

# Blood Magic of the Crimson Guard



**Domain:** Blood and violence

**Method:** The Crimson Guard's spells are cast by waving a bloodied sword around in arcs and circles.

**Associated Skill or Stat:** Coordination

**Society and Beliefs:** The Jawless (as they are also known) are the elite defenders of the Empress herself. They're described on page 233 of *REIGN*.

## Required

**Knowledge:** The Sword Skill at 4d, or 2+ED, or better.

## Edged Tongue

**Intensity:** 1

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Height in minutes

**Attunement:** No

**Effect:** A mute person who casts this spell can place a sword or dagger to his mouth (or to the place his mouth should be) and, by tapping the blade, produce words in an unpleasant, droning monotone. Larger weapons deepen the buzzing voice.

This is the only spell in the school of the jawless that doesn't require blood, the only one that doesn't require attunement, and the only one that has spread outside the company of the Crimson Guard.

## Return to the Heart

**Intensity:** 1

**Casting Time:** Three minutes

**Duration:** Height in hours

**Attunement:** Yes

**Effect:** Spilled blood becomes animate and, like water running downhill, flows

in a direct line towards the person from whom it was shed. (Not the person who dealt the blow that spattered it, but the person who got hit and bled.) It moves at a rate of twenty feet per round and does not stop until it is lapping at the feet of its source. If it hits a barrier, it rushes blindly around, trying to find a way around or through it.



## The Blood Calls for Return

**Intensity:** 2

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Instant

**Attunement:** Yes

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**Effect:** This spell affects one sword, which must have blood on it. The caster must either be holding that sword, or touch it with his own weapon. When the spell goes into effect, the caster picks one person whose blood is on the sword. That sword gives a +1d bonus on the next strike against that person. (It's as if the blood on the sword is pulling the edge back towards the body from which it issued, showing an uncanny prescience for how the victim moves.) The spell fails if the sword is cleaned before the strike is made. Multiple castings have no effect.

## Blood-Sent Blade

**Intensity:** 2

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Instant

**Attunement:** Yes

**Effect:** This spell allows the jawless guard to make one sword attack at any target he can see. He must be holding a bloodied blade in order to do this. When the spell takes effect, the shape of his weapon appears, outlined in blood, beside the target, and the guard makes his cut. The materialization of the sword can't be counterspelled, but the strike can be blocked or parried as usual.

## Carmine Render

**Intensity:** 2

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Width in minutes or until killed

**Attunement:** Yes

**Effect:** With a few gestures of a bloody sword, the guard summons a flapping, flying, animate, bloody... *thing*. It moves like an animal, though it lacks eyes or any features beyond vague wings and sharp claws. (Or are they horns? Teeth perhaps?) It's a Threat 4 Unworthy Opponent, immune to Morale Attacks, that can attack or parry. Its attacks do Width+1 Killing damage.

## Blood Biters

**Intensity:** 3

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Instant

**Attunement:** Yes

**Effect:** As the caster gestures with a blood-covered sword, fluttering red creatures detach themselves from the gore and dart over to bite at one human target within a hundred paces. This is an Area 6 Killing attack.

## Crimson Defenders

**Intensity:** 3

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Width in hours

**Attunement:** Yes

**Effect:** By waving a bloodied sword, the caster summons (or creates – there are different theories) ten small creatures. They usually look like an animate pool of blood, about a foot across. They can slither around on the ground at a human pace (15 feet per combat round). They can't attack, but they can leap up off the

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ground and impact on weapons. They're quick enough to strike arrows in midair.

The ten globules act as Threat 2 followers that can only Parry. They're immune to Morale Attacks, but easy to kill. Even a single Area Shock Die destroys a Crimson Defender.

### Reluctant Blade

**Intensity:** 3

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Until the targeted weapon is cleaned

**Attunement:** Yes

**Effect:** Instead of casting with his own blade, the enchanter makes gestures with his hand and enchants a sword in the hand of an enemy. (The weapon targeted has to be a single-blade weapon with an edge longer than the gripping surface. Thus it can target any sword and many knives, but not an axe, spear or trident.) There must be blood on the blade.

After the spell takes effect, any rolls made to strike the enchanter with that weapon are at a -1d penalty. Additional castings do not incur additional penalties. The sword's wielder can feel the sword actively pulling against him as he tries to strike the Crimson Guard, as if his weapon has become the limb of a living thing.

### Sanguine Parry

**Intensity:** 3

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Width rounds, plus the casting round.

**Attunement:** Yes

**Effect:** Like all spells of its school, Sanguine Parry is evoked with swirling gestures of a bloodied sword. Once the spell goes into effect, the caster gains a free Gobble Die equal to the Height of the casting set. This die can be used to parry with the sword. It can be used any time after the casting is complete. For a number of rounds equal to the Width of the activation set, the effect repeats during the Declare phase. This means that during those rounds, the caster gains that single Gobble Parry Die. It can be applied any time during the round. It does not affect any other actions the caster (or someone else who holds the sword) takes during that round.

### The Sorcerer's Gnawing Blood

**Intensity:** 3

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Until the next time the target rolls Sorcery or Counterspell.

**Attunement:** Yes

**Effect:** This spell is completed by a series of complicated sweeping gestures with a bloodied sword. The next time the target casts a spell or makes a Counterspell roll, all the Waste Dice from that roll do Killing damage to the target. (This won't

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work on a Counterspell that was trying to prevent The Sorcerer's Gnawing Blood from happening in the first place.)

Multiple castings do not have additional effect. If the target makes a Sorcery or Counterspell roll in which all the dice turn up in sets, the spell goes off harmlessly. If the target fails the roll, the spell waits until a success.

The damage feels like hundreds of tiny mouths chewing on the victim's veins from the inside.

### Gate of Carmine Renders

**Intensity:** 5

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Minutes equal Height

**Attunement:** Yes

**Effect:** This spell works like Carmine Render, except that in addition to summoning one Render the round the spell goes off, it repeats a number of rounds equal to the Width of the casting roll.

*Example: Stalker the Crimson Guard casts Gate of Carmine Renders with a 3x6 roll. The round she casts the spell, a Threat 4 flying Render appears to attack her foes. That creature lasts for six minutes. The next round, while Stalker can take any other action she wishes, another Render appears. This happens every round for four rounds total. Each one remains for six minutes.*

### Flawless Jawless Attunement (5 point Advantage)

The mere process of going through the agonizing attunement rite leaves the would-be Crimson Guard with the Gruesome Flaw, along with the headaches of being effectively mute much of the time. There's also the small matter of leaving his life, literally, in the Empress' hands. But beyond the ability to cast the powerful spells of his chosen system, he gains an instinctive command over blood as well—his own as well as others'. The round after someone has taken Killing damage, the Jawless can command the shed blood to return to its proper place. This requires a successful Vigor roll for the Jawless to work the power on himself, or a Heal roll to perform it on another. If the roll succeeds, one point of Killing damage is turned into Shock. This can also be used to relieve the bruising and pooling of Shock damage, in which case the roll removes a point of Shock. This ability can only be used the round after the damage was taken. However, the Jawless can instantly use it on themselves to change damage that would normally kill or knock them out.

### Imperfect Jawless Attunement (1 point Advantage)

He who fails to attune perfectly is still hostage to she who holds his jawbone, but without the instinctive blood command of his more perfectly aligned brethren. Needless to say he's still Gruesome, but he can cast Jawless spells.

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## Thirsty Sword

**Intensity:** 5

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Width rounds, plus casting round

**Attunement:** Yes

**Effect:** This spell is cast both with and upon the enchanter's bloodied sword. The next time his sword does harm, it does an extra point of Killing damage to the indicated location. After it hits, the bonus damage rises by a point every round until the spell wears off.

*Example: Stalker casts Thirsty Sword, getting a 2x5. The next round, she swings but misses. The round after that, she hits with a 2x7. Her sword does an extra point of Killing damage and awakens, moaning and slobbering be fed. If she hits the round after that, it does +2 damage. If it hits the round after that, the bonus is +3. Then the spell wears off. If the sword is activated with a 5x roll, it can get up to a +6 damage bonus on its last round.*

Multiple castings have no additional effect.

## Blood Biter Infestation

**Intensity:** 6

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Instant

**Attunement:** Yes

**Effect:** This is similar to the spell Blood Biters, but instead of instantly targeting one person with an Area 6 Killing attack,

it can target a number of people equal to the Height of the casting roll. (This automatically produces a Morale 3 Attack, as well.) Like most spells of this school, a bloody sword must be waved about to properly sculpt the flow of occult energy.

## Call Forth the Blood Worms

**Intensity:** 6

**Casting Time:** Combative

**Duration:** Instant

**Attunement:** Yes

**Effect:** The caster makes a series of particularly vicious sweeping gestures with an ensanguined blade, and ends by vehemently pointing at one person within a hundred paces. That person takes an Area 8 Killing attack, and the Waste Dice from the Sorcery roll do Shock damage. The Waste Dice are applied last.

The spell operates by transforming part of the targets' blood into small, hungry, eel-like worms. They instinctively chew their way to the surface and crawl out, turning back into shed blood immediately thereafter. It's quite gruesome. Typically there's one central locus for the infestation, where a huge blossom of them seems to burst out from the skin, but the process of enchantment is slow enough that the polluted blood has time to circulate anywhere in the body before the worms begin their feast.

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### Blood and Bone for the Empress

**Intensity:** 9

**Casting Time:** Nine Hours

**Duration:** Permanent

**Attunement:** No

**Effect:** This is the permanent attunement spell for the Crimson Guard, and it can be cast on another person as well as upon oneself. However, to cast it on someone else, they must willingly acquiesce to the process, which culminates with the removal of the lower mandible. It hurts and it's horrible.

If the spell succeeds, not only is the proud new guardsman inducted into the ranks of the guard, but the removed bone becomes a powerful talisman. Should the bone be deliberately broken, the guard dies. These jawbones can only be broken by a deliberate attempt (though purposefully doing anything that one knows would cause the bone to break counts as 'deliberate'). Furthermore, if the Guardsman dies from some other cause (possibly even old age) the jawbone breaks itself.

This artifact is stored in the tightly protected Hall of Bones, into which only the Empress herself is permitted.