must specify how long it lasts. This might be a set length of time, until a certain condition comes to pass, or even forever. As with violations of a stipulation, any condition that ends a penalty must be detected by one of the signatories on the contract, and all signatories are made aware when a penalty ends.

Contracts can also be written without stipulations, to bring some penalties into effect on some signatories immediately as the contract takes effect. This may be particularly useful when forcing someone to sign a contract under duress. It can also be used with penalties that can have some beneficial effect, such as a contract that provides Liar’s Location between all members of a coven. A contract can mix and match between penalties that occur immediately and those that are imposed by breaking stipulations.



## The Liar's Curse

The liar's curse is the standard penalty, available to anyone who can write a contract. Anyone who breaks a contract and has the liar's curse imposed upon them is magically marked as untrustworthy, a liar and an oath breaker. This acts as a magical influence on all who interact with the cursed person. The cursed person's words ring false, and people have a hard time believing what they say. This makes social interaction in general quite difficult, and in particular makes it almost impossible to perform Headology or convince people to sign further contracts with the cursed person. Interacting with people while under the liar's curse can also be harmful to one's reputation, as people come to recognise you as a liar.

The curse does not make people disbelieve every statement the cursed person makes. Self evident statements, such as "the sky is blue" are unaffected. But many things can be affected. For example, threats might come across as crass jokes, rather than being genuinely intimidating. Even compliments can ring hollow, sounding snide or sarcastic. Obvious attempts to convince people of something they may or may not believe are most severely affected. The GM is encouraged to impose large penalties on any tests that might be affected by the curse. Being under the effect of more than one liar's curse at a time has no additional effect, though contracts can always be written to add the durations of multiple instances together.

The effect of the liar's curse is not obviously supernatural to anyone interacting with the cursed person. Even people familiar with the existence of the liar's curse can struggle to recognise its effects. Furthermore, recognising that someone is under the liar's curse does not provide immunity to it—they still sound dishonest, and overcoming it requires deciding to trust them anyway. Doing so can be dangerous, for someone who says they're under the liar's curse might be lying, after all.

## Voiding a Contract

Various situations can cause a contract to become void. The most common one is when a contract is modified while it is being signed—after the first signatory signs, but before the last one does.

Otherwise, a contract can specify conditions under which it renders itself void. These conditions must be detected by a signatory, just like any violations of stipulations.

If a contract becomes void before it takes effect—if it is modified while it is being signed, for instance—then it can never take effect. Anybody who later tries to sign the contract is aware that it is void. An entirely new document must be created in order to bring a contract into effect.

If a contract becomes void some time *after* it takes effect, then all its effects immediately end. No new penalties can take effect from that contract. Furthermore, any ongoing penalties immediately end. Every signatory on the contract becomes aware when an active contract is voided.

## Feats

### Signed in Blood [20 XP, Headology]

**Prerequisites:** None

You may create contracts. Your contracts are limited to only two signatories, unless you are collaborating with someone who can create contracts with more.

### Multisign [10 XP, Headology]

**Prerequisites:** Lore (Contracts) 1, Signed in Blood

You may create contracts with more than two signatories—as many as you like.

### Null and Void [10 XP, Headology]

**Prerequisites:** Lore (Contracts) 1, Signed in Blood

It is very difficult to undo a contract once it has come into effect, but with agreement of all the original signatories, it can be done. A contract can normally contain clauses that void it under certain conditions. Now, when you create a contract, you may add clauses that void previous contracts: either immediately, or under certain conditions. These conditions must still be detected by a signatory, as usual.

For this to work, every signatory upon the contract to be voided must be a signatory on the new contract. Exactly which previous contracts are to

be voided must be specified. You may also create a contract without stipulations or penalties, with the sole purpose of voiding earlier contracts.

### **Dictate Terms [5 XP, Headology]**

**Prerequisites:** Lore (Contracts) 1, Signed in Blood

Collaboratively writing a contract usually requires passing the document around, and all physically writing upon it. This can be inconvenient if, for instance, one of the participants is inside a Circle of Containment. As such, you have learned to collaborate verbally. By dictating parts of the text of a contract word-for-word, you may allow a contract-writer with whom you are collaborating to use any feats you have to incorporate additional penalties or clauses in the contract.

While all witches must learn to write a contract independently before learning this ability, some creatures may have this ability without being able to write a contract themselves. In this case, note that whoever is actually penning the contract must have the Signed in Blood feat.

### **Taglock Escrow [15 XP, Headology]**

**Prerequisites:** Signed in Blood

The blood used to sign a contract can always be used as a taglock by someone who holds the physical document. However, the contract can also offer up use of this taglock as a penalty. You may add an additional penalty to contracts you write. This offers the use of the penalised signatory's taglock to one or more of the other signatories for the penalty's duration. This does not provide them with a physical object, but they may perform magic as though they had a taglock from the penalised signatory. This is simply a generic taglock; it does not count as blood for any magic that requires that specifically. This still works even if the physical document and the blood used to sign it have been destroyed.

### **Blood Escrow [5 XP, Headology]**

**Prerequisites:** Lore (Contracts) 2, Taglock Escrow

It was blood that was used to sign a contract, and with careful wording, you can ensure this is

preserved as it is held in escrow. You may add an additional penalty to contracts you write. This functions exactly as Taglock Escrow, except that the taglock offered may be used as though it were specifically blood for any magic that requires such (e.g. Blood Binding). This still does not provide any particular amount of blood for any magic that requires such (e.g. Total Bloodbind).

### **Liar's Location [5 XP, Headology]**

**Prerequisites:** Taglock Escrow, Taglock Tracing

You may bind some Divination magic into a contract to ensure that anyone who can break it can be tracked down. You may add an additional penalty to contracts you write. This makes the location of penalised signatory known to one or more of the other signatories for the penalty's duration. The information is provided as distance and direction to the penalised signatory, as by Taglock Tracing.

### **False Contract [25 XP, Headology]**

**Prerequisites:** Signed in Blood

You can use traditional belief-based Headology to enforce false contracts. If you can convince someone that they have signed and broken a contract, and are thus subject to a penalty, then you can subject them to the penalty. They must believe in the magic of the contract, and understand what penalty they are supposedly under.

As with genuine contracts, you can initially only impose the liar's curse this way, but you may also impose any penalty you have learned how to write into a contract. If the penalty is ongoing it lasts only as long as they believe they are under it. Thus, it ends if they stop believing your trick, but also if they believe that the agreed-upon duration of the penalty has expired.

This can work with an entirely false contract, even one for which no physical document ever existed, as long as you can convince them that the document did exist and that they signed it. However, this can also be used with a real contract, be it void or still in force. If they believe that they have violated the contract and are under a penalty, then you can enforce the penalty this way. This has no impact on the genuine contract, which might still apply the genuine penalty later.

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