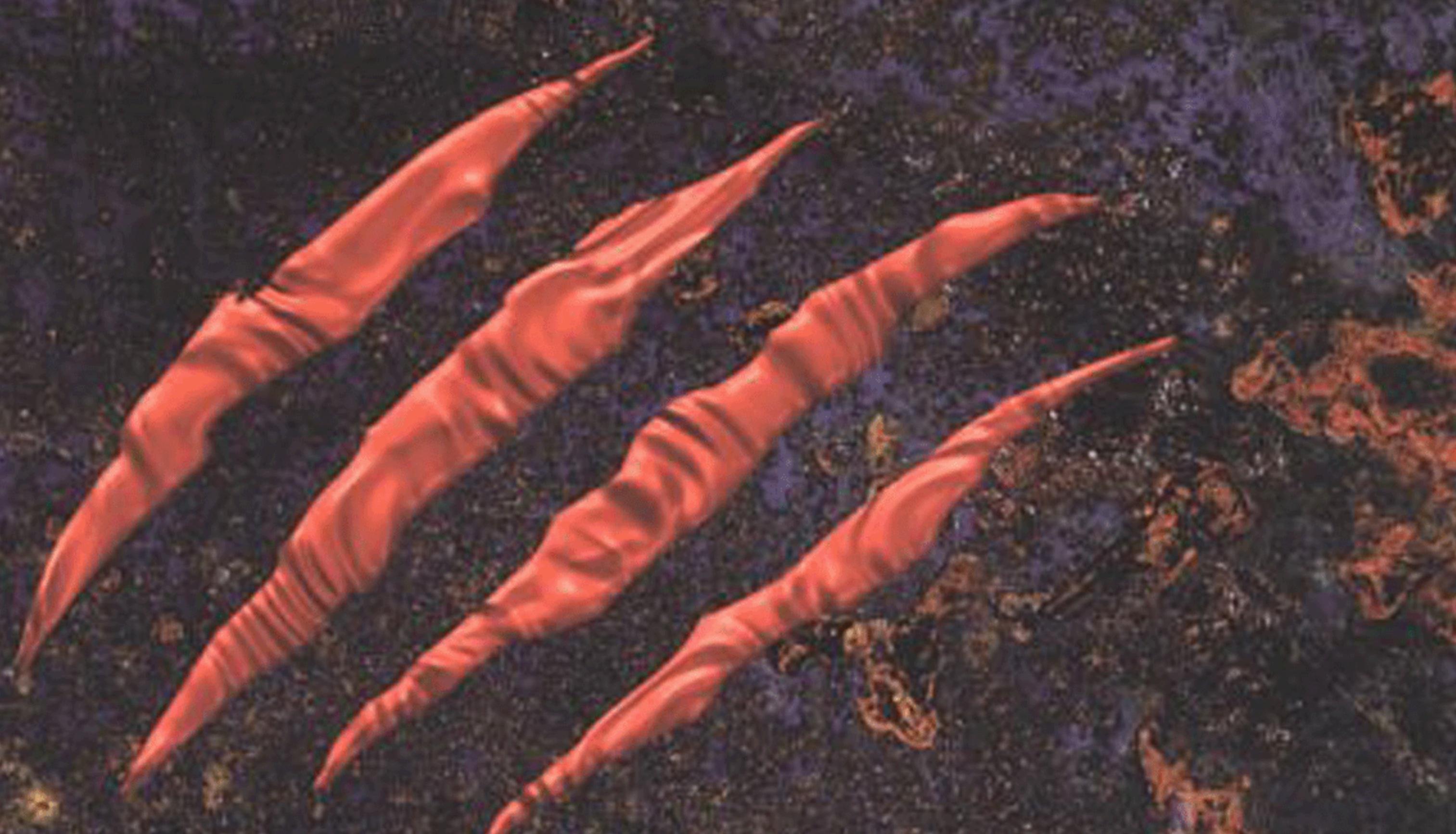


# WEREWOLF THE APOCALYPSE







# LEGENDS OF THE GAROU

## Thrown To the Wolves

Easy now. Just keep taking deep breaths. Slow down if you can. That's it. Try to relax. Try not to think too hard about the last half hour. Keep calm.

That's right. I'm a friend. I'm a... cousin, really. And I'm here to help you last out the night. I think we've got a minute before we're going to have to get away from here, so just keep breathing slowly and try to calm down.

You might have known this was coming. Was it the dreams? Sometimes it's the dreams — dreams of running on all fours, smelling blood from miles away, the moonlight... Or maybe it was the other kids. Did they treat you differently, like they could somehow see something dangerous about you? That'll happen, too. And it all got worse as you got older. Once you started getting into your teenage years, the dreams got worse, and you started to feel something bottled up inside you. Your classmates avoided you. Maybe teachers thought you were acting funny, and they started asking if you were on drugs. And the pressure inside kept building.

Yeah, I know the story. Particularly the next part. You got pushed too far. Something inside you snapped. The next thing you knew, you were covered in blood, standing in a pile of guts and flesh and bone that used to be a person — or people.

It's okay! It's okay.... This time, it's okay. The people here were trying to kill you. It was you or them. You did good. You just need to learn a little more control.



Yeah, you guessed it. This happened to me once, too. And I was scared just like you. Come on, it's time to go. Huh? Oh, yeah, right. Sorry.

My name's Evan. And the spears are for self-defense — for times when the weapony Mother gave me just isn't enough.

Let's move.

## Wolves in the Fold

I think we might be safe here for a while. I've got a friend covering our tracks. I've got to hand it to you — I was afraid I'd have to drag you along with me. You've got good instincts. Time for you to find out where they come from.

No, we can't go back. Your old life's dead — and if they catch us, there's a fair chance that your new life won't last much longer. They'll probably have silver this time.

You don't know why you just shuddered when I said that, do you? Or maybe you've guessed by now?

You've just gone through your First Change.

You're a werewolf.

You want to deny it? It sounds crazy, I know. Werewolves don't exist — that's just common sense, right? But think about it. Why are people still scared of the dark? Why do they still kill wolves? Why do they have to have their camping gear and SUVs and bike paths and carefully controlled parks?

Because something inside them *knows*. They know we're out here. You knew, too. Even though all you can think right now is, "This freak with the spears is completely fucking nuts," part of you understands I'm telling the truth.

Don't want to believe me? Look at your hand. Nails are a little long, aren't they? You're really nervous right now, and it's showing. Relax, calm down a little — there you go, back to normal. And try to keep calm. If you change right now, you aren't going to have a lot of control. The control comes later.

Good. All right, here's the story.

Whatever you've seen about werewolves on TV or in the movies — most of it's pure garbage. People tell these horror stories about people who turn into murdering animals, but they don't understand where exactly they came up with the idea. So they get a lot of it wrong. To them, werewolves are these solitary monsters that act like — well, they don't act like wolves, I'll tell you that. But people think a werewolf is some kind of person that turns into a wolf when the moon is full and goes on a mindless killing spree. Now, I'd be lying if I said that has no basis in fact — yeah, fact — but humans don't understand that werewolves aren't cursed humans. We're not really human at all, although we're often born from human — or wolf — mothers or fathers. We're our own people. We're the *Garou*.

Right. I can tell your subconscious recognizes the word. You already understand some of the language we speak when we're wearing wolf skins — it's an inborn gift from our Mother. She's given us a lot of gifts to help us. And the one that kept you alive

when you were attacked, the one that makes us monsters, the one that makes us warriors — that's the one that's hardest to deal with. Unless I miss my guess, tonight was the first time you found out you had that gift — that you were capable of Rage.

Yeah, you can hear the capital letter, can't you? It's like the way people stress the difference between "a god" and "God." Everyone gets angry. Hell, these days, with people living so close-packed that they don't have any personal space to retreat to, anger's a lot more common. When the temperature rises in the big concrete cities, they start killing each other over lost tempers a lot more often. And that's *nothing* compared to what's beating inside your heart. It feels like fire, doesn't it? That's a special gift we have — a gift or a curse, depending on how you look at it. If there's one thing the movies get right, it's that it doesn't take much to make a werewolf angry enough to kill you.

Well, the movies also get the silver thing right, but more about that later.

Your First Change was a bloody one — they always are. When I changed for the first time, I was running for my life, same as you. But when the change came over me, I stood and fought. And I killed. That's usually how it goes. You're born with Rage, although you don't know it — and it keeps on building up inside you as you get older, until *something* happens to make it all explode out of you. I know Garou who were beaten — or worse — as children, until they finally couldn't take it any more. The first blood they drew as werewolves was that of their abusers. It could even have happened at school, if you were cornered and attacked. And that's when the killing fever — the frenzy — rides you. There's no more serious thing than a frenzy. When your Rage overpowers you, you can't control yourself. All you want to do is flee or kill. You could kill anyone, even your family, while in that state. That's where the root of the legend comes from. You were lucky — when your First Change hit, the only ones around you were enemies.

Yes, we have enemies. I said we had gifts from our Mother, right? We have supernatural speed, strength, stamina — we can take a bullet to the heart and keep fighting, tear apart a car without breaking a sweat, even call on the power of the Earth itself to strike down our foes. The Mother wouldn't have given us all these things if we didn't need them. We're Her warriors, born and bred. You, me — we were designed to kill. There's a war raging, a war that stretches across the whole globe and beyond. And vicious killing machines like you and me — we're the good guys. Our enemies are far worse.

Okay, I'm losing you. Let's see if I can put this a little more clearly.

## Born to Power

I said the word "supernatural" before. It's an interesting word for what we are. It means "beyond nature," right? Well, that's sort of accurate. We aren't really literally beyond nature, of course. It's just that humans have a limited perception of what nature is. All they see is the physical side of things. Oh, sure, they keep trying to reach for some greater cosmological truth — just look at those New Age types, all convinced they're reincarnations of Ramses and Cleopatra. Or look at the churchgoers who are convinced that if they do exactly what the priest says, they'll go directly



to Heaven where they can look down on all the people they hate in Hell and laugh. But they're not looking in the right place. Humanity wants the quick fix. They suspect there's something bigger than them in the world, but they want to be told exactly the right words to say and the right things to wear so that they can get instant gratification or enlightenment. And the more they look for the quick and easy way to something sublime, the farther they get from actually touching it.

We're a little luckier than they are. We're born with a portion of the world's soul in our bodies. That's where our power comes from — we *are* nature. We're spirits made flesh. We're creatures of the two worlds — man and beast, flesh and spirit.

It's this way from birth. You weren't born human, even though no doctor, no blood or DNA test could tell the difference. There's no gene to express what makes us what we are. For all anyone could tell, we're normal human children. Or wolf cubs, for that matter. That's an important thing. We Garou can't mate with each other — well, we *can*, but it's like incest. Our blood's too potent, too powerful to produce healthy children if we mate with each other. We have to dilute it with the blood of humans and wolves if we want a healthy generation of cubs. We can't just bite somebody and make them one of us — and it's for the best that way. Because we need humans and wolves to pass on our line, we have to protect humanity and wolves alike for our own good as well as theirs. And believe me, if it weren't for that, humanity might have died out long ago. There are too many of us who see humans as the enemy.

## The Moon-Kissed

Now, the way I've been talking, you might assume that all of our power comes from some sort of invisible supernatural gene. It doesn't work that way. Like I said, we're tied into the entire world, both physical and spiritual, and those connections take a lot of forms. We draw some of our power from our birthright, sure. But it's not always who you're born to. Sometimes it's *when* you're born that makes a difference.

You know the legends about the full moon — that's when werewolves change, right? Well, there's a full moon tonight. I can feel it pulling on my blood; you can feel the same thing, can't you? The full moon's a warrior's moon. As the moon waxes and wanes, so does our Rage.

That connection to the moon's with us from birth. Luna — the spirit of the moon — kisses each one of us as we're born and gives us our anger. The more of her light in the sky on the night of your birth, the more Rage you carry within you. Forget astrological signs and planetary influences. The phase of the moon is what marks our destiny. I was born under a half moon: the judge's moon. I was born half in light, half in shadow, so it's my task to keep the laws, to see both sides of every problem.

They didn't get a chance to tell me what your moon affinity is before I left. Maybe you're a Full Moon child. That would be lucky, on a night like tonight.

Who are "they"? "They" are the werewolves who guard this portion of the land. They're your relatives, your godparents: your tribe.

## The Wolf's Blood

Wolves run in packs — you knew that. They're social creatures, as are we. But our Rage keeps us from living among humans or wolves as if we belonged there. It wouldn't be safe for our husbands and wives, our children or friends even if we could. Like I said, we're at war.

The only ones we can really rely on are each other. It's been that way since the First Days. And since the First Days, we've kept the traditions that, some say, were given to us by the Mother Herself.

That's right. The Garou have been a society since before Christianity and before Egypt. We're part of a society that's kept most of the same laws since before humans learned to bake mud and straw into bricks.

The war's been going on that long.

They weren't always good laws, though. We've fought each other in civil wars, slaughtered humans who offended us, made war on our distant cousins. We've got rivers of blood on our collective hands.

See, there's a reason humans still believe in us deep down somewhere after all these years. There's a reason why they laugh at the idea that we might be real, but have nightmares about our fangs and claws. They forget most of these nightmares. Most of them. But they still remember, deep down. They remember that long ago, even before the dawn of agriculture, wolf-beasts leapt from the forests to kill them when they grew too numerous. Our ancestors culled humanity, killing the young and the old alike to keep the population down to "reasonable" numbers. They called it "the Impergium."

And humanity still remembers. I think that's why they cut down forests and kill wolves whenever they can. I think that might even be why they have families that are too large for them to support, why they kill more than they need to survive, eat more than they have to and throw away the rest. Somewhere in their subconscious, they're trying to survive as best they can — and fight back against us in the process. Even if they don't remember that we're real.

We are real, though. We've been here almost forever. The tribes of the Garou have managed to hang on until the Final Days.

Well... not all of them. Once there were 16; now only 13 remain. Thirteen tribes of us — well, 12 that still talk to each other, and a 13th that's decided to strike out on its own. The 12 that remain are the Garou Nation — your people.

Yes, your people. They couldn't raise you among them — it was too important that you and all of us human-born Garou grow up in human society, so that we could understand humans. It's the same way with the lupus, the wolf-born; they have to grow up as wolves so they understand just what it is they're fighting for. When you were born, you were marked by a spirit whose sole job was to watch over you as you

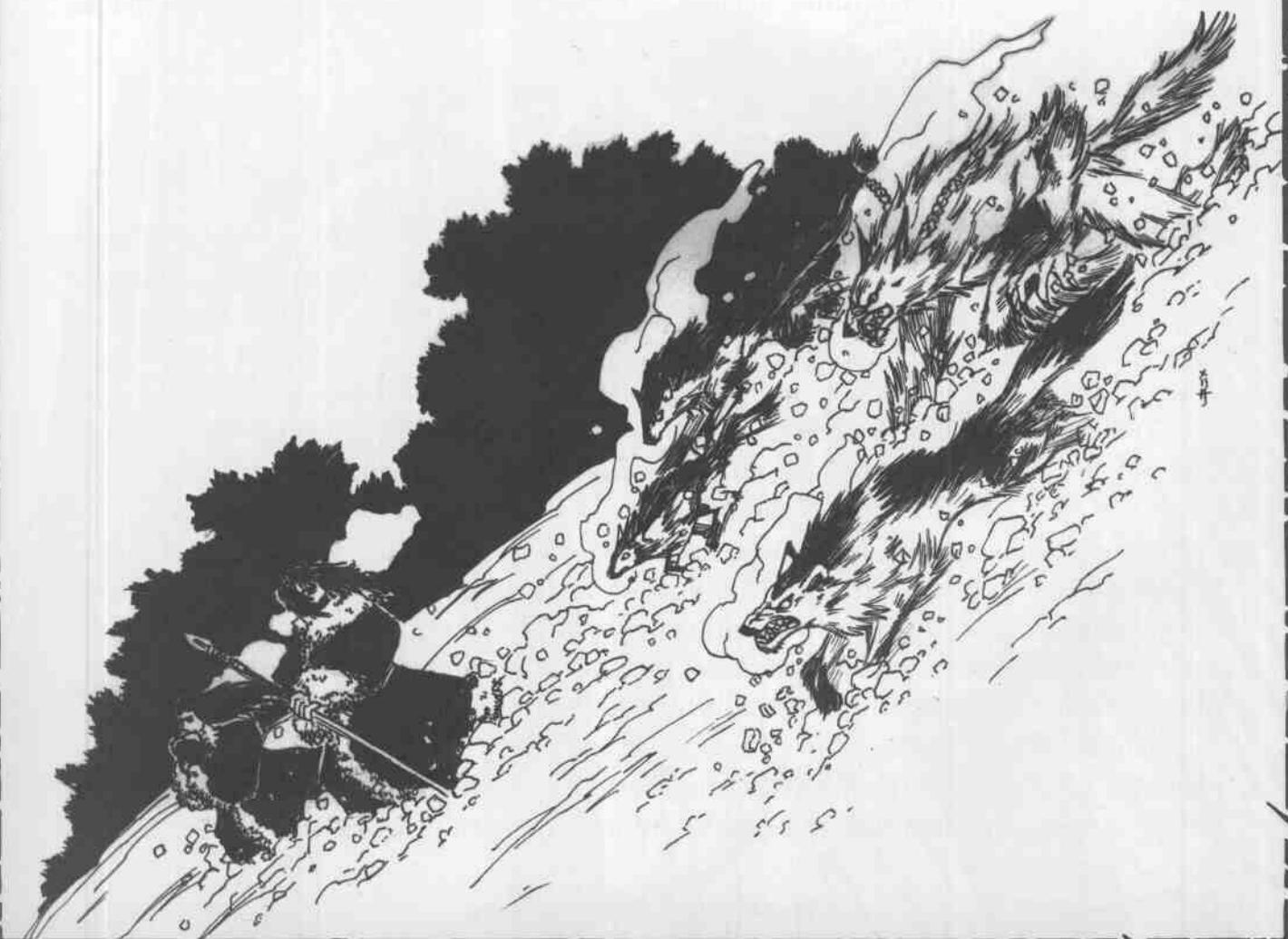
grew up and then to come and tell your kinsmen when you Changed that it was time. And it is time.

But your relatives — your tribe — are under attack. The enemy chose to assault them and you at the same time; I guess they hoped to separate you from your tribe so they could capture you. They always capture if they have a chance. A young werewolf's worth much more to them alive than dead.

No. Don't ask why. Not yet.

If you think the guys who came to collect you were bad, you should see the people — the *things* — that your relatives are fighting right now. They needed their strongest to help defend their territory, and they couldn't be sure that a younger one could reach you in time. So I volunteered.

No, I'm not one of your kin — at least not directly. We might be tribemates, but that remains to be seen. I was visiting the area on business. You see, I've got a mission of my own. Everyone has a purpose, and once we get you safely back to your kin, you can start finding out about yours.



It seems a little fascist, huh? It's not like anyone ever asked you if you wanted to be born to a people in the middle of the war. But we need you; we need everyone we can get. The war is the dirtiest war you can imagine — you may even see your packmates slaughtered, tortured or worse. Trust me... it'll happen. But you can't ask for a nobler cause.

I don't expect you to believe this, but you may soon find that your pack and your tribe become better friends, closer relatives, than you've ever had in your life. You'll never be able to walk among humans as one of them — the Rage inside you prevents that. You have a place to turn, though: Your pack and tribe are family. For most of us, our packmates and tribemates are the only ones we can rely on. They're the only ones who'll help us fight against the Enemy.

Yeah, I know. I hear you. But listen, there are a couple of things you need to see firsthand before I can tell you more about them. If I tell you who's after you — us — and why right now, you won't believe me. Trust me. You need to see for yourself.

Now's as good a time as any. Don't worry, I'll help you through this. Look into that window there. Not at the mannequins — look at your reflection. Focus on your reflection's eyes.

Now stop focusing. Let go. Look beyond the reflection — again, not at the mannequins, but at the world behind the reflection. Look beyond yourself. Look beyond the background, into the whole three-dimensional world that's stretching out from that one.

You'll feel something pushing against you. Don't fight it. Slide between the spaces. Go beyond the reflection.

That's it. You're almost—

## A Higher Reality

You made it. Congratulations.

Oh, sorry — I guess it's a little much to take in all at once. Go ahead, take a long look.

This is the Umbra — the spirit world. This is the other side of reality, the immaterial counterpart to the physical world. The spirits that fuel the world live here. Change something here, and you might change it in the physical world, too. Chop down the spirit of a giant tree, and the tree's physical body will die. That's why it's so important that we're the wolves that walk between the worlds, as my great-grandfather put it. Our war is raging in both the physical world and the Umbra; we have to be able to fight on both battlefronts.

It kind of makes your skin crawl a little, doesn't it? Yeah, that's why most of our kind don't like to come into the cities unless they have to. The webs coating everything — that's what the world's coming to. Those Pattern Spiders — the metallic spider-spirits all over the place, the ones big as St. Bernards — they're the ones spinning the spirit webs, but they draw all their power from humans.

That webbing is in the heart of every city and every town on the face of the planet. It's the mark of the Weaver. The Weaver is — well, she's one of the most immense spirits you can imagine. She's conformity, order, progress — she's repetition



and organization. She's reason, science, dogma — she's the demon at every human being's heart that demands that the world be safe, and that it above all make *sense*. She's trying to bind the whole world in her webs, crazy old thing. Everything wild and primal and disorderly — she wants it locked down, curbed, tamed. But she's got so much power that it just might happen.

And down that way — down toward that industrial plant. You see those greenish fires billowing out of those smokestacks? The ones that look practically radioactive? We'll come back to those; that's something particularly important.

This is what we're up against, though. The Weaver's webs are out of control — and the Enemy... well, they're here, too. It's damn near impossible to even hold our ground against these odds, but we do have allies. The spirits of nature, of animals and plants and elements are on our side. That doesn't mean they're *friendly*, now — you can't exactly expect the spirit of a hurricane to genuinely have your well-being foremost in its mind — but they're on our side. If we need to, we can call, and if we prove our good intentions to them, they'll help.

Here's the proof. You asked before about these spears, and I'll admit it seems stupid to bring a spear to a gunfight. Pretty useless in the 21st century, right? If they were just wood and metal and flint, I'd agree with you — but they're something more. Here — take this one.

You can feel it, can't you? Something... alive inside the wood, right? That's because there is something in there — a spirit. A Garou warrior made this spear, crafted it from the finest wood and forged its head from the finest metal. And then he called on a spirit of the storm, using ancient rites and soft speech to propitiate it. He offered it tobacco and praise and song. In return, it agreed to live inside that spear, like a genie in a bottle, and lend its strength to him — or to any Garou who promised to use the spear well in defense of the Mother.

That spear will tell you more than ten thousand words could about the friendship between us and the spirits, about the sacrifices that we're all willing to make to defend the Mother and Her creations against the Wyrm.

## The End of the War

Okay. Now it's time. You've learned what you are, you've seen the spirit world. It's time to learn why you've been chosen.

Werewolves are monsters — I'm not going to argue the point. We are. We are also necessary. As I've said before, everything we are, we are because that's how the Mother made us. When I say the Mother, I mean Mother Earth, Mother Nature — we call Her Gaia. She is the entire planet — according to some, She's the entire universe. We can't tell for sure. All we know is that She's huger than we can measure. And yet, She's in very real danger. One of the three most powerful forces in... of the universe is gnawing at Her from the inside.

That force... That's what I'm talking about when I say the Wyrm.

The Wyrm — where do I start? The Wyrm used to be Balance, the dividing line between the Weaver's order and the chaos of a force we call the Wyld. While all three were in harmony, the universe was in balance. But the balance was shifted — corrupted. Somehow, the Weaver went mad, and in the process she drove the Wyrm mad as well.

But the Weaver is still the Weaver, still the force of order. The Wyrm — the Wyrm became something else. It was devoured by its own pain and anger, and it became hate itself. It lies in a pit deep at the roots of the universe, where it thrashes in constant agony. Each horrible thought it has — each urge for revenge, each maddened desire to kill or seduce or destroy — each one becomes a spirit of corruption and is loosed on the universe. And these spirits feed on the evils they find in the world, and get stronger. Every murder, every rape, every beating — it all feeds the Wyrm's children.

So, like any other entity, they try to make their food source thrive. They encourage humanity — and even us — to destroy and defile, because it strengthens them. It's hard for us to resist the urge to kill without a second thought, but we have to — otherwise we feed those spirits. As they get stronger, so does their father — until it'll finally be strong enough to break free and take his insane revenge out on Creation itself.

Yes, it's real. Real as gravity or sunlight or thunder. I've never seen it myself, and I've never heard of anyone who has — but we know.

The tales say it'll break its bonds and come into the world in physical form in the last battle — the final battle of the Apocalypse. And the signs show that the final battle is at hand. Look, up there — you can't see it in the physical world yet, but you can see it here. The Red Star — Anthelios. Some call it the Eye of the Wyrm; others say it's the Anti-Sun. It appeared only a year or two ago. And I think it's getting brighter. It's the harbinger of the final battle, of the end of it all.

If the Wyrm does break free... It must be the size of a continent. The human race — and yes, our kind — has certainly fed it enough over the millennia. The thing is so vast that—

...

Sometimes in my dreams, even in my visions, I'm looking down on a colossal mountain, sometimes even a mountain range, from far above. And as I'm watching, the mountain starts to move — it starts to slide up almost beyond my field of vision. I can see the great, dark, wet hollow beneath it — and then the light starts to reflect on that hollow. I start seeing color, this jaundiced yellow-green that's spread out wide across the underside of the mountain — and then I see it, right in the center of the color.

The pupil.

I'm not ashamed to say that I start trying to scream when I see that. But that's what we're up against. That's the Wyrm — so huge, so invincible that there's just no point in trying to kill it. Teeth and claws just won't get the job done.

But we're not trying to kill it. We're trying to beat it. There's a difference.



## *Into the End Times*

You see now, cousin? We've got an impossible task ahead of us. Somehow we have to make enough of a difference to cut the Wyrm's feet out from under it. Somehow we have to make the world strong enough to survive the Apocalypse. We might all die in the process — it's a very real possibility. And it has to be done in *our* lifetime — no more waiting for our children to fix the planet.

But there's the problem. I keep saying "us," and I know that I can't in good conscience order you to follow me. You have to join in the war of your own free will, or you won't be able to do the world any good. There's nowhere left that you'll be truly safe, I'm afraid — but you might escape for a while.

I can't force you to follow me or to fight with your tribe. It's up to you.

Well? What'll it be?



# The Prophecy of the Phoenix

Phoenix took me.  
Carried me in his claws.  
High above the world.  
So that I could see beyond tomorrow.  
And I looked.  
I beheld the future.  
I saw the decimation of our kin. Hunted beyond hunting, death beyond death, to the last one. There were no more children, or grandchildren, or fathers, or mothers. This was the first Sign Phoenix gave to me, that the Children of the Weaver, the Humans, would give to us, the Garou.

I looked.  
I beheld the future.  
I saw the Children of the Weaver birthing. A great tide of Humans, rising. I saw more and more, until Gaia groaned at having to carry them all. Their houses overrunning, their rakes raping, their hands clawing at the parched earth, trying to feed from Her. This was the second Sign of the last days, that Phoenix showed me, that the Humans would do.

I looked again.  
I beheld the third Sign.  
So many. So many children. So many Humans. And they fell against each other, one to one, and the Wyrm brought forth corruption and gave each a measure. And the strange Fire I saw, out of control, the great Plume rising over the wilderness, spreading death wherever it shone in that dark and cold land. And I heard the agony of the Sea as She keened, for some drunken fool had poured a lake of black death out upon her.

I turned my head away in disgust, but I could not help but look again.

I beheld, then, the fourth Sign.  
The Wyrm grew powerful; its wings fanned the breezes of decay. It spread its diseases and they were horrible: the Herd became afflicted with diseases of the head and the blood. Children were born twisted. Animals fell sick and no one could cure them. In these

final days, even the Warriors of Gaia could not escape the palsied talons of the sickness-bringing deathbird.

A tear in my eye, I looked again, and the Phoenix showed me the fifth Sign.

I saw other Plumes rising like death-spears toward the beautiful sky, piercing it, letting Father Sun burn and parch Gaia. The air grew hot; even in the darkness of Winter it was warm. The plants withered in the sun. A cry of pain and disease arose from the dying forests; as one the relations cried tears of mourning.

Then, as though a veil were torn, the sixth Sign showed itself to me.

In these last days, Gaia shakes in rage. Fire boils from the depths. Ash shrouds the sky. The Wyrm skulks in the shadows made by these...and rears to strike. The old ones are gone; the Guardians of the Pathways and the Crossroads are finished. In these final days, the sixth Sign will make itself known in the Packs that form. Each Pack will have unto itself a Quest, a Sacred Journey it must perform. Such is the will of Gaia.

And I saw the sky turn black, and the moon was as blood.

And the seventh Sign I glimpsed, though I could not look on it in full. But its heat I could feel.

The Apocalypse. The final days of the world. The Moon was swallowed by the Sun, and it burned in His belly. Unholy fires fell to the ground, burning us all, twisting us and making us vomit blood. The Wyrm made itself manifest in the towers and the rivers and the air and the land, and everywhere its children ran rampant, devouring, destroying, calling down curses of every kind. And the Herd ran in fear. And the Dark Ones, children of the Wyrm, crawled from their caves and walked the streets in daylight.

I turned my head from the sight. Phoenix told me: "This is as it shall be, but not as it should."

Phoenix left me then.

Now, I cannot dream. I can only remember the Signs, each one in perfect detail. These are the last days. May Gaia have mercy on us.



# WEREWOLF

THE APOCALYPSE™



*A Storytelling Game  
of Savage Horror*

## Credits

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## Dedication

A twofold dedication:

To the writers and artists who've contributed so much over the years, pouring out their sweat to create something that's become a true labor of love. Thanks for your help and inspiration.

And to everyone reading these words, whether you've been playing the game for years, or whether you're just now trying it out. This game is and has always been for you.

## *The Requisite Disclaimer*

**Werewolf: The Apocalypse** isn't an occult handbook or spiritual reference work. It's a game. A work of fiction. If there were actual werewolves in the real world, we're sure everyone would have heard about them by now.

Thank you. Enjoy.



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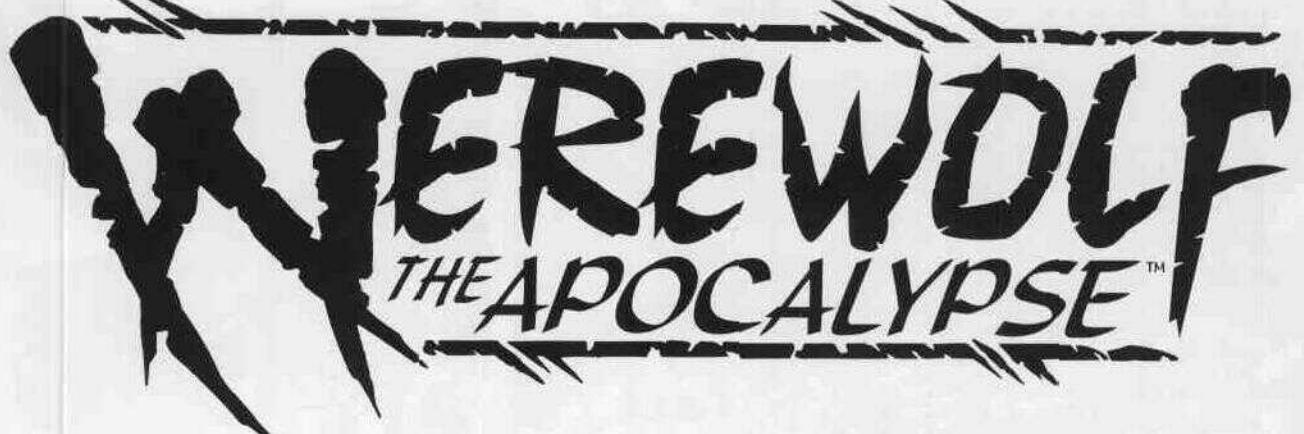
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# WEREWOLF

THE APOCALYPSE™

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# Introduction

Half human. Half beast. Predators that stalk the deepest woods and the darkest urban alleyways. Monsters that creep up on their prey like ghosts, then explode into a fury of claws and fangs. Beasts that howl under the full moon and kill those that cross the boundaries of their territory.

## Werewolves.

In some ways, werewolves embody the oldest human fear — the fear of the wolf at the door, the awful thought that for all our tools and fire, we are still prey in the eyes of Mother Nature. We struggle to control every detail of our environment to our exacting specifications, and that makes us all the more afraid, deep down, of being stranded in a hostile place under the control of something larger and stronger than us: something with fangs and a taste for meat.

But there's more to it than that. Humans have always feared, even hated wild animals, particularly those that are stronger than us on some level. But we have always envied their strength at the same time. In the earliest times, prehistoric humans wore animal skins and bones and prayed to somehow become as swift or keen-eyed or strong as the animals with which they shared the world. Even today, people wear clothing, jewelry, even tattoos depicting animals they respect in a sort of unconscious desire to borrow those animals' power. And we tell stories of humans who can take animal form (or vice versa). We always have, from the Americas to Europe to Africa to Asia. And the king of these stories is the story of the werewolf. The werewolf represents everything we fear in Nature — and everything we'd like to be.

Deep down inside, we're afraid of wolves, yet we want desperately to wear the wolves' skins and to be like them.

This is your chance to do just that.

## *Storytelling*

**Werewolf: The Apocalypse** is a storytelling game from White Wolf Publishing that allows you to step into the shoes — or pawprints — of a werewolf of legend. The rules in this book allow you and a group of friends to assume the roles of a pack of werewolves, hunting and fighting as one. Together, you tell the story of these werewolves and their struggle, whether they triumph at great cost or die in a blaze of glory.

In a storytelling game, the players use the game's rules to create characters to serve as alter egos of a sort. They then take those characters through dramas and adventures called stories (a game term that means pretty much the same thing as the word's common use). Each of the players describes his character's actions and speaks as the character would speak, thus guiding the character through the plot established by the group.

To keep track of all this activity, one person acts as the Storyteller — a role more like that of a movie director than an author. The Storyteller describes the setting of each scene, roleplays the actions and speeches of the various people the players' characters encounter and generally guides the story's plot. However, the Storyteller's control isn't absolute. Since the players control their characters, each scene in a story is the product of the entire group cooperating to tell the story in a way they enjoy. What's more, the rules in this book provide a common ground to gauge the characters' chances of success impartially. The players generally try to help their characters accomplish their goals, while the Storyteller provides opposition and obstacles (in the form of the possibility of failure) to add tension.

The ultimate goal, of course, is for everyone to have a good time. Whether the characters succeed or fail is irrelevant. The only thing that matters is that everyone is happy to have played

a part when the story ends. For that reason, the rules in this book are useful *only* as a means to provide a framework for the story. If the rules conflict with the story, the story wins every time.

## *The Legend*

The werewolves of the World of Darkness aren't quite what one would expect from the movies. Humanity has managed to grasp the concept of the werewolf only partially. The European legends of shapeshifting witches and the Native American tales of animals that take on human form are equally full of misconceptions. The following are a few of the most commonly accepted "facts" about werewolves — and just how true or false they are in the world of *Werewolf*.

**Werewolves are mindless beasts in wolf form.** False. Werewolves retain their intelligence, which is equal to that of any human, in any form they take (and werewolves have five forms from which to choose). Their reputation for savagery stems from their Rage, which is a supernatural fury more intense than any anger a human can feel. Werewolves can channel their Rage to perform incredible feats of strength and speed. However, the stronger a werewolf's Rage is, the more likely he is to lose control in times of great stress, flying into a berserk fit of violence called *frenzy*. It is virtually impossible to reason with a werewolf in this state. All he can think of is fight or flight. It is this savagery that has given rise to the legends of brutal, uncontrollable man-beasts.

**A werewolf changes form when the moon is full.** Mostly false. Werewolves can change forms whenever they want, day or night. However, they have deep spiritual ties to the moon, and they revere the mighty moon-spirit Luna as one of their greatest totems. A werewolf's Rage is tied to the moon's phases, growing stronger as the moon grows brighter. Therefore, a werewolf is at her greatest risk of *frenzy* when the moon is full, and more werewolf attacks tend to occur under the full moon.

**If a werewolf bites a person, that person becomes a werewolf.** False. Werewolves are born, not "infected." Most werewolves are born of human or wolf stock, and they don't know their true heritage until they reach adolescence and undergo their First Change. Even so, some tribes have been historically known to keep track of their young cubs from afar, then staging a mock "wolf attack" just before the children are due for their First Change. Although this practice has fallen out of favor in modern times, it was in no small way responsible for the rumors of the supernatural disease lycanthropy.

**Werewolves are witches who take wolf form by dressing in wolf skins.** False. Either you're born a werewolf, or you aren't. Wizards and witches exist in the World of Darkness, and some of them can shapeshift into animal form, but none of them are true Garou with all the according powers.

**Werewolves can be killed only by silver.** Partially true. For all their supernatural power, werewolves aren't immortal. They grow old, and they can be killed. However, werewolves are remarkably resistant to injury and disease. Furthermore, they heal with incredible speed, even to the point of regenerating damaged internal organs. A gunshot wound that would kill an ordinary human can be nothing more than an inconvenience to a werewolf. But werewolves cannot heal all wounds with equal ease. With its spiritual ties to the moon, silver can burn werewolves more severely than fire could. A wound from a silver weapon can be fatal, and although werewolves can heal

such terrible damage, doing so takes them a long time. Therefore, a silver bullet might not be the instant kill depicted so often in the movies, but it's an enemy's best chance at taking a werewolf down.

**Werewolves can be detected by odd features such as pointed ears or index and middle fingers of the same length.** Almost entirely false. Werewolves are indistinguishable from humans in their Homid, or human form. However, there are a few werewolves whose parents are both werewolves rather than humans or wolves. These metis are always deformed in some fashion. Their deformities are usually evident in human form, although they are much more debilitating than cosmetic oddities like pointed ears.

**Werewolves, unlike wolves, are loners.** False. Werewolves have a powerful pack mentality, and they feel distinctly uncomfortable without the presence of packmates or tribemates. To be cast out of one's pack and sentenced to walk alone is a horrible punishment for a werewolf.

## *The Truth*

In the World of Darkness, werewolves have walked among humanity for as long as humans have existed. They can blend into human civilization, but rarely for long. They're predators at heart, and people can sense as much on an instinctive level. At heart, a werewolf is a creature of both human and wolf nature, but it is neither fully. They refer to themselves by a name from their own tongue — the *Garou*.

Werewolves cannot breed among themselves to preserve their lineage; their blood is too potent, and the result is too much like inbreeding. To continue their bloodlines, werewolves must mate with humans or wolves. However, the chance that any children or cubs that result from such a pairing will breed true is small. In most cases, the spirit half of the werewolf isn't passed on.

Werewolves born to human or wolf families are indistinguishable from their mortal siblings. There is no detectable "Garou gene," and DNA-testing does not reveal anything amiss. Newborn werewolves simply appear to be normal humans or wolves in almost every respect. Only a very few are even told by their parents that werewolves exist at all. However, young werewolves are prone to strange dreams and fits of temper that alienate them from their relatives or friends. Finally, some time after adolescence, a young werewolf undergoes his *First Change*. This event is often brought on by stress or trauma, leading the confused young werewolf to lash out at whatever is hurting him. It's then that the werewolf's Garou relatives arrive to collect him. Once among his own kind, he is initiated into his Garou tribe and taught the purpose and traditions of his people. From that point forward, the young werewolf lives a life of constant danger. Should he persevere, though, he can become a legend among his Garou kin.

Garou society is older at its core than any human culture. Many of its traditions date back to a time before agriculture, before the first humans settled Australia, and even before history as we know it. They have managed this amazing longevity while keeping their true nature a secret from humanity by two means: oral tradition and faith.

To the Garou, the past is a living thing. They keep tales of their ancestors alive, retelling them at gatherings to inspire the latest generation to strive for similarly heroic deeds. The laws laid down millennia ago are learned and recounted by each genera-

tion until every werewolf knows them by heart. By keeping all their lore alive in an oral tradition, the Garou have retained a sense of continuity that binds each generation to the next.

Secondly, werewolves believe that Gaia — the living spirit of the world itself — created them to defend her and make war against her enemies. They're aided in this belief by several points that seem to support their claim: their obviously supernatural nature, their allies among the spirit world and the fact that they are definitely at war with the forces of spiritual corruption. Their war has been going on for millennia — not even the wisest Talesinger among the werewolves can recall a story of their race at peace. According to their traditions, Gaia brought werewolves into being as a response to the rise of their enemy — the Wyrm. The Garou maintain that their true purpose in life is to fight, kill and die in the service of the Earth Mother.

The Garou's claim to be a race designed for battle is certainly well founded. Werewolves are deadly creatures, perhaps the most lethal overall of any living being in the world. They possess great strength when they shapeshift, allowing them to tear apart metal and stone with their bare talons. They heal remarkably quickly, making them nearly impossible to kill with mundane weaponry such as knives or small firearms. They possess mystical powers that allow them to travel the spirit world, strike with stealth or monstrous force and even call on the forces of the earth itself. They have all the intelligence and tool-using capability of any human, making some werewolves masters of both high technology and occult power. Most importantly, werewolves are pack creatures, which makes them a hundred times stronger. A pack of werewolves is worth more than 10 times its weight in enemies.

If they were more numerous, it's possible that the werewolves would have already won the war. But they are too few in number; at the beginning of the 21st century, they are a dying race. Their enemies are virtually uncountable, and they range from humans who fight with raw intelligence, cunning and resources to monsters from deep in the earth that can tear apart tanks — to an entire tribe of werewolves that has sided with the enemy. Worst of all, the Garou fight amongst themselves. Rivalries that started centuries ago continue even today as blood feuds that prevent the Garou from achieving the unity that would make them unstoppable. Just as their pack mentality brings them together, their Rage drives them apart. Such is the tragedy of Werewolf.

As you can see, the lot of a werewolf is far from an easy one. But therein lies the appeal of trying on a wolf's skin for a while.

## *How to Use This Book*

Each chapter of this book focuses on a different aspect of the game, be it a certain aspect of characters, a specific portion of the rules or a description of the setting. You don't have to read them in order; feel free to skip around until you're comfortable with the book. Naturally, the world of *Werewolf* is far too large to be contained between two covers. This rulebook is intended to serve only as a foundation on which to build your games. Feel free to modify, clarify, elaborate upon or disregard anything and everything within that doesn't suit your vision of an exciting game.

**Chapter One: A World of Darkness** details the setting of *Werewolf: The Apocalypse* — both the Garou themselves and the world they prowl.

**Chapter Two: The Garou** describes the werewolves of the World of Darkness in more detail, particularly their breeds, auspices and tribes — traits of bloodline and society that influence each werewolf's role in the greater scheme of things.

**Chapter Three: Character and Traits** describes the step-by-step process of creating a werewolf character and details the various traits by which a character's strengths and weaknesses are measured — raw attributes, skills, backgrounds and so on.

**Chapter Four: Gifts and Rites** defines the supernatural powers of the Garou, both the rituals that call on their bond with the spirit world and the mystical "tricks" they learn from their spirit allies.

**Chapter Five: Rules** describes the core rules of the Storyteller system — the foundation for all of *Werewolf*'s rules.

**Chapter Six: Systems and Drama** goes into more specific rules, such as how to stage a combat or chase scene, as well as the details of character growth and advancement.

**Chapter Seven: The Umbra** details the spirit world and its residents, as well as the role they play in the *Werewolf* setting.

**Chapter Eight: Storytelling** describes the role of the Storyteller and offers advice on how to put together the best game possible.

**Chapter Nine: Antagonists** details the Garou's rivals, adversaries and mortal foes.

Finally, the **Appendix** details *Werewolf*'s supporting cast and some of the trinkets that Garou characters find particularly useful.

## *Source Material*

Sad to say, most movies, books and TV shows that depict werewolves aren't very helpful source material for a *Werewolf* game. The tack most writers take is to approach the werewolf as a person who becomes an uncontrollable monster when the full moon rises. This misconception is the one humans of the World of Darkness have of werewolves (which, of course, they don't believe in consciously), but it's not an accurate picture of the Garou.

The Garou owe some of their traits to classic Western werewolf literature, but the reading list goes far beyond that. S.P. Somtow's *Moon Dance* is probably the best example of recent werewolf horror fiction, and the most applicable.

However, to get a proper feel for all the aspects of the Garou experience, we recommend a number of books on wolves, myths and environmental concerns. Jack London's works such as *Call of the Wild* and *White Fang* are just as suitable as Barry Lopez's *Of Wolves and Men* and Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf* (which is also available as a film). For capturing the American Indian viewpoint, we recommend *American Indian Myths and Legends* (edited by Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz) for the legendary side, and just about anything by Sherman Alexie for the human side.

Sadly, most werewolf movies qualify as "decent" at best — if that. *Wolfen*, *The Howling* (the first — the sequels are strictly avoidable) and *An American Werewolf in London* are probably the most applicable. Others include the classic *The Wolf Man*, *Wolf* (the recent Jack Nicholson movie) and *An American Werewolf in Paris* — most of which are probably better for illustrating what humans think they know about werewolves than for inspiring characters that would work well in a *Werewolf* game. Finally, Hayao Miyazaki's animated film *Princess Mononoke*, while not strictly about werewolves, is a masterwork depicting the innate rivalry man has with nature, and the spiritual aspects of nature at its best and worst. With a rich cast of humans and nature-spirits (and yes, there are huge, sentient wolves), it's as close to "must see" viewing for *Werewolf*'s themes as it gets.



By the time Mephi Faster-Than-Death came to the caern, it was too late.

The ache was deep in his gut as he drew nearer to the caern's heart; over and over, he couldn't help thinking that he'd made a liar of his deed name this time. The invaders had given death and much, much worse to the Uktena sept. Most of the war council had perished in the first wave of the attack. All that remained were some Kin and a few young ones. From the looks of it, they hadn't even gone through their Rite of Passage. Mephi padded gently toward the closest, a girl 15 or 16 at the most. She looked at him with hollow eyes, her long hair hanging in bloody sweat-matted tangles.

"We tried to fight," she muttered, "but it..." The girl gestured helplessly at the ruin of the bawn. "It was too much. Our Warder finally dragged the last of them down, and the Tender..."

Mephi nodded. "It was your Bane Tender I came to see. Is she...does she still live?" The girl didn't even nod or shake her head — she just slowly stretched out her arm and pointed over to a low, scrubby tree. Mephi's footfalls were quiet on the torn sod as he paced over to the tree, and to the large, gray-furred wolf stretched out underneath. Deep wounds covered the wolf's aged body, and when she raised her head to her visitor, Mephi feared she wouldn't even have the strength left to talk.

"They came to stop my message to you," rasped the wolf. Mephi knelt next to her, leaning in close to listen. It seemed incredible that the enemy could have had such knowledge, but now wasn't the time to ask too many questions.

"And what message would that be, grandmother?" he asked gently.

"That the rivers of the clouded worlds are running dry. We hear the twisted cries of Gaia's warriors, lost before they are renewed in the world. The steady drum of the Weaver pulls us into a fatal pattern that must be broken. There are many signs and portents, Silent Strider. Who will take word to the tribes? Something vital is lost that must be found. Many will scoff at my words. The children will shut their ears with dirt. The Wyrmcomers will dance and sing into oblivion. The others...I know not. But carry my words. Someone must hear them."

The wolf looked to the girl. "My great-granddaughter, Blue Water. She will know what to do. Of all the new cubs, I leave my hopes with her." The wolf's head dropped then and her chest ceased to rise. Blue Water cried quietly, then began to gather rocks to cover the wolf's body.

Mephi didn't move, lost for a moment in thought. *Cryptic to the last — a true daughter of Uktena. They've had a hard time, and maybe this is just her way of passing into the next life a little easier. But I'll keep her words safe. Never know when a prophecy might come in handy*, the Galliard thought. And with that, he too gathered stones to cover the bodies of the dead.

# Chapter One: A World of Darkness

The world of *Werewolf* is not our own, although it resembles our world in many ways. Externally, little differs between the two. The established institutions, personalities and attitudes of our world are still there. Yet, far more sinister events take place behind the scenes. Shadows are darker, corruption is more rampant, and despair is commonplace. This world is one of extremes. Vast expanses of untamed wilderness punish intruders with feral brutality. Labyrinthine cities are bleak and gloomy at their core, hiding conspiracies the mundane world does not dare suspect. From the streets of major metropolises to the secret places of the wild, horrific creatures stalk unseen, preying on the innocent and the weak. This is a world where evil breeds: our World of Darkness.

As in any good Gothic horror story, this ominous world hides terrible secrets. Menace lurks everywhere, and every agenda hides an ulterior motive. Decaying cities filled with huge, looming edifices cast shadows on the destitute and the damned. Stone gargoyles watch from atop the tallest buildings, bearing mute testimony to crime and suffering in the streets. Faith is dying here, even while massive churches perform rituals for the desperate. Even in the suburbs and urban sprawl, fearful people live behind thin walls, numbing themselves by perpetuating empty lives from day to day.

A few people have the energy to resist this oppressive world, and they do so on a grand scale. Wherever the rich and powerful exploit their influence, rebellion stirs. A thriving counterculture strikes back at an uncaring society, rebelling with words, music and often violence. Hell bent for leather, it lashes out with desperate energy. Yet all

too often, these rebels burn out in a blaze of glory. Underground clubs are ready to indulge the most exotic vices of the desperate. Street gangs, vainglorious bands and savvy entrepreneurs incite them into a frenzy of aggression... and they profit from the results. Thus, crime is common, apathy is de rigueur, and cynicism is rampant.

However, this world is not without hope — after all, there is no darkness without light. Modern heroes, fully aware of the corruption that surrounds them, are ready to fight for their beliefs. Their world is dying, yet they are alive, full of fury and the power of the Earth itself. From the depths of the wilderness they come, with sharpened claws and vengeful rage. As the natural world dies, they seek and destroy the evils that surround them. As monsters, they stalk the night, crushing bones, savaging victims and staining the streets with crimson blood. Yet, despite their brutality, they are the only true guardians of the Earth: mystics in a modern hell, warriors in an unseen battle. Werewolves prowl the Earth in this world, as they have since the dawn of human history.

## *Caught Between Worlds*

Werewolves are outsiders, trapped forever between extremes. Unlike the monstrous shapechangers of legend, they can change their shapes at will. Assuming the forms of men and women, they walk the streets of the largest cities to protect — or punish — the human race. Wearing a lupine skin, they can run as wolves, free as moonlight in the night. They may try to live in both worlds if they prefer, but they will never truly belong in either.

Some prefer living as humans do, but such a life is frustrating, to say the least. Over six billion humans populate the Earth. Any werewolf can try to live among them, but modern cities are cold and alien places, vast and sterile. Werewolves are aware of sinister things lurking in the shadows, horrible creatures mankind simply does not understand... or even recognize. The presence of the unnatural awakens their most feral instincts. No matter how civilized human cities may seem, foul things dwell in the darkness.

A werewolf may try to escape into the natural world, but that realm has also been dying steadily. Thanks to ecological devastation, the wilderness is shrinking. As the werewolves are keenly aware, the number of wild wolves on the planet is decreasing rapidly. Hated and feared by average folk, the wolf is a villain in children's stories, a menace to farmers and fair game for hunters. Only in Alaska, Canada, Scandinavia and Siberia can wolves be found in their natural habitat. There is no place left to hide. Even in the most remote realms, the Earth is bleak.

No matter how or where they live, werewolves struggle to survive. Caught between worlds, they must choose between two extremes: hunting in urban hellholes and exploring the constantly changing wilderness.

### *Urban Hell*

For werewolves, the most dangerous hunting grounds are in the cities, for nothing in them is what it seems. Most werewolves openly despise the major metropolises as cancerous tumors on the flesh of the world. Even the human inhabitants find them bleak. Smog dims the sunlight, traffic snarls through the streets, and crime boils under the city's skin. Werewolves, with their superhuman senses and occult talents, are aware of far deeper problems than crime and corruption. Hunting in a city requires great caution, for the quarry is often devious and deadly.

Two tribes of werewolves — the Bone Gnawers and Glass Walkers — consider the cities to be their natural territory, but other werewolves fear such an unnatural world. A wolf is as out of place in a concrete wasteland as a citizen of the First World would be in the depths of the Amazon or Sahara. The smells are all wrong, the logic of the streets is twisted, and natural laws warp and mutate. In the cities of mankind, werewolves sense strange activity everywhere. Shapeshifters are cautious whenever they leave the relative safety of the wilderness.

### *Primal Wilderness*

Behind the veneer of civilization, the primal wild waits to reclaim its dominance. If the cities seem bleak, the alternative is even less comforting. Humans erect cities to shelter themselves from nature's capricious ways. The wild is more than just an expanse of tangled forests, stagnant swamps and windswept plains. Humanity's morality does not always apply there. The primal wild is a realm of mysteries, especially to the unprepared. Great lumbering beasts stalk the night, as they have for thousands of years, and only werewolves have the courage to face them.

Rural towns exist on the fringe of civilization, filled with sullen, insular and mistrustful citizens. Humans there are filled with superstition and fear... and with good reason. Memories of a far more primitive world lurk deep within the human subconscious. While these fears can never be dredged up entirely, wandering into the untamed wilderness stirs up distant reminders of a lost and terrible age.

Even the werewolves do not understand all the secrets of the wild. Strange events take place away from watchful eyes, and nature is often cruel to those who try to steal her secrets. The Earth is not always loving and gentle. Some places are taboo, and fools who seek them out do not return.

### *The Spirit World*

Another reality exists beyond what mankind experiences. Mystics speak of a spirit world that the vast majority of humans never encounter. Visionaries and shamans may gain brief glimpses, parting the veil that obscures it from view, but they can never understand fully what they encounter. Werewolves have an animistic view of creation, believing that spirits lurk behind everything around them. Indeed, spirits are everywhere... if you know where to look.

Most werewolves believe that everything of consequence in the physical world has a reflection in the spirit world. It is as if everything that is truly alive casts a shadow into this separate, thriving dimension. For this reason, the realm of spirit is known as the *Umbra*, the "shadow" of creation. Werewolves are more than mere humans; they are creatures of both flesh and spirit. Any werewolf can cross over to the other side and enter the spirit world — what their kind calls "stepping sideways" — if she wills it. In a sense, she can escape to another dimension, if only for a short time.

### *Rage and Crisis*

Two other extremes are crucial to a werewolf's existence: rage and reason. Because werewolves are both beasts and men, they must balance instinct carefully with intellect. Packs can spend a lifetime hunting monsters in the physical world, but the violence, confrontation and suffering of the "real world" fills them with uncontrollable and overwhelming anger as they spend more and more time away from the spirit world. If they are not careful, they eventually become as feral as the werewolves of legend.

By contrast, the mystical world encourages contemplation — it is a realm of enigmas and mystery. Werewolves who explore the spirit world gain insights into the physical world. By studying the realms of the *Umbra*, they learn to understand great secrets, increasing their mystical understanding or *Gnosis*. However, werewolves who spend too much time away from the physical world lose touch with reality, forgetting responsibilities they have left behind. No place is safe; the werewolf is an outsider no matter where he travels.

### *Walking Between Worlds*

The world of the werewolves is harsh, yet this harshness provides contrast to great acts of sacrifice and heroism. Quite simply, werewolves fight and die for their beliefs. Warriors fight horrific abominations with tooth and claw, while mystics hunt evil with supernatural insight. Some wise warriors employ even stranger methods, like street-savvy trickery, political activism and cunning intrigue. No matter what tactics they choose, werewolves walk between two worlds: the reality of the violent physical world and the mystery of the enigmatic spirit world.

Wherever they run — in the cities, in the wilderness, or even in the spirit world — werewolves face the same overwhelming fate. Their world is dying, and their destiny is ultimately tragic. In fact, many of their mystics proclaim that these are the Final Days. The End Times, when all of creation will finally unravel, are here. As the light dies, werewolf heroes are willing

to sacrifice everything to hold back the darkness. We live in the age of the final, ultimate Apocalypse.

## Mythic History

That is how the legend ends. This is how it begins.

The world was not always so bleak. Storytellers speak of a gentler time, when the Earth was governed by simpler laws. In the springtime of the world, the veil that separated the worlds of flesh and spirit was gossamer-thin. While the sun shone, the natural world came alive with a brilliance and beauty, our modern world just cannot equal. Quite simply, magic was alive, and its power was evident everywhere. Once upon a time, long before the dawn of human history, werewolves were the dominant species on the planet.

According to myth, they first learned the art of shapeshifting from the Earth Mother. Werewolves still speak with reverence of their goddess, *Gaia*, who gave them the power of the changing ways. Because they showed such great promise for the mystic arts, they were taught how to walk among the tribes of men and within the deep wilderness with equal impunity. This legacy was to be passed from parent to child, inherited with each passing generation. In return, the werewolves were to watch over *Gaia*'s creation, protecting both their human and lupine cousins. To pass on this gift, some werewolves mated with humans, walking among them to choose the strongest. Others preferred to run with the wolves, raising litters of cubs.

The natural world was beautiful by day, but monsters prowled the Earth at night. The werewolves claimed that they watched over their human herds to protect them from these evils, but in truth, they also treated humans as herds of breeding

stock. Great warriors would often war over the most esteemed human tribes, leading them on journeys far from their rivals. The result was the *Impergium*, three thousand years of dominance over the human race.

Humans were herded like sheep and gathered into primitive flocks, a few of which began to develop the agricultural communes that were the precursors to our modern cities. The separation between civilization and the wilderness began, and the schism widened gradually. Every village had stories of what would happen to the foolish traveler who ventured into the woods alone at night.

## The War of Rage

Of the many tribes of werewolves in the world, each has its own interpretation of why the mythical age of the *Impergium* came to an end. However, they are not the only shapeshangers in existence. Others are aware of the occult world, telling their own myths and legends. The werewolves know that *Gaia* blessed many other races of shapeshifters as well, giving each of them a sacred duty to perform. In the Western world, these fabulous creatures were known as the *Fera*.

In a thousand different forms, the *Fera* stalked the night. Wise in the ways of magic, secretive werecats hoarded mysteries and mystical knowledge. Strong in the power of healing, steadfast werebears guarded many of the world's most sacred places. Relying on cunning and guile, wererats kept down the population of humans when they became too numerous. The *Fera* were cousins to ravens, spiders, lizards, coyotes and more. Among the dozens of species of shapeshifters, each of the *Fera* attended to its sacred tasks.

Yet, according to their own legends, the werewolves were the greatest of these children, and they called themselves the



*Garou*. They held their pledge to protect humanity as the most sacred duty of all. With their power came great pride. First, the most powerful Garou attempted to dominate all other tribes of werewolves, insisting on the formation of a great society throughout the world. When this goal met with even partial success, the most esteemed werewolves then demanded that they should rule over all of the other shapechangers as well.

In the legends of most shapechangers, the Fera refused, and a vicious era of genocidal warfare followed. Since the other shapechangers would not bow before Gaia's greatest children, the werewolves began to destroy them. Asserting their dominance, the Garou claimed that the others were a threat to the safety of humanity, and they set out to eradicate entire species of shapeshifters. As blood flowed freely, the werewolves demonstrated that they would reign unopposed as Gaia's favored children and the dominant lifeform on Earth, from then on.

### *The Concord*

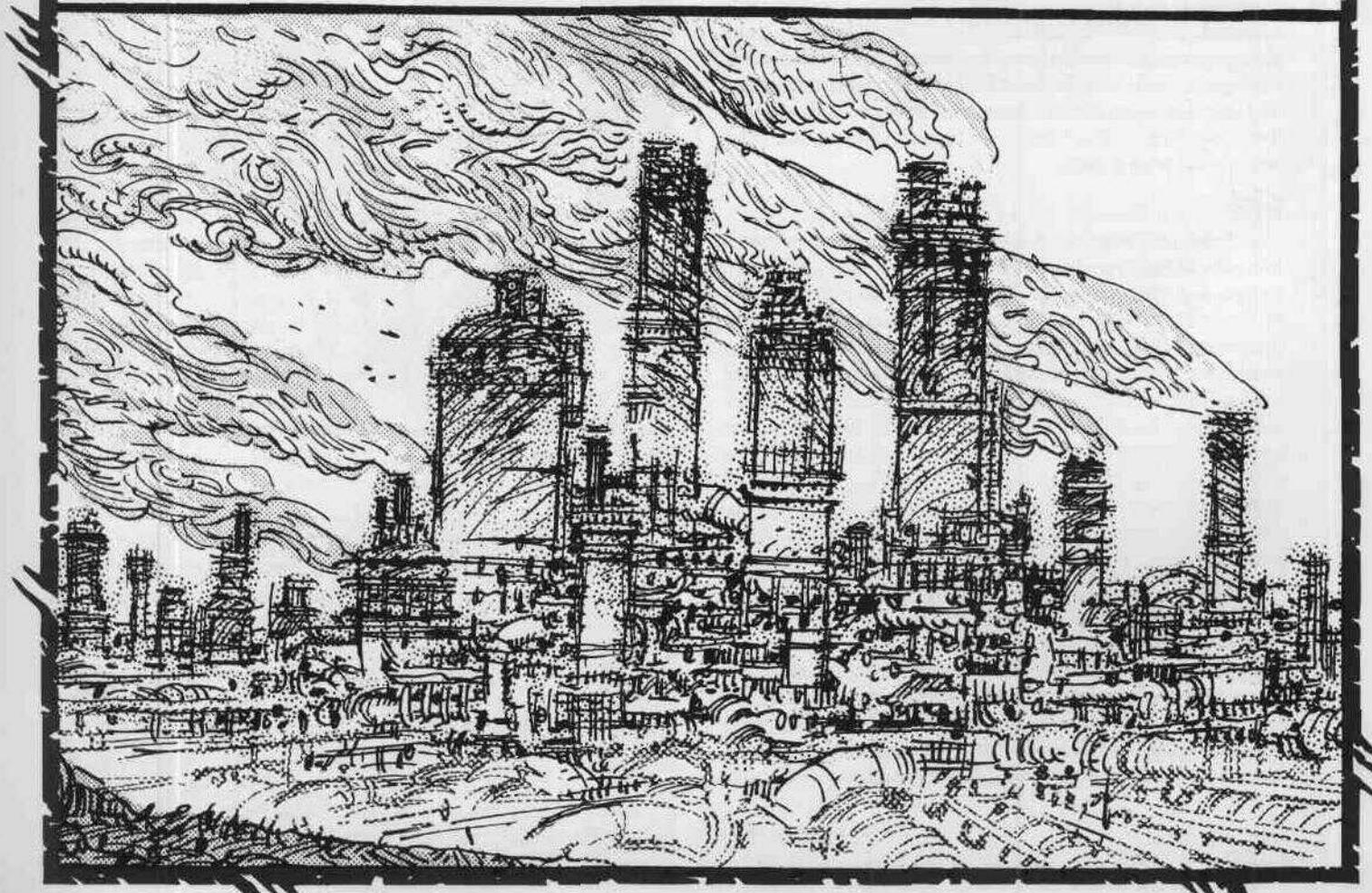
Little did the werewolves suspect that they, in turn, would be challenged for dominance... this time, by the very humans they claimed to protect. Horrified by the violence that surrounded them, humans no longer trusted their supernatural guardians. They decided to defend themselves from what seemed to be the most dangerous creatures of all: the Garou. The werewolves were thrown into disarray. Some argued to discipline rebellious villages, punishing them for their disobedience. Others pledged peace, claiming that Gaia had entrusted them with keeping humans from harm. Some especially feral werewolves—lupine Garou who preferred the primal wilderness and the wolves that ran there—argued for the immediate extermination of the human race, considering their obligation fulfilled.

The werewolves argued and fought among themselves until they reached a compromise known as the Concord. Both wolves and men would have to live together in the same world, but clearly humanity no longer wanted to be dominated by the Garou. The werewolves agreed to maintain their own society separate from the world of men. The result was the Western Concordat, a civilization thriving deep within the wilderness. The age of the Impergium came to an end, and human history began. The werewolves faded into the shadows, becoming mere legends.

Since the end of the Impergium, werewolves have never regained their primal dominance. They have remained a myth, a reminder of a distant past mankind dares not remember... and with good reason. Under the right circumstances, the very sight of a Garou is enough to conjure primal memories of fear and bloodshed. Thus, the werewolves have stayed hidden throughout human history. The demarcation between the cities and the wilderness remains, separating two very different worlds. Because legends of werewolves remain, men see them as through a glass darkly, never realizing what they truly are, but instead fearing what they once were. The Garou still see themselves as heroes, but to the humans, they will always be monsters. Perhaps the truth lies somewhere between.

### *Becoming Garou*

Humans have their own society and their own legends. They also tell stories about the shapechangers of legend, monsters who prey on the weak. Wolfmen in late-night movies typically curse their victims with lycanthropy, infecting them during epic rampages. The werewolves of the modern world have created a separate set of myths, epics and legends. In each



such legend, lycanthropy is less a curse than a blessing; a legacy passed from parent to child.

In modern terms, werewolf blood is inherited. If one of a child's parents is a werewolf, a chance exists that he will be one as well. Sadly, this chance has diminished steadily over the last thousand years. The blood's power is not dominant, and a Garou's child really has only a one-in-10 chance of becoming a "full-blooded" werewolf. Fortunately, the blessing isn't limited to human children. Many Garou prefer to breed with wolves, leaving their cubs to be raised by lupine mates in the wilderness.

For thousands of years, werewolves bred with both humans and wolves in relatively equal proportions. Unfortunately, as the number of wolves has decreased drastically in the world, Garou blood has become dangerously impure. One in three werewolves bred with wolves as recently as a thousand years ago, but now the ratio is closer to one-in-15. Legendary ancestors once found it relatively easy to balance their feral instincts against their human wisdom, but no longer.

### *Kinfolk*

Most of a Garou's cubs and children never become full-blooded werewolves. Instead, they are "carriers" for the blood of the Garou, which can survive in their families for generations. Half-blooded children are known as *Kinfolk*. Although werewolves don't defend these relations as staunchly as they did millennia ago, a wise Garou keeps an eye on his kin. Some do so by commanding spirits, commonly called *Kin-Fetches*, to watch over their children. While the spirits pledge to observe all of a werewolf's children carefully, many of them lose their way over the span of years and abandon their charges.

*Kinfolk* "half-breeds" are markedly different from the rest of mankind. They may have strange and terrifying dreams, wander alone in hopeless reverie for hours at a time or have trouble relating to people around them. An inexplicable longing consumes them. The lucky ones learn about their werewolf relations, and even help them from time to time. Most just remain quietly unaware of the secret world around them.

### *Cubs*

A child of a werewolf has about a 10-percent chance that he himself will be born a "full-blooded" Garou — not good odds. Some werewolves manage to divine their children's true nature at birth. Those without the proper resources to do so don't discover which if any of their cubs are Garou until the young ones reach adolescence. Although the Garou mark their pure-blooded cubs at birth, werewolves all too commonly leave their offspring to be raised by their mates, sometimes as an effort to draw enemies away from their children. A cub's true nature remains dormant throughout her childhood, manifesting only as dreams and visions. Between the ages of 10 and 16 (if human) or between one and two years (for a wolf), hazy memories and "unnatural" urges begin to surface. A troubled wolf may be driven from the pack for her unpredictable behavior, or an adolescent may be ostracized or even institutionalized. In some way, others begin to notice that this lost soul is different.

As life becomes more difficult, the legacy remains dormant until a great trauma forces the *First Change*. The *First Change* does not wait for a full moon or a curse. When the time is right, flesh and bone rapidly warp the child into a hulking, bipedal, nine-foot monster. If the cub is fortunate, she is found

by others of her own kind; if she isn't, the experience is even more terrifying. Legends of monsters driven insane by the light of the full moon have basis in fact.

Most cubs are rescued — or kidnapped, depending on your point of view — and educated by other werewolves. By necessity, the first lesson is controlling shapeshifting voluntarily. Years of teaching follow... or they should, at least. However, time is a luxury these days. Elders offer various bits of tribal lore, although curiously enough, their oral histories differ remarkably from tribe to tribe. Regardless of age, the "cub" is treated like a child until she decides to accept her destiny and join the community of the Garou.

### *Coming of Age*

Every tribe has its own traditions for marking a cub's passage into adulthood. The Garou denote a cub's coming of age with a *Rite of Passage*, a deadly and dangerous quest that tests a werewolf's strength and wisdom to its very limits. The rite is more than a transition into adulthood. It also shows elders that a cub is worthy of membership in one of the greatest tribes. Until this quest is complete, she does not belong to any of them, for she has not proven herself worthy.

Two choices follow. First, a werewolf may approach her chosen tribe alone. Once she does, the tribal elders may send her out on a test particularly suited to their kind. Solitary visionquests are based on ancient tribal traditions. Usually, however, the elders send the cub to a place where many werewolves gather. There, the child must wait until several cubs are ready to embark on a quest together. In this case, the ritual is also a test of the cubs' ability to work together and resolve their differences. They may later decide to join the same pack. In all cases, the elders send spirits to watch over the petitioners, if only to verify the greatness of their deeds. Once these cubs return, they become *cliath*, they join their respective tribes formally, and they learn their first tribal *Gifts*.

In recent years, the Garou have found an increasing number of adult humans (or even wolves) who once had the potential to become werewolves, but never did. They might have been illegitimate and unrecognized children of Garou wanderers. The spirits who watched over them might have lost them. They might have even been born to two *Kinfolk* parents far from a sept. Regardless, they never underwent their *First Change* and *Rite of Passage*. Such poor souls are known as *lost cubs*. They have repressed their true nature to such a degree that many go insane or die of depression. When one survives long enough to undergo the *Change* late in life, it is a cause for great joy. As the *Final Days* approach, every werewolf is needed desperately. The forces of darkness are legion, and they grow stronger with each passing day.

### *Breeds*

A werewolf's true nature is shaped long before his *First Change*. If one of his parents is human, he will grow up in human society, learning the ways of man. If one of his parents is a wolf, he will be raised by wolves, and human society will be a mystery to him. In almost every case, one of the parents is Garou. Whether the child's mother's natural form is that of a human or a wolf determines what his *breed* will be. (It's also possible that a werewolf might be born to two human parents or to a mated pair of wolves if the werewolf blood is strong



enough in his family. However, the odds of such an occurrence are much steeper.) There are three such breeds in Garou society: *homid*, *lupus* and *metis*.

### *Homid*

A homid is the child of a werewolf and a human, one who lives as a human before his First Change. Although homids often have trouble relating to other children, they understand thoroughly how human society works. They are not *quite* human, though. The word "homid" refers to a werewolf with a human parent, while the word "human" refers to the race of mankind. By definition, a homid will never quite fit into human society. Something about him — his dreams, his turmoil or his hidden rage — marks him as different.

Homids find themselves confronted by a moral dilemma. After a homid learns about his true nature, human society begins to seem alien. A true werewolf is drawn to the wild, feeling a deep need to commune with the primal wilderness. Unfortunately, that primeval world is gone, having been destroyed by thousands of years of human civilization. The only place where a werewolf truly belongs is with his own species. Therefore, Garou are social creatures who gather in packs to run together. The cub leaves his past gradually to become immersed in Garou society, where he will face its difficulties and its destiny. The alternative is the madness of facing a dying world alone.

Some homids never admit the faults and failings of human society fully. They keep going back to their former lives, torturing themselves by trying to rejoin the human race. While they are painfully aware of the environmental destruction humans wreak, most can never fully reconcile the idea of hating humanity because of it. As a result, some homids are very defensive about their human ancestry. A bitter few lash out at those lupus werewolves who question human ways, and they forever consider them "lesser" creatures. Homids, after all, are the most populous of the three breeds, and they're obviously at the top of the evolutionary ladder. Homids are clearly the most fit to rule... at least by their reckoning.

### *Lupus*

A lupus Garou is the child of a werewolf and a wolf (or more rarely, two Kinfolk wolves). A thousand years ago, about one-third of the werewolves in the world were lupus. Today, the ratio is only about one in eight. Lupus usually spend their formative years around wolves, raised as creatures of instinct. A lupus suspects she is different from an early age. For one thing, she is typically more intelligent than her wolf packmates. However, since she does not learn to think "like a human," she often acts on intuition and gut reactions. Even after she learns to communicate with other Garou, words are not as important to her as actions, feelings and sensory impressions.

Lupus tend to see the world more simply than homids do, but they are not stupid. Lupus are capable of making complex plans, measuring time, figuring out simple technology and completing tasks quickly and effectively. They also tend to have remarkable insights homids would never develop. Nonetheless, homids sometimes patronize them because the wolf-born express themselves very directly. Homids love to talk and are often caught up in long-winded speeches about simple concepts, a practice lupus call "monkey-babble." Lupus typically speak with a handful of verbs and nouns. They break down complex issues into simple black and white, detesting deceit,

hypocrisy or verbal subterfuge. If a lupus doesn't like you, he'll tell you straight out.

Lupus are also intensely aware that they are a dying breed. Of course, the humans are largely to blame, and the homids are accomplices. While a lupus may decide to join a pack with werewolves of other breeds, a few favor spending time with their own kind. Many such lupus either belong to the Red Talon tribe — a society known for its genocidal policies toward humans — or they at least agree with its philosophy. Even a lupus who trusts the homids in her pack may be overpowered by the call of the wild. She may trust her packmates with her very life but still feel a longing for the company of wolves.

### *Metis*

Metis werewolves don't belong in either human or lupine society; their parents are neither wolves nor humans. A metis is the child of two werewolves. Garou law forbids werewolves from breeding with each other, but such acts of "incest" do occur. Garou who commit these acts are usually ostracized, or sometimes killed outright, but not without reason: Their offspring, the victims of inbreeding and recessive genes, are always sterile and deformed.

Every metis has a deformity of some kind. Long ago, these bastard children were cast out or killed. But now, as the Garou race is dying out, metis are accepted reluctantly and grudgingly in Garou society. The parents are usually exiled, since their shame is too great for them to raise the bastard cub themselves. Instead, other werewolves raise metis cubs. A metis cub grows up in a werewolf community called a *sept*, usually a rural one far from the watchful eyes of innocent humans.

A metis may undergo his First Change early in life — around the same time a human child begins to walk — or he may stay trapped in his monstrous birth form until early adolescence (usually at eight to 10 years of age). There's really no way to tell when it will occur. For these and other reasons, metis children are kept hidden from human society. Throughout childhood, they are treated with scorn and disdain. Elders teach them responsibility by giving them tasks to do for the *sept*, but these tasks are almost always drudgery. A high-ranking metis may have the task of watching over a *sept*'s metis cubs. If the *sept* also includes lupus cubs or homid children, elders usually raise them separately. Despite this segregation, metis grow up learning the intricacies of Garou culture, and they are intimately familiar with the workings of their *sept*.

As they grow older, metis find shapechanging relatively easy, especially when the threat of danger is nearby. Therefore, they are recruited to help defend their *sept* throughout their adolescence. Those who survive may undergo their Rite of Passage, join a pack and be accepted by a tribe. However, they are still considered second-class citizens, and their deformities are still obvious. Until his dying day, each metis must display his stigma openly at all times within the territory of the *sept*. A few metis are able to conceal their genetic flaws at least partially when among humans, but their relatives hate them all the more for "cheating nature." As a result, the average metis is a hostile, bitter creature who may never trust others enough to join a pack. The few that can overcome this hatred are tragic figures. Even if their packmates accept them fully, Garou outside the pack hardly ever return their admiration or affection.

### *Forms*

A werewolf always feels most comfortable in the form she grew up in, which is known as her *breed form*. For instance, homid werewolves prefer to wear a human skin, largely because they are the most adept at dealing with mankind. When a werewolf shapeshifts into a human being, he is said to be in *Homid form* (with a capital "H"). By contrast, lupus-breed werewolves prefer having sharpened teeth and claws, warm fur and the heightened senses that come from being a wolf. When a werewolf shapeshifts into a wolf, he has taken *Lupus form*. When in this form, he is quite obviously a wolf. A werewolf trying to pass himself off as a "wild dog" is either demented, a disgrace or a buffoon.

Most metis spend their adolescent years defending the *sept* that raised them. When someone sounds the call to battle, they prefer to take a form halfway between Homid and Lupus. This shape is their battle form, the infamous *Crinos form*. A werewolf in *Crinos* is a killing machine, a massive, nine-foot tall monster plodding to battle on two stocky legs. The very sight of one conjures up images of an age long gone, when massive shapeshifters stalked the Earth and herded their flocks of human breeding stock. Homids and lupus can "shift to *Crinos*," too; they're just used to a different way of life.

If you ask a werewolf how he sees himself, he will usually think of his breed form first. A werewolf is born in his breed form, and he keeps it until his First Change. A metis is born in his *Crinos* form, in rare cases even killing the mother who gave birth to him. Cynical werewolves insist that such tragedies further prove that their laws are right: The mother's act of incest results in her death.

Homid form and Lupus form are the two extremes of shapeshifting — shifting completely from a man into a wolf for the first time is a brutal and painful ordeal. Eventually it becomes easy, and werewolves learn to make more subtle changes. For instance, they may take a shape halfway between Homid and *Crinos*, one halfway between *Crinos* and Lupus, or even (with great effort) temporarily shift a small part of the body. Regardless of breed, any werewolf can shift freely between these forms, but he will always be most familiar with his breed form. These three skins — Homid, Lupus and *Crinos* form — are the most commonly worn, and they reflect three very different aspects of Garou society.

### *Delirium*

When a human sees a werewolf in his true *Crinos* form, suppressed racial memories of the distant past rise from her subconscious. Because werewolves culled human "herds" systematically for three thousand years, they have scarred the collective psyche of the human race permanently. If a human sees a werewolf in his true and terrifying majesty, overwhelming fear and madness results. Garou call this phenomenon the *Delirium*.

The *Delirium* may be seen as a sort of supernatural blessing, for it prevents the horror of the primeval world from returning. Humans never see *Crinos* Garou as they really are. Instead, they rationalize such sightings away instinctively, concocting elaborate and horrific stories about what they thought they saw. They may not see anything at all, simply reacting to something they will never remember. Because of the terror of *Delirium*, most humans refuse to accept that werewolves are real, even when confronted with very direct evidence. The

racial memories run so deep that it's a rare and strong-willed human who can see so much as a photograph of a Crinos-form Garou and not subconsciously dismiss it as "some sort of hoax."

But despite the protection this fear affords, the Garou cannot afford to take chances. Werewolves who unleash the panic of the Delirium without good cause are punished severely or possibly exiled. Their survival depends on staying hidden and acting discreetly; indiscretion has its consequences. Werewolves hunting in human cities are loath to force the Delirium without a very good reason. Since the Concord, they have kept their existence secret, maintaining the *Veil*, the illusion that the primitive supernatural world no longer exists. If even the slightest chance exists that a werewolf's shapeshifting was caught on film, for instance, the werewolves and their human kin will move heaven and earth to make sure that the footage isn't brought to daylight. Even if one human in a thousand believes what he sees, that's far, far too many.

Kinfolk are unaffected by the Delirium. After all, they possess Garou blood; they see their relations as they really are. Some werewolves choose to keep in very close contact with their Kin, and they are very open with them. Therefore, the *Veil* does not always apply to Kinfolk. Because they can see the world of the werewolves for what it really is, many are eager to work with their relations. Many, however, become resentful and bitter that they are just poor cousins the werewolves call on whenever they're needed, rather than "true Garou."

## *Auspices*

At the moment a werewolf is born, she inherits an ancient legacy. Her breed will shape her view of the world, and one day, her tribe will teach her how to survive. Her fate in life, on the other hand, is shaped by something far more mystical. The phase of the moon at the instant of a werewolf's birth determines her *auspice*, the role she is destined to play in Garou society. Every werewolf upholds one of these five aspects and receives mystical gifts to help fulfill it. A shapeshifter is strongest when the moon's phase corresponds to her auspice; the first time each month a werewolf sees her auspice moon, she is filled with an uncontrollable rush of energy. The Garou's greatest warriors, for instance, are born during the full moon, which has led to the most infamous werewolf legends.

**New Moon:** Children born during the new moon are destined to become great tricksters, for sly creatures stalk unseen in the darkness when the light of the moon is absent. New Moons are masters of stealth and guile. Their talent for theft is so great that they often love to mock the orderly ways of Garou society, a trait their packmates accept grudgingly. With this freedom comes a carefree disregard for society's laws and a wicked sense of humor. Such a cub is fated to become a *Ragabash*.

**Crescent Moon:** The crescent moon cuts through darkness like a knife, bringing spectral glory to the landscape below. Cubs born under this auspice are of a mystical disposition, often fascinated by the supernatural and the spiritual. Long before a Crescent's Rite of Passage, elders teach her myth, lore, the mysteries of cosmology and the secrets of the occult. By the time she comes of age, the cub is ready to serve as a *Theurge*.

**Half Moon:** Just as the half moon is caught between light and shadow, so too are cubs born under this auspice. Werewolves are faced with many conflicts and contradictions—the struggle between man and nature, the balance of human thoughts and

lupine instincts, existence as a creature of both flesh and spirit or even the conflict between good and evil. Half Moons can see both sides of any issue, which makes them expert mediators and judges. As they are prepared for their Rites of Passage, they are taught the intricacies of Garou law. Such a cub is destined to become a *Philodox*.

**Gibbous Moon:** Cubs born under this sign are known as Moon Dancers, since they're inspired easily by the radiant moonlight this auspice moon brings. Although some may see them as flighty or temperamental, they have terrific bursts of artistic insight. When the moon is bright, they are often moved to song or story. Many develop phenomenal memories, especially for the sagas and histories of great Garou. Because of their great passion and sociable bravado, such cubs become *Galliards*.

**Full Moon:** When a cub is born under the full moon, she grows up full of rage and fury. When her auspice moon hangs in the heavens, she is eager to unleash her wrath and give in to the glory of bloodlust. Like the wolfman of legend, she revels in violence and feral frenzies, meting punishment with her cruel claws. After years of intense physical training, she will howl at the moon that she is *Ahroun*.

## *The Twelve Tribes*

Once a Garou completes his Rite of Passage, he is welcomed into one of the Twelve Tribes of the Garou Nation. Before the completion of this rite, he is a cub, and he is treated as little more than a child. He may not learn tribal Gifts or receive the tribe's deepest secrets. Even metis cubs are shut out from such sacred knowledge; they're welcomed enough to work for the sept, but not enough to receive its privileges. After the rite, however, the tribe teaches each new cub the ways of the world and how to conquer it.

Each of the Twelve Tribes originally came from a different region of the world. Each has its own tribal homeland, a place in the world where it has always been strongest. Each tribe's Kinfolk and societies reflect these different cultures. During the ancient agreement of the Concord, the 16 major tribes set aside their differences and began the development of a communal society. Three of them have been destroyed. One has rejected the Western Concordat and found other allies. Now only 12 of them remain allied in their defense of the world.

**Black Furies:** In a tribe composed exclusively of women, the Furies act as defenders of the Goddess and protectors of her most sacred places. Originating in Ancient Greece, the tribe has since inspired great legends of female heroes.

**Bone Gnawers:** This urban tribe is tied instinctually to life on the street. Long ago, they began as scavengers in India and Northern Africa. Now they stalk wherever the homeless and desperate struggle to survive.

**Children of Gaia:** As peaceful warriors and gentle mediators, the Children favor healing and understanding over bloodshed. No other tribe is as committed to helping humanity.

**Fianna:** Exclusively of Celtic descent, the Fianna are known for their wild passions and artistic insight. They are famous for their skilled bards, great warriors and mystical ties to the fae.

**Get of Fenris:** Surviving the harsh lands of Northern Europe, the Fenrir have developed a savage, bloodthirsty and fatalistic view of life. As one of the most martial tribes of werewolves, they are also unparalleled at dealing in death.

**Glass Walkers:** For thousands of years, the Walkers hid in human cities, living as wolves among sheep. Other werewolves typically mistrust them, not only for their proficiency with high technology, but also for their love of human cities and culture.

**Red Talons:** Composed entirely of *lupus Garou*, this tribe is well known for its fierce hatred of humans. Talons thrive whenever they can commune with the mysteries of the wild.

**Shadow Lords:** Ruthless, devious and ambitious — the Lords value political power over all else, and they are fascinated by the politics of Garou society. By struggling against their rivals in Eastern Europe for millennia, they have become masters of diplomacy and Machiavellian intrigue.

**Silent Striders:** Once they dwelt in the fabled lands of Khem in Ancient Egypt, but no longer. Now they roam the Earth, following an insatiable wanderlust. Striders typically join packs that love to travel, often communing with gypsies, wanderers and the restless spirits of the dead along the way.

**Silver Fangs:** Once the unquestioned rulers of Garou society, the Fangs are descended from some of the greatest werewolves in history. Lineage and ancestry is critical to them. Since their glorious days in their Russian homelands, they have fallen prey to tragic flaws, often spiraling into despair and madness.

**Uktena:** Indigenous peoples from throughout the world have contributed to this eclectic and mysterious tribe. Ethnically diverse and intensely curious, they hoard knowledge of magic from all over the world... as well as a deep understanding of the occult that they dare not share with outsiders.

**Wendigo:** This tribe is descended from Native American Garou. Their strongest septs are in the northernmost portions of North America, where they endure some of the harshest conditions on Earth.

Each of the Twelve Tribes reflects the history and culture from a different part of the world, and with good reason. During the Impergium, when great heroes led their flocks of humans away from their rivals, their Kinfolk eventually formed the foundations of different human cultures. For example, many Get of Fenris have Scandinavian or Germanic ancestors, while Wendigo Kinfolk are distinctly Native American. While Garou Kinfolk can breed with werewolves of any tribe, most prefer to remain within their own culture. Most tribes are outraged when others place designs on their Kin.

A werewolf is not born into a tribe; he must prove himself worthy during his Rite of Passage first. A cub usually makes the same choice as his mother or father when deciding what tribe to petition, but he does not have to do so. Every werewolf has a lineage stretching back for generations. Throughout most of Garou history, the vast majority of cubs have made the same choices as their ancestors. A cub with a long lineage will be hounded to "make the right choice." After all, forsaking your heritage is a difficult path to follow.

Theoretically, a cub can approach any tribe, but a cub who is obviously abandoning his ancestors' legacy has to work twice as hard as an "adopted" cliath. If your father was a Bone Gnawer, you'll have to work your ass off to join the Get of Fenris. Often, a cub receives dreams and visions of his past during his adolescence, but some of the greatest heroes of Garou legend have defied their destinies.

A few tribes refuse to take anyone who doesn't meet their standards. The Black Furies accept only women; if a Black Fury

gives birth to a non-metis male cub, he must eventually petition another tribe to accept him. Silver Fangs will not recognize a hero who does not have an extensive lineage of Fang ancestors. Red Talons accept only *lupus Garou*. Bone Gnawers, by contrast, will accept almost anyone, including the most twisted and deformed metis. Some tribes have rites for tracing a werewolf's ancestry. When performed properly, the rite may reveal visions of an ancestor's greatest accomplishments... and epic failures.

Many Garou are very particular about their lineage, reciting the names of their greatest ancestors as they introduce themselves. The noblest are "pure bred," regarded as obviously exemplary specimens of their tribal heritage. Pure breeds are impressive not only because of their superior breeding, but because dozens of generations of ancestors have chosen to support the same tribe. In the mystical world of the Garou, it is even possible for a werewolf to be aware of his ancestor spirits. A werewolf can reject this idea utterly, but it is also possible to summon up these memories, or even channel an ancestor to act through a young hero.

As the End Times approach, of course, the Twelve Tribes are increasingly eager to welcome young cubs into the fold, especially if they have a lineage with their tribe. The stodgiest elders complain that Rites of Passage are nowhere near as taxing or rigorous as they once were. At the end of the rite, the cliath has her tribe's sigil inscribed mystically on her body or tattooed there physically. Once this act is complete, the werewolf may never leave her tribe for another. In short, tribal membership is a choice and an honor, not a birthright.

## *Garou Cosmology*

The Twelve Tribes teach their cubs and cliath the ways of the world, giving them purpose and inspiration. Werewolf cubs are told a distinctly unique legend of why the Earth is dying, a mystical and spiritual account. As is the way of the spirit world, events in the Umbra appear as reflections of the physical world. According to myth, Gaia created the world and all living things in it. When time began, she released three primal forces upon the Earth: the Weaver, the Wyld and the Wurm. These elements of creation are known collectively as the *Triat*. The spirit world is complex, but werewolves can reduce all of its workings to these three primal forces.

The Weaver created all structure in the world, from the highest mountains to the depths of the oceans. She gave birth to a host of spirits to preserve order, and Weaver-spirits have been known for their predictability, ruthlessness and determination since that primal time. Legions of them weave the fabric of reality with long legs and spinnerets, reinforcing the tapestry of creation. In the modern world, wherever law triumphs over anarchy, whenever technology kicks into overdrive, or when anyone rebuilds what has been torn down, werewolves claim that the spirits of the Weaver are scurrying nearby.

The Wyld was the breath of life in the world, allowing the Weaver's creations to thrive. Wherever nature is alive, the Wyld is there. The spirits that serve it are capricious and effervescent, unpredictable and indefatigable. Just as the Weaver brought order, the Wyld brought chaos, surging with energy wherever it could not be contained. Rebellion, frustration and raw feral instinct all give it strength. Yet nature can also be gentle. Behind every serene glen and tranquil brook, the Wyld returns its energy.

Garou mystics say that Gaia created a third force to maintain the balance between order and chaos, between the Weaver and the Wyld. Like a great serpent wriggling through all creation, the primal Wyrm snipped at the threads of creation that could not otherwise be controlled. Once the Wyrm was the force of balance in the world (as the Garou say), but no longer. The mad Weaver grew too ambitious, trying to tip the balance by trapping the Wyrm within its lifeless web. Confined and denied, the Wyrm went slowly insane, and creation listed out of balance.

### *The Truth Revealed*

For mystics, this story is not mere myth. Each portion of the Triat has spawned a host of lesser spirits, mystic servitors who are still at work in the world. In the shadow of creation, in the spirit world of the Umbra, werewolves can see these forces at work. Over the last few centuries, the spirits of the Wyrm have become more powerful than ever before. The most fanatic Garou share a common belief: If there is corruption and misery spreading through the world, the Wyrm is at the heart of it. Beyond all other ideals, the greatest goal of the werewolves is to protect all of creation by destroying the servants of the Wyrm.

The Wyrm's servants have become a cancerous corruption, and its servitors have become the Garou's greatest enemies. For millennia, its rage and hatred has grown to the point of insanity. Its pain ceases only when it can pare back creation, destroying the Weaver's order and polluting the Wyld's purity. The Wyrm can suborn even human beings, especially when they practice sinful and malicious acts. Wherever the Earth is despoiled and befouled, the Wyrm grows stronger. Wherever order is perverted and law is denied, the Wyrm shudders in glory. When humans fall prey to darker emotions, succumbing to vice and sin, the Wyrm exploits more victims. It is beyond reason, and its servants are legion.

The Wyrm's strength is such that it now overpowers the efforts of the werewolves to contain it. In prophecies, in visions and in the world around them, the Garou see evidence that this treacherous evil is achieving its goal to destroy all creation and free itself forever. Therefore, the world that remains is cold and bleak. As prophecy has foretold, the werewolves must fight to the last to defeat the Wyrm. Now is the time of the final confrontation, the Apocalypse. Confronted by a dying world, they have contained their rage for far too long. This is the final battle, and so shapechangers are returning from the shadows, bringing heroism, valor and horror back into the light of day.

### *The Weaver's Webs*

Fanatical werewolves believe that their only duty in life is to defeat — or even kill — the Wyrm. It's a very direct philosophy, but one with which some cubs and cliath just cannot agree. A heretical idea is spreading throughout the Western Concordiat: The Garou's real enemy isn't the Wyrm, but the Weaver. After all, it is the Weaver that is responsible for the largest human cities. She was the primal force that first drove the Great Serpent insane, and she brings her own brand of suffering on the world as she continues her mad designs.

Most elders are horrified by this idea. Some refuse to send packs to investigate the mad Weaver's activities, and some even refuse to award renown for succeeding in such enterprises. Nonetheless, a new generation of cubs has dedicated itself to shredding the Weaver's webs, regardless of what their mangy, crusty old elders might believe.

### *The Lost and the Fallen*

Once there were 16 tribes in the world, but only 12 remain in the Western Concordiat. One of the original 16, the Stargazers, has begun isolating its septs from the rest of the tribes. Three other tribes have fallen before the talons of the Wyrm. Each of their stories is a source of despair, grief and shame. Although many young cubs learn about their ancestor's mistakes, most elders are loath to speak too openly on these taboo subjects. After all, the fates of the Fallen reveal some of the deepest and most tragic flaws of the werewolf race.

### *The White Howlers*

Once they were guardians of the frozen north, heroes who sent their cubs into the deepest pits of hell to prove their prowess. Descended from the ancient Picts, the Howlers not only dominated the harsh wilds of Scotland, but also attempted to master the stygian depths of the Underworld. With each passing generation, their heroes descended into the Labyrinth of the Black Spiral, a horrifying Realm of the spirit world.

Yet as they journeyed deeper and deeper into the Abyss, they were eventually overcome by the very evil they taunted. In retribution, dark forces rose from the earth to devour the Howlers' caerns and drag their greatest heroes back into hell. Torture, torment and mystic revelations shattered their minds. A few survivors emerged, but they had become twisted, mutated horrors by then. Thus arose the Wyrm-spawned tribe of Black Spiral Dancers.

The Spirals are still alive today. They still capture their werewolf rivals, often turning them to the service of the Wyrm. The White Howlers, on the other hand, are extinct. Many werewolves prefer to forget their memory, refusing to contemplate that any Garou can be corrupted so thoroughly by the Wyrm.

### *The Croatan*

As one of the tribes of "Pure Ones," this Native American tribe originally guarded the shores of North America. Once they believed that they could live side-by-side with the early European settlers, but with these incursions came evils the tribe had never encountered before. The Eater-of-Souls, one of the three major aspects of the Wyrm, exploited starvation and despair, gaining enough strength to manifest in the physical world. Because of their ancestors' pledge to the Goddess, the Croatan decided to fight this evil to the bitter end.

Outside the famed Roanoke colony off the Carolina coast, the Croatan sacrificed themselves one by one to drive this evil from the world. Countless heroes faced the Wyrm's titanic beast, some braving ultimate evil by rushing straight into its hideous, gaping maw. The legend remains, but both the tribe and the colonists are gone, memorialized by a few carvings on gnarled trees. Many modern heroes still believe that it is worth the ultimate sacrifice to drive the Wyrm from the world; few of them dare gainsay the lesson of the Croatan.

### *The Bunyip*

The saga of the Bunyip is not one of glory, but shame. In many ways, it is the most tragic of the three tales. The tribe was not slain by the talons of the Wyrm, but by its own brethren. During the Impergium, the Bunyip tribe was strongest in Australia. European Garou and their settler Kinfolk, eager for a new

home far from the Wyrm, invaded the Bunyip's tribal homelands and fought with them for dominance. In some caerns, Black Spirals set the Garou against each other. Overcome with despair at their brothers' pettiness, Bunyip in other caerns stalked off into the spirit world of the Dreamtime, never to return.

Over the course of centuries, the Bunyip and their strange Kinfolk, the Tasmanian wolves, were driven to extinction. Tribe continues to war with tribe, and since few would dare admit that they are capable of destroying each other completely, storytellers whisper the tale of the Bunyip only when they are most ashamed.

### *The Stargazers*

Although they are still quite active and alive, the Stargazers have also become a source of great sadness for the Garou. The Stargazers are an Eastern tribe known for their command of mysticism, their contemplative natures and their enigmatic philosophies. Their history is decidedly different from that of the other tribes. In the West, the War of Rage brought about the deaths of thousands of shapechangers of all species. In the East, more species survived and continued to hide from the werewolves. In fact, many Eastern Garou rejected the harsh philosophies of their Western brethren, remaining estranged from the Western Concordiat. The Stargazers were once an exception. No more.

The Stargazers have worked with their Western brethren for centuries, yet it has hardly been an equitable arrangement. Over the last 200 years, the tribe's homelands have fallen to the Wyrm. While the Stargazers have sided with Western Garou continually to fight on other continents, Asian sacred sites have repeatedly been captured and corrupted. With each successive generation, more Stargazers have undertaken journeys to the East to contemplate their history... often dying in the process.

Now the Stargazers have abandoned the Concord and found new allies. Their tribe has always been fascinated by enigmas, and the other shapechangers of the world are certainly enigmatic. The Stargazers have found common ground with the mysterious *hengeyokai*, the shapechangers of the East. Part of the tribe's compromise involved turning away from the Western Concordiat and joining the *hengeyokai*'s Beast Courts. Stargazers have always favored peace and reason over pointless warfare, therefore, they have formally abandoned the ways of the West. They are returning to their old traditions, reclaiming what's left of their culture, heritage, sacred sites and Kinfolk.

The decisions made by tribal elders now weigh heavily on the hearts of younger Stargazers. Many are reluctant to leave packs that they have run with for countless years, and some do not want to abandon sacred places they have pledged to defend. Yet throughout the tribe, more and more are becoming fascinated with their past, sometimes receiving visions and dreams in the depths of their meditations. Two unusual philosophies have seized them. First, like the *hengeyokai*, more Stargazers are accepting the idea that the Apocalypse need not be the end of creation, but is perhaps the dawn of a new age. It is as though a great wheel is turning, and while the Wyrm may gnaw at its axle, there is a chance that the cycle of creation and destruction may renew itself.

A few have integrated a far more heretical idea. In the East, the Wyrm is not regarded with the same revulsion as it is in the West, since many still see it as a force of balance. It is a desperate force spiraling out of control, to be certain, but it is still one that must ultimately pare back the madness of the

Weaver and begin the new age. As a result, other Garou have answered the Stargazers' decision with resentment and suspicion. The Stargazers who remain in the West are met with increasing contempt, continually torn between the decisions of their tribal elders and loyalty to their former septs and packmates.

### *Caerns*

From the time when the tribes first watched over their earliest homelands, they have held a deep understanding of the mystical world. The modern world is a shadow of what the Earth once was, for mysticism and magic are dying. Only a few places remain where the spirit of the ancient world lives on. Near menhirs and burial mounds, along ley lines and "dragon tracks," decaying in old "haints" and cemeteries, mystical nodes of ancient energy remain. Just as the sun has its solar flares, there are places in the world where this primal power leaks into the mundane world. Werewolves have claimed some of them as their own, building temples and shrines to protect their power. They perform rituals to keep them alive, fight continually for control of them and meditate on deep and spiritual mysteries inside them. The Garou call these places *caerns*.

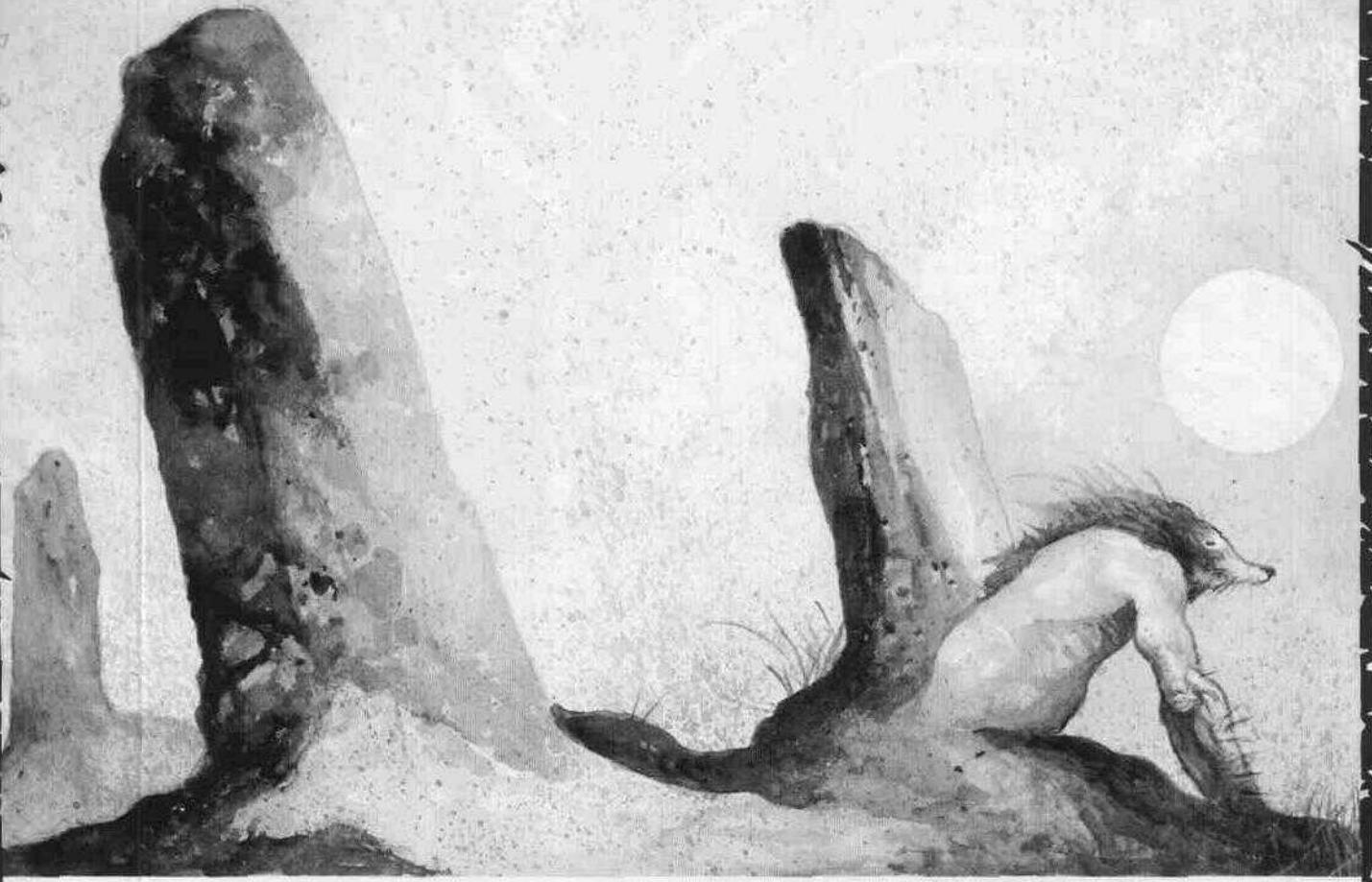
Caerns are critical to Garou culture. They act as sites of worship, meeting places and even burial grounds for fallen heroes. By tapping into their power, werewolves become stronger. Mystics use them as sacred "lightning rods" to summon ancient spirits or awesome mystical energies. Because so many werewolves are drawn to such places, some settle down and dedicate their lives to protecting a single caern. Garou society is based around the formation of these extended packs, known as *septs*.

Each tribe dominates a handful of caerns, but most septs are communal. Tribal caerns often reflect the philosophy or history of the septs that protect them. A sept led by the Children of Gaia may meditate in a serene glen, while Shadow Lords septs look down from craggy, stormy mountaintops. Each caern is also dedicated to a particular spirit, often one that serves the dominant tribe. When the proper rites are performed, the spirit blesses the werewolves who serve it.

Of course, other supernatural creatures are drawn to these sacred sites as well, claiming some of them as their own. Ghosts haunt the most decayed and dilapidated ones. Sorcerers seek out caerns and deplete them of their quintessential energies systematically. Faeries allegedly defend their own sites of power so that they may remain eternally young. Minions of evil may occupy and corrupt them as well, turning them to the power of the Wyrm. Great heroes gain renown by recovering these sites, but other occult societies reclaim them when these heroes fail.

### *Urban Caerns*

Many ancient caerns have been swallowed up by rapidly growing cities. A few "urban caerns" retain their spiritual properties as nodes of mystic might in the midst of urban desolation. As more of the natural world dies, young packs of Garou are willing to brave the dangers of the cities to reclaim what was once theirs. Such quests are not without risk. If humans see werewolves stalking about in their true forms near an urban caern, particularly in Crinos form, urban legends and horror stories result. If, for instance, werewolves revel through a city park each full moon, people will avoid that spot instinctively. Seizing and maintaining an urban caern requires a great deal of secrecy, but the effort is worth it for the power of a sacred site.



## *Garou Society*

A werewolf's primal instincts make him a monster, but the noble aspirations of his society make him Garou. Shapechangers live in a vicious, uncaring and brutal world, but they survive because they have learned to live together. Hidden from human society, they preserve their own laws, their own faiths and their own politics. Life is harsh — elders must often choose who among them will live and who will die — but the intricacies of Garou society place them above the status of mere animals... or petty humans.

### *The Litany*

Werewolves are often depicted as solitary monsters, but by gathering in septs and protecting caerns, the Garou have developed a communal culture. Across the ages, they have codified a system of law, handing it down from one generation to the next. As one would expect, it is a largely oral tradition that is subjected to endless interpretation. To preserve the old ways, the Garou have created the *Litany*, a great song of ages containing the traditions, codes and laws of their people. In its full form, it is as much an epic poem as a legal code. Chanting it in its entirety can take hours. One tribe of werewolves, the Fianna, are the acknowledged masters of this epic. Four times a year, they gather in their tribal homelands to recite it in its entirety.

Most modern werewolves prefer a straightforward culture with little patience for legal subterfuge. To simplify matters, the Litany can be summarized in 13 basic precepts. If a werewolf violates one of these laws, he'll usually be aware of his transgres-

sion. Each tribe, of course, has its own views on right and wrong. In fact, a disparity often exists between what Garou elders preach and what werewolves actually do. Masters of Garou law can cite dozens of examples of precedent, but as fewer cubs learn to chant the details, more argue ways to bend the rules in their favor.

#### *Garou Shall Not Mate With Garou*

**The Law:** Werewolves should mate only with humans or wolves. Because metis offspring are deformed, twisted or even insane, Garou are forbidden to mate with their own kind. Of course, this law is enforced largely because of age-old prejudices against metis. This stricture forms the basis for some of the greatest tragedies of Garou culture. Galliards have been known to move listeners to tears by telling ballads of two werewolves who fall in love and can never express their passion... or who do so at the cost of their lives.

**The Reality:** The number of metis in Garou culture is increasing steadily, showing that this law is not as inviolate as it once was. A handful of tribes claim to actually be kinder to their metis than others. Unfortunately, these claims are often little more than tactics used to recruit and exploit metis for tasks lupus and homids would just as soon avoid.

#### *Combat the Wyrm Wherever It Dwells and Whenever It Breeds*

**The Law:** The Wyrm is a source of evil in the world. Gaia created the werewolves to protect humanity, and destroying the Wyrm is the most direct way to do so. The fastest way for a Garou to become respected is to prove himself in battle against the servants of the Wyrm. The Apocalypse may be close at hand, but



the surest way to delay it is to fight without restraint against the Great Serpent and its minions.

**The Reality:** Werewolves suspect that these days are the Final Days of the world, especially as age-old prophecies have become reality. Even if it were possible, some whisper softly, killing the Wyrm would only delay the inevitable. Jaded elders are distracted by other tasks, such as securing territory, contesting for political power or crippling their rivals. Accepting that the Apocalypse has already begun is a bit too much for some Garou, who would much rather build their own reputations and legacies.

When confronted with this part of the Litany, cubs typically ask questions their elders are loath to answer. What happens to a Garou that is possessed, but not fully in the thrall of the Wyrm? Should he be destroyed? Is a Wyrm-spirit really destroyed if it is "killed," or will it just re-form somewhere else? Can werewolves expect to change the course of history by destroying all of the Wyrm's servants, or should they choose their battles more carefully? A growing number of young wolves demand that the Weaver is just as dangerous as the Wyrm. Wasn't it the Weaver that forced the Wyrm to such heights of insanity? Such dangerous ideas must be whispered carefully. More zealous werewolves have been known to challenge and kill Garou who speak such treasonous thoughts.

### *Respect the Territory of Another*

**The Law:** Whenever a Garou approaches another werewolf's territory, he must announce himself first and ask permission to enter. The traditional method involves the Howl of Introduction, reciting one's name, sept, totem, tribe and home sept. Many Silver Fangs and Shadow Lords also insist on

a visitor's lineage, establishing whether he is pure bred. In addition to these precautions, a werewolf should mark his territory, whether with scent or clawed sigils, to keep peace with other Garou.

**The Reality:** As the population of humans in the world keeps growing, howling and urinating on trees becomes impractical. In urban caerns, some technologically proficient werewolves (like the Glass Walkers) prefer a telephone call, email or fax. Many younger werewolves ignore this part of the Litany entirely, considering it a "fascist" tradition in what should be a communal culture. Who cares what your ancestors did centuries ago? A Garou should be judged by what he does today.

### *Accept an Honorable Surrender*

**The Law:** Duels between werewolves are common. While many homids prefer to talk their way out of disputes, most tribes emphasize martial prowess, stressing trial by ordeal and single combat. As a result, many werewolves die. As the race dies out, peaceful Garou have reemphasized this dictum. They can't stop their septmates from killing each other, but because of this portion of the Litany, a werewolf being attacked by another Garou can end a duel peacefully by exposing his throat. The loser shouldn't suffer a loss of reputation or renown for doing so, but a victorious Garou should be praised for his mercy. Theoretically, any dueling Garou is honor-bound to accept a surrender.

**The Reality:** In practice, peaceful werewolves invoke this law freely, but cunning Garou are far more selective. After all, in the heat of battle, anything can happen. Even the most feral and violent werewolf struggles to obey this law, but when blood begins to flow, instincts overcome reason. Some warriors are

infamous for "accidentally" overlooking a surrender and sinking their teeth into an exposed throat.

### *Submission to Those of Higher Station*

**The Law:** Like the wolves with whom they breed, werewolves maintain a strictly hierarchical society. Someone's always alpha, and some poor fool always ends up skulking behind the rest of the pack. Therefore, the concepts of Renown and Rank are integral to Garou society. A werewolf must always honor reasonable requests from higher-ranking Garou.

**The Reality:** An increasing number of cubs and cliath have little respect for their elders. If Garou society has done so little to heal the world, how exactly are elders worthy of respect? Each tribe has its own culture, and not all of them believe in kowtowing to tyrants or humoring egotistical alphas with long lineages. A werewolf will honor the elders of his tribe generally, but opinions vary when it comes to the highly ranked of other tribes.

Bone Gnawers have a habit of disregarding this dictum entirely. In their eyes, all werewolves are equal. Otherwise, they'd find themselves bowing and scraping to everyone. Children of Gaia and Silent Striders respect personal choice, and therefore, they prefer to earn obedience rather than demanding it. Get of Fenris respect any elder... as long as said elder can kick their asses. Red Talons prefer not to hear "monkey babbles" about complicated hierarchies; you should know your place instinctively. Shadow Lords and Silver Fangs, on the other hand, enforce this law with iron fists and sharpened claws.

### *The First Share of the Kill for the Greatest in Station*

**The Law:** Elders are well known for invoking this custom repeatedly. While this "kill clause" originally applied to hunting, it has since been expanded to include spoils of war. In theory, the most renown Garou has a right to the most powerful fetishes found by their packmates. Silver Fangs and Shadow Lords demand what they see as their due; other tribes accept grudgingly.

**The Reality:** Pack mentality may be a strong instinct, but not everyone thinks the same way. Most individuals wouldn't abide handing over all the loot they find to one companion. A respected Garou can get away with using this law against her packmates for a while — and maybe even get the elders to back her up — but there are consequences, of course. They begin with mistrust and end with blows.

### *Ye Shall Not Eat the Flesh of Humans*

**The Law:** This portion of the Litany was first sung shortly after the Concord. Stargazer mystics noticed that many werewolves of the Western Concordat took a bit too much pleasure in devouring human flesh. Such cannibals found themselves vulnerable to the corruption of the Wyrm. Elders grown fat off human stock also became weak at stalking and killing more challenging prey, like the Wyrm-spirits they should have been hunting. In the 21st century, this law is more than a simple spiritual matter. Human beings now consume a frightening amount of preservatives. Their chemical-laden diet makes their flesh unwholesome.

**The Reality:** Werewolves are feral creatures, and they lose control occasionally. Far too many times, a hero gazing at the full moon has been overwhelmed by his rage, awakening the next morning with a strange taste in his mouth... and a craving for

more. Red Talons quietly ignore this portion of the Litany; some hunt and devour humans openly. One atavistic camp of Bone Gnawers, the Man-Eaters, bases entire rites around cannibalism. As for the Shadow Lord tribe, they consider this law a moot point. They have more effective ways to dispose of human victims....

### *Respect Those Beneath Ye — All Are of Gaia*

**The Law:** The werewolves of human legend are skulking solitary monsters, but Garou are communal creatures. Their legendary ancestors pledged to become the world's protectors, so they must respect every creature's place in the natural world. Every Garou is likewise worthy of respect. Chivalry is a classic Garou concept, and chivalrous behavior is a respectable way to gain renown.

**The Reality:** All septs may cite this dictum, but not all tribes regard their cubs, cliath and metis Garou the same way. Shadow Lords twist this law's meaning, applying only what they see as the "proper amount of respect" to lesser creatures. Get of Fenris won't kill their weaker septmates openly, but they'll put them through sheer hell, giving them the "honor of earning respect." Bone Gnawers just laugh at this precept. They sure as hell don't get respect, and who could be lower in station than them?

Fortunately, lupine instincts often keep these practices in check. Wolves often show respect for their prey — human Kinfolk marvel when a wolf looks deeply into the eyes of the animal it is about to kill. Noble Garou have even been known to mourn the passing of their foes, earning the respect of others in the process. Werewolves kill when it is necessary, but must be careful not to degenerate into unthinking monsters.

### *The Vess Shall Not Be Lifted*

Here, the law and reality are the same. Werewolves must be discreet when acting among humans. This practice is far more than simple respect for the Concord, the decision to respect humanity's right to its own civilization. The world is a dangerous place. Human hunters, religious fanatics, ancient vampires and far more sinister supernatural creatures stalk the night. And, of course, the servants of the Wyrm are lurking everywhere, exploiting the weak. If werewolves choose to act like monsters, other creatures will hunt them like the beasts they are.

Garou also have an obligation to protect humanity. When humans see werewolves lumbering about in Crinos form, insanity grips them, and they concoct all sorts of outrageous rationales for what they've seen. Fear mounts, panic results, and the populace resorts to drastic measures of defense. In short, rampaging werewolves can cause almost as much damage as the Wyrm creatures they hunt.

### *Do Not Suffer Thy People to Tend Thy Sickness*

**The Law:** Sadly, people at war do not always have the resources to care for their infirm. Long ago, an infirm, aged or mortally wounded Garou would be torn to pieces by his septmates. Such a pitiable hero should not suffer further. In the modern world, it is considered more dignified to let such an elder choose how to end his own life. In Garou legends, many of the greatest heroes simply set out on one last journey, never to return.

**The Reality:** The Children of Gaia vociferously argue against this law. They believe in a natural death, caring for their elderly through the most prolonged and horrifying illnesses. A few older Garou, especially those crippled by depression and

remorse, simply return to human or lupine society to die, making peace with the life they left behind.

### *The Leader May Be Challenged at Any Time During Peace*

**The Law:** A werewolf's pack mentality may be strong, but he should not tolerate a weak alpha. If no immediate threat is nearby, a Garou of sufficient rank may challenge the pack leader for his position. A contest results, usually a duel, a test of wits or a simple, snarling display of intimidation. In a pack, this contest is resolved quickly and decisively. In a sept, the assembled werewolves enact the contest with great drama.

**The Reality:** An extremely powerful alpha may be virtually immune to challenge. Some packs challenge their leader one at a time, wearing him down until he must relent. Tyrannical Shadow Lords insist continually that greater threats are lurking nearby, postponing the most dangerous duels. Cunning werewolves insist on choosing the type of duel that should result, playing off their rivals' known weaknesses. In short, alphas who claw their way to the top through treachery and deceit defend their authority with the same methods.

### *The Leader May Not Be Challenged During Wartime*

**The Law:** The most dangerous spirits are capable of manifesting in the physical world; in their true aspects, they are monstrous in size and power. For werewolves, pack tactics are the best defense against such invasions. Therefore, obedience in a pack is essential. Once a fight begins, the pack alpha's word is law. A packmate who disobeys may be punished or assaulted by his companions, or possibly even by his sept, after the danger has passed.

**The Reality:** After bloodlust passes, rage gives way to reason. Half Moons may want to judge why this lapse in obedience took place. If a werewolf was under magical control, corrupted or possessed by the Wyrm — or if the alpha was just startlingly incompetent — such disobedience may be excused, especially if the action saved a pack or the sept. Unfortunately, any renown the wolf would have received for her valor may be canceled out by her insubordination.

### *Ye Shall Take No Action That Causes a Caern to Be Violated*

This law is obeyed as strictly as the need to preserve the Veil. Caerns surge with mystical energy, the lifeblood of the Earth. If one is destroyed or corrupted, part of the Earth dies, and so does the power of the Garou. A werewolf who leads a proven or potential enemy to a hidden caern is punished severely, even if the act was unintentional.

### *Justice*

In Garou society, most simple crimes and mistakes are easy to redress. If a problem looms, an elder can usually caution a younger werewolf of a potential error. Garou settle disputes by a reprimand, a mediator or possibly a duel. If these measures are not enough, disapproval from a werewolf's pack, sept or tribe is typically enough to correct misbehavior. Most ambitious cliath do not want to lose renown. However, a few crimes are so severe that they must be punished severely. Simply put, someone must pay when the Litany is violated.

Each sept and tribe has its own methods of conducting trials. Get of Fenris and Red Talons prefer trial by combat, measuring a werewolf by his deeds, not his words. By contrast, Shadow Lords petition sept leaders with lengthy and elaborate arguments, intimidating anyone who refuses their right to speak. Bone Gnawers have a democratic approach to such affairs, convening a jury of peers to pass judgment... even if the jurors are easy to bribe. Uktenea summon spirits to discern the truth, while Glass Walkers employ modern criminology. While one or two tribes may dominate a sept, many caerns attract a wide array of Garou. In these cases, the sept leader may choose the methods of her tribe, the tribe of the highest-ranking Philodox or that of the offender himself. Political consequences arise for each choice.

Once sentence has been passed, a sept enacts a formal rite to punish the offender. If a criminal escapes, the Garou may offer a bounty for his capture... or his skin. The worst punishment is outright ostracism, an offense feared more than death itself. Most Garou believe that great heroes are reborn; some even have visions of past lives to prove it. An outcast, declared a "rogue" or Ronin, is shut out forever from his brothers and sisters. Unless he can commit some great deed to prove his valor, he remains mistrusted and alone. Sadly, fatalistic werewolves convince themselves that there is no future for the Garou as the Apocalypse draws closer. Entire packs of Ronin wander the Earth rejecting the strictures of the Litany completely.

### *Hierarchy*

Every gathering of Garou, from the smallest pack to the largest sept, has a few remarkable similarities. Part of being a werewolf is knowing the ways of wolves. Instinct plays a big part in how they relate to each other. Like wolves, Garou establish a pecking order almost immediately. One among them must become the alpha, and all must obey. In most small gatherings, an alpha proves his dominance by brute force. In larger gatherings, however, doing so is impractical. If a ruler has to fight off rivals constantly, he will soon become too weak to govern properly.

Garou society establishes hierarchy through a system of renown, a measure of a hero's deeds and service to her sept. Constant infighting wounds and weakens a sept, but this system channels such energies in a positive direction. ("If you want to show your strength, cub, then show us how well you hunt! I know of a spirit that intrigues me....") This "caste system" may sound disturbing, but a werewolf's instincts and thousands of years of tribal conditioning reinforce it. Pack instincts demand hierarchy. Every werewolf has his place. Elders rarely need to demonstrate power by abusing their lessors, and their vassals are usually content to serve.

Based on their renown, each werewolf also holds a certain rank in Garou society, and he is often addressed by his proper title. For instance:

—Cubs are at the bottom of the pecking order, treated as little more than children. They're eager to learn, and they ask many confusing questions.

—Once a cub completes her Rite of Passage, she becomes a cliath, a young Garou enlisted continually to perform all sorts of tasks for her sept. Because packs of cliath know that they are in demand, some travel all over the world to learn about Garou society.

—As cliath continue to gain renown, they eventually become fosters. These Garou are educated enough to act as

esteemed emissaries between septs. At this stage in life, an entire pack may undergo a period of fosterage in a distant and seemingly alien caern.

— Adren outrank fostern, often taking on some of the lesser political positions in a sept. By this time, a pack of adren usually limits its travel to a handful of caerns. Political rivalries develop over time.

— Athro outrank all these commoners. They are typically swept up in some of the most perilous and compelling adventures their tribes can offer. Silent Strider messengers have been known to travel around the world to summon the right pack of athro for critical adventures.

— Only the most esteemed and highest-ranking Garou are addressed as *elders*. Even if an elder does not currently serve as a tribal elder, as a sept leader or in some other esteemed position, a werewolf with enough renown is still treated with the greatest forms of respect.

When two Garou of vastly different rank interact — as in a conversation between young claiath and their elders — their relative positions are fairly obvious. When two werewolves have roughly the same rank or renown, social niceties are not so clean-cut. When heroes of equal status disagree, matters may come to blows. Fortunately, Garou society has developed protocols for dealing with such conflict. It has developed ways for Garou to contest for leadership without killing each other: tests of dominance that are usually based on the type of problem facing the sept.

When danger approaches, the power struggle among werewolves is fluid. When many Garou gather, their alpha may change from hour to hour. Since werewolves know instinctively that each auspice has its particular strength, they are usually willing to follow the strongest and most qualified leader of the proper auspice. For instance, the highest-ranking warrior will usually lead a tribe or sept in battle. Once the skirmish is over, if the group is confronted by a devious group of spirits, the warrior may then be defeated in a mental challenge by a clever and cunning mystic. If negotiating skills are needed shortly thereafter, a Philodox known for his social acumen might then challenge the alpha to a different type of contest. When a Garou is especially renowned for his skills, a wise rival steps down from a challenge once he realizes he's outclassed.

Outright challenges are rarely necessary in a pack. A pack of werewolves works together for so long that its members already know who does what best. When a fight breaks out, it's often the Ahroun that becomes alpha. The Galliard usually steps to the fore when someone must address the pack's sept and speak eloquently. A Philodox is an excellent choice at mediating a dispute or conversing with creatures the pack doesn't understand fully, or even resolving disputes within the pack. The Theurge deals best with spirits and mystical problems, often acting as alpha in the Umbra. And, of course, when trickery and guile is needed, the Ragabash leads the pack in matters of mischief and misdirection.

### *Dominance and Submission*

Even if you think the choice for an alpha is obvious, other werewolves may not agree. As the Litany says, as long as a group isn't in the middle of immediate danger, its leader may be challenged at any time. Thousands of years of conflict have resulted in the three most common methods of testing dominance: the *facedown*, *gamecraft* and *duel*. If the pack or sept faces a particular crisis, the type of problem influences the type of



challenge, such as a duel fought to see who leads a midnight raid. Otherwise, the challenged werewolf is allowed to choose.

The facedown is a contest of wills. The challenger initiates it by growling at his opponent and staring him in the eye with an unblinking gaze. The first werewolf to back down loses. While this may seem to be a simple contest, it is not without risk. Once a werewolf's hackles are up, he may work himself into a frenzy and attack. Should such happen, the frenzied werewolf loses not only the confrontation, but renown as well.

Gamecraft is a test of skill, cunning or wits. It may be a riddle contest, a game of chess, a competition to name various hierarchies of spirits or some similar mental exercise. Sometimes Ragabash win these contests with a clever bit of cheating. The leader must demonstrate his superior intellect if he is to continue as alpha.

The duel is exactly what onlookers expect: single combat. The challenged Garou may choose the type of weapons used; such contests are rarely to the death. Unfortunately, as with facedowns, duels may lead to frenzies of violence. Some septs, such as those dominated by Get of Fenris, rely on such challenges almost exclusively.

The loser of a test of dominance must show some sign of submission immediately — an "honorable surrender," as the Litany puts it. Doing so might involve falling to the ground, exposing his throat, lowering his head and whimpering or what have you. Gamecraft has its own signs of submission, from the chess master who knocks over his own king to the storyteller who bows with a flourish and buys his rival a drink. In a physical contest, if the loser does not show some sign of relenting, the winner may follow through with a quick attack, cuffing or clawing his lesser until recognition is given.

### *The Pack*

One of the greatest strengths a wolf has is his pack mentality. One wolf can be strong, but he can help bring down a creature 10 times his own weight by working with a pack. Werewolves are no different. Packs make up the foundation of Garou society. Septs may be conquered and tribes may argue, but a pack works together despite all adversity. In fact, much of the mistrust and prejudice that exists between different tribes is set aside when a pack runs together long enough.

Packs include from two to 10 werewolves. Usually, each of the five auspices is recognized, but this representation is not mandatory. It is possible, for example, to form a pack of several Ahroun or have a Ragabash team up with more than one Theurge. All of the werewolves may be of the same tribe or several different tribes. A cub may tag along with cliath, a few fosters may attend to a pack of elders, or the entire pack may decide to go Ronin. It's said that Stargazers even form temporary packs (called *sentai*) with the other shapechangers of the East. Stranger things have happened.

Each pack also shares a common purpose. Cubs always gather together in a pack for a reason, even if it is no more than a simple declaration. This declaration may begin as something quite simple ("Aid and defend the sept that brought us together."), something ambitious and long-lasting ("Seek out the breeding places of the Wyrm and destroy them all," or "Help our Silver Fang become sept leader.") or even a mystical or cryptic agenda ("Travel to the East and share knowledge with other supernatural creatures."). The pack may, of course,

decide to take on many other types of tasks along the way, but its unity often comes from dedication to one purpose.

Some packs are built around a particular strength, bringing together werewolves with similar or complementary talents. A pack can take on a wide range of adventures, but it excels at its specialty. One may be dedicated to *monkeywrenching*, sabotaging businesses that work with the servants of the Wyrm. Another may be obsessed with the spirit world, traveling continually deeper and deeper into mystic realms. A third may be intensely political, traveling between a handful of septs and becoming embroiled in intrigue and espionage. A pack can take on almost any adversity, but elders learn quickly what they do best.

### *Totems*

Each pack also dedicates itself to a particular totem when it is first formed. Many of these totems are great animals spirits, such as Raven or Bear. Others, such as Grandfather Thunder are more personified. Lesser known, more esoteric totems, like Almighty Dolla' and the Great Trash Heap, are cryptic and bizarre. These great spirits each have their own special strengths, so the choice of a totem often relates to a pack's goals or strengths. The choice is made during an intense and mystical rite. The pack then receives a *totem spirit*, a spiritual servitor of the totem that can act as their guardian, guide them through the spirit world and even lend them mystical power.

On some occasions, the pack is gathered expressly to serve a specific totem, and all the cliath who serve it are first brought together to form a pack with this affinity in mind. For instance, if a Wendigo sept decides to form a Raven pack, it may gather together the most infamous tricksters and sagest masters of knowledge. Once, it was easy for elder Theurges to simply summon these guides. However, since magic is dying rapidly in the world, many packs now undertake a great quest into the spirit world to find their totem spirit. Until it does so, the pack travels without such guidance.

Of course, the pack does not have to stay together forever. Some packs disband after many years of cooperation, especially if their goals in life change. If the pack makes this decision, such as when their purpose is accomplished, the totem spirit is released ceremonially.

### *The Sept*

Larger groups of werewolves gather around caerns, largely for the purpose of guarding a sacred site. Septs are the societies that form around caerns. The oldest ones are dominated by one or two tribes, usually not far from their tribal homelands, but septs have become increasingly multi-tribal over the last few centuries. Such cooperation may be the last hope of the Garou. If they cannot set aside their prejudices and stereotypes, their enemies will divide and conquer them easily.

The primary task of a sept is guarding its caern. Through powerful mystic rites, a sept can help heroes travel great distances to aid them. Drawing upon Luna's power, mystics form powerful *moon bridges* between the largest caerns. Because of this ability, septs are also gathering places for travelers. After a wandering pack is welcomed, the elders may extend an opportunity for the pack to stay a while and rest. This honor usually demands that the visitors pay some form of *chimage* in return. This payment may be a simple as reciting a story of their journey, as esoteric as bringing back something valuable from the nearby spirit world or as onerous as performing a brief task for the sept's benefit.

Older Garou settle down eventually into one sept that they particularly favor, usually assuming a political position there. An elder may dedicate many years to protecting one caern, and many eventually become loath to leave it... ever. For this reason, elders commonly offer younger Garou the chance to perform missions on behalf of their sept as an easy path to honor and glory.

Young cliath are wise to remember which elders in a sept are responsible for which tasks. Every sept has a *sept leader*, the sagacious ruler who organizes the sept and directs the local backs. The highest-ranking Theurge becomes the Master of the Rite, performing many of the day-to-day rituals that maintain the sept. She is also responsible for caring for the spiritual center of the caern, where werewolves meditate. The *caern Warden* protects the area surrounding the caern, known as the *bawn*, and keeps an eye out for trouble. Many young metis are enlisted to help him in this task. Septs often have a wealth of other positions, from the *den mother* or *den father* who watches over cubs to the *Talesinger* who chronicles its history. Every werewolf has a place in Garou society, and most are eager to speak to young heroes in need of advice.

### *The Tribe*

Werewolves speak about their ancestors with great loyalty and pride. Throughout their lives, they help their tribes, and their tribes help them. Each one has a very different hierarchy, from the constant conflicts for power among Shadow Lords to the relaxed, informal democracy of the Bone Gnawers. As noted before, one or two tribes will dominate most septs, which gives rise to tribal politics. Young cliath serve their pack first and their sept second, but when a tribe has a pressing issue that only werewolves of that tribe can truly understand, an elder may call upon the tribe's cliath to aid him, possibly with the help of their respective packs. In some tribes, such as the Silver Fangs and Shadow Lords, this imperative is undeniable. The chance to gain renown for serving one's tribe is usually sufficient motivation, however.

Every tribe also includes smaller societies, groups of werewolves who share a common purpose but who don't necessarily belong to the same pack. These groups are known as *camps*. For example, a Bone Gnawer might belong to the Frankweiler Camp, tending to public parks and museums during his spare time, or he might decide instead to join the Hood, watching over run-down neighborhoods in the city suburbs. A follower of a camp may still decide to join in a pack with werewolves from other tribes, but occasionally, he'll have to leave to carry out a personal task on behalf of his camp. He may even recruit his pack to help him in such a quest, sometimes in exchange for similar favors. For instance, if a Fenrir helps her packmate in the Frankweiler camp rescue a fetish stolen from a museum, she might later insist that the Bone Gnawer should help her Valkyria friends punish some wayward Ahroun.

### *Moots*

Werewolves gather regularly in *moots*, events that serve a variety of social, political and religious functions. These gatherings are part of what makes them Garou, communal creatures dedicated to common causes and sacred responsibilities. Usually, moots are convened every full moon, although a sept may call smaller gatherings as circumstances warrant. For cliath, these gatherings are vital. When a pack returns from one of its adventures, one among them should tell the events that oc-

curred at the next moot. The various werewolves in the pack can then earn renown. By contrast, Garou who avoid moots regularly are viewed with suspicion, often because of their unwillingness to aid their own kind.

Moots are always held at caerns, and powerful spirits are often summoned as part of the proceedings. Theurges perform great rites, Philodox attend to protocol and the "business" aspects of the gathering. Galliards organize the social and storytelling events, and Ahroun see to the defense of the assembly. Werewolves debate policies, discuss plans, send heroes off to perform great tasks, celebrate heroes who have returned triumphant and revile criminals who violate the Litany. Matters are handled with decorum and weighed by the sept as a whole. When matters become too grim, Ragabash satirize foolish decisions, jape at pretentious elders and taunt those who take themselves far too seriously. The most powerful moon bridges are opened during this time. Most importantly, the spiritual energy expended keeps the caern alive, for as the Garou prosper, so do the sacred sites they attend.

There are many types of moots, varying in size, purpose, grandeur and attendance.

**Hearings** may be convened at any time, usually when a pack returns from a great adventure. Elders assemble to listen to what the young heroes have found, pressing plans are discussed immediately, and renown is awarded. The sept leader decides which elders are vital to the discussion. As a pack's Galliard relates what has just occurred, his packmates should watch the elders' reactions carefully. Those reactions often reveal volumes about political struggles within the sept. Not everyone in the sept is required to attend a hearing, although many elders hate to receive information after their rivals have.

**Sept Moots** are the regular monthly meetings of a sept. Any Garou can attend, although those from outside the sept are often regarded with suspicion. This meeting is more than a simple voicing of complaints; it often resolves with a raucous celebration that no cliath would dare miss.

**Grand Moots** are convened to discuss the weightiest matters, often those that affect an entire tribe. All werewolves of the specific tribe within a reasonable distance are required to attend; others may be invited as well, but only with special permission.

**Concolations** are the largest moots, and all werewolves nearby are required to attend, regardless of pack, sept or tribe. They are extremely rare and accordingly critical. The gathering is announced during a normal moot, and it always requires at least five elders of five different tribes to support it. Once the decision has been made, messengers are sent out from region to region and caern to caern. The event is held exactly three months later at the exact same site. Legends speak of a few grand concolations where messengers are dispatched to retrieve some of the greatest heroes in the world, but such an event has not occurred in decades.

### *Tribal Moots*

A tribal moot is a less critical version of a Grand Moot. It is as much a show of solidarity as anything else. Elders believe that these gatherings reinforce a tribe's political power. Once it was rare for one tribe to scheme directly against another, but vengeful elders have increased the conflict between tribes as tensions mount and the End Times approach. Pity the poor wolf who must choose between the needs of his sept and the dictates of his tribe.



Black Furies gather in their most sacred tribal holdings, isolated and idyllic spots untouched by encroaching civilization. Choral chants and sacred hunts are common pursuits, along with tribal rites no man has ever witnessed. As more of their tribal lands fall before their enemies, Black Furies have also begun hosting far less traditional gatherings in the cities, events casually dismissed as innocuous by the uneducated.

**Bone Gnawers** rarely hold formal moots. Instead, they find solidarity by launching into epic binges. They gather up spare change, stock up on booze, steal some cheap food and then get trashed. Occasionally, a drunken mob of Bone Gnawers may work up their courage to mess with the nastiest urban spirits in the area. Elders call these gatherings "Orkins."

**Children of Gaia** hold tribal moots based around the concept of community. A few are fairly innocuous affairs where human Kinfolk (or even highly esteemed humans) gather to discuss political activism and environmental issues. Some moots are remarkably peaceful, involving endless meditation, tranquil singing and quiet contemplation. Of course, even the Gaians have a raucous, joyous side. Since ancient times, the tribe has also held a fondness for hallucinogenic reveries and wild musical revels.

The **Fianna** are known for two styles of tribal moots. During the holidays of the Celtic calendar — set at each solstice and equinox — they hold solemn affairs where they recite or sing great epics and preserve their bardic history. At other times of the year, they hold wild parties, occasionally inviting potentially useful allies from other tribes to share in song, dance and

drink. Fianna Galliards spend months rehearsing for performances at both types of events.

When the **Get of Fenris** gather, the result is an epic contest of endurance, martial prowess, howling, drinking, eating and even more fighting. The event resembles a massive brawl, with gauntlets to be run, ceremonial burning or scarification and inspiring sagas from the skalds. Younger Fenrir usually prefer drinking insane amounts of alcohol, slam-dancing in a mosh pit and beating the crap out of each other.

**Glass Walkers** hold professional and thoroughly corporate meetings, often with an agenda, minutes and proper rules of order. In abandoned warehouses and corporate offices, they not only discuss tribal goals, but also summon urban spirits to trap in batteries and floppy disks. Younger Walkers are dismissed early, often so that they can go to their own raves, drink strange beverages, ingest stranger chemicals and appreciate music far too cutting edge for the elders to understand.

**Red Talons** isolate themselves from all other Garou and completely lose track of what they've learned from humans. Hunting, howling and running with the nearest wolf pack are all common pursuits. Unknown to Garou of other tribes, the most extreme Talon moots involve far darker rites, often enacted as a mockery of human rituals. Human sacrifice is common here, such as when Talons feast on an eviscerated human's entrails and string the remains around a "Yuletide tree."

**Shadow Lords** hold gloomy, brooding, somber affairs high atop mountains beneath stormy skies. Great pomp and circumstance celebrates rank, conspiratorial accomplishments and the latest intricacies of the tribal hierarchy. Thundering drums and

majestic Gregorian chants speak of the grandeur of the tribe, sometimes leading to the sacrifice of a weak, hapless human to the tribe's dark god, Grandfather Thunder.

**Silent Striders** rarely congregate, but they do often gather with other travelers to share stories and songs. Striders invite their trusted traveling companions. One festival may be attended by Gypsies, another by wandering fae and still another by the spirits of the dead. Sometimes the moot takes places deep in the Umbra, but it rarely stays in one place for long. Races, relays and long hikes are all typical activities.

**Silver Fang** moots are all about tradition, involving ancient, beautiful dances and long recitations to the spirits. White-robed nobles lead candle-lit processions to isolated, idyllic locales. Tales of great ancestors are spoken with reverence, often to set an example for the latest generation of Silver Fang nobility.

**Uktena** maintain absolute secrecy, conducting strange rites, summoning great spirits and performing cryptic incantations. Mysticism is celebrated, and Galliards recite lengthy paeans from ancient tomes and occult epics.

**Wendigo** are distinctly Native American, particularly in the northern septs, and their moots preserve a wealth of traditions. One gathering may involve visionquests and peyote, while another can depend on sacred tobacco, fire dances and ritual combat. Some moots employ Umbral travel, such as when the entire assembly placates a great spirit and hunts it into the Penumbra.

### *Revelry*

The greatest moots typically end with a revel, in which Garou transform into Crinos form and run madly about the area to clear away anything that may pose a threat. This rampage is often so strenuous that some elders fall behind the cubs and cliath, or even die trying to keep up the pace. Packs do not always run together during a revel. Instead, most of the sept begins the run as one, then fragments into smaller groups as the night proceeds. Individual werewolves may work themselves into a frenzy, possibly becoming a danger to themselves and others — the revel is not performed without risk. Most run themselves to exhaustion. The stanchest and strongest Garou continue until dawn, immediately gaining renown for their great stamina and fervor.

The revel is not performed every time the sept gathers, but is instead reserved for special occasions. Urban caerns begin it with great trepidation, fearing that cliath swept up in the moment may destroy portions of the caern others have pledged to protect. An urban sept may find other ways to unleash this chaos and frenzy at the end of their moots. Martial tribes like the Get of Fenris and Red Talons are shocked to hear about tribal moots ending in (what they consider) sad substitutes for a traditional revel. Examples of modern revels include Fianna pub-crawls, Bone Gnawer feasts, Glass Walker "fragfests" on networked computers and Uktena drumming circles.

### *Language*

Garou who have completed their Rite of Passage can converse with each other in a variety of ways. Homids, of course, know at least one of the languages of the human world, if not more. Lupus can communicate very simply when they are in wolf form, often by using a great deal of body language. Each breed can

learn the other's language, but conversation can be difficult. Lupus rarely communicate concepts that use more than a handful of verbs and nouns, while homids find it frustrating to limit their speech while in a wolf's skin. Even homid Garou from distant lands have difficulty speaking with each other.

Fortunately, the Garou themselves have developed a separate language over thousands of years to bridge the gap. Galliards know this worldwide language as the "High Tongue" or "Garou Tongue." Most claim that the Fianna conceived it first. Bone Gnawer Ragabash, on the other hand, describe its lofty tones as "High-Falutin'," and unfortunately, this name has stuck as well. All Garou are taught the High Tongue immediately following their Rite of Passage, although differences in regional accent and dialect do come up. Garou language depends as much on body language and tone as on actual words. Much of it is instinctive, accented by pheromones, growls and whines. A few spoken words cannot be reproduced by a human or wolf throat, as they require partial transformation to articulate. These words represent some of the loftiest concepts tied to Garou culture.

Of course, some lupus never really master this language. They prefer to speak as simply and plainly as wolves do. For the record, Garou in Lupus or Hispo form (halfway between Lupus and Crinos) may communicate freely with wolves. This same "lupine language" can be used in other forms, but a greater chance of misunderstanding arises. While the formal and complex Garou High Tongue requires training, any werewolf in Lupus form can speak in "lupine" instinctively. The first time a homid or metis shapeshifts into a wolf, he can communicate with other wolves.

### *Howls*

The most powerful, evocative and effective way to communicate with other werewolves is by howling. Enormous amounts of information can be condensed into a few wailing sounds. All of them incorporate the Garou language, although not all of them are as "high-falutin'" as the High Tongue. Just as every Philodox studies the Litany, any Galliard should be well versed in all the common howls.

Howls can vary greatly from one sept to another — enough so that an attentive Galliard may even be able to recognize a performer's tribe or auspice, or possibly part of his personality. Optionally, a Storyteller may allow a Galliard skilled in expression or performance to convey further information. Thirteen of the most commonly used howls are listed here. Sane Garou use 12 of them, while one is reserved for a fallen tribe.

**Anthem of War** — Ahroun muster their septmates to war with this battle cry. Moon Dancers use it to rally them if their morale is waning. The howl can convey where the enemy is, approximately how many are attacking and how soon reinforcements are needed.

**Call for Succor** — One pack member may use this howl to summon his comrades if he is in great danger. Some find it embarrassing, since it sounds like a puppy's bark for his mother. An expressive howl may include sensory impressions of what danger is near.

**Call to Hunt** — A long, low ululation informs the pack of the position of its prey. When done properly, it may also identify what the prey is, describe its wounds or even coordinate the tactics of the pack that's hunting it.

**Chant of Challenge** — This howl begins very much like the Howl of Introduction, but it is quickly contrasted by a horrible mockery of an enemy's deeds, ancestry and odious

personal habits. The Fianna not only invented this howl as a method of initiating duels, but also further elevated it to a satirical art form. Everyone hearing the chant can discern exactly why the challenge is taking place.

**Cry of Elation** — In the heat of battle, young heroes may think themselves almost invincible, and they may attempt ridiculous feats of courage that no sane werewolf would attempt. The cry basically means, "Look at me!" or (as some elders put it), "Watch me do something incredibly stupid!" With enough expression, it may also convey who should get out of the way, what four or five objects are going to be used, where they will be inserted in the victim and why the pack's healer should ready her mystic Gifts if the attempt fails.

**Curse of Ignominy** — This howl is a horrible, discordant snarling whine used to insult violators of the Litany. As more werewolves lend their voices to the whine, it becomes increasingly painful. The strain on a listener does not subside until he joins in the cry. Garou who have fallen into disfavor are subjected to this cacophony. The sounds convey a mocking account of a villain's failures and shortcomings. An entire sept can memorize all of the excruciating details by sharing in the chant.

**Dirge for the Fallen** — This dirge is a somber, low-pitched howl used as a requiem for the honored dead. Its length depends on the status of the fallen. An attentive listener can learn which participants are hurt the most by this tragedy, and he may even gather brief images of the hero's deeds, rather like the memories after a great eulogy.

**Howl of Introduction** — The Litany commands werewolves to respect the territory of others; this howl is the result. It details a Garou's breed, tribe and auspice. Some werewolves include parts of their lineage. The Howl of Introduction may even include a sensory impression of why a visitor is worthy of attention.

**Snarl of Precedence** — This short violent outburst is directed against a chosen foe, and it usually means, "You're mine, punk." Packs use these snarls to coordinate their tactics, establishing who is attacking whom. A higher-ranking Garou does not have to recognize this howl — and he even has the right to "steal the kill" from a lesser werewolf — but most react to a well-executed snarl.

**Song of Mockery** — A Ragabash can take any other howl and twist it into something perverted and infuriating. Shadow Lords and cocky Ahroun are common victims of well-timed mockery. An undeniably insulting gesture, it's the musical equivalent of "the finger." If done properly, the recipient can be taunted into attacking or just losing his composure altogether.

**Symphony of the Abyss** — The Garou's greatest enemies, the Black Spiral Dancers, unleash an insane reverberating whine as they stalk their prey. Victims who listen too closely can identify the fate that lies in store for them. Even those who don't are usually terrified.

**Wail of Foreboding** — Whenever danger approaches, this sound is the general cry of distress. The Anthem of War alerts werewolves of an attack, but the Wail of Foreboding is typically used for natural disasters, unusual phenomenon in the Umbra or anything strange that bears further investigation. A practiced Galliard can give impressions of what the danger may be, but such sensations are usually cryptic or contradictory.

**Warning of the Wyrm's Approach** — A sharp-pitched howl, followed by a series of brief staccato bursts, announces the

presence of the Wyrm's minions. If a scout can scent the true form of these creatures, he may be able to describe it. All who hear the howl can see and feel the foulness that surrounds them.

## *Rage Across the World*

Garou society is far older than human civilization. Vast cities have arisen since the end of the Impergium, but the old ways and old mysteries remain hidden from the human realm. As mankind has evolved, the Garou have also continued to adapt. Some werewolves preserve the past by remaining close to their ancestral homelands, but the Twelve Tribes have expanded their territories across the planet. Even lupus, who vastly prefer running where wolves roam free, know that defending the wild requires them to travel far from home. The Garou's sacred duty to the Earth Mother has set them on a series of epic quests around the globe.

### *North America*

The Pure Ones were the first werewolves to arrive in North America. The Uktena, Croatan and Wendigo originally led their human flocks across the Bering Strait, then migrated south gradually. Unlike the brutal European werewolves, the Pure Ones preferred to exist harmoniously with their human brethren. As a result, Native Americans developed a respect for nature and the creatures of the Earth. The Impergium on this continent was more an exercise in co-existence than a matter of dominance and submission. The three North American tribes accepted the Concord grudgingly, largely because they favored the idea of humans evolving enough to survive on their own. For thousands of years, North America remained a refuge from the Wyrm.

The Pure Ones had no need to maintain moon bridges with the other tribes, but they didn't foresee the possibility of human invasion. In the early 16th century, European immigrants began to land on North American shores, bringing a very different culture along with them. Starvation and privation summoned the hungry minions of the Wyrm; the notable manifestations occurred in a Virginia settlement called the Roanoke colony. Croatan Garou sacrificed their lives to prevent the Great Serpent from spawning its progeny in the surface world, but to little avail. Centuries of "manifest destiny" followed as the Europeans — now known to the Uktena and Wendigo as the Wyrmcomers — devoured the tribal homelands of the Pure Ones rapaciously.

Within a few scant centuries, other tribes offered eagerly to help the Uktena and Wendigo establish moon bridges so that they could rush to their aid. Fianna and Get of Fenris watched over new generations of Kinfolk immigrating to the New World, and they demanded prompt acceptance in the caerns they found there. The Glass Walkers (then known as the Iron Riders) were drawn by their fascination with the Weaver's minions. With every telegraph wire erected and railroad track laid, their claims to territory grew. The Shadow Lords soon followed, demanding that proper leaders help keep the peace in rapidly growing multi-tribal septs. Before long, the clamorous howling of many tribes demanded that the last of the Pure Ones cede control of more caerns so that the Garou could "help them." Their lands have long since lost their innocence.

Both Uktena and Wendigo have remained bitter, yet further threats have forced them to work with werewolves from other tribes as the End Times approach. Garou of every coat and claw can be found across America. The Bone Gnawers are

undeniably the most common tribe. The spirit of American democracy, cheap cable TV and bountiful dumpsters overflowing with loot draws in many of them. The tribes have learned to tolerate each other, but tensions still flare. The most embittered Wendigo have retreated farther and farther into their tribal lands in Canada, isolating themselves from other septs.

Despite the proliferation of some of the most banal and corrupt cities in the world, North America remains one of the few places in the world where wild wolves can roam freely. Just as the Wendigo's *lupus* Kinfolk are prevalent throughout Canada, the Red Talons are attempting to maintain extensive breeding grounds in Alaska. Sadly, wolf hunting in both areas is winnowing their population.

### *South America*

Few Garou consider this continent their home. It has long been a refuge for the world's other shapechangers, who still harbor great anger over the War of Rage. Although Spain and Portugal laid claim to vast tracts of land in the 15th century, a relatively small population of Kinfolk went with them. Culling packs of Fera have kept communities of Garou Kinfolk isolated from their werewolf relations, sometimes even striking at them directly to hurt the Garou. The largest South American cities are marvels of the modern age, but poverty and despair are commonplace in the depths of the Third World.

The Uktena and Bone Gnawers have managed to secure a few caerns on this continent, but their Kin are well acquainted with oppression, exploitation and abuse. Shadow Lords attempted to organize them centuries ago by working with the Spanish conquistadors, but they met with epic failure instead. South American Fera fought fiercely to defend their lands, and although many died in the process, they have remained there to this day. A few have even begun breeding with Garou Kinfolk, much to the horror of the werewolves who find out. Other tribes have only just begun to realize how populous their Kin are on this continent. While there are only a handful of moon bridges leading into South America, there are plenty of isolated caerns waiting to be reclaimed... or stolen. Lost Kinfolk may help turn the tide of battle, but only if the Garou can also help them.

One of the most notable locations in supernatural South America is the Amazon. Over the last 10 years, it has become one of the Garou's greatest battlegrounds against the Wyrm. Minions of the Wyrm have corrupted a few powerful corporations intent on profiting from the rainforest's destruction. Within the shrinking jungles, vicious shapechanging "jaguar gods" defend their Den Realms savagely, lashing out at werewolves and corporate raiders with equal ferocity. It's a losing battle for all concerned. Even without the influence of the Great Serpent, human encroachment is eliminating a realm that the Earth needs desperately to survive.

### *Europe*

The Fianna, Black Furies, Get of Fenris and Shadow Lords all originated in Europe. All four tribes still maintain caerns in their tribal homelands. Since the time of the Dark Ages, Europe has remained a vital part of Garou history. From the craggy peaks of the Carpathians to the depths of the Black Forest, this realm has long been one where werewolves reign supreme. A thousand years ago, Irish farmers, Transylvanian serfs and German settlers all whispered legends of werewolves stalking the night, punishing fools who dared investigate their activities.

Unfortunately, the Wyrm has always been strong here as well. Medieval legends of dragons, manticores and other fantastic creatures can be traced to its foul work. As long as there have been stories of incubi, succubi and other demons, the Great Serpent has tempted weak humans and lured them to corruption. The Fianna recite great epics of warring with corrupted legions of fomori spawned beneath the sea, while the Shadow Lords have always been keenly aware of evil in their midst, from the sinister vampires of Transylvania to the spiritual servitors of forgotten gods.

Evil has grown stronger steadily, and the werewolves' supremacy has come to an end. Once Europe was canopied with great stretches of forest — a pack could run for days and only barely see sunlight through the trees the whole time. Now human habitation encroaches on the greatest tribal caerns. The Weaver grows stronger as Europe grows more urbanized.

The Fianna still control massive caerns in Ireland, England, Wales and Scotland, but many cliah find political struggles in the cities more fascinating than endless paens to their grand Celtic heritage. The Get of Fenris dominate powerful caerns in Northern Europe, but ancient caerns in the Black Forest of Germany are surrounded by urban development. The Black Furies have focused their attention more on the entire globe and less on their Greek territories, although a few island caerns still remain. Near the Shadow Lords' homelands in Eastern Europe, their vampiric rivals remain as powerful as ever. As the Lords continue to pursue political intrigues both with vampires and their own kind, their tribal lands fall to dissent, warfare and ethnic hatred. Humanity still has its own civilization, and it's tearing the societies of the Garou in Europe apart.

### *Africa*

By and large, the Garou are not welcome in Africa. Other species of shapeshifters roam the continent freely, and they have no patience for werewolf incursions. The most dangerous of these species are dragonlike beasts who thunder through the most isolated stretches of wilderness. The great cats who roam the savannas and jungles have werebeasts among their number, while one species of rat-shifters is said to thrive on spreading modern plagues in overcrowded cities. Of course, the Fera here have their own internal struggles and even covert wars, but most Garou are completely unaware of such complications. Instead, they have come to realize that this land is filled with many spiritual hellholes, neglected lands that demand immediate action. Werewolf packs planning on exploring the continent further run the risk of retribution from the African shapeshifters, a type of "safari" that is certain to end in bloodshed.

The werewolves are not without influence on this continent, but packs venture here cautiously. Silent Striders still travel ancient Umbral trods across the continent, sometimes seeking visions of Ancient Khem in Egypt's Penumbra. Recently, they have made alarming discoveries of their tribe's past. A handful of Silent Strider cliah have found out that they've had past lives in Khem. This miraculous occurrence has no explanation, and many Theurges wonder whether it was brought about by some other supernatural society.

Bone Gnawers are predominant throughout Northern Africa, but they are among the most destitute and poorly organized in the world. An isolated camp of the tribe still lives in South Africa, gathering in moots in Capetown, but it also refuses to accept its relations in other parts of the world. African

Red Talons are even more unusual creatures. They are the only ones of their kind who enjoy their Homid form, but they use that form to exploit human suffering wherever starvation and disease are prevalent.

### *Asia*

Much of Asia remains an enigma to the Garou. Although primal tribes once ran with packs of Mongol and Hun Kinfolk, the Concord never gained support in the East. Asian werewolves were not as fanatic about developing one culture and destroying their Fera rivals. Many tribes have developed niche cultures here, but the werewolves of the East have always been poorly organized. By contrast, the other shapeshifters of the Asia, the hengeyokai, have learned to set aside their differences and form packs as need demands. When werewolves are on the prowl in this territory, the hengeyokai are quick to drive them off and give them scars they will never forget.

Russia is the last great domain for the Asian Garou. The Silver Fangs have maintained their supremacy here for thousands of years, but just as inbreeding degenerated the tribe's elders, the elders have lost their grip on territory they once commanded. The 20th century has not been kind to the Fangs' noble relatives. After the Bolshevik revolution, the power of the Russian aristocracy has evaporated. With the rise of the Communist regime, strange spiritual phenomena cut off many ancient Silver Fang caerns from the rest of the world. A spiritual gauntlet known as the Shadow Curtain once made travel between the oldest caerns and the outside world almost impossible. After the break-up of the old Soviet Union, the Curtain fell, but political turmoil has made the Silver Fang's homelands more dangerous than ever before.

Remote Siberia remains one of the most valued places to the Garou. As one of the few places in the world where wild wolves can roam their natural habitat, it has become home to both Red Talons and Silver Fangs. One isolated Silver Fang camp, the Siberakh, remains aloof and isolated from the rest of the Garou. However, over the last 20 years, many of the packs and caerns of this region have disappeared mysteriously. Although the Shadow Curtain is no more, entire caerns are still found drained of their spiritual essence. The mystery remains, baffling those brave enough to investigate.

For centuries, solitary Stargazers wandered the rural areas of China, Southeast Asia and Tibet. In fact, it is rumored that the sightings of Stargazers in frenzy (an admittedly rare occurrence) may be responsible for stories of the legendary yeti. The Stargazers are returning to their tribal lands in numbers. The loss of their ancient caerns in Tibet was a terrible blow, but recent reparations with other Asian shapeshifters have renewed their chances of restoring their traditional way of life.

In India, an age-old conflict simmers between the Children of Gaia and the Red Talons. The Gaians have done their best to relieve suffering in India; the Talons would just as soon wipe out humans in one of the most overpopulated places on the planet. Feral Red Talons appear to have found sinister allies to help turn the tide of battle, including lost cults of shapechangers and an insidious breed of wererat.

The Glass Walkers are drawn to more affluent parts of Asia. They have created their own pocket societies in cities like Hong Kong, particularly in realms dominated by organized crime. The "HK Glass Walker" has become something of a stereotype in the West, glamorized by Asian action films. With the hand-over of

Hong Kong to China, more Glass Walkers have begun expanding their business interests to Western cities.

Japan remains a battleground for several tribes of werewolves. The code of *bushido* meshes well with ancient variants of the Litany, forming a Garou culture unlike any other in the world. Glass Walkers are drawn to the technological aspects of Japanese culture, while Shadow Lords are fascinated by powerful *zaibatsu*. A few scattered Uktene still care for the Ainu, a beleaguered Japanese minority. A relation of the Shadow Lords, the Hakken Garou, is far more numerous, preserving a society that is antithetical to that of their brothers in Eastern Europe.

Indonesia is far less accepting, for it is still one of the strongest homelands of the hengeyokai. From Thailand to the Philippines, they are numerous and well organized. Legends speak of horrible creatures that defend their territory fiercely, from enormous shapeshifting pythons to ingenious sentient orangutans. Whether these stories are true is another matter entirely. The only rumors that have been confirmed involve the Rokea, a race of weresharks prowling the waters. So far, no Western pack has been bold enough to confirm the existence of any other atavistic freaks.

### *Australia*

The barrier between the physical and spiritual world is tenuously thin in Australia. Aborigines have their own tribal visions of the Umbra, manifesting in a realm known as the Dreamtime. At the most sacred times, mystical creatures are able to cross the boundary between worlds easily. This land was once the homeland of the Bunyip, a bizarre race that used fertility powers to change from wolves to marsupial thylacines. Their tribal totem, the Rainbow Snake, granted them powers over both the Dreamtime and physical reality.

The Bunyip were once celebrated as the wisest and most powerful Garou... until other werewolves demanded to share in their good fortune. Silver Fangs and Shadow Lords alike exploited human colonization to invade Bunyip lands, insisting that the Wyrmlord was powerful there. The Bunyip's enigmatic perception of the Wyrmlord only complicated attempts at communication. Twisting such miscommunications to their own benefit, the European Garou forced the Bunyip further and further into the Outback until their indigenous culture began to perish. At the same time, environmental devastation began wiping out the Bunyip's Tasmanian Kinfolk. In 1934, the last Tasmanian wolf died in captivity; the rest of the tribe followed soon thereafter.

Many werewolves who have remained in Australia are consumed by *Harano*, a great sadness resulting from their guilt and grief. Yet the tribe's mysteries remain, although the Bunyip themselves are gone. Packs of Garou have been disappearing here for years. In many of the reclaimed caerns, the tracks of Tasmanian wolves are the only evidence remaining. Fear of these legendary ghosts has been sufficient to keep werewolves far from the Outback at night. Packs of idealistic cliath continue to charge in to investigate, but many are never heard from again.

### *Antarctica*

No Garou septs live in Antarctica. In fact, much about this land is unknown. Even the Wendigo see it as a barren, icy wasteland. The Get of Fenris argued once that it may be the legendary land of Thule, and they even attempted to settle there. All such efforts at exploration have failed... all except one. Since the Garou have not been vigilant in defending this land, other

creatures have claimed it as their own. Unknown to the Garou, one of their fiercest rivals, the Black Spiral tribe, has claimed this continent as its own. Burrowing deep into the ground, they have uncovered secrets of a lost world, using them to develop vast breeding grounds beneath the ice. It is rumored that the Black Spirals, aided by far more sinister creatures, have recovered lost cities that defy conventional archaeology. Anyone wanting to confirm this myth is welcome to die trying.

### *The Wyrm*

Heroes become great by opposing terrible villains. Werewolves have an instinctual need to hunt, one they direct against their most insidious foes. The evils they face are not always supernatural, of course. Many werewolves fight seemingly ordinary battles, from crusading with political activism to protecting victims of crime and exploitation. Yet wherever the Garou hunt evil, they often find the same foul stench of corruption behind it. Behind the shadow of reality, werewolves see the spirits of the Wyrm ready to exploit, corrupt and victimize.

The Fenrir describe the Wyrm as the Great Serpent of Darkness spawning monsters for them to kill. Black Furies see it as spiritual despair lurking near families devastated by domestic violence and abuse. The Glass Walkers smell its foul stench in corporate corruption and ecological exploitation. The hydra has a thousand heads, yet all of them are formed from the body of the Wyrm as it slithers and scurries toward the weak, the helpless and the sinful.

Save perhaps for the most blasphemous Black Spiral Dancers, no werewolf has ever spoken to or met with an actual physical incarnation of "the Wyrm" itself. Typically, it is known only through the deeds of its servants, an imagined evil lurking behind very real acts of perversion, corruption and outright destruction. Certain powerful Theurges question whether a separate and distant entity guides all of these minions. A vast and calculating intelligence does seem to lurk behind their actions, but such speculation is difficult to prove. Although the Wyrm remains an abstraction for most Garou, they still speak of it directly, based on the horror and destruction its spiritual servants unleash.

Occultists are aware of three major aspects of the Wyrm, each with its own legion of servitors. The Beast-of-War gluts itself on violence and delights at spreading entropy throughout the world. The Eater-of-Souls seeks to devour all of creation, feasting on matter, energy and spirit with equal propensity. The Defiler Wyrm is the most insidious aspect, as it concentrates on corrupting human society.

### *Banes*

The Great Serpent often acts through mortal agents, but it also directs legions of evil spirits. Werewolves call these foul ephemera Banes. While some mystics believe that Banes are avatars of various aspects of the Wyrm, most regard them as separate entities with individual sentience. Some Banes even speak of the Wyrm with dread, obviously acting in fear of their unseen master.



Banes are strongest in the spirit world, for it is their natural element. There, they use spiritual powers called Charms to seduce, corrupt or assault their enemies. Powerful Banes possess humans or animals in the physical world, using them as vessels. Typically, these possessed creatures are "spiritually weak," already overcome by sin or dark emotions, such as lust, greed, envy or wrath. The Wyrm's minions do not cause all acts of "evil" in the world. They seek out ideal victims to possess, perverting and exaggerating their most horrific tendencies. Once a victim has been possessed, the whisperings of the Wyrm urge him to commit further horrible acts. Banes can also manifest physically, creating as loathsome a form as possible to unnerve those who oppose them.

Countless varieties of these wicked spirits exist. Many students of the occult have attempted vainly to gather the facts they can confirm into hierarchies and categories, but such attempts typically drive scholars insane. Some Banes appear as manifestations of malevolent forces or personifications of weird phenomena. Others are simply hideous freaks spawned with no obvious purpose. A current theory holds that Banes serve masters tied to the great themes of evil: Hatred, Pollution, Seduction and so forth. Despite all attempts to confine them with rigid rules, the Wyrm continues to pervert its minions into grotesque and disturbing new permutations.

### *Wyrm Caerns*

Just as werewolves have dedicated sacred sites to the Goddess, the minions of the Wyrm have desecrated caerns in its unholy name. Surrounded by the liveliest awfulness, its cultists perform unspeakable rites and blasphemous magic to aid the forces of corruption.

Originally, Wyrm caerns remained far underground, eternally basking in the light of chilling, poisonous balefires. Its hideous minions shuffled, oozed and undulated in subterranean chambers around the balefires' sickly gleam. While the bowels of the Earth churned with such evils, the surface remained relatively unmarred, largely due to werewolves' vigilant patrols. A shambling horror crept occasionally to the surface on a mission of desecration or a straightforward killing spree. The Veil has mercifully obscured these nightmare memories, allowing them to resurface as human myths. Odysseus and the Cyclops, St. George and the Dragon, Beowulf and Grendel—the heroes and villains have been renamed, but the essence remains the same.

Near the end of the 20th century, myth was replaced by science gone astray. Disastrous mistakes heralded the dawn of the End Times. Nuclear warfare, biological havoc and ecological devastation on an unprecedented scale overwhelmed the werewolves' efforts, summoning the Wyrm into the world in forms never witnessed before. As below, so it was above. Throughout the last century, the Wyrm established and befouled more caerns on the surface, rejoicing in landfills, toxic waste, ecological devastation, atomic test sites and urban hellholes surrounded by crime and human suffering.

The armies of the Apocalypse have assembled, and they are legion. They congregate by unholy sites, preying on the innocent and the damned. People living near Wyrm caerns disappear suddenly, or they grow suspicious, sullen and apathetic. New generations of humans are born twisted and deformed, with defects ranging from the subtle to the grotesque. Humans make easy prey, and some are hardly challenging at all.

The Wyrm also hunts the Garou themselves, along with the caerns they dedicate as sacred. Nothing delights the Wyrm

more than to have its emissaries capture a werewolf caern, seed it with toxins and balefire, and then channel its potent mystic energies to its own service. With every victory, the Garou are weakened further and the end of creation draws nigh.

### *Wyrm Corruption*

The Wyrm's minions claim many victims, yet the most esteemed are the Garou themselves. The Great Serpent lusts at the thought of luring its ancient foes into its own service. Despite high ideals and readied claws, countless werewolves have been seduced into acts of treason against their own kind. Heroes, packs and even entire tribes — such as the infamous Black Spirals — have succumbed to its wiles.

A faithful servant of the Great Serpent begins by seeking a disgraced or disgruntled Garou, one whose moral dilemmas have become more compelling than any abstract notions of good or evil. In the guise of a spirit or disguised as creature of flesh, it whispers temptations, from the material to the perverse, to garner the victim's complicity. The bait may be a fetish, supernatural power, forgotten lore, the chance at revenge or simple acceptance and understanding if the victim is truly alone and abandoned. In return, the corrupter asks a little favor: information, an act of violence or perhaps an item that "no one will miss." If the victim is almost discovered, the servitor whispers promises of further aid to delay discovery. As the dark dealings continue, spiritual decay is inevitable.

Traitors are the werewolves' greatest foes, for they can wreak havoc as no obvious evil can. They know the locations of secret caerns, the weaknesses of their elders, plans made at moots and even the needs of their former packmates. As the Wyrm gains its hideous strength at the end of time, treason is becoming more commonplace. Septs respond with paranoia and xenophobia, aiding the Wyrm unwittingly in the process. Shadows lengthen, and great heroes plunge into the depths of despair. The Great Serpent hisses its pleasure.

### *Black Spiral Dancers*

Garou who turn to the Wyrm are destined to join the ranks of the Black Spiral Dancers. Originally, the founders of this tribe were known as the White Howlers. Subtle corruption suborned them over generations, until the minions of the Wyrm conquered the last White Howler caern and captured its greatest heroes, dragging them into the depths of the underworld. When the Great Serpent had finally seduced its prey, the survivors emerged once again, this time as the Black Spiral tribe.

For thousands of years, the Black Spirals spawned in tunnels beneath the earth, waiting for the time when they would be numerous enough to decimate their Garou rivals. That time has arrived. The Spirals no longer spend generations lurking in subterranean caverns, only emerging in the surface world to rend and slay. They are a vast army, easily outnumbering the combined strength of the two largest tribes of Garou. While they favor committing wanton acts of bloodshed and devouring the flesh of other werewolves, their greatest joy comes from capturing Garou and corrupting them to the ways of the Wyrm, recreating them in their own shattered image.

Once the Garou believed that all Black Spirals were utterly and completely insane, but they have since uncovered a far more sinister truth. Only the weakest minds are shattered during the tribe's rites of passage. Black Spiral cubs and Garou initiates are dragged to a realm of the Underworld known as

Malfeas, where they are forced to walk a spiral labyrinth containing unimaginable horrors. Those that survive and return to the surface world are forever changed. Even for those whose sanity is shattered, there is a method to their madness. Black Spiral werewolves are capable of serving the Wyrm of their own free will. Once their perspective on creation is forever altered, they pledge themselves to Wyrm totems willingly, receiving insights from their amoral gods.

Madness and insight breed great power. Centuries of exposure to balefire and radiation have twisted their genetic strands. Many display bizarre deformities, especially in their Crinos form. Sharklike teeth, leonine or batlike ears, sickly gray green fur and wrinkled scabrous hides are typical genetic enhancements. While the Garou shun the deformities brought by inbreeding, the Black Spirals hold no qualm against spawning legions of metis shock troops. Their genes have been polluted; their minds are already twisted and disturbed.

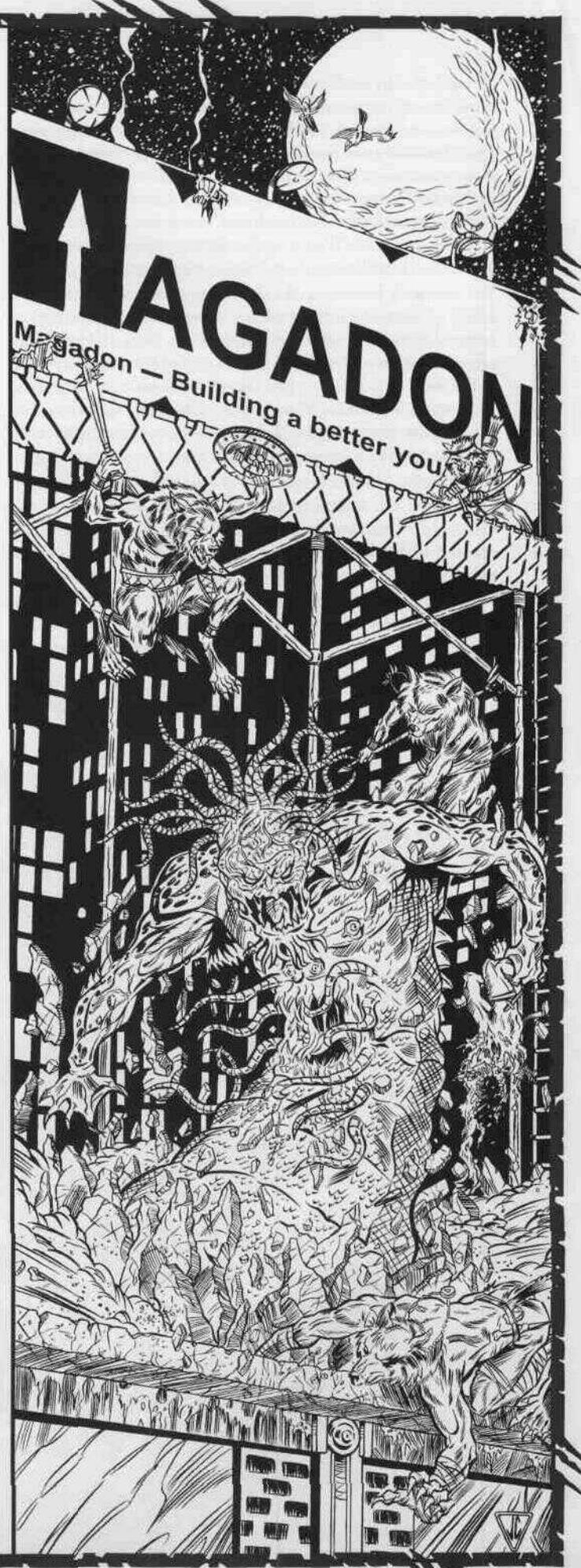
Spirals breed in vast underground lairs known as Hives, sinister counterparts to Garou caerns. It is said that vast networks of underground tunnels, or at least labyrinths that extend into the spirit world, connect many hives. By the sluggish light of balefires, they conduct blasphemous rites and demented moots, often inviting weird and forgotten creatures from the bowels of the Earth to join them. Some even drag humans from the surface to sate their appetites.

Most Garou Theurges associate the Black Spirals with the Whippoorwill totem. A pack on the hunt will mimic its haunting cry, calling out their desire for the souls of their victims. It has since been revealed that the Spirals serve many totems and are keenly aware of the hierarchies of Wyrm spirits. No doubt by their reckoning, the most devolved creature in this spiritual genealogy would be the Black Spirals themselves.

### *Pentex and its Subsidiaries*

Pentex is a very different adversary: It's one of the largest corporations in the world. As with many institutions in the werewolves' world, it hides vast conspiracies behind layers and layers of corporate security. Originally investing in oil and mining, Pentex has since become a holding company, diversifying its resources into hundreds of subsidiaries. A Glass Walker could spend years tracking all the financial dealings of companies it allegedly controls, organizations like Magadon Pharmaceuticals, Endron Oil, Sunburst Technologies and even the Black Dog Game Factory. Unfortunately for the Garou Nation, Pentex is subtle, and only a few septs are aware of the true nature of the megacorporation behind much of the world's ills. Working with its corporate allies, Pentex holds monopolies in many areas of the world, acts as a leader in the global economy, provides jobs for countless employees and spawns corruption and despair continuously throughout the world.

Pentex's prime agenda is planetary corruption in the name of the Wyrm. Oddly enough, this goal makes a handsome profit in the process. Ecological devastation is one of its greatest tactics. Pentex companies produce toxins, mutagens and carcinogens routinely, then they dump them wherever they can—preferably in areas sacred to the Garou. After buying out vast tracts of land surrounding werewolf caerns, they then begin transforming that land into a lifeless waste. The result is often the acquisition of more Wyrm caerns, along with blights spawning Banes and other Wyrm-spirits.



Like many real-world corporations, Pentex incorporates numerous strategies and tactics to cover up its violations. Savvy lawyers, underworld contacts and government shills are ready to sell out to anyone to make a profit, and Pentex pays well. The megacorporation's standard tactics pale next to its supernatural resources. Entire packs of Black Spiral werewolves act with Pentex's sponsorship. Banes breed extensively around many company holdings. Werewolves encountering such plants can sometimes literally smell the taint of the Wyrm in the air.

Hunting corruption within the megacorp is not as easy as it first appears. Not all of Pentex's actions are evil, and many of its employees are completely free of Wyrm taint. In fact, many of its managers are ordinary people performing ordinary jobs. Corporate horror is often hidden behind seemingly innocuous or altruistic activities. Many employees simply do not realize the ulterior purposes behind their projects. For some, working for a subsidiary of Pentex is simply a way to get a paycheck — an apathetic belief that suits the Wyrm's plans perfectly.

Garou investigating Pentex are often baffled by the contrast between the innocence of many of its employees and the vileness of its master plans. Monkeywrenching its activities takes patience, resourcefulness and dedication, but once a weakness has been found, it also requires heroes ready to destroy the monsters hiding behind a vast and powerful corporate titan.

### *Fomori*

Every army needs foot soldiers. The Wyrm can create monstrous creatures and spawn foul Banes, but it finds seducing

one of Gaia's creatures and warping it into a monster far more satisfying. It employs countless tactics, which include exposing a victim to mutagens or balefire, tricking it into ingesting toxins or Wyrm-tainted chemicals or simply seducing it with promises of power. When the Wyrm corrupts a human or animal, that victim can be forced through a monstrous transformation. The victim becomes a *fomor*.

The Fianna believe that fomori first spawned off the shores of Eire, breeding in vast undersea kingdoms. In those early days, the Great Serpent chose its servants indiscriminately, creating a vast array of dragons, chimerae, undersea monsters and terrible ogres. These creatures became mythical, representing evil not only in Celtic legends, but also throughout the world. In the modern age, the Wyrm prefers to exploit a far more resourceful creature: human beings. Not surprisingly, they are capable of subtler evils than the titanic beasts of legend.

A fomor is ultimately suited to engage in combat, and most are bred or mutated specifically to kill werewolves. A single fomor is an easy kill, but packs of them can be deadly. The Wyrm bestows them with an arsenal of unholy powers, from supernatural strength and chitinous carapaces to psychic and mental disciplines. The Wyrm does indeed grant power to all who serve it, and the price is eternal damnation. Just as a victim's body is deformed, his very soul is twisted. The weakest fomori become stalking horrors drawn to toxic waste dumps, urban landfills or backwoods refuges. The strongest retain a spark of sentience and develop human camouflage. They infiltrate human society and enact grand schemes on behalf of the Great Serpent.



Pentex and its subsidiaries have also made the creation of somori one of their agendas. Some Wyrm-tainted corporations be foul and poison the lands around their work sites and offices deliberately, luring employees into "lifetime employment." Others maintain laboratories specifically for the development of such creatures. The most unspeakable ones use more insidious methods of recruitment, ranging from violent video games to tainted fast foods. Foulness takes many forms, and only the Garou possess the instincts, knowledge and training to hunt them.

### *The Weaver*

Rebellious cliahth insist that the Wyrm is not the only spiritual threat to creation. After all, it was the Weaver who first drove the Wyrm insane. Wherever her servitors thrive, human civilization forces the natural world into submission. Snapping the threads of the Weaver's schemes is a very different sort of campaign from a war against the Wyrm, one that requires subtlety and restraint.

Crude tactics do not work. Outright anarchy and wholesale destruction harms human society as much as it heals it, in addition to rending the Veil and inviting retribution. A more common tactic involves attacking Weaver-spawn directly in the Umbra, then shutting down her favored weapons in the physical world. Of course, the Weaver's minions typically have a strong affinity for technology, devious intellects and ruthless natures, making them difficult prey for primitive or brutal Garou.

While many septs don't support this type of Umbral espionage, various secret societies and camps are willing to recognize the renown of packs who practice "spiritual monkeywrenching." Sometimes the Weaver's minions' elaborate schemes pose an overwhelming danger to a sept, forcing a sept's elders to recruit, support and praise packs who specialize in shredding the Weaver's webs.

### *Developmental Neogenetics Amalgamated*

Many septs are so fanatic about killing the Wyrm that they overlook other dangers threatening their existence. Developmental Neogenetics, a biotech firm on the cutting edge of genetic research, is a perfect example. DNA has no reputation of environmental devastation, and it steers clear of researching chemical warfare, defoliants and other biogenetic hazards. Yet behind its respectable and profitable facade, it has employed scientists and researchers routinely who are ruthless in the extreme. DNA employees managed to capture their first werewolf in 1993, and the company has never been the same since.

After months of tests, studies, experiments and vivisection, DNA agents began to realize the value of the scientific anomaly they had captured. The creature had amazing regenerative properties, genetic mutations that seemed to defy current scientific thought and an admirable combination of human intelligence and animal instinct. The heads of the DNA corporation scoffed at the superstitious notion that their captive was a "werewolf," but they began to speculate that genetic mutation was responsible for evolving such a remarkable organism. By the end of the decade, they had captured another "lupine mutant" and fought two more.

The Weaver has a habit of repressing and entrapping things she does not understand or cannot accommodate. The Garou have only just begun to realize the danger that DNA

poses to their kind. Their secrecy has clearly been compromised, but how to respond remains a subject of debate. Just as the corporation does not understand the Garou, the werewolves believe that the spirits of the Weaver are lurking behind DNA's activities. Some Theurges insist that the Weaver has already enlisted the corporation as a way to suppress the Garou. The truth remains to be seen, but the threat is undeniable.

DNA agents are formidable foes. They have access to advanced weaponry, they can formulate chemical compounds capable of inflicting aggravated damage, and they are well aware of the "mutants' allergies to silver." However, they have no interest in killing Garou — they prefer to take their quarry alive. Tear gas and knockout gas are common weapons that are currently in mass production. The corporation heads have decided to invest heavily in further acquisition and research.

The Garou are still uncertain how to stop DNA. While they could theoretically charge into the nearest corporate research center and kill everyone inside, the agents and scientists involved are not "of the Wyrm." Some werewolves insist that killing these humans would confirm that they are the monsters DNA imagines them to be. The DNA corporation and the Weaver-spirits who lurk behind its activities continue their insidious activities unabated. As the world continues to evolve, the supernatural world does so as well, spawning new and terrible foes for Gaia's greatest heroes to hunt and destroy.

### *Common Parlance*

These words are in common use among the Garou.

**Anchorhead:** A spirit gate between the Near and Deep Umbra. (See Membrane.)

**Anthelios:** The portentous Red Star that has recently appeared in the Umbral heavens; largely seen as an omen of doom. Also called "the Eye of the Wyrm."

**Apocalypse:** The age of destruction, the final cycle, the birth of death, the everlasting corruption, the end of Gaia. A word used in Garou mythology to describe the time of the final battle with the Wyrm. Many consider this time to be the present.

**Auspice:** The phase of the moon under which a particular Garou was born, which is thought commonly to determine personality and tendencies. The auspices include: Ragabash (New Moon; Trickster), Theurge (Crescent Moon; Seer), Philodox (Half Moon; Judge), Galliard (Gibbous Moon; Moon Dancer), Ahroun (Full Moon; Warrior).

**Bane:** Evil spirits that follow the Wyrm. Many different kinds of Banes exist, including Scrags, Kali, Psychomachiae and more.

**Bawn:** A boundary area around a caern, patrolled and monitored carefully.

**Blight:** Any corrupted area in either the spirit world or physical reality.

**Breed:** The ancestry of a Garou, be it wolf, human or other Garou.

**Caern:** A sacred place; a meeting spot where the Garou can contact the spirit world.

**Celestine:** The greatest spirits; the closest things the Garou have to gods. Examples are Luna (the Moon) and Helios (the Sun).

**Conolation:** A great moot, wherein many tribes gather to discuss matters that concern the Nation of Garou.



**Concord, The:** The agreement all the tribes reached nearly 9,000 years ago, after which the Impergium ended. The traditions thereof are still obeyed today.

**Corruption:** The act of destroying, devolving or debasing life; also, the often overwhelming effects of the Wyrm's actions. In the present age, it often refers specifically to the ecological ruin humans wreak upon the environment.

**Crinos:** The half-wolf, half-human war form of the Garou.

**Deep Umbra:** The aspects of the Umbra that lie outside the Membrane. Reality becomes more and more fragmentary the farther one travels from the Realm.

**Delirium:** The madness and memory-loss suffered by humans who look upon a Garou in Crinos form.

**Domain:** A mini-Realm in the Umbra, usually connected to a larger Realm in the Deep Umbra.

**Fera:** Garou term for shapeshifters other than werewolves; most are presumed extinct.

**Feral:** Slang term for lupus.

**Fomori (singular "fomor"):** Humans who have turned to the Wyrm and who draw their power from it. Common enemies of the Garou.

**Gaffling:** A simple spirit servant of a Jagglng, Incarna or Celestine. Gafflings are rarely sentient.

**Gaia:** The Earth and related Realms, in both a physical and a spiritual sense; the Mother Goddess.

**Garou:** The term werewolves use for themselves.

**Gauntlet:** The barrier between the physical world of Earth and the spirit world of the Umbra. It is strongest around technological (Weaver) places and weakest around caerns.

**Glabro:** The near-man form of the Garou.

**Harano:** Inexplicable gloom, inexpressible longing for unnamable things, weeping for that which is not yet lost. Some say it is depression caused by contemplation of Gaia's suffering.

**Hispo:** The near-wolf form of the Garou.

**Homid:** A Garou of human ancestry. Occasionally used disdainfully by ferals (e.g., "That boy fights like a homid."). Also the human form of the Garou.

**Impergium:** The 3,000 years immediately following the birth of agriculture, during which strict population quotas were maintained on all human villages.

**Incarna:** A class of spirits; weaker than the Celestines, but still greater spirits by any measure.

**Jagglng:** A spirit servant of an Incarna or Celestine.

**Kenning:** The empathic calling some Garou perform when howling.

**Kinfolk:** Those humans and wolves who are related to the Garou and are not prone to the Delirium, but who are not actual werewolves.

**Klaive:** A fetish dagger or sword, usually of great spiritual potency and nearly always made of silver.

**Litan:** The code of laws kept by the Garou.

**Luna:** The Incarna of the moon; powerful spirit patron to all shapechangers.

**Lupus:** A Garou of wolf origin. Also the wolf form of the Garou.

**Membrane, The:** The barrier between the Near and Deep Umbra. To breach it, an Anchorhead must be found. Alternatively, the Garou can travel through the Dream Zone.

**Metis:** The sterile and often deformed offspring of two Garou. Generally reviled by Garou society.

**Moon Bridge:** A gate between two caerns; it most often appears during moots.

**Moot:** A sept or tribal conclave that takes place at a caern.

**Mule:** Slang for metis.

**Near Umbra:** The spirit world surrounding the Gaia Realm.

**Pack:** A small group of Garou bound to each other by ties of friendship and mission as opposed to culture.

**Penumbra:** "Earth's Shadow"; the spirit world directly surrounding the physical world. Many, but not all, terrain features have reflections there.

**Protectorate:** The territory claimed and patrolled by a pack or sept.

**Reaching:** Traveling into the spirit world.

**Realms:** The worlds of "solid" reality within the Tellurian. Earth is referred to as the Realm.

**Ronin:** A Garou who has chosen or been forced to leave Garou society. It is a harsh fate to become a "lone wolf."

**Sept:** The group of Garou who live near and tend an individual caern.

**Stepping Sideways:** Entering the spirit world. Many elders consider this term flippant and disrespectful.

**Tellurian:** The whole of reality.

**Totem:** A spirit joined to a pack or tribe and representative of its inner nature. A tribal totem is an Incarna, while a pack totem is an Incarna avatar (a Jagglings equivalent).

**Triat, The:** The Weaver, the Wyld and the Wyrm. The trinity of primal cosmic forces.

**Tribe:** The larger community of Garou. Tribe members are often bound by similar totems and lifestyles.

**Umbra:** The spirit world.

**Veil, The:** A poetic term for the false assumption that the supernatural does not exist, which the Delirium reinforces.

**Ways, The:** The traditions of the Garou.

**Weaver, The:** Manifestation and symbol of order and pattern. Computers, science, logic and mathematics are examples of the Weaver's influence on the material plane.

**Wyld, The:** Manifestation and symbol of pure change. The chaos of transmutation and elemental force.

**Wyrm, The:** Manifestation and symbol of evil, entropy and decay in Garou belief. Vampires are often manifestations of the Wyrm, as are toxic waste and pollution.

**Wyrmhole:** A place that has been spiritually defiled by the Wyrm; invariably a location of great corruption.

### *Vulgar Argot*

The younger Garou use these words to help distinguish themselves from their elders.

**Cadaver:** A derogatory term for a vampire.

**Flock, The:** All of humanity, particularly those humans from whom the Garou recruit their members.

**Gremlin:** A malevolent spirit.

**Leech:** See *Cadaver*.

**Run:** A ritual hunt or revel that takes place at the conclusion of a moot.

**Sheep:** Humans.

**Throat:** To best another in ritual combat. Used as a verb (e.g., "I throated his sorry butt!").

### *Old Form*

These words hail from the distant past of the Garou and display their Fianna origins. They are no longer used frequently. However, all Garou know these terms.

**Adren:** A pupil or a student who learns from a Mentor.

**Airts:** The magical paths within the spirit world (e.g., Spirit Tracks, Moon Paths, etc.).

**Aisling:** A journey into the spirit world.

**Anamae:** "Soul-friend"; most often a bond with a pack totem.

**Anruth:** A Garou who travels from caern to caern but is bound to none of them.

**Athro:** Teacher, Mentor.

**Awen:** The sacred Muse, the creative impulse. Some say she is a spirit, but she has never been found. Moon Dancers go on quests for her periodically.

**Brugh:** Any sort of mystic place, whether a Garou caern or a Wyrmhole. Often a glade or cave located somewhere in the wilderness.

**Charach:** A Garou who sleeps with another Garou or has done so in the past. Often used as a word of anger.

**Chiminage:** A form of "favors done for services rendered." A werewolf may perform a task as chiminage in order to repay a spirit for teaching him a Gift, or to repay a sept for allowing him to use its caern.

**Clathi:** A young Garou, not yet of any significant rank.

**Fostern:** Your pack brothers and sisters; those who are your family by choice.

**Gallain:** The Kinfolk of the Garou.

**-ikthya:** "Of the Wyrm"; a suffix appended to a name.

**Inceptor:** A Garou who guides another through a rite. An inceptor is also called a ritemaster.

**Kinain:** The relationship among Garou who are related by blood through an ancestor. This term of endearment and pride is never used when referring to metis.

**Moon-Calf:** Idiot, simpleton.

**Pericarp:** The Near Umbra around each Realm.

**Phoebe:** An Incarna of Luna, representing the Moon.

**Praenomen:** The guardian spirit of a pack.

**-ryha:** "Greater in station"; a suffix appended to a name.

**Urrah:** Garou who live in the city; also, the tainted ones.

**-yuf:** "Honored equal"; a suffix appended to a name.



When people lie, they either purposely stare you in the eye, or make certain their gaze falls anywhere except on your face. There is no middle ground.

There have been many, these long years. Warriors and songkeepers. Mystics and questioners. And worst of all, the so-called peacemakers — those that should lend their words to my own. And what do they have for me? The piercing stare or the wandering eye. Lies.

Once every now and again, I reach someone. A shadowed glance, a studious blink — then perhaps a brief pause as he retreats into thought. Every now and again, they listen. But all too often, those who will hear my voice — the voice of a mule — are those of my own tribe, granting me consideration not on the strength of my words, but for the sake of the tribe. I am grateful for whatever faith they will afford me, but what good can we do alone? What advantage comes from the call of a single voice in a multitude?

I know the truth, that in the past, one man or woman's voice has turned the tide and changed the course of history, even for those outside the halls of power. It has been so among humans for centuries. So why is it so hard for the Garou to listen to a voice in the wilderness? All they can see is a flaw of form; they are deafened in their prejudice, pity and disgust, and of these, I don't know which is the worst.

Sometimes my *other* brethren call me aside. Not my tribemates — my fellow metis. They talk of anger and humiliation. They want to know if within my heart burns a desire to smash the skulls of my enemies, to feel the hot blood run down my horns and face, to convince those who hate me that I am as powerful as they. An argument not of words, but of brutality. Then I am the liar, for I tell them with my honeyed tongue how we mustn't strike back at our brothers and sisters, that we are all werewolves and servants of Gaia, despite the differences in our breeds and tribes. I cite the Litany, and tell how showing one's throat in an honorable surrender is no shame. And I am the one staring hard into the eyes of a young hotblood, one who wants nothing more than to be accepted as an equal in the sight of her pack and sept. She's too young, too naïve and too inexperienced to know I'm telling a lie.

I can no longer assuage my own fury, much less that of other metis who look to me for wisdom. My feet are sore, my tongue is thick and swollen, and my heart doesn't lift with the full moon's rise. For more than a dozen years, I have told the young and the old alike that fewer werewolves are born each year. Our Kinfolk, wolf and human, dwindle in numbers despite the swell of the human population and the return of the gray wolf. We are a dying people unless we can unite and put aside our differences. When there are no packs left standing, when only one lone werewolf remains, it will be too late. What can I do to convince others that even a mere metis can be right about this one thing?

The answer still eludes me.

# Chapter Two: The Garou

Three important characteristics shape the werewolf character: breed, the birth race of the werewolf; auspice, the moon under which she was born and that determines her path in life; and tribe, the specific Garou family to which she belongs. These facets provide the framework on which to build the character's history, personality and story.

Breed, auspice and tribe should inspire you, the player, to design a creative character, and each of these

characteristics abounds with certain stereotypes that may provide an interesting starting point. But keep in mind that these characteristics are just guidelines. Individual quirks and paths for the characters come from *playing*, not from a piece of paper. Often, the exceptions to the stereotypes, the characters who forge their own way, make the most interesting personas of a chronicle.

## Breeds

Werewolves are both wolf and human; these halves of their souls cannot be pried apart or even divided down a sharp line. Having said that, though, each werewolf is born to a particular breed and raised in a certain manner depending on that breed. What determines breed? Simply enough, it's the natural form of the werewolf's mother, whether she's Kinfolk, Garou, ordinary human or wolf. If she's a wolf, then the offspring is lupus. If she's human, the child is homid. And if the mother and father are both werewolves, their progeny is metis. For example, Fireheart is a lupus Red Talon female. If she mates with a packmate who is Kinfolk, any Garou she bears would be considered lupus. And even if Fireheart mates with human Kin while in her two-legged form, any werewolf children from that union are still lupus. Female werewolves who bear offspring always wear their breed form when giving birth. The only exceptions to this rule are the unlucky females who bear metis. If they didn't assume their Crinos forms, they'd assuredly die from the experience. Note too that every so often, a werewolf child is born to an ordinary human or wolf mother who may be many generations removed from werewolf and Kin. Gaia alone knows whom to choose as her warriors.

Each breed has its own strengths and weaknesses, and each group has a slightly different connection to Gaia. For example, many lupus believe that their link to the Wyld is stronger than that of homids. Then again, some homids become more wolfish than human, while a few of their lupus brethren discover that they like living in their two-legged forms. Homid and lupus alike generally scorn the deformed metis as sick reflections of Gaia's own malaise. Whatever the case, all three breeds provide interesting hooks for developing unique and flavorful characters.

### Homid

You were born to a two-legged mother, who may or may not have been a werewolf or Kinfolk. You grew up among humans and learned how to live in their society. Yet something always set you apart. Other kids found you weird, and your feisty temper brought on heaps of trouble more than once. As you inched toward puberty, haunting dreams pestered your nights. Maybe you'd wake up craving raw meat or drowning in a cold sweat. Chances are, someone, perhaps a distant relative, watched you from afar and took you away before your Change, which ended whatever life you may have led. Now you know the realities about yourself and your true people. Even if you really wanted to go back, it would be too hard. You couldn't possibly explain to your human family what really happened.

Homid characters have no limits on what Abilities they may have. They're skilled with all kinds of modern machinery, like cars and computers, and they often have a knack for

understanding both abstractions and concrete reasoning in subjects such as economics or algebra. In their breed form, homids can also handle silver with no Gnosis penalty.

But being born human has some downsides, though. Homid characters are generally less intuitive and perceptive than lupus or metis. They're likely to rely on what they see and hear, rather than what they feel. Moreover, their innate connections to Gaia are weaker, as represented by their low starting Gnosis. Humanity has simply grown apart from the spirit world. Finally, the other breeds have some understandable concern that homids outnumber all other werewolves. The lupus fear especially that homids will prove dominant and desert their wolf cousins. This concern makes for some definite tension when the two groups tangle unexpectedly.

**Nicknames:** Apes, Two-Legs, Monkeys

**Initial Gnosis:** 1

**Beginning Gifts:** Master of Fire, Persuasion, Smell of Man

### Metis

Metis rank in the lowest echelons of Garou society, for they are the offspring of lawbreakers who disobeyed the Litany and mated. It's a hard, thankless life that's made no better by the fact that all metis bear some kind of obvious deformity. Most werewolves point to this setback as a mark of Gaia's displeasure; others call it evidence of corruption. A few argue that too much werewolf blood is a bad thing — no flesh can contain such pure blood without developing a flaw. Whatever the case, you've survived from a hard birth, through years of living only in your Crinos body (the natural form of a metis), to finally undergo your First Change. Whether your parents raised you — as an outcast among the sept — or long-suffering but devoted Kinfolk did, you're now ready to take your place in the sept. Unlike homids, you have a lot of knowledge about werewolf society already — the good, the bad and the very, very ugly. Your birthright has toughened your body, your heart and your spirit. Only time will tell if you maintain your dignity and honor or let your dire Rage consume you utterly.

Metis characters have no restrictions on Abilities. Like homids, they can understand various theoretical concepts that puzzle the lupus. But like their wolf relatives, the metis also have cunning instincts. While most lupus and homid werewolves would never admit it, the metis have many of the best parts of being wolf and human.

The downside, though, is the mark of deformity that all metis bear. While a few who can do so may try to hide their defect, others reject the sham as dishonorable. They have to bear it, and so should everyone who sees them. Another flaw of this breed is that all metis are sterile; none can sire or bear children. In a race of beings that is dwindling, this flaw is ironic, especially since the number of metis has grown in recent years.



**Nicknames:** Mules, Bastards, Obscenities

**Initial Gnosis:** 3

**Beginning Gifts:** Create Element, Primal Anger, Sense Wurm

**Deformities:** Every metis character must have one deformity, chosen during character creation. And while some deformities may have minor benefits, the bad should always outweigh the good. Storytellers should encourage players to choose defects that complement their character concept. Some possibilities for metis deformities include:

- **Albino**

You have no melanin in your body, no matter what form you take. As a result, your skin is faintly pink, and it burns easily, so stay out of the sun if possible. Your hair is stark white (not silver) and your eyes are blood red, which makes you a real anomaly among the werewolves. Take a +2 difficulty penalty on all Perception rolls if you're trying to operate in bright light without your protective clothing or sunglasses.

- **Blind**

Whether you have two eyes in the right place that don't work, or no eyes at all, you are totally blind. You fail any rolls involving vision automatically. At the Storyteller's discretion, though, you may take occasional bonuses with other sense groups.

- **Fits of Madness**

Mental illness plagues you on a periodic basis. Whatever your malaise, you tend to fall to pieces when you get

stressed. Make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) whenever situations get tough. Scoring any less than three successes makes you go quietly nuts for a while.

- **Hairless**

You have no hair or fur in any of your forms, making you a weird sight indeed. Take a +1 difficulty penalty to all Social rolls. You might be able to avoid this penalty among humans when you're in Homid form, although some people will be put off by your complete lack of hair even then (particularly if they note your lack of eyebrows).

- **Horns**

A pair of horns sprouts from your brow. They may be like those of a ram or goat, or perhaps you have a small pair of antelope-like antlers. You might even have a single short horn like a unicorn's. Whatever the shape this disfigurement takes, you suffer a +1 difficulty penalty to all Social rolls, and you are likely to be even more heavily scorned by your fellow Garou. (Horns are a mark of prey, not of a predator, after all.) If you actually try to attack with your horns (which may do Strength +1 bashing damage at best), you will likely lose some amount of Glory Renown for fighting like a prey animal instead of a Garou.

- **Hunchback**

You were born with a front-to-back or side-to-side curve of your spine that's worsened as you've aged. Not only does it give you a negative social stigma (+1 difficulty

penalty to Social rolls), it also impedes your movement, adding a +1 difficulty penalty to all Dexterity-based rolls.

- **No Sense of Smell**

You have no olfactory nerves, so your sense of smell is nonexistent. This is an unfortunate thing for a creature who relies so much on her nose. You fail all Perception rolls involving smell automatically, and you suffer a +2 difficulty penalty to track prey using your Primal-Urge.

- **No Tail**

Not having a tail creates serious communication problems with others of your kind. You take a +1 difficulty penalty in all social situations while in Lupus, Hispo or Crinos forms. Likewise, your sense of balance suffers. You take a +1 difficulty penalty to Dexterity rolls as well while wearing those forms.

- **Seizures**

When you're under the gun, you lose control of your body. When you botch an important roll, make a Willpower check (difficulty 8). Scoring less than three successes makes you writhe uncontrollably until the Storyteller tells you to make another roll. You can take no actions while experiencing a seizure.

- **Tough Hide**

Your hide's as tough as old leather, and it's wrinkled and dry with spotty patches of hair. Your Appearance can never be greater than 1, plus unbearable itching and hot spots are constant aggravations. On the positive side, you get an extra die on soak rolls, but it's only a small advantage to weigh against your smelly, scratchy hide.

- **Wasting Disease**

Your constitution is notably weak. You cough and wheeze, and you can't keep up when your pack trots along for hours on end. Take a +2 difficulty penalty on all Stamina rolls, including soak rolls.

- **Weak Immune System**

Unlike other Garou, you catch almost every germ that comes along. Sniffling constantly and often suffering from flu-like symptoms, you don't have the same ability to resist damage that others have. Because of your condition, you have no Bruised health level. When marking damage, begin at the Hurt level.

- **Withered Limb**

You have four limbs, but the muscles of one are atrophied, leaving it withered or paralyzed. Depending on your form, you can't walk well, and you run more slowly than other werewolves. You incur a +2 difficulty penalty on all Dexterity rolls when trying to use this limb.

## *Lupus*

Gaia's passion runs deep within your soul, for you were born in the wild as a wolf. You rose through the natural hierarchy of the pack instinctively, perhaps becoming the alpha, even though you sensed that you were somehow

different from the others. Then you learned the truth: You weren't an ordinary wolf. You were a shapeshifter; a werewolf.

Now you run with a werewolf pack, and you try to see the world through new eyes. The human part of you is often difficult to understand; speech, for example, is layered with more nonsense than is necessary. And those strange manners! To you, every creature has a rank and place, and society is no more complicated than that. Those who rank highest eat first and expect greeting and respect from those who rank lower. Yet the homids have complex rituals for everything, from greetings to meals, and they speak of strange concepts like equality. To you, they seem to ignore the wolf in them overmuch. That's sad, because one thing you do understand is that the number of lupus werewolves lessens with each passing year. And every pup is precious.

While you have a number of advantages, including a strong body and keen senses, you also have some limitations in that you know little about technology. Likewise, you don't follow human logic and reasoning. You rely instead on the powerful instincts Gaia has given you, which is reflected in your high Gnosis. However, beginning lupus characters have restrictions on purchasing certain Abilities, since they lack knowledge about human ways of life.

**Nicknames:** Feral Ones, Four-Legs, Fleabiters

**Initial Gnosis:** 5

**Beginning Gifts:** Hare's Leap, Heightened Senses, Sense Prey

**Restricted Abilities:** Beginning lupus characters cannot take the following Skills and Knowledges. You may, however, use freebie points to purchase them, perhaps as a result of your character's prelude. Similarly, you can use experience points to add these Abilities as a result of "training" in the course of the chronicle (which is a chance for Storytellers with a sharp sense of humor to have some devilish fun).

**Skills:** Crafts, Drive, Etiquette, Firearms

**Knowledges:** Computer, Law, Linguistics, Politics, Science

## *Wolf Years*

Lupus and metis reach maturity more quickly than homids. A metis hits adolescence between eight and 10, and a lupus is usually full-grown after just a year or two. However, all breeds age at the same rate once they undergo their First Change. A lupus can outlive generations of wolves, although rumors circulate of unlucky souls somehow cursed to age as wolves do, dying before their second decade. Even so, most werewolves are theoretically capable of reaching the hundred-year mark or even beyond. It is the rare, rare werewolf, however, who has the luxury of dying from old age.

## *Auspices*

Regardless of their breed, all werewolves feel an inexorable pull toward Luna, sister of Gaia. Whether she shines on them with her full face or hides from view, they take comfort from her company and guidance. Luna is the one who shows a werewolf what his path and role will be in Garou society, and this path is called an auspice.

An auspice is many things: It reflects the werewolf's general personality traits, attitudes and interests, as well as his duties in the pack. All auspices are important, for no werewolf can be all things to his people. As many different auspices are included in a pack, the unit grows stronger as a whole from the diversity of its individual members. Auspice also determines the inner Rage of the werewolf. Some Garou mothers try to use herbs or other methods to induce labor under a specific moon, which is one of the reasons that Ragabash and Ahroun are roughly as common as the other three auspices, even though the full moon and new moon appear only half as often as any other phase.

Each young werewolf studies with an elder of the same auspice, learning particular Gifts and the role Luna has decreed for him in werewolf society. Werewolves often introduce themselves by auspice when meeting others. Whether the werewolf was born under a waxing or waning moon also has some bearing on his auspice and temperament. The waxing moon is a sign of rising Rage, while the waning moon hints at a cooler, more somber personality. Players might take this aspect of a character's auspice into account when considering some of the character's minor personality quirks.

Try as they might, some werewolves find that they are not suited to their auspice roles. Even though doing so is a direct insult to Luna, they may change auspices by renouncing their former auspice and identity through a Rite of Renunciation. This rite is a grave thing for any werewolf to consider. In addition to losing any former rank and Gifts to begin in his new

auspice at Rank 1, he will face the deep mistrust of others until he has proven his decision more than justified, if not for the rest of his life. It is no small thing to spurn Luna's wishes, but sometimes a Garou must follow his heart.

## *Tribes*

If breed determines a werewolf's blood and auspice determines his destined role, then tribe can be said to determine his family. A tribe is more than a simple ethnic or idealistic classification — it is a social unit of werewolves bound together by blood, ideals and spirit. Tribal affiliation brings with it many responsibilities and even unasked-for rivalries — but it also offers a kinship of purpose.

A werewolf's tribe is not a matter of genetics — it is a societal bond made stronger by the patronage of a powerful totem and often by blood ties. A werewolf usually joins the tribe of his ancestors, although sometimes that isn't an option — a Silver Fang born to a less than purebred bloodline may have to seek acceptance among the Glass Walkers, or a bitter lupus can reject his Children of Gaia ancestors to join the Red Talons. When a cub undergoes the Rite of Passage, the totem of the tribe initiating him chooses whether to accept him or not — if the tribal totem approves, then the cub is part of the tribe, finally a full-fledged Garou.

It's said that the Garou Nation wasn't always divided into tribes — that the controversy of the Impergium split the One Tribe into sixteen. Over the millennia, the tribes have dwindled; one has fallen to the Wyrm, two are dead and the fourth has left the Nation. Still, the twelve tribes that remain are tightly knit groups, dedicated to waging the war of Apocalypse until their last breath, for the sake of generations yet to come. The tribes do their best to maintain their tribal heritage, but they are forced to cooperate even more closely with one another in these trying times — or else there will be no heritage and no generations to give it to, only desolation and extinction.

## Ragabash: The New Moon, The Trickster

Only a real fool ignores the wisdom hiding in the guise of the trickster. She brings mirth to still the anger between two hearts and humility to those who need a dose in full. Moreover, the New Moon often has clever insights that make her a worthy advisor (or conniver). The Ragabash occupies an odd place in werewolf society. Many distrust her unpredictable mannerisms and peculiar sense of humor, but she's usually welcomed and given a free hand in the day-to-day life of the sept. The New Moon enjoys a rare flexibility within the normally rigid strictures of werewolf society. When there's tension in the air, the Ragabash is usually the one to lift it, even at the risk of a claw raking across her exposed, laughing throat. She shows a different kind of courage than the warrior, but one that clever elders don't underestimate.

As the "questioner of the ways," the Ragabash has an obligation to play devil's advocate. Being a New Moon is more than being given a license to play pranks or undercut authority — it is a real responsibility. The Ragabash must question traditions and decrees not reflexively, but rather from an informed point of view. It isn't enough to cast doubt on an elder's proclamation; the Ragabash must have a solid argument supporting her contrary views. It's her task to make certain that her packmates see both sides to every issue, to be sure that they're taking the right

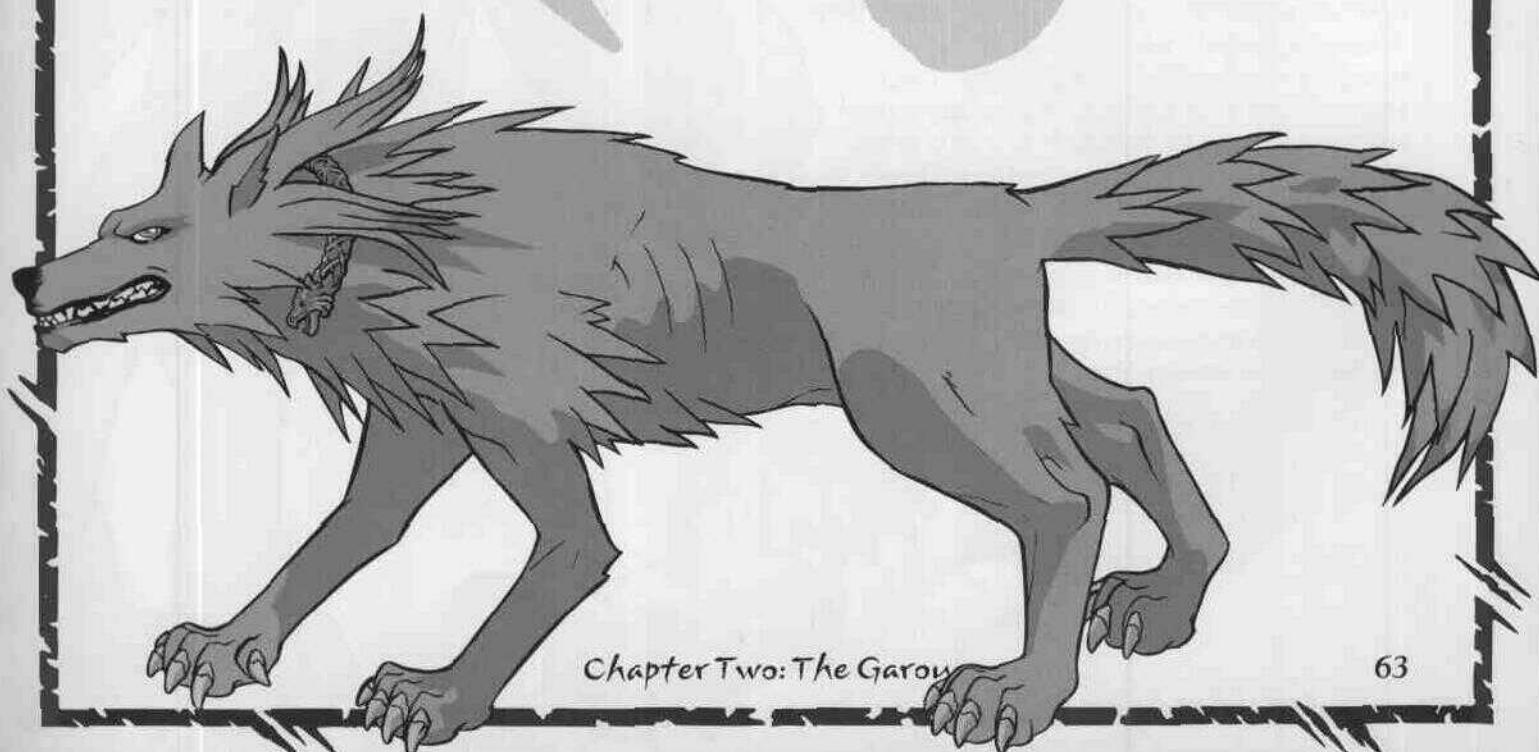
option, not just the most obvious one. Of course, the Ragabash's penchant for cunning, sly tactics and subtle Gifts also tends to bestow a certain amount of responsibility as a scout, saboteur or even assassin. The new moon is the moon of stealth, and its children are the ones charged with using that stealth for the Garou's benefit.

### Initial Rage: 1

**Beginning Gifts:** Blur of the Milky Eye, Open Seal, Scent of Running Water

**Stereotype:** The Ragabash born as the new moon waxes is usually light-hearted and capricious while one birthed under the waning new moon has a slightly more wicked and ruthless streak. All werewolves of this auspice have keen senses of humor, and they try to find some wit in everything. If they have a flaw, it lies in not knowing how to show their sincerity. It's not that the Ragabash can't be earnest, quite the contrary. It's just that she may have trouble convincing her packmates when she means business. For this reason, as well as their incessant tricks, many werewolves unfortunately give little respect to the Ragabash.

**Quote:** *Scorn not my counsel, warrior. I am born under no light of the moon, and I am used to a view from the shadows. The words of your lips don't necessarily reflect the inclinations of your heart. Leave subtlety to those who can use it better than one such as yourself.*



# Theurge: The Crescent Moon, The Seer

As Luna's most slender light shines on her sister Gaia, she reveals secrets of the spirits and their vast realms. The Theurge is the child of the crescent moon, and he is wisest in the ways of the Umbra and its inhabitants. Some call these seers the daydreamers of the werewolves, and many do seem to be a bit detached from their brethren. They can see and hear things that others cannot, as if they live half in the world of the physical and half in the world of the spirit. For all his alien solitude, though, the Theurge holds an important place in any pack. Without him, the werewolves would forget the spiritual side of their nature. They might wander lost and blind if they did not have his visions and dreams to guide them.

The Theurge is usually his pack's ritemaster, the one who knows the most rites and takes the responsibility of performing them for the pack's benefit. He is also the one who typically negotiates with encountered spirits, as the one most likely to speak their language and understand their unusual modes of thought. The Gifts of the crescent moon assist the Theurge in these endeavors, although it also takes a certain kind of mentality to learn to "think" as spirits do. The closer a Theurge grows to his spirit allies, the less familiar he becomes to people used to thinking in more physical terms.

**Initial Rage:** 2

**Beginning Gifts:**

Mother's Touch,  
Sense Wyrm, Spirit  
Speech

**Stereotype:**

Only an idiot would call a Theurge cryptic or equivocal to his face, but many of the Crescent Moons live up to the stereotype. They have a penchant for speaking in riddles and spouting off enigmatic sayings, simply because trafficking with spirits has made such talk second nature to them. Those Theurges born under the waning moon are apparently more adept at binding and forcing spirits to their will (and battling evil spirits to boot), while a Theurge brought forth under the waxing moon has a more charming, cajoling manner with denizens of the Umbra.

**Quote:** *Look, my child, not with your eyes, but with your heart. Listen to the whispers on the wind. The sounds you hear are not merely leaves brushing on grass. No, those are the very spirits we have called to us this night. Honor them as they have blessed our caern with their presence.*



## Philodox: The Half Moon, The Mediator

The half moon reflects the dualities of Garou natures: wolf and human, flesh and spirit, fury and wisdom, darkness and light. The Philodox is counselor, mediator and lawkeeper of the pack. Just as the Ragabash lives for laughter, the Philodox

is born with the wisdom and desire to judge fairly the actions of her people, be those actions bright or ugly. She can't help but try to solve every dispute that falls in her path; such is the role Luna has destined for her. In times of peace, the ranking Philodox is often the leader of the pack. In times of war, she may well give over this mantle to the ranking Galliard or Ahroun. A wise Half Moon bears no grudge and understands that stepping down in such situations is likely for the best. Among the ultra-competitive werewolves, this behavior exemplifies her natural desire for balance and order more than any other.

The Philodox often takes the role of alpha in her pack, although it's more common for Ahroun to lead in times of war. Whether she gains a leadership position or not, she's expected to remain impartial where her packmates are concerned; it's a poor Half Moon who favors one packmate over another. The Philodox also has the responsibility to keep the laws of the Garou in mind — if a packmate is straying dangerously close to violating the Litany, the Philodox should be the first one to notice and warn him against going any further. This responsibility extends even beyond the pack; a good Philodox is concerned with the honor of each and every werewolf she meets. Of course, it's all too easy for such Half Moons to become quickly disillusioned in these desperate times....

### Initial Rage: 3

**Beginning Gifts:** Resist Pain, Scent of the True Form, Truth of Gaia

**Stereotype:** Buried so heavily in her role as impartial judge and jury, others may consider the Philodox aloof and somehow above the day-to-day trials of life. Such is particularly true of the Half Moon born under Luna's waxing gaze. The waning-moon Philodox may instead be edgy and perpetually concerned about everything around her being in perfect balance, to the point of making her packmates grind their teeth in frustration. Still, when trouble strikes, everyone looks to the Philodox for guidance.

**Quote:** *What, another fight? I would have thought better of you two. Imagine a great warrior and a wise sage squabbling like pups! Now, give me the whole story. And no silver-tongued words from either of you. Just the facts, you hear me?*



The Garou

# Galliard: The Gibbous Moon, The Moon Dancer

The Galliard, beloved of the nigh-full moon, is joy incarnate in his songs, stories and poetry. The beauty of Luna's gibbous face inspires him to great deeds on the battlefield as well as around the moot fires. He keeps the traditions of the werewolves perpetually alive through lore carried from generation to generation. A Galliard can rouse the pack from self-pity and suffering when their claws are needed for battle; he can cause even the stodgiest Philodox to weep her heart's last tears just as easily, should the occasion call for it. The entertainment of the Galliard takes many forms. He might be a dancer, a storyteller, a musician or a bit of everything rolled into one. When peace turns to war, the Moon Dancer may well lead the pack. And when tranquility comes again, he'll sing laments for the fallen and epic sagas for the brave survivors who still walk Gaia's sacred places.

A Galliard's role is a tricky one. He must be the lorekeeper of his pack, well-versed in Garou history and able to teach others to learn from past mistakes. He is also the one who recounts his packmates' deeds of bravery, wisdom and honor at moots, ensuring that they are properly honored for their efforts. In many cases, the Galliard is also the one who negotiates with mortals and others, just as the Theurge bargains with spirits and the Philodox reasons with other Garou. The talented Galliard has a fine memory, a glib tongue and a brave spirit; his job isn't easy by any measure, and he needs all the talent he can muster.

**Initial Rage: 4**

**Beginning Gifts:** Beast Speech, Call of the Wyld, Mindspeak

**Stereotype:** Galliards are all the passion of the werewolves rolled up into one feisty and creative package. They're completely unrestrained in their various moods, and they're damn hot-tempered to boot. Moon Dancers born under Luna's waning face have dark, consuming passions; they relate tales of doom, war and sacrifice. The waxing-moon Galliards, by contrast, are almost giddy in their revels, full of songs of wonder, conquest and joy. In the pack, the Moon Dancer keeps everyone's spirits up, even in times of terrible hardship. Without the Galliard's song, many are the werewolves who'd have given up, even in sight of victory.

**Quote:** *Surely I've regaled you with the story of Gunnar Draugrbane, the fiercest warrior ever to sail the sea. No? Then share my mead and stoke the fire! The night is young, and I feel a great inspiration coming to me from Fenris himself.*



## Ahroun: The Full Moon, The Warrior

The Warrior basks in the full glow of Luna, the silver light illuminating his all-consuming Rage. He doesn't hesitate to strike fatal blows; rather, he often doesn't know when to stop his killing. All werewolves are fighters, but the Ahroun is the most destructive and vicious of all Gaia's children. Even the young among this auspice are fearsome to see. The old ones are few, perhaps because the Ahroun don't fear death in service to Gaia, and those elders who do live are likely among the greatest werewolves of legend. The Full Moon knows no cowardice, only thirst for battle. Like the Galliard, the Ahroun is an inspiration to his people, but for tactical acumen, physical prowess and might rather than pretty words. When peace falters, he takes the reins of command as is his due, being the first to lead his pack into the fray and the last to fall should they meet defeat.

The Ahroun's role in the pack is simple — he must be the consummate warrior, able to physically defend his weaker packmates as well as provide the right tactic for any circumstance. As much general as berserker, the Ahroun is the very definition of Gaia's champion.

**Initial Rage: 5**

**Beginning Gifts:** Falling Touch, Inspiration, Razor Claws

**Stereotype:** The term "hell on wheels" doesn't begin to describe the raw strength and courage of the Warrior. A Full Moon werewolf is on the edge constantly, seething with Rage, spoiling for a fight at every turn. The waxing-moon Ahroun is almost a fanatic about proving himself, while the Warrior of the waning moon seeks to assert his dominance over others. They're all damn ornery and hard to get along with, but any werewolf is glad to have one around in the thick of a fight... assuming they're on the same side.

**Quote:** *Out of my way, peacemaker! The only thing these honorless scum will understand is my claws sinking into their throats and the warmth of their blood washing us both in its heat as I send them back to the hells they came from! Move aside, or you too may feel my teeth chewing up your heart!*





# BLACK FURIES

The Black Furies practice feminism with a vengeance. According to legend, Luna first gathered this cult of warrior women in Ancient Greece. Incarnate as Artemis the Huntress, the goddess appointed she-wolves as the defenders of the Wyld. Since then, the tribe's followers have inspired legends of female heroes. Elders claim that the tribe has been responsible for warrior Amazons, vengeful Maenads, Lysistrata's political revolt, Queen Bodacea's military prowess and even the Norse Valkyries. The tribe accepts only women into its ranks, often recruiting werewolf cubs infuriated by the chauvinism or sexism of other tribes. Their version of gender bias is often called hypocritical, but it is based on a culture that has developed for thousands of years. For most Furies, their driving belief is simply that women are worthy of respect and reverence.

Throughout history, rumor had it that Black Furies gave birth exclusively to female offspring. In truth, some Furies ceremoniously killed their male children; the rest gave their cubs away. The only exceptions were the metis; for reasons unknown, the Furies have several metis among their ranks. These days, though, the Furies give away male cubs to be raised by other werewolves, but in return, they demand the right to recruit cubs raised by other tribes. The Furies have forced their rivals to treat female cubs with respect, not by intimidation or insults, but by offering an alternative. Contrary to stereotype, they do not demand that their cubs "hate all men." Instead, they give women a chance to voice their beliefs openly... and act on them.

No two Furies interpret the tribe's philosophies in quite the same way, but a few cultural standards are constant. The Furies are known for their mystical wisdom, fierce pride and political fervor. Honor is their most prized virtue; if a Black Fury gives her word, she'll go through hell to keep it. The tribe's Gifts and spirit allies demonstrate a primal connection to the Wyld, and they are often summoned up to defend the natural places of the world. Fury protectorates are among the most beautiful and sacred places in creation. In fact, many Furies see themselves as aspects of the Goddess herself, since they share a deeper bond with Gaia than any ordinary man.

In return for these gifts from the Gaian Goddess, each Fury also has obligations to the tribe as a whole. First and foremost, they must attend private tribal moots regularly, at which wise women lead complex and beautiful rites. *Kuklochoros* are informal moots where human women are invited to attend, often to learn the ways of the Goddess. During the Burning Times of the Renaissance, many such gatherings were mistaken for witches' sabbats. *Ulaka magelis* are for Black Furies alone, for only they have the strength and stamina to endure the lengthy and deeply emotional rituals involved. The tribe undeniably has its own version of discrimination, but this practice is often necessary to explore their deepest tribal mysteries and keeping them secret from the patriarchal societies surrounding them.

In Greek myth, Bellerophon, a hero whose mastery of animals allowed him to conquer a mythical beast and travel

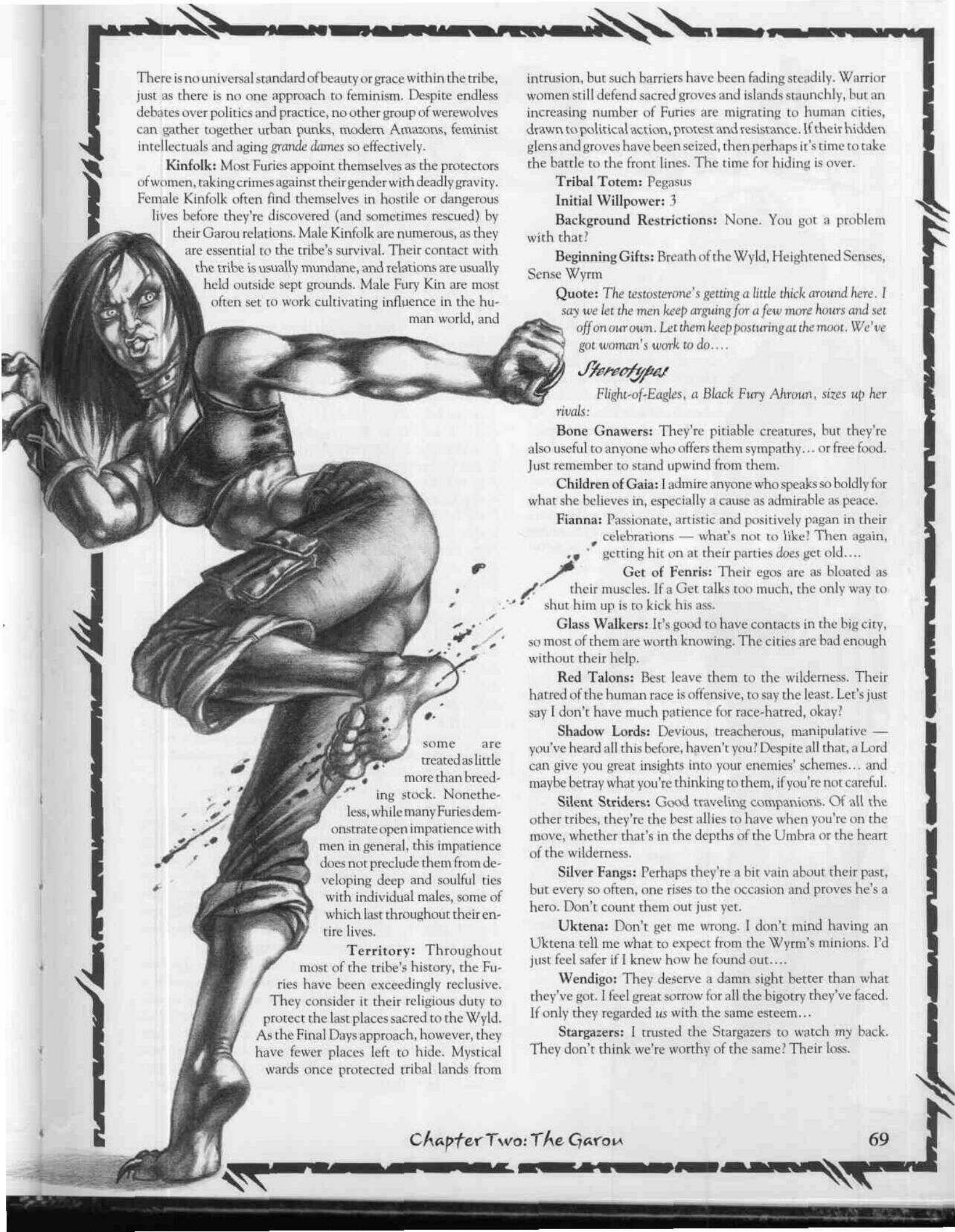
throughout the world, tamed Pegasus. In the Gaian version of this myth, Pegasus — the Furies' totem — gained a great hatred for the man who had mastered her. Furies retell this legend in their own image, using it as an example of man's need to rein in nature and exploit mystical power. Of course, the tribe reveres other totems as well, from Owl and Panther to the Muses and Medusae.

Tribalists who share similar beliefs gather in camps called *kuklos* or "circles." Black Furies who have allied themselves with werewolves from other tribes may still act on behalf of a *kuklos* periodically, often recruiting other members of their pack to help them out. Each circle acts with a high degree of autonomy, although all must eventually report to the Inner and Outer Calyxes, the high councils of the tribe. The elders of the Outer Calyx are well known, as they are chosen with a great deal of pomp and ceremony. The Inner Calyx keeps its leaders and activities secret, much to the annoyance of the tribe's cubs and cliath.

The Furies also possess treasures and fetishes, which they see as only fit for members of their tribe. When these possessions fall into the wrong hands, women warriors rush out to retrieve them. Such extreme activities account for many stories of vengeful and misanthropic Furies. However, despite the preconceived notions of other werewolves, not all Furies are radical in their beliefs. A few camps are particularly harsh in their attitudes toward men, but these camps often form their own packs composed entirely of their own followers. Many Furies run with packs that accept other tribes; unfortunately, they sometimes find themselves at odds with the most extreme and intolerant elders of their own culture.

The battle lines between cliath and elders are clear. While many of the oldest Furies are quite set in their beliefs, young cubs entertain very revolutionary concepts of gender, warfare and Garou society. Not every Black Fury believes in "stomping man's face firmly into the mud," but all members of the tribe are known for their tendency to speak their minds, directly and forcefully, no matter how unpopular or dangerous their ideas may be. In doing so, they risk alienating others within their own tribe and invoking the wrath of the tribal elders. While a "woman who runs with the wolves" may choose to ally herself with anyone she pleases, the elders of her tribe still encourage her to take up Gaian causes shared by her sisters. Thus, the struggle between the old and young continues. In her name, the Furies will avenge any crime against women, insult toward the Goddess or defilement of her creation.

**Appearance:** Although the tribe originated in Ancient Greece, the Furies have since spread throughout the world, adapting to (and changing) a wide array of cultures. In Crinos, Hispo and Lupus forms, their fur is unusually dark, often with white, gray or silver highlights. By ancient law, the only males among the tribe are the metis sons of other Furies. Ancient Greek art depicts homid Furies as graceful, lithe warriors, but 21st century Furies resent being portrayed under any one stereotype.



There is no universal standard of beauty or grace within the tribe, just as there is no one approach to feminism. Despite endless debates over politics and practice, no other group of werewolves can gather together urban punks, modern Amazons, feminist intellectuals and aging *grande dames* so effectively.

**Kinfolk:** Most Furies appoint themselves as the protectors of women, taking crimes against their gender with deadly gravity. Female Kinfolk often find themselves in hostile or dangerous lives before they're discovered (and sometimes rescued) by their Garou relations. Male Kinfolk are numerous, as they are essential to the tribe's survival. Their contact with the tribe is usually mundane, and relations are usually held outside sept grounds. Male Fury Kin are most often set to work cultivating influence in the human world, and

some are treated as little more than breeding stock. Nonetheless, while many Furies demonstrate open impatience with men in general, this impatience does not preclude them from developing deep and soulful ties with individual males, some of which last throughout their entire lives.

**Territory:** Throughout most of the tribe's history, the Furies have been exceedingly reclusive. They consider it their religious duty to protect the last places sacred to the Wyld. As the Final Days approach, however, they have fewer places left to hide. Mystical wards once protected tribal lands from

intrusion, but such barriers have been fading steadily. Warrior women still defend sacred groves and islands staunchly, but an increasing number of Furies are migrating to human cities, drawn to political action, protest and resistance. If their hidden glens and groves have been seized, then perhaps it's time to take the battle to the front lines. The time for hiding is over.

**Tribal Totem:** Pegasus

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Background Restrictions:** None. You got a problem with that?

**Beginning Gifts:** Breath of the Wyld, Heightened Senses, Sense Wyrm

**Quote:** *The testosterone's getting a little thick around here. I say we let the men keep arguing for a few more hours and set off on our own. Let them keep posturing at the moot. We've got woman's work to do....*

#### **Stereotypes**

*Flight-of-Eagles, a Black Fury Ahroun, sizes up her rivals:*

**Bone Gnawers:** They're pitiable creatures, but they're also useful to anyone who offers them sympathy... or free food. Just remember to stand upwind from them.

**Children of Gaia:** I admire anyone who speaks so boldly for what she believes in, especially a cause as admirable as peace.

**Fianna:** Passionate, artistic and positively pagan in their celebrations — what's not to like? Then again, getting hit on at their parties does get old....

**Get of Fenris:** Their egos are as bloated as their muscles. If a Get talks too much, the only way to shut him up is to kick his ass.

**Glass Walkers:** It's good to have contacts in the big city, so most of them are worth knowing. The cities are bad enough without their help.

**Red Talons:** Best leave them to the wilderness. Their hatred of the human race is offensive, to say the least. Let's just say I don't have much patience for race-hatred, okay?

**Shadow Lords:** Devious, treacherous, manipulative — you've heard all this before, haven't you? Despite all that, a Lord can give you great insights into your enemies' schemes... and maybe betray what you're thinking to them, if you're not careful.

**Silent Striders:** Good traveling companions. Of all the other tribes, they're the best allies to have when you're on the move, whether that's in the depths of the Umbra or the heart of the wilderness.

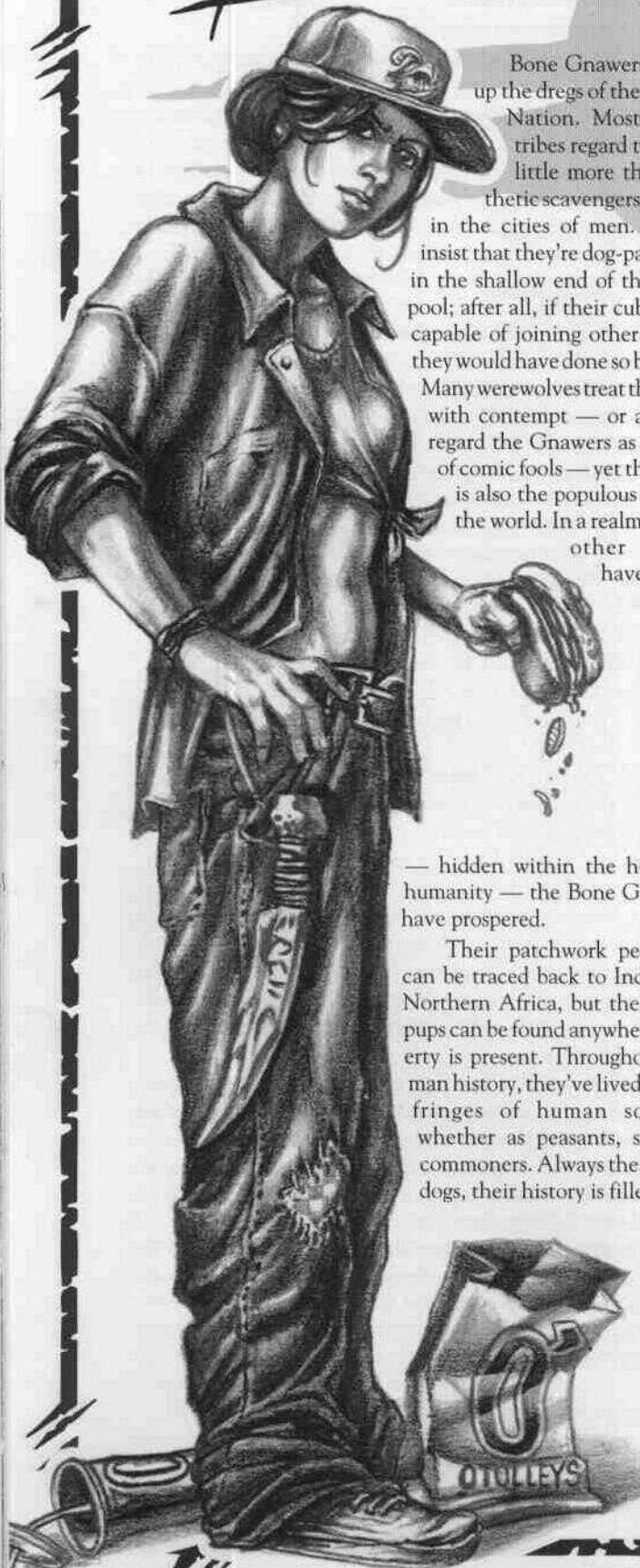
**Silver Fangs:** Perhaps they're a bit vain about their past, but every so often, one rises to the occasion and proves he's a hero. Don't count them out just yet.

**Uktena:** Don't get me wrong. I don't mind having an Uktena tell me what to expect from the Wyrm's minions. I'd just feel safer if I knew how he found out....

**Wendigo:** They deserve a damn sight better than what they've got. I feel great sorrow for all the bigotry they've faced. If only they regarded us with the same esteem...

**Stargazers:** I trusted the Stargazers to watch my back. They don't think we're worthy of the same? Their loss.

# BONE GNAWERS



Bone Gnawers make up the dregs of the Garou Nation. Most other tribes regard them as little more than pathetic scavengers hiding in the cities of men. Rivals insist that they're dog-paddling in the shallow end of the gene pool; after all, if their cubs were capable of joining other tribes, they would have done so by now. Many werewolves treat the tribe with contempt — or at least regard the Gnawers as a pack of comic fools — yet the tribe is also the populous one in the world. In a realm where other tribes have failed

— hidden within the heart of humanity — the Bone Gnawers have prospered.

Their patchwork pedigrees can be traced back to India and Northern Africa, but the tribe's pups can be found anywhere poverty is present. Throughout human history, they've lived on the fringes of human society, whether as peasants, serfs or commoners. Always the underdogs, their history is filled with

stories of helping the "common man" triumph despite impossible odds. Bone Gnawers tell tales of their ancestors aiding Robin Hood, fighting in the American Revolution, rounding up aristos during the French Revolution and even supporting the proletariat in the Communist Revolution. Other tribes laugh these stories off, claiming that the tribe drinks too much bad hooch, but cubs and cliath listen attentively, finding the inspiration to keep fighting.

While other tribes may threaten and intimidate to gain power among their own kind, septs dominated by Bone Gnawers are usually strongly communal or staunchly democratic. After you fall through the cracks of human society, they reason, everyone you find at the bottom should be considered equal. Despite this welcoming attitude, the tribe still maintains a few secrets and traditions away from outsiders. Others consider their totems and rituals bizarre, to say the least. Whether they're sacrificing cheap wine to the Great Trash Heap, singing Frank Sinatra songs to summon the New York City Father or leaving peanut butter for Elvis and the American Dream, Bone Gnawers revel in behavior that outsiders would consider just plain nuts. Yet, they insist that what they're doing is sacred. Everyone has a say in a Bone Gnawer sept, but some of their opinions are straight out of the ozone.

Dirty and mangy, ill fed on a diet of leftovers and scavenged food, Gnawers are generally cynical and world-weary, but they also cultivate street smarts and a wicked wit. Just as cannily as they scavenge food and tools from dumpsters and refuse, they unearth secrets on the street. Although their appearance may be pitiful, they are as well suited to guerrilla tactics and urban warfare. Like rats, they gather in unexpected and hidden places, attack in numbers, and scurry back to safety. If others consider them madmen and fools, so much the better — surprise attacks are far more effective, anyway.

Lofty Garou ideals have no place within the tribe, for practicality is paramount. They value freedom and hard-core survival above all else. Most have great sympathy for folks on the skids, and they often recruit down-and-out humans (and other desperate supernatural creatures) as allies. Tribal elders, addressed respectfully as "mothers" and "fathers," watch carefully over the extended families that result. Along the way, they develop a fierce hatred for humans who exploit others, whether through greed or callous apathy. Therefore, generosity is an important measure of status within the tribe.

While most werewolves tend to think reflexively of the Gnawers as an urban tribe, some of their camps and Kin prefer rural septs. The Hillfolk live very simply in the Appalachians and throughout the rural South, following an old-fashioned way of life as "sons of the soil" (what others would call "hillbillies"). A more infamous camp, the Man-Eaters, keep their affiliations well-hidden, for cannibalism is forbidden by both the Litany and human law. Some hunt in

the most decadent and decayed realms of major cities, but most prefer to retreat to the wild, emerging to hunt only when absolutely necessary.

The tribe has a reputation for being very... cosmopolitan... because of its talent for urban survival. Only the Glass Walkers feel as comfortable in cities, and then only because they are able to afford the very best human luxuries. Gnawers are masters of scrounging Stuff, Loot, Junk and many other varieties of trash that others would consider worthless. Many of their rites and Gifts allow them to survive in urban hellholes, even if it's on a diet of cardboard and dry macaroni. They are masters of begging and groveling, both in human and Garou society. Spare change can fund a Bone Gnawer feast, and every dumpster overflows with bounty... as long as you know how to use the trash festering inside it. Long after the other werewolves have been destroyed by the Apocalypse, the Bone Gnawers intend to be the last ones standing.

**Appearance:** Bone Gnawers wander the streets of mankind's major cities passing themselves off as drifters, blue-collar types and homeless drop-outs. Even in Homid form, they often appear mangy, scrawny, starving and feral. Using this subterfuge, they patrol the streets. In Lupus form, their coats are a mishmash of clashing colors, stains and smells. Some try to pass themselves off as stray dogs or lost mutts, but any human can sense a Bone Gnawer's muted rage and pain instinctively. Although some have bred with stray dogs to create strange hybrids, a desperate Gnawer can't pass himself off as anything other than a feral and dangerous animal that's more wolf than dog. Better call Animal Control, just to be sure.

**Kinfolk:** Gnawers often congregate in urban packs for their own protection, adopting runaways, street kids, drifters and the homeless into their streetwise gangs. Some of these allies and contacts are Kinfolk; others are just victims in desperate need of protection. Kin can be found among any race or nationality in the world, but most such lost souls come from squalid, or at least struggling, backgrounds.

**Territory:** No other tribe knows about life on the street as well as these mutts do. While Glass Walkers lay claim to some of the most valuable real estate in the city, the Bone Gnawers stalk through some of the worst. Condemned or abandoned buildings, junkyards and landfills, dark alleyways and decaying slums are all common hunting grounds. Not all of their haunts are hellish, however. As the most democratic and egalitarian of the tribes, Bone Gnawers also protect the parts of a city established for the benefit of the average citizen. Honorable Garou defend public libraries, museums, playgrounds, city parks, homeless shelters and other places that welcome the (usually unwashed) masses.

**Tribal Totem:** Rat

**Initial Willpower:** 4

**Background Restrictions:** Bone Gnawers may not buy Ancestors, Pure Breed or Resources. Such good fortune typically falls to wolves from other tribes.

**Beginning Gifts:** Cooking, Resist Toxin, Tagalong

**Quote:** Hey, you! Stop pissin' on my damn box! What do you think this is, a men's room? This here's my home, and 'f you don't zip it and run right now, I'm gonna have to bite that thing off. You hear me? I BITE!

### *Stereotypes*

*Piss-in-the-Wind, a Bone Gnawer Ragabash, trades what he knows for a warm meal:*

**Black Furies:** What cool chicks! They prove what I've known all along: Girls kick ass! Tell 'em how cool they are. That way, they'll stand in front of you when a fight's about to start.

**Children of Gaia:** Um, yeah, I'm all for peace. Especially if it means that a sept's going to prosper. After all, that means more food for everyone. Then again, the Bone Gnawers are still the last line of defense, so there's no way we could ever become complete pacifists.

**Fianna:** Hey! I'll trade you what's in my bottle for what's in yours!

**Get of Fenris:** See that Get? Man, the guy who stuck the stick so far up his ass must have been some warrior. They're so full of themselves that I'm glad they'll die to protect us. I know that's harsh, but I'm sick of 'em kicking us around.

**Glass Walkers:** You gotta get one of these guys in your pack. They've got enough cash to pay for everything you need. Ask 'em to pick up the check in restaurants. They love that.

**Red Talons:** I don't know how much I trust them. I mean, without all the people in the world, what would happen to all the cities?

**Shadow Lords:** Ugh. Creep, creep, snoop, snoop. And they still don't pick up the word on the street as well as we do. They'll try to use you for whatever they can get, so make sure you don't sell yourself short.

**Silent Striders:** Striders sometimes help me scrounge up stuff when I'm traveling. Unfortunately, some of them like to "sacrifice" little critters to Owl. If one of them touches my rat friends, I'm gonna hafta kick his ass.

**Silver Fangs:** Oh, yes, sir, Mr. Silver Fang, sir. You go ahead and stand up in front of the whole pack where everyone can see you. You want me to help paint that target on your forehead?

**Uktena:** It's a pity what happened to their kin. It's almost as bad as what happened to ours.

**Wendigo:** Hey! Who turned down the heat again? It's freezing in here!

**Stargazers:** Yeah, yeah. Door, ass, way out, all that.

# CHILDREN of GAIA

In ancient times, when the werewolves culled humans and warred against each other, disaffected members of the tribes rose together as one, and called themselves the Children of Gaia. They pled for peace and an end to the Impergium. With a martyr's will they pled it, and enough heard their message that the tribes were joined... joined enough to end the killing, at any rate. Thus the Children were born and forged, the only tribe born in a cry for peace.

Today, the Children travel from sept to sept, pack to pack, mediating disputes and trying to show the Garou that their common purpose — defending Gaia — is far too important to lose sight of in constant skirmishes over differences. Accord, the Children claim, is one of the best weapons they have for fighting their true enemies. To the Children, Gaia is a loving Mother, and the Wyrm's poison simply stems from an absence of her love. When boiled down to those basic terms, they insist, the "complexities" of the tribes' disagreements sort out pretty quickly.

While their reputation as peacemakers does earn some (grudging) respect, the Children also endure a fair bit of derision over their methods. Some call them soft in the head for wasting their time; others scoff at the notion of pacifists in a warrior society. But the Children of Gaia are hardly nonconfrontational. When roused, a Child's Rage can be terrible, sometimes more so because it's been pent up for a long time. And the tribe understands that werewolves will often feel the need to "pop claws and go to town." Unfortunately, however, violence is a means that too easily becomes an end (as the Children often say with a glance toward the Get of Fenris). When two Garou fight, one may likely die, and the survivor will certainly be weaker for the struggle. The only winner is the Wyrm. When a werewolf slays a normal, untainted human for being in the wrong place, the human's loved ones suffer. And suffering is a state that benefits only the Wyrm.

While other tribes are shrinking steadily, the Children of Gaia are holding on surprisingly tenaciously. If they're not growing, they are at least shrinking at a shorter rate. The main reason is that the tribe takes in any Garou who asks. They are rare among tribes in that they are more than tolerant or even kind to metis — they actually treat them as equals. Therefore, many metis seek them out to find acceptance. Also, many male Garou born to the Black Furies find homes among Gaia's Children. Furthermore, tribe members are always on the lookout for lost cubs, and if a cub doesn't obviously belong to a particular tribe, the Children will make a home for it gladly.

Children of Gaia form loose packs and even looser septs. They do not observe rank and hierarchy as strictly as do other tribes, and while they are by no means purely democratic, leaders try to reach a consensus among involved sept members. Each sept has two elders who take the lead in mediating

disputes. They are known as the Voice of the Goddess (always female) and the Arm of the Goddess (always male).

As a tribe, they are the most active in human environmental organizations by far. Through a vast network of students, teachers, lobbyists and other Kinfolk activists, they have made strides in changing attitudes and pushing eco-friendly legislation that otherwise would never see beyond a congressman's "thank you for your interest" form letter. Their efforts to improve the situation of Native Americans has helped raise their status in the eyes of the Uktenea and Wendigo, although many still grumble, "Too little, too late."

Although few outside the tribe know it, the Children are divided as to how much education is necessary or even allowable. One faction believes that certain non-Kinfolk humans would not only be ready to know the truth about Gaia and the werewolves, but — galvanized by the knowledge — they would also be indispensable allies. This faction has already recruited a few select individuals, but they would see it become a more widespread practice. The others are wary, realizing the price of letting the information fall into the wrong hands. They further realize that the rest of the Garou Nation would likely persecute them for parting the Veil (and thus breaching the Litany). A small but increasing minority feels that it's too late for such measures anyway. The Apocalypse is upon them, they reason, and there is no time for anything except a final gathering of forces. These hard-line Children feel that the other tribes should "put up or shut up." They should close ranks beside them or be cut loose to fare as best they may. A final faction holds that, while ending the Impergium was the right thing to do, the Garou should have found another way to hinder the Weaver's expansion. Choosing the lesser of two evils, they say, is still choosing an evil.

Sadly, these divisions demonstrate that the Children are having a harder time than ever turning the other cheek. They've been striving to promote peace for millennia, only to find that humans and werewolves alike seem to have an inborn need for war. For all the progress that the tribe has made, there's still so much to be done and so little time to do it. It's a small wonder that a tone of bitterness has crept into the Children's howls for accord.

**Appearance:** Homid Children of Gaia come from all races and cultures. Lupus Children are strong and clean of limb, with a dappling of white on their gray and brown coats. While Lupus forms of other tribes radiate danger or feral coldness, Children give off an aura of calm, quiet grace that can sometimes dispel fear as well as instill it.

**Kinfolk:** The Children of Gaia's Kinfolk come from any nationality. They tend to be unusually aware of and active in environmental and social issues, which creates a network of contacts for their Garou relatives.

**Territory:** The Children of Gaia hailed from the cultures of the Fertile Crescent and Phoenicia originally, but the tribe has traveled for millennia to where it is needed most. These days, most Children see North America as a fine home base, but they are scattered across the world as needs be.

**Tribal Totem:** Unicorn

**Initial Willpower:** 4

**Background Restrictions:** No restrictions

**Beginning Gifts:** Mercy, Mother's Touch, Resist Pain

**Quote:** *Of course I'm teaching humans to respect nature instead of fear it. We destroy what we fear. That's why you kill humans, isn't it?*

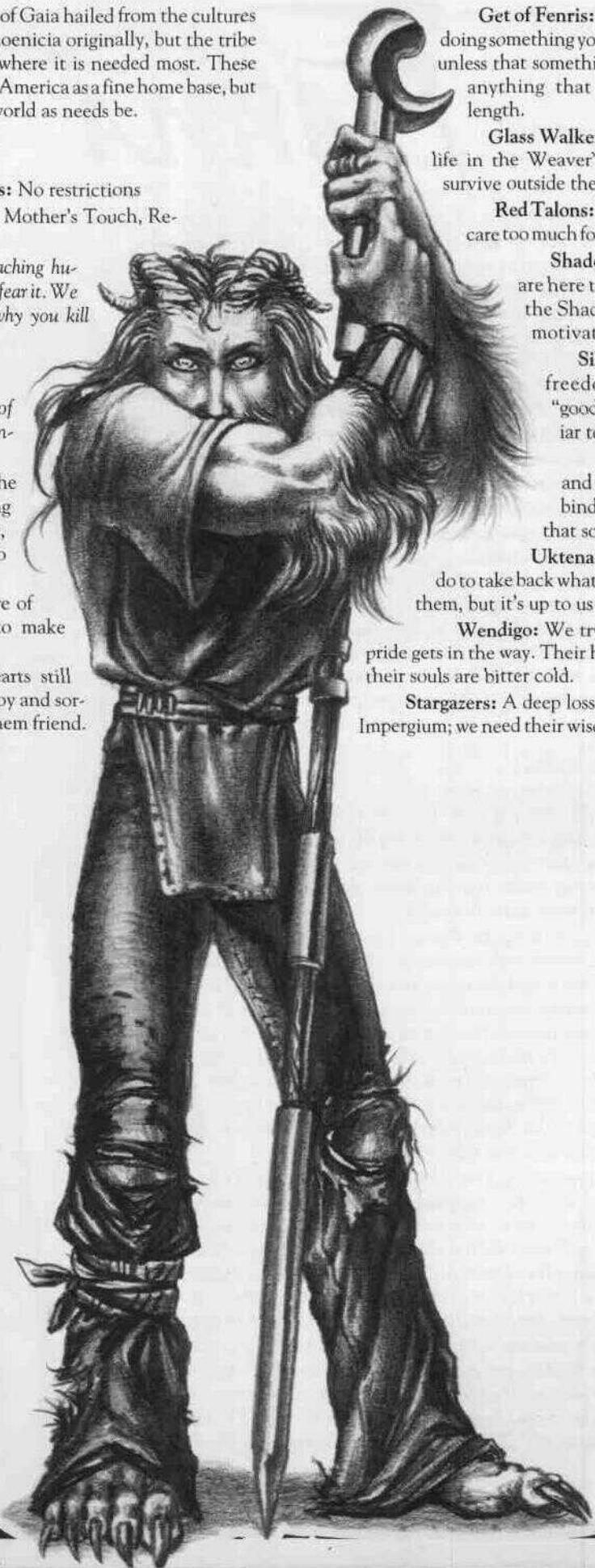
### ***Stereotypes***

Peter Falling-Light, Child of Gaia Theurge, voices his concerns:

**Black Furies:** Like us, the Furies see the need for healing in this world. The difference is, they would deny that mercy to a great many who need it.

**Bone Gnawers:** They are of our blood; we can't afford to make outcasts of our family.

**Fianna:** The biggest hearts still can't contain the mixture of joy and sorrow they feel. I call many of them friend.



**Get of Fenris:** It is good to take pride in doing something you love and doing it well... unless that something is mindlessly rending anything that wanders within arm's length.

**Glass Walkers:** They have adapted to life in the Weaver's domain, but can they survive outside their fish tanks now?

**Red Talons:** I like their honesty. Don't care too much for their bitterness, though.

**Shadow Lords:** The Garou are here to help others, except for the Shadow Lords, who are most motivated to help themselves.

**Silent Striders:** I envy their freedom sometimes, but "goodbye" is a word too familiar to their lips.

**Silver Fangs:** A strong and noble leader would surely bind the tribes together. Is that so blasted much to ask!?

**Uktena:** There is nothing we can do to take back what the invading tribes did to them, but it's up to us to heal the scars.

**Wendigo:** We try to help them, but their pride gets in the way. Their hearts burn with rage, but their souls are bitter cold.

**Stargazers:** A deep loss. They helped us end the Impergium; we need their wisdom now more than ever.

# FIANNA

It's said that the first Galliard was a Fianna. The more humble of this tribe shake their heads and say, "No, not the first one, just the best one." Hailing from Western Europe and the British Isles in particular, the Fianna are a tribe that indulges in its passions for music, drink, love and fighting (not necessarily in that order). The tribe also includes the finest lorekeepers and bards of the Garou, for they learn the tales of other tribes as well as their own. None can match the memory of a Fianna master bard, who can recite a clan generation by generation easily back thousands of years. Garou from other tribes come to the Fianna to learn the old stories of heroes and battles, lists of lineages and tales of tragedy. Members of Stag's tribe are often called to be judges, for their memories are long and they are familiar with Litany precedent as few others are.

Fianna have quite a reputation for enjoying themselves to excess. Music, dancing, drinking, love and general merriment are more than simple pastimes. Stag's tribe is very serious about the fine art of the good time. For this reason more than any other, the Fianna are taken less than seriously by other Garou.

Fianna tend to be extroverts who enjoy parties and gatherings of all kinds. They can also be deeply moody; Harano strikes the Fianna more often than any other tribe save the Silver Fangs. No, the Fianna never do anything by halves! Their mercurial personalities, coupled with their creativity, are often linked to their ancestral ties with the fae folk. In fact, many Garou (including the Fianna themselves) suspect that a touch of faerie blood runs through Fianna veins. While not every tribe member can carry a tune, most members of Stag's tribe are encouraged to be creative. It's the rare Theurge that doesn't embellish a fetish with curling designs representing the spirit housed within, and many Ahroun can forge weapons that are works of art as well as death-dealers. Other tribes have painters, dancers, writers and musicians, but the Fianna have them in spades.

In addition to being sociable, the Fianna are the most likely of all werewolves to fall in love, either with humans or (all too frequently) other Garou. Such romances end in tragedy far more often than not, supplying grist for ballads and stories to fill a thousand heart-breaking nights. Should an illicit union bear tainted fruit, have nothing but pity for the offspring. Fianna are hard on their metis, for it's traditional wisdom that a twisted body mirrors a twisted soul. Metis never hold positions of power within the tribe — custom forbids it. It's a sad irony that abusive treatment sometimes drives the metis to the Wyrm, which only proves the metis' taint in the eyes of the more hard-line elders.

Despite their rowdy reputation, it would be a bad idea to think of the Fianna as merely drunken sots who can spout stories. Those who have thought so have learned their lesson quickly. The joy of battle is not the least of their joys! Time and again their ferocity has surprised the Get of Fenris or other interlopers who expected that lovers couldn't be fighters. Some say that the world is better for the drinking and dancing; without an outlet for that passionate energy, the Fianna would probably be more battle-mad than the Get!

Now, a tribal divide is opening — the age-old schism between old and new. Many Fianna and their activist Kinfolk are using the influx of European Union capital and environmentally friendly parties to repair some of the damage done by chemical dumps and general land wasting across the British Isles as well as the rest of Europe. The other faction sees that the so-called Celtic Tiger economic boom has created a flurry of unrestricted



growth and development. "What's the use of cleaning the Wyrm-taint from a forest if the trees are leveled and an apartment complex covers the land?" they ask. This quandary is being noticed among the other tribes these days, but it is especially painful for the traditionalists of the Fianna. If one uses the tools of the Weaver to fight the Wyrm, what can he use to fight the Weaver?

**Appearance:** In wolf form, the Fianna are quite striking. They are huge like dire wolves (with the occasional resemblance to wolfhounds), with shining red or black fur. They often use Gifts to make their eyes glow green. Their howls are heartbreakingly beautiful, with an ethereal quality no other tribe can match.

Their appearance in Homid form often reflects their Celtic heritage. Most are descended from the people of the British Isles or Western Europe, and Fianna can be found almost anywhere English is spoken. Fianna can be fair-skinned or swarthy; they can be blond, dark-haired or redheads.

**Kinfolk:** Their Kinfolk descend from the finest Celtic stock, many of whom immigrated throughout the world. Fianna are close to their Kinfolk and fiercely protective, a fact that has led to no few skirmishes. Most of their wolf Kinfolk live in North America, but a few treasured members roam hidden on protected European estates and parks.

**Territory:** In the old times, Fianna took wide moors, forests and peat bogs as their homes. As they spread across the world, they found much different locales to settle. Although they always prefer places that remind them of "the old country," they can be found nearly anywhere their Kinfolk have settled. Outside the British Isles, they are most common in Australia and New Zealand, Canada and of course the United States (particularly Appalachia).

**Tribal Totem:** Stag

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Background Restrictions:** No restrictions.

**Beginning Gifts:** Faerie Light, Persuasion, Resist Toxin

**Quote:** *There's three things that'll bring you praise at the moot, lad: a well-spun tale, a ready wit and a clear voice. <sigh> If you'll just work on the first two, you might not make a fool of yourself, lad.*

### **Stereotypes**

**Morgan the Unruly, Fianna Ragabash, shares the gossip:**

**Black Furies:** Be careful around these ladies; they can't take a joke.

**Bone Gnawers:** They're looked down on, but show 'em a little kindness and they'll be your friend for life. Can't ever have too many friends.

**Children of Gaia:** A smile will go a long way, and these folks always have one for you. They'll fight with the best of them; it just takes longer to piss them off.

**Get of Fenris:** They're battle-mad. They'd attack a tree if you wrote "Wyrm" on the side... assuming they can read.

**Glass Walkers:** If you need to find your way around a city, a Glass Walker will give you a hand. But don't expect a free lunch.

**Red Talons:** Better than the Get, because they're pickier. They're discriminating psychopaths.

**Shadow Lords:** Arrogant bastards. Don't shake one's hand, there's likely poison in his ring.

**Silent Striders:** Strange lot, and a little spooky. But invite one to your fire and you're in for a night of many tales.

**Silver Fangs:** Respectable, traditionalists to a fault, but a bit stiff and overbearing sometimes. Still, one's king is one's king.

**Uktena:** Pretty unfriendly, unless they think you know something they don't. Then they're only slightly unfriendly.

**Wendigo:** We've got some history. We don't get on too well.

**Stargazers:** Too wise for us mere mortals. They're probably happier hanging out on their mountaintops.

# GET of FENRIS

Any Get worth his scars carries himself with pride, for he is the result of centuries of warrior heritage. The Get of Fenris, or Fenrir, are heroes in the truest sense of the word. They seek their fortune along a path beset by battles and awash in blood. Most commonly of Nordic, Teutonic or Saxon descent, they reflect the harsh attitudes of a brutal history. The sagas, *eddas* and prose poems of a thousand years ago inspire them to great acts of valor. Admittedly, werewolves from other tribes are often shocked by their violent and remorseless behavior, even toward other Garou. Few will back down from a fight, and fewer still show mercy; yet all of them are eager to demonstrate their prowess in battle. Strength is the greatest virtue among the Get. Through constant conflict, they force themselves to become stronger... or destroy themselves in the process.

The Fenrir seem ferocious and belligerent to other tribes. Even their cubs will sacrifice their lives gladly in the never-ending campaign against the Great Serpent of Darkness. While cubs with proper lineage are hounded to join the tribe, werewolves are not just born into the Get of Fenris; they must prove themselves worthy first. Most are of European stock, born of Fenrir Kinfolk, but Get septs have been known to accept heroes from other ethnic groups. The path to glory is not easy, though. The tribe's Rites of Passage are inevitably bloody and often deadly. Cubs who seek acceptance are challenged and tested continually. Even werewolves who aren't born under the full moon must prove themselves as capable warriors. Weak Get die; the strongest survive.

To spur them on to greater glory, Fenrir Galliards called *skalds* recite vast epics of werewolf heroes who have fought against impossible odds. Yet in their lust for blood and glory, the Get have become blind to the darkness within themselves. Fatalism is common among their kind. A true hero does not care whether he lives or dies, as long as he destroys his foes and inspires a great epic for the Galliards to recite. As one would expect, casualties among the Fenrir are high. Even if winning a battle seems impossible, a Get of Fenris would rather die a hero than run away with his tail between his legs. Calling a Get a coward is tantamount to suicide.

The tribe sees itself as the vanguard in the endless fight against the Wyrm. Their elitism is painfully evident. A rare few have even embraced Aryan ideals of racial supremacy, staining the honor of the tribe in the process. The rest consider themselves superior to other Garou, but largely because they have led a harsh life with high ideals. They are also undeniably chauvinist, sneering at "civil rights" and "empowerment." The strong command the weak who must take their place among cowards and failed heroes.

Over the last century, the tribe has been forced to modify its chauvinistic attitudes. Other tribes consider them sexist and crude, but women have always had a place in Get culture. Throughout the 20th century, female Fenrir have redefined many of the traditional roles for women in the tribe. As part of

their culture, they have fought to prove that they are as heroic as their male rivals, and despite having to work several times as hard, they have proven themselves worthy. Sometimes an elder looks askance at a woman who insists on being treated as an equal, but he usually changes his mind once he's had his ears pinned back. Female Get are strong-willed enough to hold their own against the average Black Fury. Unfortunately, they are also stubborn enough to insist on proving their superiority. Epic duels result.

When the Get decide to gather in numbers, bone-cracking tourneys and epic tests of prowess are certain to follow. Tribal moots are always held beneath the full moon, and they are always militaristic. Ahroun dominate these gatherings, since leaders must always fight for their positions of authority. All who attend must run a deadly gauntlet to participate in the tribe's sacred rites. The gauntlet is soon followed by ritual bloodletting, live rune carving and torture of captured enemies. Mystical rites involve lengthy combat, sometimes with spirits who must be forced into submission by powerful Theurges.

The Fenrir see life as a long, hard struggle; for them, peace is an impossible dream. Through this philosophy, they gain a deep understanding of their inner Beasts, feral instincts and boundless rage. As the Final Days approach, true heroes have a chance to wield these weapons and earn a place in Valhalla. They believe that a great battlefield has already been readied for them in the Umbra: Vigrithr, the realm where the final battle of the Apocalypse will be fought. Fimbulwinter, the "final winter" that will end the age of man, is here. The armies of evil are amassing to destroy the Garou in numbers heretofore unseen. The Get of Fenris have been readying themselves for generations. If Ragnarok is at hand, they will greet it with sharpened claws and readied blades.

**Appearance:** The Get are a very martial tribe. Most are intensely muscular, and they bear their scars with pride. Their lupine forms resemble the huge gray wolves of the North, belligerent beasts with broad shoulders and huge, savage jaws. Many have dark patches in their fur, although some supremacists mock any Get who does not have a pure coat. Many look Scandinavian, Germanic or Anglo-Saxon in Homid forms, but modern Fenrir come from any culture that produces sufficiently strong warriors. Nearly all Get cultivate impressive scars and tattoos. Some even brand their fur or carve runes ceremoniously into their flesh.

**Kinfolk:** The Get of Fenris first stalked their tribal homelands in Northern Europe, but they have traveled freely throughout many lands like their Viking ancestors. Most favor rural areas near their Kinfolk, often under conditions adverse enough to "cull the weak" from their human herds.

**Territory:** Any sacred site that isn't defended adequately may find itself under attack from Fenrir "protectors." They are infamous for assaulting other tribal caerns to allegedly secure



them. Like the Wendigo, they seem to thrive under adverse conditions, guarding caerns known for fierce storms and harsh winters. The largest protectorates are in the Black Forest of Germany and the wilderness of Scandinavia.

**Tribal Totem:** Fenris

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Background Restrictions:**

Get cannot purchase the Contacts Background. True friends are the only

friends a Fenrir wants. They may purchase Mentor, but a Get's patron will only advise, never protect. Those who cannot survive on their own deserve to die.

**Beginning Gifts:** Razor Claws, Resist Pain, Visage of Fenris

**Quote:** *The stench of evil is strong here. I think we're outnumbered at least four to one. A pity they will be at such a disadvantage. What? Do you think we should retreat? Never! This is a time for great glory!*

***Stereotypes***

*Fists-of-Wotan, a Get of Fenris Ahroun, reviles his rivals:*

**Black Furies:** Their warriors are fierce, but they should have more respect for great heroes. Perhaps we shall have to teach them a lesson again.

**Bone Gnawers:** Crawling curs. I suppose every sept needs commoners. A pack should only call on them when all other options fail. Even then, their methods can bring a great hero even greater shame.

**Children of Gaia:** How I tire of their insufferable prattling! Perhaps they should hide back at the sept with the Bone Gnawers. I've seen a few of their Ahroun hold their own in a fight, but I'd prefer that they actually *kill* more of their foes....

**Fianna:** Ah! Their lust for battle! Their spirited drinking contests! Such fine epics! We find them amusing, yet they still hold a grudge against us. I imagine it's because our ancestors beat the crap out of theirs.

**Glass Walkers:** I still don't understand them. They are more men than wolves. Beware their strange ways.

**Red Talons:** We would do well to ally with the Talons. Their instincts are strong, and they are fierce as Fenris himself in battle. Yet they do not see who the real enemies are. It is far too late to cull the herds of humans.

**Shadow Lords:** Dealing with them is always a gamble. You may get an advantage you did not see before, or lose everything to their trickery. Trust your gut instincts when talking to them. Their seemingly honeyed words are poisoned with lies.

**Silent Striders:** Run up ahead, Strider! Come back when you find something... so we can kill it for you!

**Silver Fangs:** If they live up to their heritage, they are good rulers. The rest — they look handsome at our moots, but I'd rather have strong warriors standing beside me. Don't be surprised if you find you must seize power from a weak Fang for the good of the sept.

**Uktena:** Their ancestors were weak enough to lose their lands, so they make dark deals and questionable pacts. Remember to watch them carefully for signs of Wyrm-taint.

**Wendigo:** The Wendigo's ability to survive the harsh lands of the North proves their indomitable spirit. We shall stand at the vanguard, but they are worthy enough to come running close behind us.

**Stargazers:** To leave the Nation in these times is as good as suicide. Even the strongest tribe cannot survive the Apocalypse on its own, much less the Stargazers.

# GLASS WALKERS



Glass Walkers defy many of the basic concepts of the Western Concordat. Most other werewolves see human cities as cancers on the skin of Gaia, cesspools of corruption and pollution, but the Walkers are drawn to them. Most wolves prefer to commune with the Wyld in the depths of the wilderness, but the Glass Walker tribe is primarily urban. These werewolves have a deep connection to the Weaver, a cosmic force others blame for the insane excesses of human civilization. They are masters of men's tools, technophiles of the first order and intimately familiar with human society. For these reasons, other Garou describe the Walkers as *urrah*, "tainted ones" who have compromised with human society and human values. Despite this reputation, the Glass Walkers understand the world of men far better than their rural brethren do.

Like any culturally adept traveler, the tribe has changed its appearance throughout its history. Originating in Mesopotamia, the first Glass Walkers called themselves "Warders of Men." Cut off from the rural septs of the Garou, they lived in a separate world, understanding humans by living among them. Long before the Bone Gnawers took to the streets, they entrenched themselves in the wealthiest and largest cities, living as wolves in sheep's clothing.

Throughout the medieval millennium, "City Warders" encouraged trade and the spread of knowledge. By the dawn of the Victorian era, they traveled along the railroads as "Iron Riders." With each telegraph wire erected and stretch of rail laid, they aided the Weaver in stretching its webs around the world. The tribe reinvents its culture repeatedly, adapting continually to the changing world around it.

In the modern era, they've used their wealth to make homes in the tallest skyscrapers, surrounding themselves with creature comforts and assimilating modern technology thoroughly. Glass Walkers have climbed the cities' glass and steel towers to watch over mankind. Only in the last few centuries have they begun to integrate their tribe fully with the Garou Nation again, much to the chagrin of werewolves who follow vastly different traditions. Their "rules of order" are all too human, often dominated by professional work ethics, corporate philosophies and a driving reverence for the all-mighty dollar.

Among the first to dwell in human settlements, the Walkers have long admired human adaptability and ingenuity. Their art, fashion and society all reflect the latest trends, a proclivity that raises the suspicions of their packmates and septmates. Yet they also insist that this admiration gives them a deeper communion with the Earth Mother. Evolution is a natural process, after all, and humans are definitely ahead of the curve. If the wilderness is dying, more werewolves should move to the cities. Skyscrapers are merely the trees of a more efficient forest, surrounded by concrete and asphalt that will last for generations to come. Others can try to preserve a dying past, but the Walkers exist in the here and now. Some claim that a Glass Walker's strength lies in his wealth, but the tribe considers cultural adaptability its greatest advantage.

No matter what paths they follow in life, Walkers focus their resources on building the wealthiest and best-connected urban caerns. They often reclaim urban areas "for Gaia," even those that have fallen prey to urban development and modernization. After all, doing so places them in an excellent position to stalk and slay humans who profit from such exploitation. The tribe particularly prides itself on its

"monkeywrenchers," saboteurs who cripple corrupt companies, especially those that fall under the sway of the Wyrm. The subsidiaries of Pentex are among the tribe's greatest enemies, closely followed by a much younger corporate rival: Developmental Neogenetics Amalgamated.

The tribe is equally famous for its urban shamans, Glass Walker Theurges who develop extensive pacts with urban spirits and bind them into deadly technological fetishes. A seemingly innocuous floppy disk or battery can contain vast cosmic power. Unfortunately, the tribe also competes directly with other supernatural denizens of the cities. Werewolves are well aware that vampires exist, and the Glass Walkers often vie for their real estate and influence. Although not as influential as their vampiric rivals, Glass Walkers are wealthier than most other werewolves, and far more technically proficient. Having infiltrated "the system," they use the methods of the modern age to fight beside the rest of the Garou Nation.

**Appearance:** Glass Walkers are known for their devotion to human fashion, even while representing a vast array of subcultures. In this tribe, wealthy street punks and corporate powerbrokers work side by side. In Lupus form (when that option is absolutely necessary), their fur is often mottled and multicolored, usually trimmed and sometimes dyed. Cubs and cliath sometimes style their hair in Crinos form, sporting a strange variety of modern coiffures. Lupus Glass Walkers are rare, so their blood is dangerously thin. Many exhibit an unusually high intelligence, or they at least conceal their rapid learning curve carefully.

**Kinfolk:** The thought of a Glass Walker without easy access to email, a pager, a cell phone and other personal technology is unthinkable, or at least considered strange. Many Glass Walkers have Kinfolk they never actually see face to face, keeping their contact virtual. Others treat their relations as employees and contractors of the Garou Nation, managing them in the field directly for a wide variety of tasks. Most Kin are technophiles, or at least they seem to thrive in the industrialized world, so the other tribes seem strange and primitive to them.

**Territory:** The Glass Walker tribe secures prime real estate in urban realms, places far more comfortable than the rattier places the Bone Gnawers prefer. Walkers stay close to their human contacts, whether they're in corporations, scientific institutions, underworld society or urban gangs. Then again, as one would expect, most Glass Walker resources are usually just a phone call away. Elders have a fine taste for the ritziest places in the city, although some cubs and cliath have been known to favor seedy clubs and decadent street life.

**Tribal Totem:** Cockroach is an alien totem to most other Garou, but it's a perfect choice for Glass Walkers. Its children have survived for 325 million years, they can adapt to almost any environment, they are virtually impossible to exterminate fully, and they are often plentiful in urban caerns.

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Background Restrictions:** Glass Walkers stopped cultivating the Pure Breed Background ages ago, and they have lost touch with their anachronistic ancestors. They also learn

without the benefit of mentors. Anything an elder can teach a cub is probably obsolete, and it must be reinvented or upgraded.

**Beginning Gifts:** Control Simple Machine, Diagnostics, Trick Shot

**Quote:** *That little magnetic keypad should be no problem. I'm more worried about the creatures they've been breeding in their computer system. I say we shift to Crinos and run our own little "anti-virus" program.*

### **Stereotypes**

"Casual" Friday, Glass Walker Galliard, gives his associates a performance review:

**Black Furies:** What's the big deal? Why are the other tribes so reluctant to respect these women? They may be tiresome to argue with, but their prowess is even greater than their pride.

**Bone Gnawers:** Yes, I value the contributions they bring to our urban caerns. No, I don't intend to ever take them for granted. And yes, I'm really tired of them asking me for money....

**Children of Gaia:** The Children's close ties with their Kinfolk are immensely useful. When the world has given you a few scrapes too many, you can count on them to heal your wounds and nourish your soul.

**Fianna:** The best Galliards in the whole damn Concordat. They fight like madmen and revel like gods. Just handle them with care. One wrong word can set them off....

**Get of Fenris:** Why, certainly, you have the honor of striking the first blow! Just stop talking about how you're going to do it.

**Red Talons:** I'm sorry, but they can't stand me and I'm tired of their snarling. If you don't like the big city, go hide in the woods.

**Shadow Lords:** It always helps to have informants. Just don't depend on them too much. They rarely help out without demanding something in return... or taking it outright.

**Silent Striders:** Depending on the Striders is a bit old-fashioned for my tastes. Why send a messenger when I've still got a full charge on my cell phone? Still, the farther you get from the city, the more useful they are.

**Silver Fangs:** I'm sorry, did I say something about being old-fashioned? The Striders are nothing compared to these guys. Someone needs to upgrade to the 21st century. Still, I'll respect them if they respect me. Oh, wait! They don't!

**Uktena:** If you need a cunning scout, someone to hold mystic rites or a fellow traveler in the spirit world, you can depend on an Uktena. I'm much more comfortable dealing with the real world, myself.

**Wendigo:** Okay, let's face it. Your people were on the losing side. Your reservations are dying. Accept it and move on. By the way, I've got a friend in the casino business who can help... OKAY! OKAY! Forget I said anything! Jeez, relax!

**Stargazers:** I used to be convinced they had a lot to offer, but now I'm wondering if they're suffering from planned obsolescence.

# RED TALONS

The Garou culled humanity long ago, because they recognized the dangerous tendency of humans to spread across wide territories if not checked. The tribes eventually knew pity and ended the Impergium; now the cancer-like spread of humanity is beyond anything those elders could have possibly imagined. Yet one tribe still advocates a return to the old ways — the tribe called the Red Talons. Lupus to the last member, they claim proudly that no human has ever tainted their tribe. Other tribes point to the Talons as a warning of what happens when Garou forsake one side of their being, for without humans in their bloodline they have become more bestial than the wolves themselves. Their savage howls make even homid Garou uneasy.

The Talons follow tradition closely — not the tradition of Silver Fangs, but that of their wolf brethren. More than any other tribe, the Red Talons decide their hierarchy by strength, cunning and endurance. Pack members test each other at a sign of weakness, and the one most fit for leadership assumes the role of alpha. The alpha demands unquestioned loyalty from the pack, and he gets it. He eats first of the best portions of the kill, followed by the rest of the pack in descending order of status, yet no member of the pack goes hungry. Tribal law is clear-cut. If a crime has been committed against the Garou, the pack doesn't indulge in haggling or soul-searching — it delivers justice swiftly and moves on.

Red Talons dwell in wilderness, away from the noise and stench of human settlements. Their territory is often "posted" with the skulls of trespassers. More than any other werewolves, Talons are at home in the wilderness, following paths others fear to tread. Even their detractors among the other tribes must admit that the Red Talons have long memories, and that they probably practice rites and keep secrets long forgotten by the rest of the Garou.

Now, as forests are logged and caerns bulldozed, as their hunting grounds are subdivided and their Kin ate poisoned and shot, the outrage of Griffin's tribe is beyond measure. The Talons' hatred of humanity is legendary; to the Garou Nation, they are living reminders of the Impergium and a constant to the species' existence. But not all Talons espouse the humans' extermination. Most believe that returning to a policy of culling would be sufficient. In fact, some humans actually live peacefully near Talon territories, if those humans are few and show the land proper respect. It is more common for a pack to make examples of any who wander too near, trusting that fear will keep the apes in the safety of their scablike cities.

Many wonder if the Talons have been corrupted by the Wyrm, for rumors of their cruelty to humans rival tales of the evil rites of the Black Spiral Dancers. For the most part, Talons slay man, woman and child wholeheartedly, but they do so quickly. Some enjoy it, others take to the task as a duty, but wounding so the prey will suffer for hours or days isn't natural

(although it may be just). However, the younger Talons have begun making elaborate rituals of their mini-Impergium in recent years, and it worries the elders. To savor the fear of the prey is one thing, but to draw the agony out over days... that is something the apes do. A dark secret of the Talons is that more than a few consume the flesh of their victims regularly, disregarding one of the Litany's tenets. These rogues insist that the Stargazers included that provision in the Litany, and since they're gone, it doesn't matter anymore.

**Appearance:** In wolf form, Talons are generally large-framed, with noticeably oversized jaws and paws. Even in Lupus, their claws are almost catlike in sharpness. Their fur tends toward ruddy brown. Perhaps the most unusual feature of the tribe is the shock of blood- or flame-red fur always present somewhere on their bodies. Talons boast that it is a badge of honor from Gaia, showing her approval for the only tribe willing to advocate putting humans back in their place. Less extreme tribes contend (quietly) that it is Gaia's mark of shame to the last adherents of the Impergium.

In Homid form (which they rarely ever assume), Talons are crude, hairy, slouching and unkempt; they never look when they can glare. They shamble, unused to walking on two legs, and find the human's mild sensory deprivation unnerving.

**Kinfolk:** Red Talons guard the dwindling wolf packs across the world. Many won't even acknowledge human Kinfolk, sparking many bloody conflicts with other tribes. All wolves, Kinfolk or not, are precious to the tribe, and even a pup is worth a few human lives. To lose a wolf to starvation or disease is a reason to mourn; to lose one to hunters is an excuse for revenge.

**Territory:** Red Talons dwell in the deepest wilderness, away from the taint that humans bring. Occasionally, a pack will set up its territory near civilization, but only to conduct raids against their enemies.

**Tribal Totem:** Griffin

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Background Restrictions:** Red Talons may not buy Allies, Contacts or Resources. Their only Kinfolk are wolves.

**Beginning Gifts:** Beast Speech, Scent of Running Water, Wolf at the Door

**Quote:** *Why should we submit to the new Impergium where humans cull wolves?*

## Stereotypes

*Lynx-Killer, Red Talon Galliard, howls softly.*

**Black Furies:** It is not right to deny your father and love only your mother. Both are needed.

**Bone Gnawers:** There will always be a lowest-ranked wolf in every pack. In the Garou Nation, it is the Bone Gnawers.

**Children of Gaia:** Harmony is good. Harmony with your enemies is not. Humans are our enemies.

**Fianna:** When howling, their voices are beautiful; otherwise, they babble and brawl.

**Get of Fenris:** They fight like the wolverine, and they eat like wolverines too.

**Glass Walkers:** They are abominations. In fighting the Wyrm, they have allowed the Weaver to take their souls!

**Shadow Lords:** It is right they test the Silver Fangs, but the Shadow Lords are not fit to lead. They must use deception to cover their weakness.

**Silent Striders:** There is something wrong with them. Wolves are never lone by choice.

**Silver Fangs:** A pack leader must lead. They have grown fat and sluggish and mad.

**Uktena:** They keep many secrets, which is not that different from lying. They dabble with the Wyrm too much.

**Wendigo:** A proud tribe, more honest than most.

**Stargazers:** It is well that they leave. There is nothing left of instinct in them, only thinking, thinking, thinking!



# SHADOW LORDS

Dominance and submission, mastery and servitude — such concepts form the basis of Shadow Lord society. To the Lords, hierarchy is everything. No other tribe is organized so rigidly, yet because their elders are masters of politics, they also have a reputation for treachery. As the rest of the world plunges into darkness, they argue, political power is the only strength holding the Garou Nation together. Leadership is the only measure of worth, so it must be attained by any means necessary. Machiavellian and manipulative, the Lords are often maligned. Bearing others' disdain and mistrust with simmering rage, they skulk back to their shadowy schemes and furtive activities. It's best to exact revenge when your rivals least expect it....

Shadow Lord cubs regale their tribal leaders openly as proud, dignified, cunning and aloof... no doubt because they fear them so much. The tribe's elders are renowned as cunning and merciless, but they are known for arrogance and ambition just as well. Devout tribal unity, elaborate conspiracies, talented spies and leaders forged in the heat of unceasing competition have made their order an unstoppable political machine. Yet this same lust for tyrannical conquest is also their greatest weakness. If the tribe ever stops gaining power, it is often because of a struggle for dominance within its own ranks. Therefore, when an ambitious Shadow Lord seizes power, he does so quickly and decisively, destroying his rivals completely. To do any less weakens the tribe as a whole.

The Shadow Lords first formed in what is now Eastern Europe. During the Impergium, many were tyrants of the first order; some modern Lords still long for the purity of that age. Just as many had a reputation as loyal advisors, acting as the vigilant "betas" supporting and protecting many a great alpha. Nonetheless, the Shadow Lords decided to act independently of the rest of the Garou Nation when the Impergium came to an end. While others pledge peace, the Lords waged war against rebellious human villages. They've had a reputation for deceit ever since.

During thousands of years of subterfuge in the Balkans, the Lords have watched human tribes and nations betray and conspire against each other... and they've learned from others' mistakes. Near their most powerful caerns, the Lords found themselves continually at odds with far more sinister creatures, including conspiracies of ancient vampires. Survival depended on making and breaking alliances with various shifting factions. To this day, the Shadow Lords are the most adept at exploiting dark deals with sinister forces, including a vast array of blood-sucking freaks. Few others would dare try to understand the motivations of such insidious monsters.

The traditions of their society are confusing to other werewolves, many of whom prefer to stay far away from Garou politics. For instance, a Shadow Lord will scheme against a weak leader but still respect a strong one. Sept leaders know that a Shadow Lord advisor can do a masterful job of uncovering conspiracy and dissent among their followers, but only as long as the advisor approves of the sept leader's policies. Many alphas prefer to keep the Lords where they can see them, and

some root out insurrection merely by noticing which "allies" a Shadow Lord speaks to the most.

Among the Shadow Lords, tyrannical alphas hold on to power and privilege through tenacity, deception and continual subterfuge. Because they are so enthralled by the politics of the Garou Nation, they consider themselves guardians of the Litany, or at least the "correct" interpretation of it. Ragabash claim that arguing with a Shadow Lord Philodox is as futile as trying to freeze a Wendigo, as reckless as calling a Fenrir a coward and as pointless as trying to rob a Bone Gnawer.

Any Shadow Lord respects power and condemns weakness, so nearly all of them despise the Silver Fangs, whom they consider weak and decrepit relics of the past. Their greatest goal is to usurp power from the Fangs. After doing so, dominating the Garou Nation and eventually the human race cannot be far behind. Because they rule through fear and intimidation, no true Shadow Lord would show sympathy or tolerance for the weak. As such, they are commonly sought by agents of the Wyrm. A Shadow Lord can make an amazing ascent to power, but he is also capable of a maddening fall from grace soon thereafter if he is not careful.

**Appearance:** Shadow Lords cultivate an intimidating appearance, just as they develop a respect for fear. The archetypal Lord is dark and brooding, with a commanding bearing. Some are genial and openly charismatic, even empathetic, while others cringe and skulk as only a consummate caern advisor can. In Lupus form, Lords are large and stocky, often resembling the lupine version of massive pit bulls; they usually have coats as dark as their name would imply. Many homids are eager to shift to Lupus on the bleakest and雨iest days of the year.

**Kinfolk:** The oldest Kinfolk families are of Eastern European stock, but the tribe has built up "flocks" of breeding stock in other parts of the world. Intelligence is a highly prized trait. Kinfolk who breed with Shadow Lords usually do so after long years of tempestuous and dysfunctional romance. Female Shadow Lords are sometimes drawn away from the flock toward men with power. A ruthless businessman, a brilliant crime lord or even a military dictator may find himself overpowered by a stalking suitor. Kinfolk don't receive much coddling, however. Weaklings and victims don't deserve to breed.

**Territory:** Bleak landscapes with dark, gloomy beauty appeal to the tribe. The lands surrounding their caerns would make for fine scenery in classic horror films. Craggy mountains, dark forests and roiling mists are perfect for a Shadow Lord's rituals and meditations. Because of regular worship to Grandfather Thunder, storms are common around caerns dominated by Shadow Lords.

**Tribal Totem:** Grandfather Thunder is worshipped by cults of reverent Shadow Lords, some of whom see him as quite removed from Mother Gaia.

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Background Restrictions:** Shadow Lords cannot attain the Allies or Mentor Background. Any such alliance is temporary at best; anything less is an invitation to betrayal.

**Beginning Gifts:** Aura of Confidence, Fatal Flaw, Seizing the Edge

**Quote:** *You fool! Our enemy is a madman, a tyrant who will not give up so easily. Like many ambitious men, he is weak to his own flaws. Perhaps you should let me lead the raid against him. I know how he thinks....*

### Stereotypes

Janos Raven-Claw, Shadow Lord Philodox, confides what his spies have confirmed:

**Black Furies:** Their pride is their undoing, and they definitely feel the need to prove themselves. As long as one's got a chip on her shoulder, you'll know exactly how to exploi... er, speak to her.

**Bone Gnawers:** Desperate for help. If you patronize their company, they'll reveal all sorts of interesting secrets. The Bone Gnawers' mastery of stealth and hidden talents in war are vastly underrated.

**Children of Gaia:** Peace has its place. It gives us the opportunity to further prepare for war.

**Fianna:** Don't forget that they know the Litany almost as well as we do. Almost.

**Get of Fenris:** As the saying goes, "Speak of war and they'll scream for more." A few well-chosen words, and they'll fight—and usually kill — anything that gets in your way.

**Glass Walkers:** The more others treat them with fear and disdain, the more they need to ally with us. Fine by me. As long as they're considered *urrah*, they can't really refuse our aid.

**Red Talons:** Make your arguments with them quick and dirty. They aren't exactly masters of logic, are they?

**Silent Striders:** Be wary. They have some most unusual allies, some of which are hard to identify. If they can't scout out the truth themselves, they know others who can.

**Silver Fangs:** Their time has passed, but don't underestimate them. They're almost as full of surprises as we are. In the end, don't be surprised when we end up pissing on their graves....

**Uktena:** They've got a lot of skeletons in their closet, so the darkest of them are vul-

nerable to blackmail. Watch and learn. Their reputation hardly precludes them from acting in our conspiracies.

**Wendigo:** Within their cold hearts, they can bear grudges for a long, long time.

**Stargazers:** Do you need any more reason than the Stargazers' desertion not to trust those of other tribes too closely?



# SILENT STRIDERS

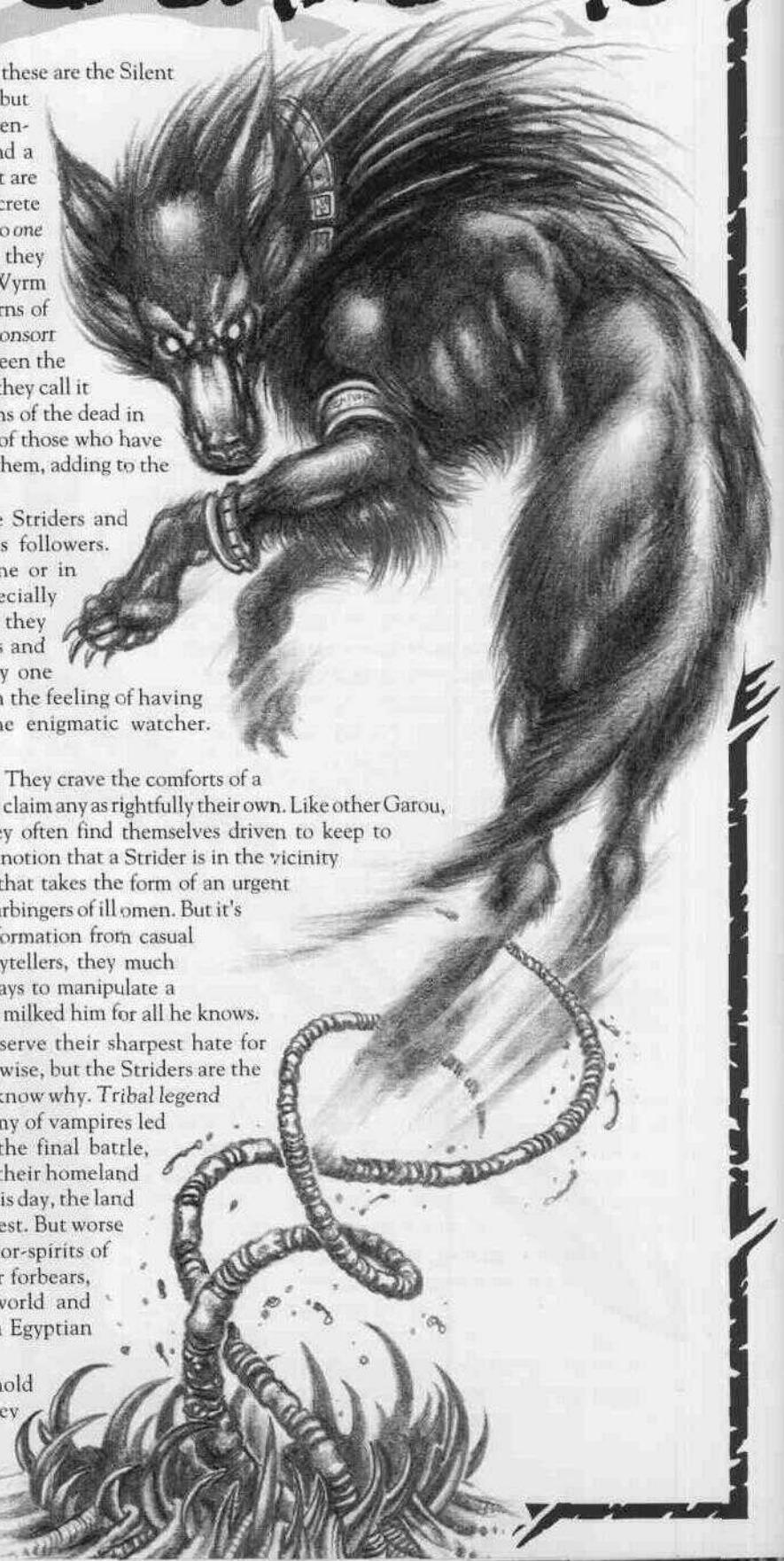
Mysterious wanderers, tireless scouts, heralds — these are the Silent Striders. Their roots lie in Africa and the Middle East, but they can be found nearly anywhere, traveling and listening. For these wayfarers, home is the open road, and a caern or Kinfolk's house is a mere rest stop. Their feet are lightest when on a path, whether of blown sand, concrete or spirit-stuff. They explore where no werewolf — or no one — has been before. They poke their snouts in where they don't belong, and they move on if they don't find a Wyrm pit or something equally interesting. They visit caerns of many different tribes, and they have been known to consort with mages, spirits and the fae as well. Others have seen the Wyrm on the move in one aspect or another, even if they call it by a different name. Striders have even trod the paths of the dead in search of hidden knowledge from the restless spirits of those who have gone before. The scent of the Dark Umbra clings to them, adding to the eerie mystery that shrouds them.

Although no real rivalries exist between the Striders and other tribes, many werewolves don't trust Owl's followers. Perhaps it's because Striders typically travel alone or in pairs. A lone wolf is always cause for suspicion, especially one that chooses that path. Perhaps it's because they show up unheralded, with grim news on their lips and dark omens in their eyes. Or perhaps it's the way one walks away from a conversation with a Strider with the feeling of having revealed much more than one gleaned from the enigmatic watcher. Certainly, all these reasons are valid.

The Striders are a tribe of many contradictions. They crave the comforts of a home or territory, but they cannot bring themselves to claim any as rightfully their own. Like other Garou, they long for the companionship of packs, but they often find themselves driven to keep to themselves — and on the road. A sept may have no notion that a Strider is in the vicinity unless she has something to tell them, and usually that takes the form of an urgent warning; the Striders have a deserved reputation as harbingers of ill omen. But it's quite true that *Striders are experts at gathering information from casual conversation*. Although most are quite skillful storytellers, they much prefer to listen than talk. They have a variety of ways to manipulate a speaker into going on at length until the Strider has milked him for all he knows.

Apart from Banes and Black Spirals, they reserve their sharpest hate for vampires. No Garou trucks with the undead if he's wise, but the Striders are the Leeches' bitter foes, although few outside the tribe know why. Tribal legend holds that long ago, the tribe fought against an army of vampires led by the dark god-monster known as Sutekh. At the final battle, Sutekh wove a mighty curse that drove them from their homeland of Egypt and scattered them to the four winds. To this day, the land of the Nile is the one land where they can find no rest. But worse still, the curse severed all contact with the ancestor-spirits of the tribe. No Striders have been able to find their forbears, even though many have searched both spirit world and Underworld for some sign. Many Striders take an Egyptian name in honor of their lost heritage.

As might be expected from nomads, Striders hold fewer caerns than any other tribe, and those they



claim generally have a high turnover in membership. Sept members that stay for more than a season or two are usually old enough for the call of duty to drown out the call of the road. Still, as with the Wheel of Ptah sept in Casablanca, they are often located at crossroads, so tales of the road can soften loss of the road itself.

Striders form many friendships, but fortunate is the friend who meets the Strider more than twice. When they do join packs of mixed tribes, they show their packmates loyalty unto death — the Striders are so few that they greatly value those truly close to them. They are likewise known for brief but intense relationships with their Kin, for you don't have time for protracted preliminaries when tomorrow will see you far away. One of the worst things anyone, Garou or Kin, can do to a Strider is bind him to a place against his will through duty or force. Sooner than later, their hearts pine for the open road once more, as many lovers have learned. A Strider whose wings have been clipped is utterly miserable, and campfire tales say that a few actually wasted away and died from being denied their freedom.

It's a lonely life, and it brings a lonely death all too often. Striders rarely fall amid friends; they are simply never seen again. It is the custom that aged or infirm Striders make a final journey into the Umbra, never to return. Some hope that they will find their loved ones there at last.

**Appearance:** The first Silent Striders hailed from North Africa and the Middle East, and much of the tribe wears that cast upon their faces. However, they have bred with humans of every stock. Whatever their ethnic background, they are almost universally lean and fit from constant travel. In wolf form, they are long and lean like the jackal-dogs of Egyptian art, often with sleek black coats and yellow eyes.

**Kinfolk:** Scattered across the world, Strider Kinfolk are typically travelers themselves — Bedouin nomads, circus troupes, Gypsies, truckers or just plain drifters.

**Territory:** Everywhere. Nowhere. As perpetual wanderers, it is the rare Strider who sees two moons from the same patch of ground.

**Tribal Totem:** Owl

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Background Restrictions:** Silent Striders may not have the Ancestors or Resources Backgrounds.

**Beginning Gifts:** Sense Wyrm, Silence, Speed of Thought

**Quote:** *Awake! On your feet! The Wyrm's Breath follows hard at my heels.*

### **Stereotypes**

*Lerli Moonless-Sky, Silent Strider Galliard, shares some tales:*

**Black Furies:** Worthy of respect, but let them open their own doors.

**Bone Gnawers:** Homebodies, but they're alright. Especially when you have a head cold — don't smell as much.

**Children of Gaia:** A Child of Gaia caern is a fine place to fill your belly and wash the dust off. The exhortations to join their personal cause get to you after a couple of days, though.

**Fianna:** Only they have an appreciation of tales to match ours. Better still, they'd rather talk than listen. To my mind, there's no finer caern to pass a night.

**Get of Fenris:** They'd be easy to dismiss if we didn't know that when they say they're ready to die to the last to save Gaia, they mean it. There's more to the Get than meets the eye.

**Glass Walkers:** Garou are creatures of balance; the Walkers have strayed too close to the human side. They have adapted to the world, but have lost part of themselves...

**Red Talons:** ...as have the Talons. To embrace the wolf at the expense of the human only makes them more bestial than our wolf Kin.

**Shadow Lords:** If they took the energy spent trying to dethrone the Silver Fangs and used it to bring down the Wyrm, I think we'd be a lot better off.

**Silver Fangs:** They need to leave their throne rooms and take a lap or two. The fresh air will clean out those cobwebs in their heads.

**Uktena:** They are living proof that there really is such a thing as knowing too much.

**Wendigo:** Proud and noble in a way no other tribe can understand. I respect them, but I only hope they'll deign to join in when the time comes.

**Stargazers:** With such a wide world, why look inward all the time? Ah, well, they follow their path, and I follow mine.

# SILVER FANGS

The Silver Fangs are the proudest, most noble of the tribes. Tracing their lineage back to the Progenitor Wolf, they represent the best of the breed, embodying everything it means to be Garou: strength, nobility, perseverance, loyalty and magnificence. Through their heroic examples and awe-inspiring leadership, they unite the tribes against their enemies.

That's one side of the story. A less flattering view is of the inbred rulers whose chief right of rulership is the memory of their great grandfathers' deeds as king. They are mired in strict adherence to traditions only they remember, whose original purpose may be lost to time. In the Fang's court, action has given way to procedural points. They are doddering, even senile kings whose authority among the tribes extends only as far as the doors of the royal court.

Which view is true? Perhaps some of both. To be sure, the Silver Fangs lived up to their legends in the old days. In battle the Fangs were matchless, inspiring their followers by leading charges; in peace, they were just and fair, mediating disputes to keep the tribes from warring against each other... too frequently. They took as their own the best Kinfolk from nobility of many countries throughout Europe and Asia.

Things changed as centuries passed. Their power waned, in the human realm as well as the Garou. In recent years many Garou have noticed the Fangs becoming increasingly neurotic, manifesting minor quirks such as absentmindedness or an overdeveloped sense of vengeance. Their tendency to fall into Harano is explained readily as the price of the heavy burden of leadership in these trying times. As to the rest, well, the rich and powerful have always been eccentric, have they not? Some whisper, however, that centuries of breeding with exclusive bloodlines is beginning to take its toll. But Falcon's tribe insists that that exclusivity makes their blood run so pure in their veins.

The Silver Fangs borrowed many traditions from their noble Kinfolk. Territory is divided up into "protectorates" ruled by a king (by tradition, always Ahroun) who presides over a court. The court is divided into the Lodge of the Sun and the Lodge of the Moon. The former deals with temporal matters such as business and commerce, while the latter presides over spiritual affairs as well as concerns of the lupus population. Courts and lesser moots are lengthy affairs, at which all interested parties haggle over points of contention. Formal moots take all night (reciting the King's introduction alone may take half an hour). If there is important business, the debates can last for days.

Many Garou still look to the Fangs for leadership, showing the respect due by right of millennia of rule. Others see them as figureheads, little more than mascots. Not a few consider them worse than useless, for a bad decision costs precious lives in the Garou's most desperate hour. Lately, the murmurs of discontent have grown louder as voices are added.

The Shadow Lords have wasted no time in fanning the unrest, but there has been no open rebellion thus far. There is still loyalty enough to keep the Fangs in power, but Falcon's tribe had better show initiative soon. One movement within the tribe, the Renewalist faction, has been particularly aggressive in its calls to rebuild before the tribe collapses.

One of the Fangs' greatest strengths is personal charisma. A leader who meets often with other Garou can bind disparate factions together through sheer force of personality. Unfortunately, many choose to sit in their courts and make everyone come to them. Thus isolated, their effectiveness wanes.

In these dark days, many Garou look to their own tribes for strength rather than shackling themselves to the mad ones who would drag them down into the Abyss. As Gaia's warriors are on the verge of being overwhelmed by the onslaught of Wyrm and Weaver, those who still believe in the divine right of the Silver Fangs see this time as their last chance to reward that trust.

**Appearance:** Silver Fangs come primarily from aristocrats of European and Middle Eastern descent, although one noble house has established itself neatly in Asia and India. In human form, they have refined features, often with familial peculiarities such as a distinctive nose or ears. Their wolf forms are always graceful, with fur of silver or white, long jaws and full tail brushes. In any form, they usually wear some form of jewelry.

**Kinfolk:** The Fangs keep very detailed track of their Kin, with "pedigrees" that fill whole libraries. Their human Kin are of impeccable breeding from the nobility of the countries of Europe; Russia in particular used to be the Fangs' homeland. Money is not a prime consideration. A penniless branch of the Romanovs would be more valuable than a newly rich industrialist family descended from chicken thieves. Likewise, the tribe keeps close contact with their rare lupine Kin living on great estates, primarily in Russia and western Canada.

**Territory:** Silver Fang septs are scattered across the Garou Nation. They typically hold some of the choicest lands, to the displeasure of the tribes from which they commandeered those lands. They live in lands with splendid vistas — great mountain chains, seaside cliffs or forested valleys — places as majestic as the Silver Fangs are (to) themselves.

**Tribal Totem:** Falcon

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Background Restrictions:** Silver Fang characters must spend at least three Background points on Pure Breed.

**Beginning Gifts:** Falcon's Grasp, Lambent Flame, Sense Wyrm

**Quote:** *Under Falcon's banner I stand before you. Join your banner to mine, and all the Spirals in the world can't stop us from reclaiming the lost caern! Are you with me? Then follow me, for Gaia!*

## Stereotypes

Malcolm Summersbright, Silver Fang Philodox, speaks with all due candor:

**Black Furies:** How can so honorable and trustworthy a tribe be so confused?

**Bone Gnawers:** Pathetic creatures, they squabble in the street and then expect to be welcomed into our mansions! They are Garou... technically, but they are like a branch of the family that one would just as soon forget about.

**Children of Gaia:** Joyous lovers of peace, they lend us a sympathetic ear. Would that they were as quick to take our burdens from us as they are to heap more on. Still, they help keep the others in our cause.

**Fianna:** For their songs that soothe and hearten and remind us of old times, we are grateful. For their satires of our leadership, we are wary. For their drinking and shouting, we are long-suffering.

**Get of Fenris:** Complain all you wish about the Get's hunger for war, but you cannot call them honorless without proving yourself a liar.

**Glass Walkers:** Cities have made them soft. Urban life has made them strange.

**Red Talons:** They have embraced the Beast too closely, and they suffer for it. They never come to court and seldom do as we ask, but where I would see insubordination in other tribes I merely assume the Talons forgot what day the meeting was.

**Shadow Lords:** They have "that lean and hungry look." We will put them in their place as needed, in March or any other month.

**Silent Striders:** Mysterious travelers whom I prefer to see going rather than coming, for they seldom bring good news.

**Uktena:** Secret-keepers of the first rank, who list their true feelings for us among their secrets.

**Wendigo:** Wise and powerful, aloof and disdainful. I'm not sure if they are truly allies, but we both profit should they add their strength to our own.

**Stargazers:** They were wise councilors, if a bit too ethereal. A pity that they chose such an insubordinate path for themselves.



# UKTENA

The Uktena tribe is composed of animistic (some would say primitive) peoples from throughout the world. They are the "world beat" of the Garou Nation, yet as the most multi-cultural tribe, they've also inherited many of the legacies of the dispossessed. Throughout their history, other cultures have slowly encroached on and devoured their tribal lands. Their Kinfolk have been forced out of their homelands repeatedly, sometimes dragged away in chains. Generations of suffering have nurtured hatred and a thirst for vengeance in their dark hearts. Therefore, it is often rumored that many of them are driven to the Wyrm as a result. While they have accumulated mysticism and magic from throughout the world, many are drawn to dark arts, occult studies and forbidden lore.

At one time, however, the tribe was one of the three largest in the world, roaming across vast stretches of primal wilderness. Long before their descent into darkness, the Uktena, Wendigo and Croatan tribes made up one people. Modern Galliards refer to these ancestors as the "Pure Ones." When early Garou first led migrations of primitive humans across the Bering Strait, the Uktena settled in the south, wandering through what is now the Southern United States and Central America. Among the Pure Ones, Wendigo is still known as "Younger Brother" and Uktena as "Older Brother."

In their travels, packs of Uktena communed with creatures and spirits unknown to other werewolves, trading mystical knowledge and stories. Wereravens watched over them; Coyote's children led them on, mocking and laughing; Pumonca and Qualmi werecats taught them secret wonders. It is regrettable that the War of Rage cut them off from these former allies, yet the knowledge they learned still survives, if only in a bastardized and diminished form. The tribe has handed down its mystical secrets carefully for generations. The Uktena have become wise in ways that other werewolves can never understand... and perhaps never should.

Natural wonders have since been conquered by unnatural horrors. Across the centuries, the Uktena have found powerful Banes sleeping in the Earth, and they have conducted epic rites to bind them. For generations, tribal "Bane Tenders" watched over unholy grounds, often gaining a thorough understanding of evil as a result. The tribe became unusually knowledgeable about the Wyrm — suspiciously so, some say. They have also been renowned for their talent at scouting out Wyrm taint where no one else could find it. Many of the greatest Uktena heroes gained honor and glory by finding blights and horrors in the spirit world, usually by using ancient knowledge hoarded by the tribe.

Despite their wisdom and vigilance, the Uktena couldn't predict that Europeans would settle in the New World. Bitter tribal storytellers still describe the arrivals as "Wyrmcomers," for disease and suffering followed in their wake. When white settlers also brought African and Asian slaves with them, merciful werewolves took pity on these slaves and treated them

as brothers. As the tribe's Kinfolk were enslaved, punished or wiped out, many Garou found solace in the spirit world, seeking answers beyond the veil of reality. Some turned to visionaries and prophets for aid, incorporating their dreams and nightmares into Uktena lore. As their power in the physical world waned, their mastery of the spirit world increased.

After centuries of supernatural exploration, the tribe's mystics have gained a legendary knowledge of spirits and a staunch respect for prophecy. Uktena cliah are encouraged to share in some of these teachings, more so than in most other tribes. From the moment a cub completes her Rite of Passage, elders praise her driving need to understand spiritual mysteries and encourage her boundless curiosity. While Uktena Theurges are often the most adept at investigating the occult and resolving enigmas, such talents are common within the tribe.

But the tribe's pursuits can be risky. Uktena are often tempted by forbidden knowledge during the course of their travels. Since their ancestors have lived among primitive peoples from all over the world, they have also gathered occult secrets from every place their forebears have lived. The modern world has forgotten the secrets of the ancient world, but lost magical arts are still passed from generation to generation. The Uktena's mystics and occultists are among the most powerful in the Garou Nation. Many claim rightful ownership of powerful fetishes, insisting that no other tribe could guard them properly. As a result, even their Wendigo brothers fear them... or at least demand to know what they are hiding. As long as the secrets of the past are kept alive, the Uktena will continue to confront the Wyrm as they have for thousands of years.

**Appearance:** In Lupus form, most Uktena have reddish-black fur; many skulk as though they are stalking unseen spirits. In Homid form, they project an aura of mystery and menace, with a disconcerting habit of staring intently at everything around them. Many adapt the clothing and appearance of their ancestors. Some "adopted" tribalists are very eclectic, gathering fragments of the cultures that interest them most. While many pure-bred Uktena are Native American, the tribe includes indigenous peoples from throughout the world. Maori warriors and Cherokee mystics work side-by-side with African shamans. When in meditation, an Uktena acts as cryptically as any Umbral spirit, but when angered, she radiates a cold ferocity as fiercely as the balefires of Hell.

**Kinfolk:** The Uktena are guardians of the dispossessed, of tribes and peoples who have lost their lands to foreign conquest. Uktena Kinfolk belong to a wide spectrum of oppressed ethnic groups. From Native American reservations to urban 'hoods, from the depths of the Amazon to the islands of the South Pacific, Uktena Kinfolk build strong communities that preserve their heritage. Adversity forces strength. Even lupus Kinfolk gather in tightly knit packs.

**Territory:** In the depths of the wilderness, beneath the open sky, the Uktena practice ancient crafts. Only a few secret

places have withstood Wyrmcomer assaults. Uktena will do nearly anything to punish intruders who find them. Many of the tribe's most sacred lands have been seized by other supernatural societies. As the End Times approach, the tribe's elders are increasingly willing to summon up mighty magic and retake those sites by force.

**Tribal Totem:** The Uktena take their name from their tribal totem, a Native American water spirit with the features of a serpent, deer and cougar. The Uktena totem is famous for disguising its appearance, and it grants this talent to packs who follow him.

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Background Restrictions:** None. Some things cannot be stolen, even by Wyrmcomers.

**Beginning Gifts:** Sense Magic, Shroud, Spirit Speech

**Quote:** *You worry about fighting what you can see. I sense something very powerful here that you cannot. It is an ancient evil lurking in the shadows, a spirit my people have encountered before. Listen very carefully to what I am chanting. If I fall, I expect you to continue where I left off....*

### *Stereotypes*

*Sees-in-Darkness, an Uktena Theurge, offers his insight:*

**Black Furies:** As divisive as they are, they work together in their tribal rituals. If only I knew what they were doing there...

**Bone Gnawers:** They have a talent for walking unnoticed in the midst of mankind. While they may not seem sane, they see things even we do not notice. Their understanding of the cities' spirit worlds is impressive.

**Children of Gaia:** The Children's skill as healers and nurturers is unsurpassed. A pity that their approach to the sacred arts is so limited.

**Fianna:** They should take life a bit more seriously. Such reckless behavior will destroy them.

**Get of Fenris:** They are so proud of their strengths that they do not see their weaknesses.

**Glass Walkers:** This tribe's urban magic is most curious. When they are in their element, they are truly formidable.

**Red Talons:** A Talon's keen senses and sharper instincts are amazing. No one knows the natural world as well as they do... especially its mysteries.

**Shadow Lords:** Listen very carefully to what they say. Half of it will be useful, and half of it will deceive you. If you're wise, you'll pick the right half.

**Silent Striders:** What a marvelous job they do of exploring the spirit world. They get into all sorts of places I've only dreamt of seeing.

**Silver Fangs:** Play up to their need for respect. We need all the allies we can get.

**Wendigo:** Younger Brother, you and I are the only two I really trust. We walk different paths, yet we still follow the same sacred ways.

**Stargazers:** We could easily have been as the Stargazers—but we have a brother to stand beside. The Stargazers had family here, too, but I do not think they knew that.



# WENDIGO

As proud as any Silver Fang and almost as bitter as the Red Talons, the Wendigo consider themselves the purest of the Pure Ones, and the Garou least tainted by the Wyrm. According to their philosophy, the European werewolves have been touched by the Wyrm, the Croatan sacrificed themselves, and the Uktene have degraded themselves with the blood of the Wyrmbringers — the European invaders.

The tribe takes its name from its totem, the great cannibal spirit of winter. Wendigo has taught his tribe the power that lies in harnessing the ice storm, its strength and implacability. As quiet as falling snow, fast as the winter wind, the Wendigo are masters of their woodland domain. No prey can elude them — on two legs or four. They engage in a covert war against the Wyrmbringer, focusing on those who seek actively to defile their lands and Kinfolk and steal away their culture. But don't all Garou of European stock bear some share of the blame ultimately? Doesn't their mere presence invite the Wyrm? Wendigo war parties can be found far from their lands, even into the heart of cities — wherever corruption can be traced.

The tribe's relations with other Garou are tenuous. While they are on good terms with the Silent Striders and Red Talons, and they respect the Black Furies, they have little but suspicion for the other tribes. After centuries of bitter struggle, they have come to loathe the Get of Fenris, Fianna and Shadow Lords. Wendigo may ally with the Europeans to accomplish short-term goals, but they remain aloof on the whole. Trust is a difficult thing for the tribes to earn. The Wendigo been given too many empty promises.

The Wendigo are a deeply traditional, deeply spiritual tribe that takes great pains to make sure that no hint of corruption taints its rituals. Wendigo hold their rites at sites too sacred for spectators, and any European Garou who tried to spy on their moots would never be seen again. Tribe members purify themselves ritually before hunts or battle; Wendigo seek spiritual aid to solve all manner of problems. Many packs quest through the spirit world looking for some sign of their brother tribe, the Croatan.

The goal of the Wendigo is to secure the lands that they now hold. What happens beyond that is a question that occupies many councils. Some elders, particularly the Half Moons, wish to open the Wyrmbringer's eyes to the old traditions so that they may leave the cities, return to nature and live in harmony with the spirits and the earth. Others, including many Ahroun, have set for themselves the equally impossible task of driving the invaders from the Pure Lands or to wash the Wyrm taint from the earth with the Wyrmbringer's blood. Although most Wendigo consider this last view a pipe dream, frustration has brought more and more to this way of thinking. An alliance with like-minded Red Talons may not be long in coming.

Although they are not the bookkeepers the Silver Fangs are, Wendigo are very picky about with whom they breed. They maintain exclusively Native American bloodlines, preferably from those who hold the old beliefs, and they breed only with wolves who live free and haven't forgotten the ways of the wild trapped in a zoo. They teach their Kin the old ways, although such teachings are easily drowned out in these days by the seductive promises of modern commercial society.



Now, crowded cities look toward the North with its open spaces and raw materials. Forces of the Wyrm and the Weaver are gathering for the next assault to extinguish the dwindling tribe and defile the last of the Pure Lands. But for the Wendigo in their wilderness homes, the line has been drawn. No more negotiations, no more treaties, no more retreats. Should the skidders and bulldozers come to lay the forest bare, they must first drive over the bodies of the fallen Wendigo.

**Appearance:** Virtually all Wendigo are born from the native peoples of northern North America (although a rumored few hail from Siberia). On four legs, they resemble the great timber wolves that make the tundra their home. Their coats are varying shades of gray so that they fade like ghosts into the forest.

**Kinfolk:** All Wendigo Kin are native peoples, whether huddled on reservations or living in the wilds as their ancestors did. The tribe is lucky to have a relatively high proportion of wolf Kin wandering free in the northern lands.

**Territory:** The stronghold of the tribe is in Canada, Alaska and the plains states of the US, but they may also be found on reservations giving strength to their people or in the Wyrmbringer cities fighting evil where it lives.

**Tribal Totem:** Wendigo

**Initial Willpower:** 4

**Background Restrictions:** Wendigo may not buy Contacts or Resources.

**Beginning Gifts:** Call the Breeze, Camouflage, Resist Pain

**Quote:** *You are looking for your friends? See, their blood is still wet on my claws. Now, I will send you to them!*

### *Stereotypes*

Nawauhin, Wendigo Galliard, growls his misgivings:

**Black Furies:** These women are brave, but they have lost the true path.

**Bone Gnawers:** A Garou that gladly lives in filth is no Garou. Still, they are better than others.

**Children of Gaia:** Their promises were sweet, but they did not stop their cousins from drawing our blood. The Children know how to love, but they have not yet learned when to hate.

**Fianna:** Sweet-voiced Wyrmcomers that remember their own glory but forget the death they brought to our people. Now they wonder at our anger.

**Get of Fenris:** They respect no agreement, no territory, nothing except strength in battle. There is no honor in them. The only thing they may be trusted to do is to draw their silver blades at a moment's notice.

**Glass Walkers:** They have forgotten the land, and it is dead beneath their feet. They are like spiders spinning their webs inside a skull.

**Red Talons:** We know their outrage, but to forsake a part of themselves lessens them.

**Shadow Lords:** The Stormcrows embrace the worst attributes of the Wyrmbringers: greed, treachery, casual cruelty and selfishness. They take everything and deserve nothing.

**Silent Striders:** They have not done us wrong. We respect them, but we pity them too. None should live without their people close at hand.

**Silver Fangs:** These "kings" were born across the sea, yet they claim to know what is right for all wolf-changers. But their spirits are sick — if they can not help themselves, how can they know our path?

**Uktena:** Older Brother no longer walks a good path. The Uktena mate with mongrels and search the dark places for secrets that will bring them no peace. We must bring them back before they step into the Horned Serpent's maw.

**Stargazers:** There is much wisdom in the Stargazers. We could trust them, even though we could not always understand them. I hope their decision is a good one.



Sooner or later, the rug always gets yanked out from under you. I don't care who you are — sometime on down the road, somebody dies. Something collapses. And nothing makes sense from then on out. Maybe you learn to cope with your new life. Maybe you even figure you like it. Maybe you crack. But it always happens. And that's nothing next to what we get.

You wanna know somethin' funny? We call ourselves the chosen few; we say we're lucky to get all the strength and speed and spirit allies and stuff that we get. We even say being born into this damn war is lucky. If that's so, then how come there ain't a soul out there who ever makes the change all peacefully 'n' shit? How come there's nobody whose Change doesn't involve blood?

Goddammit, of all the memories I get to hold on to, that's the one that keeps waking me up at night. Puking my guts out in the morning, making my mom wonder if I'd gotten pregnant or something. Getting feverish and sweating like a pig.

And yeah, round about sundown, just losing it. I busted out of the building like I had the Gaspar Street Niños on my ass. No telling why, at least at the time — I didn't even know where I was going. I just had to get out under the sky, just had to get off somewhere to myself.

You know, I almost made it. I almost made it somewhere out of the way. I almost got to my old hiding spot, where nobody woulda gotten hurt.

But like I said, that never happens. Someone always bleeds.

And then you wind up spending the rest of your life killing the right sort of people just so you can make it up to the wrong sort of people, the people who just happened to be in the wrong place.

Yeah, we're the lucky ones.

# Chapter Three: Character and Traits

To play *Werewolf*, you create a character — one of Gaia's chosen — who will be your alter ego when you interact with the world and participate in the story. Your character is like one of the protagonists in a novel or movie, except that when the story is over, you can move on to the next — and the next. Your character will grow as you play her, possibly developing into something you never expected.

You will discover in this chapter how to create a unique werewolf character whom you will hopefully play for a long time, detailing her history and enjoying her exploits. Before you can do so, you must start with your general concept and translate it into numbers that you can use in the game. These numbers are not particularly inspiring or thought-provoking — it's hard to evoke a compelling image when you say "my character has four dots in Etiquette" — but they serve as a starting point that helps you define your character's strengths and weaknesses in objective terms. These numbers also serve when you need to determine if your character's actions are successful or not. A manipulative character is better able to convince the security guard to let him inside the offices after hours than a character who is blunt or reticent.

It's best to create a character with assistance and supervision from the Storyteller. When you know what the game you'll participate in is like, you can more easily design a character who fits in. In fact, it's best to discuss with the other players and Storyteller what's expected in the game so that every character can fit together without too much fuss. Werewolves gather in packs, so players should keep this tendency in mind as well when designing a character.

## *Traits*

When you set out to create your character, you should have a general concept in mind that includes where he lives,

how he grew up and what he loves or hates. These factors make each character truly alive and unique. But in order to play the character, you must first assign his Traits. You can't decide that your character is intelligent and a fast thinker without assigning dots to Intelligence and Wits. He can't be devastatingly handsome if you don't put any dots into Appearance. You should assign Traits in a manner that supports the character's concept and intended role. A smooth talker should have Charisma or Manipulation along with Subterfuge, to make him useful when the group needs someone to fast-talk their way out of a situation. On the other hand, he may need to rely on a companion for heavy-duty physical work such as combat.

Traits are described in numerical terms, with ratings from one to five dots. (Rage, Gnosis, Renown and Willpower are exceptions, running up to 10 dots.) Each rating represents the character's capability in that particular Trait. Trait ratings are similar to the scores that critics might give a movie or restaurant. Having no dots at all is abysmal (or in some Traits, even subhuman), while five is superb (probably the best in the world), with one to four dots ranging between. These ratings are very important when it comes time to roll dice. (See Chapter Five: Rules for specifics.)

## *Getting Started*

**Werewolf: The Apocalypse** character creation is based around five basic concepts that you must keep in mind when creating the character you want to play.

- You can create a character from any nation, of any age, from any cultural background, but your character has undergone the First Change only recently. He probably knows very little about werewolf society, unless he received instruction from a mentor or Kinfolk, or he is metis.

## Common Traits and Terms:

Werewolf characters tend to be defined by the following Traits:

**Name:** The character's name, which may be a human name or nickname or a "deed name" given to him by his tribe. Some characters use both their birth name and their "Garou name" as appropriate.

**Player:** The person who's playing the character in question.

**Chronicle:** The chronicle is the series of stories that tells the overall tale of your pack's deeds; if each game session is the equivalent of a weekly episode of a TV series, the chronicle is the series itself. The Storyteller is usually the one to decide on an appropriate name for the chronicle.

**Attributes:** The inborn, most raw aptitudes and potential a character possesses.

**Abilities:** Any skills or aptitudes that your character possesses that make him better at certain activities, whether learned skills or inborn affinities.

**Backgrounds:** These represent advantages your character may have as a result of his parentage or upbringing, whether great wealth or purity of bloodline.

**Renown:** This measures how famous (or infamous) your character's deeds have made him among other Garou. **Glory** is a measure of his bravery and battle ability, **Honor** gauges his ability to live according to the ethics of his kind, and **Wisdom** represents his reputation for good or poor judgement and forethought.

**Rank:** The higher a character's Rank, the more power he wields in Garou society. All characters begin at Rank 1, but may eventually rise to Rank 5 or 6, becoming esteemed elders.

**Rage:** This is the supernatural fury of the werewolf, a measure of how much anger your character has. High Rage makes a werewolf very dangerous to friend and foe.

**Gnosis:** A measure of connection to the spirit world, as well as the reserves of spiritual energy a werewolf stores within himself.

**Willpower:** This is a measure of a character's dedication and sheer force of will; werewolves with high Willpower never give up or give in.

**Breed:** This represents your parentage — whether you were born to humans, wolves or two werewolf parents.

**Auspice:** This is the moon phase your character was born under, like an astrological sign (only much more potent). Auspice determines a character's general role in werewolf society.

**Tribe:** The tribe that adopted your character; tribe affects a character's aptitudes, as well as his outlook and goals.

**Pack Name:** Most packs choose a common name to identify themselves, which may derive from their totem, sept or most commonly their purpose. You and your fellow players will most likely decide on your pack name.

**Pack Totem:** Each pack is bound together by a particular totem patron, purchased via the Totem background. This totem lends its particular strengths to its pack, and adds a touch of extra personality. You and your fellow players will collectively choose this totem.

**Concept:** This is a basic one-to-three word description of your character's history or aspirations; sample concepts might be "Reluctant Peacemaker," "Whitewater Guide" or "Modern Crusader."

**Gifts:** Your Gifts are special supernatural powers learned from spirits. The Gifts available to you are determined by your breed, auspice and tribe.

**Health:** Werewolves live a life of constant danger, ever suffering great wounds for their cause and fighting their way back to health. The Health Trait measures how injured your character may be at any given moment.

**Experience:** This Trait represents how much you have learned since becoming Garou. All characters begin with zero experience points. You may spend experience points to increase your Traits or purchase new ones.

- The character creation process is designed to help you define your character and provide you with the means for that character to work within the rules. The numbers are not more important than the concept, but your character's Traits should support and strengthen your concept. The only way your character can truly come to life for you, the other players and the Storyteller is through roleplaying. Keep that in mind as you design your character.

- The Werewolf character creation system is point-based — you receive points to apply to each part of the character (Attributes, Abilities, Advantages). After you assign these points, you receive a pool of freebie points to personalize and round out your character further. Note that even with freebies, you probably won't have enough points to purchase everything you want. This is fine! Your character is still competent at the starting level, and he'll grow into his full potential as you play him over time.

- A Trait of one is poor, while a Trait of five makes your character one of the most accomplished in her field. If you have one dot in an Ability, your character is inexperienced, or simply not very good at it. Your character is not necessarily useless just because she has one dot in Strength. Instead, consider it an opportunity to flesh out your character further. A one-dot Trait can be as defining as any five dot Trait. Remember that Garou Attributes change when they shapeshift. A Garou in Crinos form is a lot stronger than she is in Homid.

- It is very important to create a character that fits into the group. You can't expect the other players to tolerate a character that just won't fit in or work with the pack. If your character's behavior disrupts a story, the Storyteller or other players may ask you to modify how you play or create a new character who will fit in better. Garou are pack creatures, and life is far too difficult for werewolves if they cannot cooperate with their own packmates. Often, survival depends on a pack's ability to cooperate and work cohesively.

## *The Storyteller's Role in Character Creation*

As the Storyteller, you should guide your players through character creation. When your players arrive for the first session, discuss the game's basic premise and themes (specifically those you wish to explore). It's helpful to write a style sheet, a document that describes where you'd like to start and where you'd like the chronicle to go over time. You don't have to reveal your actual plans for stories, simply give guidance on the kind of stories you want to run. If any players are unfamiliar with *Werewolf*, spend time filling them in on the setting and rules basics. You don't need to bring them up to speed on everything, though, since a new character won't know much more than the new player does. Try to keep things as simple as possible and give the players room to discover the system's intricacies on their own.

First, give the players each a character sheet and give them a minute to look it over and ask questions about them. Then, explain the character creation process step by step. Give the players time to ask questions, and answer them as clearly as possible. A little patience in the beginning will save a lot of frustration and misunderstanding later on. Be sure to explain what the Traits mean and how they define a character's abilities.

Before players create their characters, discuss what kind of pack they'd like to play and which role each character might

fulfill. Don't think about it necessarily in terms of "one Garou of each auspice" or "no more than one member of any tribe." Consider what the characters will do in the pack and why they formed the pack. Encourage the players to give their characters hooks to hold them together.

Spend the entire session creating characters, and don't rush the players. Give them time to make complete, flesh-and-blood characters with personalities, goals, hopes and dreams. You don't want undeveloped caricatures. Once players have finished creating their characters, spend the remainder of the session running preludes for them. A prelude is a short session with the player to tell the story of her character's life up through the present, including family life, important events and the First Change. Preludes will be your players' first exposure to your chronicle, so make them memorable and interesting. Once you've run all the preludes, run a prelude for the pack as a whole. Describe an occasion, such as the Rite of Passage, that brings all of the characters together for a reason strong enough for them to forge a more lasting bond. You can find more information on preludes later in this chapter.

## *Step One: Character Concept*

Before you write down a single word or darken a single dot, you need to develop a character concept. The concept needs be only a general idea of what your character is like. Make it something unique and interesting that you will enjoy playing for the long haul. As you progress through the character-creation process, you may change or adjust this concept to suit your needs or wants, but it gives you a starting point. The character concept is something like a thesis sentence for your character. An example might be, "My character ran away from home in her early teens to escape an abusive parent, and she had her First Change in a youth shelter. Now she spends her time looking out for the other runaways, since no one else will." The concept should be unique and interesting enough to satisfy you and the Storyteller.

Once you've decided on a concept, you must make three choices to support that concept. You must choose your character's breed (species), her auspice (role in Garou society) and her tribe (the group that claims her as a member). The better you understand these aspects and can interrelate them with each other and your core concept, the more complete and interesting your character will be.

- **Breed:** The Garou are creatures of two worlds who truly belong to neither. Werewolves are outsiders in a way that few humans have ever experienced directly. They cannot even breed among their own kind. Garou must breed with humans and wolves to perpetuate their kind and breed healthy (and fertile) offspring.

For two werewolves to mate is to violate one of the oldest taboos among the Garou. The product of such a union is always sterile and either deformed or insane (sometimes both). Worse, the offspring is born in Crinos form, and it cannot shapeshift until eight years of age, requiring the parents to raise it away from human society. Even when werewolves do breed with humans or wolves, the offspring rarely breeds true. Nine out of 10 births are normal Kinfolk wolf cubs or human infants, marked only by their blood relation to the Garou. In some families, the strain might vanish for generations, only to appear long after the Kinfolk have drifted apart from their Garou relatives. In others, several children in a single generation might experience the First Change. The Garou try to track all descendants and relatives (wolf and human) to locate potential

werewolves. When Garou find any who are about to enter the First Change (either from observation or happenstance), they bring that one into their tribe to teach them about who and what they are, and about the war that they were born to fight.

The Garou's current generation is believed to be the *last*, as more signs of the Apocalypse come to pass. Garou are under less pressure to breed in the end times, since nobody truly believes that a child born now will be mature in time for the final battle.

The three breeds are homid (born to humans), lupus (born to wolves) and metis (born from the union of two Garou). All metis characters have deformities (see pp. 60-61).

• **Auspice:** Your character's auspice is the moon-phase under which she was born. It's similar to an astrological birth sign, but it plays a much more significant role in a werewolf's life. To the Garou, Luna is a central figure in their lives, and they draw their Rage from her. Your character's auspice indicates her profession in Garou society, some of her strengths and some of her weaknesses.

You may choose from five different auspices: Ragabash (trickster, scout or spy), Theurge (shaman, seer or mystic), Philodox (judge, lawgiver or mediator), Galliard (historian, bard or storyteller) and Ahroun (warrior or guardian). Your character's auspice may have a strong effect on her personality. Ahroun tend to be violent while Ragabash are often clever.

Complete information on each auspice can be found on pp. 63-67.

• **Tribe:** In the shadow of the coming Apocalypse, packs are usually composed of many tribes, since Garou are too few in number to follow the older practice of creating a pack composed entirely of one tribe's members. Even so, a Garou's tribe provides context for who and what he is. Each tribe has a spirit totem that influences much of the tribe's characteristics. Choose your character's tribe carefully. Your choice will impact her background (and available Backgrounds).

Players may select any of the 12 tribes described in *Werewolf*. See pp. 68-91 for further information on each tribe and its unique characteristics.

## *Step Two: Choosing Attributes*

Once you've defined your concept and selected your character's breed, auspice and tribe, it's time to begin assigning numbers. The first step is to assign scores to each of your character's Attributes. The Attributes defines your character's innate capabilities and aptitudes. How fast can your character move? Is she attractive or even beautiful? How sharp are her senses? The Attributes answer each of these questions objectively.

First, prioritize your three Attribute categories — Physical, Social and Mental. Decide which category your character is best at (primary), which category is above average (secondary) and which category is merely average (tertiary). Is she more mental than physical — more perceptive and intelligent than strong and tough?

- Physical Attributes define your character's physical limits, such as how fast he can run, how much he can lift and how healthy he is. If your character is primarily action-oriented, then you'd be well advised to make Physical your primary category.

- Social Attributes define your character's ability to interact with, relate to and sometimes use others. Social

Attributes affect first impressions, your character's ability to inspire or lead people and how attractive he is. If your character is a charmer or a deceiver, Social Attributes make a good choice for your primary category.

- Mental Attributes define your character's mental capacity. How quickly can she think? How sharp is her eyesight? How smart is she? If your character likes puzzles or is an investigator, then Mental Attributes should be primary.

Your character concept should give you direction on how to prioritize your Attributes, but don't feel straightjacketed into such choices. Yes, it's perfectly viable to play a former soldier with Mental Attributes as primary (a genius tactician) or an artist with Physical in the primary slot (a dancer, perhaps). As noted previously, you can still modify your basic concept, and Attribute priorities might prompt you to alter your focus or intent.

Your character begins with each Attribute at one dot. Priority selection determines how many additional dots you may place in each category: Divide seven dots among your character's primary Attributes, five dots among her secondary Attributes and three dots among her tertiary Attributes. You may choose to apply seven dots to your character's Mental Attributes, five to his Social Attributes and three to his Physical Attributes, for example. You are also not limited in how many dots you may assign to any one Attribute (in the preceding case, you could apply all three dots in your Physical category to Dexterity, leaving you with Strength and Stamina at one dot and Dexterity at four). You may not raise an Attribute above five dots.

Freebie points allow you to increase an Attribute or two later on if you feel it necessary.

## *Step Three: Choosing Abilities*

Abilities describe what your character knows and can do. They represent what he's learned as opposed to what comes from natural potential.

Like Attributes, Abilities are rated from one to five dots. This rating represents your character's competence in that area. You use this number (usually added to an Attribute) to determine how many dice you roll when your character uses an Ability. Abilities are also prioritized into primary, secondary and tertiary categories, just as Attributes are.

Abilities are divided into Talents, Skills and Knowledges. Each category has distinct characteristics.

- **Talents** are Abilities your character can work out on her own or develop intuitively. It's sometimes necessary to practice Talents in order to purchase or increase them, but they aren't learned from a teacher or a book. They can be gained through direct experience. If your character lives on the streets, for example, it's easier to pick up Streetwise. Some Talents (such as Athletics, Brawl or Expression) can be trained, but it's not required. If your character tends to survive through her own wits or common sense, Talents are appropriate as the primary category.

- **Skills** are Abilities learned through training. This category includes those Abilities one learns step-by-step through practice as well as those learned from a teacher. If your character is good at learning through practice, Skills make a good primary choice.

- **Knowledges** are Abilities that one can learn only through rigorous study and application. Many are learned in school or from books, but they can be acquired through experience. If

your character is educated, has a good memory or spends a great deal of time in study, Knowledges are appropriate for the primary Ability category.

Assign each Ability category a priority (primary, secondary or tertiary). As with Attributes, let your concept guide your decision. Unlike Attributes, all Abilities start at zero dots.

Assign 13 dots to your primary category, nine dots to your secondary category and five dots to your tertiary category. You may not assign more than three dots to any Ability, but you can increase Abilities to four or five dots with freebie points later.

## Step Four: Advantages

Advantages are neither prioritized nor ranked. Instead, each Advantage has a specific number of dots allotted. It is possible to increase them with freebie points later.

### Backgrounds

Your character receives five dots to assign among the 10 Background Traits. Read your choice of tribe carefully before assigning any dots, because some tribes restrict Background choices during character creation. Backgrounds chosen should tie into your character concept as defined in Step One.

### Gifts

Your character receives three Level One Gifts (powers the spirits grant to the Garou). Choose one Gift from each of the appropriate breed, auspice and tribe lists (see the Tribe listings in the *Character Creation Summary* pp. 100-101). You may spend freebie points to choose more Gifts, but they must also be Level One.

### Renown

Renown is vital for your character, since it defines how famous she is among the Garou. Your character's auspice determines her starting permanent Renown. Characters do not begin with temporary Renown (with the exception of packs with certain pack totems, as listed in the Appendix).

### Rank

Rank is a Garou's station and trustworthiness in werewolf society, and it is determined by Renown totals (these requirements are different for each auspice). All characters begin at Rank 1 (cliath).

## Step Five: Finishing Touches

Now it's time to round out your character and customize him with freebie points. At this stage, you also determine your character's base Rage, Gnosis and Willpower.

### Rage

Rage quantifies your character's inner anger and turmoil. High Rage makes it more difficult for werewolves to deal with normal humans and wolves. Your character's auspice determines his starting score.

### Gnosis

Gnosis determines how spiritual your character is and how in tune she is with the natural world. A werewolf with no Gnosis has no connection to the spirit world and cannot step sideways under her own power. Breed determines your character's initial rating.

### Willpower

Willpower describes how much self-control your character has and how determined he is in adverse circumstances. Players may use Willpower to control character actions when events conspire to force an instinctive response (frenzy and such). Your character's tribe determines his initial Willpower.

### Freebie Points

The final step. You now have 15 freebie points with which to round out your character and select Traits you couldn't afford previously. Each Trait has its own price (see the table in the *Character Creation Summary* on p. 102).

### Spark of Life

Now it's time to work out some of those character qualities that have nothing to do with game mechanics. It's not absolutely necessary to write these qualities down, but doing so is highly recommended. At the very least, think about each of them after character creation and during games thereafter. Some will change over time while others may be reinforced.

### Appearance

What does your character look like? How do her Traits affect her appearance? If she has four dots in Strength, those muscles will show. If she has high Charisma, that rating will translate to how she moves and talks. Go over her concept and Traits to see how you can use them as descriptive hooks. Your choices will reflect not only your character's appearance, but also how she dresses, how she acts and how she speaks. Does she move with confidence and have a steady gaze, or is she hunched over, refusing to look anyone in the eye? Does she prefer casual, rugged clothing, or does she have more expensive and refined tastes? It is much more evocative to say, "My character walks with a pronounced limp, possibly from an old injury," than to say, "My character has one dot of Dexterity."

### Specialties

Characters with high Traits may be very good at some tasks — even more than the number of dots would imply. If your character has any Attribute or Ability at four or five dots, you may choose a specialty that applies to that Trait (appropriate specialties are listed with Traits, in Chapter Four). Keep your concept in mind when choosing specialties. (An ex-marine might choose "assault rifles" as a Firearms specialty, where a gangsta might choose "pistols.") You can leave specialties blank and choose them during play, but it's just as appropriate to select them right away. Specialties serve as a roleplaying tool, and they provide a bonus to dice rolls that apply to them (see p. 108).

You can also assign specialties to Traits rated at three or fewer dots. You won't get a bonus in this case, but you can use it as a roleplaying tool or guide. The specialty would indicate character preference rather than any objective improvement. In no case can you take a specialty that the Storyteller deems too broad (such as "small arms" for Firearms or "keen senses" for Alertness).

### Quirks

Everyone has unique habits, anecdotes, interests and hobbies. These quirks do not define the character centrally, but they do give that character more color or depth, as well as a more realistic feel. Write a few sentences on the back of your character sheet describing some of these quirks. They could range from a wickedly brutal sense of humor to a hatred for



## felix

poodles to a penchant for quoting favorite action movies. You can always add more quirks after play begins if new possibilities occur to you.

### Motivations

What drives your character? Why does she go out and battle the Wyrm? Why does she risk her life for her packmates and Gaia on a regular basis? While it may seem that fighting the Wyrm is worthy for its own sake, surely most Garou have other reasons for continuing a millennia-long war. What in your character's history or concept pushes her to destroy the Wyrm's corrupting influence? A compelling, dramatic reason can give you a lot of mileage for roleplay in any chronicle. Perhaps a gang of fomori killed your character's family when she had her First Change, and every blow she strikes against the Wyrm's minions is a blow struck for her family. This motivation needs not lead her only to battle, though. She *might also want to find her family's spirits and lay them to rest with the knowledge that their deaths have been avenged.* Your character's motivation must answer the question, "Why does she fight this war?"

### Normal Identity

Many homids choose to maintain a "normal" life in human society. After all, not all Garou decide to leave their old lives behind entirely. Some tribes, like the Bone Gnawers, Children of Gaia and the Glass Walkers, spend a great deal of time among mundane humanity. Even some members of other tribes, like the Get of Fenris and the Black Furies could have

mundane identities. How does your character maintain such an existence? How does she deal with the risks Rage can present, such as frenzy or endangering innocents?

Lupus Garou sometimes choose to spend time among mundane wolves as well. Such a Garou (even the smallest Ragabash) will usually assume the alpha position of any wolf pack he joins. How does he interact with other wolves? How does he interact with humans who come hunting?

These possibilities aren't exclusive. A homid might choose to live as a wolf for a time, and a lupus might experiment with living in human society (although such an experiment is unlikely for a Red Talon).

### The Pack

More important to the Werewolf chronicle than any of the individual characters is the pack they form. Among Garou, the pack is the basic social unit; Garou who are not part of a pack are practically social outcasts. For a pack to work, the characters must cooperate with each other. Pack unity is important to success among werewolves.

It may be difficult to conceive of playing a group as closely knit as a pack, but consider that the Garou who make it up have been through hell (also called the Rite of Passage) together. They've lived with each other, breathed the same air, eaten the same food and lived with the same decisions. They came together after their respective First Changes, and they have spent nearly all of their time since working (or playing) together.

## Character Creation Summary

### Character Creation Process

- Step One: Character Concept

Choose concept, breed, auspice and tribe

- Step Two: Select Attributes

Note that all Attributes start with one dot before you add any.

Prioritize the three categories: Physical, Social, Mental (7/5/3)

Choose Physical Traits: Strength, Dexterity, Stamina

Choose Social Traits: Charisma, Manipulation, Appearance

Choose Mental Traits: Perception, Intelligence, Wits

- Step Three: Select Abilities

Prioritize the three categories: Talents, Skills, Knowledges (13/9/5)

Choose Talents, Skills, Knowledges

- Step Four: Select Advantages

Choose Backgrounds (5 — restricted by tribe), Gifts (three — one each from breed, auspice and tribe), Renown (by auspice)

- Step Five: Finishing Touches

Record Rage (by auspice), Gnosis (by breed), Willpower (by tribe) and Rank 1 (cliaht)

Spend freebie points (15)

### Breed

See also Breeds, pp. 59-61

- **Homid:** You were born human and raised by human parents. You were not aware of your heritage until you experienced the First Change with the onset of adulthood (or shortly before). It's very likely that you were completely unaware of your family's nature as Kinfolk (or of your Garou parent's nature).

Initial Gnosis: 1

Beginning Gifts: Master of Fire, Persuasion, Smell of Man

Initial Gnosis: 5

Beginning Gifts: Hare's Leap, Heightened Senses, Sense Prey

- **Metis:** Both of your parents are Garou, and they broke the Litany when they conceived you. You were raised within a sept among werewolves, and you understand Garou culture more deeply than either homids or lupus. As a sign of your parents' sin, you are malformed and sterile.

Initial Gnosis: 3

Beginning Gifts: Create Element, Primal Anger, Sense Wyrm

- **Lupus:** You were born a wolf and raised in the wilds among wolves. Until you were almost full-grown (two years or so), you were unaware of your true nature as a werewolf. You aren't as sophisticated as a homid, but you have stronger faith in your instincts.

### Auspice

See also Auspices, pp. 62-67

- **Ragabash: New Moon** — Tricksters and questioners, they fight the Wyrm with guile and cleverness.

Initial Rage: 1

Beginning Gifts: Blur of the Milky Eye, Open Seal, Scent of Running Water

Beginning Renown: Three in any combination.

- **Theurge: Crescent Moon** — Seers and shamans, they speak to spirits and understand their ways.

Initial Rage: 2

Beginning Gifts: Mother's Touch, Sense Wyrm, Spirit Speech

Beginning Renown: 3 Wisdom

- **Philodox: Half Moon** — Judges and lawkeepers, they adjudicate challenges between Garou and often serve as final arbiters.

Initial Rage: 3

Beginning Gifts: Resist Pain, Scent of the True Form, Truth of Gaia

Beginning Renown: 3 Honor

- **Galliard: Gibbous Moon** — Lorekeepers and Talesingers, they remember Garou history and teach it through their impassioned tales.

Initial Rage: 4

Beginning Gifts: Beast Speech, Call of the Wyld, Mindspeak

Beginning Renown: 2 Glory, 1 Wisdom

- **Ahroun: Full Moon** — Warriors and protectors, they fight like no other auspices and bring destruction to the Wyrm wherever it dwells and breeds.

Initial Rage: 5

Beginning Gifts: Falling Touch, Inspiration, Razor Claws

Beginning Renown: 2 Glory, 1 Honor

### Tribe

See also Tribes, pp. 62, 68-91

- **Black Furies:** The Furies defend the wildest places and fight viciously to defend women. Most Black Furies are female, and the only males in the tribe are metis.

Initial Willpower: 3

Backgrounds: No Restrictions

Beginning Gifts: Breath of the Wyld, Heightened Senses, Sense Wyrm

- **Bone Gnawers:** Possibly the best-informed tribe and the most competent at spying. The Bone Gnawers live in poverty, and the other tribes despise them for their casual ways.

Initial Willpower: 4

Backgrounds: Ancestors, Pure Breed and Resources are not available to Bone Gnawers.

Beginning Gifts: Cooking, Resist Toxin, Tagalong

- **Children of Gaia:** The most moderate of the tribes, the Children of Gaia consider themselves mediators and humanity's champions.

Initial Willpower: 4

Backgrounds: No restrictions.

Beginning Gifts: Mercy, Mother's Touch, Resist Pain

• **Fianna:** This tribe is of Celtic descent. Their ancestry ranges from Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England, but in modern times, they can be found anywhere their relatives have migrated. They are renowned as lusty for both battle and celebration.

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Backgrounds:** No restrictions, but Kinfolk is recommended.

**Beginning Gifts:** Faerie Light, Persuasion, Resist Toxin

• **Get of Fenris:** Dedicated to the Wyrm's utter destruction, the Get are considered savage and bloodthirsty. This tribe is primarily of Germanic and Scandinavian descent, and Fenrir take great pride in their heritage.

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Backgrounds:** Get of Fenris may not purchase Contacts.

**Beginning Gifts:** Razor Claws, Resist Pain, Visage of Fenris

• **Glass Walkers:** The Glass Walkers have adapted more closely to city life than every other tribe (except the Bone Gnawers), and they are not considered trustworthy. Glass Walkers tend to gravitate toward high technology, high finance and the criminal underworld.

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Backgrounds:** Glass Walkers may not purchase Ancestors, Mentor or Pure Breed.

**Beginning Gifts:** Control Simple Machine, Diagnostics, Trick Shot

• **Red Talons:** A tribe unique in that it is composed almost entirely of lupus members (with a very small but growing number of metis). Red Talons live in the wilderness among their lupine Kinfolk, and they believe that Gaia's only hope is the extermination of all humans.

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Backgrounds:** Red Talons may not purchase human Allies, Contacts or Resources, and their only Kinfolk are wolves.

**Beginning Gifts:** Beast Speech, Scent of Running Water, Wolf at the Door

• **Shadow Lords:** The Silver Fangs' primary rival for leadership of all Garou. Shadow Lords are seen as cunning, deceptive and domineering — judgments that are not far off the mark.

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Backgrounds:** Shadow Lords may not purchase Allies or Mentor.

**Beginning Gifts:** Aura of Confidence, Fatal Flaw, Seizing the Edge

• **Silent Striders:** Exiled from their original homeland, the Silent Striders choose to live solitary lives on the road, traveling constantly. Some work as couriers between septs. Silent Striders have learned many secrets of both the physical and spiritual worlds in their travels..

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Backgrounds:** Silent Striders may not purchase Ancestors or Resources.

**Beginning Gifts:** Sense Wyrm, Silence, Speed of Thought

• **Silver Fangs:** The rightful rulers of the Garou Nation, the preserve impeccable breeding through both their lupine and human lineages. Most can claim descent through various European noble and royal families. This exclusionary behavior has led to inbreeding, and the Silver Fangs are tainted with madness because of it.

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Backgrounds:** All Silver Fangs must purchase at least three dots of Pure Breed.

**Beginning Gifts:** Falcon's Grasp, Lambert Flame, Sense Wyrm

• **Uktena:** The Uktena are the most mysterious and mystical of the tribes. They have charged themselves to guard the resting places of many powerful Banes, and some fear that this association taints the tribe. Once, the tribe's human blood was entirely Native American. In recent decades, the Uktena have begun to breed with other races.

**Initial Willpower:** 3

**Backgrounds:** No restrictions.

**Beginning Gifts:** Sense Magic, Shroud, Spirit Speech

• **Wendigo:** The Wendigo are the only Garou tribe composed primarily of Native American members, but a few have bred outside their traditional lineages. The Wendigo resent the other tribes' presence in North America, and they guard their caerns from all others.

**Initial Willpower:** 4

**Backgrounds:** Wendigo may not purchase Contacts or Resources.

**Beginning Gifts:** Call the Breeze, Camouflage, Resist Pain

## *Backgrounds*

See also *Backgrounds*, pp. 120-123

• **Allies:** Your friends, whether they're human or wolf.

• **Ancestors:** This Background describes your character's ability to speak with and channel the knowledge of his ancestors.

• **Contacts:** Who you know, primarily in human society.

• **Fetish:** You own an item of some sort with a spirit bound within it. See pp. 301-303 for more information.

• **Kinfolk:** The number of relatives you're in regular contact with — human or wolf, and all are immune to the Delirium.

• **Mentor:** A Garou elder who's taken an interest in you and advises you.

• **Pure Breed:** Your lineage and pedigree among Garou.

• **Resources:** Your personal wealth and possessions, as well as your regular income.

• **Rites:** Describes the number and/or level of rites you have learned. See *Rites*, pp. 154-167.

• **Totem:** A pack's totem is a unique spirit. Each pack member may contribute to this Background to create it. See pp. 293-294 for more information on building totems.

## *Gifts*

Breed, auspice and tribe above denote what Gifts you may choose to assign to your character.

## Renown

See the auspice descriptions for beginning Renown. Also refer to *Renown* (pp. 123-124) and *Advancing in Rank* (pp. 184-186).

## Rank

All characters begin play at Rank 1. (See *Rank* pp. 124-125.)

## Rage, Cawse, Willpower

See as follows: auspice for Rage, breed for Gnosis and tribe for Willpower. See also *Rage* pp. 125-126, *Gnosis* pp. 126-127 and *Willpower* pp. 127-128.

## Freebie Points

Trait	Cost
Attributes	5 per dot
Abilities	2 per dot
Backgrounds	1 per dot
Gifts	7 per Gift (Level One only)
Rage	1 per dot
Gnosis	2 per dot
Willpower	1 per dot

By stressing the importance of the pack members' relationships, we do not say that all the characters must like each other unreservedly and get along in all things — this is impossible. In fact, it's more interesting if the characters do disagree over some things and experience conflict. After all, every family has its problems. The fact is, though, that a pack is more than the sum of its members. It describes those Garou as a group with common goals, motivations, enemies and background.

It may help players to visualize the pack as a character unto itself and work out its nature before they even begin to create their characters. The Storyteller and players should discuss the pack's purpose for existence (all packs have one) and how it was formed. What must it accomplish? How does it interact with other packs? With the sept? Once the players decide upon a pack concept, they can decide who will fill which roles within the pack and what kind of characters they want to bring into it.

## Creating the Pack

The pack serves as the chronicle's center, the axis around which everything else revolves. Characters can join or die, but the pack remains. Because of its nature, it's extremely important that the players agree on the sort of pack they want to play, as that will impact directly the kind of stories they will play. If a player decides that she doesn't like her character two stories into a chronicle, it's easy enough to let her switch in a new one. If the players decide they don't like the pack's nature, though, it may be necessary to overhaul the chronicle completely.

Most packs in the Final Days are formed during a Rite of Passage as the characters band together in the interests of survival. In past times, such packs were formed from members of a single tribe. Now, however, the Garou are too few, and the End Times too near, for elders to continue this practice. Modern packs are usually formed from members of several tribes, in the hope that they may support each other's strengths and cover each other's weaknesses.

When they create the pack, players should answer several questions. Players should answer these questions before they create their characters or play out their preludes, but they may change the specifics afterward. The important goal is to establish a firm pack concept to give each character context.

• **Where is the pack based?** — What territory does the pack claim? Where does it range? Does it even claim territory? Do the pack members patrol their territory, or do they even acknowledge such responsibilities? Do the members have their own homes or do they live together? Is the pack urban, rural or wilderness-based?

• **What is the pack's mission?** — What goals and motivations unite the pack? Do the packmates seek to destroy a

particularly powerful Bane? Do they exist simply to protect their territory? Do they seek vengeance on someone in particular or upon anyone who defiles Gaia?

• **Who, if anyone, is the pack alpha?** — Who makes decisions? Who leads the pack? How does the pack decide? Some packs choose the alpha through violent challenges, allowing the victor to lead. Others designate different members to lead during different missions. The Ragabash may lead scouting missions while the Ahroun leads in battle.

• **What is the pack's totem?** — Does the pack have a totem? If so, what is it? Why do the characters follow this totem? Did it choose them, or did they choose it?

• **What is their sept like?** — What kind of sept does the pack belong to? Does it give the characters additional responsibilities? What is its name? Who are the leaders? The elders? Does the sept have a totem? Do sept members have certain duties that they must fulfill to appease certain spirits? Why?

• **Does the pack have friends and allies?** — Does the pack have any friends beyond its individual members' contacts and allies? Who are they? Does the pack protect them?

• **What about enemies?** — Does the pack have any enemies? Who are they, and why do they hate the pack? What are their motivations? Are they Garou? If not, what are they?

## Pack Purpose

The pack concept is lodged deeply in the Garou psyche — everyone is viewed in that context. Garou view solitary werewolves as creatures to be pitied or cursed; they're certainly not whole. Of all Garou, only the elders live without packs, and they do so (hopefully) because they've fulfilled their sacred mission. In all too many cases, though, such is not the case. Few Garou survive to become elders, and few elders have surviving packmates.

According to Garou tradition, Gaia charges each and every pack with a purpose that draws its members together; a purpose they are meant to serve and fulfill. In fact, potential packmates often experience visions or dreams guiding them together and revealing their purpose, before the pack is even formed.

In the End Times, many Garou are drawn together with visions of their own violent deaths — but those deaths always serve some greater purpose. Many younger werewolves are uncomfortable with these visions, but they support each other within the packs and help those who lose conviction in their cause.

## The Prelude

One moment in every Garou's life changes everything. At that point, there is no turning back; she's transformed, and she now lives in a larger world. When a werewolf experiences her First

Change, she steps into her heritage, probably very traumatically. But what's the point of defining that First Change if you don't have a sense of what her life was like before? Most werewolves grow to adulthood without knowing what awaits them.

The prelude, then, provides context for the character's past, her experience upon the First Change, her reaction to it and what she does afterward. It's a one-on-one storytelling session during which the player and Storyteller establish the important moments of the character's history. Since it's necessary to compress many years of life into a series of rapid-fire vignettes, each highlighting a pivotal event in the character's life, rather than a fully developed life story.

### *Storytelling the Prelude*

The Storyteller should take the time to run a one-on-one prelude for each player, unless two characters were close friends who grew up together before they became Garou. It's important to keep the player focused during the prelude, since it is a very personal experience that gives each character a sense of history. Some players may want to share a prelude — for example, if their characters were longtime childhood friends — but it's best to run preludes one person at a time. Don't worry about the other players; they can spend the time to socialize, refine their characters, discuss their plans for the chronicle or call for pizza. The prelude is too important to neglect.

When running the prelude, don't take too much time with each vignette. Lay out the scene, give the player a chance to make a few decisions, then move on to the next.

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can use this opportunity to foreshadow some of the events in the chronicle (perhaps a recurring enemy appears in each prelude?), but don't dwell on any one thing for too long. Your goal is to make the player respond instinctively to each situation, rather than with deliberation. Doing so gives a very concentrated sense of what the character's life was like.

The prelude serves as an opportunity for the player to explore the rules and setting. Give her room to do so, but try to avoid combat. If combat does occur, simply describe the outcome so as not to kill the character accidentally before the game starts.

The player may change her mind about some of her character's Traits as a result of decisions and actions during the prelude, and it's fine to let her change things around a bit to fit her concept better. Don't allow players to simply shift Traits around to make invincible characters. The idea is to highlight the character's nuances, not engage in a number-crunching exercise. Use the prelude to explore the character's Traits. Does he have high Resources? Cover how he came into that money. Allies? Run a few vignettes showing how she met her friends.

It's important, when running preludes, to establish a sense of normalcy and of the routine (unless the character is a metis, then play up his isolation from humans and wolves). The prelude gives you a sense of the mundane that you can shatter gleefully when the First Change occurs. It's a great way to build dramatic tension both before and during the actual change.

The prelude is presented as a storytelling session, but it's important to allow the player to interrupt and offer input. After all, this is *her* character, and she should not have to deal with elements she finds intolerable. It's also important that she's a part of the process.

Finally, take the time to give the First Change all the detail it needs. Play it up as much as you can, focus on the intensity of the moment as the character's newfound Rage wells up within him and he lashes out with it for the first time. Use

sensory cues — especially sound and smell. Garou are very sensual creatures, and they use far more of their senses than we humans use ours, so focus on that sensory input. Use it to give the change i m p a c t



and weight. Make it clear that the character has crossed a line irrevocably and that her life will never be the same.

### *Questions and Answers*

When you play through your prelude, you should keep the following questions in mind. All of them should be answered to some extent by the time you're done, and you should have an idea as to how some of them will be answered before you begin. It often helps to write out the answers whether or not you've played through the prelude. Doing so can help guide the Storyteller or provide an invaluable means of solidifying concepts in your mind.

Each question lists some things you should ask yourself as you flesh out your character. The questions also include some advice on how to use these elements in the prelude.

- **How old are you?** — How long has it been since you had the First Change? Most werewolves go through the First Change at some point after they hit puberty, but an increasing number don't change until after they reach adulthood. Most homids experience the First Change between the ages of 14 and 18, but some experience it as late as 21. Lupus change between two and three years (and age like a human thereafter). Metis usually undergo the First Change somewhere between eight and 10 years of age.

- **What was your family life like?** — Did your parents misunderstand you? Did other wolves shun you? Most Garou have a strong sense of "not belonging" before the First Change, although lupus don't grasp this isolation fully until afterward.

Did you grow up with your real parents? Was one parent Garou, and therefore not present while you grew up until you underwent your First Change? Did you end up in foster care, moving from family to family? Was your birth pack hunted and killed? Captured by researchers? Or did you have a peaceful childhood, with few disruptions?

- **When did you have your First Change?** — Where did it happen? Did others see it (and suffer from the Delirium)? Did you injure — or kill — anyone? Friend or foe? Did you find the experience terrifying? Exhilarating? Both?

The First Change is probably the single most important event in your character's life, since it's the first time he changes form (usually to Crinos). From that point on, he can never go back to what he was. The first Change is especially traumatic if he killed a close friend or family member inadvertently.

Fortunately for them, most young Garou are watched from afar with the aid of a Kin-Fetch spirit (see p. 160). Once they undergo the Change, members of their tribe seek them out and bring them to a sept where they can be trained in Garou ways.

If your character was metis, how was she treated as she matured? Was she a continual scapegoat who was ignored at best, or did the sept treat her with love and respect (as practically never happens)? How does her upbringing affect her?

- **When did you meet your packmates?** — Do you get along with your packmates? How long have you known them? Did you meet them at a caern, or did you know any of them before the First Change? Do you share the same goals? Do you have a rivalry with any of them?

It's important that packmates be compatible on some level. Too much interpersonal conflict can tear a pack apart (or at the very least get the troublesome member expelled to live a

solitary life, which is a terrible fate for a Garou). See *The Pack* earlier in this chapter.

- **Where do you live now?** — Do you live at the caern? In an apartment in the city? In a country cabin? In the woods? Does anyone know how to find you? If you live at a caern, where is it located? Do you have neighbors? What are they like? Have you made their acquaintance?

The Storyteller can use your home as a story hook (especially if you're not careful about who learns where you live).

- **Do you continue to live a normal life?** — Do you continue to interact with the humans or wolves you knew before the First Change? Do any normal people (not Kinfolk) know what you are? Do other Garou know that you try to maintain a normal life? If you keep it secret, why? How? How will your packmates react if (or when) they find out?

Provide your Storyteller with as many details about your character's mundane life as you can, since she can use these hooks to start a story (or even build an entire story around them). Some problems come directly from trying to juggle responsibilities between your regular job (if you have one) and your duties to Gaia.

- **What motivates you?** — What guides your life as a werewolf? What drives you to fight alongside your packmates (beyond the pack's shared purpose)? Do you seek vengeance upon someone? Renown? Adventure and excitement? Acceptance? Do you wish you'd never become a werewolf and long for a mundane life?

Your character's priorities and desires are a central part of his personality, it's vitally important that you keep them in mind as you flesh out your character. Once he's undergone the First Change, how do his priorities shift? One day, he's worrying about whether he'll pass his final exams — the next, he learns he's a chosen warrior of Gaia in what looks like a losing war. How does he avoid depression and hopelessness?

### *Character Creation Example*

Bryan decides to make his first Werewolf character for Geoff's chronicle. Geoff told the group that he wanted to run a game that explores human corruption in the heart of a gritty, industrial city. The players decided they wanted to play a pack whose specialty was digging up and using information against the unscrupulous industrialists, crime bosses and politicians who populate Geoff's city.

#### *Step One: Concept*

Before Bryan actually dives into the mechanical part of character creation, he must develop a character concept. He decides he wants to play a journalist who always goes that extra inch to find the *truth* and expose it for all to see. Bryan decides that he wants to step away from standard journalism, so decides that the character allows the outrage he sees to fill his work.

Bryan decides immediately that homid is the best choice for breed, since the character maintains a mundane occupation and a "real life." For auspice, Bryan considers Galliard to be the obvious choice, but his journalist has to be cunning and sly to find his stories. He settles on Ragabash, for its focus on trickery and stealth. Bryan passes the Bone Gnawers over and settles on Fianna. He wants his character to contrast against the city

rather than blend in, and decides that the character was born in the Appalachians, to descendants of Scottish immigrants.

Bryan decides to give his character two names — one for his human life and occupation, and one for use among the Garou. For his human name, he chooses Stuart Brown (reflecting a common Southern practice of naming children after Civil War heroes). His Garou name is Stalks-the-Truth, representing his preferred tactics — Stuart will stop at nothing to expose the Wyrm's activities to attack.

### *Step Two: Attributes*

Now that Bryan's chosen his character concept, he needs to put numbers on paper to describe what Stalks-the-Truth can do. Because Stuart is a journalist who makes a living (and often survives!) through his fast thinking and his ability to pay attention, Bryan prioritizes Mental Attributes as his primary category. Bryan doesn't see Stuart as exceptionally likeable, but he is very slick when he needs to be, so Social Attributes become the character's secondary priority. These choices leave Physical Attributes as tertiary, but since Stuart considers the mind a more dangerous weapon than the body, Bryan's not too concerned about this weakness.

First, Bryan distributes seven dots among his Mental Attributes. Since Stalks-the-Truth needs to be perceptive enough to get into trouble, Bryan assigns two dots to Perception. Stuart's also fairly intelligent, so Bryan also assigns two dots to Intelligence. Stalks-the-Truth needs to think fast on his feet to get back out of trouble, so Bryan assigns the remaining three dots to Wits. Stalks-the-Truth's Mental Attributes are Perception 3, Intelligence 3 and Wits 4.

Now Bryan considers Stalks-the-Truth's Social Attributes. He doesn't see this character as being particularly charming, so he puts one dot in Charisma. On the other hand, the character can talk his way into or out of just about anything, so Bryan puts three dots into Manipulation. This choice leaves one dot for Appearance. Stalks-the-Truth's Social Attributes are Charisma 2, Manipulation 4 and Appearance 2.

Finally, Bryan assigns Physical Attributes. He decides that Stuart doesn't really stand out physically, so he assigns one dot to each Attribute. Stalks-the-Truth's Physical Attributes are Strength 2, Dexterity 2 and Stamina 2.

### *Step Three: Abilities*

With Attributes finished, Bryan turns his attention to Abilities. Stuart grew up in the Appalachians and learned a great deal about living in the outdoors and experiencing the wonders of nature. (He couldn't get to the city fast enough.) Bryan also thinks that Stuart needs at least some ability to survive in the city, since Stuart's been there for at least a few years now. (Long enough to attend journalism courses at a community college.)

Bryan assigns the primary slot to Talents, reasoning that Stalks-the-Truth relies more upon his natural abilities than learned skills. Stuart is able to notice things other people miss, so Bryan puts two dots into Alertness. Stuart's not very good at fighting, but Bryan figures that he's better at avoiding danger than facing it straight on. He assigns one dot to Dodge. Stuart needs to be able to "read" people when he interviews them, so that he can tell if they're lying or hiding something, and Bryan assigns two dots to Empathy. Bryan also sees Stuart's writing style as biting and incisive as well as entertaining, and he

assigns three dots to Expression. Bryan gives Stuart one dot in Intimidation to reflect his blunt style. The remaining four points are divided between Streetwise and Subterfuge, to reflect his experiences in the city's seamy underbelly, as well as his ability to use subtler means to get his way.

Since Stalks-the-Truth has sought a semi-formal education (through community college), Bryan decides to assign his secondary priority to Knowledges. The first dot goes into Computer, to reflect Stuart's ability to use a word processor. Bryan assigns three dots to Investigation, to reflect Stuart's gift for digging up obscure information to wield against the corrupt and power-mad. Stuart speaks Spanish (since Geoff indicated that the city has a large Hispanic population), and he gets one dot in Linguistics. Bryan assigns two dots to Politics to reflect Stuart's understanding of the city's power structure. Finally, Bryan decides that Stuart spent some time after his Rite of Passage learning about Garou culture and rites, and he assigns two dots to Rituals.

Finally, Bryan turns to the tertiary assignment — Skills. He decides that Stuart really likes fast cars, so he assigns a dot to Drive (figuring that he can spend freebie points to boost this score later). He also figures that Stuart learned how to handle guns at an early age, and he puts a dot into Firearms. As part of his upbringing, Stuart also learned how to track, hunt and sneak up on wildlife, which gives him two dots in Stealth and one dot in Survival. Stuart has more Stealth because he's had more reason to use it since moving to the city.

### *Step Four: Advantages*

Now Bryan needs to assign Backgrounds, Gifts and Renown to Stalks-the-Truth. In some ways, these Traits define him as a werewolf rather than just another paranoid, ranting journalist. Bryan starts with Backgrounds. Stalks-the-Truth spends a great deal of time meeting people and getting to know them, but his rather abrasive personality makes it difficult for him to establish regular friendships. Bryan passes over Allies and assigns three dots to Contacts. Bryan also figures that Stalks-the-Truth keeps in touch with his parents, but he doesn't go beyond that. Bryan assigns one dot to Kinfolk. Finally, Bryan reasons that Stalks-the-Truth actually sells a weekly column to the city's major newspaper, so he puts one dot in Resources to reflect that income.

Now it's time for Bryan to decide which Gifts Stalks-the-Truth has learned since his Rite of Passage. First going over the Level One Gifts available to homid breed, he decides that Persuasion is the best choice, giving Stalks-the-Truth that extra little edge when doing his work. Moving on to auspice Gifts, Bryan doesn't even hesitate before selecting Open Seal from the Ragabash list. Stalks-the-Truth often needs to get into places he shouldn't go, so this Gift will be an immense help. Finally, Bryan chooses Resist Toxin from the Gifts available to Fianna. Despite his elders' warnings, Stalks-the-Truth often samples mind-altering substances, and Resist Toxin makes it possible for him to survive far more experimentation than would otherwise be possible.

Since Stalks-the-Truth is Ragabash, he gets to assign three points of permanent Renown in any order. Bryan decides that Stalks-the-Truth's dedication to the truth has earned one permanent Honor, and that his ability to dig up and expose the Wyrm's activities have earned two permanent Wisdom. Because he prefers to avoid direct combat, he has not yet earned any Glory. As with all new characters, Stalks-the-Truth is Rank 1.

## Step Five: Finishing Touches

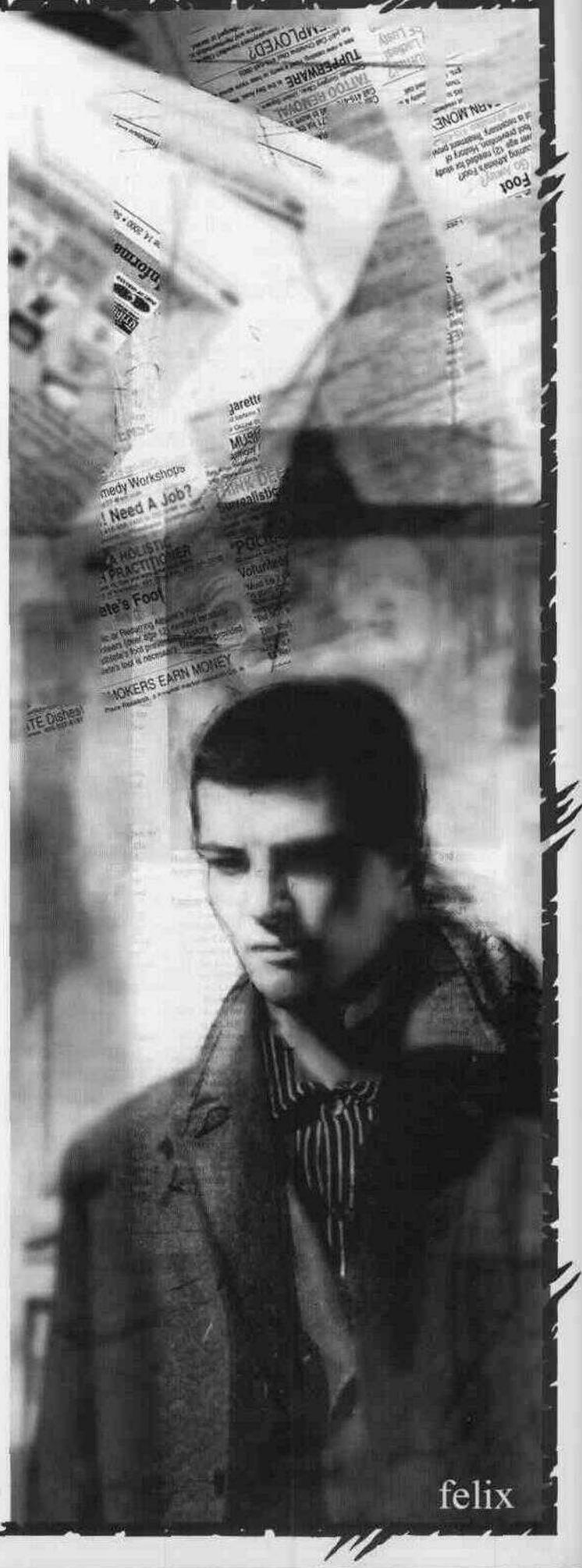
Bryan puts the last touches on Stalks-the-Truth's character sheet. Ragabash receive one dot of Rage, horrid Garou receive one dot of Gnosis, and Fianna receive three dots of Willpower.

At this point, Bryan can customize his character further with freebie points. He's satisfied with Attributes, but a couple of Abilities seem too low. He purchases four additional Ability dots (costing eight freebies), and he applies one to Streetwise (raising it to three), one to Subterfuge (also to three) and two to Drive (raising it to three dots). Bryan would also like Stalks to be paid what he's worth, so he spends two freebies to raise his Resources score to three dots. Bryan decides to spend one freebie to purchase the Rites Background at one dot (selecting the Rite of Talisman Dedication so he won't lose his clothes every time he shifts). Since the players want a totem for their pack, Bryan puts two freebies into Totem, giving him two dots in the Background. Bryan spends his last two freebies to raise Stalks-the-Truth's Gnosis to two dots, to further reflect the time that Stalks-the-Truth spent learning Garou ways.

All that remains is Stalks-the-Truth's specialties, description, history and quirks. Bryan decides to select his specialties right away. For Manipulation, he chooses "witty." Stuart has a way with words that can flay his chosen target and still amuse his audience. For Wits, he selects "clever," since Stuart is always coming up with novel ways to approach new and old problems.

Bryan determines that Stalks-the-Truth lived most of his life (through his late teens) with his family in the Appalachians. When he was old enough to leave for college, he'd been champing at the bit for a few years to get out of the country. In college, he passed only a few of his courses, since he managed to antagonize several of his instructors with his very opinionated rants. This bent was most apparent in his journalism classes, in which he rejected the idea that journalism must be "objective." Bryan had read about new journalism a few months before and found the concept of opinionated and subjective reporting to be fascinating, so Stuart follows a similar philosophy. Once out of college, it took over a year for the newspaper to accept his column. (He wrote for smaller papers until the major newspaper's editor noted his popularity and brought him over). After a year of hurling outrage after outrage into the public eye (and getting every third story spiked), Stuart experienced the First Change. Just as the subject of his scathing editorials (a city commissioner revealed to have accepted Mafia bribes) caught up with him. The ensuing attempt on Stuart's life triggered the Rage boiling within. Other Garou found him standing in Crinos amidst the bodies of his attackers. From there, he spent several months learning about his new life and going through his Rite of Passage.

Since Stalks-the-Truth spends more time chasing story leads, investigating corruption and partying than he probably should, he devotes little time to anything more than basic hygiene. He's of about average height and rail-thin. He ties his shoulder-length brown hair into a ponytail to keep it out of his eyes. His gaze is just intent enough to make those he aims it at feel a little uncomfortable. He likes nice clothes, but he doesn't care for them properly — putting dry clean only clothes in washing machines and such — so most of his attire is somewhat wrinkled. He carries a .357 magnum pistol at all times in case he needs to defend himself. Yes, he's a Garou, but he'd rather not turn into a nine-foot monster.



every time a mugger jumps him. Stuart owns (but is still paying off) a Pontiac Grand Am that he uses primarily to collect traffic tickets.

Stalks-the-Truth developed the habit of watching entertainment sports on a regular basis, and he still makes time for *Extreme Wrestling Warfare Beatdown* every Thursday night, and he tries to keep up with NASCAR racing since his love of fast cars extends to watching them in action. His packmates tolerate his tastes to an extent, but they've had to drag him away from the television on a few occasions.

## Attributes

Attributes define how much potential a character has in three domains of Traits: Physical, Social and Mental. If a character has only one dot in a Trait, the default score, he's pretty piss-poor. Having five dots, however, represents the best human level of achievement possible. Some Traits change as the werewolf shifts forms, even above the human maximum; all of these Attributes can be developed through time, training and experience.

### Physical

Physical Traits measure just how hearty a character is. These characteristics cover not only brute force, but also the werewolf's general constitution and nimbleness. Many Ahroun and lupus have particularly high marks in these Traits. As werewolves shift forms, their Physical Traits change as well, and space is provided on your character sheet to note these differences.

#### Strength

"Hurry up!" Ingrid hissed, her face tight with worry. "If the pack gets here before you're finished..."

"They won't," Kurt snarled. "Quit talking and let me finish, Moon Dancer. Unless your puny shoulders can bear the load, that is." The huge monster towered over her, golden brown fur covering a Crinos body thick with scarred muscles. He gritted his teeth, leaning hard into the enormous rock, and finally it budged, sliding into the crevice he'd dug earlier.

"Now," he said, "no one needs know of Hilda's shame."

"Or that of the poor thing she almost birthed," Ingrid sighed.

The Strength Trait indicates how much weight the character can carry, shove or lift. Strength figures into jumping and leaping, and it also measures the raw damage you can deliver in a fight. The higher your Strength is, the more punishing your blows are. Generally, characters with high Strength are big and brawny, although such is not always the case; the short and wiry types can also pack quite a punch.

- Poor: You can carry or lift 40 pounds.
- Average: You can carry or lift 100 pounds.
- Good: You can carry or lift 250 pounds.
- Exceptional: You can carry or lift 400 pounds.
- Outstanding: You can carry or lift 650 pounds and turn wild beasts into hamburger.

**Specialties:** Steely Grip, Lower Body, Strength Reserves

#### Dexterity

Chinook found the trek across the ice harder on two legs. And yet, his sept leader had given the order. The young lupus knew that

this was his challenge, to learn about life as the monkeys lived it. He'd do what he must if... Suddenly, the ice floe he'd been crossing cracked. Freezing water splashed him, soaking his crude leather trews as he fought to regain balance. Chinook reacted without thought; crouching low in the unfamiliar body, he darted quick and light across the cracking ice. Within seconds, he'd bounded onto the thicker floes to his left. Astonished at what even two legs could do, he listened to the earsplitting snaps of breaking ice where he'd been standing only moments before.

Dexterity represents a number of physical aptitudes, including agility, speed and manual deftness. Characters with a high Dexterity have good hand-eye coordination. Generally, they're graceful and light on their feet to boot. Dexterity influences accuracy in combat, as well as the ability to do precision work with one's hands.

- Poor: You trip and stumble just walking across carpet.
- Average: A gymnast you're not, but you don't embarrass yourself, either.
- Good: There's some grace in your movements and lightness to your step.
- Exceptional: You've got the potential to be a world-class acrobat, dancer or thief.
- Outstanding: Your agility and control over your movements is possibly the stuff of legends. Every step you take is fluid, graceful and lithe.

**Specialties:** Lightning Reflexes, Preternatural Grace, Nimble Fingers

#### Stamina

She'll never keep up, Graymantle thought, looking at his companion. Already the young homid lagged behind, even though she ran on four legs. The old Strider lupus hardly even felt short of breath, so dire was their mission. Unless they warned the sept, the whole mad pack of Spirals on their tail would devastate the caern. Dropping back a few steps, he nipped the youngster's heels. She yelped, but ran even faster. Satisfied, Graymantle took the lead again, taking a deep breath of air before quickening his pace.

Stamina is a state of both mind and body. It indicates the physical ability to withstand great strain over a long period of time (such as running for hours on end or going without food for days), but it's also a matter of inner resistance (such as holding up in the face of torture or shrugging off dire wounds to finish a mission). High Stamina allows you to endure an opponent's blows, so it's the Trait of choice for representing tough-as-nails werewolves.

- Poor: Your body tires easily, and you prefer sleep to a good jog through the meadow.
- Average: You can take a punch.
- Good: A day's hike without food or water isn't too much for you to bear.
- Exceptional: Whether it's a two-day forced march or sneering at the faces of your torturers, you're up to the task.
- Outstanding: There's little that can tire you or force you to give up secrets. It'll take a lot more than torture or threats to weaken your resolve.

**Specialties:** Unbreakable, Tireless, Resilient

## Social

Are you a natural leader? Do you find it easy to make others do your bidding? Does the opposite sex find you irresistible? The Social Traits rank your aptitude in dealing with others, both your good looks and your general personality. Naturally, some penalties apply to these Attributes as the werewolf shifts forms. Many Galliards and Philodox find high Social Traits extremely useful.

### Charisma

Robiard de Chazelle looked down the hill. The Silver Fang Galliard himself wore a swath of bandages over what remained of his left arm. But duty dulled the pain.

"My friends," he called in a strong voice, "the hour is nigh. Even as we assemble, our enemies are never distant. You have sworn a pledge to soak your claws with the death's blood of the Dark Hollow Spirals. Their Hive must be destroyed. Will you follow me, and by dawn, keep your oath?"

As one, the cries of the werewolves rose in assent, promising death to their enemies and vows to follow their leader even through darkness.

Charisma isn't really about good looks; rather, it's innate charm, personality and power of influence. Even ugly people can have high Charisma, and many great leaders possess a commanding presence without being beautiful or handsome. Characters with a high Charisma Trait generally serve as inspiration for their fellows, exuding an air of trust and likability. Others depend on them regularly to provide motivation and encouragement, a great expectation indeed. In contrast, characters with low Charisma have poor social skills, no matter what form they wear. They do and say the wrong things, and they generally end up pissing off people who might otherwise be friends.

- Poor: Making friends is harder for you than most.
- Average: People think you're kind of friendly and fairly easy to get along with.
- Good: You generally inspire others to trust you, even in tough circumstances.
- Exceptional: You draw in admirers like bees to honey. No one's ever a stranger for long.
- Outstanding: You've got tremendous leadership potential, and your mere presence stirs entire septs to extreme acts of reverence and duty.

**Specialties:** Air of Confidence, Captivating, Commanding Voice, Infectious Humor

### Manipulation

Tuyen gave his best smile to the coltish caern Warden. "Hi there. Guess nobody told you I was comin'."

The girl stared at him, tense and ready to spring. "Who're you, and what do you want?"

"I'm Treads Near Spirits of the Uktene, but most people call me Tuyen." He looked around. "This bawn is immaculate. Your doing, no doubt. It's a great responsibility for one so young, but you've seen to the task well." The girl shrugged, but a smile of pride crept onto her lips. Ah, Tuyen thought, a crack in the ice. Getting her to take me to the ritemaster will be a snap.

Manipulation is the art of getting others to do what you want, preferably without them realizing how they're being used. It differs from Charisma in that the person being *persuaded* doesn't have to be a friend; a character with a high score in Manipulation can even exploit her enemies. This Trait is usually

## Specialties

When a character has at least four dots in an Attribute or Ability, she's eligible to choose a specialty in the given Trait. Specialties represent a particular focus and proficiency. For example, a specialty under Dexterity might be "swift-footed," while a Medicine specialty could be "combat medic." Several specialty suggestions are given with each Trait. Why are specialties so important? Well, whenever you roll for an action that falls under your character's specialty, be sure to count how many 10s you rolled, in addition to tallying up the total successes. For each and every 10, you get to roll another die and keep a running total of successes. Note that any ones rolled on bonus dice granted by a specialty do not subtract successes from the final total.

Let's look at an example. Dr. Karel Weilbacher, Get of Fentris Theurge, has the Knowledge Medicine at four dots; his specialty is "emergency medicine." In the tale, one of the young Ahroun of his sept is wounded badly by a Black Spiral's tainted klaw. At the Storyteller's instruction, Karel's player Monica rolls Intelligence (three dots) + Medicine (four dots), making her dice pool seven. Monica rolls three 10s, one 6 and three 2s. So Karel has four successes. Now, Monica rolls three more dice, one for each 10, since this activity is Karel's specialty. She gets three successes! That roll yields a total of seven successes for Karel, who heals the kid quickly enough for him to get back into the fray.

Note again that you have no innate right to select specialties that are too broad (such as "small arms" for Firearms or "healing" for Medicine) or just plain unbalancing (such as "doing damage" for Strength or "soak rolls" for Stamina). The Storyteller always has veto power over ridiculous specialty requests.

subtle, and it involves some variety of quick talking, bluffing or understated threat, unless an overt action fits the story. Botching a Manipulation roll can bring down the wrath of the intended target. Nobody likes to be manipulated. This Attribute is generally easier for homids to master than it is for lupus, although many betas and omegas are no stranger to the idea.

- Poor: You'd have trouble getting a starving wolf to eat freshly killed rabbit.
- Average: You're as sly as the next person; sometimes you got it, sometimes you don't.
- Good: Haggling and striking a good deal is a snap for you.
- Exceptional: Folks generally agree with whatever you say, despite their better judgment.
- Outstanding: You could convince the most devoted pup to turn against his mother, if you wished.

**Specialties:** Forked Tongue, Unswerving Logic, Doubletalk, Seduction

### Appearance

"I hear there's a party tonight," Thea grinned. "Sounds like a good time will be had by all."

"Uh huh. And you're not coming," her brother replied, thinking of all the rowdy young Kinfolk who'd been calling lately.

"Not coming! You can't keep me from attending the May Day rites! All the other Kin get to come, so I'll be there too." Thea looked just smug enough to slap.

Ian's seven-foot body towered over his sister, and with a glare at her good looks, he reminded her just who was head of the family. "You're my sister, and you're not going!" he growled. "Care to argue about it?"

Appearance describes your physical features and related qualities, such as voice and bone structure. A high score in this Attribute denotes a character who is physically attractive or who has some mysterious allure that others find enticing. A low score means that he's unattractive or lacking physical features that most folks find pleasing. Appearance is important for first encounters and impressions. Charisma can go a long way after acquaintances are made, but Appearance certainly influences initial gut instincts.

- Poor: Not pretty. Young ones howl when you come too close.
- Average: Your looks and features don't set you apart, which can be an asset.
- Good: You've heard all the pickup lines at the local pub, good and bad.
- Exceptional: You could make a living as a model, and photographers are always bugging you to pose for them.

•••• Outstanding: It's a bit of everything: your body, hair, face and voice make you exquisite to behold.

**Specialties:** Genial, Exotic, Alluring, Noble Bearing

## Mental

Thinking, reasoning and sharp observation are all in the realm of Mental Traits. These Attributes help determine, among other things, reaction time and awareness of what's going on around you. Werewolves who want to be known for their cleverness would do well to have high Mental Traits.

## Perception

Mwamini scratched her nose, wishing in vain that her nostrils worked. Ah well, she thought, Gaia didn't will it to be when my parents made their choice, and nobody here seems to care anyway.

Suddenly, her ears perked up. She knew that sound, the unmistakable crackling of wood burning. A fire had started in the forest! Mwamini scrambled down from her private thinking rock and darted back to the bawn. With luck, they could put out the flames before too much damage was done.

Perception is a combination of watching your surroundings actively



while also relying on instincts and certain feelings. It may or may not involve intense concentration; it's more like having a certain awareness or sensitivity to what's going on in the immediate vicinity. Perception comes in handy when characters search for clues, maintain alertness for ambushes or seek hidden knowledge. Characters who are too cocky or skeptical probably don't rely on their Perception as much as they should if they want to live a bit longer.

- Poor: Oblivious. You won't have a clue when the Apocalypse comes.
- Average: You get the general idea when trouble brews, as long as there's some racket.
- Good: You're usually alert to changes in your environment, enough not to be surprised easily.
- Exceptional: You notice just about everything, even when one of your senses is dulled.
- Outstanding: Nothing escapes your notice, not even that click beetle painted with the Magadon logo, living in the neighbor's potted plant.

**Specialties:** Eyes in the Back of Your Head, Farsighted, Uncanny Instincts, Detail-Oriented

### *Intelligence*

Curtis Delgado leafed carefully through the massive file his assistant had left on his desk. He smiled grimly, thinking about how she'd urged him to store important information on disk. Curtis knew better. For more than 20 years, the Theurge had been amassing details on a certain Air BC jet crash that had cost him more than anyone could imagine. And now, with just a scrap of information from an informant in the States, the picture had slid suddenly into place. No one could hack into a pen-and-paper file, especially not the corporate spies at Triangle Geo-Chemical. Curtis knew the enemy's name, and soon, he'd know just how to break them. *It was only a matter of time and planning.*

Intelligence includes raw reasoning ability, problem-solving and memory. It's not just your IQ score; instead, Intelligence involves how well a character can make sense of seemingly random facts and data, organizing them into usable and constructive patterns. Many Knowledge Traits work with Intelligence to reflect working through dilemmas and conundrums. Lateral thinking and leaps of intuition are also part of Intelligence, as is logic, both deductive and inductive. Having a low Intelligence doesn't necessarily imply stupidity; it's just that the character probably thinks in simple patterns, with no shades of gray. And by the same token, a high Intelligence doesn't make a character Stephen Hawking. Instead, the character is just a whiz at remembering facts and pulling them out when they're needed most.

- Poor: Slow on the uptake, you don't comprehend anything but the here and now (IQ 80).
- Average: You finish parts of the daily crossword (IQ 100).
- Good: Puzzles and trivia games are a snap. You see patterns in given data easily, if you've got the time to spare (IQ 120).
- Exceptional: Sorting and classifying even complex information is a breeze. Also, you have excellent recall, although your memory isn't quite eidetic (IQ 140).
- Outstanding: You're a true genius who can figure out just about any problem, no matter how complex, with the time and resources (IQ 160+).

**Specialties:** Lateral Problem Solver, Creative Logic, Probability Calculation, Trivia

### *Wits*

Tempers are flying tonight, Elaine thought. She stood on two legs, guiltily relieved that the visiting packs wouldn't see her stumpy tail.

"While you bicker," the Philodox said loudly, "the Mother's daughters are killed by their own brothers and fathers. Are we going to act, or are we going to argue?"

"Why should we listen to a metis bitch?" one lupus snarled from the circle's edge.

"Because you know I'm right, Coming Moon. Our fight is with the enemy, not with each other. Help us save these sisters who may save you in turn."

It was just the thing to say. Murmurs of assent came from around the circle for Elaine's words, and Coming Moon sank back into the shadows with a low growl.

The Wits Trait encompasses planning, quick thinking and cleverness. It affects a character's reaction time in combat and his adaptability to new stimuli. If she has a low Wits score, she's probably gullible and not particularly fast on the uptake; jokes slip right past her, even if she's the victim. On the other hand, a high Wits Trait indicates an ability to keep cool in stressful circumstances and respond to unforeseen events with precision and aplomb. This Attribute comes in handy both in lively conversation and during the heat of a fight.

- Poor: The local Ragabash loves to torment you.
- Average: You know enough to duck when punches or bullets start flying.
- Good: You can handle a fast-paced debate and make a good showing of yourself.
- Exceptional: You're infamous for your quick retorts; it's difficult to catch you off balance.
- Outstanding: Almost nothing takes you by surprise, whether a stab in the back or a fiery remark at a moor.

**Specialties:** Snappy Retorts, Ambushes, Cool-Headed, Cunning

### *Abilities*

Abilities illustrate the knacks and proficiencies the character has developed through hard training or from natural giftedness. In the course of a game, you'll match the Abilities up with appropriate Attributes to determine a die pool that will be rolled to indicate the character's success or failure. Abilities are divided into the following three groups of 10: Talents, Skills and Knowledges.

In some cases, you should go ahead and note an area of expertise when you first choose the Ability, although you won't get the specialty bonus until the Ability reaches four dots. For example, Science is a Knowledge, but it makes little sense not to clarify the branch of science in which the character excels. Your Storyteller will tell you if such areas of expertise are appropriate for an Ability.

### *Talents*

Talents aren't the product of training alone. They're mostly inborn Abilities that can be honed and improved, but they're rarely created from scratch. However, characters are assumed to have some potential in just about every Talent. It makes perfect sense that these Abilities would improve through experience and practice. If a character attempts a feat with a Talent he doesn't

have, the roll incurs no dice penalty. The player just rolls whichever Attribute the Storyteller decides is most appropriate, and he counts those dice to determine success or failure.

### *Alertness*

Neverwise pricked her ears at the sounds of machinery. The Wyrmspawn had found the caern! Quick as lightning, she darted down the hill toward the bawn. And only her inborn senses prevented the rifle butt from catching her in the shoulder as she spun at the last possible moment to face the fomor who thought he'd been sneaking up behind her. She snarled at him, fangs bared. It would be the last wolf he'd ever threaten, she thought, sinking her teeth into the corrupted flesh of his throat.

Alertness describes how attuned the character is to things he can see, smell, hear or touch, and depending on the story, perhaps things that are not so tangible. In combat, it's often paired with Wits to gauge reaction and response time. Out of combat, it works well with Perception to give the character clues about his surroundings. Alertness usually kicks in even when the character isn't necessarily looking for anything.

- Novice: You're alert to certain sights and sounds around you.
- Practiced: You know when to eavesdrop and whom to keep an eye on.
- Competent: You're alert to even subtle changes in the environment.
- Expert: Very little gets past your vigilance, even if you're preoccupied.
- Master: The wolf sense is particularly strong in you. Even when sleeping, you're wary to minute alterations in temperature, light and other environmental features.

**Possessed by:** Bodyguards, Hunters, Thieves, Wild Animals, Security Personnel

**Specialties:** Ambushes, Paranoia, Traps, Scents

### *Athletics*

The river pulled at Raine, trying to drag her under and against the sharp rocks in its depths. She'd had no time to react when her raft flapped in the strong eddy. Now, she struggled to right herself, to swim up for air and find a current to pull her toward shore. Raine kicked hard and broke the surface. A few powerful strokes, and her hands grabbed dirt and roots. Good thing, she thought, hearing the roar of rapids just ahead.

Athletics covers all kinds of athletic endeavors, whether formal sports or otherwise, such as running, jumping, throwing or swimming. A high Athletics score can represent a trained athlete or a naturally athletic individual who spends a lot of time in free-form exercise. Although Athletics is a versatile Talent, it still doesn't cover simple motor action (like lifting weights) or athletic endeavors covered by other Abilities (such as boxing, which is the focus of Brawl).

- Novice: Typical active kid.
- Practiced: High-school jock.
- Competent: College-level competitor.
- Expert: Respected professional.
- Master: Olympic or world-class athlete.

**Possessed by:** Athletes, Jocks, Kids, Lupus, Outdoors Enthusiasts, "Extreme" Sports Nuts

**Specialties:** Specific sports, Team Play, Swimming, Rock Climbing, Tumbling, Distance Trials, Pentathlon

### *Brawl*

Finishing her drink, Rebekah decided she'd heard one too many catcalls for the night. The Fury rose and moved over to the nearest creep, who groped immediately for her chest. He never got the chance. A hand with tight, raised knuckles busted his nose, and blood spurted. Rebekah's fingers then slid into his eyes, clawing and scraping. Her target slid to the ground, howling with pain, and Rebekah grinned invitingly at his friends. As everyone gave her plenty of room at the bar, she bit back her Rage, lest some unlucky bystander get slaughtered in her battle.

Brawl represents training in unarmed combat. It reflects the character's schooling—or real-world experience—with martial arts, street fighting and the like. This Talent calls for real down-and-dirty action; typically, hand-to-hand fighting is ruthless and brutal. The character skilled in Brawl knows how to hit an opponent with all her might and bring him down as quickly as possible, while ignoring her own pain and loose teeth.

- Novice: You picked some fights in the schoolyard.
- Practiced: A barroom brawl gets your blood pumping.
- Competent: You've been in a fair share of fights, more often than not walking away unscathed.
- Expert: Professional boxers would have a hard time beating you.
- Master: Your fingers alone are deadly weapons, and when your fists come out, people die.

**Possessed by:** Police, Thugs, Soldiers, Werewolves, Self-Defense Instructors

**Specialties:** Boxing, Wrestling, Dirty Infighting, Weaponless Martial Arts (Judo, Karate, Tae Kwon Do, etc.)

### *Dodge*

"Run!" Mimiteh shouted. "I'm not joking!" Young Tadi took one look at the Spiral charging him and made quick tracks for their vehicle. But the fetid Wyrmspawn caught up in one leap. Seeing no other option, Tadi darted quick as a rabbit under the truck, rolling away from sharp, deadly claws. He was just pulling out his pistol when he heard the gratifying sound of Mimiteh's klawe slicing through the Spiral's spine.

A werewolf can't get hit if he's out of the way, can he? Dodge allows a character to do just that: duck, dive for cover or take whatever action necessary to avoid an incoming blow. Players should indicate to the Storyteller in what manner their characters are evading potential hits. The description may give them a bonus, depending on the circumstances.

- Novice: You know enough to hit the dirt when bullets fly.
- Practiced: You're capable of getting under cover in most situations.
- Competent: Evading thrown objects is pretty darn easy.
- Expert: Only the most skilled martial artists can hit you.
- Master: Sometimes, you can actually sidestep bullets.

**Possessed by:** Police, Criminals, Martial Artists, Boxers, Ragabash

**Specialties:** Finding Cover, Sidestepping, Drop and Run

### *Empathy*

Derek wiped foaming sputtle from the young metis' mouth, feeling every awful sensation of the fit as if it were his own. And another day, another minute, it just might've been. Strange, the Get thought, that I should meet another metis with the exact same curse. When the



worst of it was over, the young werewolf turned thankful eyes to Derek, falling into exhausted sleep. Maybe we can watch over each other, Derek thought. Two of us in the same boat, looks like, adrift on icy waters. Beats riding the waves alone.

The Empathy Trait allows characters to identify and discern other people's emotions and feelings. With a highly successful roll, a character may even be able to tell if someone is lying to her or has an ulterior motive. Likewise, she may be able to adjust her own emotions to take advantage of someone, feign sympathy or give it genuinely. That's the trickiest side of this Talent. A character with Empathy may get so caught up in the feelings of others that her own emotions will be affected, willingly or not.

- Novice: People consider you a confidant.
- Practiced: You're attuned to the pain of those around you.
- Competent: You can analyze the emotions of casual acquaintances with skill.
- Expert: Even strangers pour out their stories; it's easy to catch people lying too.
- Master: You know what they're going to say before they open their mouths.

**Possessed by:** Counselors, Social Workers, Psychologists, Best Friends, Psychics, Hucksters

**Specialties:** Detect Lies, Hidden Motives, Emotional States, Personality Quirks, Affairs of the Heart

### *Expression*

Waterdancer knew he'd never seen female Kin, wolf or two-leg, as beautiful as the one who prowled near him now in the snow. He voiced a howl, just for her, punctuated by short playful yips. She

grinned and waited. The lupus then circled his would-be mate, his throat emitting soft, low growls with unmistakable meaning. To his delight, she responded with a lift of her tail. For the young Wendigo, winter would not be so cold.

Expression is the art of getting your point across, no matter what the medium. With a high Expression score, your email is just as eloquent as your carefully planned oration, and whether the information is true or not, people sit up and take notice of your words. Expression covers the creation and delivery of speeches, poetry and other writing, but for singing, music and the like, a character needs Performance. Expression is often combined with Charisma or Wits for powerful effect.

- Novice: You've written imaginative poetry.
- Practiced: Fast-paced debates and word contests are not a problem.
- Competent: You could make an easy living as a successful journalist or novelist.
- Expert: Your writing could win international awards.
- Master: Werewolves everywhere praise the beauty and flow of your words, especially when you speak them aloud.

**Possessed by:** Galliards, Writers, Poets, Politicians, Actors

**Specialties:** Rhetoric, Inspiring Speeches, Poetry, Drama, Political Doubletalk

### *Intimidation*

Turganova looked over the Kinfolk's cooling body dispassionately. "Take it to the quarters of my lady Kucacek in secret," she said to her young servant. "Leave it across her threshold so that she knows her agents will not find a place in my dasha."

"My liege," the servant replied curiously but with deep respect. "I hear and obey, but would it not be more effective to simply let the carcass float down the Don? That way, the Lady of Shadows will never know what happened to her best spy."

The Silver Fang smiled at the youth's innocence. "I would have Kucacek know that I have found her out. Fear is always a greater weapon than doubt, young Moon Dancer. Never forget it!"

Intimidation runs the gamut from soft, subtle persuasion to outright brute force. A character skilled in this Talent knows exactly how and when to apply pressure to make a target do his bidding. Intimidation is a powerful combination of words and deeds designed to cause a particular outcome. In the hands of a forceful personality, this Trait can be rather potent.

- Novice: Your threats are crude, but effective.
- Practiced: That cold, hard stare of yours usually gets results.
- Competent: Your combination of bitch-slapping and understated coercion makes others fear you.
- Expert: Even tough opponents think twice about earning your wrath.
- Master: Few werewolves will stand against your goals and desires.

**Possessed by:** Pack Leaders, Bullies, Officers, Drill Sergeants, Shadow Lords, Ahroun

**Specialties:** Veiled Threats, Good Cop/ Bad Cop, Blackmail, Physical Threats, Revenge

### Primal-Urgo

Something wasn't right. Leif couldn't say how he knew, but he yanked his paw back a split-second before it brushed the thick, dried leaves. A clang rang in his ears as the silver-toothed steel trap snapped on empty air. A fury like he'd never known spread over his body, and then, with paws turned to fists and claws, Leif ripped the trap out of the ground and tore the pieces asunder. Only after his own blood stained the dirt did he stop to think just who'd put the damn thing in his territory.

This Talent describes not only the bestial nature inside every werewolf (or any animal, for that matter), but also the level of gut feelings the character has in her various half-wolf, half-human forms. Characters with a high Primal-Urgo rating can rely more easily on "wolf thought" — the ability to call on raw animal instincts for guidance — rather than the rationalization so typical of humans. Moreover, werewolves with strong Primal-Urgo find it easier to assume their various forms or take on partial transformations.

- Novice: Merely a pup. The urge is there, but it hasn't been honed.
- Practiced: Your instincts often put you on the safest path through danger.
- Competent: You feel at ease in any form because you understand the Wyld in your soul.
- Expert: The wolf within guides you to react quickly, without rational thought.
- Master: Only powerful leaders among the werewolves who are closely attuned with Gaia and the Wyld have this depth of understanding.

**Possessed by:** Lupus, Warriors, Wild Animals, Predators  
**Specialties:** Shifting Forms, Hunting, Protection

### Streetwise

Angelica gave the skinny kid a wad of cash. "Now, tell me where you last saw him. There might be more where that came from."

"There's more, all right," the kid snickered. "Anybody who hands out piles of 20s got a lot more." He eyed her diamond bracelet with interest.

Angelica suddenly saw her contact flanked by more punks. Damn, she thought, I didn't imagine the little snot would lie to me.

"If you won't give us your pretties," her contact said, "reckon we'll just have to take 'em."

"Want to make a bet?" the Silver Fang smiled, tapping a well-filed nail against her teeth.

This versatile Talent allows characters to blend into rough crowds, gather information and strike deals on the streets without attracting too much attention. Botched Streetwise rolls can be a source of real danger, but the streets can provide a wealth of hard-to-find items and gossip for those who are shrewd and careful. This Talent is the way to go to indulge in larceny, get the skinny on local crime and fence stolen items.

- Novice: You're pretty sure those guys on the corner sell drugs.
- Practiced: Most of the local thugs consider you on the level.
- Competent: You could be a gang member or a successful madame.
- Expert: The streets are like a second home to you; not much there you don't know about.
- Master: You could be a powerful crime-lord with multiple organizations under your control.

**Possessed by:** Homeless Folks, Bone Gnawers, Criminals, Detectives, Beat Cops

**Specialties:** Picking Pockets, Fencing Goods, Drug Deals, Gangs

### Subterfuge

"It's a genuine antique?" the tourist asked, looking eagerly at her husband.

"Absolutely!" Keahi replied. "That's a traditional grass skirt, possibly from the time before Cook's expedition. That'd make it, oh, about 200 years old."

"Fred, I must have it! Think how good it'd look in our den." The man gave a sigh and shelled out Keahi's asking price of \$500. The Uktena kept her face solemn until the haole had moved on. Then, with a grin, she stuck her head into the back of the shop.

"Hey, Lono, we need a couple more antique grass skirts out front. And don't make 'em look too good, okay?"

Subterfuge is all about figuring out the opponent's motivations and twisting them to your best advantage, while hiding your own goals and interests. This Trait often works with Manipulation or Wits to convince potential targets of your sincere good intentions. Characters with a high rating in Subterfuge are masters of clever conversation, knowing exactly what to say and when to say it to fulfill their goals. Most people wouldn't trust a master of Subterfuge — if they could recognize him.

- Novice: White lies are easy to contrive.
- Practiced: You've gotten quite good at intriguing pickup lines.
- Competent: Hardened criminals follow your cues in their "not guilty" speeches.

- Expert: The slickest used car salesperson is putty in your hands.
- Master: They'll never figure out it was you, all this time....

**Possessed by:** Lawyers, Con Artists, Vampires, Uktene  
**Specialties:** White Lies, Seduction, Innocent and Needy

### Other Talents

Instruction, Intrigue, Mimicry, Search, Ventriloquism

### Skills

Unlike Talents, Skills develop as a direct result of training and instruction. No one really just knows how to drive a car, for example; you have to at least get in a little practice before hitting the interstate. Attempting feats when the character doesn't have the Skill in question is a bit trickier. The player rolls the dice at a +1 difficulty penalty. It's a lot harder to shoot a gun than it seems on TV....

### Animal Ken

Anoki quickly saw what the dogs were after: a cougar, wounded badly but still snarling. With a growl of his own, the Wendigo shooed away the mongrels, then crouched carefully beside the feline. She hissed and spat. Anoki whispered softly, "Your people and mine are not friends, but I will help." The big cat looked at him coldly but didn't pull away as he touched her gently. Where his hands lay, wounds closed. She watched Anoki a long moment, then darted away into the hills.

Although they too are animals, humans think and behave far differently than most creatures do. It takes a special touch to deal with critters, particularly if they are hurt or frightened. Animal Ken represents this knack. With it, a person (or werewolf) knows how to speak and move in such a way as to gain an animal's trust. Without Animal Ken, even homid werewolves find that other creatures tend to be skittish and jumpy around them. Animal Ken is also necessary for training animals (such as working dogs) and for any specific activities that involve animals (such as leading a mule train).

- Novice: You know how to behave around typical pets.
- Practiced: Basic obedience and puppy training is easy for you.
- Competent: You could train animals for highly specialized work, like herding.
- Expert: Under your guidance, most animals can learn complex tricks and routines.
- Master: Even the wildest animals seem attracted to your presence.

**Possessed by:** Veterinarians, Animal Trainers, Farmers, Pet Owners

**Specialties:** Families of Animals (canines, felines, avians, etc.), Farm Animals, Feral Animals

### Crafts

Music sprang from the forge where Diana Philothelides tapped her hammer on the twists of gold and bronze. She could never explain the rhythm in it, the song that was equal in some ways to the beauteous voices of her sisters in the pack. The smith looked up only when old Hera, the Warden, limped into the workshop.

"Best make the fires hotter," she sighed, flicking back her steel-gray hair. "Our visitors say that a pack of Black Spirals will be here before dawn, and our weapons need repair." Diana nodded and put

aside her creation of *Luna's Rising Over the Sea* with a sad sigh. There'd be time enough for that when the battle was won.

Crafts allows a character to create lasting beauty or repair or useful and functional articles with a variety of materials and media. Some crafters use this Skill for building specialized devices for their packs; others make valuable tokens or items for sale or barter. This Skill is also valuable for those who hope to make fetishes. Spirits are more prone to enter a vessel that's made well, after all. The quality of the work depends on the expertise of the crafter, and the character should pick a particular Craft (or two closely related areas) in which to specialize. The Skill may also impart basic knowledge of materials or methods, however, regardless of a player's chosen Craft.

- Novice: You can produce something basic, but attractive or functional.
- Practiced: Your work has a known and recognizable style.
- Competent: Other artisans are familiar with you, and they praise your skills.
- Expert: Unique items you make fetch high prices, and they are highly desired.
- Master: You are among the greatest crafters in your chosen field.

**Possessed by:** Artists, Designers, Inventors, Handcrafters, Theurges

**Specialties:** Woodworking, Drawing/Painting, Weaving, Carving, Sculpture, Metalworking, Car Repair

### Drive

"What do you mean you never drove a car?" Celeste squealed, as Groznek took another corner on rails. "You told me you'd driven all around Budapest!"

"Did I say this?" her companion asked. "No, you did not hear. I said I had been in Budapest traffic. Big difference! Ah, you worry too much. We will arrive at meeting in one piece. I have seen this done many times on big road." Celeste held on for dear life as Groznek whizzed deftly through Chicago traffic, wondering how the lupus had ever talked her into this fiasco.

The Drive Skill is pretty self-explanatory. Having it means that you can operate a car and possibly similar conveyances such as light trucks or vans. The greater your skill, the larger the variety of vehicles you can use. Your difficulty might increase or decrease depending on the vehicle, terrain and weather conditions. Note that riding a motorcycle is quite different than driving a sedan, and heading down a country two-lane road is nothing compared to a metropolitan beltway.

- Novice: You're not just a Sunday driver, as long as you've got an automatic.
- Practiced: A sporty manual transmission is lots of fun for you.
- Competent: You're capable of driving large trucks on long hauls.
- Expert: Maybe you've even raced with professionals.
- Master: A daredevil driver, skilled with many different vehicles and terrain.

**Possessed by:** Truckers, Modern folks in Western nations, Cabbies

**Specialties:** Stick Shifts, Motorbikes, Four-Wheel Drive, Big Rigs, Sports Cars

## Etiquette

The caern Warder sneered at Bridget, appraising her knobby, clawless fingers and bitter heritage. "What do you want, freak? There's no room for your kind here."

Bridget seethed but gave him a wicked grin. There would be tales the likes of which the Fianna never heard this night, and she intended to be all ears. "No place? And here I have a fine batch of mead, straight from Silver Tara itself." She held up the enormous jug. "I was hoping to share."

The Warder's nose twitched, and he stood aside grumbling.

Good manners and social niceties are but a small part of Etiquette. This Skill is also used for general diplomacy, haggling and seduction. Knowing the intricacies of which wines to serve with certain foods and what to do when faced with six different forks is likewise part of Etiquette. The character using this Trait will be familiar with the culture in which he was raised, but the Storyteller may raise or lower the difficulty should the werewolf be faced with traditions and mores that are not his own.

- Novice: You know when to speak and when to be silent.
- Practiced: The difference between a black-tie and a white-tie affair is crystal clear.
- Competent: A multi-course dinner with complex utensils doesn't pose a problem.
- Expert: Your manners and grace mark you as the ideal guest for any occasion.
- Master: Not only are you suave and debonair, others follow your perfect example, whether at the theater or the negotiating table.

**Possessed by:** Socialites, Diplomats, Silver Fangs, Business Executives

**Specialties:** High Society, Big Business, Wining and Dining, Moots

## Firearms

Rambler swung his Ingram in a wide arc, howling madly as the bullets hit the Leeches and their lackeys. The undead kept coming, but he saw that a number of the humans had crumpled into heaps. He flung himself against the cover of a brick wall, switching weapons quickly. When he jumped out again, the Bone Gnawer ignored the sting of silver bullets biting his shoulder and let loose the incendiaries with a gleeful shout. Now it was the vampires' turn to scream.

A character with Firearms has a broad knowledge of many different kinds of guns — from a kid's BB pistol to a submachine gun — and he has the ability to use them as well. This Skill also allows the character to repair all kinds of firearms and make decisions about the best ammunition for the occasion and the weapon. However, it doesn't cover the use of heavy artillery or tank guns.

- Novice: You passed a hunter safety course.
- Practiced: Most of the time, you leave the firing range happy.
- Competent: You're accomplished with several different kinds of guns.
- Expert: Chances are, you've fired shots (and been fired upon) in several gun battles.
- Master: You leave smiley faces blown through all your targets.

**Possessed by:** Police, Criminals, Soldiers, Hunters

**Specialties:** Rifles, Pistols, Submachine Guns, Gunsmithing

## Leadership

Bloodthunder acknowledged the licks and nuzzles of those holding their heads and tails below his own. As his pack gathered, he began to speak.

"You saw what humans did to our lake, our forest. Now they call it a place to bring food and crude shelter. This night, we will take back what is ours. The apes do not deserve this land. They have not protected it, as we have." The Talon's body grew larger and hairier. The whole pack trembled, waiting. "Tonight, we cleanse their stench. Together, as one pack and one tribe." Bloodthunder led an earsplitting howl, then darted off toward the enemy, a stream of dire wolves on his heels.

Often paired with Charisma, Leadership makes one the kind of person (or wolf) that others support and serve. It deals with knowing what to say and how to say it so that the troops stay loyal in the heat of battle. Good leaders know when to give hard orders, as well as how to lead by example. Leadership isn't about tricking people into following. It's about making yourself into someone worthy to guide them.

- Novice: Little kids would do anything for you.
- Practiced: When you talk, others listen.
- Competent: In tough times, others follow your lead eagerly.
- Expert: You're a natural alpha who attracts followers with little effort.
- Master: Potentially, you could be one of the greatest leaders of the Garou Nation... or one of the most infamous.

**Possessed by:** Military Officers, Pack Leaders, Philodox, Executives

**Specialties:** Noblesse Oblige, Combat Readiness, Motivation

## Melee

The Master of the Challenge gave her nod, and Claire jumped toward Weston, pulling her knife in a fluid motion. With a quick thrust, she drew blood from her opponent. Weston snarled and leapt at his challenger, attempting to sweep Claire's feet from under her with a staff. Just as the wood was about to smash into her legs, Claire leapt, twisted and landed on Weston's back with her knife at his throat.

"Care to give up now, pup?" she panted.

Melee involves fighting with a weapon, such as a spear, sword, staff or even a wooden stake (which is quite useful against Leeches). Similarly, Melee paired with Dexterity is used for klawie duels. Likewise, this Skill covers weapons such as tonfa, sai and naganata. Some might think that Melee is a bit old-fashioned and outdated when matched against firearms, but it's always good to have a backup when the gun jams or the ammo runs out.

- Novice: You've got the basics of fencing under your belt.
- Practiced: Trophies from local competitions gather dust on your shelves.
- Competent: You've attained skill with several different kinds of weapons.
- Expert: If you can grab it, you can use it as a deadly weapon.
- Master: You have a widespread reputation as an extremely dangerous opponent with a myriad of weapons.

**Possessed by:** Police, Thugs, Gang Members, Duelists, Ahroun

**Specialties:** Swords, Spears, Saps, Eastern Weapons, Klawies

## Performance

Firefang's howl for the dead seeped slowly into the bones of the assembled Talons. They all knew she'd crept around the still bodies for hours, on two legs and four, thinking about what to sing at the moot. Now as her song echoed through the valley, even the monkeys who'd lent unbidden assistance wept. The Galliard's mournful voice stirred memories of glory and sacrifice, but also of the simple joys of sleeping in the sun and howling to the moon. No human tribute could've been better.

In her chosen area of expertise, such as music, dance or acting, the character has attained a notable level of success. She knows about the history of the art and probably has a broad repertoire of pieces to perform from a variety of time periods. Some of these areas may overlap, with Storyteller approval. For example, a character who plays musical instruments may have rudimentary knowledge of singing or composing music.

- Novice: You hold regular jam sessions, or you have been a success in a college play.
- Practiced: You're a regular in community theatres or the club circuit.
- Competent: Producers have approached you for a movie or record contract.
- Expert: You're a regional, if not national, celebrity.
- Master: Your genius will be remembered long after your death.

**Possessed by:** Galliards, Actors, Musicians, Dancers

**Specialties:** Ballet, Ballroom Dance, Classical Music, A Cappella Singing, Improvisation, Howls

## Stealth

Cameo reminded herself to give Niknak a stern talking to when they got back to the caern. The young Ragabash made more noise getting to the warehouse than a tractor rolling over rocks! Suddenly, her mind snapped back to the present. One of the guards looked their way. Cameo froze, and to her surprise, she lost sight of Niknak in the shadows playing near the fence. If she hadn't already known he was there, she'd never have noticed his gold eyes nestled in black fur. Well, well. Maybe this city jaunt had taught him a thing or two after all.

Stealth is the knack of moving so that you can't be seen or heard. This Skill also measures how good the werewolf is at making use of cover and shadow. When a character uses Stealth, Storytellers will probably have him match rolls against someone else's Perception; whoever has the most successes thwarts the other. Note that Stealth can be a bit different when used in the woods and in an urban alleyway.

- Novice: In full darkness with clear terrain, hiding isn't a problem.
- Practiced: You know how to stick to the shadows.
- Competent: Stalking and hiding is child's play.
- Expert: Dry leaves and twigs are silent under your feet.
- Master: If you don't want to be seen, you're as good as invisible.



**Possessed by:** Cat Burglars, Ragabash, Hunters, Snipers, Assassins

**Specialties:** Shadowing, Urban, Sylvan, Taking Point

### *Survival*

Being in the forest gave Corbin the creeps. He'd tried to start a fire, to no avail. Raw hamburger wasn't so bad, but his feet were blistered, and cold bit into his soaked jeans. Corbin would rather have hacked into IBM than spend a night outside. He started to change to his wolf form. At least it would be warmer.

Suddenly, he heard a noise behind him. Whirling around, he beheld the biggest dire wolf he'd ever seen. It grinned at him, then pawed the ground.

Oh shit, the city boy thought.

Living off the land is more than eating fruits and berries or drinking from a creek. It also involves finding shelter, tracking and even navigating through dangerous territory. Characters skilled in Survival know basics for finding food, starting fires and staying safe in harsh conditions. Storytellers should note that characters using Stealth in the wilderness can't roll more dice than they have in Survival.

- Novice: You made it through scout camp.
- Practiced: The edible berries and mushrooms are familiar to you.
- Competent: You can read animal signs and brew natural remedies.
- Expert: The wild is your home; you feel at ease among all its wonders and dangers.
- Master: You can survive even in the harshest climates and poorest conditions.

**Possessed by:** Hunters, Lupus, Scouts, Explorers, Outdoor Enthusiasts, Rangers

**Specialties:** Foraging, Tracking, Specific Environments (Arctic, Desert, etc.), Trapping

### *Other Skills*

Archery, Boating, Cooking, Demolitions, Disguise, Escapology, Fast-Draw, Gambling, Hypnotism, Kailindo, Klaive, Dueling, Mechanics, Meditation, Pilot, Swimming, Traps

### *Knowledge*

Knowledge Traits usually develop from time spent in formalized classroom training, private tutoring or rigorous independent study. Most involve the use of Mental Attributes rather than Physical ones. Lupus and metis characters may have fewer Knowledges than homid characters — which isn't because they're unintelligent, but just because they haven't sat through years of compulsory schooling. If a character doesn't have any dots in a Knowledge Ability, she can't make a roll for it. Of course, a Storyteller may decide that anyone would know to put pressure on a bleeding wound, and thus allow a Medicine roll at a penalty even if a character doesn't have the Trait.

### *Computer*

"I've finished the new relational database," Svetlana said, tired but elated. "I think it has at least 700 names and addresses in it. Everything we need to know for the other team to run its investigations."

"Excellent!" Ilmir, her pack leader, replied. "We'll get to work right away. There must be a few lost cubs among this bloodline. Or

at least some Kin. Your work has given us a strong start," he praised. The young Silver Fang blushed with pride at his words.

Knowledge of computers includes operating the machines as well as the programs (word-processing, information-retrieval and so on). Depending on the character's level of expertise, she can make computers spit out useful information or even design her own operating system. The Computer Knowledge is required for anyone wants to write programs or hack into other people's systems, and the Storyteller should feel free to adjust difficulties based on any opposing intruder countermeasures.

- Student: Shareware games are just your speed.
- College: You can make minor changes in system configurations and networks.
- Masters: You can write original programs.
- Doctorate: Minor hacking is a snap; no more long distance bills for you.
- Scholar: You've got the ability to design a whole new operating system, maybe even an AI.

**Possessed by:** Hackers, Glass Walkers, Software Engineers, Executive Assistants, Students

**Specialties:** Databases, Hacking, Viruses, Computer Languages, Internet, Web Design

### *Enigmas*

Duncan pondered the new challenge from his pack leader. Find a true Fianna tale that has never been told? Where on Earth... Then, the Galliard had a thought. He'd heard that tinker Kin had kept tales going for generations. Surely they knew a few that hadn't reached the ears of Fianna in the New World. Now, it was just a matter of tracking some down, and Duncan recalled that caravans appeared regularly on the borders this time of year....

Logic problems, puzzles and mysteries are all in the realm of Enigmas. Characters with this Knowledge link information and hunches together to solve conundrums of all varieties, from the spiritual to the material. It's not that they have any sort of ESP, they just put things together uncannily well. Those characters who have Enigmas probably enjoy matching wits against devious villains or even packmates in contests of the mind.

- Student: You always solve the daily crossword.
- College: Why bother to read whodunits? You always know the ending.
- Masters: The pack regards you as the resident riddlemaster when witty spirits are around.
- Doctorate: You can win contests of logic even with faulty information.
- Scholar: Even the deepest philosophical mysteries and issues are clear to you.

**Possessed by:** Theurges, Mystics, Wise Elders, Gamers, Mystery Fans, Puzzle-Lovers

**Specialties:** Logic Problems, Ancient Mysteries, Things Werewolves Weren't Meant to Know

### *Investigation*

Tomas scratched a sore, his scaly skin itching like crazy in the dry desert heat. "Well, Mrs. Ironox, I'd say your cattle rustler is of the two-legged variety."

"Because you smelled no wolves?" his elderly Kinfolk neighbor asked with an arm around her 11-year old granddaughter.

"No, because I found her tracks in the mud," the metis grinned, handing her a plaster cast showing a set of kid's sneakers, and winking at the girl. "Looks like we may have another New Moon hanging around in a few years."

Relying on physical evidence, explanations from witnesses or sheer luck, characters with Investigation are knowledgeable about crimes and criminals. They can often distinguish murder from accident or solves thefts and kidnappings by assembling and pondering the clues. This Knowledge also provides the character with what he needs to know to perform general forensic procedures, such as lifting fingerprints or figuring an approximate time of death.

- Student: You've read some detective novels, and you know the lingo.
- College: You can tear holes in a rookie cop's case.
- Masters: You could make a living as a PI.
- Doctorate: You're good enough to be a special agent for the FBI or CIA.
- Scholar: No witness or scrap of evidence could possibly evade your attention.

**Possessed by:** Detectives, Police, Reporters, Special Agents

**Specialties:** Evidence, Ballistics, Forensics, Fingerprints

## Law

"You're outta luck, Miss Daniels," the tanker captain smirked. "State court just ruled we're not liable for that spill, and since you're a hot-shot lawyer, you know double jeopardy'll prevent another trial."

Lilly gave him a cold smile. "Don't start celebrating just yet, Captain. You see, it won't be double jeopardy when I appeal the state's decision to a federal court. And you can forget my offer to plea down to criminal negligence this time." She nodded to the deputy. "Now get this bastard out of here before I really lose my temper."

Law encompasses many areas: the enforcement system, legal code and the workings of the courts. Characters in trouble with the police will need this Knowledge (or a lawyer friend) to get them out of any legal tangles. This Knowledge also covers Garou law, such as the various codes grown up around the Litany — and the appropriate punishments for crimes against the Garou Nation. Although most lawyers have an area of expertise, such as immigration law, most state bars don't recognize these as such. The characters might have a very interesting time if their counselor doesn't have a clue about environmental law....

- Student: You know a few classic cases and the basis of the legal system.
- College: You could pass the bar exam.
- Masters: Chances are, you're a much-sought counselor.
- Doctorate: You're capable of adjudging and writing law.
- Scholar: There are few cases or matters of jurisprudence you don't know about.

**Possessed by:** Philodox, Lawyers, Police, Judges, Detectives, Crime Writers, TV Viewers

**Specialties:** Procedure, Garou Law, Specific Types (Criminal, Contacts, Liability, etc.), Courts

## Linguistics

The spirit looked to be a medieval warrior of some kind, possibly Norman or Carolingian, judging from the slightly nasal vowels. Merriam listened closely as he repeated his demand. Yes! She recognized the dialect as a direct forebear to the French she'd learned during

an extended stay in Paris. Hope he doesn't mind I'm not one of his own tribe, the Strider thought as she considered the knight's plea.

Werewolves already know three languages: a human language of choice, wolfspeak and the Garou tongue. The Linguistics Knowledge allows a character to add to her language repertoire; the greater her level of Linguistics, the more languages she can speak. Because language acquisition builds upon itself, making it easier to learn subsequent tongues, the levels of ability double the number of languages known. This progression also reflects the fact that many languages are related to each other. Additionally, the character may choose to learn unspoken languages, such as ASL, or specialize in unique dialects or accents. Remember that lupus who don't spend any freebie points on this Knowledge don't speak any human languages!

- Student: One additional language.
- College: Two additional languages.
- Masters: Four additional languages.
- Doctorate: Eight additional languages.
- Scholar: True polyglot, 16 additional languages.

**Possessed by:** Diplomats, World Travelers, Linguists, Interpreters, Silent Striders

**Specialties:** Slang, Business Terms, Idioms, Artificial Languages, Alphabets

## Medicine

Kalani plucked out the last silver buckshot from her patient. "Try not to get yourself messed up so soon, Matt. It hasn't been a day since you were in here with gashes from a fight with those Spirals. Give yourself a rest! Doctor's orders."

The Uktena grinned sheepishly at his friend. "Typical Half Moon, always looking out for the pack. I promise I'll wait at least a week." Kalani rolled her eyes. Ahroun made the worst patients.

Medicine is the study of health, function and wellness of the human body, and it also includes an understanding of anatomy and physiology. Characters with this Knowledge can diagnose and treat diseases and injuries. They can likewise care for wolves and other animals, although their expertise will not be as specific as a veterinarian will have. Medicine also confers a familiarity with pharmaceuticals, legal and otherwise, that can help and harm.

- Student: You know advanced first aid and CPR.
- College: You could be a successful emergency medical technician (EMT).
- Masters: With the right paperwork, you can work as a general practitioner.
- Doctorate: You're capable of performing surgery.
- Scholar: You're one of the greatest healers of your tribe.

**Possessed by:** MDs, Med Students, Theurges, Nurses, Paramedics, Military Personnel

**Specialties:** Emergency Medicine, Forensic Pathology, Specific Fields (Pediatrics, Neurology, etc.)

## Occult

Michel dropped the latest stack of papers and books on Aerik's already cluttered desk. "This batch looked particularly ripe. Look at the titles of some of these things: A Book of the Walking Dead, One Thousand Nights of Vampires, Prince Valerian the Vampire and the Werewolf's Revenge. Where do they get this stuff?"

Aerik studied the tomes his fellow Theurge had brought. "Don't know, but this one is interesting." He pointed to a graphic woodcut

in the last of the books. It showed what was unmistakably a werewolf wielding a *klaive*, in a bitter fight with a finely dressed Leech. "I think it's time we did some more checking up on this author. Someone knows more about the damn bloodsuckers than they're telling. And we need a good lead right now."

The character has a working knowledge of the vast area of the occult, including (but not limited to) psychic phenomena, magic, tarot and general mysticism. This Knowledge, based on folklore and human works as it is, doesn't always present the actual truth—just what is known. For instance, using Occult to study vampires doesn't necessarily grant you knowledge of their deepest secrets. Instead, you would possess common folk wisdom about the blood-suckers. This principle holds true for most other denizens of the World of Darkness as well. Still, this Knowledge is undeniably useful for gathering information and studying general weirdness.

- Student: Ouija boards and tarot cards are about your speed.
- College: You know some realities of the spiritual world.
- Masters: Werewolves aren't the only mystical critters running around!
- Doctorate: You can pick credible stories out of the tabloids.
- Scholar: You're privy to some great mysteries of the otherworlds.

**Possessed by:** New Agers, Parapsychologists, Fortune-Tellers, Mystics, Theurges

**Specialties:** Tarot, Witchcraft, Curses, Ghosts, Psychometry

### *Politics*

"How can you trust him?" Alice nearly shouted. "He's a Shadow Lord. He's using you, Leon!"

"No, he's not," Leon replied quietly. "If anything, I'm using him. Gunraven may seem like a total bastard, but he's quietly sunk more money into the city's school system than you'll ever see. I know for a fact he'll be on my side on this issue—kids are at stake. What's more, he'll bring his tribe with him. And you must admit, there's nobody better suited to swaying the sept officials than the Lords."

This Knowledge covers understanding political systems as well as knowing who's who in the world of government. Characters with Politics can be quite effective when they're trying to sway public opinion or elected officials because they know just what to say to get things done. They can also figure out how to navigate human or wolf political structures in order to talk to the "right werewolf" to get their goals accomplished.

- Student: You vote and take part in occasional protests.
- College: Local and regional politicians invite your help on their campaigns.
- Masters: You've helped on state and national political stumps.
- Doctorate: You could be a member of the national government.
- Scholar: Your knowledge of politics rivals Machiavelli.

**Possessed by:** Politicians, Caern Personnel, Elders, Diplomats, Activists, Lobbyists, PAC members, Shadow Lords

**Specialties:** Fundraising, Political Philosophy, Grass Roots, Elections, Caern Hierarchy

### *Rituals*

Reach of Song looked carefully at his newest charge. "You look dubious, cub. Is there a flaw in the plan?"

"Well, if we jump the guards in Crinos, we'll look pretty conspicuous on the street afterwards, what with our clothes in shreds." Since he Firsted a month ago, Jason was running out of jeans.

"That's not a problem," replied the older Strider. "Hold still." Jason watched as his mentor, eyes closed in deep concentration, touched the boy's jeans, then his shirt and finally his shoes. "Simple enough. I've dedicated them to you; they will change to fit no matter your form. And if you impress me on this outing, I'll show you how to perform the rite yourself," Reach of Song added with a hidden smile.

Rituals and rites are an important part of werewolf life. This Knowledge lets the character know about the traditions, mysteries and ceremonies of the werewolves, including how to participate in such events and behave properly toward elders and leaders. At higher levels, the character may also know about the sacred rites of other tribes. A character needs a Rituals rating equal to or greater than the level of rites he knows or seeks to learn.

- Student: You've watched a few rites closely.
- College: You carry yourself well at tribal moots.
- Masters: Other tribes invite you to attend their moots.
- Doctorate: Even Black Spirals respect your knowledge.
- Scholar: You can devise original rites.

**Possessed by:** Garou, Changing Breeds, Rare Kinfolk

**Specialties:** Accord, Caern, Death, Mystic, Punishment, Renown, Seasonal, Minor

### *Science*

Soren checked the pipette. "Almost finished, Lise. It's a risk to transport, but it'll blow those doors off, guaranteed."

"Good," his packmate replied. "I daresay we could tear out the housings with our claws, but a bit of your special liquid explosive never hurts, especially since we're outnumbered." She put a firm hand on his shoulder. "I'll see to it that Otto puts in a word or two about this in his next saga." Lise grinned fiercely, a look Soren returned eagerly.

At its most basic meaning, Science is simply a systemized study of some specific subject, and over the years, scientists as a whole have developed a number of universal laws and theories that the character will probably know. This Knowledge is broad, and characters should probably choose an area of expertise (such as biology, chemistry or geology) or two closely related areas of science with Storyteller permission.

- Student: You understand basic theories and laws.
- College: You comprehend and can teach complex scientific applications.
- Masters: In your area of expertise, you can construct useful items and substances.
- Doctorate: Your applications are worthy of a Nobel prize.
- Scholar: You've made well-known and lasting contributions to science.

**Possessed by:** Researchers, Engineers, Inventors, Technicians

**Specialties:** Experiments, Theory, Specific Equipment, Practical Applications

### *Other Knowledges*

Area Knowledges, Cosmology, Herbalism, Wyrm Lore, Poisons

## Backgrounds

These Traits describe the special advantages available by birth, opportunity or other circumstance. When you choose your Backgrounds, be sure to flesh out the what, why and how. Who are your contacts? How did you come by that fetish? Integrate your Backgrounds into your character concept.

A Background usually stands alone, although it can sometimes be used in conjunction with an Attribute. For example, you might roll Wits + Resources to keep your cash flow healthy in hard times, or Manipulation + Mentor to convince your teacher that it would be good for you to sit in on the council meeting.

Backgrounds cannot be increased with experience points. They can be improved only through the actual events of the story. The only exception to this rule is the Totem Background.

### Allies

"Major!" Colonel Lockhart shouted. When his aide arrived at a trot, Lockhart pointed to the map. "Surprise drill. I want a fire mission here," he said, pointing to a valley at the far end of the proving area.

The major blinked. "But sir, the next exercise is scheduled for—"

"I know the schedule, Major, but do you really think the enemy will follow a schedule? Roll those momma's boys out of the mess hall, and if I don't hear rounds out in 10 minutes—" But the major was already backing out. He assumed his commander was getting back at one of the gunners for some mistake or slight, but it certainly wasn't a good career move to argue with the Old Man.

Lockhart smiled as he picked up the phone. "I have artillery on the way." He rolled his left shoulder appreciatively. "Don't mention it, my friend. You saved my arm; that's worth a few shells."

Allies are folks who help and support you, whether out of love or common interest. They can be old comrades or even organizations that are friendly to you. They may have skills of their own (medicine, for instance), but they often have community influence, with contacts or resources they can use on your behalf. Allies are generally trustworthy, but the relationship takes time and energy to maintain. They have their own lives, so don't treat them like servants. Except in special circumstances, your allies don't usually know you are a werewolf (that knowledge would probably alter the relationship for the worse), but they may know that you have special "knacks," and they will come to you for favors. After all, friends help each other out, right?

Allies are more than just a pool of extra contacts — you can influence them as well. They're friends, after all, and they'll listen to you. Convincing your fishing buddy that a local refinery is spilling toxins into a major fishery can do wonders for your cause when he's an aide in the governor's office. Of course, just as your allies are more loyal and directly useful than your contacts, they can also require more in return. But hey, they're your friends, right?

You should work out who your allies are at the beginning of the game, as well as how you know them. Maybe they're old brothers-in-arms or friends from a local environmental society. Maybe (if your rating is 5) you're an old hunting buddy of the governor.

- One ally, of moderate influence and power (doctor or veterinarian, local activist)
- Two allies, both of moderate power (district ranger, deputy sheriff)

- Three allies, one of them quite influential (newspaper editor, local philanthropist).
- Four allies, one of them very influential (city councilman, military base commander).
- Five allies, one of them extremely influential (mayor, senator's aide)

### Ancestors

He marshaled his flagging strength as the Tainted Ones gathered their forces for another rush. Now was the time for a death song, but Hides-From-Owls sang to his ancestors instead. As he finished his song of Power, Hides heard the voice of his grandfather, Bright Knife. "You would give up after so little a fight? Let me show you what battle was in my time!"

Strength flooded his muscles, and his body leapt forward, no longer solely his own.

To humans, ancestral memory is a pseudo-scientific concept at best. To Garou it's a fact of life. Many werewolves have some of the memories of their distant ancestors; some even allow their forebears to take over their bodies.

Once per game session, the player of a Garou with this Background may roll his Ancestors Background (difficulty 8, or 10 if he's trying to contact the spirit of a specific ancestor). Each success allows the character to add one die to the dice pool of any Ability (even if the character doesn't possess that Ability). For example, young Emil, a pure flatlander, must scale an immense cliff to come to the aid of his embattled pack. Emil has an Ancestors rating of 4 and an Athletics of 0. He calls on his forebears to guide him, and Emil's player rolls four dice at difficulty 8. He scores three successes. Emil contacts his great-great-great granduncle Cragramer who guides him over the sheer face and over the top. Now the player has an effective Athletics rating of 3 to make his climbing roll. If Emil had an Athletics rating of 2, then his effective dice pool would be 5. All effects last for only one scene.

While it is more difficult to contact a specific ancestor, successful contact may provide counsel or precognitive visions at the discretion of the Storyteller.

Botching an Ancestors roll may indicate that the character becomes catatonic for the remainder of the scene as he's overwhelmed by the memories of thousands of lives. Alternatively, the ancestral spirit refuses to relinquish the body. How long the ancestor stays depends on the Storyteller.

- You have brief, hazy visions from the distant past.
- You remember faces and places from past lives just as you remember those of your early childhood.
- You put names to faces among your ancestors.
- Ancestors converse with you on a regular basis.
- Your ancestors watch your adventures with interest, and they often come to counsel you.

### Contacts

Dr. Judy Hawthorne struggled to keep her arms around the energetic wolf cub. She smiled at the owner, Jack Sharpfoot. "Stem to stern, he's in good health overall. What are you feeding him?" When Jack replied with his usual "goat's milk and tenderized road-kill" answer, she nodded. "The lab did find some worms." When she saw Jack's stricken look, she quickly added, "But we dosed them right out. He's fine." She handed the cub to his caretaker. "I think it's great, you raising all those orphan wolves. You do a good job." Judy

smiled as she watched the cub lick Jack's face eagerly. "He's sweet. He treats you like family."

Jack only grinned.

Contacts are the people you know who come from all walks of life. They know you in turn, as acquaintances or friends. These disparate people form an information network that may prove useful.

There are two levels of contacts. Major contacts are friends, people you trust implicitly to give you the straight scoop about things in their areas of expertise. You should describe major contacts in some detail, either at the start of the chronicle or as the game progresses. You also have a number of minor contacts around the area. They are not quite as friendly or reliable in a pinch, but you can bribe, charm or otherwise manipulate them into giving you the desired information. To get in touch with a minor contact, make a roll using your Contacts rating (difficulty 7). Each success means that you have located one of your minor contacts. Because major contacts are closer to you (they're usually good friends), they are easier to find.

- One major contact
- Two major contacts
- Three major contacts
- Four major contacts
- Five major contacts.

### *Fetish*

"Your grandmother asked that I give this to you when after your First Change." Aunt Jocelyn smiled as she handed the heirloom to Lyle. The young cub opened the box and pulled out a small pouch encrusted with mother-of-pearl and stitched with gold thread. Looking closely, he saw tiny glyphs like those the elders used. It was exquisite.

His aunt seemed to read his mind. "Beautiful, isn't it? But the real beauty is inside." Lyle undid the knot and gasped when he felt his skin tighten as if a cool breeze had wafted out of the bag. "It stores the essence of spirit energy. Your great-grandfather crafted it himself. And now it's yours. Care for it and honor the spirit within, and it will never fail you."

You possess a fetish, a physical object into which a spirit has been bound. Fetishes have a number of powers granted by the spirit, so they are very significant to the Garou. Such things are valuable, and other Garou (or other supernatural beings) may covet them.

- You possess one Level One fetish.
- You possess one Level Two fetish or two Level One fetishes.
- You possess one or more fetishes with a total of three levels.
- You possess one or more fetishes with a total of four levels.
- You possess one or more fetishes with a total of five levels.

### *Kinfolk*

Standing on the step in the frigid night air was a girl of 16 summers, torn jeans and T-shirt half-covering a hard, scarred frame. She shook back her long black hair to reveal a coppery face set in a scowl. "My Theurge asked for you. There's been a fight," the girl growled. "Don't know why he thought a Wymbringer would help us somewhere besides into the grave."

Thea, who was reaching for her coat, froze, then returned the fiery glare with steely calm. "I help who asks, red, white, black, blue or candy-striped. Do you ask?" Silence. "Did your Theurge ask?" A quick nod was the Garou's answer. "Right, then. Let me get my bag, and we'll be off."

You are in contact with certain humans or wolves who are descended from Garou without actually being werewolves themselves. While Kinfolk are normal members of their species in most respects, they have the advantage(?) of immunity to the Delirium. They know that you are Garou, and they are willing to help you however they can, although most are not in positions of power (such people are considered Allies). Networks of Kinfolk are a valuable way for werewolves to deal with the human world without risking frenzy or discovery.

- Two Kinfolk
- Five Kinfolk
- 10 Kinfolk
- 20 Kinfolk
- 50 Kinfolk

### *Mentor*

"I agree that someone needs to pick up the old Theurge's bag, but we have everybody trying to find the Bane lair before they make another foray." The council nodded in agreement, except for old Ironjaw, who looked thoughtful before speaking. "True enough, but I believe my friend's notebook will point us in the right direction. And I think I know who would be perfect for the task.... Do you know young Quickstep?"

The Warden raised his eyebrows. "He's barely a cub! Would you really trust a muzzle-nuzzler to go into unknown country and collect a pack of notes, talens and who-knows-what-else, and in the middle of a Bane infestation?"

Ironjaw smiled. This would be the start of a glorious career for his young protégé. "I have every confidence in him."

Many Garou have one or more elders that look after them. The rating of your Mentor Background quantifies how powerful your mentor is within the tribe and what rank he or she has achieved. A mentor can teach you skills, advise you or speak on your behalf at a council fire. Of course, your mentor may expect something in return for his assistance, be it good company, an occasional gofer, a champion or perhaps a supporter in sept politics. (Mentor demands are excellent hooks for stories.) In general, however, you will receive more than you give.

A powerful mentor doesn't have to be a single person; a pack or council of elders might be considered a collective mentor. The latter would almost certainly have a rating of four or five dots, even if no one on the council is above Rank 5.

- Mentor is Rank 2
- Mentor is Rank 3
- Mentor is Rank 4
- Mentor is Rank 5
- Mentor is Rank 6

### *Pure Breed*

"Why," the Galliard sneered, "should we accept you as sept leader? You are new. You don't know our ways—"

The Ahroun rose to his full height. "I know the ways you have forgotten, for I am William of the Straight Blade, of the Unbreakable Hearth. The might of our ancient heroes is in my veins!" With his

ragged cloak and cowl removed, the others beheld his regal bearing and knew that he spoke true.

Garou take great stock in ancestry, and the werewolf who is descended from renowned forbears has a definite advantage in Garou society. This Background represents your lineage, markings, bearing and other features of birth. Other Garou revere werewolves with high scores in Pure Breed as heroes of yore come to life — and such werewolves are expected to act the part. The higher your Pure Breed score is, the more likely you are to impress elder councils or receive hospitality from foreign tribes. Each point of Pure Breed adds an extra die to Social or challenge rolls involving other Garou (even Ronin or Black Spiral Dancers).

Some tribes place more value on good breeding than others, but Pure Breed is almost universally respected. It's almost a mystical trait, and werewolves can tell instinctively whose blood is particularly pure. Of course, Garou expect those of pure blood to live up to the standards set by their noble ancestors. They frown on those who can't or won't accept the challenge.

Over the eons, whole lines of heroes have fallen to war, Wyrm or simply time. In this latter age, very few pure-bred Garou walk the Earth.

- You have your father's eyes.
- Your grandfather made a name for himself at the Battle of Bloody Ford, and you carry that name with pride.
- Your pedigree is blessed with pillars of the Garou Nation, and the blood tells.
- You can be dressed as a beggar and still command respect.
- The greatest of heroes live on in you.

### *Resources*

"The four-legs just don't understand," Martin grumbled. "If I didn't have the cash, they wouldn't have the land. All they see is some sort of Weaver-taint. What should I do, sell everything and donate it to charity?"

Rick Keene shrugged and took another swig of beer. "I know, I know, it's something they'll never really accept. But does that matter? It's still right." He patted Martin's shoulder. "For the price of a few growls, the sept can hunt in peace. Sounds worthwhile to me."

This Trait describes your personal financial resources (or access to such resources). It reflects your standard of living rather than liquid assets. Even if you have four dots, it may take weeks or months to come up with half a million dollars in cash. And of course, if you don't purchase this Background, you get what you pay for — nothing, or as close to nothing as makes no difference. As with all other Traits, you should be able to justify Resources. It'll be tricky explaining how a lupus in the Yukon gets a check for a couple of grand each month. (And what could he spend it on, anyway?) Where does the money come from, a trust fund, stocks, tenant rent or a day job? Depending on circumstances, your cash flow may dry up during the course of the chronicle.

- Small savings: You have a cramped apartment and maybe a used motorcycle. If liquidated, you could scrape up \$1000 in cash. Allowance of \$500 a month.
- Middle class: You have a decent apartment or condominium and a car. If liquidated, you would have \$8,000 in cash. Allowance of \$1200 a month.



- Large savings: You are a homeowner with a good bit of equity. If liquidated, you would have at least \$50,000 in cash. Allowance of \$3000 a month.
- Quite well off: You own a large house or perhaps a dilapidated country manor. If liquidated you would have \$500,000 in cash. Allowance of \$9000 a month.
- Ridiculously wealthy: You are a multimillionaire. If liquidated, you would have \$5,000,000 to play with. Allowance of \$30,000 a month.

### Rites

*Redglyph knelt over at the torn body of his packmate. The unknown foe left no trail, but he always seemed to know when one of his struggling pack was alone. If only the elders were still alive! He felt a frustration keener than the winter wind. Some Theurge he was! His mentor died before he could be taught anything useful, and now the caern's strength was fading as quickly as the sept's.*

*Redglyph raised his head and began a mournful howl. This one rite he did know... and he'd used it too damn many times lately.*

Rituals are an important part of Garou life. This Trait denotes how many rites the character knows at the beginning of the game. The rating represents levels of rites, so a character with Rites 4 may have a Level Four rite, one Level One and one Level Three rite or any other combination. Remember that to learn a rite the character needs a Rituals Knowledge rating at least equal to the level of a given rite. While Rank is not necessarily a factor, a Theurge would need a pretty convincing reason to teach a Level Five rite to a Rank 1 Garou. Note that two minor rites can be purchased in place of one Level One rite.

- Character knows one level of rites.
- Character knows two levels of rites.
- Character knows three levels of rites.
- Character knows four levels of rites.
- Character knows five levels of rites.

### Totem

*The Razorback Pack was cornered, bloody and near exhaustion. The Black Spiral Dancers were closing in, savoring their imminent victory. "Looks like you pig-boys are gonna be spitted. Waddayathink, boys, about Garou barbecue tonight?" The others cackled.*

*The Razorback alpha's slow grin quieted them. "There's a thing y'all don't know about wild boars. When they're played out and nearly dead — that's when they're most dangerous. You can even kill them, and it just pisses them off." With that, the pack howled as one, their voices mingled with a shrieking, grunting roar. A massive boar, hooves clattering, charged at the stunned Dancers, with the Rage-filled Razorbacks hot on its heels.*

Unlike other Backgrounds, this Trait applies to the character's pack rather than the individual. The members of the pack pool the points invested in this Trait to determine the totem's power.

Each totem has a Background cost rating; the pack must spend that amount to ally with that totem. Some totems are willing to lend great powers to their adherents; their point costs are correspondingly greater. See *Pack Totems* (p. 293) for a list of possible totems. Regardless of how many points the initial totem costs, all beginning totems have a base of eight points to divide among Rage, Willpower and Gnosis. The totem also begins with the Airt Sense and Re-form Charms. Apart from bestowing power, totems are somewhat aloof from the pack,

and they have little influence among spirits (unless the players buy a closer connection is bought with Background points). With time, roleplaying and experience points, pack totems can grow more powerful, and they could even become the totems of whole septs or (in legendary circumstances) even tribes.

Most of the powers totems bestow are usually available to only one pack member at a time. At the end of each turn, the Garou with the power declares who the power may be given to next turn (assuming that she doesn't keep it). After the initial cost of the totem has been spent, any other Background points add to the totem's strength and abilities.

Cost	Power
1	Per three points to spend on Willpower, Rage and/or Gnosis
1	Totem can speak to the pack without the benefit of the Gift: Spirit Speech.
1	Totem can always find the pack members.
2	Totem is nearly always with the pack members.
2	Totem is respected by other spirits.
2	Per charm possessed
3	Per extra pack member who can use the totem's powers in the same turn
4	Totem is connected mystically to all pack members, allowing communication among them even at great distances (at Storyteller's discretion).
5	Totem is feared by agents of the Wyrm, which could mean that either the agents run away or they do their best to kill the pack....

The listed cost is in Background points, which can be bought through experience (see *Spending Experience Points*, p. 181) at the rate of two experience points per Background point. (Therefore, three points of Rage would cost two experience points.) The Totem Trait is the only Background that can be increased through experience. The Storyteller should allow increases in totem powers only when it fits in to the story, such as when pack members gain a higher rank, a new member joins the pack or when pack members gain new insight into the nature of their totem. When the totem is affiliated with a more powerful spirit, the greater spirit might grant the strengthening of its servant (pack totem) in return for a great service done it by the pack.

### Renown

Renown is a system that determines how well a character is living up to his expected role in Garou society. It is for this reason that Renown is connected so closely with auspices. Renown differs from the experience point system because it involves much more roleplaying. A character could rack up plenty of experience for his actions, but if his deeds conflict with his auspice duties, his Renown will not increase.

Characters with low Renown, such as starting characters, are expected to respect and defer to werewolves of higher rank. Garou who ignore this system find themselves looked down upon, and they lose more Renown as a result.

Renown is measured in three different areas: Glory, Honor and Wisdom. Each one is somewhat self-explanatory. Glory represents the physical deeds of the Garou: feats of strength, stamina and agility, such as those that made Hercules a legend. It also measures bravery, extreme risks and victories in battle. Honor measures a Garou's sense of duty and history. It speaks

of the character's ethics and morals, as well as his personal sense of pride. And finally, Wisdom celebrates the more mental virtues of a character. It includes strategy, cunning and insight. Patience and a strong connection to the spirit world also help a Garou increase his Wisdom.

On paper, Renown takes two forms. The dots represent the character's permanent Renown rating while the squares denote the Renown pool and show how many temporary points the character has earned. Renown differs from Gnosis and Willpower in that the Renown pool is allowed to exceed the Renown rating. Permanent Renown changes very little, and it changes only in dramatic circumstances. Temporary Renown is always in flux, and it might shift several times over one session.

When a Garou gains enough Renown, she increases in rank. More information on this process appears in Chapter Six.

## *Beginning Renown*

A character begins with three permanent dots in Renown, which are distributed according to her auspice (see the Renown chart, p. 185). This Renown is tied into her Rite of Passage, and if the Storyteller plans to play through the rite, players shouldn't assign these three dots until the rite is completed. Starting characters begin the game at Rank 1.

## *Glory*

Defeating mighty enemies and succeeding at noble quests are both ways to gain Glory. Fighting on through overwhelming odds and triumphing will ensure the Garou his fair share of Glory. But just the fighting isn't enough. The cause must be clear, and, in the end, you must never surrender, regardless of the cost. Many young Garou have found their Glory stripped for entering into fights they could not hope to win. The best way to win great Glory is by attempting the impossible, and living to tell the tale. Even so, a grand death gives the deceased a large share of the Glory they strove for in life.

## *Glory Creed*

*I shall be valorous  
I shall be dependable  
I shall be generous  
I shall protect the weak  
I shall slay the Wyrm*

## *Honor*

Honor is the moral imperative to uphold the laws of the Garou. It refers to a fundamental belief in the wisdom of society's laws, up to and including the ultimate standard of Garou behavior: the Litany. To gain Honor Renown in Garou society shows an individual to be of honesty, integrity and respect. Honor can sometimes be a rare trait, but werewolves strive to maintain their honor with ferocity for fear of losing it.

Werewolves on the path of Honor hold themselves to the highest possible standards. They don't do so to feel superior to others, for the Garou who looks down his nose at his compatriots finds his Honor Renown slow to rise, while those who tolerate the braggart soon surpass him.

Honor requires a large share of self-control, not only to uphold strict principles when easier alternatives abound,

but also to keep from falling into a frenzy. When berserk, a Garou is capable of all sorts of evil, and more than a few young Garou have awakened to find themselves covered in blood and bereft of honor.

## *Code of Honor*

*I shall be respectful  
I shall be loyal  
I shall be just  
I shall live by my word  
I shall accept all fair challenges*

## *Wisdom*

Garou with a reputation for Wisdom are the ones most likely to be listened to and deferred to at moots. High Wisdom Renown marks a character who thinks through her words and actions before sharing them, and is adept at sensing when others have not done the same.

Werewolves rich in both wisdom and glory are a rare breed. The two are often at odds, with the glory-seekers charging into battle at any opportunity and those who quest for Wisdom picking their battles carefully. Both have their advantages, but those who lose on the quest for Wisdom are most likely to be able to try again. A werewolf who is both wise and valorous knows when to fight and how, and he is, therefore, the most valuable of allies.

## *Creed of Wisdom*

*I shall be calm  
I shall be prudent  
I shall be merciful  
I shall think before I act and listen before I think*

## *Rank*

As in any military force, rank is of extreme importance among the Garou. It shows respect and determines status. As a Garou's rank increases, more secrets of the tribe are revealed, but expectations are higher. Gaining rank is the way to show members of the tribe your commitment and your trustworthiness.

Characters begin at Rank 1, and they increase their rank by gaining Renown. Gaining rank is discussed fully in Chapter Six.

## *Benefits of Rank*

Membership has its privileges. But rank has many more.

- **Gifts:** When a Garou reaches a new rank, new, more powerful Gifts are hers for the asking. But to learn a new Gift, the character must not only have the required experience points, but also the Rank equal to the level of the Gift. A Garou cannot buy the respect of spirits and one's peers with experience points. The most valuable Gifts are reserved for those who have shown Glory, Honor and Wisdom.

- **Rights:** As it states in the Litany, those lower in station must defer to those higher. As a Garou rises in rank, he gains the benefit of having younger and lower-ranked Garou defer to him. When a character has advanced to Rank 3 or higher, he is known throughout werewolf society. But with this fame comes responsibility, as werewolves of higher rank are expected

to lead and look after those lower in station, guard caerns from attack and embark on quests to help the sept and tribe.

- **Challenges:** Lawful challenges are also governed by rank. A Garou can challenge someone who is only one rank higher than himself. Therefore, a Rank 1 Garou can challenge a Rank 2 superior, but he cannot challenge a Rank 3 werewolf.

- **Self-Control:** Characters of high rank have disciplined themselves so much that they are much less likely to frenzy. The following chart shows the frenzy bonus a Garou gains as his rank rises.

Rank	Frenzy Bonus
0	-
1	-
2	-
3	+1 to frenzy difficulties
4	+2 to frenzy difficulties
5	+2 to frenzy difficulties, 5+ successes needed to frenzy
6	+2 to frenzy difficulties, 6+ successes needed to frenzy

## Rage

Rage is the amount of that primal Beast that still exists in a Garou. It is not just an increased capacity for battle, but a force that could just as easily become mindless violence on a frightening scale. It is the instinctual cunning and hunting ability mixed with savage bloodlust and unpredictable horror.

Rage is a blessing and a curse to the Garou. It is the distilled raw force sent from Gaia that allows them to punish all who seek to destroy Her. This connection to both aspects of Rage makes the Garou frightening warriors. They can walk in the world of the

human or that of the beast and be equally powerful in both.

The debate about the origin of Rage has been going on since the beginning of werewolf society. Many say that it was given to the Garou by Luna, as it is the auspice that determines how much Rage a Garou has, at least at the beginning. Some contend that Rage is a curse of the Wyrm, a little of the destroyer in the children of the creator. But the most vocal tell that it was Gaia's choice that her most favored sons and daughters be given this great weapon, and that it is their noble responsibility to use it wisely.

Much of a Garou's struggle comes from this never-ending battle against themselves. The Beast is never far from a Garou's thoughts, and many live in the dread of what might happen should it ever gain control.

Rage is recorded on the character sheet in two forms. The first is the Rage rating, indicated by the dots. This rating is your character's permanent Rage. The second is the Rage pool, which is shown by the squares underneath. These squares tell you how much Rage you have left to spend.

When you spend a point of Rage, remove it from the Rage pool squares. Do not take it from the permanent dots of the Rage rating. This rating stays constant, while the pool will drop during the course of the story. At certain times, a werewolf's Rage can actually go higher than his permanent rating, but only if the situation is sufficiently infuriating.

### Using Rage

Rage points must be spent at the beginning of a turn in the declaration stage. (This rule is detailed further in Chapter Six.) You can spend Rage only in times of stress.

Rage is a powerful and versatile weapon for the Garou. The following are some of its uses and dangers:



• **Frenzy:** Frenzy is the most frightening drawback of using Rage. Frenzy is the violent outburst, the untamed savagery, the animal instinct for blood and brutality that lurks in the heart of every werewolf. Whenever a player gets four or more successes on a Rage roll, the character enters a frenzy. See *Frenzy* on p. 190 for more information on the causes and resolutions of frenzies.

• **Extra Actions:** A player can spend Rage to give her character extra actions in a single turn. However, a Garou cannot spend more Rage points in one turn than half of her permanent Rage rating. (See p. 193.)

• **Changing Forms:** A player may spend a Rage point for his character to change instantly to any form he desires, without having to roll Stamina + Primal-Urge. See p. 203.

• **Recovering from Stun:** If a werewolf loses more health levels in one turn than his Stamina rating, he is stunned and unable to act in the next turn. By spending a Rage point, the character can ignore the effect and function normally.

• **Remaining Active:** If a character falls below the Incapacitated health level, a player can use Rage to keep her character going. Doing so requires a Rage roll (difficulty 8). Each success heals a health level, regardless of the type of wound. A player may attempt this roll only once per scene. If this roll fails, the character doesn't recover.

However, this last-ditch survival effort has its price. Like all Rage rolls, the character is still subject to frenzy. The wound will also remain on the Garou's body as an appropriate Battle Scar.

• **Beast Within:** Occasionally, a Garou is more of the wolf than of the world, and she must pay the price for it. For every point of Rage a character has above her Willpower rating, she loses one die on all social-interaction rolls. People, even other werewolves, can sense the killer hiding just under her skin, and they don't want to be anywhere near it.

• **Losing the Wolf:** If a character has lost or spent all his Rage and Willpower points, he has "lost the wolf," and he cannot regain Rage. The Garou cannot shift to anything except his breed form until his Rage returns. The character must regain at least one Willpower point before he can recover any Rage.

### *Catching and Regaining Rage*

A Rage pool fluctuates from session to session and from turn to turn. Luckily, Rage replenishes itself in several ways.

• **The Moon:** The first time a werewolf sees the moon at night, the Beast inside stirs, and Rage floods back into her. Under a new moon, the character gets one point; under a waning moon, two points; under a half or waxing moon, three points; and under a full moon, four points. However, if the moon phase corresponds with the character's auspice, she regains all of her Rage. This phenomenon occurs only at the first sighting of the moon each night.

• **Botch:** If the Storyteller approves, a werewolf might receive a Rage point after a botched a roll. Rage comes from stressful situations, and seeing the action you were attempting blow up in your face, sometimes literally, can be a very stressful situation. And Garou tempers shouldn't be taken lightly. Not to mention...

• **Humiliation:** Rage will also come rushing back if anything a Garou does proves particularly humiliating. The Storyteller decides whether a situation is embarrassing enough to warrant a Rage point. Garou tend to be very proud, and they don't take being laughed at well.

• **Confrontation:** Again at the Storyteller's approval, a character could receive a Rage point at the beginning of a tense situation, in the moments right before combat starts. This gain accounts for the anticipation and hackle-raising that happens just as tempers start to flare.

• **New Stories:** When a new story begins, each player should roll a die to determine how many Rage points he possesses currently. (They might even exceed their permanent Rage ratings, at the Storyteller's discretion.) Yes, characters might end up with less Rage than they had at the end of the last story. Such is the way of Rage. It is always moving and never predictable.

The player is encouraged to explain this increase or decrease in Rage by describing what happened between sessions. If they come up with some creative tales, Storytellers can be a little more giving with the Rage as the new story progresses.

### *Cnossis*

The Garou say that Gaia gave them Rage to make them the mightiest hunters and the fiercest warriors. But she also gave them another tool that is just as useful and potent, and one that would connect her children to their other nature, the spirit world. This connection to the Sacred Mother is called Gnosis.

Gnosis is what allows Garou to access the spirits that surround them; it is the essence of the spiritual world. In some ways, it is the expression of their half-spirit nature. This connection is what makes travel to the Umbra possible, and it is what fuels the powerful Gifts the spirits can bestow. Without this spiritual force, Garou would be cut off from half of their natures. Characters with low Gnosis scores find contact with the spirits rare and difficult. On the other side, those with very high Gnosis scores sometimes find the worlds blurring, and they may have trouble distinguishing each side of the Gauntlet from the other.

Gnosis comes in two forms, much like Rage and Willpower. The first is the Gnosis score, indicated on the character sheet by the dots. This score shows a character's permanent Gnosis. The second is the Gnosis pool, represented by the squares. This score shows how many Gnosis points the player has left to spend. The Gnosis pool can never be greater than the Gnosis rating. When a player spends a point of Gnosis, it should be taken from the Gnosis pool, not the permanent Gnosis rating. Permanent Gnosis stays constant through the story, while the pool fluctuates.

### *Using Cnossis*

Just as Rage fuels battle and the physical world, the uses of Gnosis tend toward affecting insight and the spirit world.

• **Rage and Gnosis:** A player cannot spend both Rage and Gnosis in the same turn, whether spending points or rolling the Trait, with the exception of certain Gifts that demand both. These two forces are very powerful, and the Garou's body is not strong enough to pull the power from these two natures simultaneously. For example, a werewolf cannot spend Rage for multiple actions and activate a fetish in the same turn.

• **Carrying Silver:** For every object made of or containing silver that a character is carrying, she loses one effective point from her Gnosis rating. More potent objects will cause the character to lose more. Luckily, this effect is only temporary, and it lasts only a day after the silver is discarded. Too much silver can even affect an entire pack's Gnosis. More information appears on p. 189.



- **Using Gifts:** Many of the Gifts the spirits have bestowed upon faithful Garou call for Gnosis expenditures and/or rolls.
- **Fetishes:** Gnosis is used to attune or activate a Garou's fetish. See p. 240 for more information on fetishes.

### *Claiming and Regaining Gnosis*

Characters can regain their Gnosis in several different ways.

- **Meditation:** When a character takes time to center himself and reconnect with the Sacred Mother on a personal level, he can sometimes regain Gnosis. The character must spend at least an hour staying in one place and focusing on his deeply spiritual side. (One cannot meditate while cleaning guns, for example.) The player must then roll Wits + Enigmas (difficulty 8). For each success, a player regains one Gnosis point. However, a character can regain only one Gnosis point per hour of meditation, no matter how many successes the player rolls. In addition, this form of meditation can be done only once per day, and the difficulty increases by one for each extra day a character attempts it in the same week (to a maximum difficulty of 10). The spirits are gracious, but not always generous.

- **Sacred Hunt:** The Sacred Hunt is one of the most frequently performed activities at Garou moots. It is a ritual and a sacred task done for the good of the people and the caern. An Engling is the chosen prey that is summoned and then hunted down. This activity can be done in either the Umbra or on Earth. After the prey has been caught and "killed," werewolves who have taken part in the hunt give thanks to the spirit for the gift of its life. This sacrifice has allowed Garou to keep their senses and skills sharp for their ceaseless battles against the Wyrm and its minions. All who participate in the hunt replenish their Gnosis pools com-

pletely. But do not weep for the poor Engling. Because of the rituals performed before the hunt begins, the spirit will reform in another part of the Umbra after its apparent demise. See p. 300 for more information on Englings.

- **Bargaining with Spirits:** Ritual hunts are not the only way to get Gnosis out of a spirit. Sometimes the soft sell works just as well. A werewolf can attempt to sweet-talk a spirit into sharing some of its Gnosis. Of course, the character must be able to speak in the spirit language through the use of a Gift or some similar method. The spirit might well ask the character to run some errand or perform some task before it shares its life force with the Garou; fair is fair.

- **Between Stories:** In the downtime between new tales, the players can make a Charisma + Enigmas roll to regain some Gnosis. Each success on this roll refreshes one point of Gnosis.

### *Willpower*

Willpower is one of the few great equalizers. Almost every creature skulking around in the World of Darkness has it. Its force is a common one. It is the strength hidden in each individual to overcome his base urges and occasionally push himself to greatness.

Much like Gnosis and Rage, Willpower is indicated in two forms. The permanent Willpower rating is illustrated on the character sheet by dots; the temporary Willpower pool is measured in the squares below the Willpower rating. A character's Willpower pool can never be larger than his Willpower rating. As with Rage and Gnosis, spending a Willpower point is recorded on the Willpower pool squares, and not on the permanent rating dots.

A character's Willpower rating decreases every time a character uses this innate force to perform a difficult task, keep his urges in check or remain in control of himself. However, as a character continues to spend Willpower, he finds his reserves becoming depleted. With no Willpower left, characters will be exhausted and unable to summon the inner strength to perform their duties. They will not care what happens to them, since they have no Willpower to go on.

For the most part, Garou are very strong-willed creatures. Even young pups who have just passed their Rite of Passage might boast a 6 or 7 in Willpower. In the grand scheme, this amount seems small compared to their elders and enemies who often check in at 8 and 9. But in relation to their charges, the humans, it is miles above. A typical human adult has a Willpower score of about 2 or 3. The most willful of humans, a lawyer, cop or protester, tops out at about 4 or 5. Humans can go above 5 Willpower, but such individuals are remarkably rare.

•	Spineless
..	Weak
...	Unassertive
....	Diffident
.....	Certain
.....	Confident
.....	Determined
.....	Controlled
.....	Iron-willed
.....	Unshakable

### *Using Willpower*

Of all the Traits werewolves possess, Willpower is possibly the most frequently rolled and spent because of the many ways it can be utilized. As your story progresses, you may find yourself paying a lot more attention to your Willpower pool as you discover how handy it can be.

- **Automatic Successes:** Spending a Willpower point on an action gives the player one instant success. Only one point can be spent thus each turn, but the success is guaranteed. Therefore, a task can be performed successfully by concentrating and focusing the mind, without leaving the task to chance. Some situations might negate this success, and the Storyteller has the final right in deciding when it can and can't be used. For instance, Willpower is traditionally not allowed in damage rolls or any roll involving Gifts.

- **Uncontrollable Urges:** Garou are instinctual creatures, and players may occasionally find the Beast in their characters reacting to stimuli that has been part of their nature for millennia. The Storyteller may inform you that your character has done something from a primal urge, like getting away from fire or attacking a creature of the Wyrm. A Willpower point can be spent to negate this gut reaction and allow the higher brain to remain in control and keep the Garou right where he is. On occasion, the feeling will not just go away, and more Willpower points must be spent to keep from reacting. This build-up continues until the character removes himself from the situation or runs out of Willpower.

- **Halting Frenzies:** As mentioned previously, a character flies into a frenzy whenever her player rolls more than four successes on a Rage roll. This situation can be averted if the

player spends a Willpower point to remain in control. More information on frenzies can be found on pp. 190-191.

### *Recovering Willpower*

Garou rarely get a moment's peace. Besides their ongoing battles against the Wyrm and its minions, the daily rituals and duties of the human side of their lives take up much of the remaining time. Nonetheless, characters must be able to rest or at least get a chance to restore their damaged self-images, in order to regain their precious Willpower. It is ultimately up to the Storyteller when and how a character recovers Willpower.

Presented here are three different ways characters can regain their Willpower. Remember that recovering Willpower has no effect on the character's permanent rating. That rating rises only by investing experience points.

When a story is complete, characters can regain all their Willpower. This act should be reserved for *story* endings, not necessarily the end of each session. The Storyteller may wish to allow the characters to regain only as much Willpower as he feels they deserve for the goal they accomplished.

Another option is to allow players who have achieved a particularly unique victory in the framework of the game to regain some amount of Willpower. These victories are typically deeply personal in nature, such as confronting a personal enemy or overcoming a vice. The Storyteller would rule whether a character has regained some or all of his self-confidence by this action.

Finally, if a character performed the duties of her auspice particularly well, she might regain one to three Willpower points. This method is subject to the Storyteller's approval, and it relies largely on the roleplaying skills of the player.

The quick-and-dirty method is simply to let the players regain a point of Willpower when they wake up each day. It is not as involved or satisfying, but it is a way to keep things moving, and keep the kids happy.

### *Health*

Werewolves are more physically powerful than most living creatures, and they are immune to many of the ailments and diseases that plague their human and wolf cousins. As half-spirit beasts designed for battle, they're exceptionally hard to kill.

Even so, it's a misconception to think that werewolves are immune to physical wounds. They can be wounded, but their wounds don't remain open long, thanks to their remarkable regenerative powers. The fact is that a werewolf can regenerate one health level of bashing damage per turn under any circumstances. If the damage is lethal, the Garou can still regenerate one health level per turn, although the player must roll Stamina (difficulty 8) if the Garou is involved in a strenuous or stressful situation such as combat. (See *Healing* on p. 188 for more information.)

As the movies show, the one great weakness the Garou have is silver. A werewolf has no defense against Luna's metal. Next to silver, the most dangerous threats to Garou are fire, radiation and the attacks of other supernatural creatures. This most powerful and lasting of damage is referred to as aggravated damage. More information on damage appears in Chapter Six.

The Health Trait is used to show the current status of a character. A Garou can absorb a lot of punishment, but continued abuse causes even werewolves to slow down physically and in their reaction time. This slow decline is indicated by the Health Trait, which shows dice penalties and condition notes for each level as a character slips towards death. For instance, a character who has been Hurt has a -1 modifier, which means that he has one less die to roll on all rolls. If a character has been mangled enough to warrant a health level of Crippled, he would lose five dice on all actions. At this point, the character is so beaten and suffering that it is difficult to focus on anything but the pain.

A character who reaches Incapacitated is in very bad shape. Not only is he unable to react to what is going on around him, but he's very close to ending his fighting days. If the character were to take one more health level of damage, he would die. Gaia is very gracious to her children, and she has given them many advantages to continue the fight, but dead is dead, even to her. In the olden times, the Garou would simply honor the fallen and wish them well on their next journey. But in these, the End Times, each loss hurts much worse. A fallen warrior is one who will not be present at the final battle of the Apocalypse.

Health Levels	Dice Pool Penalty	Movement Penalty
Bruised		Character is only slightly bruised, and he suffers no dice penalties.
Hurt	-1	Character is superficially hurt, but he suffers no movement hindrances.
Injured	-1	Character has suffered minor injuries, and movement is mildly inhibited (one half max. running speed).
Wounded	-2	Character has suffered significant damage. He may walk, but he cannot run. At this level, a character may not move, then attack. He will lose dice when moving and attacking in the same turn.
Mauled	-2	Character is badly injured, and he may hobble only about three yards per turn.
Crippled	-5	Character is catastrophically injured, and he can crawl only about one yard per turn.
Incapacitated		Character is incapable of movement and likely unconscious.



As she entered the Umbral cave, Mari took a deep breath, steeling herself. The passage was lit by a dull, red glow which pulsed in time with her heartbeat.

Her mind was iron, pure resolution. The bastards who'd caught Ceci back in the city — apparently no warning was good enough for them. Reason was lost on them, they understood only basic drives: hunger, lust, pain. Pain.

If that's what it would take to get through to them, Mari was more than ready to broaden her own knowledge of the subject.

Stepping carefully around the coral-sharp jagged edges on the walls and floor, Mari made her way deeper inside the cavern. There, in the center of the room, an obscenely twisted form moaned quietly, writhing spasmodically. As the Fury approached, the figure struggled into a half-sitting, half-leaning position, chittering as it looked at her out of deep, hollow eyes.

"Spirit of Pain," Mari addressed the Epiphling in the spirit tongue, "I have sought you out to learn the secrets of your strength. I ask to be taught your Gift which curses the wicked with wracking pain."

The Gaffling regarded her a long moment, motionless except for the occasional wince or shudder. "Wicked or virtuous, it matters not to me," it rasped finally. "Tell me, what pain is to your choice? Something like...this?"

Fire burst inside Mari's chest, radiating through her body, nearly knocking her off her feet with the intensity. The agony settled in her skull, then faded as quickly as it began. She drew a shuddering breath, but did not look away. The spirit grimaced, a knife-bladed imitation of a smile, and croaked, "Or were you looking for something like this?" and the Black Fury felt a dozen lashes score her back, followed by a dozen blades peeling skin from flesh. She dropped to her knees in agony. Then the pain faded, leaving her breathless and ready to vomit. Before she could speak, a cramp hit her belly like hot knives soaked in acid, like a metis clawing its way from her womb. She bit back a shriek.

All was quiet. The ground was rough but cool. The pain had subsided, leaving a dull ache throughout her body. Slowly, she rose to her feet, her eyes blazing with Rage. The wincing little beast was a claw's width from learning a new definition of pain, Gift or no Gift. "Yeah, something like that. Now what will it take for you to teach me?"

Again, the creature grimaced; through its eternal agony, triumph showed in its eyes. "I already have what I want. Come closer, and I will teach you how to lay your enemies low...as I have brought you down."

# Chapter Four: Gifts and Rites

## *Gifts*

The spirit world shares many secrets with werewolves and other shapechangers. In accordance with an ancient pact, spirits teach magical abilities called Gifts to the Garou. Gifts allow werewolves to focus their spiritual energy to affect the Tellurian. Different tribes, auspices, and even breeds learn different Gifts. Each group has its own secrets and its own unique spiritual connections.

Gifts are divided into levels. Level One Gifts are the weakest Gifts — those taught to raw cubs — and Level Five Gifts are the greatest secrets, taught only to those heroes who have proved themselves time and again. A beginning character may choose one Level One Gift from each of her breed, auspice and tribe Gift lists. In the process of character creation, the players may use leftover freebie points to buy other Gifts.

As a character gains more experience, she may purchase more Gifts. However, the character must be of a rank equivalent to the level of the Gift desired, or she cannot possess it. During play, a werewolf may learn the Gifts of other breeds, auspices or tribes, provided she can find a spirit to teach them. However, these Gifts have a higher cost (see the Experience Point chart, p. 181).

## *Learning Gifts*

A werewolf must either petition a particular spirit to teach him its powers or ask an elder to summon that spirit and petition on his behalf. Only spirits allied to the Garou teach Gifts willingly. Spirits never teach a high-level Gift to a werewolf who has not attained the proper rank.

When a werewolf wants to learn a Gift, she must find a willing instructor first. Usually, she travels to a caern with a power level equal to or greater than that of the desired Gift to petition the spirit personally. Traditionally, werewolves have always sought to beseech the teachings of a spirit thus. The act of summoning the spirit to a powerful caern is a sign of respect. Unfortunately, the modern world rarely allows for such noble gestures, despite what most Silver Fangs would say. Because so few powerful caerns remain, often the best effort that a werewolf can make is to ask a respected Theurge to summon the particular spirit and placate it with appropriate rites. Even then, the demands of these End Times often forces young wolves to enter the Umbra and track down their own spirit guides. The danger in doing so is obvious. An inexperienced werewolf may anger a spirit in its home, which is a very bad idea. Spirits are always wary of such improper requests.

Each Gift lists the spirits which first taught the Gift to the Garou (some of which appear in the Appendix). They are not necessarily the only ones who can teach the Gift. More powerful and versatile spirits can bestow a variety of Gifts. The Storyteller decides what other spirits could teach a particular Gift. Learning a Gift is an excellent roleplaying opportunity, and players should realize that it's also a chance to gain an ally as well as a Gift. Storytellers should have fun crafting personalities for spirits. Books on animals can prove helpful, especially those that list the legendary qualities associated with certain animals.

Werewolves may also teach each other Gifts. When a spirit imparts knowledge of a Gift, it involves a total immersion and direct sharing of how to unlock the power within the student.

This process takes only a short time, usually no more than an hour, and a night at most. But when werewolves try to teach each other Gifts, it takes much longer. Packmates seem to learn faster from each other, but the process involves experimentation, practice and multiple failures before mastery of the Gift is attained. At best, the process takes a full lunar month (at the end of which time the player can spend experience points to acquire the Gift). Characters gaining Gifts in this manner must spend one more experience point than normal.

The drawbacks to this method are extreme. Because the student must practice the Gift to master it, learning a Gift such as Silver Claws can be quite painful. The student may spend multiple nights howling in agony, as he no doubt burns his flesh while learning to control the Gift. A student learning a Gift may be able to use it before gaining complete control in some circumstances, but doing so is always risky for anyone in the vicinity. Despite these drawbacks, young packs have started teaching Gifts to each other much more commonly, without regard for crossing tribal, auspice or breed lines.

These indiscriminate teaching practices haven't gone unnoticed by their elders. Many septs have laws forbidding certain Gifts to be taught except by spirits. For example, the Gift: Call of the Wyrm, which draws Wyrm creatures, is often restricted. No sept can afford to have wayward Wyrm creatures coming around just so a student can practice. More traditional tribes, such as the Silver Fangs and Black Furies, have even more restrictions. (Woe to the young Fury who reveals tribal secrets to a male Get of Fenris.) In addition, the amount of time spent between teacher and student can lead to "contamination" of tribal ethics. When the teacher and student are of opposite sexes, most older Garou believe that these lessons encourage violations of the Litany.

Once learned, Gifts cannot be forgotten; these special talents become as much a part of the werewolf as the ability to speak or tie his shoes. However, Theurges warn that Incarnae or Celestines can personally rescind all Gifts taught by their spirit broods, should they find the need to get personally involved.

## *Systems*

*So, you wish to know why your Gifts don't work the way you want them to, eh, pup? Did it ever occur to you that GAIA decides how Gifts work, not US? They are called Gifts for a reason... you never questioned presents given by your parents as a child, did you? You did? Well, then they took them away or roundly beat you about the head and shoulders, didn't they? Well, they should have! These are Gifts! Don't rely on them, consider them the blessing of Gaia and be thankful that She has a place in this world even for an ungrateful whelp like you! Hmmppf!*

Gifts can vary wildly in effect, depending on the spirits who grant them. They usually produce the same results no matter who uses the Gift, but how that happens... the possibilities are endless. Blue spiral tattoos may appear mysteriously on a Fianna's fur when she activates Gifts. An icy wind may howl suddenly when a Theurge of the Wendigo speaks to spirits. A Glass Walker's Gifts may evoke technological effects as flashes of electricity and lines of data race across his eyes. In addition, the Storyteller has complete freedom to determine the difficulties for strange uses of Gifts. Certain places make using Gifts more difficult, and the Umbra is a reality all its own. We also encourage Storytellers to make Gift-related botches interesting (and embarrassing).

## *Breed Gifts*

Many spirits teach Breed Gifts, usually in accordance with ancient pacts or as rewards for past deeds. For instance, an ancient tale tells of a metis who helped a mole hide from predators. In return, the mole taught the metis how to burrow through earth, and since that time, mole-spirits will teach metis that Gift. When a werewolf wishes to learn a breed Gift, she will have a relatively easy time finding a spirit to teach her.

### *Homid*

Homid Gifts involve humankind's skills and abilities not only as toolmakers and cultural beings, but also as conquerors of nature. Humanity's adversarial stand against nature has given them great control over their environment, but also a vague disquiet within their souls. Such are the repercussions of severing their primordial relationship with nature. Humans have become strangers to the world of spirit. Thus, many of the homid breed's Gifts are taught by their ancestors rather than by nature spirits.

- **Master of Fire (Level One)** — Once humans tamed fire to keep them warm and to drive off the wild beasts, they were on their way to civilization. Werewolves with this Gift invoke humanity's ancient pact with the spirits of fire. The spirits of flame agree to hold back their hunger when the werewolf touches them. An ancestor-spirit or a fire-spirit grants this Gift.

**System:** This Gift allows a werewolf to heal fire damage as if it were bashing. This requires the expenditure of a Gnosis point; the effects last for a scene.

- **Persuasion (Level One)** — This Gift allows a homid to become more persuasive when dealing with others, in such a way that his statements and arguments are imbued with added meaning or credibility. An ancestor-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Charisma + Subterfuge. If successful, the Storyteller reduces the difficulties of all Social rolls by one for the remainder of the scene. In addition, any successful Social rolls may have significantly more impact than they would without the Gift. A werewolf could win arguments with hard line opponents, or cause a cold-hearted psychopath to relent (at least for a little while).

- **Smell of Man (Level One)** — Creatures of the wild have learned well that where man goes, death follows. With this Gift, the werewolf enhances the human scent around him greatly, causing wild animals to feel uneasy and nervous. However, the scent also causes domestic animals to recognize the werewolf as their master. An ancestor-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** All wild animals (not including supernatural creatures in animal form) lose one die from their dice pools when within 20 feet of the Garou (save when defending themselves or running away), and they are likely to flee. All domesticated animals recognize the werewolf as a friend and refuse to harm him. For example, an attack-trained dog ordered to take down the werewolf would run up to the character and wag its tail. If the domesticated animal is harmed, then it will revert to acting naturally. The Garou may use this Gift at will. She simply states when she is activating it or turning it off.

- **Jam Technology (Level Two)** — The werewolf can cause technological devices to cease functioning, albeit temporarily. Even the simplest of shaped objects will refuse to perform its function. A Gremlin — a type of Wyld-spirit that enjoys breaking things — teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Manipulation + Crafts. The werewolf may choose the level of complexity she intends to "jam." All technological devices (i.e., any devices shaped from fabricated materials like metal or plastic) of that complexity within 50 feet cease functioning for one turn per success. The devices remain unchanged but inert. Knives won't cut, gunpowder won't ignite, gears won't turn and so on. The difficulty of the roll is based on the following chart:

Device	Difficulty
Computer	4
Phone	6
Automobile	8
Gun	9
Knife	10

• **Staredown (Level Two)** — By staring into the eyes of a human or animal, a werewolf can cause the target to flee in terror. This Gift can be used against other werewolves, but the target will freeze in place rather than flee. A ram- or snake-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou using this Gift may focus on only one target per turn; the player rolls Charisma + Intimidation (difficulty 5 + the victim's Rank). The victim flees for one turn per success, although he may expend a Willpower point to resist the Gift's effects for a turn. Should the character score five or more successes, the victim flees for the duration of the scene. Werewolves (and most powerful Wyrm-monsters) will not flee, but they cannot attack while the Gift's user continues to stare them down. However, if they are attacked themselves, all bets are off.

• **Disquiet (Level Three)** — This Gift makes its target feel inexplicably depressed and withdrawn. The subject finds it difficult to draw on his full emotion or to maintain any type of concentration. An ancestor-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Manipulation + Empathy against a difficulty equal to the target's Willpower. If successful, that opponent will not be able to recover Rage for the duration of the scene. Furthermore, all difficulties for extended actions increase by one.

• **Reshape Object (Level Three)** — The werewolf can shape once-living material (but not undead!) into a variety of objects instantly. Trees may become shelter, buck antlers become spears, animal hides become armor, and flowers become perfumes. The item will resemble the object from which it was shaped (e.g., the aforementioned spear is made of antler, not wood). A Pattern Spider — one of the Weaver's spirits — teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Manipulation + Crafts against a variable difficulty (5 to turn a broken tree limb into a spear, 8 to turn a plank into a floatable raft) and spends a Gnosis point. The created object is not necessarily permanent; it will last a length of time according to the following chart. Expending an additional Gnosis point allows a created weapon to inflict aggravated damage for the scene's duration or until the object returns to its original form. This effect can be made permanent with the sacrifice of a permanent point of Gnosis if the object itself is changed permanently.

Successes	Duration
One	5 minutes
Two	10 minutes
Three	One scene
Four	One story
Five	Permanent

• **Cocoon (Level Four)** — The werewolf can wrap himself in a thick, opaque sarcophagus-like epidermis, making him immobile but near-impervious to harm. This cocoon grants him immunity to fire, starvation, gas, high pressure, cold and similar environmental hazards. An insect- or Weaver-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou spends one Gnosis point. While in the cocoon, the werewolf ignores any attacks which fail to do damage at least equal to her Stamina + Rituals, but attacks that pierce the cocoon destroy it. The cocoon lasts for one scene, after which it dissolves rapidly and evaporates. The player may extend the duration of the Gift spending more Gnosis points. Spending days in the cocoon is entirely possible, but the maximum duration is up to the Storyteller.

• **Spirit Ward (Level Four)** — A werewolf with this Gift may protect himself from spirits by performing a quick warding rite. To use this Gift, the werewolf draws an invisible pictogram in the air that scares and unnerves any nearby spirits (except pack totems or caern spirits). The symbol travels with the werewolf as long as it lasts. An ancestor-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Manipulation + Rituals (difficulty 7). Spirits within 100 feet of the character (again, except the pack totem or local caern spirits) must subtract one from their dice pools for each success. This Gift lasts for one scene.

• **Assimilation (Level Five)** — A werewolf with this Gift blends smoothly into any culture, no matter how strange or unfamiliar he might normally find it. He could slip among Bedouin nomads as if he were one of them, or he could shop in a Chinese market without anyone noticing that he does not belong. The Gift doesn't hide racial differences, but it does allow the user to mimic the behaviors and mannerisms of a native. It also grants the ability to speak and understand the culture's language, although this knowledge vanishes as the Gift ends. Ancestor-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Manipulation + Empathy. If successful, the character interacts with members of another culture as if he were one of them. The difficulty depends on how alien the culture is. The difficulty would be 5 for another Garou sept, but it could be as high as 9 when trying to assimilate into a Black Spiral Hive in a foreign country. The character will not suffer Social-roll penalties when interacting with members of the culture, although he will not receive any special benefits. The Gift lasts for one scene plus one day per Willpower point spent when activating it.

• **Part the Veil (Level Five)** — With this Gift, a werewolf may immunize any human from the Delirium for a scene. In this way, the human can interact with Garou without deleterious effects. However, the human will forget much of what he knows if the Delirium is induced in him at a later date. An ancestor-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Empathy. One success is all that's required.

### *Metis*

Metis are the outcasts of Garou society. Unlike homid and lupus Garou, however, they are born into werewolf society and raised within it, reminded constantly of their inadequacies. The abuse heaped on a metis usually creates a deeply repressed inner fury, but it also leads them to a deeper connection with the spirit world, possibly as a means of escape from the horror of their lives.

• **Create Element (Level One)** — The metis has the power to create a small amount of one of the four basic elements — fire, air, earth or water. In this way, she can replenish the air supply in an airtight room, make a rock to throw at someone, create a fire without matches or wood, or even fill a bathtub without any faucet or pipes. The metis cannot create specialized forms of any element. Precious metals (especially silver), lethal gases and acid are beyond his reach. This Gift creates only natural air, earth, fire and water. Elementals teach this Gift.

**System:** The werewolf's player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Gnosis. Each success allows the character to create approximately one cubic foot of the desired element, to a maximum weight of 100 lbs, anywhere he can see within 60 feet. The element remains in existence until used up (breathed in the case of air or burned up in the case of fire without any fuel to keep it going). The flames created with this Gift are genuinely hot, but they are no substitute for a flame-thrower. They inflict one health level of damage per success, to a maximum of three health levels of damage.

• **Primal Anger (Level One)** — The metis learns to focus the anger within her heart and use it to increase her Rage. The anger takes a physical toll on the werewolf, and it is up to her to unleash it on her enemies. The spirits of ancient metis teach this Gift. Few members of other breeds have suffered enough shame and suffering to learn this Gift.

**System:** A character with this Gift may sacrifice a single health level, once per scene, and gain two extra points of Rage in exchange (even if doing so takes her above her permanent Rage rating). The health level is treated as aggravated damage for purposes of recovery.

• **Sense Wyrm (Level One)** — The werewolf can sense manifestations of the Wyrm in the nearby area. This Gift involves a mystical sense, not a visual or olfactory image, although werewolves using the Gift sometimes say things like, "This place stinks of the Wyrm" (with a few more colorful adjectives). Garou should remember that the Wyrm's taint can cling to relatively blameless souls. Werewolves may sense an innocent person who happens to work in a Wyrm-controlled factory or who has eaten tainted food. This power requires active concentration. Any spirit of Gaia may teach this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Occult. The difficulty depends on the concentration and strength of the Wyrm's influence. Sensing a single fomor in the next room would be difficulty 6, while detecting the stench of a Bane that was in the room an hour ago would be difficulty 8. Vampires register as Wyrm-tainted, save those with Humanity Traits of 7 or higher.

• **Burrow (Level Two)** — Those who learn this Gift gain the ability to burrow through the earth. They make a real tunnel, and others can follow them through it. The digger creates a burrow just large enough for her to go through. Others may follow, but they are limited by the size of the hole. The werewolf must be in Crinos, Hispo or Lupus form to use this Gift as she needs her claws for digging (although even metis without claws can use this Gift). The tunnel is not structurally sound, and it will collapse over time. Mole kindly teaches this Gift to all metis who seek him.

**System:** The player rolls Strength + Athletics against a difficulty depending on the substance to be excavated (4 for loose mud, 9 for solid rock). Some alloyed metals (such as titanium steel) and other reinforced structures will not yield to the werewolf no matter how hard she digs. The character can burrow one yard per

turn for each success. After the initial roll, the character does not need to roll again to continue at the same speed.

• **Curse of Hatred (Level Two)** — The metis may verbalize the hatred in her heart, disheartening opponents with the intensity of her emotion. A spirit of hate teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Manipulation + Expression (difficulty of the opponent's Willpower). If she succeeds, her opponent loses two Willpower points and two Rage points. This Gift may be used on an opponent only once per scene.

• **Eyes of the Cat (Level Three)** — The werewolf may see clearly in pitch darkness. His eyes glow a lambent green while this power is in effect. Any cat-spirit can teach this Gift, although werewolves who make enemies of the Bastet will have trouble finding teachers.

**System:** The character must state when the Gift is in effect, but it requires no roll or expenditure. The character suffers no difficulty or dice-pool penalties from darkness.

• **Mental Speech (Level Three)** — This Gift grants mental communication, even over vast distances. The user must either know the target personally (although he does not have to be friends with that person) or have something that belongs to that person, such as a lock of his hair. Bird spirits and spirits of intellect teach this Gift. Owl is a particularly sought-after teacher, and those who learn from him claim to have enhanced abilities at night.

**System:** The player rolls Charisma + Empathy (difficulty 8) and expends a Willpower point; the effects last for a scene. His character may hold a mental conversation with a target at a maximum distance of 10 miles per success. It does not allow mind reading, but the werewolf may use social Abilities, such as Intimidation.

• **Gift of the Porcupine (Level Four)** — When using this Gift, the werewolf undergoes a startling transformation. Her fur becomes elongated, bristly and sharp like the quills of a porcupine. This change makes her an even more fearsome killing machine. A werewolf must be in Crinos, Hispo or Lupus form to use this Gift. Porcupine teaches this Gift, and he has a great fondness for metis.

**System:** The character spends a Gnosis point to sharpen his fur. Anyone whom the metis tackles, grapples or immobilizes takes aggravated damage from his newfound quills (Strength +1). Furthermore, anyone who strikes him with bare flesh (and scoring fewer than five successes on the attack roll) takes damage based on the attacker's own Strength, although the metis still takes normal damage. This Gift lasts for one scene or until the werewolf wills his fur to return to normal.

• **Wither Limb (Level Four)** — With a snarl and an angry gaze, the werewolf forces a target's arm or leg to twist, desiccate and wither, making it useless. Creatures with regenerative abilities will restore the limb to full function after one scene; otherwise, the effects are permanent. Snake-spirits, spider-spirits and other venomous spirits teach this Gift. Some werewolves even invoke spirits of disease to learn this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Willpower (difficulty of the victim's Stamina + 4). The victim adds two to the difficulties of all Dexterity rolls. If his leg is affected, he can move at only half of his normal speed.

• **Madness (Level Five)** — The metis struggles his whole life to find a place, a purpose and a sense of stability in his horrifying

existence. With this Gift, he can force others to face their inner demons, inducing insanity and madness. The nature of the derangement varies among individuals, but it will always be severe, making it impossible for the victim to function normally. Lunes, along with spirits of trickery and madness teach this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Manipulation + Intimidation (difficulty of the victim's Willpower). The insanity lasts a number of days equal to the successes rolled on the attempt. During this time, the metis can increase or decrease the effects of the madness, granting the victim lucidity and then driving him into psychosis. Even after the Gift has ended, the repercussions from the bout with madness often haunt the target for the rest of his life.

• **Totem Gift (Level Five)** — Due to the metis' strong ties with Garou society, she can plead directly with her tribal totem, gaining some of its power. The effects of this Gift depend on the nature of the tribal totem power. Rat (totem of the Bone Gnawers) might send swarms of rats to attack the Garou's enemies, and Grandfather Thunder (totem of the Shadow Lords) might smite the Garou's enemies with a blast of thunder and lightning. The potential of this Gift depends only on the favor of the totem, and it may cross over into the miraculous. Only the tribal totem teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Rituals (difficulty 7). The greater the number of successes, the more dramatic the effects. One success might cause a minor distraction, whereas 10 successes is the dramatic equivalent of summoning a localized twister to destroy the metis' foes.

## Lupus

The Gifts of the lupus breed reflect their strong ties to the natural world and the wilds. Usually these Gifts enhance the natural abilities of the werewolf, allowing her to perform feats that other breeds would find impossible.

• **Hare's Leap (Level One)** — By invoking this Gift, the werewolf may leap incredible distances. Hare-, frog- and cat-spirits usually teach this Gift. The lost Bunyip knew this Gift as Leap of the Kangaroo, however marsupial-spirits seem loath to aid werewolves these days. Today, many werewolves call this Gift "Leap of the Kangaroo" in their fallen cousins' honor.

**System:** The player rolls Stamina + Athletics (difficulty 7). If successful, she may double her normal jumping distance. (See Jumping, p. 197.)

• **Heightened Senses (Level One)** — The werewolf with this Gift tunes in to the world around him, increasing his senses vastly. When in Homid or Glabro form, her senses become as sharp as those a wolf, allowing him to hear sounds beyond his normal range, granting him superior night vision and making his sense of smell stronger than that of any dog. In wolf forms, his senses become preternaturally potent, allowing him to perform feats that border on precognition. This Gift has drawbacks as well. If a fire alarm were to go off around a Garou using this Gift, it might render him helpless. Cities can barrage the werewolf with a sensory overload. Wolf-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Gnosis point. The effects last for one scene. In Homid or Glabro forms, the werewolf's Perception difficulties decrease by two, and he may roll Perception + Primal-Urge to perform sensory feats impossible for humans (such as tracking by scent). In Crinos, Hispo and Lupus forms, Perception difficulties decrease by three (which is not

cumulative with the ordinary Lupus-form Perception bonuses), and the werewolf gains an extra die to Primal-Urge dice pools.

• **Sense Prey (Level One)** — Werewolves used this ancient Gift during hard winters to feed their packs. The Gift lets Garou locate enough prey to feed a pack. In the urban environment, this Gift guides the lupus to prey within the city, usually in parks, sewers, animal shelters and even zoos. The Gift will tell the werewolf the location of large numbers of prey within 50 miles in the wilds, and within the limits of a city and its suburbs. Humans do not register as prey animals, although some say that the Red Talons know a variant of this Gift that can find them. A wolf-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The hunter's player rolls Perception + Primal-Urge. The difficulty is 7 in wilderness environments and 9 in urban environments. Success indicates the location of enough prey to feed a large pack. In the case of multiple sources, the Gift guides the werewolf to the nearest source (although not necessarily the easiest or safest).

• **Scent of Sight (Level Two)** — The werewolf can compensate for her vision completely by using her sense of smell. She can attack invisible creatures normally or navigate roughly in absolute darkness. Wolf-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Primal-Urge against a Storyteller-determined difficulty that depends on how powerful local smells are. The Storyteller should require rolls only when something could cause the Garou to lose his opponent's scent (such as if the opponent runs through water or into a reeking alley).

• **Sense the Unnatural (Level Two)** — The werewolf can sense any unnatural presence and determine its approximate strength and type. Supernatural presences can include magic, spirits, the Wyrm, wraiths and vampires, although it won't pick them out specifically as such. The werewolf may sense a person plagued by hauntings as easily as a ghost. Any spirit servant of Gaia can teach this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Enigmas. The more successes he rolls, the more information he gains. The sensory input is somewhat vague and subject to interpretation, though. For instance, a vampire might smell of old blood, of fear, of rotten flesh, of fresh meat or of whatever else the Storyteller finds appropriate. Interpreting the information properly might require an Intelligence + Occult roll (Storyteller's option).

• **Catfeet (Level Three)** — This Gift gives the werewolf the agility of a cat, making him immune to falls under 100 feet (he lands on his feet just right). He also has perfect balance even on the most slippery surfaces, and the difficulties of all combat actions involving body slams and grappling decrease by two. Cat-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** This ability becomes innate to those who learn the Gift.

• **Name the Spirit (Level Three)** — A werewolf with this Gift becomes familiar with the ways of the Umbra. He can sense the type and approximate Trait levels (Rage, Gnosis, Willpower) of spirits. A spirit servant of the Uktene totem teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Willpower point and rolls Perception + Occult (difficulty 8).

• **Beast Life (Level Four)** — The werewolf with this Gift can communicate with other wild animals and attract (or even command) them. Domesticated animals will speak with the werewolf, but they have given themselves to the ways of humans and must be persuaded to obey the Garou. Any animal

spirit may teach this Gift, although Lion and Bear are most often sought as teachers.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Animal Ken (difficulty 7). The character gains the ability to communicate with all animals automatically. One success can attract specific types of animals within a 10-mile radius, and those that can reach the werewolf in a reasonable amount of time will do so. Each additional success adds 10 miles (two successes indicate a 20-mile radius). All wild animals become friendly to the character. They follow any reasonable request the character makes, and many unreasonable ones as well. A character who uses this Gift to force an animal to sacrifice itself had best pay homage to its spirit or risk angering Gaia. The effect lasts for one scene, but the time may be extended by spending one Gnosis point per extra scene desired.

• **Gnaw (Level Four)** — The werewolf's jaws strengthen to the point that she can chew through just about anything, given enough time. In addition, her jaws do more damage in combat, and only death will break her grip if she clamps her teeth into an opponent. Wolf-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Willpower point and rolls Stamina + 4 against a variable difficulty (3 for wood, 6 for steel handcuffs, 9 for a train car coupling). The length of time it takes to gnaw through something depends on the number of successes. In addition, this Gift gives a character's bite two extra dice of damage for the duration of the scene.

• **Elemental Gift (Level Five)** — The werewolf calls upon the primal force of Gaia Herself, thereby commanding the spirits of the elements to rise up, undulate forward and even engulf foes. This Gift summons an elemental spirit, not merely the raw matter of the elements, but primal spirits possessing power enough to challenge even something as powerful as a Nexus Crawler. The elementals grant this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Occult (difficulty 7). If successful, he calls an elemental who grants him the ability to control a large volume of air, earth, water or fire (in any of their forms) that is approximately 20' by 20' per success. The effect lasts for one scene or until the elemental leaves or is destroyed.

• **Song of the Great Beast (Level Five)** — To use this Gift, the werewolf must travel to the deep wilderness. When she reaches her destination, she howls the Song of the Great Beast into the sky, summoning one of the Great Beasts to her aid. These beasts are the terrible and ancient creatures that walked the Earth in ages past. Examples include the Willawau (giant owl), the Yeti, the Sabertooth Tiger, the great Megalodon sharks that swam the seas eons ago and the mighty Mammoth, who arrives in herds. Who knows what else a Garou might call? Rumors say that dinosaurs survive in the deep Congo.... The surviving Great Beasts possess abilities in the physical world that rival those of mighty spirits in the Umbra. Even the wisest of Garou are not certain of their natures. Once the ancient one arrives, the werewolf may make a request, although she should do so with great caution. If the Great Beast agrees to aid the werewolf, it will do so in its own way, but enemies of the lupus should beware. Few spirits know this Gift. It's said that those that do dwell in the Realm of Pangaea.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Primal-Urge (difficulty 8) to sing the Song of the Great Beast. More successes improve the Great Beast's

disposition. Traits are left to the Storyteller's discretion, but they should be appropriately impressive.

## *Auspice Gifts*

These Gifts represent the secrets given to Gaia's children by Luna. She bade her many servants teach the Garou their various tricks, giving them magical skills to use in protecting Gaia.

### *Ragabash*

The Ragabash were blessed by Luna with the wit to question rigid tradition and the cunning to use stealth and trickery against the Garou's enemies. The New Moons' Gifts allow them to get the job done in a clever, unconventional fashion.

• **Blur of the Milky Eye (Level One)** — The Garou's form becomes a shimmering blur, allowing him to pass unnoticed among others. Once the Garou has been seen, however, this Gift is negated until the viewer has again been distracted. A chameleon-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Manipulation + Stealth (difficulty 8). Although he doesn't become truly invisible, each success increases the difficulties of all Perception rolls made to detect him by one.

• **Open Seal (Level One)** — With this Gift, the Garou can open nearly any sort of closed or locked physical device. A raccoon-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Gnosis (difficulty of the local Gauntlet rating).

• **Scent of Running Water (Level One)** — The Garou can mask her scent completely, making herself virtually impossible to track. A fox-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The difficulties of all rolls to track the Garou increase by two. This Gift becomes an innate ability to the Garou who learns it. She need not expend any points or make any rolls. However, the Ragabash may still leave a scent behind if she decides to do so voluntarily (which may be necessary to blend in with wolf packs).

• **Blissful Ignorance (Level Two)** — The Garou can become completely invisible to all senses, spirits or monitoring devices by remaining still. A chameleon-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou's player rolls Dexterity + Stealth (difficulty 7). Each success subtracts one success from the Perception + Alertness rolls of those looking for the character actively. If no one is doing so, then just one success indicates complete concealment.

• **Sense of the Prey (Level Two)** — If he knows anything about his prey, the character can track it down as rapidly as he can travel. This unerring sense of direction operates anywhere, and it is useful for tracking spirits through the Umbra as well as finding beings on Earth. A wolf- or dog-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** No roll is required unless the target is hiding actively (intent alone is not enough), in which case a Perception + Enigmas roll is made against a difficulty of the target's Wits + Stealth. If the target is a spirit, the difficulty is the spirit's Gnosis.

• **Taking the Forgotten (Level Two)** — The Ragabash with this Gift can steal something from a target, and his victim will forget that she ever possessed the stolen item. A mouse-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player must score three successes on a Wits + Stealth roll (difficulty of the victim's Intelligence + Streetwise).

• **Gremlins (Level Three)** — The Ragabash can cause a technological device to malfunction merely by touching it. This Gift actually disrupts the spirit energy within the device that aids its function. If the Garou can frighten the spirit sufficiently, it will flee the device, causing it to malfunction permanently. A Gremlin teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Manipulation + Intimidation; the difficulty is determined by the complexity of the item. The more successes the Garou obtains, the more the device is damaged. Five successes disable the device permanently (the spirit has fled). Good roleplaying might certainly warrant one to three additional dice at the discretion of the Storyteller.

Device	Difficulty
Computer	4
Phone	6
Automobile	8
Knife	10

• **Open Moon Bridge (Level Three)** — The Garou has the ability to open a moon bridge, with or without the permission of the totem of that caern. A Lune teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point. See the Rite of the Opened Bridge (p. 158) for more information on opening moon bridges. The maximum distance that can thereby be covered is 1,000 miles.

• **Luna's Blessing (Level Four)** — When the moon is visible in the night sky, silver refuses to cause the Garou aggravated wounds. Indeed, if the moon waxes full, silver weapons may well turn on those who would wield them against the character. A Lune teaches this Gift.

**System:** For each strike against the Garou, the wielder of the weapon must roll three extra dice on the attack; these dice are read only to check for botches. The Garou can soak and regenerate silver as if it were bashing or lethal damage (depending on whether the silver is part of an edged weapon or not), but only when the moon is in a visible phase above the horizon. Therefore, the Garou is still vulnerable during a new moon.

• **Whelp Body (Level Four)** — With this Gift a Garou may deliver a devastating curse upon a foe's body, causing it to weaken or palsy. Many consider the use of this power on a foe to be a declaration of unending war. Either a pain-spirit or a spirit of disease teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Gnosis, and the target resists with his own Gnosis roll. The Garou's difficulty is the opponent's Willpower, while her victim's difficulty is the Ragabash's Gnosis. (Victims without Gnosis roll Stamina without any adjustments for supernatural powers or the like.) Each success scored by the Ragabash allows him to remove one point from any of the victim's Physical Attributes. The effect is permanent, although the victim may restore these Attributes via experience. This Gift may be used only once ever against a given opponent.

• **Thieving Talons of the Magpie (Level Five)** — The Garou can steal the powers of others and use them herself. These powers can be Garou Gifts, spirit Charms, vampiric Disciplines, True Magic or any other such power. Naturally, a magpie-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player must gain three successes on a Wits + Stealth roll (difficulty of the target's Willpower). If successful, the Ragabash can use the specified power (and the victim

cannot) for each successive turn she is willing to spend a Gnosis point. The werewolf's Gnosis is substituted for any Traits exclusive to the victim that might be necessary to work the power, such as a vampire's blood pool or a mage's Arete. The Ragabash must know something about his target's powers, and he must target a power in the terms by which he would understand it.

• **Thousand Forms (Level Five)** — Most trickster archetypes are shapeshifters, and the Ragabash is no different. The Garou with this Gift may change herself into any animal between the sizes of a small bird and a bison. The Garou gains all the special powers (flight, gills, poison, sensory abilities, etc.) of the animal she mimics. She may not take the form of Wyrm-beasts (not that she would wish to!), but she may take the form of mythical beasts with some extra effort.

**System:** The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Intelligence + Animal Ken. The difficulty varies, rising higher the farther removed from the Garou's natural form the desired animal is. For example, an ape or panther (mammals of roughly equal mass) might be difficulty 5, while an alligator (a reptile of slightly larger size) would be difficulty 7, and a frog (a much smaller amphibian) would be difficulty 9. Mimicking mythical animals is always difficulty 10.

### Theurge

Luna's Gifts to her Crescent Moon children grant them insight into and power over the spirit world. The Theurge is blessed with the ability to manipulate the Umbra and the intellect of others, all in the name of serving a greater wisdom.

• **Mother's Touch (Level One)** — The Garou is able to heal the wounds of any living creature, aggravated or otherwise, simply by laying hands over the afflicted area. The Garou may not heal herself, spirits or the undead with this Gift. A bear- or unicorn-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Intelligence + Medicine (difficulty of the wounded individual's Rage, or 6 for non-Garou). Each success heals one health level. The Theurge may heal even Battle Scars in this manner if the Theurge uses the Gift in the same scene in which the scar was obtained and she spends a second Gnosis point. There is no limit to how many times this Gift may be used on a person, but each use requires the expenditure of one Gnosis.

• **Sense Wyrm (Level One)** — As the metis Gift.

• **Spirit Speech (Level One)** — This Gift allows the Garou to communicate with encountered spirits. The Garou is thus able to address them whether they wish to be addressed or not. Of course, nothing (usually) prevents the spirit from ignoring the Theurge or leaving. Any spirit can teach this Gift.

**System:** Once learned, this Gift allows the Garou to understand the communication of spirits intuitively. Particularly alien spirits may be difficult — or, in the case of many Banes, outright painful — to understand.

• **Command Spirit (Level Two)** — The Theurge can give simple commands to encountered spirits and expect a measure of compliance. This Gift does not grant the ability to summon spirits. It enables the user only to coerce them to obey. Any Incarna avatar can teach this Gift.

**System:** The player must spend a Willpower point and roll Charisma + Leadership (difficulty of the spirit's Gnosis). Each successive command requires the expenditure of another Willpower point. Note that the Garou cannot command spirits to

leave areas to which they have been bound. Doing so requires the Level Three Theurge Gift: Exorcism.

- **Name the Spirit (Level Two)** — As the Level Three lupus Gift.

• **Sight from Beyond (Level Two)** — When danger stalks the Garou or momentous events are in the offing, visions begin striking the Garou without warning. The nature of the danger is veiled in metaphor — a powerful vampire may appear in the Theurge's dream as a bloody skeleton, while an impending battle might be heralded by dreams of carrion crows. Crow-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** Interpreting these signs is best handled through roleplaying, but the Storyteller can require the Garou's player to roll Wits + Occult (difficulty 7) if he deems appropriate.

- **Exorcism (Level Three)** — This is the Gift of ejecting spirits from places or objects, whether they are there voluntarily or are bound there. Any Incarna avatar can teach this Gift.

**System:** The Garou must concentrate uninterrupted for three turns. If a spirit does not wish to leave, the player must make a Manipulation + Intimidation roll (difficulty of the spirit's Willpower). If the spirit has been bound to its lodging place (or into a fetish), then the exorcist must make a Wits + Subterfuge roll (difficulty 8) and gain more successes than the binder did when tying the spirit to its location. This Gift can be used to "cure" fomori, although the host will surely die as the Bane is ejected unless a powerful healer manages to preserve her life during the exorcism.

- **Pulse of the Invisible (Level Three)** — Spirits fill the world around the Garou, and none knows this fact better than the Theurge. This Gift grants constant awareness of the spirit world. Even in the physical world, the Theurge with this Gift can interact with spirits in the Penumbra at will. While most spirit activity is barely worth watching, the Theurge will be aware of any dramatic changes. Any spirit can teach this Gift.

**System:** If the Garou's permanent Gnosis equals or exceeds the Gauntlet, he can see into the Umbra automatically. Otherwise, the player must roll Gnosis to pierce the Gauntlet (difficulty of the Gauntlet rating). Only one success is required. The effect lasts for an entire scene or until the character enters an area with a higher Gauntlet.

- **Grasp the Beyond (Level Four)** — The Garou may take things to and from the Umbra without having to dedicate them to herself (see the Rite of Talisman Dedication, p. 160). This Gift affects humans and animals, both willing and unwilling. Garou often use this power to take loyal Kinfolk with them on Umbral quests or to heal injured Kinfolk — both body and soul — in mystic Glens.

**System:** The Garou must grasp the object or person he wishes to take to the spirit world. He must then spend a number of Willpower points: one for small items (a pocket-watch or knife), two for larger items (a backpack or bow) and three for huge items (including people). The player makes the usual Gnosis roll to pierce the Gauntlet and step sideways; if successful, both he and the desired object or person pass into the Umbra. An unwilling target may resist with a Willpower roll; each success subtracts one from the Garou's successes. A Garou attempting to abduct an unwilling victim must achieve at least three successes on his Gnosis roll.

Unless she has the ability to step sideways, any person taken to the Umbra must rely on the Garou to escape, or she must find an area with a very thin Gauntlet, such as a caern. The Gauntlet rating must be 3 or lower for a victim to exit of

his own accord. If he does exit, he may not reenter the Umbra, regardless of the Gauntlet rating. If left in the Umbra too long, a living creature eventually turns to spirit matter entirely.

- **Spirit Drain (Level Four)** — The Garou may drain power from a spirit to feed his own resolve. A spirit servant of the Uktene totem teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player makes a resisted Gnosis roll against the spirit. If the player succeeds, the spirit loses one Essence point per success for the rest of the scene. For every two points drained, the Garou gains a temporary Willpower point, but she loses any points exceeding her maximum at the end of the scene.

- **Feral Lobotomy (Level Five)** — With but a thought, the Garou can devolve an opponent's mind to that of an animal, effectively destroying his intelligence. A spirit servant of the Griffin totem teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Wits + Empathy (difficulty of the target's Willpower + 3, maximum 10), and spends a variable number of Gnosis. If successful, the Garou can destroy a target's Intelligence Attribute permanently. Two Gnosis points must be spent for each point of Intelligence destroyed, and the Garou cannot destroy more points than he rolls successes. Additionally, the target begins acting more animalistic with each point removed.

- **Malleable Spirit (Level Five)** — The Garou can change a spirit's form or purpose. A Chimerling teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou's player must best the spirit in a resisted Gnosis roll. The difficulty is based on what the Garou tries to accomplish, while the spirit's difficulty is the Garou's Gnosis.

Change	Difficulty
Characteristics (Willpower, Rage, Gnosis; one point changed per success)	6
Disposition (Friendly, Neutral, Hostile)	8
Type (Naturae, Elemental, Bane, etc.)	10

## Philodox

Luna gifts her Half Moon children with the powers of balance, the ability to detect truth and enforce law. As judges and mediators, many Philodox gravitate into leadership positions, and they possess Gifts to aid them in this role.

- **Resist Pain (Level One)** — Through force of will, the Philodox is able to ignore the pain of his wounds and continue acting normally. A bear-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Willpower point; his character may ignore all wound penalties for the rest of the scene.

- **Scent of the True Form (Level One)** — This Gift allows the Garou to determine the true nature of a person. This information is conveyed as an olfactory sensation — it is actually a scent of the target's natural form. Any spirit servant of Gaia can teach this Gift.

**System:** The Garou can tell automatically when someone is a werewolf; anything else requires a Perception + Primal-Urgo roll. It takes two successes to detect vampires, faeries or other shapeshifters as such, and it takes four to detect fomori or mages.

- **Truth of Gaia (Level One)** — As judges of the Litany, Philodox have the ability to sense whether others have spoken truth or falsehood. A Gaffling of Falcon teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Intelligence + Empathy (difficulty of the subject's Manipulation + Subterfuge). This Gift reveals only whether the target speaks the truth or lies.

• **Call to Duty (Level Two)** — Any spirit the Philodox knows by name is a potential servitor. With this Gift, the werewolf can summon and command any spirit she knows by name. Only one command is possible at a time, and the spirit departs after fulfilling the one request. An Incarna avatar teaches this Gift.

**System:** Obviously, the Philodox must learn the spirit's name, which usually requires personal acquaintance or use of the Gift: Name the Spirit. The player rolls Charisma + Leadership (difficulty of the spirit's Willpower). If the player spends two Gnosis points, the werewolf can summon all Gaian spirits within one mile to protect or assist her, even if she does not know their names.

• **King of the Beasts (Level Two)** — The Philodox's authority extends even into the realm of beasts, such that he can command the loyalty of any specific animal. If successful, the animal follows his commands willingly and unconditionally. A lion- or falcon-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Philodox must choose one target within 100 feet. The player rolls Charisma + Animal Ken against a difficulty based on the werewolf's relationship with the animal. This power works on only one animal at a time, and it does not attract animals to the Garou's vicinity (see the Level Four lupus Gift: Beast Life).

Relationship	Difficulty
A sibling	3
Feed and care for	6
Stranger	8
Hostile	10

• **Strength of Purpose (Level Two)** — Some Garou feel so strongly about their place in the pack, the tribe and the world that they can draw on this resolve in times of need. The Philodox can pull new resolve from his deepest reserves. A wolf-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** Once per scene, the player may roll Stamina + Rituals (difficulty 7). For every two successes, the Philodox recovers one point of Willpower up to her maximum.

• **Weak Arm (Level Three)** — Philodox are masters of judgment, and this trait extends even into the field of battle. By watching an opponent's fighting style, the werewolf can evaluate his strengths and weaknesses. Snake- and wind-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Brawl (difficulty 8). Each success gives her one bonus die to add to her attack or damage rolls against this opponent. For instance, a Philodox who gets four successes on this roll could add two dice to her attack rolls and two to her damage pool. This Gift can be used against a given foe only once per scene, and the benefits are lost at the end of the scene. The Garou must concentrate for a full turn to use this Gift.

• **Wisdom of the Ancient Ways (Level Three)** — All werewolves have an innate connection to their ancestors, a form of racial unconscious accessible through intense meditation. The Philodox can tap into these deep memories to remember ancient facts and lore. An ancestor-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The character must meditate for a short time, concentrating on the past. The player then rolls Gnosis (difficulty 9, -1 for each point of Ancestors the Garou possesses). The number of successes determines how detailed and exact the answer he receives will be.

• **Roll Over (Level Four)** — The Philodox can call on her power to radiate a commanding presence that compels others to submit to her. Should she succeed in a test of wills, she dominates her foe, which causes humans to fall to their knees and wolves to roll on their backs. Either a lion- or a wolf-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player must score at least three successes more than her opponent on a resisted Willpower contest. If the Gift takes effect, the victim can take no action other than submission unless he is in direct danger.

• **Scent of Beyond (Level Four)** — The werewolf can bring all his senses to bear on one spot with which he is familiar (even an Umbral site), no matter how far away that spot is. The Philodox senses the site from a point of view as if he were standing in the middle of the area being scanned. A bird-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Enigmas (difficulty 8). If the spot is in the Umbra, the difficulty is 8 or the Gauntlet rating (whichever is higher).

• **Geas (Level Five)** — This Gift places its target under a geas, a sacred oath to obey the Philodox's bidding. The geas cannot make the targets act contrary to their basic instincts (such as self-preservation). Therefore, she could send a group on a quest, but she could not make its members attack and try to kill each other — unless they were psychotics or werewolves without pack bonds. An Incarna avatar teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Manipulation + Leadership (difficulty of the target's Willpower). In the case of a group, the difficulty is the highest Willpower among its members. The geas' compulsion lasts until the task is completed or until the target is dropped to the Incapacitated health level in pursuit of the quest. No victim can labor under more than one geas at a time; the first one laid always takes precedence.

• **Wall of Granite (Level Five)** — Philodox have a stronger relationship with the elementals of the earth than do other werewolves, for just as the earth upholds those upon it, the Philodox uphold their people's ways. While in contact with earth or rock, the Philodox can invoke a wall to protect himself. This wall will move with the Garou, defending him from all angles. Earth elementals teach this Gift.

**System:** The Garou spends one Gnosis point. The wall's dimensions are three yards high, two yards long and one yard thick. It has a soak pool of 10 dice, and 15 health levels must be inflicted to penetrate it at any point. The wall lasts for one scene or until released into the earth by the Garou.

### Galliard

The Moon Dancers are filled with passion and song, so Luna gives them Gifts that allow them to weave emotions, dreams and hopes. The Galliard is an artist of the highest order, and all the world is his canvas.

• **Beast Speech (Level One)** — The werewolf with this Gift may communicate with any animals from fish to mammals. This Gift does not change their basic reactions; most animals are still afraid of predators such as werewolves. Any spirit of nature can teach this Gift.

**System:** The player simply rolls Charisma + Animal Ken, although each separate encounter or type of animal requires a separate roll.

• **Call of the Wyld (Level One)** — This Gift augments the Galliard's natural task of communication through howls.

The Galliard can howl a cry that stirs and invigorates other werewolves, even those far beyond the normal range of hearing. This Gift is most commonly used at the beginning of revels or other events to charge up the sept, or to call for aid in times of peril. A wolf-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Stamina + Empathy; the number of successes determines how far away the Call can be heard and how stirring it is to those who hear it. This Gift can be used in concert with any of the standard Garou howls (see pp. 45-46). The Storyteller determines the actual effects, but they should be linked to the type of howl made and the intent of the Garou. Some examples are: every two successes gives those at a revel an extra die to their dice pools; Wyrm agents are distracted by the call and their difficulties rise temporarily; all Garou in the area do not hesitate to respond to the Garou's Call for Succor.

• **Mindspeak (Level One)** — By invoking the power of waking dreams, the Garou can place any chosen characters into silent communion. A Chimerling teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Willpower point per sentient being chosen and makes a Manipulation + Expression roll (difficulty of the victim's Willpower) if the being is unwilling. All those included in the dream may interact normally through the Mindspeak, although they can inflict no damage through it. Their real bodies can still act, although all dice pools decrease by two. The Mindspeak ends when all the participants want it to, or on the turn the Galliard fails the roll against an unwilling member. The beings affected must be within line of sight.

• **Call of the Wyrm (Level Two)** — This dangerous Gift actually attracts creatures of the Wyrm. Galliards typically use the Call to bait an ambush or to flush prey from hiding. Any spirit servant of Gaia can teach this Gift.

**System:** The Garou's player makes a resisted roll of Manipulation + Performance against the Wyrm creature's Willpower (both rolls are difficulty 7). If the Wyrm creature loses the contest, it must come to the source of the Call.

• **Distractions (Level Two)** — The Garou can make annoying yips, yelps and howls to divert the attention of his target. A coyote-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Wits + Performance (difficulty of the victim's Willpower). Each success subtracts one die from the target's dice pool next turn.

• **Dreamspeak (Level Two)** — The Galliard can enter another's dream and thereby affect the course of that dream. The werewolf does not have to be anywhere near the target, but she must know or have seen the dreamer. A Chimerling teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Wits + Empathy (difficulty 8). If the dreamer awakens while the Galliard is still within the dream, the werewolf is thrown out of the dream world, and he loses a Gnosis point.

• **Eye of the Cobra (Level Three)** — With but a look, the Garou can attract anyone to his side. A snake-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Appearance + Enigmas (difficulty of the target's Willpower). The Garou needs three successes to bring the target to his side; fewer at least start the victim moving in the right direction. Once there, the target can do as he pleases, but he must try his best to get to the Galliard until then.

• **Song of Rage (Level Three)** — This Gift unleashes the Beast in others, forcing werewolves, vampires and other such creatures into frenzy and turning humans into berserkers. A wolverine-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou rolls Manipulation + Leadership (difficulty of the target's Willpower). The victim flies into a violent rage (or frenzy, if naturally prone) for one turn per success.

• **Bridge Walker (Level Four)** — The Galliard has the ability to create minor moon bridges through which she alone can travel. The Garou travels between the ends of this moon bridge in one percent of the time it would take to travel that distance normally, allowing her to disappear from in front of a foe and reappear behind it instantly. Note that these moon bridges are not protected by Lunes, and they attract the interest of spirit creatures occasionally. These beings have even been known to follow the Garou into the physical world. A Lune teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point to create the bridge. The moon bridge lasts for only one passage, unless the player spends a permanent Gnosis point during its creation, in which case it lasts until the next full moon. The maximum distance that can be traversed by the bridge is the Garou's Gnosis in miles.

• **Shadows by the Firelight (Level Four)** — By invoking the power of shadows and dreams, the Galliard may create interactive stories in which others take part — willingly or not. Shadows dance around the participants as they act out their roles (as directed by the Galliard). This Gift is used commonly at moots, allowing many Garou to take part in the same legend recounted by the Galliard. However, this Gift can also be used on the unwilling, forcing them to participate in a story of the Garou's choosing. An ancestor-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** When using this Gift on the unwilling, the player must spend a variable amount of Gnosis and score three successes on a Manipulation + Performance roll (difficulty of the target's Willpower). If successful, the player may tell a story and force the victim to perform exactly as the story's character does. This effect lasts one turn per Gnosis point spent.

• **Fabric of the Mind (Level Five)** — The highest-ranked Galliards can bring the products of their imagination to very solid life, crafting creatures from the spiritual essence of dreams. Chimerlings teach this Gift.

**System:** The player makes an extended roll of Intelligence + Performance (difficulty 8). She can create any form of life she can imagine, assigning it one dot of Traits for each success gained on the roll. The werewolf can take as long as she wants to form the creature, accumulating successes from turn to turn, but once she stops, the dream being takes form and requires the expenditure of Gnosis to keep it manifested. The cost is one Gnosis per scene if the dream being remains relatively inactive (such as doing minor chores or watching a location), or one point per turn if the being engages in combat or similarly strenuous activity. The werewolf must be careful, because if she botches at any point, the dream being escapes her control. It will remain in the physical world for as long as it sees fit.

• **Head Games (Level Five)** — This Gift embodies the Galliard's ability to manipulate emotion in its purest form. The Galliard can change a target's emotions as she pleases, from hate to love and back again. Coyote-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** The Garou rolls Manipulation + Empathy (difficulty of the target's Willpower). Success allows the Garou to steer the emotions of any one individual. The more successes the player rolls, the more quickly the emotions manifest and the stronger they feel. Some emotions won't last without good cause. A Galliard could make someone fall in love with him, but the love won't last. (It may well even turn into justified

resentment.) If the Galliard's actions would reinforce the emotion — treating a "new friend" well or threatening a terrified foe — there's a better chance that the emotions will become the real thing. The Storyteller should give the Galliard's player extra dice for roleplaying this Gift especially well.

### Ahroun

When Luna is full, she floods her children with Rage. The Ahroun is her chosen warrior, born to fight and die in her name and Gaia's alike. Luna rewards these brave souls with strength, speed, skill and power, all of which one needs direly in the face of the Enemy.

• **Falling Touch (Level One)** — This Gift allows the Garou to send her foe sprawling with but a touch. Any aerial spirit can teach this Gift.

**System:** The Garou's player rolls Dexterity + Medicine (difficulty of the opponent's Stamina + Athletics). Even one success sends the victim to the ground. Doing so counts as an action; activating this Gift and striking a foe with intent to harm are two separate things.

• **Inspiration (Level One)** — Other werewolves look to the Ahroun for leadership in combat. The Gift of Inspiration is one reason. The Garou with this Gift lends new resolve and righteous anger to his brethren. Either a lion- or wolf-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point. All comrades (but not the Gift's user) receive one automatic success on any Willpower rolls made during the scene.

• **Razor Claws (Level One)** — By raking his claws over stone or another hard surface, the Ahroun hones them to razor sharpness. Either a cat- or bear-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Rage point, and the Ahroun must take a full turn to sharpen her claws. For the remainder of the scene, her claw attacks do an additional die of damage.

• **Sense Silver (Level Two)** — As consummate warriors, Ahroun must be prepared for every eventuality — including silver weaponry. This Gift, taught by Lunes, allows the Ahroun to detect the presence of silver.

**System:** The Garou rolls Perception + Primal-Urg (difficulty 7). If successful, she can detect the presence of any nearby silver. Three successes allow him to pinpoint the silver's location.

• **Spirit of the Fray (Level Two)** — This Gift allows the Ahroun to attack with lightning speed, striking before any foe. A cat-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** Once the character learns this Gift, its effects are permanent. The Ahroun may add 10 to all his initiative rolls, which will nearly always ensure that he strikes first. If he chooses, the Ahroun may spend a Gnosis point to add another 10 to his initiative roll. Remember, though, that doing so prevents him from spending Rage to gain extra actions; werewolves can't use Rage and Gnosis in the same turn.

• **True Fear (Level Two)** — The Ahroun can display the true extent of her power, scaring one chosen foe into quiescence for a number of turns. Spirits of fear teach this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Strength + Intimidation (difficulty of the target's Willpower). Each success she achieves cows the enemy for one turn; the victim cannot attack at this time. He may defend himself if attacked and otherwise act normally, although his actions will likely be guided by fear.

• **Heart of Fury (Level Three)** — The Garou can steel himself against anger, suppressing his Rage and creating a mental dam against the explosive frenzies of his kind. This anger will catch up with him eventually, though, so he must vent it before it breaks free. A boar-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Willpower (difficulty of the character's permanent Rage rating). Every two successes add one to the character's frenzy difficulties for the scene, making it harder to frenzy. When the scene ends, however, past slights and injuries come rushing back to haunt the Garou, refilling the Garou's heart and soul. He must spend one Willpower point or make a frenzy check immediately at the regular difficulty.

• **Silver Claws (Level Three)** — The Ahroun can establish her battlefield primacy against other werebeasts by transforming her own claws into silver. A Lune teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Gnosis (difficulty 7) to activate the Gift. The transformation lasts for the scene or until the Ahroun decides to end the Gift. Silver claws still do aggravated damage to all targets, and they are naturally unsoakable to Garou and most other werebeasts. While the Ahroun manifests the claws, she suffers searing agonies. Each turn, she gains an automatic Rage point. Furthermore, all non-combat difficulties increase by one because of the distraction. When her Rage points exceed her Willpower, she must check for frenzy.

• **Clenched Jaw (Level Four)** — The werewolf with this Gift can bite down with such power that her grip won't loosen until she chooses to do so; even in death, her jaws bite down. A wolf- or hyena-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** After making a successful bite attack, the player may invoke this Gift by spending a Rage point. For each successive turn she opts to maintain her grip, she makes a bite attack roll (difficulty 3). While foes can make a resisted Strength roll to break the grip (suffering an additional health level of damage in the process of tearing free), the Garou may add half her Willpower to her dice pool.

• **Stoking Fury's Furnace (Level Four)** — No auspice is as closely tied to their Rage as the Ahroun, who is the master of directing his fury. This Gift — taught by a wolverine-spirit — allows him to channel his Rage even more effectively.

**System:** The Garou regains one Rage point in any turn that he takes damage, and he does not have to check for frenzy from that specific stimulus (other stimuli induce frenzy checks as normal). In addition, the Garou can spend one Rage point — and only one — per turn without losing any temporary Rage. However, if he spends multiple Rage in any turn, they are marked off as usual.

• **Kiss of Helios (Level Five)** — The Ahroun can invoke the sun's power to become completely immune to the damaging effects of fire. Additionally, the Ahroun may ignite any portion of his body and keep it burning for extended periods. Most commonly the Garou will light his mane during rituals, but he can also ignite his claws or mouth without ill effect. A fire elemental or a sun-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis. For the rest of the scene, the Ahroun cannot be harmed by any natural forms of fire, up to and including molten lava. Artificial fires (napalm, gas fires, etc.) do one-quarter damage, and they are treated as bashing damage. The Garou does two additional dice of aggravated damage if he attacks with blazing fists, claws or fangs. The effects last for one scene.

- **Strength of Will (Level Five)** — The Ahroun with this Gift could lead his pack to the gates of Hell itself if that were what it took. A wolf-spirit or an Incarna avatar teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou's player spends a point of Willpower and rolls Charisma + Leadership (difficulty 8). Each success grants all the Garou's allies within 100 feet an extra point of Willpower. These extra points last for the rest of the scene, and they can be spent as usual. This Gift can even raise an ally's Willpower above its maximum or even above 10. This Gift may be used only once per scene.

### *Tribal Gifts*

These Gifts are commonly taught by a spirit in service to or associated with a tribe's totem. Some tribes' Gifts have remained virtually unchanged for centuries, while some tribes (such as the Glass Walkers) learn new Gifts with each passing year.

Learning a Gift from another tribe requires the Garou be on good terms with a member of that tribe (usually a packmate) who can summon the appropriate spirit. Even then, the Garou must convince the spirit that the Gift will be put to good use — and not used against any members of the spirit's patron tribe.

### *Black Furies*

The Black Furies' Gifts reflect their ongoing relationship with the Wyld. The Furies also possess some of the most effective Gifts of war of all the Garou.

- **Breath of the Wyld (Level One)** — As the Furies see it, the problem with most humans (and some Garou) is that they have forgotten that the energy of Creation is nourishing, refreshing and ever present. With this Gift, the Black Fury may instill a feeling of vitality and life in a living being. A spirit servant of Pegasus teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Fury must touch her target's skin, and this Gift must be used outdoors in a natural setting (a city park is natural enough for the Gift to function). The player rolls Gnosis (difficulty 6 for humans, 5 for Garou). Success grants a rush of energy and clarity of thought. In game terms, this Gift grants one extra die on all Mental rolls for the next scene. It also adds one to the difficulty of any Rage rolls the target makes in that time.

- **Heightened Senses (Level One)** — As the lupus Gift.
- **Sense Wyrm (Level One)** — As the metis Gift.

- **Curse of Aeolus (Level Two)** — The Fury calls up a thick, eerie fog that obscures vision and unnerves her opponents. The Fury can see normally, but others caught in this fog halve their Perception scores (with regards to sight only). The fog is quite unnerving, and everyone except the Fury and her packmates loses a die from all Willpower dice pools.

**System:** The player makes a Gnosis roll. The difficulty varies according to the surrounding terrain and humidity: 4 near the sea, 6 under normal circumstances, 9 in a desert. The Black Fury can see normally, but others caught in this fog halve their Perception scores (with regards to sight only). The fog is quite unnerving, and everyone except the Fury and her packmates loses a die from all Willpower dice pools.

- **Sense of the Prey (Level Two)** — As the Ragabash Gift.
- **Coup de Grace (Level Three)** — The Garou studies her foe, looking for the best place to strike. In doing so, she sets herself up to land this devastating attack. An owl-spirit teaches this Gift.



**System:** The player spends one Willpower point and rolls Perception + Brawl (difficulty of the target's Stamina + Dodge). If successful, the player doubles her damage dice on the Garou's next successful attack.

• **Visceral Agony (Level Three)** — The werewolf's claws change to barbed, wicked talons dripping with black venom. While wounds caused by these claws cause no extra damage, the pain alone they inflict is crippling. A pain-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Rage point before the character attacks. Any wound penalties the target suffers as a result of this attack are doubled (i.e., a foe at Wounded would lose four dice). If the target is in frenzy or otherwise resistant to pain, he still suffers normal wound penalties.

• **Body Wrack (Level Four)** — The Fury causes a target immense, crippling pain. The Fury needs only point to the target for this Gift to be effective. A pain-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Strength + Medicine (difficulty of the opponent's Stamina + 3). Each success causes the victim to lose one die from all dice pools as pain wracks her body. The effects last for one scene.

• **Wasp Talons (Level Four)** — The Fury with this talent can fire her claws from her hand like darts. She is incapable of using claw attacks with that hand until her claws regenerate, however. A wasp-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Rage point and rolls Dexterity + Brawl to hit. The difficulty is figured as though the character was using a firearm; the medium range is 20 yards. Damage is figured normally for a claw-strike. The Garou's claws take one full turn to regenerate.

• **Thousand Forms (Level Five)** — As the Ragabash Gift. The Fury that chooses to risk taking the form of a mythical beast typically honors Pegasus by assuming her form.

• **Wyld Warp (Level Five)** — A desperate tactic at best, this Gift summons a number of Wyld-spirits. What they do when they arrive is wholly unpredictable. They may run or fly about in a destructive frenzy, tearing the Fury's foes apart. They may grant the Fury and her packmates temporary increases in might or Rage, or they might decide to destroy all Weaver-tools in the area. They may even heal the Fury and her allies of any wounds they have suffered. The Fury has no way of knowing, but the effect is usually beneficial. A Wyldling teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and one Rage point. She then rolls Wits + Enigmas (difficulty of the local Gauntlet). Successes summons a variable number of Wyldlings, which will alter the situation as the Storyteller sees fit.

### *Bone Gnawers*

Whatever else can be said about them, the Bone Gnawers are survivors without peer. Their Gifts — blessings from Rat and her brood — are geared chiefly toward surviving the perils of the modern world.

• **Cooking (Level One)** — The Garou must have small pot (a coffee can will do) and a ladle or spoon to use this Gift. He places whatever he can find into the pot — trash, beer cans, old newspapers, etc. — adds water (spit counts) and stirs. The result is a pasty, bland-tasting mush that is nevertheless edible and filling.

**System:** The player rolls Wits + Survival. The difficulty depends on the items "cooked." Inedible but harmless material is difficulty 6, while actively toxic substances are difficulty 10.

• **Resist Toxin (Level One)** — Many Bone Gnawers learn a preternatural resistance to poisons and toxins of all kinds, doubtless due to their diet of refuse and American beer. A trash-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Stamina + Survival. Success nullifies the effects of most conventional poisons, and adds three dice to the Garou's Stamina for purposes of resisting Wyrm-enhanced poisons. The effects last for the scene.

• **Tagalong (Level One)** — Commonly used by Bone Gnawers residing in a sept controlled by other tribes, this Gift ingratiate the Bone Gnawer to a pack's or caern's totem for a short time. While the Gift is in effect, the Gnawer is treated as a member of a pack with regards to using the totem's blessings and any pack tactics the pack knows. If used on a caern totem, the totem looks favorably upon the Bone Gnawer. The Gnawer may then perform the Rite of the Opened Caern, if he knows it, without fear of retribution. A lost-dog-spirit, a spirit servant of Rat, teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Bone Gnawer must know the name of the totem in question. He must also prostrate himself before the caern's center or the pack's leader and wiggle forward on his stomach like a begging dog. The player rolls Charisma + Subterfuge. The difficulty varies based on the totem's opinion of the Bone Gnawer, which is left to the Storyteller's discretion. Success indicates that the character gains the previously mentioned benefits for one day, and that the totem will not look favorably on a Garou who mistreats the Bone Gnawer without cause. This Gift usually won't cause any bad feelings from the sept or pack in question as long as the Bone Gnawer minds his manners. However, using it too often certainly will.

• **Blissful Ignorance (Level Two)** — As the Ragabash Gift.

• **Odious Aroma (Level Two)** — The Bone Gnawer can amplify his (probably already formidable) body odor to the point that it debilitates any who can smell it. A stinkbug-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one point of Gnosis. For the duration of the scene, all beings that can smell and are within 20 feet of the Garou subtract two from all dice pools as they fight to breathe.

• **Friend In Need (Level Three)** — It takes a lot for a pack to accept a Bone Gnawer as an equal, but once they do, the Bone Gnawer's loyalty is unshakable. This Gift allows a Bone Gnawer to risk all, even his own life, to aid a packmate or tribemate. A dog-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** When a packmate or fellow Bone Gnawer is in danger, the Bone Gnawer may "lend" him what he needs, be it a Gift the Bone Gnawer knows, his Rage, his Willpower, or even his own life (in the form of health levels). The Bone Gnawer cannot lend a Gift of a higher rank than the recipient could know, nor can he lend Abilities or Attributes. The player must spend one Willpower point and roll Willpower (difficulty 7) and must succeed for the transfer to take place. If the roll botches, the Bone Gnawer loses the Traits in question but the recipient does not gain them. This Gift lasts until the end of the scene unless the recipient decides to terminate it early. If the recipient dies before the Traits are returned, the Bone Gnawer loses them permanently.

• **Reshape Object (Level Three)** — As the homid Gift.

• **Attunement (Level Four)** — The Garou may commune with the spirits of a city or town and gain information about the area from them, including rough population, enclaves of Garou

or other beings and secret tunnels. This Gift does not function in the wilderness, since the Bone Gnawers have lost the knack for conversing with such spirits easily. A rat-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis and rolls Perception + Streetwise. The amount and accuracy of the information depend on the number of successes rolled. On a botch, playful spirits lie (which can be fatal, depending on the nature of misinformation).

• **Infest (Level Four)** — The Garou can summon a horde of vermin to invade a structure (no bigger than a large building). The Gift summons any kind of vermin common to the area, which usually includes a lively variety of insects, slugs and rodents, and it may also include carrion birds and snakes. These creatures will not attack humans mindlessly. They will act according to their natures, which often means fleeing to dark places and hiding out. Any vermin spirit can teach this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis and rolls Manipulation + Animal Ken (difficulty 7). One success stirs up some shrieks and a call to an exterminator, while five swamps the structure in vermin completely, making it uninhabitable for quite some time.

• **Riot (Level Five)** — This Gift summons a horde of malevolent spirits to provoke the inhabitants of a city into violent rioting. The Gift plays on the hatred and fear of the down-and-outs of the city: the homeless, the poor and even stray animals. The Gnawer can direct the riot to a degree, but such things tend to escalate, and the Garou has no power to stop the riot from doing so. A rat-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Wits + Subterfuge (difficulty 8). If successful, the spirits direct their hosts against a target of the Garou's choice. The different hosts, however, will not necessarily work together — they may even begin to fight each other as the mob mentality takes over. The number of successes determines the area affected.

Successes	Extent
One	Building
Two	Block
Three	Neighborhood
Four	District (the South Side, etc.)
Five	Entire City

• **Survivor (Level Five)** — This Gift confers temporary immunity to many environmental factors. The Garou has no need of food, water or sleep, and she does not suffer from temperature extremes. She is also immune to natural diseases and poisons. Wyrm toxins will still affect her, but at half their normal potency.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis and rolls Stamina + Survival (difficulty 7). The effects last for one day per success. By spending a second Gnosis point, the Bone Gnawer can gain three extra points of Stamina, and he suffers no wound penalties, but the Gift will expire prematurely after 10 rounds of full combat. The Garou must sleep for at least eight hours when the Gift wears off, and he awakens ravenously hungry.

### *Children of Gaia*

The most peaceful of the tribes, the Children of Gaia's Gifts aid in calming others and strengthening themselves. The Children are not devout pacifists, and many of their Gifts prove that their approach to war is no weaker than that of any other tribe.

• **Mercy (Level One)** — Children of Gaia see no use for lethal force when they are not fighting minions of the Wyrm, but even they succumb to frenzy. This Gift, used chiefly by

Children of Gaia with high Rage or in duels, allows the Garou to use her natural weaponry and Rage without fear of killing her opponent. A dove-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point. For the rest of the scene, all damage that the Garou inflicts with her own body (claws and teeth, but not weapons of any kind) is considered bashing. A creature "killed" by such damage merely falls unconscious, and he may heal the wounds at the usual rate for bashing damage (see *Healing*).

- **Mother's Touch (Level One)** — As the Theurge Gift.
- **Resist Pain (Level One)** — As the Philodox Gift.
- **Calm (Level Two)** — This Gift imparts the secret of quelling the anger in others. A unicorn-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Empathy (difficulty of the target's Willpower). Each success removes one of the target's Rage points, which may be regained normally. If used on a creature that has the capacity to frenzy but does not possess Rage (vampires, some fomori), the Gift cancels the frenzy if the player scores more successes than the target's Willpower.

• **Luna's Armor (Level Two)** — The Child of Gaia may call for Luna's protection in battle. This Gift even allows limited resistance to silver. A Lune teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou concentrates for one full turn, and the player spends a Gnosis point and rolls base Stamina + Survival (difficulty 7). The player may add one die per success to the Garou's soak pool for the rest of the scene. These bonus dice may also be used to soak silver damage, but only these dice. For example, if the Garou's Stamina is 4 and the player rolls three successes, the Garou has seven dice to soak non-silver damage and three to soak silver.

• **Dazzle (Level Three)** — The Garou can flood a target's mind with the glory and love of Gaia, rendering him harmless for a short while. A unicorn-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Charisma + Empathy. The difficulty varies according to the target.

Target	Difficulty
Normal human	4
Packmate	5
Gaian Garou (even frenzied)	6
Wyrm creature (including Black Spiral Dancers)	8
Alien or unemotional creatures (vampires)	9

Dazzle rarely works to pacify spirits that don't feel emotion or that have a specific emotional focus (like hate-spirits). Success indicates that the target sits down and stays there, contemplating Gaia's love quietly, for the rest of the scene. Attacking the target will disrupt the effects of this Gift. Dazzle can be used on a given target only once per scene.

• **Spirit Friend (Level Three)** — A Child of Gaia's presence is generally more beatific than that of most werewolves, and although humans can't sense this aura of peace, spirits can. The Garou can use this Gift to aid in interactions with spirits. A unicorn-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Charisma + Empathy (difficulty 7). Each success adds one die to any rolls involving interactions with spirits for the duration of the scene.

• **Beast Life (Level Four)** — As the lupus Gift. Children of Gaia who use this Gift never do so if the animals attracted would come to harm, unless the very heart of a caern is threatened.



• **Strike the Air (Level Four)** — The Garou becomes the ultimate example of passive resistance. She becomes unable to attack an opponent, but she is also unable to be hit, allowing her opponent to exhaust himself in the attempt. A mongoose-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Willpower point and rolls Wits + Dodge (difficulty of the opponent's Willpower). For the duration of the scene, the opponent cannot strike the Garou, no matter how many successes he achieves on the roll. This Gift is canceled immediately if the werewolf attacks his opponent or if anyone else attacks on the Garou's behalf. This Gift will work on multiple opponents, but the player must spend a point of Willpower and make a new roll for each opponent.

• **Halo of the Sun (Level Five)** — The Garou is surrounded by a nimbus of blazing sunlight. Some Wyrm-creatures may flee before this terrifying sight, but any who stay and fight discover that the Garou strikes with added power. Helios, the Celestine of the sun, teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point, and the effects of the Gift last for one scene. The Garou is surrounded in blinding sunlight, and anyone looking directly at the werewolf is blinded (add three to difficulties to attack the Garou). The Garou adds two dice of damage to all hand attacks, and hand damage is considered aggravated in all forms. Any vampires within 20 feet take damage as though exposed to true, direct sunlight.

• **The Living Wood (Level Five)** — The Garou calls upon the spirits of the forest to come to her aid. The trees around the Child of Gaia animate, and they can restrain or fight foes. A Glade Child teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Survival (difficulty 8). Each success animates one tree. The trees move with the Dexterity of the Child of Gaia, and they can have Strength ratings from 4 to 15, depending on their size. Other Traits are up to the Storyteller's discretion.

### *Fianna*

The Gifts of the Fianna lean toward their fae allies and vigorous nature, and toward calling on the power of their lands.

• **Faerie Light (Level One)** — The Garou can conjure a small, bobbing sphere of light. The sphere illuminates only a three-foot area, but that is usually enough to provide the necessary light — or to lead foes into ambush. A marsh-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Wits + Enigmas (difficulty 6). The light can appear anywhere within the Garou's line of sight. It can move, bobbing along at 10 feet per turn, if bidden to do so. The light lasts for one turn per success, but the player can spend a point of Gnosis to make it last for the entire scene.

• **Persuasion (Level One)** — As the homid Gift.

• **Resist Toxin (Level One)** — As the Bone Gnawer Gift.

• **Glib Tongue (Level Two)** — This Gift makes listeners hear whatever they wish to hear. The Fianna can say anything, even total gibberish, but anyone listening will agree heartily. While this Gift is not a way to talk a millionaire into signing over all his goods, it is a superb method of talking one's way into a party, making fast friends or avoiding being caught in a lie. A rabbit-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Wits + Expression (difficulty of the listener's Wits + Alertness). The effects last for one turn per success.

• **Howl of the Banshee (Level Two)** — The werewolf emits a fearful howl that causes those who hear it to run in terror. A Banshee — a mournful spirit of the dead — teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Intimidation. All who hear the howl must roll Willpower (difficulty 8, 6 for allies of the Fianna) or flee in terror for one turn per success on the Garou's roll.

• **Faerie Kin (Level Three)** — The Fianna can call upon ancient pacts between her people and the fae. By emitting a special howl, the Garou can call whatever fae are in the area to help. They will obey the Fianna, but not without question. A dream-spirit teaches this Gift, and the teaching normally involves a quest of some kind.

**System:** The player spends at least one Gnosis point and rolls Manipulation + Occult (difficulty 8). Spending more Gnosis increases the raw power of the faeries who respond, while more successes on the roll means that more faeries answer. Note that this Gift may summon changelings or dream-spirits called *chimera*, but it will call true fae only in strange Umbral reaches, and even then very rarely. Botching this roll is bad news; the faeries who respond are vicious and malevolent, and they will act to hinder the Garou.

• **Reshape Object (Level Three)** — As the homid Gift.  
• **Balor's Gaze (Level Four)** — This Gift emulates the power of one of the Fianna's legendary enemies. One of the Garou's eyes glows a livid red color, and all enemies caught in his gaze are stricken with pain. A pain-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Rage point and one Gnosis. She must then roll Perception + Occult (difficulty 8). For the rest of the scene, any foe at whom the Garou glances must roll Willpower (difficulty 8) and equal or exceed the player's successes or double over in pain. Any beings thus affected take wound penalties as though they were at Crippled (-5 dice to all actions), regardless of their current health. Any characters already at Crippled are considered Incapacitated.

• **Phantasm (Level Four)** — The Garou creates an unmoving illusion that contains visual, auditory, olfactory and even tactile elements. A grain-spirit — the so-called "spirit of spirits" — teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis for each 10-foot area to be covered by the illusion and then rolls Intelligence + Expression. Anyone who doubts the illusion must roll Perception + Alertness and exceed the Garou's successes in order to see through it.

• **Call the Hunt (Level Five)** — The werewolf may use this Gift only once per month, and only if there is an overwhelming need for it (such as discovering that a truly great evil infests an area). This Gift calls the Huntsman of Celtic mythology to harry and slay the evil. The Huntsman himself teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou must chant and concentrate for one full hour. The player then spends one Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Occult (difficulty 8). The Huntsman appears with a single hound, plus one hound for each extra Rage or Gnosis point the player wishes to expend. If the roll is botched, the evil is not worthy of the Huntsman's attention. If the summoner does not join the hunt, the Huntsman instead leads the hunt against the Garou.

• **Gift of the Spriggan (Level Five)** — The Fianna may grow to up to three times her usual size or shrink to the size of a small puppy. A faerie or a Chimerling teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Stamina + Primal-Urge (difficulty 8). The effects last for one

hour per success or until the Garou cancels the Gift. If the Garou grows larger, she gains three Strength dice for every 100% increase in size. If she grows smaller, she retains her normal Traits, but she may sneak around unnoticed or masquerade as someone's pet.

### *Get of Fenris*

Fierce warriors against the Wyrm one and all, the Get's Gifts are almost universally martial. Even their Ragabash and Theurges are expected to stand out in battle.

- **Razor Claws (Level One)** — As the Ahroun Gift.
- **Resist Pain (Level One)** — As the Philodox Gift.
- **Visage of Fenris (Level One)** — The Get appears larger and more fearsome, commanding respect from peers and cowing his foes. A wolf-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Charisma + Intimidation. Only one success is necessary to affect non-Garou and Garou of equal rank. To affect Garou of higher rank, the player must score a number of successes equal to twice the difference of rank between the Garou and the target. For example, for a Rank 1 Garou to affect a Rank 5 Garou would require eight successes (not very likely). Allies and peers affected by this Gift see the Get as impressive and noble (-1 difficulty bonus to all Social rolls). Foes pause for a moment to summon the resolve necessary to fight such a monster (losing one from their initiative ratings). This Gift lasts for one scene.

• **Halt the Coward's Flight (Level Two)** — The Garou may slow a fleeing (not charging) foe, making him easier to catch. A wolf-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou must spend one turn concentrating, and the player rolls Charisma + Intimidation (difficulty of the target's Willpower). If the roll succeeds, the target's speed is halved for one scene.

• **Snarl of the Predator (Level Two)** — The Garou lets out a feral snarl that terrifies opponents and cows them into submission. A wolf-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Charisma + Intimidation (difficulty of the opponent's Wits + 3). Each success subtracts one die from an opponent's dice pools on the next turn. This Gift takes one full turn to invoke.

• **Might of Thor (Level Three)** — The Garou can increase his strength tremendously, the better to slay his foes. A wolf-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis and one Rage, then rolls Willpower (difficulty 8). The Garou's Strength doubles for one turn per success. After the Gift wears off, the Get is weakened considerably (Physical Attributes are considered 1, and Willpower is halved) until he can rest for at least one hour.

• **Venom Blood (Level Three)** — The Garou may change her blood into a black, acidic bile that poisons anyone unlucky enough to come into contact with it. A snake- or spider-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Rage point and rolls Stamina + Medicine (difficulty 7). Anyone coming into contact with the Garou's blood for the duration of the scene takes one die of aggravated damage per success on the first roll.

• **Hero's Stand (Level Four)** — The Garou channels the strength of Gaia herself, becoming one with the earth upon which he stands. While he may not retreat or even move from

that spot for the duration of the Gift, he gains many powers through Gaia's might. An earth elemental teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Willpower (difficulty 8). Each success grants one extra die to all Physical dice pools. Also, the Garou may not be surprised, and all attacks are considered frontal. The Garou may not move until all foes have been defeated or have fled.

• **Scream of Gaia (Level Four)** — The Garou emits a horrible, ragged scream imbued with Rage and the pain of Gaia. The force of the scream batters foes and knocks them off their feet. Storm-spirits, which the Get call Sturms, teach this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Rage. Everyone within a 50-foot radius is blasted to the ground to suffer one health level of bashing damage per success as a shockwave rips through the area.

• **Horde of Valhalla (Level Five)** — The Garou who uses this Gift must be in good standing with his tribe's totem, and he must have a great need for aid, for he is asking help of Fenris himself. This Gift — taught by an avatar of Fenris — summons great wolves to come to the Garou's aid.

**System:** The player spends as much Rage and/or Gnosis as he wishes and rolls Charisma + Animal Ken. If successful, a number of spirit wolves appear from the Umbra to do battle with the Garou foes. The number of wolves is equal to the number of points spent by the player. The wolves are functionally identical to the wolves of the Great Hunt. They remain for the entire scene.

• **Fenris' Bite (Level Five)** — The Garou's already vicious bite increases in power terribly, to the point that the Garou can mangle or even sever limbs with a single bite. An avatar of Fenris teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Rage point and rolls Strength + Medicine (difficulty of the opponent's Stamina + 3). The Garou's next bite attack, if it hits, will mangle and disable one of the target's limbs, inflicting three automatic, unsoakable, aggravated health levels of damage in addition to any damage already rolled. The limb is rendered useless until the target can regenerate the damage, or permanently in the case of humans and other creatures who do not regenerate. If the player achieves five or more successes on the Strength + Medicine roll, the limb is severed.

### *Glass Walkers*

Many of the Glass Walker's Gifts involve Weaver-spirits of one type or another. This association earns them no respect in the eyes of most of the tribes, but it does afford them great versatility and an unparalleled rapport with modern technology.

• **Control Simple Machine (Level One)** — The Garou may command the spirits of the simplest machines,



causing levers to flip, doors to unbolt, pulleys to roll and so on. Any technological spirit can teach this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Willpower point and rolls Manipulation + Crafts (difficulty 7). The Garou's control lasts until the end of the scene.

- **Diagnostics (Level One)** — At a glance, the Glass Walker can tell what is wrong with a machine. He can then enlist the aid of the machine's spirit in repairing the faulty device. Any technological spirit can teach this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Crafts to determine the problem. She then spends one Gnosis point as the Garou mentally convinces the spirit of the device to aid her in fixing it. (Most such spirits are happy to do so — they don't want to be junk!) The time to fix the device is halved, and the player may subtract any successes on the Perception + Crafts roll from the successes necessary to fix the device (see *Repair*, p. 198).

- **Trick Shot (Level One)** — This Gift, once an acquired taste, has undergone a recent surge in popularity. It allows the Garou to execute brilliant feats of sharpshooting, such as shooting a weapon from an opponent's hand or firing down the barrel of an enemy's gun. The Garou cannot use this Gift to harm an opponent directly, however, and he can use Trick Shot only with rifles or pistols. Air-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** The player adds the character's permanent Glory rating to his dice pool when performing a really outlandish shooting trick. Again, this Gift does not allow direct damage to targets ("I'll shoot him between the eyes!"), but it can be used to injure opponents indirectly. ("I'll shoot the rope that's holding the chandelier over his head!") The effects are permanent.

- **Cybersenses (Level Two)** — By studying both his natural senses and the sensory capabilities of machines, the Garou may exchange the former for the latter. He may choose to exchange normal hearing for radar, or ordinary sight for infrared or UV sight. Any technological spirit can teach this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point per sense affected, and he rolls Perception + Science thereafter to activate the Garou's new senses. This Gift lasts for one scene.

- **Power Surge (Level Two)** — By speaking with electricity spirits, the Garou causes a blackout over a widespread area. An electricity elemental teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Wits + Science (difficulty 7). The number of successes determines how large of an area is blacked out. One success would black out a single room, while five would cut the power to a whole neighborhood.

- **Control Complex Machine (Level Three)** — Similar to Control Simple Machine, the Garou may now converse with and command the spirits of electronic devices such as computers, video games and cars. One learns (or steals) this Gift from a Net-Spider.

**System:** The player spends one Willpower point and rolls Manipulation + Science (or Computer). The Storyteller sets the difficulty based on how complex the machine actually is (usually 8). The Garou's control lasts for one scene.

- **Elemental Favor (Level Three)** — By begging, threatening or cajoling an urban elemental, a Garou can convince the spirit to do her a favor by manipulating or even destroying her earthly shell. Thus, a glass sheet might explode at the Garou's foes; a door might refuse to open, even if unlocked, or a car's brakes might fail. An urban elemental teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Charisma + Subterfuge (difficulty of the spirit's Gnosis). The Storyteller determines the precise effects.

- **Attunement (Level Four)** — As the Bone Gnawer Gift, but taught by a cockroach-spirit.

- **Doppelganger (Level Four)** — The Garou may take the exact likeness of any other human, wolf or Garou. A chameleon-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Performance (difficulty 8). Traits aren't duplicated, but everything else, including voice, posture and scent, is identical. The effects last for one day per success.

- **Chaos Mechanics (Level Five)** — Werewolves pulse with the Wyld's energy, of course, but all creatures with form and nature have something of the Weaver in them, or so the Glass Walkers argue. Upon learning this Gift, the Glass Walker reconciles these two sides of his being, and he can summon primal energy and mystical form at the same time.

**System:** A Garou with this Gift may use Rage and Gnosis in the same turn with no penalty. Doing so allows the Garou to use Rage actions to activate fetishes and use Gifts requiring Gnosis (provided that said Gift does not take a full turn to enact). What's more important is that it allows the Garou to take Rage actions in the same turn that he steps sideways, provided that the player rolls enough successes to get to or from the Umbra instantly. This Gift's effects are permanent.

- **Summon Net-Spider (Level Five)** — The Garou can summon a Net-Spider, a Weaver spirit that gives its summoner near-absolute control over any computer system. The Spider can disrupt, erase or destroy whatever system it is sent into (the exact effects are left to the Storyteller, but are typically destructive). An avatar of Cockroach teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Computer (difficulty 8). If successful, the Net-Spider appears and heeds the Garou's commands. This Gift allows the Garou to halve all computer-related difficulties along with the aforementioned destructive capacity of the spirit.

### *Red Talons*

The fearsome Talons hate humans, and Griffin grants them Gifts geared toward the destructive, violent side of nature. All the better to repay the humans in kind for their treatment of Gaia.

- **Beast Speech (Level One)** — As the Galliard Gift.

- **Scent of Running Water (Level One)** — As the Ragabash Gift.

- **Wolf at the Door (Level One)** — Some humans can't just be splattered all over the nearest tree. Some of them have to be taught a lesson and left alive, for whatever reason. However, the Red Talons know how to make the message stick. This Gift induces a terrible dread of and respect for the forest, and it makes a human target afraid to tamper with it in any way. Any predator spirit can teach this Gift.

**System:** The Garou must make eye contact with the target, but he can be in any form when she does so. The player then rolls Charisma + Primal-Urge (difficulty of the target's Willpower). The effects last for one day per success. During this time, the human must roll Willpower to leave his home, and he may not go near anything resembling a forest without spending a Willpower point. If the human does leave home, he is shaky

and fearful until he returns, and his player loses two dice from all Mental and Social dice pools. This Gift functions on Kinfolk, mages, ghouls and other "supernatural" humans, but the difficulty increases by two to a maximum of 10.

• **Beastmind (Level Two)** — The Garou can reduce the mental faculties of his victim to that of an animal for a short time. An avatar of Griffin teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Manipulation + Empathy (difficulty of the target's Willpower). The effects last for one turn per success, during which the target listens to only his most base instincts and behaves like a wild animal.

• **Sense of the Prey (Level Two)** — As the Ragabash Gift.

• **Elemental Favor (Level Three)** — As the Glass Walker Gift, except that this version affects the four classic elements — fire, earth, water and air — and a natural elemental teaches it.

• **Trackless Waste (Level Three)** — Humans have no sense of direction, the Talons assert. With this Gift, the Garou can make certain that they don't. The Talon employing Trackless Waste must have some familiarity with the terrain in question. Upon using the Gift, humans become hopelessly lost. Compasses malfunction, maps are misleading, and landmarks seem to be out of place. A spirit of the wilderness teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Intelligence + Primal-Urge. Each success "scrambles" a two-mile radius. This Gift functions on other werewolves, but they can resist with a Perception + Primal-Urge roll, and they must score more successes than the Talon to remain unaffected. This Gift lasts for four hours.

• **Gorge (Level Four)** — Natural wolves will eat as much as possible when food is available, for they never know when their next meal will arrive. With this Gift, a Red Talon can do much the same thing with Rage, Gnosis or Willpower, storing such energy against the day when she will need it. A wolf-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** Upon learning this Gift, the player chooses which Trait (Rage, Gnosis or Willpower) her character can store. Thereafter, the character can hold three more points in the appropriate Trait than her permanent rating. These extra points must be regained as usual, and they do not add extra dice to rolls involving these Traits. To amplify more than one Trait the character must learn the Gift (i.e., pay the experience cost) a second time.

• **Quicksand (Level Four)** — The Garou turns the ground into a sticky morass that catches foes and prevents them from escaping or even walking. An earth elemental teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Manipulation + Primal-Urge (difficulty 7). Each success changes the ground into a quicksand-like bog for a 10-foot radius. Anyone trying to move through it (except the Garou) moves at half walking speed, and he may not execute combat maneuvers that require overland movement. Additionally, all other combat maneuvers take a +1 difficulty penalty.

• **Curse of Lycaon (Level Five)** — In the ultimate twist, this Gift allows a Red Talon to transform a human being into a wolf. This Gift also works on Garou, forcing them into Lupus form. A wolf-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one point of Gnosis and rolls Gnosis (difficulty of the target's Willpower). Only one success is necessary. Werewolves are forced into Lupus form for the duration of the scene. When used on humans, the effect of the

Gift is permanent. The person remains a normal wolf in body and mind for the rest of his life.

• **Gaia's Vengeance (Level Five)** — The Garou calls to the spirits of the surrounding forest to attack intruders. The terrain responds as best it can: Rocks roll and smash, vines trip, and water sucks victims under. An avatar of Gaia herself teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and one Rage point then rolls Charisma + Primal-Urge (difficulty of the local Gauntlet). The exact effects depend on the terrain and are left to the Storyteller.

### *Shadow Lords*

The Shadow Lords' repertoire of Gifts consists a number of ways to intimidate, control and assert dominance over others.

• **Aura of Confidence (Level One)** — The Garou projects a demeanor of control and superiority, preventing attempts to find flaws or read auras. This Gift does not prevent supernatural attempts to read the Garou's thoughts, although it may make doing so difficult (Storyteller's discretion). An ancestor-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Charisma + Subterfuge (difficulty 7) to activate the Gift; the effects lasts for one scene.

• **Fatal Flaw (Level One)** — The Shadow Lord can discern a target's weakness, granting an advantage in combat. A Stormcrow teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Shadow Lord must concentrate for one full turn. The player rolls Perception + Empathy (difficulty of the target's Wits + Subterfuge). Success grants the Garou an extra die of damage during combat with that target. Additional successes grant knowledge of further weaknesses (although no further damage bonus is gained). Five successes reveal all of the target's flaws.

• **Seizing the Edge (Level One)** — To the Shadow Lords, there is no possible way for a contest to be even. If neither competitor wins, they both lose. This Gift allows the Garou to swing the balance, ever so slightly, in her favor. A spirit servant of Grandfather Thunder teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point. For the remainder of the scene, whenever the Shadow Lord is involved in a direct confrontation with another being (specifically, if the player must make an opposed roll), any ties go to the Shadow Lord. For example, a Shadow Lord and her Get of Fenris rival are wrestling. Both players must roll to see if the Get of Fenris can break the hold that the Shadow Lord has caught him in. If the players roll the same number of successes, the Shadow Lord wins, and the Get remains pinned. This Gift lasts for one scene.

• **Clap of Thunder (Level Two)** — The Garou slams her hands together and creates a mighty thunderclap that stuns those who hear it. A Stormcrow teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point. All characters within 10 feet, friend or foe, must succeed in a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) or be stunned and unable to act for one turn. On a botch, the effect lasts for one scene. The Garou must be in Homid, Glabro or Crinos form to use this Gift.

• **Luna's Armor (Level Two)** — As the Child of Gaia Gift.

• **Direct the Storm (Level Three)** — Having a packmate who is prone to frenzy isn't safe for anyone. With this Gift, the Shadow Lord can direct the primal instincts of a frenzied Garou — friend or foe — causing him to attack targets of the Lord's choice. A Stormcrow teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Willpower (difficulty of the target's Rage). Success indicates that the Shadow Lord controls the target's frenzy and can set him on anyone she chooses. Using this Gift on a Garou in the Thrall of the Wyrm is possible, but doing so requires the player to roll Rage (difficulty 7) to check for frenzy for her own character.

• **Paralyzing Stare (Level Three)** — The Shadow Lord directs a terrifying glare at a target, causing her to freeze in terror. A Stormcrow teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou concentrates for one turn. The player spends one Gnosis point, and rolls Charisma + Intimidation (difficulty of the target's Willpower). Each success freezes the target in place for one turn. The target must be able to see the Garou.

• **Open Wounds (Level Four)** — The Garou may cause the next wound he inflicts to bleed profusely, weakening the target further. A pain-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Strength + Medicine (difficulty 7). If the Shadow Lord's next attack does any damage, the target will bleed continuously, losing one health level per turn for a number of turns equal to the number of successes rolled. This hemorrhaging is considered lethal damage.

• **Strength of the Dominator (Level Four)** — The Garou draws on a target's anger to feed his own. A Stormcrow teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Wits + Intimidation (difficulty of the target's Willpower). For a number of turns equal to the successes scored, the target will lose a point of Rage per turn, while the Shadow Lord gains that Rage. The character can use this Gift only once per target per scene.

• **Obedience (Level Five)** — With the power of this Gift, the Shadow Lord becomes the ultimate alpha, compelling all others to follow her orders. A Stormcrow teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Leadership (difficulty 8). All in the vicinity must roll Willpower (difficulty 8) and match or exceed the Garou's successes to avoid the effects of the Gift. If the werewolf wins by one success, the targets follow any orders they don't mind following. Getting three successes means that the targets will treat the Garou as their alpha and fight for him. Getting five successes means that the targets will follow him into the Abyss or perform other virtually suicidal actions.

• **Shadow Pack (Level Five)** — The Garou summons up shadowy duplicates of himself to stand by him in battle. These shadow-wolves resemble the Shadow Lord and have some of the same capabilities. A night-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Gnosis (difficulty 8) and spends a variable number of Gnosis points. For each point spent, the Garou summons a shadow-duplicate. These duplicates have the same Attributes and Abilities as the Garou, but they may not use Gnosis or Willpower. Each has only one health level (i.e., any attack that is not soaked destroys it). The duplicates fade at the end of the scene.

### *Silent Striders*

The enigmatic Striders possess Gifts of travel and speed.

• **Sense Wyrm (Level One)** — As the metis Gift.

• **Silence (Level One)** — The Garou can muffle any sound she makes, the better to creep up on an enemy or escape unnoticed. An owl-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Dexterity + Stealth. Each success adds one to others' difficulty to hear the Garou for one scene.

• **Speed of Thought (Level One)** — The Garou doubles her running speed. A roadrunner- or cheetah-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point. The Gift lasts until the end of the scene.

• **Blissful Ignorance (Level Two)** — As the Ragabash Gift.

• **Messenger's Fortitude (Level Two)** — The Garou can run at full speed for three days without rest, food or water. When the Garou reaches her destination, she has 10 minutes to complete whatever business brought her, then she must sleep for three days. A camel- or wolf-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point. The Garou may do nothing but run; stopping ends the Gift. For an additional Gnosis point, he may imbue another being with this Gift's benefits.

• **Adaptation (Level Three)** — The Garou takes no damage from poison or disease, and he may exist in any environment, regardless of pressure, temperature or atmospheric condition. This Gift does not protect the Garou from hazardous situations (like falling), only hazardous environments. A bear-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Stamina + Survival (difficulty 7). Each success extends the Gift's effects by one hour.

• **Great Leap (Level Three)** — The Strider with this Gift can jump truly astounding distances. A jackrabbit-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Willpower point and rolls Strength + Athletics. Each success allows the character to jump 100 feet.

• **Attunement (Level Four)** — As the Bone Gnawer Gift, with one exception: When the Garou learns the Gift, she must choose if it functions in the city or the wilderness. The "city" version is identical to the Bone Gnawer Gift. The "wilderness" version is similar, but the roll required is Perception + Survival.

• **Speed Beyond Thought (Level Four)** — The Garou can run at 10 times his normal land speed. The effects last for up to eight hours, during which the Garou can nothing but concentrate on running. When the Gift's effects end, the Garou must eat immediately or face frenzy from hunger. A cheetah- or air-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Stamina + Athletics (difficulty 7) to activate the Gift.

• **Gate of the Moon (Level Five)** — This Gift creates a specialized moon bridge that takes the Strider to her destination instantly. At least a sliver of the moon must be visible at her area of departure. A Lune teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point for every 100 miles the Garou needs to travel. She then rolls Intelligence + Alertness (difficulty varies on how far the journey is and how well the Garou knows the way). Success transports the character to her destination, but she will be disoriented for one turn unless the player scored three successes. A bat-spirit takes the character miles in the wrong direction — possibly straight up.

• **Reach the Umbra (Level Five)** — The Garou may step into and out of the Umbra at will, without need of a reflective surface or even any effort at all. An owl-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou may step sideways instantly, at any time, with no fear of being "caught." No roll is necessary. In

addition, all rolls made to enter or leave Umbral Realms receive a -2 difficulty bonus. She may not, however, spend Rage in the same turn that she steps sideways.

### *Silver Fangs*

The regal Silver Fangs are the longtime leaders of the Garou, and their Gifts are part of — and they reflect — their birthright.

• **Falcon's Grasp (Level One)** — A leader must keep a tight grip on his power, and this Gift allows the Garou to do so literally. The Garou's hands or jaws tighten in a mighty death-grip, making it nearly impossible to escape. A falcon-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one point of Rage. For the remainder of the scene, the Garou's grip with either hands or jaws (or both at a cost of two Rage) is much stronger. In game terms, the Garou's Strength is considered three points higher for purposes of grappling or maneuvers such as the jaw lock (see *Special Maneuvers*). The Garou may not use this extra Strength to inflict damage.

• **Lambent Flame (Level One)** — The Garou causes her body to ignite with silver light. A Lune teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Willpower point to ignite the light. The glare illuminates a 100-foot area. Any hand-to-hand attacks against the Garou take a +1 difficulty penalty, while missile attacks receive a -1 difficulty bonus.

• **Sense Wurm (Level One)** — As the metis Gift.

• **Empathy (Level Two)** — To be a leader among wolves is largely a matter of physical dominance, but a human leader must understand his charges and follow their will to a degree. With this Gift, a Silver Fang can understand those around him and live up to their expectations. A falcon-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Intelligence + Empathy (difficulty 7). Success indicates that the Garou knows what the majority would like to see, be it attack, mediation, harsh punishment or clemency. The more successes the player rolls, the better the Garou understands the people's desires, even if the people would rather keep their desires secret. Note that this Gift by no means reveals the wisest or most rational decision, just the most popular one.

• **Luna's Armor (Level Two)** — As the Child of Gaia Gift.

• **Silver Claws (Level Three)** — As the Ahroun Gift.

• **Wrath of Gaia (Level Three)** — The Garou shows himself in full, terrible, glory as Gaia's chosen warrior. His splendor overwhelms minions of the Wyrm, driving them before him in terror unless they can master their instinctive fear of this predator. An avatar of Gaia herself teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Intimidation. Any minions of the Wyrm who look upon the Garou for the next scene must roll Willpower (difficulty 7) and equal or exceed the player's successes. Otherwise, they flee in terror.

• **Mastery (Level Four)** — With the power of this Gift, the Fang can command other Garou, including Black Spiral Dancers, to do her bidding. A falcon-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Charisma + Leadership (difficulty of the target's Wits +3). If the roll succeeds, the Garou can give the target one non-suicidal command, which he must obey for one turn per success. This Gift works only against Garou.

• **Mindblock (Level Four)** — Upon learning this Gift, the Garou's mental defenses are strengthened to the utmost. A falcon-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The difficulties of any direct mental attacks or attempts to control the Garou's mind, as well as more insidious psychic assaults (mind-reading, mentally implanting illusions or possession) are raised to 10. The effects of this Gift are permanent, but they do not apply to powers that sway emotion.

• **Luna's Avenger (Level Five)** — The Garou's entire body, regardless of her current form, is changed to living silver. She becomes a nearly unstoppable warrior. A Lune teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou must concentrate for one full turn to activate this Gift. The player spends one Gnosis point. This Gift lasts for one scene, during which the Garou is immune to the effects of silver. Any attack she makes does aggravated, unsoakable damage to Garou. Furthermore, she gains two extra points of Stamina and one additional health level while the Gift lasts.

• **Paws of the Newborn Cub (Level Five)** — With a glare and snarl, the Silver Fang strips her foe of any supernatural power. Many servants of the Wyrm have tried to employ their putrescent magic against the Fangs, only to realize that they face a mighty foe with only mundane methods of defense. A falcon-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Gnosis (difficulty of the target's Willpower). Each success removes all special abilities (shapeshifting, Gifts, any sort of supernatural or magical powers) for one turn.

### *Uktena*

The Uktena's Gifts reflect their predilection toward magical study and animal powers. Many of their Gifts were long-forgotten secrets before the tribe unearthed them.

• **Sense Magic (Level One)** — The Uktena can discern magical energies, whether they emanate from Garou Gifts, vampiric wizardry or even human magic. A spirit servant of Uktena teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Enigmas. The difficulty is based on the strength and subtlety of the magic. The Uktena cannot tell the exact nature of the magic, although vague clues such as "Gaian" or "blood magic" might be granted with sufficient successes. The radius is 10 feet per success.

• **Shroud (Level One)** — The Garou can create a field of inky blackness through which only she can see. A night-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Gnosis (difficulty varies: 3 for twilight, 6 indoors, 9 for bright sunlight). Each success blacks out a 10' by 10' by 10' area. The Garou can choose any area within his line of sight. The metis Gift: Eyes of the Cat can see through the conjured darkness.

• **Spirit Speech (Level One)** — As the Theurge Gift.

• **Spirit of the Bird (Level Two)** — Few enemies would expect a werewolf to attack from above, which is precisely why the Uktena developed the means to do so. The Garou may hover, fly or float. Any bird spirit can teach this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point. The Garou can fly at 20 mph and hover as she desires. The difficulties of all combat maneuvers increase by one. This Gift lasts for one hour.

• **Spirit of the Fish (Level Two)** — The werewolf blessed with this Gift can breathe underwater and swim as fast as he can run in Hispo form. Unsurprisingly, a fish-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis and rolls Stamina + Animal Ken (difficulty 7). The effects last for one hour per success.

- **Banish Totem (Level Three)** — By speaking words of forbiddance, the Uktene can bar pack or personal totems from giving their children aid. Doing so also disrupts the spiritual rapport between packmates, making it difficult for them to execute pack tactics or act in concert. An ancestor-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Uktene must concentrate for a full turn, and he must know which totem his victims follow. The player spends one Gnosis point and one Willpower point, and he rolls Gnosis at a difficulty of the pack's combined Totem scores (maximum of 10). If successful, the pack members lose all Traits associated with their totem, and they cannot use pack tactics or act in concert for the remainder of the scene. If the Uktene is rendered unconscious or killed, the Gift is canceled.

- **Invisibility (Level Three)** — The Garou can vanish from sight. When this Gift is in use, the Garou must concentrate on staying invisible. He cannot move faster than half normal walking speed, and he cannot draw attention to himself. A spirit servant of Uktene teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Intelligence + Occult (difficulty varies: 4 if already concealed, 6 if in open, 9 if in plain sight). Anyone looking for the Garou must score more successes on a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 8) than the player did on the initial roll.

- **Call Elemental (Level Four)** — The Garou is able to call one of the four classic elementals to his aid (earth, air, fire or water). An elemental teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Gnosis (difficulty of the area's Gauntlet). She must then roll Manipulation + Occult (difficulty 7) to make the elemental look favorably upon the Garou. The elemental vanishes at the end of the scene.

- **Hand of the Earth Lords (Level Four)** — By drawing on the land's energies, the Uktene can move any one object weighing up to 1000 pounds telekinetically. An air elemental and an earth elemental must teach this Gift in concert.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Dexterity + Occult (difficulty 7). The Uktene must maintain concentration in order to move the object, which travels at roughly 20 mph. The effect lasts for one turn per success.

- **Fabric of the Mind (Level Five)** — As the Galliard Gift.

- **Fetish Doll (Level Five)** — Sympathetic magic is the oldest form of sorcery, and it is still effective. Although many cultures find this sort of magic repellent, the Uktene believe that the ends well justify the means. The Garou can harm his victim from afar using a specially created doll. He must have a piece of his victim or an object belonging to him, and he must then construct the doll. An ancestor-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The doll takes one week to construct and enchant. The player rolls Perception + Crafts (difficulty 8) to construct the doll. When the doll is complete, the player may roll Intelligence + Medicine (difficulty of the victim's Willpower). Each success inflicts one level of aggravated damage on the victim, which he may soak if he capable of doing so. The doll is only capable of transferring 10 levels of damage. After 10 successes, the doll is too mutilated to be of further use. A botched roll destroys the doll without inflicting any damage.

### *Wendigo*

The Wendigo specialize in Gifts gleaned from their cold, harsh homeland. They use their powers to thrive in their wintry environment and to call its hazards on their enemies.

- **Call the Breeze (Level One)** — The Garou calls up a strong (20 mph), cold breeze and directs it at whim. This breeze



chills anyone not prepared for it, and it disperses (or redirects) clouds of vapor (including tear gas or airborne toxins) or swarms of insects. A wind-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou simply whistles to call the breeze. Anyone caught in it loses one die from Perception rolls as long as the breeze lasts.

• **Camouflage (Level One)** — The Wendigo blends in with the surrounding wilderness, which makes him very difficult to see. A deer-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The difficulties to spot the Garou increase by three, provided that he is in the woods. The werewolf invokes the effects at whim.

• **Resist Pain (Level One)** — As the Philodox Gift.

• **Cutting Wind (Level Two)** — The Garou conjures up a bitterly cold blast of wind and directs it at will. The wind can knock opponents off their feet, as well as chill them to the bone. A spirit servant of Great Wendigo itself teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Willpower point. Directing the gust requires a Dexterity + Occult roll. Anyone hit by the wind loses two dice from all dice pools that turn, and one the next turn. The wind can also knock foes off ledges, into traffic or into pits. The wind's medium range is 20 yards, and it is modified as per the rules on firearms (see p. 208). The wind lasts for a number of turns equal to the number of successes rolled.

• **Speak with Wind Spirits (Level Two)** — The Wendigo may call upon wind-spirits for knowledge and guidance. He can ask them one question, which must concern the immediate area (wind-spirits have notoriously short attention spans). A wind-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** Upon learning this Gift, the Garou can speak with wind-spirits automatically while he is in the Umbra. To ask a question in the physical world, the player must spend one Gnosis point and roll Manipulation + Expression (difficulty 7). The number of successes reflects the accuracy of the information.

• **Bloody Feast (Level Three)** — Great Wendigo, as a hungry cannibalistic spirit, can teach his favored children the ability to gain added strength from an enemy's flesh and blood. An avatar of Great Wendigo teaches this Gift.

**System:** To activate this Gift, the Garou must first bite his opponent and be able to taste blood — meaning he must inflict at least one health level of damage, and his victim must be something that bleeds. If his opponent has toxic blood or none at all, this Gift will not work. The player then rolls Gnosis at a difficulty of the opponent's Stamina + 3 (maximum of 10). The Wendigo gains one extra dot in Strength for every two health levels of damage inflicted by the bite (maximum of +5 to Strength). The extra Strength bonus lasts for one turn per success on the Gnosis roll. However, flesh and blood can be addictive. The Wendigo's player must make an immediate frenzy roll the turn after activating the Gift.

• **Wisdom of the Ancient Ways (Level Three)** — As the Philodox Gift.

• **Call the Cannibal Spirit (Level Four)** — By dancing under the night sky, the werewolf can summon an avatar of Great Wendigo to hunt down a target of the Garou's choice. The Garou must possess a piece of his target whose heart the Wendigo devours.

**System:** The Garou must dance for three full turns. The player spends one Rage point and one Gnosis point, then rolls

Charisma + Occult (difficulty 8). If the roll botches, or if the Wendigo is somehow prevented from killing its target, it will return to kill the summoner.

• **Chill of Early Frost (Level Four)** — The werewolf calls down a mystical chill from Great Wendigo himself, freezing the surrounding lands and anyone in it. A spirit servant of Great Wendigo teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Intelligence + Occult (difficulty varies: 4 if it is already winter, 6 for spring, 9 for summer). Success drops the temperature to a bit below freezing in a five-mile radius, or even further below zero if it was already winter. All creatures without a natural coat of fur lose two dice from all pools. This Gift wreaks pure havoc in urban environments, as pipes burst and roads freeze. This Gift lasts for one hour per success.

• **Invoke the Spirits of the Storm (Level Five)** — The Garou can summon nearly any weather effect she desires, be it a tornado, fog, blizzard or thunderstorms. An avatar of Wendigo teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Willpower (difficulty varies based on how close the desired effect is to the actual weather patterns of the area). The storm covers 10 miles per success. If the Garou summons a thunderstorm, she may spend Gnosis to call lightning down on her enemies (Dexterity + Occult to hit, 10 dice of aggravated damage).

• **Heart of Ice (Level Five)** — The Garou can call down the curse of the Wendigo on an enemy. The Garou must whisper the name of the target to the winds; thereafter, the victim's innards begin turning to ice. An avatar of Wendigo teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Wits + Occult (difficulty of the target's Willpower). Each success inflicts one level of aggravated, unspeakable damage. This damage accrues slowly, inflicting one health level per turn until all possible damage has been done.

## Rites

Rites are the outward forms of the Garou's rituals and celebrations. Rites form and reinforce the spiritual and social ties that bind the Garou to each other and to Gaia herself. The common bond formed by rites resonates in the souls of all Garou. Many werewolves maintain that without the continuous practice of such rites, the Garou would lose their ties to the Earth Mother. In so doing, Theurges warn, the Garou may become something less than their true selves, possibly reverting to simple wolves and humans instead of Gaia's chosen.

The special ties werewolves have with the spirit world allow rites to function. The Garou invoke these bonds with Gaia's spirits when performing rites. In the dawn of time, shapeshifters struck a great pact — the Pact — with the spirits of Gaia. In return for the shapeshifters' fealty and service, the spirits would empower the werebeasts' rites, flooding them with supernatural power. For this reason, nobody but a shapeshifter can perform rites and expect them to work. The spirits will not answer the call if they are not legally bound to do so. This relationship is unique to the Garou and certain other Fera, and it makes the performance of these rites their sacred right and privilege, and theirs alone.

Through rites, Garou weave the social, emotional and religious fabric connecting werewolf to werewolf, pack to pack and

tribe to tribe. When Silver Fang meets Black Fury or Silent Strider meets Glass Walker, the rites of their ancestors give them common ground on which to tread. Even the simple Rite of Contrition has prevented many meetings between werewolves of different tribes and packs from erupting in argument and violence.

Rites also allow tribes and packs the freedom to define themselves and to develop their unique roles in Gaia's defense. Often tribes, and many individual septs, have their own rites and their own versions of common rites. The raucous, howling tumult of the Fianna's Rite of Spirit Awakening has little external similarity to the Shadow Lords' dark and brooding rite of the same name, yet the essence and purpose of the two rites are the same.

### *Types of Rites*

Rites have both religious and magical connotations, and they serve both social and mystical purposes. Most rites can be performed in either the Umbra or the physical world. When teaching rites to young pups, Garou may group them by the purpose each type of rite serves for the Garou and for Gaia. Rites of accord, caern rites, rites of death, mystic rites, rites of punishment, rites of renown, seasonal rites and minor rites are the most common types of rites that Garou practice. The basic requirements for each of these types of rites must be fulfilled to perform any of these rites successfully.

Descriptions and requirements for each type are listed here, along with common rites from each category.

A werewolf has the potential to learn any rite. All she must do is find a teacher. A Garou's auspice usually determines the rites she is expected to learn (see *Auspice Roles*). Most elder Garou are more than willing to teach rites. In fact, the number of young werewolves who seem to discount rites as antiquated or cumbersome disturbs the elders. Many new packs fail to see the importance of rites, preferring to spend their time doing things that have a more "immediate" impact. However, these same gray furs criticize young wolves that insist on modernizing or individualizing rites to meet the needs of their packs.

### *Enacting a Rite*

Ritemasters generally lead groups of Garou in the performance of rites. These rites are grand ceremonies usually held at caerns with much tradition and socializing going along with them. It is the nature of rites to be social affairs. Most rites require the presence of at least three Garou, although a lone werewolf may conduct certain minor rites and mystic rites. Many older septs frown on the practice of performing rites away from the group.

Rites require great concentration and skill on the part of the celebrant. A rite takes a minimum of 10 minutes per level to cast, while minor rites take from two to five minutes to enact. Rites almost always require some form of trinket or special material. The general requirements for particular categories of rites are detailed in the following lists.

It is the responsibility of the ritemaster to ensure that all the requirements are met and that all Garou present participate fully in the rite. The player or Storyteller should roll to determine the success of the rite. The exact nature and difficulty of the roll will vary with each rite. Storytellers may decrease the difficulty of a roll if the ritemaster and participating characters enact the rite particularly well (i.e., if the players roleplay it well).

For every five Garou beyond the base number required (again, usually three) who are present and helping perform the rite to the best of their ability (in addition to the

### *Rite Chart*

Type	Roll	Difficulty
Accord	Cha + Rituals	7
Caern	varies (max. Gnosis)	7
Death	Cha + Rituals	8 - Rank
Mystic	Wits + Rituals	7
Punishment	Cha + Rituals	7
Renown	Cha + Rituals	6
Seasonal	Sta + Rituals	8 - Caern Level
Minor	none	none

These rolls are the standard ones required by type to enact any given rite. If no roll is mentioned in a system's description, assume that the roll is standard.

ritemaster), the difficulty level of the rite decreases by one (to a minimum difficulty of 3).

Rites are considered to be a natural way of affecting the natural order. They are part of how things work. Werewolves believe that if a rite is performed properly, the effect will occur naturally, just as a scientist would follow cause and effect. If you drop a rock, it will fall; if you perform a rite as it was handed down to you by your ancestor's ancestors, then the desired effect will occur. However, some rites do require Gnosis. These rites are particularly powerful breaches of the natural order.

### *Learning a Rite*

The tribal elders who teach rites were themselves taught by their elders, who were taught by their elders, and so on back through the ages. In order to gain the knowledge (and tacit permission) to perform a rite, a young werewolf must approach an elder who possesses such knowledge. In the vast majority of cases, the elder will request payment (in the form of talens) from the young whelp in question. The number of talens required varies with the amount of teaching needed (level of the rite) and the elder's opinion of the cub (comparative rank and roleplaying). Elders will often allow the young Garou to do a favor instead of (or in addition to) donating talens. Such favors may range from providing the elder with fresh rabbit meat and caviar for three full moons to tracking down a minor enemy of the elder's and tearing out his throat. In any event, the favor asked is normally proportionate to the power and importance of the rite the young wolf wishes to master.

Learning a rite is an extended action. A Garou must have a Rituals Knowledge at least equal to the level of the rite she wishes to learn; a character with Rituals 3 cannot master a Level Four rite. She must also spend time — at least one week per level of the rite she wishes to learn (three days for minor rites) — with the elder who knows the rite. The player must roll Intelligence + Rituals (difficulty of 10 minus Intelligence). The number of successes required equals the level of the rite. The student may make one roll per period of teaching (one week for a Level One rite, three weeks for a Level Three rite, etc.). If the student fails a roll, she must spend a Willpower point to continue her studies. If she botches a roll, she is not yet ready to learn the knowledge she seeks. The character must wait at least three turnings of the moon, or until she has more life experience, to try again.

A character can begin the game with knowledge of rites by purchasing the Rites Background. Subsequently, however, rites can be learned only through roleplaying; they may not be purchased with experience points.

A character can attempt to enact a rite in which he has previously taken part, but which he does not know. Needless to say, he has little chance of success. The difficulty is three higher than normal, and the player must spend double the amount of Gnosis points if any are required. In addition, elder Garou often see such an attempt as impudent or even sacrilegious. Attempting an unlearned rite in the presence of an elder may decrease the Garou's Honor or Wisdom in the eyes of his sept.

Finally, it's possible — but obscenely difficult — to create new rites. Such a task is no small matter, as it involves convincing a great portion of the spirit world that a new rite is necessary, and that they must empower it whenever called to do so.

### *Auspice Roles*

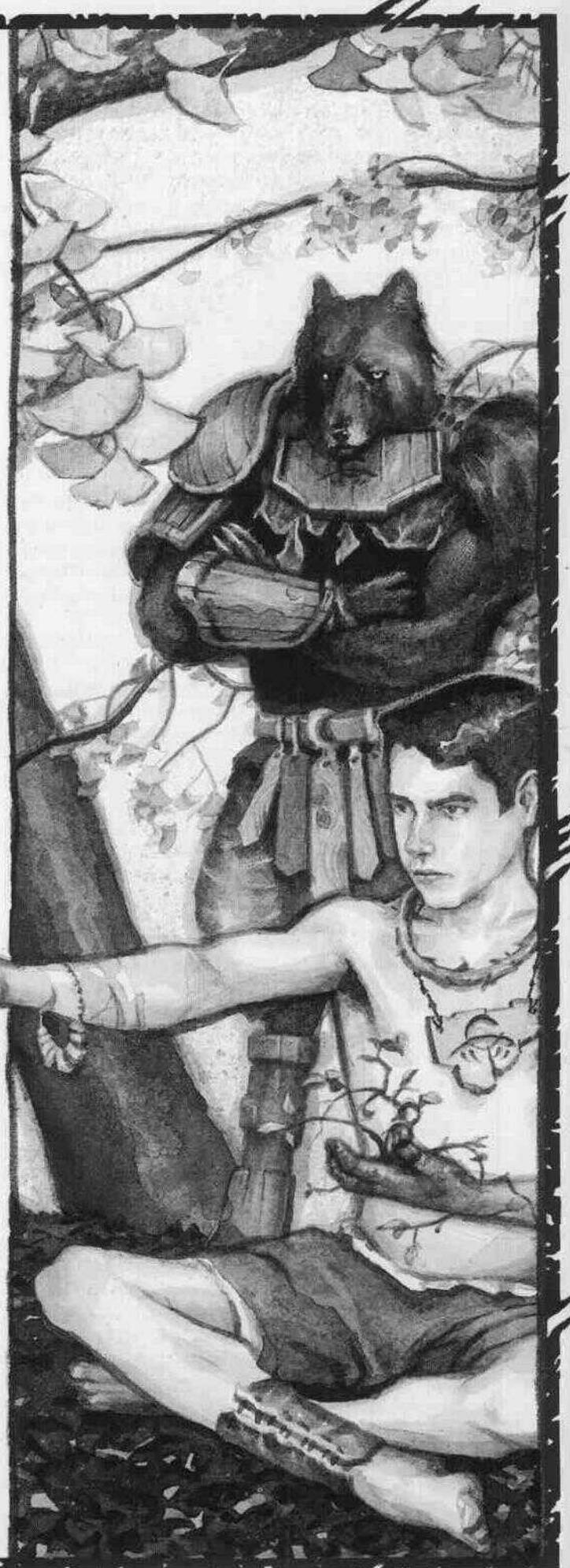
Not all Garou have a natural affinity for leading the Great Rites. Many are content to know some minor rites and a smattering of rites most significant in their own eyes. In fact, Garou traditionally view werewolves born under certain auspices as the rightful ritemasters of the tribes. In particular, Theurges and Philodox are groomed for such positions from the time that they first enter the sept as adolescent cubs. It is almost unheard of for a Garou of either auspice not to have at least some skill in the enactment of rites. In general, Theurges tend to learn mystic rites, seasonal rites and caern rites, while Philodox traditionally learn rites of accord and rites of punishment.

This is not to say that Garou of all auspices do not learn rites, or even lead rites occasionally. Galliards are likely to lead rites of death and rites of renown. Ragabash and Ahroun may also learn and enact rites, although the sept is unlikely to encourage such behavior unless a particular reason comes up for such a Garou to lead a rite. For example, an Ahroun might lead his war party in a Rite of Wounding after a cub's first battle. It is wise to remember that individual packs are often (but not always) more flexible when interpreting such traditions, being more concerned with which packmate will best carry out a rite than with following every musty old tradition. Any Garou is allowed to learn a mystic rite, regardless of auspice.

### *Rites of Accord*

Rites of accord restore a place or particular Garou to harmony and balance with Gaia. These rites purify and renew by bringing the object of the rite through a symbolic rebirth from Gaia's womb.

**System:** Any Garou attempting to perform a rite of accord must possess a talen, a fetish or some piece of Gaia never touched by minions of the Wyrm or by human hands (for example, a willow branch from a remote forest or a stone from a protected caern). The ritemaster makes a Charisma + Rituals roll (difficulty 7 unless otherwise stated).



## Rite of Cleansing

### Level One

This rite purifies a person, place or object, allowing it to be used without fear of Wyrm-taint. The most common form of this rite involves the ritemaster inscribing a circle on the earth, walking widdershins (counterclockwise) around the afflicted person(s) or object(s) while holding a smoldering branch or torch. She must use a branch (preferably willow or birch) dipped in pure water or snow to sprinkle the object or person cleansed. As the ritemaster does so, all Garou present release an eerie, otherworldly howl in an attempt to "frighten away" and thus banish the corrupting influence. Ideally, this rite is performed at dawn, but it can be performed at any time.

**System:** This rite can be cast upon more than one person or object, but the leader must spend one Gnosis point on each extra thing or person in need of cleansing. The difficulty level depends on the level of taint. For instance, taint caused by a spirit might set a difficulty equal to the spirit's Gnosis. Only one success is required. If the character performs the rite at dawn, the difficulty of the rite decreases by one. Note that this rite cannot heal wounds or damage caused by Wyrm-taint; it removes only any existing contamination. This rite cannot cleanse taint of the most innate sort, either. The rite inflicts agonizing pain when performed on a fomor, vampire, unrepentant Black Spiral Dancer or other similarly accursed creature, but it cannot wash the recipient clean.

## Rite of Contrition

### Level One

This rite is a form of apology used to prevent the enmity of spirits or Garou whom an individual has annoyed, or to prevent war between septs or tribes. The rite most often involves the enactor dropping to her belly and sliding forward. The ritemaster may also whine and lick his paws or hands. If performed well, however, a simple inclination of the head may suffice. To enact this rite successfully, the Garou must either give a small gift to the offended individual or, in the case of a spirit, possess some aspect of the spirit in question (for example, a clay falcon if the Garou is appealing to the totem spirit Falcon).

**System:** The difficulty level of the rite equals the Rage of the target spirit or werewolf. A single success suffices for a gracious apology, but it may not be enough to mend friendships or forgive grievous errors. The more successes, the greater the wrong that can be forgiven. Werewolves who refuse to recognize a Rite of Contrition are looked upon badly by elders. Most spirits will always accept a well-performed rite. This effect lasts until the Garou performs another action that could harm or insult the other.

## Rite of Renunciation

### Level Two

In this rare rite, a werewolf rejects the auspice under which he was born and chooses a new auspice. The Garou must perform this rite during the phase of the moon he wishes to embrace. Most commonly, water from a silver basin exposed to Luna's radiance is poured over the naked supplicant, washing him clean of all he once was, including all rank. He is now free to start anew as a member of his adopted auspice. Almost free, that is, for many werewolves view such a "Shifting Moon" with suspicion. The Shadow Lords and Silver Fangs in particular see this rite as a grave

insult to Luna, and they are loath to trust those Garou who cannot bear the weight of their assigned burdens.

**System:** A character who changes auspices must start anew at Rank 1. Although he may keep any Gifts he has already learned, he may never learn new Gifts from his old auspice. However, Gifts of his adopted auspice are now available to him. Sometimes this rite is performed for purposes other than shifting auspice, such as when a Garou wishes to give up his name and start over in Garou society. (See *Renunciation*, p. 185.) A variation on this rite also allows a werewolf to renounce his tribe and join a second tribe. Doing so, however, is a severe insult to his formal tribal totem, who will likely view him poorly for the rest of his days. In no case can a werewolf return to an auspice or tribe that he formerly renounced. He's made his bed, so he must lie in it.

## Caern Rites

These rites are of vital importance to Gaia, for they aid in the opening, protection, and renewal of the sacred spaces dedicated to her. Without such rites, the mystical flow of Gaia's spiritual nourishment might cease, and her children, the Garou, might no longer rest themselves within her protecting bosom. Without such renewal, even the most ferocious of werewolves would grow weary of battle.

**System:** These rites can be performed only within a caern. The dice pool required varies with each particular rite, but the maximum number of dice used cannot exceed the ritemaster's Gnosis. Unless otherwise stated, the difficulty of such a rite is 7.

## Moot Rite

### Level One

A moot cannot open until this rite is completed. The rite recharges the caern with Gnosis. The rite always includes a prolonged howl led by a Garou known as the Master of the Howl. The howl varies by tribe and sept, but it always expresses the unique nature of the sept. All werewolves present must form a circle within the caern itself before they commence howling. Numerous variations on the basic requirements exist. The Red Talons often bite their own paws and scratch their blood into the earth, while the Uktena pass their most powerful fetish from one to another as each in turn adds her voice to the howl. However, the howl must always echo forth and the eternal circle must form.

**System:** The rite must be performed at least once per month to keep the caern consecrated. During the course of a moot, the participants must empower the caern with a combined total of five Gnosis points per caern level in order to replenish it fully.

## Rite of the Opened Caern

### Level One

Caerns are highly spiritual places that are sacred to those who create them. Each caern has a specific power associated with it, generally of a beneficial nature. Thus, there are caerns of Rage, caerns of Gnosis, Strength, Enigmas and so on. If a character is knowledgeable enough, she may tap into the caern's power and use it herself. Doing so is commonly called "opening" a caern. Opening a caern should not be attempted lightly. Caerns do not give up their energies easily, and failure to harness such power properly can result in serious damage to the Garou.

Each caern has its own requirements of the ritemaster. The ritemaster must prove herself worthy of the caern's energies. In

order to open a caern of Enigmas, a Garou might walk a spiral path while calling out the Greek myth of Persephone. To open a caern of Rage, the Garou might transform into Crinos and chant the litany of his ancestors who have fallen to the Wyrm. The key is forging a connection to the particular spirit of the caern.

**System:** To open a caern, a character engages in a resisted, extended success test of Wits + Rituals (difficulty 7). The number of successes needed equals the caern's level.

The character must overcome the caern spirit to prove herself worthy. The caern spirit uses its caern level as a dice pool. Its difficulty equals the character's Gnosis, while the number of successes needed equals the character's Willpower. The first one to garner the necessary number of successes wins.

If the character wins the test, she can add the caern's rating to her dice pool when performing actions appropriate to that caern's focus. If she loses, however, she takes wounds equal to the number of success by which the caern beat her. A botch indicates that the wounds are aggravated. These physical and spiritual wounds are the results of a backlash of spiritual energy.

See *Caerns Mechanics* (p. 226) for a list of caern types, their powers and the spirits that can be encountered near them.

### *The Badger's Burrow*

#### Level Four

The guardians of the caerns become so connected to their bawn that they can sense all that goes on within its boundaries. The ritemaster enacting this rite gazes intently into a bowl of water, pool of ink, mirror, or some such. At the same time, the Garou pours a small amount of witch hazel or other strongly scented astringent (such as urine) on the ground in front of her. Any other Garou watching or participating encircle the ritemaster and growl softly in the backs of their throats. Some of the younger Garou (Glass Walkers and Wendigo in particular) enhance the ritual through the use of mild psychotropic drugs, although many Garou frown upon this practice.

**System:** The celebrant must make a successful Perception + Rituals roll against the given difficulty level. Each success enables the ritemaster (or the caern Warder) to ask one question regarding a defined area. The difficulty varies with the size of the area. Failure indicates that the Garou sees nothing, while a botch means that the Garou sees what she desires to see, regardless of the truth.

Area	Difficulty
Small Room	5
Ballroom	6
House	7
Acre of Land	8
Small Forest	9

### *Rite of the Opened Bridge*

#### Level Four

This rite creates a moon bridge, a shimmering portal serving as a mystical means of transportation between two caerns. Such moon bridges are vital links between the sacred spaces of Gaia. Once per year, a caern must renew its connection with other caerns to which it wishes to maintain moon bridges. This rite is always held during a moot, and it must be enacted simultaneously by both participating caerns.

The primary requirement to open a moon bridge is a moongem, or pathstone as it is most often called. Pathstones are

found in the Umbra, and they are often the objects of quests. These extraordinarily rare stones resemble flat pearls with the imprint of a wolf's paw on one side. It is possible to steal a pathstone from a caern, but such a theft is considered blasphemous, and it may well result in war between two Garou septs.

The rite establishes (or reestablishes) a spiritual connection between the pathstones of two second caerns by way of the caerns' totem spirits. At the rite's culmination, a moon bridge opens between the two participating caerns. During this time, Garou from both septs can travel between the caerns to join in a wild revel. Moon bridges allow Garou to traverse distances in 1/1000th the normal time required. This rite must be renewed once every 13 moons (roughly a year).

**System:** The roll is Wits + Enigmas (difficulty 8 minus the level of the ritemaster's own caern). The ritemaster may spend Willpower on the roll. If her pack totem is the same as the totem of the caern, she receives a bonus of three dice to the roll. If the rite was unsuccessful previously, the difficulty level of the rite increases by one. The ritemaster needs to obtain a number of successes equal to the target caern's level to complete the rite.

If the rite succeeds, the moon bridge opens immediately, and the spirit-bond between the two pathstones is established. Moon bridges may now be opened at any time between the two caerns. The bridges may be opened with the Rite of the Opened Caern or the Ragabash Gift: Open Moon Bridge (if performed at the caern). If the rite fails, no moon bridge opens, and the rite must be tried again next year. Moon bridges to the caern may still be opened, but they are not as safe as they might be....

If the rite botches, no moon bridge opens, and the pathstone in the caern is scorched by the badly handled energies. Botching this rite often leads to another rite — the Rite of Ostracism — being performed against the offending Garou.

See *Caerns Mechanics* (p. 226) for moon bridge distances.

### *Rite of the Shrouded Glen*

#### Level Four

This rite causes an area within the Umbra to become invisible, so that it cannot be seen from any other part of the spirit world. At least five people must participate in this ritual, and they must fast for at least three days to purify themselves. The Uktena, who are particularly adept at this rite, maintain that all participants must come to the rite with their bodies clad only in painted symbols representing earth, air, water, fire, and (for the ritemaster) the spirit world.

**System:** The difficulty of this roll is the caern's Gauntlet + 4. Any participating Garou can contribute Gnosis to this rite. The participants must spend a total of 10 Gnosis points to make the effect permanent. Otherwise, the number of successes achieved equals the number of hours the Umbral Glen remains hidden. If the area the Garou attempt to hide is larger than the caern itself, the amount of Gnosis required increases by two for each one-mile radius the participants attempt to ensnarl.

### *Rite of Caern Building*

#### Level Five

This powerful rite actually creates a permanent caern by drawing the spirit world and the physical world closer together. Simply reciting the rite draws the attention of the Wyrm's servitors, and actually performing the rite has been known to prove fatal. Only the most powerful and wise mystics dare lead such an undertaking.

A powerful Theurge is almost always selected to perform this most sacred of rites. Many Garou must channel their energy through a powerful leader to have even a hope of success. Whole packs have been known to die in agony of failed attempts.

Once the physical focus for the heart of the caern is chosen, the area must be cleansed of all taint in preparation for its transformation. All Garou participating in the rite must undergo a Rite of Cleansing. The ritemaster performs a series of minor rituals, meditation and other physical preliminaries to prepare for her awesome task.

The sept must post sentries (very often the players' characters), for servants of the Wyrm almost invariably attempt to disrupt such a great rite. Only the mightiest warriors are chosen for such an assignment, and their protection is critical to the success of the rite. The leader of the rite is helpless while he chants a long litany of verses designed to draw a great spirit into the prepared caern. Although it is possible to create a specific type of caern, most leaders leave this choice to Gaia and accept whatever caern she grants the sept.

The rite must be performed between the hours of sunset and sunrise during the waxing of the moon. Only the Black Spiral Dancers create caerns during the moon's waning.

**System:** The rite requires an extended roll of Wits + Rituals, although the leader may use only as many dice as she has Gnosis. The difficulty begins at 8, and it is modified downward by one for every five Garou participating and spending Gnosis over and above the 13 necessary participants, and 40 successes are required. Only one roll can be attempted per hour of the ritual.

Because an enormous amount of Gnosis is needed to create a new caern, a minimum of 13 Garou, one for each moon of the year, must participate in this rite. Regardless of the number of Garou aiding her, the ritemaster can channel such a powerful stream of Gnosis through her system only once per hour. The rite must be performed at night. Therefore, the ritemaster has only eight rolls (one per hour) in which to accomplish her task in most places and at most times of the year. This limit makes success fairly unlikely. If indeed, the rite does fail, all involved suffer five wounds. These wounds are not aggravated, but they are very painful, and they always leave small teardrop-shaped scars scattered across the Garou's body. Such scars are considered marks of bravery, and these "tears of Gaia" are often highlighted by tattoos or paint and worn with pride by the Garou. The Garou say the scars are the result of Gaia crying out for her children's pain.

Once the leader scores the required number of successes, all those involved in the rite must contribute Gnosis points — 100 are needed. If the total Gnosis available is not 100, all those participating begin to suffer aggravated wounds. Each wound counts as three more Gnosis points toward the total.

Botches during this rite are particularly deadly. All characters involved suffer seven health levels of damage, which means that even a Garou previously at full health becomes Incapacitated. Those Garou reduced to below Incapacitated suffer severe Battle Scars (see pp. 189-190).

If the minimum number of successes is rolled (40), the caern is ranked Level One. The Gauntlet of such an area is 4, and the spirits bound into the caern will grant powers approximately equal to Level One Gifts. Every five additional successes raise the level of the caern by one, correspondingly raising the magnitude of the powers the caern grants. At Level Three, the

Gauntlet of the area is 3, while at Level Five, it is but 2. Immediately upon the rite's successful completion, the ritemaster must sacrifice a number of permanent Gnosis points equal to the level of the caern.

If a player's character should somehow assume the role of ritemaster and succeed, she receives three points of Glory Renown, five points of Honor Renown and seven points of Wisdom Renown. Anyone else participating in the rite receives five points of Glory Renown and three points of Honor Renown. This task is a legendary one that deserves a suitable reward.

### *Rites of Death*

Garou perform rites of death both to honor the departed and to reaffirm their connection to the cycle of life, death and rebirth. In facing and acknowledging death as a necessary part of the dance of life, the pack and sept release themselves from the debilitating poisons of grief and fear.

**System:** The ritemaster must make a Charisma + Rituals roll (difficulty 8 minus the Rank of the honored Garou).

### *Gathering for the Departed*

#### Level One

This rite is enacted in honor of the newly dead. A Galliard or a packmate of the departed werewolf usually performs the rite. This rite varies dramatically from tribe to tribe. For example, a Fianna ritemaster leads the sept in the telling of tales, both raucous and heroic, about the fallen Garou. In contrast stands the Wendigo's solemn rite, in which the ritemaster and all the fallen one's packmates stand on the highest peak available, tails to the wind, and howl out their pride and grief to speed their companion onward to her next life. The exact form the rite takes does not matter, only the acknowledgment itself.

**System:** The ritemaster leads the release of the Garou's combined emotions into the spirit world. The Uktens say that such emotions have a real impact upon the Umbra and that they help ensure that the departed Garou retains ties to her mortal relatives. At the Storyteller's discretion, this rite makes the deceased's spirit easier to contact through the Ancestors Background.

### *Rite of the Winter Wolf*

#### Level Three

Once a Garou becomes too wounded or aged to fight with his tribe, he performs this solemn and bleak rite. Upon announcing that he will undergo this rite, the werewolf sits at the center of a gathering of his pack- and septmates. This meeting is an onerous, solemn affair during which the Moon Dancers sing hymns of the celebrant's life and deeds and invoke the spirits for glory in the next world or life. The celebrant then slowly and proudly walks through the closed ranks of the tribe. As he passes his people, they begin howling a dirge similar to that sung during the Gathering for the Departed. Some Garou beat heavy drums or play mournful pipes as the celebrant drags himself to a secluded site where he ends his life, usually with a silver klawie. Rarely, two werewolves, usually packmates, will perform this rite together, sometimes killing each other simultaneously, although Ahroun may give each other a last fight to finish, with the victor ending his life beside his fallen opponent. Immediately after the suicide, the sept performs the Gathering for the Departed.

Members of the Red Talons and Get of Fenris are the staunchest supporters of this rite. It is almost unheard of among

the Children of Gaia, who value the knowledge and experience of their aged and wounded.

**System:** This rite is always performed at night, and it requires that at least three other Garou be present to acknowledge the solemn event. The weapon used by the Garou must be silver, although it need not be a *klaive*.

## *Mystic Rites*

Mystic rites bring the Garou into direct contact with the Umbra and/or spirit beings. Unlike most other rites, a Garou usually performs these rites alone.

**System:** When performing a mystic rite, the ritemaster must make a Wits + Rituals roll (difficulty 7 unless otherwise stated).

### *Baptism of Fire*

#### Level One

Most tribes attempt to track down all children born to their Kinfolk within one month of the children's birth to see if they "share the blood." (Most commonly, this search involves the Gift: Scent of the True Form.) Those who are Garou are "baptized" in the light of their auspice moon, beside a ritual fire. Such a baptism most commonly involves mingling ashes with a few drops of Garou blood. The mixture is then touched to the child's ears, nose, eyelids and tongue.

In the presence of a lesser tribal spirit known as a Kin-Fetch, the babe is then held up to the moonlight while the baptizing Garou howls Gaia's greeting to the newborn. The ritemaster then has the Kin-Fetch kiss the infant. The spirit's fiery kiss inscribes a spiritual brand upon the babe in the form of the newborn's tribal pictograph. This mark is not visible on the newborn's body; the only mark left is spiritual. It is impossible to remove this spiritual brand. Such a mark can be traced and recognized by all Garou (including the Black Spiral Dancers, who all too often track down cubs of other tribes and capture them in order to create more of their foul number).

The participating Kin-Fetch spirit is assigned to watch over the young Garou as she grows to maturity, so that the tribe may always know the child's location and whether she is endangered. When the child is about to undergo the First Change and is ready for the Rite of Passage, the spirit alerts the tribe. Unfortunately, such minor spirits are notoriously weak-willed and easily distracted. All too often, a Kin-Fetch loses track of its charge or becomes lost itself, leaving the young cub on her own. Such "lost cubs" often become Lunatics or recluses, terrified of themselves and unable to understand their powerful primal urges.

**System:** The ritemaster makes a Charisma + Rituals roll. Only one success is required, but additional successes improve the chance that the Kin-Fetch will keep track of the child. This rite must be performed at night under the moon in which the child was born. Although this rite is normally performed within a month of birth, the brand can be inscribed at any time before the cub reaches adolescence and undergoes her First Change. The brand fades out of existence after the cub's Rite of Passage.

### *Rite of Binding*

#### Level One

This rite binds a spirit to a Garou, making it his servant. The more powerful the spirit is, the more difficult the process is. Although any encountered spirit is subject to binding, the Garou generally feel that spirits should be bound only when needed.

They do not feel good about binding spirits for great lengths of time. This point does not go uncontested, however, particularly by the mystics of the Uktenea tribe.

Spirits trapped through this rite may be bound into temporary service or into objects to create talens (see *Fetishes and Talens*, pp. 240-241). No spirit allows itself to be bound unless it is friendly to the binding character's totem. Spirits can be bound into objects, places and people, although the Garou generally don't perform the last feat unless the need is great. Failing this rite can be dangerous, for the spirit is very likely to become hostile and attempt to harm the mystic.

**System:** A Garou can attempt this rite only in the presence of a spirit, and it is usually performed in the Umbra. When attempting to bind a spirit, a Garou must first spend a number of Gnosis points (minimum one). Each point of Gnosis spent reduces the spirit's Gnosis rating by one. The Garou's player must then roll Willpower (difficulty of the spirit's adjusted Gnosis). The number of successes indicates how long the spirit may be forced into service (one week per success). In the case of a talen, the spirit is bound until the object is used.

See the Appendix for examples of spirits and a list of sample talens.

### *Rite of the Quaffing Stone*

#### Level One

This rite allows the werewolf to find a person or object (locations do not count). He must know the name of the object or individual. The difficulty of the rite is reduced if the Garou has some piece of the object or person (for example, a clipping of hair or piece of cloth). He must dangle a stone or needle from a thread while concentrating on the item or person sought. Glass Walkers often use maps and substitute a compass for the traditional stone and thread.

**System:** Standard roll. If the Garou has a piece of the item or individual, the difficulty drops by one. The rite gives the Garou a sense of only the object's general location, not its exact position.

### *Rite of Talisman Dedication*

#### Level One

This rite allows a werewolf to bind objects to her body, allowing these objects to fit her various forms (jeans will grow to accommodate the size increase of the Crinos form, for instance) and accompany the Garou into the Umbra. Such talismans are most commonly mundane items, for spiritual items such as fetishes and talens remain with the werewolf in all forms automatically. A werewolf most often performs this rite during the phase of the moon under which he was born. Each auspice has its own peculiar ritual.

**System:** The cost is one Gnosis point per object dedicated, and a character may never have more objects bound to himself than his Gnosis score. Certain large objects (Storyteller's discretion) are considered to be more than one for the purposes of "cost." Similarly, the Storyteller may allow multiple objects to count as one object if they are sufficiently related (and not an abuse of the rite). The most common example is permitting a set of clothes to count as "one object" rather than one shirt, one pair of pants and so on. A generous Storyteller might allow a container's contents (at the time of dedication) to count as part of the container — if, again, the players aren't abusing the rite by doing so.

The Storyteller and the player should decide what happens to the object when the character assumes certain forms. For

example, when the character assumes Crinos form, her backpack's straps may simply grow to fit around her shoulders (although the pack still cannot hold more items than normal). When the character is in Hispo form, her knife may meld with her body. In such cases, the object will appear as a tattoo. Others must spend a Willpower point to remove the object from the character.

### *Rite of Becoming*

#### Level Two

Werewolves must perform this rite at an Anchorhead Domain. Once completed, it enables them to travel into the Deep Umbra. The most common version of this rite requires that the Garou must make a braid from three of her hairs, three pieces of fine copper wire and three tendrils of ivy or other vine. Lengths of silk thread are sometimes substituted for the hair or wire. When the braid has been constructed, the Garou ties it around his own wrist and howls three words of power. The Uktene often drink a bitter potion that loosens the Garou's spirit from the Tellurian, while the Black Furies always perform this ritual in threesomes, never traveling the Deep Umbra alone.

**System:** If the braid is destroyed while the Garou is in the Deep Umbra, the Garou takes one health level of aggravated damage and risks becoming lost forever if she does not return to the Near Umbra immediately.

### *Rite of Spirit Awakening*

#### Level Two

This rite is used to awaken a sleeping (inactive) spirit. To perform this rite, a Garou must play a rhythm on some form of instrument (drums being the most common). While the Garou plays, any other participating Garou pace around the ritemaster howling and growling in counterpoint to the beat.

When performed on a mundane item, this rite enlivens the object's spirit, causing it to awaken and appear in the Umbra. For example, if the rite is performed on a VW bus, any Garou stepping sideways could see the bus as a true part of the landscape. However, it would appear as a stationary object in the Penumbra unless someone on the physical plane began to drive it, in which case it would appear as a driverless vehicle to anyone in the Umbra.

When performed on plants, this rite is known as sanctification. Plant-spirits are generally benevolent, and an awakened plant spirit will lend its powers as though it were a talen (one use). Different plants grant different abilities when sanctified. For example, sanctified foxglove protects against faerie magic (adding two to the difficulty of any faerie spell).

**System:** The ritemaster must play a musical instrument or sing a song (talent doesn't matter). The difficulty of the roll is the spirit's Rage. Failure means that the spirit remains dormant. The Storyteller must decide whether the spirit is hostile or friendly to its awakener. Awakening a spirit does not allow any control over it. Commanding an awakened spirit requires either a Rite of Binding or a Gift. This rite doesn't work on sentient beings such as humans. Such individuals are already as "awakened" as they're going to get.

### *Rite of Summoning*

#### Level Two

Garou mystics are adept at calling spirits, be they minor Gafflings, totem spirits or even Incarna. Summoning spirits

involves complex rituals, long periods of meditation and tribal mantra chanting. Within the Umbra, this process is far easier. This rite compels spirits to seek those who call them. Furthermore, the spirit cannot escape its caller once the summoning is completed successfully, and it must attend the mystic. Many spirits, particularly minor ones, are too weak to resist a powerful summoning. Powerful ones come out of curiosity. The chance of a successful summoning depends upon the skill of the mystic, the power of the spirit and the strength of the area's Gauntlet.

**System:** The ritemaster must pierce the Gauntlet just as if he were entering the Umbra (Gnosis roll against the Gauntlet). A mystic already within the Umbra is not required to pierce the Gauntlet. The power level of the spirit determines the difficulty level of a successful summoning. The Storyteller can determine target numbers from the following chart:

Spirit Type	Target Number
Gaffling	4
Jagglng	5
Totem avatar	7
Incarna	8-9
Celestine avatar	10

For each hour the Garou spends invoking the spirit, his target number drops by one. No target number may fall below 3. The player must then make a Gnosis roll and achieve as many successes as possible, with the following results:

Successes	Effect
1	Spirit comes eventually and is initially hostile
2	Spirit manifests quickly, but it is still initially hostile
3	Spirit comes immediately and is neutral
4	Spirit comes immediately and is passively benign
5	Spirit comes immediately and is friendly

A botched roll is likely to have disastrous results. Often a botch summons the wrong type of spirit — or even Banes — in great numbers or with great hostility.

The Storyteller should feel free to adjust the previous tables as she wishes, particularly as appropriate to totems. In certain cases, a Garou who attempts to summon a specific spirit will have no chance of success. At other times, he will have almost no chance of failure. The Storyteller is advised to treat each use of this rite individually and to use common sense in her decisions.

A Garou who summons an Incarna or Celestine avatar successfully gains two points of Wisdom Renown.

### *Rite of the Fetish*

#### Level Three

This rite allows a werewolf to create a fetish (an object with a spirit bound into it). To do so, the Garou must first cleanse the potential fetish by placing it under running water (sufficiently drinkable tap water counts), burying it in pure earth, exposing the object to constant breezes or suspending it above flame for three consecutive nights. The Garou must then force or persuade a spirit to enter the prepared object. The Fianna claim that cajoling or flattering a spirit produces the best results, while the Bone Gnawers and Silent Striders claim that bribery (expending Gnosis) works best.

**System:** The ritemaster rolls Wits + Rituals (difficulty 10). Each point of permanent Gnosis that the character spends during the rite reduces the difficulty by two; going to great lengths

to prove one's sincerity to the spirit may also reduce the difficulty. A botch indicates that the spirit is released suddenly. (If the spirit was coerced into participation, it will almost assuredly attack.) If the Garou attempts to force a spirit into the fetish, she must first attack the spirit and reduce it to zero Essence before attempting to bind it into the fetish. A newly created fetish will not work until the bound spirit has recharged its Essence.

### Rite of the Totem

Level Three

This rite binds a totem to a group of Garou, joining them together as a pack. During the rite, all werewolves who wish to bind their destinies to a particular totem spirit must coat their eyes with an infusion of saliva and mugwort, tobacco or a similar substance holy to Gaia and step sideways into the Umbra. In the spirit world, the ritemaster leads the Garou in a hunt for the spiritual spoor left by a totem spirit. Such evidence varies with the spirit, but Garou worthy of the totem's attention can always find it. Even tracking down the spirit does not guarantee success, for the totem must decide whether the Garou are worthy to become its fosterlings. An undecided totem may require a quest of the supplicants, although one is almost never required if the pack has just completed a Rite of Passage successfully.

**System:** Characters must purchase the Totem Background to benefit from this rite. Otherwise, the rite is simply not performed. The roll is standard.

### Punishment Rites

Punishment rites levy the sanction of the tribe or sept against a transgressing werewolf. Such rites strengthen the Garou by establishing clear limits of acceptable behavior. By joining in the punishment, each Garou strengthens her commitment to the pack over the individual.

**System:** Punishment rites are performed only for major transgressions or after less structured punishments fail to cause a werewolf to mend her ways. The ritemaster must make a Charisma + Rituals roll (difficulty 7 unless otherwise stated). A failed rite is considered a sign from Gaia that the offending Garou's crimes are not considered significant enough to warrant such a punishment. At the Storyteller's discretion, punishment rites may fail automatically if the target is truly innocent — leading to a sure Renown loss for her accusers.

### Rite of Ostracism

Level Two

This rite is a fairly common punishment for lesser crimes, yet its effects can be devastating during wartime. This rite estranges the punished Garou from her tribe, sept and sometimes even her pack. The tribe will thereafter treat the individual as a nonentity. She is ignored as much as possible and forced to fend for herself for even basic needs, although no hostile actions are taken against the non-wolf (in theory at least, although some Garou have been known to injure ostracized werewolves "accidentally"). In a life-or-death situation, the tribe (friends and packmates in particular) might aid the offender, but even then only grudgingly. Otherwise, the punished Garou is ignored utterly. Garou present at this rite form a circle around the chastised werewolf (if present), and each participant calls out once to Gaia, then to her brethren the name of the offender, followed by the words: "Of all Gaia's children, I have no such brother/sister." The speaker then

turns widdershins to face away from the circle. Once all present have spoken, they drift away into the night.

**System:** This punishment normally lasts from one phase of the moon to the next. It can, however, last as long as the sept or tribe leaders desire. For serious crimes, the punishment may even be decreed permanent, essentially exiling the offender from her sept or tribe. The ostracized Garou loses one point of Glory Renown, five points of Honor Renown and one point of Wisdom Renown.

### Stone of Scorn

Level Two

The Stone of Scorn is a rock imbued with malicious spirit personifications of shame, sorrow and the like. Some septs have a permanent Stone of Scorn to which an offender is dragged, although most merely imbue a small stone with mocking energies. Starting with the ritemaster, this stone passes to each Garou present at the rite. The scorned werewolf is forced by his septmates to sit and watch. As each Garou receives the stone, he carves or paints a symbol of derision or shame onto it while telling a mocking or embarrassing tale about the offending behavior and other flaws of the scorned Garou. Moon Dancers are particularly creative in their verbal portrayals of the miscreant. This rite often lasts all night, with successive stories becoming more and more outrageous and derogatory. Once the night ends, so does the punishment, although the best stories are often whispered behind the offender's back for some time to come. Such behavior causes the Garou to lose Renown for a time.

**System:** Standard roll. The punished Garou usually loses eight points of Honor Renown and two points of Wisdom Renown until he performs an honorable deed, thus removing the taint of scorn.

### Voice of the Jackal

Level Two

When a werewolf's behavior has shamed not just herself, but her entire sept or tribe, then this rite may be called. When the ritemaster performs this rite, he blows a handful of dust or ashes onto the offender and speaks the following: "Because thy (cowardice/ gluttony/ selfishness/ etc.) has proved thee to be of jackal blood, let thy voice proclaim thy true breed!" As the dust and words envelop the punished Garou, her voice changes. Thereafter, she will speak in an annoyingly shrill and piercing nasal whine until the ritemaster repeals the punishment.

**System:** Jackal-hounds, as such punished Garou are known, subtract two dice from all Social rolls. They also lose two points of Glory Renown and five points of Honor Renown. The ritemaster can repeal this punishment at any time, although it may be made permanent for particularly serious crimes (and the Renown loss always remains). Certain jackal-hounds have reclaimed their true voices by completing a quest of great benefit to Gaia.

### The Hunt

Level Three

The Hunt is called against a werewolf who has committed a capital crime such as unwarranted murderer, yet who still retains a vestige of honor. All Garou participating in a Hunt streak their bodies with ancient symbols in paint or clay. These symbols mark the werewolves as part of a Hunting Pack, and all

other Garou will make way for Hunters so marked. It is an honor to be chosen for inclusion in a Hunt. The ritemaster, or Master of the Hunt, leads the pack. The Hunt is just that; the criminal is hunted down and killed by the pack. There is no quarter given, although (for what it's worth) death exculpates the condemned Garou. Many tragic stories tell of a werewolf forced to choose between violating his word and committing a grave crime. Such Garou, so the stories go, chose to honor their word and were Hunted, but displayed such valor during their last stand that they gained much posthumous renown.

**System:** This rite can be roleplayed using the tracking rules given in Chapter Six. Alternatively, it can be simulated by rolling the ritemaster's Charisma + Rituals (difficulty of the condemned's Rank + 4). Failure means that the condemned fought well and is accorded much posthumous Glory, while a botch means that he eluded his Hunters and can live out his life as a Ronin.

### *Satire Rite*

#### Level Three

A more serious version of the Stone of Scorn, a Satire Rite is a special song, dance and/or drama crafted by the Half Moons and Moon Dancers for the sole purpose of ridiculing the offender. This rite is always performed at a moot while the offender sits in full view of the sept. Because the Garou keep careful oral histories, the Satire will be remembered and passed down through the ages. Any werewolf so "honored" loses much renown. Cubs snicker as they sing lewd verses from the rite, and

adults will forever use some of the wittier quotes and embarrass-

ing movements from the rite when referring to the offender. While such stories are usually confined to members of the offender's own sept, Tricksters and Moon Dancers are all too happy to spread the new Satire to any Garou they encounter.

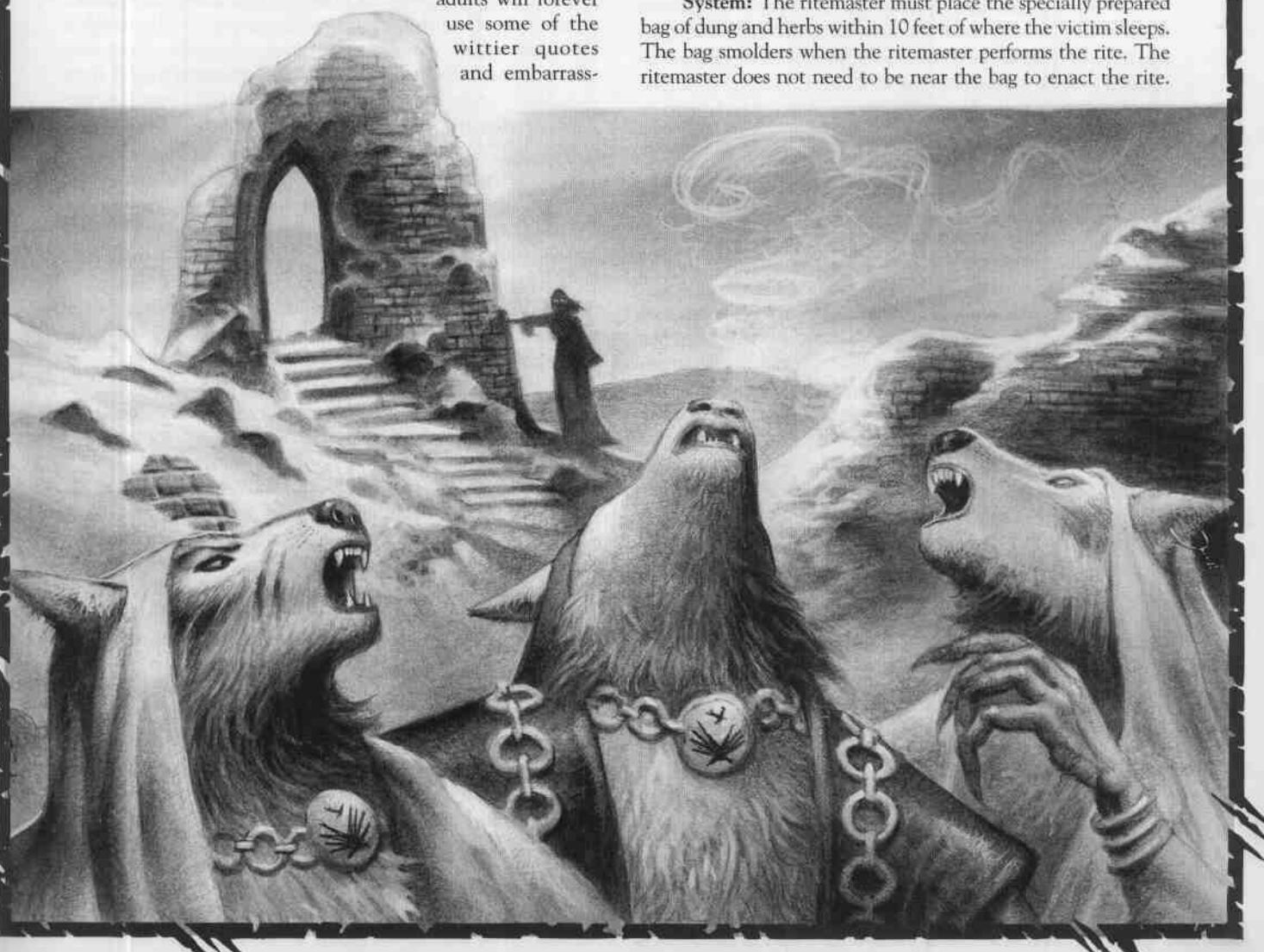
**System:** The difficulty of this rite is the offender's current Rank + 4. If successful, the offender loses one permanent Rank level (reduce his Renown to the beginning amounts for the next lowest rank). The Garou can earn new renown and rank normally. If this rite fails, the Garou loses nothing, while a botch causes the ritemaster to lose five points of Wisdom as she becomes the object of the rite.

### *The Rending of the Veil*

#### Level Four

Sometimes known as Actaeon's Folly, this rite is used to punish a human who offends the Garou greatly. The offense does not have to be against the Garou *per se*, but it may be any act against Gaia or Her children. This rite drops the Veil, forcing a human to see and remember the Garou for the duration of an all-night hunt. The ritemaster leaves a small bag of burning dung and herbs near the sleeping victim. When the victim awakens, the Veil has been burned away from his mind. The following hunt may or may not end in the human's death. Those humans left alive are often rendered insane, their unprepared minds unable to accept the truth revealed by the rite. Some few, however, overcome their fear and heal. This rite is not considered a breach of the Litany.

**System:** The ritemaster must place the specially prepared bag of dung and herbs within 10 feet of where the victim sleeps. The bag smolders when the ritemaster performs the rite. The ritemaster does not need to be near the bag to enact the rite.



Failure leaves the Veil intact. A botch causes the Garou herself to fall under the Delirium for one night.

### *Ciata's Vengeful Teeth*

#### Level Five

As one of the greatest punishments among the Garou, this rite is reserved for traitors, those who consort with the Wyrm or cowards whose actions (or lack thereof) cause the deaths of many others. At least five werewolves drag the traitor to a spot of hard, cracked earth and stones. The ritemaster then stabs a sharpened twig or stone into her own hand as she recites the traitor's sins against Gaia. Smearing her blood over the traitor's eyes, ears and forehead, the ritemaster cries in grief and rage. As the blood and tears drip to the hard ground, the rite takes effect. From that moment on, whatever of Gaia touches the traitor transforms into razor-sharp silver so long as it touches his flesh. Crinos hunters then chase the traitor like a dog. The ground beneath the traitor chews into his feet, and his death becomes an agonizing ordeal. The offender's name is then stricken from all histories, and it will be spoken only as a curse from that moment forward.

**System:** As long as the ritemaster's blood touches the traitor's body, the traitor cannot step sideways into the Umbra. No one survives this rite.

### *Rites of Renown*

These rites celebrate both the specific accomplishments of an individual Garou and his achievement of a new station in the pack or sept. Garou long to receive such rites as much as they fear facing a rite of punishment.

**System:** When performing this type of rite, the ritemaster's player must make a Charisma + Rituals roll.

### *Rite of Accomplishment*

#### Level Two

This rite is used to honor a werewolf and recognize the trials he has endured to attain his current standing. An elder will call the honored Garou forward, much as the Garou might be called forward should the elders want to punish or criticize her. As the Garou advances, the elder begins listing all of the things the Garou did to gain the acclaim. The Rite of Accomplishment then takes place, and anyone who wishes to speak on behalf of the Garou being honored may do so. In conclusion, the elder says something along the lines of, "She is made greater in her tribe, her sept and greater among the People everywhere. Let this be known."

**System:** This rite is performed when a character has 10 points of temporary Renown in a category and wishes to gain a point of permanent Renown. The difficulty is only 4 unless someone disputes the rite. (In such an instance, the difficulty rises to 6.) Only one success is required.

A failure on the roll is considered indicative of a failing in the applicant. The ritemaster often receives a portent from Gaia showing the unworthiness of the applicant. If the roll botches, the applicant must undergo a penance before anyone will again give him the Rite of Accomplishment. Such is the injustice of society.

It is possible, although rare, that someone will dispute the rite. In this case, the disputer stands and heckles the ritemaster

as he performs the rite, making bold assertions about the negative qualities of the applicant. The applicant so insulted must make a Rage roll not to frenzy; if he frenzies, the rite is over. If he keeps his cool, and the rite is successful, no one can rightfully question his worthiness for at least three moons (i.e., no one can dispute any Rites of Accomplishment performed on him during the next month and a half).

### *Rite of Passage*

#### Level Two

After a cub undergoes his First Change and becomes aware that he is a werewolf, he must undergo his Rite of Passage. Werewolves are not accorded adulthood or respect until they pass this seminal rite; they are mere cubs until that time. They are not even considered true Garou, and Shadow Lords do not refer to them as such until this rite is completed. Similarly, a cub is not a member of any tribe until his Rite of Passage. A male cub born to the Black Furies, for example, becomes a member of whatever tribe will offer him a place among them by use of this rite.

During a Rite of Passage, the cubs must complete a dangerous quest meant to prove that they have courage, honor and wisdom befitting a werewolf. However, few cubs undergo this rite alone. They are often joined by their pack-to-be, other cubs who are also coming of age. The ritemaster commands the would-be pack to go out into the world with a definite goal to achieve, and he forbids it to return until it has tried its best to accomplish this goal. Different tribes impose different goals, although multatribal septs usually reach a compromise. A Wendigo rite often takes the form of a visionquest, while the Get of Fenris commonly send their cubs into combat with Wyrm-spawn. Invisible spirits sometimes accompany the cubs in order to watch over them and report their doings to the elders.

If the cubs succeed in their quest, a ritemaster performs this rite upon them, marking them with a pictogram that brands them as full-fledged Garou. These pictograms are usually painted, but the Red Talons carve them into the flesh of the young heroes.

If the cubs fail, however, they are considered second-class citizens until they are granted another opportunity to prove themselves.

**System:** Before the Rite of Passage, Garou are not yet Rank 1. Their teachers do not teach them any Gifts until the Rite of Passage is complete.

### *Rite of Wounding*

#### Level One

This rite celebrates a Garou's first battle wound. Each tribe marks this moment differently, but all honor this sign of courage. Many tribes rub ash into at least part of the wound to form a scar of remembrance. The Get of Fenris always end this rite with a fierce all-night revel filled with drinking and fighting. By contrast, the Children of Gaia end their Rites of Wounding with prayers for peace and understanding among all creatures.

**System:** Only the wounded character and the ritemaster must be present for this rite, although the werewolf's pack and sept are normally present. The wounded character receives two points of Glory if this rite succeeds.

## Seasonal

Seasonal rites vary from tribe to tribe and place to place. Each tribe and sept has its own means of celebrating the turning of the seasons. Some septs celebrate only the major rites of the solstices and equinoxes; others perform a rite at least once per moon. The rites below are the most popular. They are fundamental rites celebrating Gaia's constant cycle of life-in-death-in-life.

These rites renew the Garou's connection to Gaia as the Earth Mother. Some Garou even believe that were such rites to cease entirely, dire repercussions would result. A few of the more mystic (or perhaps just crazier) Garou insist that if such rites weren't performed, Gaia herself might find no point in continuing the cycle, and the world would enter a perpetual Fimbulwinter... or worse.

**System:** Seasonal rites must, obviously, occur at the exact time of year the particular rite celebrates, and at least five Garou must attend. When performing the rite, the ritemaster must make a Stamina + Rituals roll (difficulty 8). If performed at a caern, the difficulty of the roll is 8 minus the caern's level. Therefore, a seasonal rite performed at a Level Three caern has a difficulty of 5.

### Rite of the Winter Winds

#### Level Two

On the longest night of the year, Garou enact this rite as a salute to Helios and an encouragement for him to begin lengthening the days again. Some werewolves believe that if this rite is not performed, the nights will continue to lengthen until Gaia has fallen into a terrible twilight state of perpetual pain. Most modern werewolves consider this mere superstition, but even such skeptics participate enthusiastically in the rite.

The Rite of the Winter Winds is rarely the same from sept to sept. European Garou practice a common version that begins with the ritemaster gathering the Garou in a circle around a small bonfire. She then leads the group in an extended howl that begins as a low, rumbling growl and eventually rises to an ululating crescendo. When the ritemaster feels that the tension is at its height, she leaps forward, snatches up a burning branch and runs into the woods. The other Garou follow her, grabbing branches as they go. Running as swiftly as they can, the Garou make as many frightening and strange noises as possible. This rite is performed both to encourage Gaia's labor in giving birth to the sun, and to frighten off any minions of the Wyrm that might be lurking about, ready to snatch the newborn sun or harm Gaia as she turns her attention away from the surface world.

The ritemaster finally leads the howling pack back to the bonfire, where they hurl their branches into the conflagration. Once the fire is raging, the Garou celebrate with a revel that lasts until dawn, at which time they greet the newborn sun with one last, triumphant howl.

### Rite of Reawakening

#### Level Two

This rite celebrates the vernal equinox, the time of rebirth. The ritemaster begins the rite at sundown by leading the gathered Garou on a quest into the Umbra. Such a quest is sometimes symbolic, but more and more often as the time of the

Apocalypse draws nigh, the questors seek true danger (or it finds them) in the Umbral Realms.

The quest always involves seven trials. These trials represent the seven gates that bar the way to the Underworld. Such trials vary dramatically from tribe to tribe, but there are always a variety of challenges presented to the members. One test might involve facing a Bane in combat, while another challenge might consist of finding a fetish lost within the Deep Umbra. Each test requires the participants to relinquish something of themselves, be it a cherished personal fetish, an old grudge or false pride. If the Garou can win their way past these challenge gates, they can renew the Earth, banishing the winter-spirits and paving the way for the green, growing season.

At the end of the rite the werewolves return to their bodies. At this time many tribes seek out Garou Kinfolk, or other humans and wolves, and reacquaint themselves with the joys of the flesh, celebrating the incredible beauty of life and the necessity of its continuation in future generations. Not surprisingly, this is the night when a large percentage of metis cubs are conceived. Although such couplings are always taboo, the intense drama of the rite sometimes overrides such concerns.

### The Great Hunt

#### Level Two

This rite falls on the eve of the summer solstice, or Midsummer, when Helios stays longest in the sky and is thus at the zenith of his influence. The short hours of darkness offer the creatures of the Wyrm little place to hide, and the werewolves respond by holding a sacred hunt.

Exactly at midnight, just at Midsummer begins, the ritemaster calls upon Gaia to bring to the attention of the sept a creature or creatures worthy of the Great Hunt. In preparation, the Garou chant, howl and tell tales of bravery. Also common is a ritual bloodletting, wherein each Garou cuts herself and sheds some of her blood into a large bowl. The mingled blood is then painted in the form of pictograms on the forehead or breastbone of each of the hunters. At dawn, Gaia sends the waiting sept a sign proclaiming the target of the Great Hunt. This sign may come in any form, from a vision seen by an entranced Wendigo ritemaster to a news story flashing on the screen of an old television in a Bone Gnawer caern. Although the person or creature chosen by Gaia is almost always associated with the Wyrm, Gaia demands on rare occasions that one of her own be sacrificed in the Great Hunt. Only the greatest warriors are ever chosen as the targets of a Great Hunt, and Gaia demands such a sacrifice from her children only in times of great need, for the freed spirit of such a warrior is said to transform immediately into an avenging angel for Gaia.

The Garou have only until midnight to complete the Great Hunt. If successful, the blood of the fallen creature is spilled onto Gaia's soil (or into the ether if the Great Hunt takes place on the Umbra) as a sacrifice to Gaia. If the hunters fail to slay their quarry, it is considered a terrible omen for the coming year. Some Theurges say that no sept will succeed at the Great Hunt during the year of the Apocalypse. At the least, a failed Great Hunt means poor luck for the sept in the year to come. Anyone participating in a successful Great Hunt gains Glory. The danger of the particular Great Hunt determines the amount of Glory gained.

**Systems:** Characters participating in a successful Great Hunt gain — presuming the target is of average threat level — three points of Glory Renown. If the Great Hunt is unsuccessful, each participating character loses two points of Glory Renown. In addition, the difficulty levels of all rites performed by the sept increase by one until the next Midsummer.

### *The Long Vigil*

#### Level Two

This rite marks the autumnal equinox, when the season of long days gives way to the season of long nights. Although summer is the traditional season of war among many human cultures, the Garou know that their shadow war will be all the more difficult during the lengthening hours of darkness. To prepare themselves, they hold the Long Vigil, a rite designed to sharpen their appetite for the battles ahead.

The Long Vigil begins at sundown, around a raging bonfire (save in some urban caerns). The sept spends the day before the Vigil bedecking the caern with trophies of war collected during the previous year. From bent rifles and shredded flak jackets to broken Wyrm-fetishes and strings of teeth to the skulls of Wyrmish monsters to smeared blood mixed with the dust of vampires, all manner of mementos adorn the heart of the caern. As the sun slips below the horizon, the ritemaster begins to chant praise to Helios, thanking him for his blessings during the summer, and praying for his safety in the coming winter. The ritemaster then praises Luna and beseeches her aid in the long nights to come.

To aid in the ritemaster's plea for aid, the Galliards of the sept come forward and begin to recite tales of the most glorious battles of the last year and the deeds done in her name. They point to each trophy in turn to tell the story of how it was won from its owner. Particularly eloquent members of other auspices who distinguished themselves in the previous year are sometimes allowed the honor of being the first to tell their own tales. Once the Galliards have finished, the other members of the sept begin to recount their own versions of the great deeds of the previous year. The tale-telling lasts all night; as dawn approaches, the ritemaster invokes Luna one final time. He dedicates all the deeds of the previous year to Luna, her brother Helios and her sister Gaia, and he promises that the year to come will be just as glorious with Luna's blessing. As the rite concludes, the Garou hurl as many trophies as possible into the bonfire, destroying their hard-earned mementos as a sign of faith that they will take many more in the year to come.

### *Minor Rites*

Minor rites are the rituals that the Garou incorporate into daily living. Almost all Garou know and use at least a few such minor rites.

An almost infinite variety of minor rites is available to the Garou. The following rites are but a small sampling. Many Garou develop their own unique minor rites to help them reaffirm their connection to Gaia, their totem spirit or each other.

**System:** Players may purchase minor rites at one-half the normal Background cost (two for one). Similarly, minor rites may be learned in half the time it takes to learn other rites. Minor rites take only two to five minutes to enact, much less

time than other rites require. Werewolves who perform a minor rite regularly find it easier to achieve certain goals. The Storyteller should require players to roleplay the invocation of these rites occasionally, to emphasize that a character is performing them regularly.

### *Bone Rhythms*

A werewolf performs this rite in homage to her totem spirit. Each spirit has a different rhythm connected to it, and the Garou taps out her spirit's rhythm with special drumsticks to honor her totem. Such "sticks" are traditionally made of bone, but they can be fashioned from any material.

**System:** Any werewolf who performs this rite three times per day for at least three consecutive days gains an additional die to any one roll while in the Umbra. Once this die is used, the Garou must rebuild the energies for an additional three days before regaining the extra die.

### *Breath of Gaia*

During this rite the werewolf breathes deeply of Gaia's breath — that is, clean air — 13 times. While so breathing, she clears her mind of all things save her love of Gaia.

**System:** The character must perform this rite at least once per day for one full cycle of the moon. So doing enables the Garou to lower the difficulty level of any one healing or detection roll by two.

### *Greet the Moon*

This rite is an exuberant paean to Luna. During this rite, the Garou howls an elaborate greeting to the moon. This greeting varies with the phase of the moon.

**System:** Performing this rite each night at moonrise for a full phase of the moon enables the character to add one die to all rolls involving social interactions with Garou of that phase's auspice the next night the moon reaches the phase in question.

### *Greet the Sun*

Certain Children of Gaia and a few Uktenea and Wendigo practice this rite. It is similar to Greet the Moon, but it is performed at sunrise.

**System:** The Garou must sing Helios' praises for nine consecutive days. If the Garou does so, Helios grants his devotee an additional die when attempting to sense Wyrm creatures or Wyrm-taint, provided the werewolf continues to sing his praises daily. If the Garou misses even one day, he must begin this rite anew to reap its benefits.

### *Hunting Prayer*

This common rite takes many forms, but it always involves pausing before the start of a hunt to praise Gaia and all her creatures. In addition, the Garou chooses some item to hold her prayers. This item can range from an old belt to a tooth, but the werewolf must have it with her when she hunts. If she loses the item, she must choose a new item and start her prayers anew.

**System:** If a Garou performs this rite before every hunt for three turnings of the moon, she receives an additional die to all tracking rolls as long as she continues her pre-hunt prayers. If she hunts even once without praying, she must renew her prayers for another three months before again receiving the bonus.

### *Prayer for the Prey*

A specific form of the Rite of Contrition, this rite involves the werewolf stepping sideways into the Umbra just after making a kill, subsequently thanking the spirit of the prey for giving its own life that the Garou might survive. Performing this rite is a sign of respect to Gaia, her children and life itself.

**System:** The character must perform this rite upon every beast of Gaia (not including Wyrm-spawn) she slays for one full turning of the moon. Should she do so, all of her difficulty numbers drop by one when dealing with nature spirits. This bonus lasts until she kills an animal without taking time to thank the creature's spirit.



Doug sucked on a peppermint to soothe the dryness in his throat. Wouldn't do any good to cough now and scare off the critters. He and Simon had been hunting in these woods for a couple of years, and they'd never run into any rangers, even though it was technically Fed land. They were usually able to bag a couple of deer, and once, Doug had shot an enormous wolf. Its brown and black pelt made a fine rug for the floor of their hunting cabin. Simon had wanted to set out some traps, because wolf pelts fetched a lot of money if you knew where to sell them, but Doug thought that was too much trouble and risk. Nah, better to do some deer stalking, and if they found a big bad wolf, they'd nab that sucker and count themselves *real* lucky.

But today had been kind of a letdown. Some damn woodpecker was knocking on one of the thick pines back at their rendezvous, loud enough to hear half a mile away. Doug was tempted to throw a rock at the thing to shut it up. He checked his watch. Time to meet Simon back at their checkpoint anyway. A waste of a day if ever there was one.

But when he got back to the rendezvous, there was no sign of his old friend. Doug used his scope and checked the truck, hidden down the hill. Still there, but no Simon. *Shit*, he thought, *the fool's gotten lost. You'd never know he grew up near here.*

His nose wrinkled. *Shit*. Literally. Smelly enough to be human. And something else? He followed his nose into the pine thicket, picking out the mixed smells of feces, urine, and...

Blood. It was all over the place. The torn shreds of flannel and Goretex were soaked in it. The smell of crap rose up from the spiraled ropes of intestine draped around the clearing — and at the center, fragments of bone. Bone — and meat — and glittering in the center, the gold watch Simon had bought two years back...

Doug staggered back, dropping his rifle, fighting to hold down the vomit surging in his throat. *Simon*, he thought. *Not Simon*. He didn't even hear the low growl from behind him. Only when he turned did he see the enormous wolf baring long, sharp teeth.

"Wolves don't attack humans!" he screamed in protest of the inevitable. "It's a myth! It just doesn't happen! It..."

Doug's cries ended in a wet, snapping sound as his vocal cords split in two. If Doug had still been listening, he might have heard a faint whisper on the wind that murmured, "Not all human stories are true." The wolf pulling his trachea out from his throat probably didn't hear the whisper anyway. Seemingly satisfied with her work, she pulled the remains deeper into the dark forest. Except for dark stains on the pine needles, no trace of the hunters remained.

The woodpecker began knocking again, now that the fuss was all over.

# Chapter Five: Rules

The rules of *Werewolf* are fairly simple, at least to start out with. It is in the various permutations that the uninitiated get concerned. But everything has a beginning and a pattern, and once the basics are established, the rest are just variations on a theme. Just like any game that uses cards or boards, the details of *Werewolf* fall together once a player sits down to learn. This chapter covers the basics of the game's rules. The further permutations arise throughout the book, but it all starts here. Understanding what lies in the next few pages is the key to unlocking the potential for great storytelling.

## Time

Real time passes moment to moment, day by day and hour by hour. But in game terms, time can be tricky. Ten years might fly by in minutes of narration, or a battle that lasts for half an hour in the game may rage on for six or seven hours of real time. The following six categories help maintain the sense of the passage of time in your game:

- **Turn** — The amount of time it takes to perform a simple action. A turn can range anywhere from three seconds, which is the norm, to three minutes. It all depends of the pace of the current scene.

- **Scene** — Like most plays and movies, the story is divided up into smaller segments called scenes. A scene takes place in one location and is made up of a variable amount of turns, as many as it takes to accomplish what was intended. A battle in an alleyway might count as a scene, as might the characters' effort to convince a spirit to aid their cause. A

scene can break down into a series of turns or resolve completely through roleplaying as your story dictates.

- **Chapter** — Just like a chapter in a book or an act in a play, a chapter in a *storytelling game* is an independent part of the larger story. It is made up of a number of scenes interconnected by downtime. Most chapters don't last much longer than an evening's play in real time.

- **Story** — The story is the complete tale, from introduction, through build-up and to the climax. Some stories have many chapters; others can be told in only one.

- **Chronicle** — A whole series of stories usually connected by the same characters, but sometimes by common links such as a city tribe or family. It is the ongoing story told by both players and the storyteller.

- **Downtime** — *Time that is not roleplayed*, but described in one large swath rather than telling it scene by scene. The Storyteller announcing, "You drive for three hours until you reach the lab," is an example of invoking downtime to speed the story along. In this manner, downtime allows you to focus on the meat of the story.

## Actions

Over the course of the game, your character will want to do many things. Most of the time, these things are fairly simple. Walking across the street, reading a book, watching television and driving a car are all simple actions, and they require no dice rolls. They are successful automatically, for the most part.

However, werewolves being what they are and living the kind of lives they lead, things are going to get more complicated.

Attempting an action couldn't be simpler. Just tell the Storyteller what you want your character to do and how she's going to do it. The Storyteller might approve of a simple action and tell you how your actions fit in with what is going on in the scene. But if you want to do something more extreme or difficult, or if a good chance exists that your character might fail, the universal arbitrator of dice comes into play. Opening a door is a simple action, but ripping a metal emergency door off its hinges to get to the vampires on the other side calls for a roll.

### *Rolling Dice*

Although the Storyteller is always the final judge of whether an action succeeds or fails, it is better to let the fates decide in many situations. Fate's agent in this case is a number of 10-sided dice, available in fine book and gaming stores all across this great world of ours.

Storytellers should have a whole mess of dice — at least 10 if not more — but players can share if they so desire. Whenever there is a chance a character might not succeed at his action, dice come into play. As a random element, they work nicely to settle the disputes and eliminate the "I got you!" "Did not!" exchanges that plagued our childhood games. Through the whims of the dice, a character gets a chance to shine, showing her pack where she really excels or a chance to embarrass herself horribly and ensure that she'll never be asked to do that again.

### *Ratings*

It may seem a little unfair at first to leave the fate of your character up to chance. However, a way exists to make sure that the dice take your character's strengths and weaknesses into account. Your character's personality is up to you, but his true capabilities are defined by his Traits. These characteristics measure his instinctive and acquired aptitudes and abilities. A Trait is described by a rating of 1 to 5. A rating of 1 in a Trait implies only vague skills or capabilities, while having a rating of 5 means that the character could accomplish appropriate tasks blindfolded. For most people, Traits run from 1 to 3. Having a 4 in an ability is a most exceptional person, and a 5 is far beyond rare, for normal humans. Ratings of 5 are reserved for the Einsteins and Bruce Lees of the world. It is also possible to have zero in a Trait. This abysmal rating is most common among Abilities, such as when a character has had no training in something.

x	Abysmal
•	Poor
..	Average
...	Good
....	Exceptional
.....	Peerless

Even so, exceptions can occur. A metis might have a deformity that drops his appearance to zero, for instance, and a human would lack Gnosis utterly.

When you roll dice, you roll one die for each dot a character has in a Trait. For example, if your character is trying to remember a license plate number, and he has three dots in Intelligence, you would roll three dice. However, it is very rare to roll an Attribute Trait all by itself. Raw potential is modified by skill, and Attributes are added to Abilities for the most common rolls.

Here's another example. Archibald is driving down a snow-covered road. Suddenly, a large animal leaps out of the woods and into the road. The Storyteller has Archibald's player (Kyle) make a Dexterity + Drive roll (an Attribute + an Ability) to keep the car on the road and under control. In this case, Kyle would take the three dice for Archibald's Perception of 3 plus as many dice as he had in Drive. Archibald's Drive is 2, so Kyle adds them to the original three, for a total of five dice. Kyle now has five dice in his *dice pool*, the total number of dice one rolls in a single turn. Most of the time, you calculate dice pools for only one action at a time. You can modify that total to take multiple actions in a single turn, but doing so is discussed more fully later in the chapter.

Situations arise that allow only an Attribute to be rolled, however. For instance, no Ability will help Archibald lift a crate of guns onto the back of a truck. In this case, Kyle rolls dice equal to Archibald's Strength Attribute alone.

You cannot add more than two Traits together into a dice pool. In addition, if your dice pool involves a Trait with a maximum rating of 10 (such as Rage or Willpower), you can't add any other Traits to your dice pool. It is effectively impossible for a normal human to have more than 10 dice in a dice pool. On the other hand, totems and the Attribute modifications of the various forms can sometimes help werewolves overcome the limitations of a mere mortal.

### *Reflexives*

Not everything a character does counts as an action. Many responses are instinctual, and they happen as your character is performing her actions. Spending a point of Rage happens in less than a second. You do not need to roll dice for the expenditure, and it leaves you free to do something else. These "free actions" are called *reflexives*. Basically, these are feats that don't require an action to be spent.

Reflexives include soaking damage and Willpower rolls. They aren't considered actions in any real way. You would not have to subtract from your dice pool to soak damage while searching for a password on a computer, for example. Naturally, your character still must be conscious to perform reflexives, but they don't get in a character's way during the turn.

## *Difficulties*

You can roll dice all day, but if you don't know what you are looking for, it won't do you any good. It is the job of the Storyteller to assign an appropriate *difficulty number* to the roll and tell the player what it is. A difficulty number is always from 2 to 10 — no lower or higher. For every die a player rolls that comes up equal to or higher than the difficulty number, the player has gained a success. For instance, if the Storyteller assigns a difficulty of 6 and the player rolls a 5, 4, 8, 8, 2 and 6, then he has gained three successes. The more successes a player gets, the better his character does. You need only one success to accomplish your task, but that success is marginal at best. If you score three or more successes, you have succeeded completely. Getting five or more successes is a momentous event.

Obviously, the lower the difficulty is, the easier the task is to accomplish, and vice versa. The default difficulty is 6, and it indicates that an action is neither impossible nor simple. If a Storyteller (or the rulebook) does not give you a difficulty for a roll, you can assume that the difficulty is 6.

The Storyteller is the final authority on difficulty numbers. If a task seems impossible, then the difficulty will be much higher. If the task is absurdly simple, the difficulty will be on the lower end of the spectrum. Extremely difficult or simple tasks might call for a roll of 2 or 10, but such difficulties should be few and far between. A task with a difficulty of 2 is so simple that it is usually better just to make it an automatic success. A difficulty of 10 represents a task that's virtually impossible — and easy to screw up horribly.

## *Failure*

If you score no successes on your roll, your character failed his attempted action. He missed his shot. She couldn't break the code. He forgot the punch-line of the joke. Failure, while disappointing, is not nearly as bad as what can happen if you botch a roll.

*Example: Paper Clip, a Bone Gnawer Theurge, is attempting to hot-wire a car before the mobsters see what he did to their windshield. The Storyteller assigns Erik, Paper Clip's player, a difficulty of 7. Erik rolls Intelligence (3) + Repair (2) and gets 4, 3, 5, 5 and 6, which yields no successes. Paper Clip rubs the two wires together, but nothing happens. Maybe the battery is dead, or maybe these are the wrong two wires. Just at that moment the first of his pursuers rounds the corner. Should he try again, or get the hell out of there?*

## *Botches*

Fate is not always kind, and it has a strange sense of humor. It is usually at the worst times that things go from bad to catastrophically horrid. To simulate such failures, Werewolf employs the "rule of one," otherwise known as botching. When a die comes up a 1, that 1 cancels out a success. Take the 1 die and any one success, and set them both aside. Do the same for every 1 that turns up on a roll. Thus, even seemingly successful actions can be reduced to nothing.

Even then, things can get worse. If a roll gives up no successes in the first place, yet one or more 1s show up, you have a botch. In other words, if all of your dice land with no successes showing and any of them is a 1, you have just botched that action. Even one success can cancel the botch out. If you have one success and seven 1s on your roll, it's still just a failure. It is only when you roll no successes that botches occur.

But botches do occur, and they are seldom forgotten easily. A botch is much worse than a failure — it's a cataclysm, a catastrophe. It is the worst-case scenario you had when you started to roll the dice. Let's say that your character has been fighting a Black Spiral for the better part of an hour, give and take, barely making it through the battle. After several attempts, your character finally gets the drop on him, lashes out face to face, puts a gun to the Black Spiral's head... and it jams. Or say your Glass Walker is searching for some biographical data on one of Pentex's executives. A failure would be not finding the data, but a botch triggers the internal security, locking down the system and sending a team to the house the signal is coming from. The Storyteller decides exactly what goes wrong and how bad a situation the botch has caused. It could be anything from a minor annoyance to an unforgettable incident.

On occasion, Storytellers may find botches occurring all too often, or a string of them causing no end of trouble for the players and the story. Superstitions are superstitions, but almost every gamer can tell a tale of a night when "the dice just went bad." It is then the Storyteller's prerogative to give the players one free Get Out of Bad Karma card, or allow them to skip one botch. Usually this freebie would be the first botch of the night. This option tends to make the players sweat a little less at the winds of chance, until they start to think about their enemies having the same advantage.

*Example: The Glass Walker Ragabash Flashburn finally managed to get a hit on the Wyrm-tainted bodyguard. His last shot had gone into the woman's leg, and she had crashed to the rain soaked street with a cry of pain. Taking a cue from the John Woo movies he has been watching lately, Lee, Flashburn's player, decides to do something theatrical. He wants to run and dive onto the pavement, sliding along the wet ground to reach her. Then he will put the gun right onto the bodyguard's forehead and blow her tainted brains all over the sidewalk. Stan, the Storyteller, decides to let him try, but he assigns a difficulty of 9. Lee has a Dexterity of 3 and a Firearms of 2. He rolls a 4, 7, 5, 8 and 1. He got no successes, and he rolled a 1. Lee sits back with a stunned expression as Stan tells how Flashburn runs and dives to the pavement, only to go shooting right past the downed bodyguard. But not before his gun gets caught in the sewer grating and is wrenched from his hand. He finally comes to rest... at the boots of the Pentex First Team who came as backup. Sometimes claws just work better....*

## *Automatic Successes*

You know how to do it, and certainly your Garou knows at least as much as you do. It is so simple, why should you even have to roll? Well, you shouldn't. Some tasks are just that basic, and your character would be able to perform them

in her sleep. A dice roll is unnecessary in this case. To that end, *Werewolf* has a system that allows for automatic successes on these tasks performed routinely.

If the number of dice you have in your dice pool is equal to or greater than the difficulty number, the character succeeds automatically. No dice are rolled, and the story moves on. This system does not work for all tasks, however. It does not work in combat or any other stressful situations. This success is also considered marginal. It is as if you only rolled one success on your dice roll. But for basic and often-repeated actions, the system is just fine. Of course, if you want to roll it — for instance, if you want more than one success — then you still can. You don't have to take an automatic success if you don't want to.

Another way to get an automatic success is to spend a Willpower point. Although you still have to roll, the Willpower guarantees that you'll get one extra success. You can do so only once per turn, and you do have a limited supply of Willpower, so it's not a privilege to be overused. Nonetheless, it is a handy thing to have when the stakes are high.

### *Try, Try Again*

Failure builds on failure, and stress leads to more stress. When a character fails an action, he is disheartened and upset, but he will usually try again. At this point, he is not at his best; he is distracted and likely to force the issue. To reflect this condition, Storytellers can choose to increase the difficulty of a task for each failure a character makes. If the attempt is tried and failed, the next try raises difficulty by one. The second try raises it by two, and so forth, until it becomes nearly impossible to succeed.

Some examples of where this rule could be put into effect include picking a lock, hacking into a computer system or interrogating a prisoner. If you cannot turn the tumblers, circumvent the security or get the canary you are interrogating to sing the first time out, it is unlikely you will be able to succeed try after try after try.

The Storyteller shouldn't always invoke this rule. Many situations are stressful enough to begin with, and they would not need the added difficulties. Things like failing to claw an opponent, detect an ambush or track your prey through city streets are intrinsically stressful. These failures would not lead to frustration and failed future attempts automatically, although some might call for a Rage roll.

*Example: Weston, a Black Fury Ahroun, has to scale the wall outside the embassy. It appears to have plenty of handholds, and this side of the street is cloaked in shadows. Jacey, Weston's player, rolls Dexterity + Athletics (difficulty 6) to begin mounting the wall. Jacey rolls no successes, and the Storyteller informs her that a bad step causes Weston to slide back down along the wall to the sidewalk, leaving scrapes along her forearms and knees. A little frustrated, Weston decides to take on the wall again, but the Storyteller makes the difficulty 7 this time. More scrapes and scratches later, Weston is back on the ground. She decides to assault the wall again, this time with a difficulty of 8 to*

### *Difficulties and Successes*

#### Difficulties

3	Easy (working an unreliable vending machine)
4	Routine (changing a tire)
5	Straightforward (hooking up a VCR)
6	Standard (firing a gun)
7	Challenging (replacing a car's sound system)
8	Difficult (rebuilding a wrecked engine block)
9	Extremely difficult (repairing that block without parts)
10	Nigh impossible (diving in through the window of a speeding car)

#### Degrees of Success

One Success	Marginal (keep a broken refrigerator running until the repairman arrives)
Two Successes	Moderate (making a handicraft that's ugly but useful)
Three Successes	Complete (fixing something so that it's good as new)
Four Successes	Exceptional (increasing your car's efficiency in the process of repairing it)
Five or More	Phenomenal (creating a masterwork)

indicate her mounting stress. Weston could be in for a long climb, and an even longer night.

### *Multiple Actions*

Sometimes a character may wish to perform more than one action in a single turn, such as firing a gun at three targets, trying to climb a tree while remaining quiet or hitting someone with a bat and then running away. In these situations, a player can roll for all the actions, but each action suffers a penalty.

First, declare how many actions the character will take in a turn. Then, subtract a number of dice from the first dice pool equal to the total number of actions. The subsequent actions lose this same amount, plus a cumulative additional die. If the dice pool drops to zero or below because of this penalty, the character cannot attempt the action. The character simply does not have it in him at that point.

*Example: Deron wants his character, Shadow-in-the-Wood, to kick the teeth out of the guy who is threatening him, while avoiding the thugs on both sides of him. The Red Talon Ragabash has Dexterity 3, Brawl 4 and Dodge 3. Deron calculates the dice pool for the boot to the head (Dexterity 3 + Brawl 4 = dice pool of seven). He then subtracts three dice from it (because of the total of three actions). His final dice pool for the first action is four. The first dodge has a dice pool of six (Dexterity 3 + Dodge 3), minus four (three for the three actions, and one more because it is the second action), for a final dice pool of two. The last action has a dice pool of one (six, minus three for the number of actions, minus two for*

being the third action). *Shadow-in-the-Wood* had better pray that the one thug rolls poorly on his grappling attempt.

Rage makes this situation a whole different story, since it can give a Garou extra actions in a single turn, at no penalty. For more information see p. 193.

## Complications

The preceding rules are all you need to get started playing *Werewolf*. And if your chronicle focuses more on the roleplaying aspect of the game than rolling dice, it would be all you need to know for a successful game. But these rules do not cover everything. Situations can get a lot more complex in a game, just as they can in life, and the rules must reflect that complexity. For example, what if your character is trying to accomplish something while someone else is trying actively to stop him? Or what if one of his packmates wants to help?

What follows are various ways to help you reflect these types of circumstances in the game and allow the story to continue unaffected. They are not mandatory, but they help add realism and suspense to the story. These optional rules are simple, effective and designed to reflect a variety of situations. More specific situations appear in the next chapter.

## Extended Actions

To accomplish a task satisfactorily, sometimes you need more than one success. A character might need to spend a night in a library tracing through subsidiaries to find who really owns a particular office building. That embassy wall mentioned previously can't be scaled in a single turn. When you need only a single success to complete an action, it is called a *simple action*. When you need multiple successes to accomplish even a marginal success, that action is called an *extended action*. Simple actions are the most common, but many opportunities will arise to perform extended actions as the game progresses.

In an extended action, you roll your dice pool again and again over subsequent turns, trying to collect enough successes to succeed. For example, your character has been chasing a vampire through the city streets on foot. The Leech had just gained the lead, run into an underground garage and slammed the rollaway door closed just as your character got there. The Storyteller rules that it will take 15 successes to get through the door, but the prey gets farther away each turn and has a better chance to hide. You will succeed eventually, but where will he be then? The Storyteller is the final authority on which situations call for extended actions.

Usually, you can take as many turns as you want to finish an extended action. However, *Werewolf* being the game it is, time is a luxury you seldom have. If you should botch in the course of an extended action, then it is back to square one. A botch wipes out all of your accumulated successes, and you start over with nothing. Worse yet, the Storyteller might rule that you can't start over at all because of the botch, depending on what you are doing. Accept your failure and move on.

Because several situations call specifically for extended actions, they are discussed further in Chapter Six: Systems

and Drama. It is important to note that because they call for such an extreme amount of dice rolling, they should probably be kept out of the more intense sessions of roleplaying.

*Example: The robbery didn't go well. If things go much worse, not only will Weston not make it to the Freebooters, she might not survive at all. Having escaped the building, Weston is now stuck on the grounds of the complex. From her vantage in the bushes around a corporate art statue, she can see the floodlight on and the security teams searching the area. The chalice is secure in her satchel, but she is far from safe. Her best bet is to sit tight and wait for the heat to die down.*

*The Storyteller rules that she'll need to roll 16 successes on an extended Stamina + Stealth roll (difficulty 7) to stay hidden until the teams give up the search. Jacey, Weston's player, rolls once for each half hour, hoping to avoid botches that would give away her position. After four in-game hours, and eight rolls, she manages to succeed. The teams give up the search and go back to standby. Now all she has to do is make it out of the complex without tripping any more alarms.*

## Resisted Actions

A simple difficulty number might not be enough to represent a struggle between two characters. What if, for instance, a character is pursuing another in a car chase? Each one is doing his best to either catch his foe or to avoid such capture. In this case, the player would make a *resisted roll*. Each person rolls dice against a difficulty determined by one of your opponent's Traits. The person who scores the most successes emerges victorious.

However, you score only as many successes as it takes to exceed your opponent's successes. In other words, the other person's successes cancel out yours, just as 1s would. If you score four successes and your opponent scores three, you are left with only one success: a marginal success. As you can see, it is difficult to get an outstanding success on a resisted action. Most times, you are lucky to succeed at all. Even if your opponent does not beat you, he can still diminish the effect of your efforts.

Some actions (such as arm-wrestling or debating) may be both extended and resisted. In these cases, one of the opponents must achieve a set number of successes to triumph. Each success over the rival's total in a given turn is added to a running tally. The winner is the first to get the designated number of successes.

*Example: Ears-of-the-Wind knew without a doubt that Red-of-Teeth was wrong. He was the leader of this war pack, but Ears-of-the-Wind did not believe that charging in the front door of the medical facility was the way. But Red-of-Teeth refused to listen to their wereraven guide's plan to sneak in the back with the trash removers. Ears-of-the-Wind did not want to make a formal challenge, but he needed to do something to ensure they would not charge into certain death.*

*Kelly, Ears-of-the-Wind's player, and the Storyteller roleplay much of the initial conversation, and Kelly manages to keep Red-of-Teeth's temper down and avoid a direct confrontation that would lead to a Challenge. Then the Storyteller has Kelly roll*

Charisma (4) + Leadership (2), resisted by Red-of-Teeth's Charisma (3) + Leadership (4). Kelly rolls six dice against a difficulty of 8, while the Storyteller rolls seven dice at the same difficulty. Kelly scores four successes, while the Storyteller gets only two. Ears-of-the-Wind manages to make her plea, and Red-of-Teeth steps aside, no honor lost, to let the wiser Garou lead the attack.

## Teamwork

No werewolf should ever work alone. The pack is living proof that strength lies in numbers. In some situations, such as trying to find a person's death certificate in a large filing room or attempting to flip a car over, characters can choose to work together for successes. If the Storyteller decides that teamwork would be appropriate for the situation, two or more characters can make separate rolls and combine the successes together. They may not combine Traits into one large dice pool, however.

Teamwork is a very effective tool in many situations. A well-coordinated attack by an entire pack can be a much greater victory than one strong Garou going at it alone. Following prey is much easier with several pairs of eyes keeping the subject in view. Assistance can be anything but helpful on some occasions, however. Two people trying to convince someone to let them into a club can backfire, just as a group trying to fix an engine can sometimes cause more damage than repair. In other words, a botch from one person can ruin everyone's work.

## The Golden Rule

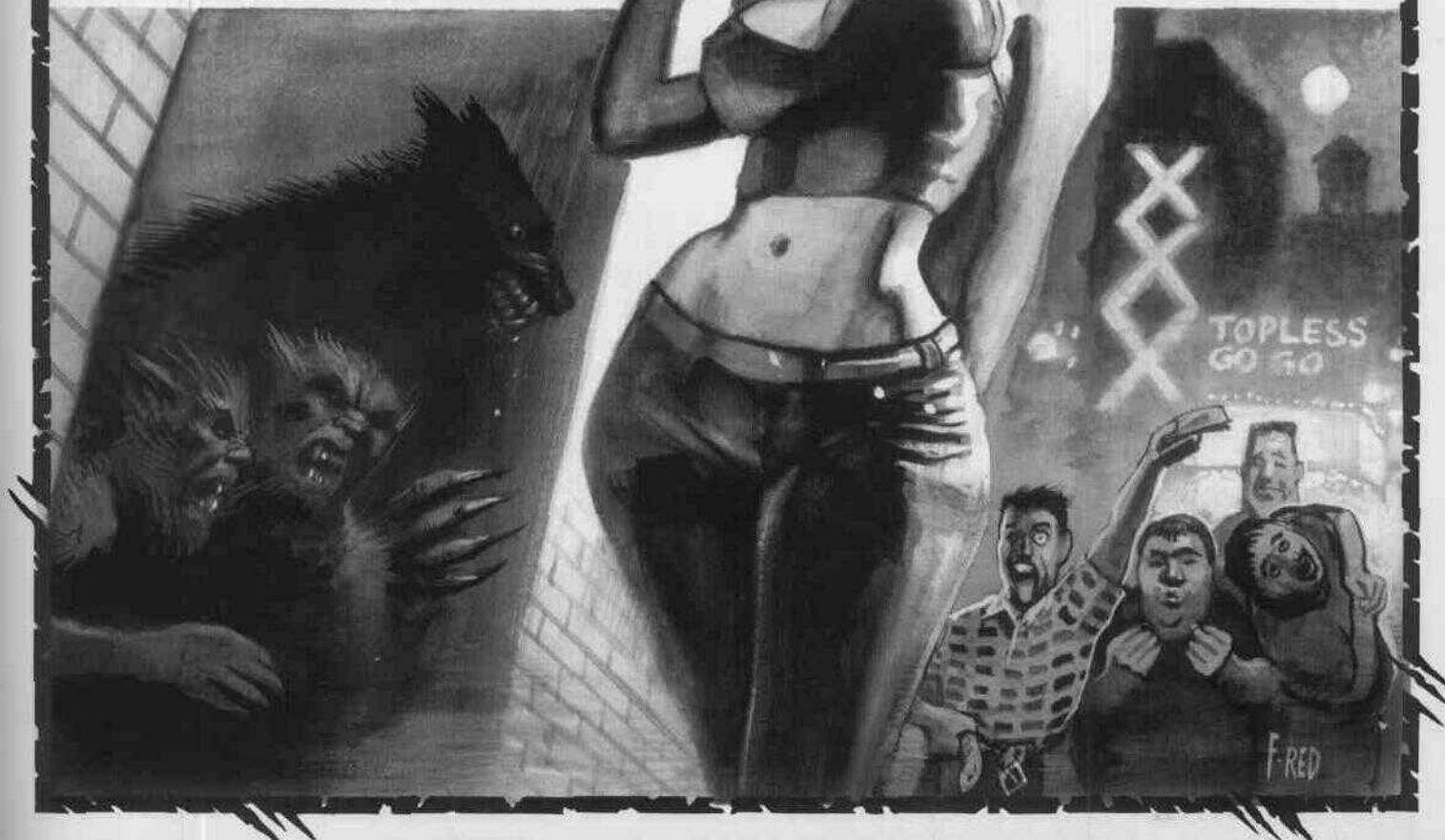
This rule is the most important one, and it's the only rule worth following to the letter: *There are no rules*. None that you *must* adhere to, that is. If you

don't like it, change it. We have tried to create a simple system that can be used to simulate the complex varieties of life (and obviously, we think it works fine for that). However, there's no accounting for the creativity of the human condition. Not all of our rules will work well in your stories, so mix them up. Run a whole session without using any dice. Or spread out the map and run a tactical version of the attack on the warehouse. Do whatever you like. This book is nothing more than a collection of guidelines, suggestions and ideas. The rules are ways of helping you capture the essence of the World of Darkness in a game format. But these rules are only to help, not to restrict. Whatever works best for you is the right way to go. We have given you the tools, now go make whatever you want out of them.

## Try It Out

And that's it for the basic rules. The rest are all variations on a theme. All the other rules spin out of what is contained in the last few pages. If you understood all that, have at it. Go grab some friends and start a game. If not, read it through again. Get some dice and practice a roll or two. Practice sticks in the mind better than simple visualization.

Let's say that Paper Clip, our car-thieving Garou, is now on the run after having wrapped said car around a telephone pole. Having gone through so much with it already, Paper Clip decides to use his much-abused sawed-off shotgun on the



thugs coming after him. The difficulty for hitting someone at this range is 6. Take three dice for Paper Clip's Dexterity of 3 and one for his Firearms Skill of 1. That adds up to 4 dice in the dice pool, which is good, but not great. So roll it. Count up your successes, but don't forget that any 1s cancel out successes. Did you hit him? Did you botch? The more successes you get, the more accurate (and lethal) the shot is. Not only that, but it increases the odds that the man will not return fire.

Now try an extended and resisted roll. Let's say that the scene is a debate at a moot, and some young pup is vying for a point of Wisdom. This debate will necessitate an indefinite series of rolls, each roll using different combinations of Traits and having different difficulties. You need to accumulate five or more successes to prove your point, and prove it wisely, to increase your Renown score. A botch eliminates all your accumulated successes, and you might just get laughed out of the discussion.

First roll: Each player rolls Charisma + Expression, difficulty of the opponents Wits + 3. (Sometimes debates are started and finished in the opening remarks.)

Second and Third rolls: As the debate heats up, each player rolls Intelligence + Expression, difficulty of the opponent's Intelligence + Expression.

Fourth roll (and any subsequent rolls): Each player rolls Manipulation + Expression (difficulty of the opponent's Wits + Expression) to make the final point.

### *Examples of Rolls*

This system is designed with flexibility in mind. To this end, there are over 270 possible combinations of Attributes and Abilities. This staggering figure is just the beginning, as it does not take into account the additional Talents, Skills and Knowledges that might crop up as the game progresses. In this way, you have a huge variety of rolls with which to simulate the action of your story. The following examples are used to show some of the situations that might crop up during a game.

- You want to conduct yourself with all the respect you can around the high-ranking elder of your tribe. Roll Wits + Etiquette (difficulty 8).

- You are standing watch while the rest of your pack sleeps all around you. Make a Stamina + Alertness roll (difficulty 7) to see how awake you are when the vampires finally attack.

- You try to distract the security guard with your left hand while slipping your knife out of your belt with your right. Roll Dexterity + Subterfuge (difficulty of the guard's Perception + Alertness).

- A Black Spiral Dancer is creeping up on you, along the ceiling! Roll Perception + Alertness (difficulty 9) to hear its approach.

- The mob is angry and out for the blood of your Kinfolk. Roll Charisma + Leadership (difficulty 7) to give an off-the-cuff speech, and hopefully save someone's life. You will need four successes to convince them to move along.

- Your arch-rival is about to tell his side of the story to the assembled elders at the moot. Roll Perception + Performance (difficulty 6) to evaluate how well he is doing at turning the council against you.

- After being questioned for hours, roll Stamina + Acting (difficulty 8) to keep to the story you made up. With five successes, you just might convince them that you are telling the truth.

- You threaten the mouthy young pup by lifting him off the floor by his collar. Roll Strength + Intimidation (difficulty 8) to get him back in line.

- Suddenly, a man pushes a cow out of the back of the cattle truck you have been chasing. Roll Wits + Drive (difficulty 6) to swerve out of the way in time.

- Can you distract the man's trained Dobermans long enough to slip in? Roll Manipulation + Animal Ken (difficulty 8).

- Is the doctor lying about when his patient actually came in to get patched up? Roll Perception + Investigation (difficulty 7).

- You try to pull alongside the fleeing truck so your friends can leap aboard. Make an extended Dexterity + Drive roll, resisted by the truck driver's Wits + Drive. If you accumulate five total successes more than his total successes, you're in position. If he accumulates a total of five more successes than you get, he causes you to swerve.

- In order to stop the engine from blowing up, you have to rip that red thing off that gray thing. Roll Strength + Crafts (difficulty 6).

- Human expression can be so hard for a lupus to figure out. What exactly does that face mean? Roll Manipulation + Empathy (difficulty 6) to try figure it out.

- You try to follow the paper trail to the company that manufactured the poisonous chemical originally. Roll Intelligence + Investigation (difficulty 9).

- What language is she speaking? Roll Intelligence + Linguistics (difficulty 6) to figure it out.

- You must keep running if you are going to outdistance your pursuers. Make an extended Stamina + Athletics roll. If you collect 15 successes, you've outlasted them.

- What sort of alarm system does the college library have? Roll Perception + Security (difficulty 6).

- You attempt to get his attention by driving your knife through his hand and into the oak bar. Roll Strength + Melee (difficulty 6).

### *Game Terms*

Defined here are some terms that first-time players, new Storytellers and a few ignorant veterans might not be familiar with.

**Ability:** These Traits describe what a character knows and has learned, rather than her physical and psychological make-up. Abilities are Traits such as Intimidation, Firearms and Occult.

**Action:** An action is the performance of a deed that is a consciously willed physical, social or mental activity. When players announce that their characters are doing something, they are taking an action.

**Advantage:** This catchall category describes a character's mystical abilities (such as Gifts and rites) and Backgrounds.

**Attributes:** These Traits describe a character's inherent capabilities. Attributes are such things as Strength, Charisma and Intelligence.

**Botch:** 1) A naturally rolled 1 that cancels out a success die. 2) A disastrous failure, indicated by rolling one or more 1s and no successes on the 10-sided dice rolled for an action.

**Character:** Each player creates a character, an individual he roleplays over the course of the chronicle. Although this term could apply to any individual, we use it here to describe the player's character.

**Dice Pool:** The dice you have in your hand after adding together your different Traits. The number of dice you can roll for that action.

**Difficulty:** A number from 2 to 10 measuring the difficulty of an action a character takes. The player needs to roll that number or higher on at least one of the dice in his dice pool.

**Downtime:** The time spent between scenes, during which no roleplaying is done and turns are not used. Actions might be made, and the Storyteller might give some descriptions, but time generally passes quickly.

**Extended Action:** An action that requires a certain number of successes, accumulated over several turns, for the character to actually succeed.

**Health:** A measure of the degree to which a character is wounded or injured.

**Points:** The temporary score of a Trait such as Willpower or Rage — the squares, not the circles.

**Rating:** A number describing the permanent value of a Trait. Most often, this number ranges from 1 to 5. Some ratings range from 1 to 10.

**Reflexive:** A situation in which dice might be rolled, but that does not count as an action for the purpose of calculating dice pools. Examples of reflexives are soak rolls and Willpower rolls to resist mind control.

**Resisted Action:** An action that two different characters take against one another. Both compare their number of successes, and the character with the most wins.

**Scene:** A single episode of a story. A time and place in which actions and events take place moment by moment. A scene is often a dramatic high point of the story.

**Score:** The temporary value of a Trait or combination of Traits used in a single roll.

**Simple Action:** An action that requires the player to get only one success to succeed, although more successes indicate a better result.

**Storyteller:** The person who creates and guides the story by assuming the roles of all characters not taken by the players and determining all events beyond the control of the players.

**System:** A specific set of complications used in a certain situation; rules to help guide the rolling of dice to create dramatic action.

**Trait:** Any Attribute, Ability, Advantage or other character index that can be described as a number (in terms of dots).

**Troupe:** The group of players, including the Storyteller, who play *Werewolf: The Apocalypse*, usually on a regular basis.



The Master of the Challenge drew back to the perimeter's edge as the two opponents began to circle warily. When he finally let his hand drop, the two exploded like thunder at one another.

When Ull lunged for her throat, Karin took it for a feint; she ducked too late to avoid the rake of the enormous claws. Blood spurted fast, but she didn't falter. Instead, she went low, her own talons ripping into the Ahroun's abdomen. He grunted, surprised at the force of the attack. Karin gave no quarter then, almost forgetting that this was not a fight to the death. Hair flew in every direction, bones snapped and sinew ripped. If her foe struck again, she didn't notice. Only when Ull slumped to the ground, his tawny fur soaked in red, did she cease her attack. The Jarl's daughter waited for him to rise, saw her adversary falter and avoid her glance, then made her decision.

"Get up," she said, her voice raspy and thick. The wound to her throat had been deeper than she'd realized, and the ache, she knew, would stay with her through many cold nights. The scars might well be there forever. Ull stared at Karin, disbelieving, until she shoved a hand under his meaty arm and hauled him to his feet. "I said UP!"

"The duel is yours," the Ahroun finally rumbled. "My life's blood is yours; my beating heart is yours to devour, if you wish it." He stared at her, pride blazing in his eyes, then dropped his gaze, finally acknowledging defeat.

The Philodox shook her head. "Did I ask you to take the easy way out?" His head flew up at that, and new steam blasted from his snout. Her eyes were ice as they bored into his. "No Fenrir fears death, Ull. Least of all you. Dying is easy for us." She stared coolly back as his brow knotted and his muscles tensed. "Your life is mine, and I demand you take the cutting road, the hateful road — I demand that you stand alongside me and fight no matter how many foes come for us! I demand that you spend your strength in battle with the Enemy!" She turned outward and gestured across the ranks of assembled Fenrir. "I demand no less of any of you! None of you die without my permission — you live to fight my war, our war, Great Fenris' war!"

The pulse of her heart and the throb of her wounds joined a third rhythm — the pounding beat set by all the Get present, who were thumping their feet, staves, drums or whatever they had at hand in unison. Her name was a chant, and in the rhythm was the pulse of life, of the sept, of Gaia's strongest, fiercest warriors. Beside her, Ull stood by force of will and dignity alone; her rival had shed her blood, and she his, but they were rivals no more. He was her blood brother, her shieldman. He would stand by her until Ragnarok — him, and the sept. Her sept, where Karin Jarlsdottir was now Greifynya and leader of her people.

# Chapter Six: Systems and Drama

## *Character Development*

This section discusses how a character can increase (or decrease) in power, ability or status in Garou society.

### *Experience Points*

If we live, we learn, and by learning, we grow. Whether through overt or subconscious means, humans pick up facts, ideas and new ways of looking at old concepts constantly. It is through applying knowledge that we move toward what we want to accomplish and grow into what we want to be. *As it is with humans, so it is for werewolves.*

During a story, characters learn many lessons. Some are general, such as, "Keep downwind of prey," or, "Always lock your car doors." Others are more story-oriented, such as, "The Warder killed his sister during his First Change," or, "The sept upstate thinks we're brash interlopers." While such lessons are valuable learning experiences for the character, they generally don't need to be written down on character sheets. The player just has to keep them in mind as he plays. Sometimes, however, players learn things that can be recorded. This form of learning is shown through the use of experience points.

At the end of game session, the Storyteller awards experience points to each character. The players keep a tally of how many experience points they've gained. They can then spend those experience points to increase Traits on their character sheets.

### *Awarding Experience Points*

A Storyteller must strike a fine balance when doling out experience points. If he gives too few, the players will be frustrated by their character's stunted learning curve. If he gives too many, the characters become more powerful than anything a Storyteller can reasonably throw at them. This balance will vary depending on whether you run a semi-weekly, weekly or monthly chronicle. Follow the guidelines given here, but don't be afraid to experiment until you find the right balance for your game.

#### *End of Each Chapter*

Give characters points at the end of each chapter (game session), and give between one and five experience per character. Whether the pack succeeds or fails, everybody who shows up gets a point.

- One point — Automatic: Each character gets one point after every session.
- One point — Learning Curve: Ask each player to describe what his character learned during the session. If he learned anything, award the point.
- One point — Acting: This award goes to the player who demonstrated exceptional roleplaying. If the player acted appropriately and his character entertained, award a point. Usually this award only goes to the troupe member who roleplayed the best during that session, but feel free to reward multiple sterling performances at once.

- One point — Concept: Award this point if the player did a very good job acting out her character's concept. Doing so could have been good or bad for the pack, but you are the final arbiter as to whether the player earns the point.

- One Point — Heroism: When a character risks life and limb for others, such as using her body to shield fallen packmates from a hail of silver bullets or taking aggravated wounds for fighting a Bane so that her packmates can escape, award the character a point (assuming she survived). Taking part in a fistfight or rending a pistol-packing thug asunder won't cut it, though. *Werewolf* focuses on heroism, so only actions "above and beyond the call" merit this award. Likewise, diving into a Hive or standing in front of an oncoming locomotive isn't heroic—it's stupid. Stupidity's rewards are many and unpleasant.

### *End of Each Story*

At the end of a story, you can assign each character one to three points in addition to those given for completing the chapter.

- One point — Success: If the pack succeeded in its mission or goal, everyone gets a point. You can award this point if the mission wasn't completely successful, as well, at long as the pack achieved a marginal victory.

- One point — Danger: If the character experienced great danger during the story — threats to life, limb or soul — and survived, he earns one point.

- One point — Wisdom: If the player exhibited great resourcefulness or wits, or came up with the cunning plan that enabled the pack to succeed, award him a point.

Sometimes you'll want to give out even more points. Perhaps you want the characters to develop more quickly, for example. If such is the case, simply create new categories for experience awards.

### *Spending Experience Points*

As stated earlier, experience points are used to increase Traits. Costs vary by Trait, as shown on the accompanying chart. Most Trait costs (except those of Gifts) are based on the current rating multiplied by a certain number. So if a player wants to increase his character's Melee rating from 2 to 3, it costs four experience points to do so. If she wants to learn a Level Four Gift (of her own auspice), doing so costs 12 points. If the character wants to acquire an Ability that she doesn't have currently (no dots), the cost is listed as a "new" Ability (three points). A Trait can be raised only one dot per story — never more.

### *Backgrounds*

With the exception of Totem, players cannot change Background Traits with experience points. Only through the course of events in the game can Backgrounds increase or decrease. Perhaps a character makes some serious connections in the city, raising his Contacts rating. Likewise, he may alienate some of his sources or otherwise lose them to accidents or foul play. In such a case, his Contacts rating

### *Experience Chart*

Trait	Cost
Attribute	current rating x 4
Ability	current rating x 2
New Ability	3
Gift	Level of Gift x 3
Gift from other breed/auspice/tribe	Level of Gift x 5
Rage	current rating
Gnosis	current rating x 2
Willpower	current rating

decreases. The Storyteller should note the changes. Should the player wish to raise a Background actively, the Storyteller may set a list of tasks for the character to accomplish in order to succeed. (The player may or may not know what he needs to do, though!) To gain Resources, for example, the character may have to make some tricky investments. Generally, changes in Resources occur gradually over the course of a story (or even a chronicle), but spectacular success or failure can lead to the subsequent gain or loss of more than one point at a time.

The Totem Background is the only Background that can be raised with experience points. Any and all pack members can spend experience to strengthen their totem. (It's worth noting that many totems notice who among the pack is more "giving" and devout....) Each Totem point costs three experience points, although it still takes roleplaying to explain exactly how the characters are fortifying their pack totem.

### *Gaining Rage*

Characters can use experience points to buy permanent Rage. Rage, however, is both as beneficial and as dangerous as a fire. A larger blaze warms and cooks better, but it is much easier to lose control of it and get burned. While raising a character's Rage rating gives that character more Rage to spend, doing so also increases the chances for frenzy. Storywise, one can gain Rage in a number of ways. Losing pack members, conducting rites at a caern of Rage or watching land be developed or poisoned are just a few of the circumstances under which an increase in Rage would be appropriate.

### *Gaining Contacts*

As with Rage, a player may increase his character's permanent Gnosis rating with experience. By becoming more spiritually attuned, the character has more (potential) Gnosis to use, and she finds it easier to step sideways. Characters wishing to increase their permanent Gnosis could go on Umbral quests, seek a vision at a caern or study under a Theurge.

### *Gaining Willpower*

While it's relatively cheap to buy, permanent Willpower is a little more difficult to gain in the course of a game. The Storyteller may give specific opportunities to raise Willpower. An obvious example is at the end of demanding

quest or when the Garou faces her worst fear and is not found lacking. As always, however, both players and Storytellers are encouraged to use their imagination.

Unfortunately, permanent Willpower can be lost as well as gained. Just as victory bolsters a man's confidence, defeat shakes his faith in himself. Should a player botch a Willpower roll, the character loses a point from his permanent Willpower rating. This loss does not apply to Gifts, though, so a character cannot lose Willpower when a Gift requires a Willpower roll to activate.

## Roleplay It

Storytellers shouldn't dictate where every experience point goes. (After all, the character is the player's.) However, Storytellers should be judicious about what can be improved. A player should increase only those Traits the character used or learned about during the story. Traits don't have to have been used *successfully*, though. We often learn more from failure than from success.

Trait increase must be woven into the story. Should Erik the Ahroun get a dot in Subterfuge just because his player wants it? Not unless the Storyteller is satisfied with the justification. If Erik engaged in some form of intrigue on his last adventure, or if his Shadow Lord septmate were to give him some instruction, then sure. Perhaps the character even had an opportunity to train with his mentor between stories. Otherwise, putting the points in an Ability such as Survival or Intimidation might reflect his typical lifestyle more appropriately.

The game is usually enhanced when actions match point expenditures. Why just say, "My Ahroun gets a spirit to teach him the Gift: Sense Silver," when finding and dealing with a Lune could make an excellent subplot or even a full-blown story? Likewise, using experience to strengthen a totem should involve deeds or rituals rather than a simple expenditure of points.

Feel free to make the experience system as realistic as you want. By forcing players to make sense of their experiences, you help them develop their characters more fully.

## Awarding Renown

Werewolves are social creatures. This statement may seem ironic, given their touchy tempers and capacity for extreme brutality, but even the flintiest werewolf has an instinctive need to be with others of his kind. Many Garou would happily die rather than face dishonor before their comrades, and most seek to raise themselves in the eyes of their peers. This rise to fame is measured in Renown. Without it, one cannot advance in Garou society.

During the course of a story, the character accumulates temporary and (eventually) permanent Renown. Renown cannot be bought with experience points; it must be earned through roleplaying. It represents fame (or infamy) based on notable actions or deeds.

The Storyteller awards Renown in one of three categories: Glory, Honor, or Wisdom. Awards can't be substituted, so players cannot convert a Wisdom award to an Honor award, regardless of what the character needs to achieve a higher rank. Characters can also lose Renown for acting inappropriately. If a character violates the Litany, for example, he will lose face and perhaps even rank.

During a game session, the Storyteller (and/or the players) keep track of deeds worthy of Renown, both good and ill. Renown for these actions is tallied at the end of the session, to be recorded in the appropriate squares on the character sheet. Another option is to save up the Renown until the end of the story, when the character's noble deeds can be recognized at a moot. If the Storyteller is very familiar with the Renown system, she can hand out temporary Renown awards and punishments during play. Doing so saves on bookkeeping, but it may slow the pace of the game.

The requirements for advancing in rank differ for each auspice, and for good reason. A Garou who exemplifies his auspice is held in greater esteem than one who seems to go against her nature. An Ahroun may be a brilliant scholar and lore-keeper, but if she doesn't wear Battle Scars she'll be met with disapproval ("Yeah, sure she's memorized the tales of Flinteye, but can she fight?"), and she won't advance her standing with the tribe.

All Renown awards are given as temporary Renown; they have no real effect on the game until the player amasses 10 points in any one category. At that point, he becomes eligible to increase the character's permanent Renown. Most Renown awards will vary between 1 and 7, with rewards of 8 to 10 points of temporary Renown being reserved for the greatest deeds (such as saving a caern single-handedly). At the Storyteller's discretion, some deeds merit an increase (or decrease) in multiple categories of Renown. Crimes that merit the loss of more than seven points of Renown in any category are generally punished much more severely than a simple loss of face.

The Sample Renown Awards chart offers a few guidelines for awarding Renown by category. Storytellers shouldn't feel obligated to award exactly the suggested amounts or award every time a character performs a listed activity, though. The Storyteller is the best judge of what constitutes minor or major feats of significance. Killing three well-armed fomori is a mighty deed for a Rank 1 Garou, but the same is practically routine for an elder. A more extensive chart of suggested (but by no means ironclad) Renown awards appears in the *Werewolf Storytellers Companion*.

### Permanent Renown

Once the character has accumulated 10 points of temporary Renown in one category, he must convince another Garou (of equal or higher Rank to the character, and not of the character's pack) to perform a Rite of Accomplishment for her (see p. 164). If successful, the character has gone up slightly in standing among Garou, and he adds a point of

## *Sample Renown Awards*

### *Glory*

#### **Sample Behavior**

	Award
Proving one's bravery in less-than-lethal circumstances; participating in a just challenge	1
Surviving an incapacitating wound; defeating a minor threat	2
Defeating an average threat; surviving a hostile Umbral Realm	3
Defeating a strong threat; dying while defending a caern (posthumous)	5
Defeating a very powerful threat; sacrificing oneself to save a caern and its defenders	7
Refusing any sept position; suffering a fox frenzy	-1
Not preventing a caern from being overrun by the Wyrm	-3
Conscious cowardice that resulted in the death of another Garou	-5

### *Honor*

#### **Sample Behavior**

	Award
Helping guard a caern; performing regular duties and chores for the sept for a month	1
Performing a moot or punishment rite; participating in a just challenge; protecting a helpless human	2
Mediating a dispute fairly and impartially; protecting the Veil by covering up incidents that might reveal the Garou's existence to humans	3
Being truthful in the face of extreme adversity; dying while defending a caern (posthumous); protecting a helpless wolf	5
Enduring torture to protect fellow Garou; sacrificing oneself to save a caern and its defenders	7
Speaking without permission at a moot; not protecting a helpless human; speaking ill of another tribe (depending on circumstance)	-1
Refusing any sept position; failing to perform regular duties and chores for the caern in the last month	-2
Participating in an unjust challenge; abandoning one's post while on watch	-3
Harming/ rending the Veil; not protecting a helpless Garou	-5

### *Wisdom*

#### **Sample Behavior**

	Award
Learning a new rite; creating a talen; healing a fellow Garou (not of one's pack) unselfishly	1
Giving good advice; discovering a fetish after following mystic signs and advice; summoning an Incarna avatar	2
Revealing, with certain proof, that an area or object is "of the Wyrm"; completing a spirit quest successfully; besting someone (including a spirit) in a riddle contest	3
Giving a prophetic warning that comes true later; ending a threat without serious harm to any Garou	5
Discovering an ancient caern that was lost; discovering or creating a new Gift	7
Refusing any sept position; suffering a frenzy; missing a Moot Rite	-1
Having poor relations with nearby Kinfolk; attacking a much more powerful force without aid	-3
Breaking a powerful and necessary fetish accidentally	-5

permanent Renown in that category; his temporary Renown in that category returns to zero.

If a character can't or won't find someone to perform the rite, he has an alternative. He can challenge an elder when he has the requisite number of temporary Renown. Should he succeed, he gains a point of permanent Renown; if he fails he doesn't. Either way, though, he loses all temporary Renown in that category. This method is a more risky way to gain permanent Renown, but it may be the best option for characters who don't get on well with their fellow Garou.

Some circumstances arise under which no one would question a deed's worthiness for renown. Because werewolves are naturally a heroic race, the standards for such a thing are

high. One must show exceptional wisdom, courage or honor beyond what anyone might reasonably expect. In such cases, the Storyteller may simply decide to award an extra dot of permanent Renown without the rite.

### *Lossing Renown*

Just as noble acts and valiant deeds can raise a Garou in others' esteem, lapses of judgment or moments of weakness can bring shame from her peers.

Say, for instance, that a Garou defeats a rival in a duel, but he ignores his opponents' cry for surrender and kills him. This action is an unquestionable breach of the Litany, but the Master of the Challenge might forgive it because the

victor was in the grip of frenzy and he seemed regretful afterward. The offending Garou will lose temporary Renown, but he faces no other consequences. Should the Garou make a habit of killing other Garou in real or provoked "challenges," however — especially when the opponent tries to surrender — he will surely face the loss of permanent Renown. The only way to maintain renown in the face of such intense societal disapproval is to prove to the elders that the loss of face was undeserved. Tests, ordeals or quests are common remedies in this circumstance. The Storyteller may develop a story around the recovery of the renown. He then decides whether the character has "learned his lesson" and passed the test in the eyes of the elders. The Storyteller's decision is final.

If a character doesn't have sufficient temporary Renown to make up for the deficit, a point of permanent Renown is converted into 10 temporary Renown in order to make up the difference. For instance, Caldwell Fire-Licker succumbed to temptation and mated with another Garou. The Storyteller deems that he loses five temporary Honor and three temporary Wisdom for his transgression. Caldwell has 3 permanent Honor, but only 2 temporary Honor; he drops to 0 temporary Honor, converts a point of permanent Honor into 10 temporary Honor, and subtracts the remaining three points. Caldwell winds up with 2 permanent Honor and 7 temporary Honor. He may even lose a rank for his night of ill-advised passion.

If a character suffers a loss of permanent Renown that drops the rating below the requirements of her current rank, she loses all benefits and privileges of that rank. She may retain knowledge and Gifts learned at that rank, however.

### *Combat and Renown*

"You may have hit it twice, but mine was the death blow! I get the Glory!" "I killed three fomori, so I get Renown for each one, right?" Renown for killing enemies has often been a point of confusion, so here are a couple of basic clarifications.

Should more than one opponent attack, the Storyteller should consider the overall threat level the minions present. Four Black Spiral Dancers will obviously be more dangerous than one alone. Killing four Black Spiral Dancers would earn seven Glory ("a very powerful threat" rather than 20 (four "strong threats").

If every member of a pack is involved in killing a Nexus Crawler, each member each gets a full share of Renown just as if he were the one to strike the death blow. In other words, the Storyteller might award seven Glory to each member, whether the combatants numbered one, three or a dozen. Certainly, individuals would have bragging rights ("I killed two of the Spirals by my own claws!"), but to other Garou, the pack is an entity above the individual members.

### *Special Considerations*

Storytellers should take expectations of breed, auspice and tribe into account when giving awards or penalties. An Ahroun who enters a fox frenzy will get more than his share of derision, because born fighters are held to a higher standard of bravery in the face of battle. Likewise, a Philodox who is caught doing something questionable might face a heavier blow to his reputation (i.e., a heavier penalty to Honor) than, say, a Galliard because the Philodox should have known better. A Ragabash might get away with more extreme breaches of Honor with less of a penalty because the Ragabash are expected to behave poorly in this regard. On the other hand, it may be harder for said Ragabash to gain Honor because everyone expects him to be up to something.

### *Optional Rule: Tribal Reputation*

Every tribe has a reputation among other Garou. Sometimes it's good, sometimes it's bad. Many dislike the Get of Fenris for various reasons, but even their detractors will admit grudgingly that the Fenrir are outstanding fighters who are brave to the point of suicidal. Likewise, the Fianna are master of story and song, Children of Gaia are peacemakers, and the Glass Walkers can get things done downtown.

Storyteller permitting, a character can gain renown for presenting the "positive side" of the tribal image to other tribes, such as in the preceding examples. Presenting the "negative side" — a Fianna being loud and drunk for example — would incur a penalty. Acting out of type altogether — a Glass Walker being a master outdoorsman — neither adds nor subtracts. The Storyteller is final arbiter of what the tribal image is in her game. If they use this rule at all, Storytellers should use it as a way to reward roleplaying and foster good intertribal relations rather than as a font of instant Renown points. Reputation awards shouldn't be more than a couple of points per story.

### *Advancing in Rank*

To be eligible to advance in rank, a character needs to have attained the number of permanent Renown points listed next to that rank on the Renown chart. The amount in each Renown category varies by auspice. For example, in order to attain the next rank, a Philodox of Rank 2 needs 2 Glory, 6 Honor and 2 Wisdom.

Gaining the required points is only half of the process. A character must also challenge a werewolf of equal or higher rank to the one he wishes to attain. The character may choose whom to challenge, but the elder chooses the nature of the contest, and she may make it as easy or as hard as she wishes. If the

character wins, the elder is honor-bound to accept the character's newrank. There are several standard contests, but the Elder can devise her own or even have a simple dominance challenge (which includes facedown, gamecraft or combat).

## Renunciation

Occasionally, a Garou rejects the auspice under which he was born. Many Garou see this action as a grave insult to Gaia, but nonetheless a way exists to switch auspices: the Rite of Renunciation (see p. 157). The Garou renounces position and auspice and claims another auspice. It represents a new birth

Renown			
Ragabash			
Rank	Any Combination		
1 (Cliath)	3		
2 (Fostern)	7		
3 (Adren)	13		
4 (Athro)	19		
5 (Elder)	25		
Thou're			
Rank	Glory	Honor	Wisdom
1 (Cliath)	0	0	3
2 (Fostern)	1	0	5
3 (Adren)	2	1	7
4 (Athro)	4	2	9
5 (Elder)	4	9	10
Philodox			
Rank	Glory	Honor	Wisdom
1 (Cliath)	0	3	0
2 (Fostern)	1	4	1
3 (Adren)	2	6	2
4 (Athro)	3	8	4
5 (Elder)	4	10	9
Galliard			
Rank	Glory	Honor	Wisdom
1 (Cliath)	2	0	1
2 (Fostern)	4	0	2
3 (Adren)	4	2	4
4 (Athro)	7	2	6
5 (Elder)	9	5	9
Akrona			
Rank	Glory	Honor	Wisdom
1 (Cliath)	2	1	0
2 (Fostern)	4	1	1
3 (Adren)	6	3	1
4 (Athro)	9	5	2
5 (Elder)	10	9	4

## Example of Gaining Renown

Song of Fire is a Galliard of Rank 2. He has 4 Glory, 3 Honor and 3 Wisdom currently. He has more Honor than necessary for Rank 3, but he needs another point of Wisdom. Upon gaining 10 temporary Wisdom points, Song of Fire asks an elder to perform a Rite of Accomplishment for him. The elder sees the potential in the likable lad, so he agrees. At the next moot, the elder performs the rite, and all the sept honors the lad's achievements. Song of Fire loses all of his temporary Wisdom Renown and gains another point of permanent Wisdom.

## Example of Gaining Rank

Now Song of Fire wishes to challenge for Rank 3. He stands before Warfrost and challenges the canny old elder to recognize him. Warfrost knows that the youngster has a silver tongue and can fight passably, but, like many of his moon, the lad's heart rules his head. Warfrost smiles and nods, saying, "I will, if you challenge me properly — say, with the Skyfire Spear in your hand." The young Galliard groans, for the legendary weapon lies at the center of an Umbral maze....

With luck and some quick thinking (not to mention a couple of nights of game play), Song of Fire confronts Warfrost, brandishing the spear that shines as brilliant as lightning. The old veteran laughs. "Well done. Go forth, and let all know that you are Song of Fire, Adren of the Fianna! And lad," Warfrost adds in a less formal tone, "I'll expect to hear the story of the spear's taking some night soon." Song's only reply is a wild whoop of joy.

## Why Renunciation?

Why would a Garou renounce something as fundamental as her auspice? Occasionally it is mandated, as a punishment for heinous crimes that don't quite warrant death. Most often, though, it is self-imposed. Sometimes young Garou feel quite at odds with the role that has been chosen for them, or perhaps they simply feel a lack of purpose that they hope the change of direction will cure. Elders do their best to find a better solution before such a drastic step is taken. Sometimes, emotional trauma — grief over love lost or self-loathing — drives the Garou to renounce all she is. The most respectable reason for renunciation is when a werewolf renounces his name in order to focus on a single purpose (usually vengeance or a Herculean task or quest). If the renunciate manages to complete her goal, she usually regains her name and old rank. (She may gain an even higher rank at the Storyteller's discretion.) Renunciates are viewed with suspicion for refusing to bear the burden Gaia bestowed.



and the death of the old life, so it is a step never taken lightly. He must adopt a new name and lose all but three permanent Renown points (thus starting out at Rank 1). At the end of the rite, he may ask a spirit to teach him one new Gift from his new auspice. He doesn't lose the Gifts he learned previously, but he may not learn new Gifts from his old auspice.

Once the rite has been completed, the werewolf essentially has a new life. It is considered bad form for old acquaintances or loved ones (except for packmates) to speak to him with any familiarity. Only when a Garou again attains her previous rank may she reestablish old friendships.

## *Physical States*

### *Injury*

Whether inflicted by a bullet, a speeding car or the claws of a werewolf, injuries are represented in the same way in *Werewolf*: the Health Trait. Every character has seven health levels. As a character receives wounds, the player indicates them by marking off the health levels on the charactersheet. The last level marked indicates the character's current health. As the character becomes more injured, she travels down the spectrum toward Incapacitated. Likewise, as she heals, the player erases the marks until none remain.

A character can suffer the following three types of damage:

- *Bashing damage* is inflicted by blunt attacks of relatively low velocity (clubs, punches, kicks, etc.).

- *Lethal damage* is inflicted by more deadly attacks that rupture the body and spill blood (bullets, knives, speeding vehicles, etc.).

- *Aggravated damage* represents the most grievous tissue damage, and it is often supernatural in origin. A werewolf's claws and teeth inflict aggravated damage, as do fire, acid and other sources of extreme trauma — such as chainsaw wounds.

(All three damage types are discussed in detail in the *Combat* section.)

For each success on an opponent's damage roll, the character is dealt one health level of damage. However, the character's natural toughness gives her a chance to absorb some of this damage. Therefore, the actual amount of damage taken depends not only on the force of the attack, but on the Stamina of the target. (Using Stamina to absorb damage is called *soak*, which is discussed fully in the *Drama* section of this chapter.) Werewolves, unlike mortals, can attempt to soak all three types of damage. The distinction between bashing and lethal damage (which poses little problem to Garou) and aggravated damage must still be made. The way one does so is by marking bashing damage on the character sheet with a slash mark ("/"), and marking lethal damage with an "X"; aggravated damage is best marked with an asterisk ("\*"). Less serious damage should be moved "down" on the spectrum, since it heals first.

*Example: Corina, known to her fellow Glass Walkers as Fangs-on-the-Cutting-Edge, is assaulted by three Magadon guards*

who've been taught to recognize "warning signs of the possible terrorist." Deciding to be safe rather than eviscerated, they open fire.

Corina dodges most of the attacks, but one shot gets through and she takes two levels of damage. This damage is lethal, since it came from a gun, and Corina's player marks off the first two health levels (Bruised and Hurt) with "X" marks. Corina leaps toward the guards, hoping to disarm or slay them before they can fire another volley. She isn't so lucky, however. One of the guards slashes at her with a silver-edged knife.

The attack is weak, and it inflicts only one health level. Since it comes from a silver weapon, however, the damage is aggravated. Corina's player marks off the Injured health level with an "X" and changes the Bruised from a slash to an "\*" (effectively "moving" a level of lethal damage to the Injured level, since she will heal this damage first). Any further aggravated damage Corina receives will be marked beginning with the Hurt level.

If a werewolf suffers damage that takes her beyond Incapacitated, she is critically wounded and near death. If the damage that took her past Incapacitated is bashing damage, she falls unconscious but stays in whatever form she was in when she took the damage. She heals at her normal rate as well (see *Healing*). She stays unconscious for at least one turn. During each turn thereafter, her player may choose to have her stay unconscious and heal, or attempt to wake up. Waking up requires a successful Stamina + Primal-Urge roll (difficulty 4 + 1 for each health level the character currently has marked off). Upon waking up, the character can take action normally, within the limits of her remaining injury.

If the damage that takes the character past Incapacitated is lethal damage, the character reverts to her breed form and collapses. Another health level of any kind will kill her unless she channels her Rage to remain active. If she is not injured further, but not tended to, she will regenerate very slowly, regaining a health level every eight hours until she regains consciousness enough to change to a form that regenerates fully (except metis; see *Healing*). This system is the only form of regeneration available to non-metis werewolves in their breed forms, and it is the source of the myth that werewolves can't be killed with guns. (They obviously can, but it takes some doing.)

If the damage that takes the character past Incapacitated is aggravated, she will die unless she channels her Rage to remain active.

### *Remaining Active*

A critically injured werewolf may attempt to channel her Rage to save her. Doing so is risky, however, for even if it succeeds, it throws the character into the depths of frenzy. It is sometimes the only way to save a character's life, though.

If the player wishes a character to remain active, she must roll the character's permanent Rage (difficulty 8). For each success, the character heals one health level. However, no matter how many health levels are healed, the character begins the next turn in a berserk frenzy.

*Example: The fight has gone badly for Corina. While she managed to disarm the guard armed with the silver knife, the*

### *Human Injury*

Normal humans take damage from the same things that werewolves do, but humans are much less resilient. While Garou can attempt to soak any injury not caused by silver, humans may soak only bashing damage. And what Garou heal in seconds can take weeks for human beings.

#### *Bashing Damage*

Mortals heal bashing damage fairly quickly, and doing so requires no medical treatment up to the Wounded level. Wounds just heal naturally by themselves. Past the Wounded health level, however, medical care becomes necessary as wounds take the form of broken bones, concussions or worse.

Health Level	Recovery Time
Bruised to Wounded	One hour
Mauled	Three hours
Crippled	Six hours
Incapacitated	12 hours

If a mortal reaches Incapacitated from bashing damage, he falls unconscious but does not die. Instead, any further damage starts at the top of the Health spectrum and is recorded as lethal (and recovery is handled as per lethal damage). Thus, even bashing damage can kill, given enough severity and duration.

#### *Lethal Damage*

Lethal damage is exactly that. Any lethal wound worse than Hurt requires medical treatment before it will heal. Any such wound left untreated worsens by one level per day as wounds re-open or become infected. A mortal who reaches Incapacitated through lethal damage is at death's door; if he takes one more health level of any sort, he dies.

A mortal at Mauled or higher from lethal damage may simply rest and recover his health. A mortal at Crippled or Incapacitated, however, needs constant medical attention over the times listed for any healing to take place.

Health Level	Recovery Time
Bruised	One day
Hurt	Three days
Injured	One week
Wounded	One month
Mauled	Two months
Crippled	Three months
Incapacitated	Five months

Note that a mortal must heal one health level at a time. That is, she must rest for the full amount of time for each health level in order to begin healing the next one. For example, a mortal who has reached Injured from lethal damage must rest for one week to heal the Injured level, three days to heal the Hurt level and an additional day to heal the Bruised level.

Aggravated damage heals as if it were lethal for humans. The only significant difference is that aggravated damage is harder to heal through supernatural means.

others have eluded her grasp and continued their assault. The worst comes when one of them lob a grenade at her and she fails to jump clear. The blast takes her below Incapacitated, and the damage is aggravated. Corina must channel her Rage or die.

Her player rolls Corina's Rage rating (five dice) at a difficulty of 8 and manages three successes. Corina heals three health levels (taking her to Wounded), and she enters the next turn in a brutal rage. The guards, who have been standing around congratulating each other, hear only a low growl and see a gray blur....

The roll to remain active can be attempted only once per scene. If a character is Incapacitated more than once in one fight, she takes the worst effects of the damage.

It should be noted, however, that although checks on the character sheet erase easily, injury does not. Werewolves heal supernaturally quickly, but even they can receive lasting injury in the form of Battle Scars.

### *Healing*

Werewolves heal at a frightening pace. They regenerate one bashing or lethal health level every turn. Homid- and lupus-breed Garou can regenerate roughly a health level a day while in their natural forms if they are in critical condition, but doing so requires their bodies to work in overdrive. If they are conscious and moving around in their breed form, they heal as humans do. Metis are blessed with full regeneration in all forms. No Garou, regardless of breed, can regenerate aggravated damage. Aggravated damage is healed at one level per day, during which the Garou must rest in a form other than his natural one (if homid or lupus).

Remember that to regenerate damage while engaged in stressful activity (like combat), the player must roll the Garou's Stamina (difficulty 8) each turn. This roll is reflexive, so the player does not have to split a dice pool or use a Rage action. Success means that the Garou heals as normal. Failure means that he heals no damage, and a botch indicates that the werewolf cannot regenerate until he has had a chance to rest.

### *Sources of Injury*

There are many ways to injure a character. Some of the more common ways are listed here.

#### *Combat*

Arguably the Garou's favorite pastime, combat is the source of most injuries in the game. Combat is detailed fully later on in this chapter.

#### *Falling*

Gravity doesn't play favorites. Falling causes damage, even to creatures as hardy as werewolves. Falling damage is usually considered bashing, and may be soaked. A character takes one health level for every 10 feet he falls before hitting something solid (rounded down).

A character who falls more than 100 feet reaches terminal velocity. At that point, the character takes 10 health levels upon impact. This damage is considered lethal, so humans cannot soak it.

#### *Fire*

Fire is analogous to werewolves in many ways. It's primal, beautiful and dangerous when it's out of control. Damage from fire is always aggravated, so it can kill werewolves almost as easily as it can kill humans.

Werewolves can soak fire damage as usual. The difficulty varies, however, on the intensity of the fire, as does the number of health levels the blaze inflicts. The player rolls the character's Stamina (see the chart for difficulty comparisons). The Storyteller must decide how many health levels the blaze can potentially inflict (one to three). That number determines how many successes the player needs for her character to avoid injury.

Difficulty	Heat of Fire
3	Heat of a candle (first-degree burns)
5	Heat of a torch (second-degree burns)
7	Heat of a Bunsen burner (third-degree burns)
9	Heat of a chemical fire
10	Molten metal

Wounds	Size of Fire
One	Torch; only part of body exposed
Two	Bonfire; half of body exposed
Three	Inferno; all of body exposed

Extreme heat (200+ degrees) causes damage in much the same way as fire. Use the system for fire damage, modified for the situation.

#### *Disease*

Werewolves are not immune to disease, but they recuperate much faster than humans do. A disease inflicts a number of health levels on the patient. With proper rest and care, the disease runs its course and the health levels heal slowly.

A Garou's healing abilities protect her from ever catching minor ailments such as the common cold or the flu. Even truly debilitating diseases can't do permanent harm (although the werewolf can still serve as a carrier). For a disease to have a pronounced effect on a werewolf, it would have to be supernatural in origin.

#### *Poison*

Like disease, most poisons have little effect on the Garou. The same is true of most human drugs. Garou who wish to become intoxicated or to use drugs for recreational purposes have two choices: either do so in Homid form, where their regenerative systems aren't quite so effective, or awaken the spirit of the drug (see the Rite of Spirit Awakening), which increases its potency.

Supernatural, particularly Wyrm-tainted, toxins have their full effect on Garou, and many are even considered to do aggravated damage.

#### *Suffocation and Drowning*

Werewolves, for all their supernatural might, do need to breathe. When immersed in water (or any other non-breathable medium) use the accompanying chart to

determine how long a Garou can hold her breath. When the character has reached her limit, she may spend Willpower to continue holding her breath. Each point spent allows 30 seconds more (if the character's Stamina score is 3 or lower) or a minute more (if her Stamina score is 4 or more).

Note that the given times assume a full breath. It is therefore impossible to gain extra time by shifting to a form with a higher Stamina rating, as lung capacity changes but the amount of air in the lungs does not. Note, also, that these times refer to Garou only. Humans often have difficulty holding their breath for even a full minute, let alone four.

Holding one's breath during a stressful activity like combat, by the way, uses up oxygen much more quickly. Assume that a character can hold her breath for a number of turns equal to twice her Stamina score during combat. For more detailed rules concerning underwater combat and its complications, see the *Werewolf Storytellers Companion*.

Stamina	Time
1	30 seconds
2	One minute
3	Two minutes
4	Four minutes
5	Eight minutes
6	15 minutes
7	20 minutes
8	30 minutes

When a character can no longer hold her breath, she begins to drown. She takes one health level of lethal damage each turn. She cannot regenerate this damage, regardless of form, until she can breathe again. When she reaches Incapacitated, she reverts to her breed form, and she will die in a number of turns equal to her Stamina.

### Radiation and Toxic Waste

Many of the Wyrm's "holy sites" on Earth are located on or near irradiated landscapes. Also, some Wyrm servitors use radiation-based attacks. In general, such damage is resolved in the same way as fire and extreme heat, but it takes twice as long to heal.

### Silver

Silver, the lunar metal, is a werewolf's great weakness. What's worse, it is common knowledge, even among most humans, that a silver weapon will kill a werewolf. Of course, fashioning weapons — especially bullets — out of silver requires a skilled blacksmith or gunsmith, but it can be done.

Silver causes werewolves one level of aggravated damage per turn of contact, unless the werewolf is a homid or lupus who is in her breed form. For a homid in Homid form or lupus in Lupus form, silver causes no damage through casual contact, although a weapon made of silver will cause normal damage for that weapon. A successful attack on a Garou in any other form will always cause at least one level of damage, no matter how many successes one rolls. Garou cannot soak damage from silver weapons, except in their

breed form. Metis Garou cannot soak silver damage at all, regardless of their form.

Some Garou carry silver, usually in the form of weaponry such as klaives. Doing so, however, comes with a price. The Garou's natural allergy to silver causes a reduction in his effective Gnosis. This loss remains in effect in all forms, including Homid. If the Garou discards the silver object(s), the effect fades after a day.

For every five silver objects a pack carries, *all* its members suffer this reduction. In addition, carrying too many silver objects, especially bullets, may cause a loss of Honor or Wisdom for the pack (not to mention being rather difficult to obtain).

Object	Gnosis Loss
Silver bullets	1 point/5 bullets
Klaive	1 point
Grand Klaive	2 points

### Battle Scars

Garou can heal most forms of damage without ill effect. While a human whose leg is savaged by a wolf will probably lose some muscular function in that leg (if not the entire leg itself), a werewolf can grow her muscle tissue back and walk again in mere days.

However, some injuries — particularly those caused by other Garou — are severe enough to cause lasting damage. Such wounds occur whenever a character must channel her Rage to remain active, and they may also occur if the werewolf suffers a particularly brutal and/or localized attack.

*Example: Sings-with-the-Wind, a Child of Gaia Therurge, is captured by Black Spiral Dancers and tortured. Specifically, they slice open his arms with silver knives and sever the connecting tendons. Sings later escapes, and, although he was technically never taken below Wounded, the Storyteller rules that his arm has been maimed beyond use, granting him a Battle Scar.*

Battle Scars can range in game effect from cosmetic damage to brain damage. Any Battle Scar grants a Renown award in the form of temporary Glory. Healing a Battle Scar causes a loss of one temporary Glory (although some tribes, especially the Children of Gaia and the Glass Walkers, sometimes recognize the Wisdom in doing so).

A list of sample Battle Scars follows, along with the Glory bonus for each one. When assigning Battle Scars, the Storyteller should choose the one that makes the most sense. A character who suffers repeated blows to the head is not going to end up gelded, although he may suffer brain damage.

This list is by no means exhaustive, and the Storyteller should feel free to come up with her own interpretations of massive trauma. When assigning Glory awards for such injuries, remember that more visible scars tend to carry larger awards.

- **Superficial Scars:** Large, ugly masses of scar tissue mar your character's body and remain hairless in all forms. These scars have no game effect, other than possibly

reducing Appearance in some situations. (Some people find scars sexy, though.) 1 temporary Glory.

- **Deep Scar:** Much the same as a superficial scar, except that muscles are affected as well, and the scar aches when the humidity changes. 1 temporary Glory.

- **Improper Bone Setting:** One of your bones snapped and did not heal properly. This wound might result in a slight loss of muscle function, but the real problem occurs if that area of your body receives two or more health levels of damage at once in the future. If this occurs, the bone snaps again, causing an additional lethal wound. 1 temporary Glory.

- **Cosmetic Damage:** A catchall term for readily visible injuries, such as a missing ear, a hare lip or an exposed part of the skull. None if it has any really debilitating effect, but it looks grotesque to humans and impressive to Garou. Reduce Appearance by one dot when dealing with humans, unless you cover or conceal the damage. 2 temporary Glory.

- **Broken Jaw:** Similar to Improper Bone Setting, your jaw was shattered, and it is now out of alignment with your tongue. Add two to any verbal communication difficulties when using human speech, and add one to bite-attack difficulties. Also, your speech is slurred (roleplay accordingly). 1 temporary Glory.

- **Missing Eye:** Simply put, one of your eyes was gouged out. The difficulties on all rolls involving depth perception or to fire a missile weapon (including thrown weapons) increase by three. Any Perception roll based on sight take a +2 difficulty penalty. 2 temporary Glory.

- **Gelded:** Your reproductive system has been damaged. You are incapable of siring or bearing children, and you cannot ever hope to see your own pups breed true. Males with this wound are not necessarily impotent, and may still be capable of seduction and using Animal Attraction, but the difficulties for both increase by two. 1 temporary Glory.

- **Collapsed Lung:** One of your lungs was punctured during battle. You find it difficult to breathe and to exert yourself. You lose one die on any Stamina roll involving exertion and an additional die after five turns of exertion. In addition, you may hold your breath for only half the time listed on the previous chart. 1 temporary Glory.

- **Missing Fingers:** You have lost at least three fingers on one hand. Dexterity rolls involving that hand suffer a +3 difficulty penalty, and claw damage from that hand is halved (rounded down). 2 temporary Glory.

- **Maimed Limb:** One of your limbs has been mauled and is now useless. You move at half speed in all forms (if a leg is damaged) or three-quarters speed in Hispo and Lupus (if your character lost an arm). You are not able to use the limb for any purpose. 3 temporary Glory.

- **Spinal Damage:** Your spine was fractured, and you have trouble keeping your balance. Your Dexterity is reduced by one, you lose two points from your initiative rating, and you must spend Willpower on any roll involving balance, precision or remaining still. 2 temporary Glory.

- **Brain Damage:** Severe damage to the head, or perhaps lack of oxygen for a long period of time, has reduced your mental faculties. You lose one dot from one Mental Attribute (Storyteller's choice). Additionally, you must roll one die and subtract the result from Gnosis, Willpower or Knowledges (player's choice of where these points are lost). You are probably partially amnesiac as well. 2 temporary Glory.

### *Aging*

Natural death is not terribly common among werewolves. A werewolf's regenerative powers can grant him some measure of added longevity — a werewolf could conceivably live to 120 or so before his body finally gives out entirely — but there are precious few examples of such elders. Most werewolves die in battle, and those that don't usually choose to die in accordance with the Litany rather than face the shame of old age and uselessness.

"Old age," of course, is relative. Some Garou continue to be useful members of their septs as advisors and ritemasters, even if they can no longer be warriors. Aging carries with it certain infirmities, though. Among them are senility (decrease in Mental Attributes), frailty (decrease in Physical Attributes) and loss of Rage — many old Garou lose the wolf permanently. The specifics are up to the Storyteller to devise, should it ever become necessary. But let's face it, it probably won't.

Some Garou choose to retire and live out their remaining years among humans or wolves. Some disappear into the Umbra to find their tribal homeland. Some simply wander off into the woods to die at peace with themselves and Gaia.

### *Mental States*

#### *Frenzy*

The popular image of the werewolf is that of a snarling, uncontrollable beast, and that isn't entirely untrue. No matter how centered or citified he is, every werewolf carries Rage in his heart. Any werewolf can lose control and run amok if that Rage is not curtailed.

Any Rage roll can ignite a frenzy, even those made to activate specific Gifts. Any Rage rolls should be interpreted as an attempt — willing or otherwise — to awaken the primal Beast that drives the Garou. If a player rolls four or more successes on a Rage roll, her character frenzies. The player may spend a Willpower point right then to halt the frenzy, but her character loses any further actions that turn.

Garou with permanent Rage ratings lower than four can frenzy, but only under extreme circumstances. Highly emotional and personal circumstances (such as the threat of rape in a Black Fury's case, or the threat of imprisonment for a claustrophobic Silent Strider) can boost a werewolf's Rage above the permanent rating. It is this higher rating that the player uses for Rage rolls.

The two types of frenzy follow:

- **Berserk Frenzy.** Garou see only red and moving shapes. They wish only to reduce these shapes to mangled

carcasses. A berserk Garou shifts immediately to Crinos or Hispo (player's choice) and attacks.

Exactly whom she attacks depends on the circumstances. A Garou whose permanent Gnosis exceeds her permanent Rage will not attack her packmates (unless she is in the Thrall of the Wyrm). She will attack anything else that moves, however, including allied Garou who are not members of her pack.

If, however, her permanent Rage exceeds her permanent Gnosis, she attacks anything that moves, and she can make no distinction between targets unless her player spends a Willpower point. If such is the case, the Storyteller can direct her as to which target to attack. In addition, such Garou do not remember what happens to them during frenzy. Often, they collapse when the frenzy ends.

- **Fox Frenzy.** Entering a fox frenzy means that the character flees in terror for her life. She shifts to Lupus form and runs, attacking anything that gets in her way (although more with the intention of getting past than of killing). Once the character reaches a safe hiding place, she will remain there until the frenzy passes.

In either frenzy, special maneuvers and pack tactics are impossible. The extent of the werewolf's attack capability is to bite, claw or run. The character may spend Rage for extra actions, but he may not split dice pools. Using Gifts in frenzy is normally impossible, as is stepping sideways. A werewolf does not suffer from pain in frenzy, though, so he ignores all wound penalties.

Coming out of frenzy requires that the situation that triggered it be over. When the trigger event is over, the player may roll Willpower (difficulty of the Garou's own Rage) to escape the frenzy. Even if this roll fails, she may try again each turn.

### Rage Rolls

The following conditions might call for a Rage roll, at the Storyteller's discretion.

- Embarrassment or humiliation (botching an important roll)
- Any strong emotion (lust, rage, envy)
- Extreme hunger
- Confinement, helplessness
- Being taunted by an enemy
- Large quantities of silver in the area
- Being wounded or seeing a packmate wounded

### Difficulty for Rage Rolls

While the old stories of werewolves changing during the full moon aren't really true, they have some basis in fact.

Moon Phase	Difficulty
New	8
Crescent	7
Half	6
Gibbous	5
Full	4

The difficulty drops by one if the moon happens to be the character's auspice moon. A Garou in Crinos form also subtracts one from her difficulty. These modifiers are not cumulative.

### The Thrall of the Wyrm

A werewolf's Rage is fearful enough, but sometimes a frenzy is abnormal. If a werewolf descends too far into frenzy, his Rage is no longer pure. Instead, he has opened himself up to be used by the Wyrm.

If a player rolls six or more successes on a Rage roll, the character enters a berserk frenzy, and spending Willpower will not bring her out of it. The character is said to be "in the Thrall of the Wyrm." The frenzy follows normal tendencies with regards to attacks and duration, but it includes some even more horrific aspects.

Each of the breeds of Garou carries a piece of the Triadic Wyrm, and during such a frenzy, that Wyrm can demand its due.

- **Homid:** Eater-of-Souls has long held humans as its special children, and this attention includes Homid Garou. The Wyrm can drive such Garou to acts of cannibalism upon humans, wolves or even other Garou. When a homid-breed Garou in the Thrall kills or incapacitates an opponent (friend or foe), her player must roll Wits (difficulty 7). If the roll botches, the Garou must stop for a turn and feast.

- **Metis:** Barred as they are from breeding, metis are special targets of the Defiler Wyrm. Metis Garou in the Thrall sometimes practice unspeakable acts of perversion on fallen opponents, regardless of their respective genders. If a metis kills or incapacitates a foe while in the Thrall, her player must roll Wits (difficulty 7). If the roll botches, the Garou stops fighting for a turn and slakes her unholy lust on her helpless opponent.

- **Lupus:** The savage, feral lupus feel the pull of Beast-of-War. A lupus Garou in the thrall will savage a fallen opponent, friend or foe, and not pull away until the body lies in pieces around her. The Garou loses all sense of mercy, regardless of her comparative Gnosis and Rage scores. When a lupus Garou kills or incapacitates a foe while in the Thrall, her player must roll Wits (difficulty 7). If the roll botches, the lupus must continue to attack until her opponent is torn limb from limb.

Succumbing to the Thrall of the Wyrm is terrifying to the Garou. A normal frenzy is considered a defense mechanism against pain, a pure if brutal method of survival. A Wyrm-frenzy is nothing of the kind. It brings to light the inner struggle with the Wyrm, which is something few Garou are prepared to face. Unable to live with their deed, some werewolves even end their lives after such a frenzy.

### The Curse

Frenzy is hardly the only effect that Rage has on Garou, and it is not at all the worst. Other animals, especially humans, can sense the predator in a werewolf, and they shy from him. Whenever a Garou's Rage exceeds a human's Willpower, the human will avoid contact with the Garou as

much as possible. This avoidance may consist of crossing the street to avoid "that weirdo" or even running in fear. Since the average human's Willpower is usually from 2 to 4, the Curse is no laughing matter. Wolves are also subject to this dread, and most natural wolves will avoid Garou whenever possible.

Garou call this phenomenon the Curse, for it makes normal relationships with humans or wolves all but impossible. Garou cannot usually maintain families among humans or wolves, as the Beast makes even their own Kin uncomfortable, albeit to a lesser degree. Only among other werewolves can the Garou find true, honest companionship — and the logical result of such relationships is prohibited by the Litany.

### *The Delirium*

Werewolves preyed on humans for over 3000 years, and while most humans have no idea that werewolves truly exist, a part of them remembers. The horrible wolf-man, the Crinos form, incites a kind of madness in humans that Garou call the Delirium.

The stronger a human's will, the more clearly she can deal with seeing a werewolf. Most humans, however, either

panic and run, or they just collapse. Even stronger-willed people tend to forget the encounter later, either by rationalizing what they saw ("A bear! I'm not kidding!") or by omitting the entire incident from their minds. The Garou refer to this subconscious denial as the Veil, and they look at it as one of their greatest assets.

The following chart shows what a human will do when he sees a Crinos as per his Willpower score. The chart also shows whether and to what degree the human will forget the encounter, as well as what percentage of the populace will react in that way. Students of the occult might gain some bonus on this chart. Storytellers may choose to allow such humans a Wits + Occult roll (difficulty 9), with each success moving the human up one level on the chart. In addition, members of cultures that didn't suffer the Impergium to a great degree (such as Native Americans and Australian Aborigines) might also be granted a bonus. Photographs or such evidence don't trigger any fear reaction, although human witnesses will probably rationalize the photos away as publicity stunts or some such unless they have a Willpower of 8 or higher. Kinfolk are immune to the Delirium.

<i>Delirium</i>			
Willpower	% of Population	Forget?	Reaction
1	10%	Yes	Catatonic Fear: The human collapses and whimpers, or perhaps even faints.
2	20%	Yes	Panic: The human runs in fear, trying to put as much distance between himself and the Garou as possible.
3	18%	Yes	Disbelief: The human refuses to accept what he sees, and he will likely retreat to a corner and stare at the "hallucination" until it passes.
4	15%	Yes	Berserk: The human takes some sort of aggressive action, be it firing a gun (he won't have enough presence of mind to reload, however), throwing crockery or even leaping at the "monster."
5	13%	Yes	Terror: Much like panic, except with more reason. The human will be rational enough to lock doors behind him or to get in a car and flee.
6	10%	Yes	Conciliatory: The human will try to plead and bargain with the Garou, doing anything possible so as not to get hurt.
7	7%	No, but will rationalize	Controlled Fear: Perhaps this person is a soldier. Although terrified, he does not panic. The human will flee or fight as appropriate, but remains in control of his actions.
8	5%	No, but will rationalize	Curiosity: These people are dangerous, because they remember what they saw (more-or-less), and they might well investigate the matter further. Conspiracy theorists and cryptozoologists often fall into this category.
9	1.5%	No	Bloodlust: In the far reaches of this human's mind, he remembers the depredations of the Garou, and he refuses to take anymore. The human is afraid but angry, and he will remember the Garou and probably even try to hunt it down.
10	.5%	No	No reaction: The human is not the slightest bit afraid or bothered by the Garou. Even Kinfolk aren't this stoic, so Garou tend to be very suspicious of such folks.

## Drama

There are a nigh-infinite number of actions that players will want their characters to take. This section shows the Storyteller how to set up the scene to accommodate those actions, and how they fit into the game system.

The systems included in this chapter do not even approach the number and variety of actions the players will concoct. After all, a character can try to do anything—and more—a real person could, and no rule system can cover all the variables to simulate real life completely. Consider these systems to be guidelines for your games. They are meant to make *Werewolf* play more smoothly, not to bog things down. If you can't remember a particular system during play or if a player describes an action that floors you, don't waste time and energy looking it up. Improvise, follow your instincts, and keep the action moving.

With that in mind, you should call for a roll only if one is truly necessary. Any normal human can crush a beer can, so don't make the player roll Strength. If you know that the characters have to chase down a fleeing human to move the plot along, don't waste time with a lot of die rolls simulating the chase—describe the action instead. A vivid, sensual depiction of the scene will enthrall the players much more than a series of rolls, no matter how many successes they achieve.

As a general rule of thumb, ask for a roll only when there is doubt in your mind as to the character's chances for success. A city-born Glass Walker who was never even a Boy Scout will certainly need to make an effort to sneak up on an intruder, whereas her lupus packmate who has been stalking rabbits since he was a pup wouldn't find it a much of a challenge. In this case, the Glass Walker's player should be required to make a Stealth roll, whereas the lupus' player would be assumed to stay quiet. Of course, if the intruder in question has some means of detecting even someone of the lupus' skill, then a roll would be required of both players. The automatic success rule provides a good system for when to require a roll.

## Scenes

A scene is a moment in the story when the troupe focuses on the task at hand. A scene has no set length of time attached to it; it generally lasts until the troupe leaves the area or changes focus. For example, a pack might be in a caern having a meeting about a challenge issued from a neighboring sept. The scene would then begin with the pack coming together at the meeting place (perhaps preceded by an ear-splitting howl to summon them all). The bulk of the scene would be spent deciding what to do—whether to ignore, meet or argue the challenge. The scene would end when the troupe decides on a course of action and goes to follow it (the venue has changed) or when a representative from the challenging sept arrives suddenly to ask how they'll answer (the focus of the scene has changed).

You, as Storyteller, should do everything possible to make the scene interesting and exciting and to keep the

players in the moment. A scene is not static. Even in the darkest wilderness, there are animal sounds around, other Garou nearby and spirits looking in on the pack curiously. Keep a scene going with a life of its own, and sweep the players up in it. Don't let the players skulk about the sidelines before a moot. Have a friendly (or seemingly friendly) Ragabash come over to swap jokes. Have a burly Get of Fenris rise as if in challenge, just to encourage a reaction. Use minor elements of the scene to help the players see how their characters fit in. If the sept as a whole has high hopes for them, they'll get a much different reception when speaking at a moot than if the elders feel they are a disgrace to the Garou. This descriptive element is especially important when the characters deal with creatures other than werewolves. Normal humans tend to react to these predators with fear. If the pack walks into a convenience store, describe how the clerk glances nervously at the alarm every few moments.

A scene should be open-ended and dynamic. Don't make the characters watch what's happening, unless that's truly what they decide they should do. Werewolves, however, are not often the sorts of creatures who wait to act. The more vivid and enticing the scene is, the more the players will want their characters to be a part of it.

## Downtime

Downtime is time in a story spent away from a scene, in which time is assumed to pass without roleplaying it out. Downtime normally occurs in one of two instances. At the end of a story, the Storyteller may decide that some game time will elapse before the next story begins, to allow the characters to heal or learn rites. The other instance in which downtime is applicable is when the characters are involved in an ongoing activity that does not lend itself to roleplaying (such as sleep). Likewise, if the characters are traveling by bus, doing extended research or waiting for someone's arrival, you may declare that those things happen during downtime. When the person for whom the characters are waiting arrives, the action changes from downtime to a scene.

## Turns

A scene is divided up into units of time called turns. Like the scene, a turn is a very loose unit of time. During non-stressful activities, a turn might be long enough to draw a map or even cook a meal. During stressful activities (e.g., combat) a turn is much shorter, ranging from three to six seconds.

In general, a turn is long enough for each character to take one action. That being the case, one character would take the same amount of time to fire a gun as another would take to run down the block, even though technically firing a gun is almost instantaneous. That's all right, though. Keeping to the one-turn/one-action rule ensures that each character gets a chance to do something, and it preserves the loose and dynamic flow of the game.

## Multiple Actions

Characters may take more than one action in a turn in one of two ways. A player may choose to spend Rage, which

## Action Scenes



An action scene is one in which many or all of the characters are taking actions to which sequence is important. These scenes require special rules to run smoothly. As stated previously, turns during action scenes take only a few seconds.

All scenes need to be described well, but a good picture of the surrounding is crucial in action scenes. Players are creative, and they will use everything at their disposal, so give them a lot to work with. Describe their general

is discussed later. The other, more common way to take multiple actions is available to any character. The player simply subtracts one die from her pool for every action beyond the first that she wishes her character to take. This reduction is cumulative.

*Example: Running low on Rage, Elasia decides to dodge her opponent's attack, and then counterattack with her spear. She has five dice in her Dexterity + Dodge pool, while her Dexterity + Melee pool is six dice. Since she is performing two actions this turn, Elasia's player removes two dice from each action. Because Elasia is dodging first, her player rolls her adjusted Dexterity + Dodge pool for that action (three dice). She then adjusts her Dexterity + Melee pool the same way (removing two dice) and subtracts one additional die because the attack is her second action (giving her a total of three dice).*

Werewolves may spend Rage to take multiple actions. For every point of Rage the player spends, her character receives one additional action that turn. These extra actions take place after everyone else has taken an action that turn. If more than one character has multiple actions, the extra actions take place after everyone has taken their first action and proceed in order of initiative.

A player using Rage actions may not split her dice pools to multiply those actions further.

surroundings, any possible escape routes, how far they are from a highway, whether anything is poking out of a dumpster and how wide an alley is. Any of these details may become important during an action scene. The Storyteller needn't explain every detail of the surroundings at once, but the players should know enough to improvise. Environmental conditions are certainly worth mentioning, as well. A fight in a blinding hailstorm will produce different complications than one that occurs in clear weather!

### *Optional Rule: Pack Initiative*

A pack bonded by a totem can act in almost perfect harmony in battle. The uncanny ability to work with and around each other, especially in a fight, is one of the most frightening things about werewolves. You can simulate this eerie coordination by making sure that they all act at the same time.

One way to do so is to let the pack alpha's player roll for the entire pack. That player makes her initiative roll as usual, and everyone acts at that time. Any one packmate, of course, could decide to act at her own pace (and make her own initiative roll), but she would probably have some explaining to do later....

Another method that is perhaps more egalitarian, is to average the pack's initiative ratings and make the roll based on that total. However, this tactic is possible only if everyone agrees to it. Any dissenters will throw the pack's sense of timing off, and everyone must roll separately or let the alpha roll.

If the entire pack knows the Ahroun Gift: Spirit of the Fray, then all may benefit from its use (obviously). However, if the whole pack doesn't know the Gift, add one to the group's initiative rating for each member who does.

Players will come up with actions that are not covered in this chapter (or likely in this book). As Storyteller, you need to be prepared for any eventuality. Let the players have their characters attempt whatever they'd like. If it's too outlandish, raise the difficulty. A difficulty of 10 usually conveys to a player that he should find a simpler way to do what she wants.

### *Organizing an Action Turn*

Dividing turns into stages is usually necessary only during an action scene, commonly combat. While you need not follow these stages rigidly, they allow for a well-organized, smooth action scene, and they provide a good framework for the story.

#### • Describing the Scene

You should begin each turn by describing the scene from the characters' point of view. Try to give some hint of what opponents or Storyteller-controlled characters in the scene might be about to do, but don't give away any information to which the characters would not be privy. This stage is also the one in which you should recap what happened in the last turn, if applicable. Remind the players what they and their characters' opponents attempted, whether they were successful and who is still standing. Don't be afraid to repeat something several times over the course of a scene. Constant updates will prevent you and the players from becoming confused.

Once you have described the scene, allow the players to ask questions. Use common sense, though. A player might well ask for a clarification in someone's description ("He's carrying a falchion? What is that, anyway?"), because the player has a right to know and understand what her character perceives. A player cannot legitimately ask for information her character doesn't have, however. "Is the guy with the falchion a vampire?" is not a legitimate question unless the character has some way of finding out.

When you and the players feel satisfied with the scene's description, each player must roll for initiative. Roll one die and add it to the character's initiative rating (Dexterity + Wits). The Storyteller must determine initiative for each of the characters she controls as well. The character with the highest initiative acts first. In case of a tie, the character with the higher initiative rating acts first. If the ratings are equal, the characters act simultaneously.

To make things go more smoothly, especially during large-scale combats, the Storyteller may choose to make each character keep the first initiative roll for the entire combat. If the fight involves multiple Storyteller characters, the Storyteller may choose to use one initiative result for all of them.

If opponents take the characters by surprise, the Storyteller may deduct from the characters' initiative ratings to give their opponents an edge (and vice versa as necessary). Alternatively, she can choose to forego initiative altogether and decide arbitrarily who goes first. Using this last tactic often is not recommended, however, as it tends to frustrate players when their characters' actions are always being trampled.

#### • Decision Stage

Each player declares what her character will do, going in descending order of initiative. The characters with the highest initiative rolls act first, but declare last, giving them the chance to base their actions on those of the slower characters. This phase is also the one in which Rage expenditures are declared. During this stage, the Storyteller should decide what kind of roll is required for the action in question.

During situations in which initiative is less important, the Storyteller may call for declaration of actions in order of Wits scores or around the table from the left. Use whatever method suits your troupe.

#### • Resolution Stage

Beginning with the highest initiative, each player makes whatever rolls are necessary to take her character's action.

After determining how successful each action is, the Storyteller must translate the dice rolls into description and plot. For example, if a player manages a miraculous damage roll and kills her opponent in one



swipe, don't simply say, "That was seven health levels, huh? Nope, he couldn't soak it. That's his ass, I guess." Get descriptive. Make the player feel as though his character has really won a brutal fight. "Your massive paw slams into the side of his head, tearing away most of his face. You hear a muddied, wet snap from his neck, and his corpse crashes to the ground in front of you." The more detail you give the players, the more they look forward to your games.

## *Taking Actions*

A character can take two types of actions without the player making a roll: reflexive actions and automatic actions. Actions that require rolls are called fixed actions.

Reflexive actions may be performed without losing any dice from a character's pool. Reflexive actions include:

- **Yielding:** The character delays his action until later in the turn, allowing other characters to act first. He can choose to act at any time during the turn, even to interrupt another character with a lower initiative. If everyone chooses to yield, the turn ends without any actions being taken at all.

- **Spending Rage:** A player can spend Rage for her character at any time during the turn, with some restrictions. See the sidebar entitled *Spending Rage in Combat* (p. 205) for a full description of what effects doing so can have.

- **Healing:** One of the most frightening things about werewolves is their hellishly fast healing power. A Garou heals one health level of bashing or lethal damage each turn, subject to three restrictions. First, a Garou cannot heal in this manner while in her natural form, unless she is metis. Most Garou are not able to access their full healing power while in their natural forms. The natural form a metis Garou is Crinos, however, so metis have no difficulty doing so. Second, only bashing and lethal damage may be healed in this manner. Aggravated damage (see *Injury*) may be healed only with time and rest or with Gifts. Third, healing lethal damage while doing anything other than resting requires a Stamina roll (difficulty 8). This roll is a reflexive action.

- **Reversion to Breed Form:** This action requires no roll, and it happens instantly. Homid Garou revert to Homid form, lupus Garou revert to Lupus, and metis Garou revert to Crinos.

Automatic actions are actions that do not normally require a roll, but that do take an action to perform. A player must split a dice pool to have his character take another action simultaneously. Some of the more common automatic actions include:

- **Moving:** A character moves by walking, jogging or running. As a general rule, a character may walk seven yards, jog 12 + Dexterity yards or run 20 + (3 x Dexterity) yards in a turn.

Garou in forms other than Homid are capable of faster movement, however. In Crinos form, a character may move an additional two yards per turn by dropping to all fours. Garou in Hispo form move at one and one-half times their human speed, and characters in Lupus form move at twice their human speed.

Example: Emma Sharptongue's Dexterity is 3 is Homid form. She jogs 15 yards per turn, and she runs 29 yards per turn. In Lupus form, she runs 58 yards per turn.

No roll is required to move, but movement takes a full action. In some situations, such as crossing treacherous ground or running amid a hail of bullets, the Storyteller may call for an Athletics roll to move or simply rule that movement at full distance is impossible.

- **Get to Feet:** A bipedal character (including Garou in Homid, Glabro or Crinos forms) may get to her feet in one action without making a roll. Quadrupeds may do so as a reflexive action, springing to their paws at the beginning of the turn after they are knocked down without using an action at all.

If a bipedal character wishes to get to her feet and still take an action, or if a quadruped wishes to get up before the next turn, she must split her dice pool or use a Rage action to do so. To perform this action by splitting a dice pool, the player must take dice from her intended action and score at least one success on a Dexterity + Athletics roll (difficulty 4).

- **Speech:** A character can speak during her turn; some Gifts require it. Speaking precludes most other actions, since it is not possible to carry on a detailed conversation and fight at the same time (despite what is portrayed in movies and comic books). If a player wishes her character to speak during an action turn, the Storyteller should time her at about six seconds, and then cut her off, in mid-sentence if necessary. It is possible, however, to shout out quick sentences ("Run! I'll hold them off!" and so forth) as a reflexive action. A character who takes an entire turn to speak cannot also spend Rage for extra actions.

- **Readyng a Weapon:** This action usually involves drawing a melee weapon or loading (or reloading) a gun. An automatic gun can be loaded and fired in the same turn by splitting a dice pool, while a revolver cannot unless the character has a speedloader (see *Firearms*).

- **Start a Car:** Under most circumstances, this action does not require a roll, unless the character is hot-wiring the car.

## *Dramatic Systems*

The actions that do require rolls are too numerous to list fully. What follows is number of game systems for physical, social and mental feats that the players may wish to have their characters perform. Two of the most common — shapeshifting and combat — are described separately.

### *Physical Feats*

Differentiated by the use of Physical Attributes, these systems involve hands-on actions and confrontations.

#### *Climbing*

When a character attempts to climb a surface, be it a tree, a cliff or the side of a building, ask the player to roll Dexterity + Athletics. The difficulty varies based on factors such as how steep the surface is and environmental conditions. Each success allows the character to climb five feet. For example, if

Isis Valor attempts to climb a 30-foot cliff, she will need six successes to reach the top. If she fails a roll, she is unable to make any progress that turn. If she botches, she falls, probably taking some damage, and she cannot attempt the climb again unless the player spends a Willpower point.

#### Sample Climb

	Difficulty
Easy climb; a large tree with many stout branches	2
Simple climb; a cliff with many handholds	4
Straightforward; a tree with thin branches	6
Treacherous; a cliff with very few handholds	8
Nearly Impossible; a slick or sheer surface	10

Note that climbing under duress (rocks being thrown from above, etc.) will raise the difficulty by two or more.

#### Feats of Strength

Strength is the only Attribute commonly used without an accompanying Ability. When a character is attempting a feat of strength that falls within her range on the following chart, the player needs not make a roll. If, however, she is attempting to push herself to lift, throw or crush something that she normally couldn't, the player must roll Willpower (not Strength) to do so. The difficulty is usually 9, although the Storyteller may vary it due to extraneous factors such as environmental conditions or whether the character is in frenzy. Each success on the roll increases the character's Strength one step on the chart, to a maximum of five steps. For example, if a character with a Strength rating of 6 (in Crinos, that is) wishes to punch through a cement wall, the player will need three successes on the Willpower roll.

Botching this roll may lead to interesting and painful problems as the character overtaxes his muscles.

Dice Pool	Feats	Lift
1	Crush a beer can	40 lbs.
2	Break a chair	100 lbs.
3	Break down a wooden door	250 lbs.
4	Break a two-by-four	400 lbs.
5	Break open a metal fire door	650 lbs.
6	Throw a motorcycle	800 lbs.
7	Flip over a small car	900 lbs.
8	Break a three-inch lead pipe	1000 lbs.
9	Punch through a cement wall	1200 lbs.
10	Rip open a steel drum	1500 lbs.
11	Punch through 1" of sheet metal	2000 lbs.
12	Break a metal lamp post	3000 lbs.
13	Throw a car	4000 lbs.
14	Throw a van	5000 lbs.
15	Throw a truck	6000 lbs.

#### Jumping

Vertical jumping requires a Strength roll. Horizontal jumping allows the player to add the Athletics ability if the character can get a good running start. The difficulty on a jumping roll is usually 3, but weather conditions or narrow jumping space can modify it. One cannot gain partial

successes on a jump roll. If the player does not roll the required number of successes, the character falls short of the jump.

The following chart shows how many feet per success a character achieves in each of the five forms. Remember that the Gift: Hare's Leap doubles jumping distances after the jump roll.

*Example: Lysistrata attempts to leap to a second-floor balcony in Lupus form. She needs to jump roughly 20 feet to clear the railing and land safely. The jump is vertical, so the player rolls her Strength (6 in Lupus form). She jumps four feet up per success, but if she uses her Hare's Leap Gift, she doubles her distance. Therefore, if her player rolls three successes on the roll, she jumps 24 feet — landing easily on the balcony.*

#### Type of Jump Feet per Success

	Homid	Glabro	Crinos	Hispo	Lupus
Vertical	2	3	4	5	4
Horizontal	4	4	5	6	7

#### Long Running

Wolves and werewolves alike are remarkable in their ability to run for long distances without rest. When long running, Garou can cover incredible distances.

Long running is possible only in Lupus form. A Garou can jog at about 16 miles per hour for a number of hours equal to her Stamina rating. After that, the player must roll Stamina + Athletics (difficulty 4) each hour. If the roll fails, the character suffers one level of lethal damage from strained muscles and exhaustion, and the difficulty on the roll increases by one. This damage cannot be healed until the Garou stops to rest.

If the player fails two consecutive rolls, she must spend a Rage or Willpower point to keep going. The difficulty increases by two on the next roll, however.

*Example: A pack of Garou is traveling from one caern to another. Because of the sept's isolationist policies on moon bridges, they are forced to long run. Corina, a Glass Walker, has a Stamina rating of 5 in Lupus form. She may therefore run at 16 miles per hour for five hours, after which her player rolls Stamina + Athletics. She succeeds on the first roll and keeps going for another hour, but she fails the second. Her difficulty increases from 4 to 5. Certain she can succeed on this roll, Corina's player does not spend Willpower—and she fails. Corina takes one unspeakable health level of lethal damage. Now her player must spend Rage or Willpower in order for her to keep running, and the difficulty on the next roll will be 7.*

Wolves will not usually stop if one of their members falls on the Long Run. This abandonment weeds out weaklings. Werewolves are often inclined to follow suit, although the desperate nature of these times compels many packs to make what sacrifices they can to ensure that as many Garou survive as possible.

#### Pursuit

Pursuit is, simply enough, the act of one character attempting to catch another. If one character is markedly faster than the other (one has a much higher Dexterity, an Athletics specialty in "sprinting," or using a Gift such as

Speed of Thought), no system need be used. If the characters are similar in land speeds or if the terrain favors one character enough to even the odds, use this system.

The pursued character begins with a predetermined number of successes, either assigned by the Storyteller (the preferred method) or by a Dexterity + Athletics roll. The pursuer must then accumulate the same number of successes by rolling Stamina + Athletics before he can catch up. The pursued character can continue to run, making the same roll as the pursuer. If the player of the pursued manages to roll more successes than her pursuer for two consecutive rolls (not turns, since a werewolf can spend Rage to run faster, effectively taking her movement action twice) she escapes.

*Example: Discovered for what he is, Slig — a Black Spiral Dancer spy — bolts for safety. Howling in rage, the Get Ahroun Dane Praised-of-Fenris gives chase. The Storyteller rules that Slig has three initial successes; Dane must overtake Slig and match these successes to catch him.*

On the first turn of pursuit, Dane's player rolls four successes, and the Storyteller rolls two for Slig. Dane is catching up and has two successes toward the three he needs to catch the little sneak (four minus the two that Slig achieved to keep ahead is two net successes). Dane needs to beat Slig by only one successes next turn to catch him. The Storyteller, however, knowing how much Slig wants to avoid being torn apart, spends a Rage point for him. The Storyteller is therefore allowed a second Stamina + Athletics roll to put more distance between Slig and Dane. The Storyteller achieves three successes; Dane must now achieve four successes to catch Slig.

### Repair

When a mechanical device breaks down, the best choice is to take it to a garage or machine shop and let a trained professional work on it. If doing so isn't an option, or if a character happens to be a trained professional, use this system to simulate Repair.

The player rolls Intelligence + Crafts to identify the problem, and then Dexterity + Crafts to fix it. The difficulty of this second roll depends on the complexity of the problem. The number of successes required depends on how long the job takes. Some repair jobs are fairly straightforward, but they still take hours. The following chart gives a relative idea of how many successes and what difficulties to require.

This system is permissible in combat. One character trying desperately to start the car while the rest fend off the oncoming hordes makes for a very exciting scene.

Job	Difficulty	# of Successes
Simple Mechanical Repair	4	3
Soldering Job	5	2
Electronic Malfunction	5	5
Fitting in new part	6	10
Repair stalled car	6	5
Tough auto repair	7	10+
System overhaul	8	20
Technical glitch	9	2

### Shadowing

As tempting as simply grabbing an enemy and tearing him apart can be for a werewolf, more subtle methods are sometimes necessary. Shadowing — following a subject without the subject noticing — is occasionally necessary. Fortunately, werewolves (like most predators) have a knack for stalking prey quietly.

The two elements of shadowing are keeping the subject in sight and avoiding the subject's notice. Shadowing is easier to do on foot, but it can be performed in vehicles, even if the shadowing character is not driving. ("Okay, now make a left at this corner! No, damn it, your other left!")

When the character begins tailing a subject, her player must roll Perception + Investigation or Streetwise. In a more rural setting, the roll would involve Survival or Primal-Urge instead. The difficulty varies. Following someone down a crowded block during lunch hour might be difficulty 8, whereas following a large, clumsy person through the woods on a dark night would be only difficulty 4. Every success allows the character to keep her subject in view for one turn. The Storyteller must determine how many turns it will take for the subject to reach his destination — the longer the trip, the more total successes the character will need. If the player fails a roll, the character has lost her subject, but she may try to find him again next turn. If the player fails two consecutive rolls, the subject is irrevocably lost (unless the player can think of a new approach). If the player botches, the character not only loses the subject, but is also delayed or hindered in some way (such as by being attacked by a gang, falling down an open manhole or being hit by a bus).

Keeping track of the subject is only half of the problem, however. It's just as important to make sure that the subject doesn't see his tail. Each time the player rolls Perception to keep the subject in view, she must also roll Dexterity + Stealth (or Drive if the character is in a vehicle). The difficulty depends on how much cover the character has — a thick crowd might make a subject hard to shadow, but it does make staying out of sight easier.

If the subject is unaware that he is being followed, a single success is enough. If, however, the subject is looking actively for a tail (perhaps due to a slip-up on the tail's part, or perhaps due to innate paranoia), the roll is opposed. The subject's player (or the Storyteller if the subject is not player-controlled) rolls Perception + Alertness or Streetwise (or Survival or Primal-Urge for wilderness, once again) at the same difficulty as the tail. If the subject accumulates five successes before reaching his destination, he spots the shadowing character. Note that a sufficiently suspicious target may change his intended destination whether or not he has actually seen anyone.

Two or more characters may work in tandem to shadow a single target. Doing so is beneficial only if the characters have worked out a system of signals ahead of time; otherwise the difficulties of all shadowing rolls increase by one. If the system is in place, however, the characters may trade off at any time. Using this sort of teamwork is a good idea when

tailing someone who suspects that he is being followed. The subject isn't given time to accumulate many successes before he has to start over against a different shadow.

### *Sneaking*

Sneaking is fairly straightforward — a character attempts to get past (or close to) a guard or sentry. The player rolls Dexterity + Stealth (difficulty of the guard's Perception + Alertness and modified by any mitigating factors such as light or weather), and she must accumulate a certain number of successes to get her character to go there. Any kind of failure on this roll results in immediate detection unless the guard is particularly lax.

A character may also try to guess how difficult it will be to avoid detection (i.e., how many successes the player must roll). The player should roll Perception + Stealth (difficulty 7) to size up the task, and only one success is usually necessary.

### *Stunt Driving*

Some folks are crack drivers — that is, they drive as though they're on crack. Jokes aside, this system is useful during car chase scenes, in which characters must be careful not only to keep their targets in sight but to keep their own cars on the road.

The following chart gives Maneuverability ratings for several different kinds of vehicles. When a character attempts a stunt with a vehicle, be it taking a sharp curve at a high speed, doing a 180° turn or sideswiping another vehicle, the player must roll Dexterity or Wits (Storyteller's choice) + Drive. The player cannot roll more dice than the vehicle's Maneuverability rating, however. The Storyteller determines the difficulty, depending on the complexity of the maneuver and the speed of the vehicle. If the vehicle is exceeding its safe speed, increase the difficulty by one for each 10 mph over the safe speed. The character can try the maneuver at any speed, but he might not be able to decelerate fast enough to stop afterward.

Vehicle	Safe Speed	Max Speed	Maneuverability
Six-wheel truck	60	90	3
Bus	70	100	3
18 wheeler	70	120	4
Sedan	70	120	5
Mini-van	70	120	6
Compact	70	130	6
Sport Compact	100	140	7
Motorcycle	100	140	8
Sport Coupe	110	150	8
Sports Car	130	170	9
Formula One Race Car	140	240	10

### *Social Feats*

These systems involve interactions between people. With that in mind, you usually don't need to use dice at all.

If the player gives a stirring rendition of a story that leaves the other players slack-jawed in amazement, assume that her character has done the same thing and don't involve chance.

If, however, a shy player controls a character who is very verbose, you might consider using one of the systems given here, perhaps modifying the difficulty based on how well the player conveys the character's intent. It's a bit unfair to penalize a character's social skills if the player isn't quite as suave, particularly if the player's roleplaying as best he can.

### *Animal Attraction*

Werewolves are dangerous. Even the most passive Child of Gaia Theurge carries around a great deal of Rage inside her. Such is the curse and blessing that all Garou share. And yet, while humans usually shy away from that Rage, it can also make werewolves appear very sexy.

Animal attraction, it should be noted, is not a "love-at-first-sight" power. It causes the target to want sex, in a very basic, primal, animalistic sort of way, so werewolves without much in the way of people skills commonly use it to breed with humans. It does not normally work as a manipulative tactic. The target will be inclined to go to bed with the character immediately, not open a filing cabinet full of corporate secrets for him. Not everyone is comfortable with reaching these inner passions, however, so the character's attempt may backfire. Animal attraction will not work on a target upon whom the character has induced the Delirium in the past.

Animal attraction is an extended roll. The player rolls Charisma + Primal-Urge (difficulty of the target's Willpower) each turn. The player must accumulate a number of successes equal to the target's Willpower, after which the target will be strongly sexually attracted to the character. To initiate animal attraction, the Garou must first look his target in the eye, although eye contact is not required throughout. If the player fails the roll, the target becomes uncomfortable and seeks to avoid the character. If the player botches, the target gets a glimpse of the Beast within the Garou, and she succumbs to the Delirium immediately.

Note that this ability does not work at all on unliving targets such as vampires or the walking dead (not that any right-thinking Garou would mate with such a beast anyway). Also, if a character uses the ability on other supernatural beings (such as mages or other shapeshifters) the difficulty increases by two. Finally, this power cannot overcome true love. A man who truly loves and is devoted to his wife will be able to reject the werewolf's advances, no matter how well her player rolls.

### *Credibility*

When a character tries to convince someone that she is telling the truth — regardless of whether she actually is — have the player roll Manipulation + Subterfuge. The difficulty is usually the listener's Intelligence + Subterfuge, but it should be modified as necessary. In particular, if the character is telling the truth, drop the difficulty by one to three. The more successes the player rolls, the more believable the

character sounds. If the player fails or botches the roll, the listener(s) does not believe the characters and may become angry enough to storm away (or arrest the character).

### *Facedown*

The facedown is a common way that Garou resolve disputes. Basically, it involves psyching one's opponent out without losing one's cool and attacking. The system is fairly simple: Each participant rolls Charisma + Intimidation or rolls Rage (whichever is higher). The difficulty is the opponent's Willpower. The one who accumulates a number of successes equal to her opponent's Wits + 5 is the winner, forcing the other to look away. The player of the other character can spend a Willpower point each turn to keep glaring, but he will run out of Willpower eventually.

A character whose Charisma + Intimidation total is greater than or equal to her Rage may use either dice pool; a character whose Rage is higher, however, must use Rage. This system makes facedowns very dangerous, because a character using Rage who achieves more than three successes in one roll enters frenzy and attacks! For this reason, facedown challenges usually occur at moots so that others can supervise the challenge. The loser of a facedown challenge loses a point of temporary Glory Renown.

If two Garou of differing rank enter a facedown challenge, the difficulty for the Garou of lesser rank increases by one for every two ranks his challenger is above him.

*Example: Pigeon, a Rank 1 Bone Gnawer, challenges Cloud-of-Night, the albino Black Fury Ahroun. Because she has no desire to tear the pup apart, Cloud-of-Night chooses a facedown challenge.*

Pigeon's Charisma + Intimidation dice pool is six, his Rage score is 5, his Wits rating is 3, and his Willpower is 4. Cloud-of-Night's Charisma + Intimidation is also six dice, her Rage rating is 7, her Wits score is 4, and her Willpower is 6. Pigeon chooses to roll Charisma + Intimidation. He must accumulate 9 successes (Cloud-of-Night's Wits + 5) at difficulty 7 (her Willpower + 1 because her rank exceeds his by two). Cloud-of-Night must accumulate eight successes at difficulty 4, but because her Rage is higher than her Charisma + Intimidation, she must use her Rage rating in the challenge. Therefore, if her player rolls four or more successes in one turn, Cloud-of-Night frenzies and attacks the younger Garou, the onlookers must pull her off of him, and Pigeon wins the challenge by default. Glowering, the two Garou square off.

### *Fast-Talk*

Fast-talk is the art of confusing one's target with quick jabber and browbeating. Normally, the player rolls Manipulation + Subterfuge, although Charisma or Appearance might also work, depending on the character style of fast-talk. The difficulty is the target's Wits + Streetwise. On a successful roll, the target becomes confused, and he will comply with the character, until the target has time to figure out what is really happening.

The target can spend Willpower to resist fast-talk. If he does so, treat the result as though the player failed the roll.

On a failed roll, the target is not confused and attempts to interject something, perhaps telling the character to slow down (which can be crippling to fast-talk, obviously). A botch on the roll means that the target sees through the fast-talk and is angry, not confused.

The Storyteller might require repeated rolls to keep a target compliant. The tone of fast-talk can be comical or deadly serious, depending on what the game's tone demands.

### *Interrogation*

Interrogation, by itself, does not include torture. It does, however, include the *threat* of torture. After all, being tied to a chair while watching someone prepare a syringe or ignite a blowtorch might well loosen the tongue (among other things). An actual system for torture is not included here.

The player rolls Manipulation + Intimidation at a difficulty of the target's Willpower. The more successes she rolls, the more the target talks. One success might indicate that the target mumbles a few facts, while five would mean that he spills his guts, confessing everything of value he knows. If the roll fails, the interrogation technique is not effective and the character must try a different tactic (with a +1 difficulty penalty). A botch means the target either refuses to talk or, worse yet, lies. To conceal the reliability of the results of the interrogation, the Storyteller should make this roll for the player.

### *Intimidation*

It bears noting here that although Garou lose dice from their Manipulation scores in various forms, this loss does not apply to intimidation. In fact, if a Garou is in a position to look menacing in a non-human form (the Glabro-form werewolf holding a man off the ground by his throat, for instance), she may actually gain dice on an Intimidation roll. If, however, the Garou has made herself look silly (running into a telephone pole while charging toward a foe, for example), her player should probably lose dice on the roll.

Humans who see a Garou in Crinos form fall under the Delirium, of course, and this effect will color their reactions. Generally speaking, Garou in Crinos form intimidate humans automatically.

### *Oration*

This system applies when a character makes a speech that the player does not wish to actually recite. The player should at least describe the speech and perhaps come up with a good beginning (which may even inspire the player to finish it). You should encourage, but never force, players to perform their oratory.

The player rolls Charisma + Leadership or Performance. The difficulty depends on whether the crowd is predisposed to listen or hurl tomatoes. If the listeners are Garou, you should adjust the difficulty based on the character's rank. A Rank 4 Theurge will probably command more hushed reverence than a Rank 1 Ragabash, after all. The number of successes indicates how impressed the crowd is. One success

gets polite applause, while five or more draws resounding howls of appreciation and demands for an encore.

For especially long or important speeches, you might want to make this roll an extended action. In this instance, more than five successes might be required to win the crowd over completely, and this difficulty increases by one for every roll after the third.

If the roll fails, the crowd is unimpressed and ignores the character. If the roll botches, the crowd begins looking for tar and feathers, or at least boos the character off the stage. In Garou circles, this reaction will also result in a loss of temporary Wisdom Renown.

### *Performance*

Used when a character gives some sort of entertaining performance, be it comedy, drama, musical or storytelling, this system is identical to oration in most ways. The roll varies, depending on the exact type of performance, but it is normally a Social Attribute + Performance or Expression. The difficulty and results of success or failure are the same as for oration.

### *Seduction*

A werewolf seeking to gain someone's affections can use animal attraction and be almost completely sure of success. But sometimes, somewhat subtler means are necessary, often to cajole a partner into revealing sensitive data (pillow talk can be more revealing than interrogation, after all). In this case, the age-old practice of clever remarks, white lies and general class comes into play. Note, however, that seduction does not tend to work well for Garou. The Curse (see pp. 191-192) drives people away all too frequently.

The system given assumes that one person (the seducer) is dominant and the other (the target) is submissive. If the characters are on equal footing, or they truly feel for each other, ignore the system and simply roleplay it out (dialogue only, please). If the character tries seducing someone who would not be interested (e.g., a woman tries seducing a gay man) it doesn't matter how many successes her player rolls. The best she can hope for is some sparkling conversation.

Seduction progresses in stages. A would-be seducer must pass through each stage in order to progress to the next.

**Opening Line:** The player rolls Appearance + Subterfuge. The difficulty is the target's Wits + 3, but it can be modified based on her desire to be seduced. If the player comes up with a clever pick-up line, the Storyteller should lower the difficulty accordingly. Likewise, a stupid line should raise the difficulty or get the seducer shot down automatically. Every success after the first adds an extra die to the roll on the next stage.

**Witty Exchange:** The characters engage in some flirtatious banter. The roll is Wits + Subterfuge at a difficulty of the target's Intelligence + 3. Again, roleplaying should confer bonuses or penalties as appropriate. Each success on the roll after the first grants an extra die on the roll for the next stage.

**Conversation:** This stage represents the intricate dance of making sure one seems to have enough in common with one's intended to get what he wants. The player rolls Charisma + Empathy, at a difficulty of the target's Perception + 3. Again, roleplaying should help or hinder as necessary.

**Intimacies:** At this point, if all goes well, the couple moves to a suitable locale and becomes physically intimate (at which point the scene fades to black...). In any event, no further rolls are necessary, unless the Storyteller wishes to be cruel and demand a Rage roll from an overly passionate Garou.

### *Mental Feats*

These feats include the use of the Perception, Intelligence or Wits Attributes. Again, it's frequently more enjoyable to use roleplaying in lieu of rolling dice.

### *Dream Interpretation*

Dreams are an accepted means of receiving wisdom from Gaia among the Garou. The wisdom, however, is often shrouded in mysterious symbols that only the dreamer can interpret.

The player of a character who attempts to glean knowledge from a dream must roll Intelligence + Enigmas. The difficulty varies based on the length and complexity of the dream. The more important and detailed the information is, the more deeply it will be hidden within dream, and the more successes the roll will require.

If a dream becomes recurrent, dream interpretation may become an extended action. Once the player has accumulated a requisite number of successes, the character progresses in the dream.

Dream interpretation is most common among homid Garou. While lupus do indeed dream, they are commonly unused to remembering and interpreting these images. Theurges of all breeds, however, cultivate this art.

### *Forgery*

Falsification of documents requires two steps. One must know what documents to forge and how they should look, then he must actually assemble them. It is very difficult to forge documents well, and it may require special equipment or extra time depending on exactly what needs to be done.

The player must make two rolls. The first roll is Intelligence + Streetwise. (The player may have to roll Law or Investigation, depending on the document in question. Some knowledge of Linguistics might also be required.) The difficulty varies if the documents are not from a legal system with which the character is familiar, or if only partial information is available. If the roll fails, some research must be done before the documents can be completed. (The character can try again in hours, or perhaps days.) A botch indicates that the documents are too difficult to copy with the information and equipment at hand, and a great deal more time and money must be invested.

The second roll is Dexterity + Streetwise, but the player may roll only as many dice as she achieved successes on the first roll. Each success indicates a higher degree of quality in

the final product. A single success produces a document that would pass only a casual inspection. Three yield a document that would fool most people, but not a lawyer or a detective. Five successes produce a near-perfect copy. A failure means that the document is obviously not passable, while a botch means that the forger missed an error that will be detected as soon as the character shows the papers.

### *Gamecraft*

Another common challenge among Garou who don't wish to actually fight is a riddle contest or some other mental challenge. The rules of the contest vary: a riddle contest consists of each participant asking the other a riddle until one cannot answer or cannot think of a riddle to ask. This is best if roleplayed out, but can be simulated by each player rolling Wits + Enigmas to ask a riddle and Intelligence + Enigmas to solve a riddle. The player whose character is solving the riddle must achieve at least as many successes as the player whose character asked for the game to continue. If a Garou challenges someone of higher rank, add one to her difficulties for every two ranks between them. Otherwise, the difficulty on both players' rolls is 6.

### *Hunting*

Werewolves do not always have the desire, much less the cash, to purchase food. Many of them would rather just hunt down and kill their prey. Doing so is an extended action. The player rolls Perception + Primal-Urge (if the character is hunting in Lupus form) or Survival (in Homid form). The difficulty varies by the availability of game in the area. A desert will command a much higher difficulty than a game preserve in spring, of course. Remember that Garou subtract two from their Perception difficulties in Lupus form, so most werewolves prefer to hunt this way.

Each roll simulates an hour of hunting. If a character hunts unsuccessfully in a given locale for four hours without success, he must move on in order to find food. For every two successes scored, the hunter finds enough food for one meal.

If members of a pack of Garou pool their hunting skills, they can find and catch bigger prey. The player of the Garou leading the hunt (ideally the one with the biggest dice pool) makes the roll, and the pack can all assist in chasing down and killing the prey.

### *Research*

You can't kill an enemy that you can't find. Sometimes, careful, slow research is needed to progress to the next point in a story. This system allows characters with high Intelligence scores to show off (as well as giving the more martial characters time to rest).

The player rolls Intelligence + an appropriate Ability, usually Investigation or Computer. The difficulty is based on how obscure or well-hidden the information is. Easily obtainable, general information might only require a difficulty of 3. Anything so easy to find, however, is so readily available for a reason — it usually isn't altogether true. Find

the complete, uncut story might require a roll at difficulty 8 or even 10, depending on what the character is researching.

The number of successes determines how much information the characters find and how useful it is. One success will answer the character's question, but not completely. Three successes will tell the characters what they need to know to continue. Five successes will give the characters the complete story plus some useful hints or hidden knowledge that could save their lives later (assuming they remember it).

Research takes time. The character has no way to know how much time will be required to find what she really needs to know, nor should the Storyteller tell her. Instead, the Storyteller should determine how long the character plans to study, and then allow a certain number of rolls based on that declaration. If the player intends to study "as long as it takes," the Storyteller must determine how much information the character can glean with the available materials. After all, all the books in the Library of Congress won't help the character learn about the courts of Malfeas; the information simply isn't there (one would hope). The character can study until she has learned all she can (Storyteller's discretion), until her player botches a roll (she believes she has learned all she can and comes away with some very false conclusions) or until she burns out. A character can study for a number of hours equal to her Stamina score. (And no, it doesn't help to shift to Crinos form while studying, because it tends to frighten the librarians.) After that time has elapsed, she must spend a Willpower point for each successive hour. The difficulty goes up by one at this point, as well, so research can continue only until the character runs out of Willpower or the difficulty exceeds 10. Remember that libraries are open only during certain hours, so extended research can take days, weeks or even years.

### *Search*

Searching a confined area for a certain object or clue requires a Perception + Investigation roll. The difficulty varies based on how well concealed the object or clue is and whether the character is looking in the right place. If the player succeeds, you might allow her character to find what she is looking for, or you might just give her a hint on where to look next.

Have the player describe exactly where her character is looking, and allow her to succeed automatically if her description is detailed enough. Likewise, if the character is looking in the wrong place, she isn't going to find what she's looking for, no matter how well her player rolls.

### *Track*

Use this system when a character tries to track someone by the physical trail he leaves. The player rolls Perception + Primal-Urge (base difficulty of 7 modified by weather, terrain, age of the trail, Gifts and so on). Each roll allows the character to follow the trail for five minutes or so. The Storyteller must determine how long the tracker must follow the trail before catching up with the quarry. If the player fails the roll, she must try again with a +1 difficulty penalty. If the difficulty



goes over 10, the character has lost the trail irrevocably. The same occurs if the player botches the roll.

Remember that Garou in Lupus form subtract two from Perception difficulties. Garou in Crinos or Hispo should subtract one from the difficulty on this roll.

### *The Many Forms*

Many legends speak of werewolves assuming only two forms, human and wolf. In truth, the Garou wear five different forms, each suited to different tasks and situations.

Changing form requires a Stamina + Primal-Urges roll. The difficulty varies based on the character's starting form. However, the number of successes needed also varies based on which form the character is attempting to reach. She must cross over all intermediate forms before reaching the one she desires. Therefore, the player must roll one success to begin the change and then one for each form the character must "pass through" to get to the desired form.

*Example:* As the quiet cluster of men in the corner suddenly begin to foam at the mouth, Stone Beast decides that Homid form might be a bit weak for what lies ahead. Stone Beast wishes to assume Crinos form. His player must therefore roll Stamina + Primal-Urges at difficulty 6 (for starting in Homid) and score at least three successes (one to start the change, one for Glabro and one for Crinos). If the player scores only two successes, Stone Beast reaches only Glabro form, and he must wait until next turn to try again (unless his player wishes to spend a Rage point for him).

If a character is shifting to her breed form, the change is automatic and instantaneous, no matter how many forms must be passed through. The same is true if the player spends a Rage point to enact the change. Any clothes the character is wearing when she shifts will probably be shredded unless they are dedicated (see the Rite of Talisman Dedication) in which case, they meld with the character's body and reappear when she takes Homid form again.

#### *Homid: The Human*

**Statistic Adjustments:** None

**Shift Difficulty:** 6

**Form Description:** The natural form for homid breed Garou and the form in which they feel most comfortable, Homid form is in all ways identical to a normal human being (save for lupus and metis werewolves, who are allergic to silver and possess regenerative powers in this form). Homid-form werewolves still trigger the Curse in normal humans, however.

*Example:* In Homid form, the Silver Fang Theurge Longing-Glance is just shy of six feet tall and is strongly built — close to 185 pounds. His hair is dusky blond and cut short.

#### *Glabro: The Near-Man*

**Statistic Adjustments:** Strength +2, Stamina +2, Manipulation -2, Appearance -1

**Shift Difficulty:** 7

**Form Description:** The Glabro form is bipedal, and it doesn't possess obvious fangs or claws, but the resemblance

to a human being ends there. A Garou shifting from Homid to Glabro gains from 100% to 200% in body weight (all muscle) and six inches in height. Body hair becomes much more profuse, the teeth and nails elongate (although not enough to inflict any special damage), the brow slopes, and the character looks huge and menacing.

Werewolves in Glabro can speak the Garou tongue and manage human language without too much trouble. Human speech, however, has a guttural rasp to it. While Garou can use this form to interact with human society, the typically don't. The Glabro form is too crude and too easy to remember.

*Example: Longing-Glance stands nearly six-and-one-half feet tall in Glabro form. He weighs in at approximately 350 pounds, and his normally sparse facial hair springs out around the jaw and neckline. His eyebrows grow together, and he walks with a slight lop in this form.*

### *Crinos: The Wolf-Man*

**Statistic Adjustments:** Strength +4, Dexterity +1, Stamina +3, Manipulation 0, Appearance 0

**Shift Difficulty:** 6

**Form Description:** Affectionately known as the "nine-foot snarling death-beast" form, a werewolf in Crinos wants to do only one thing — kill. The natural form of all metis-breed Garou, the Crinos is not a form for deliberation, even with other werewolves.

Shifting from Glabro to Crinos, the Garou grows in height by half and gains another 100% to 200% in weight. The head changes to a wolf's maw, and the fangs and claws are now fully grown. The arms become long and apelike, and the werewolf can move either on two legs or all fours. The Garou also grows a tail, which helps with balance.

A werewolf in the war form may speak the Garou tongue perfectly well, and he may converse with wolves crudely. Human speech is reduced to one or two words at a time (favorite phrases include "Wurm!" and "Kill them!"). Expressing anything more complex requires the expenditure of a Willpower point.

Note that the Manipulation and Appearance penalties may not apply to other Garou, who speak the language and are used to the war form.

*Example: Longing-Glance shifts to Crinos form. He now stands over nine feet tall and weighs just under 800 pounds. His body is covered with fur, which takes on a silvery sheen in this form.*

### *Hispo: The Near-Wolf*

**Statistic Adjustments:** Strength +3, Dexterity +2, Stamina +3, Manipulation 0

**Shift Difficulty:** 7

**Form Description:** The Hispo resembles a normal wolf in the same way that the Glabro resembles a common human. A werewolf in Hispo form looks like a prehistoric dire wolf. The head and jaws are massive, even more so than the Crinos, and the bite of a Hispo inflicts an extra die of damage. The Hispo can stand on its hind legs, if necessary, but it is much more comfortable on all fours.

The Hispo form weighs nearly as much as the Crinos form, but its four-legged stance allows it to run faster. Perception difficulties decrease by one in this form. The senses are sharp, although not so keen as the Lupus. A werewolf in Hispo has no hands, so he cannot grasp objects, except in his mouth.

A Garou in Hispo form can speak with Garou and wolves with little difficulty, but any human speech requires a Willpower point and even that is limited to one or two syllables.

*Example: In Hispo form, Longing-Glance still weighs close to 800 pounds, but he stands 5 feet high at the shoulder.*

### *Lupus: The Wolf*

**Statistic Adjustments:** Strength +1, Dexterity +2, Stamina +2, Manipulation 0

**Shift Difficulty:** 6

**Form Description:** The natural state of lupus Garou, the pure wolf form is feral and driven by instinct. Used primarily for tracking and travel, the change from Hispo to Lupus causes the Garou to shed a great deal of muscle and body size. The jaws and claws shrink considerably — a homid or metis in Lupus can cause aggravated wounds with only a bite, and lupus in their breed form cause lethal damage. The Lupus form runs at twice human speed (see Movement) and it is far more perceptive. All Perception difficulties for Garou in Lupus form drop by two.

The Lupus resembles a normal wolf for all intents and purposes. The exact appearance of a Garou's Lupus form will vary depending on her tribe.

*Example: Longing-Glance completes the shift to Lupus form. He appears, to all scrutiny, to be a large, silver-white wolf.*

### *Combat*

The combat system in Werewolf is meant to capture the grim and vicious reality of combat while keeping the focus on the characters and story. With that purpose in mind, the Storyteller needs to be flexible when running combat scenes, since no combat system can portray a real fight accurately (especially one between beings such as the Garou).

Both of the following basic types of combat involve different systems and permutations:

- **Ranged Combat** involves any weapon that works at a distance, including guns and bows. A character using a ranged weapon needs to have a line of sight on his target.
- **Close Combat** is any fight in which the combatants use their bare hands (or claws or teeth) or a hand-held weapon (knives, broken bottles, silver axes, etc.). The combatants must be within touching distance to use their own bodies as weapons (obviously). Some melee weapons, like polearms, improve a character's reach.

Players resolve combat turns just as they would any other action turn. First, all players determine initiative, then they declare their actions, then those actions are resolved using the dice systems. This last phase is broken down into Attack and Damage phases, however. Combat turns are usually only

three in-game seconds long, but when the Garou are involved, a lot can take place in those three seconds.

After determining initiative, each player declares her character's action. When all players have declared their characters' first actions, move on to the Attack stage.

### Attack

What dice pool the player uses depends on the nature of the attack.

- For any attack with a firearm, roll Dexterity + Firearms.
- For any attack with a thrown weapon, be it a rock or a shuriken, roll Dexterity + Athletics.
- For any attack with a hand-held weapon, roll Dexterity + Melee.
- For most hand-to-hand attacks, roll Dexterity + Brawl. Some maneuvers require Athletics instead, but most use Brawl.

The difficulties of these attacks and even the number of dice rolled can vary greatly, depending on a gun's rate of fire or the complexity of a brawling maneuver. These complications are discussed later.

A character can choose to take one of three defensive actions as well. She may also choose to abort a previously declared action in order to do so. These actions are dodging, blocking and parrying.

Dodging is simply the act of getting out of the way before an attack lands, and the roll is Dexterity + Dodge. The difficulty depends on how much cover is available and how much space the character has to cross to get to it, as well as the nature of the attack being dodged. A character in Lupus form dodging a kick needs only to jump back a few feet, so the difficulty is only 5. However, a Garou in Crinos form trying to dodge a shotgun blast from 15 feet away with no cover should probably just grit her teeth and get ready to get shot — her difficulty should be 9 or even 10. Successes on the dodge roll subtract successes from the attacker's roll to hit the character. So, in order to avoid being hit entirely, the dodging character needs more successes than the attacking character.

Blocking involves using one's own body to stop an incoming attack. A character cannot block a firearms attack (well, he *can*, but it isn't very smart), but a character may attempt to block any hand-to-hand or melee attack. The roll is Dexterity + Brawl and the difficulty is determined by the nature of the attack being blocked. (A fist is easier to block than a sword.) Otherwise, the system is identical to dodging.

Parrying is the use of a weapon to block an incoming attack. The system is the same as blocking, except that the roll is Dexterity + Melee.

### Resolution

In this stage, players determine how much damage their characters inflicted and received during the turn.

When inflicting damage, the player rolls a number of dice appropriate to the attack at difficulty 6. Every success inflicts

### Spending Rage in Combat

Garou can use their inner anger to move frighteningly quickly. To do so, the player spends Rage. Rage has some other uses as well, however.

- **Extra Actions:** For every point of Rage the player spends, the character can take one additional action per turn. This use of Rage must be declared at the beginning of the turn, during the initiative stage. Once the player has devoted Rage to gaining extra actions, those points are considered spent, and they may not be used for anything else during the turn. Additionally, a Garou may not use all of her Rage in this manner. (See *Restrictions*.)

- **Changing Forms:** At any time during a turn, a player may spend a point of Rage for her character and shift to any form she wishes.

- **Ignore Stun:** A character who takes more damage in one turn than her Stamina rating is stunned, and she loses all remaining actions and her next turn. (Remember, turns are approximately only three seconds long!) Werewolves, however, are hard to stun, in part because of their high Stamina ratings in Crinos form, and in part because hitting them that hard is only likely to anger them. By spending a Rage point, the player ignores the stun, and her character may act normally.

- **Ignore Pain:** Ignoring pain works on much the same principle as ignoring a stun. The player may spend one Rage point and allow her character to ignore the dice penalty of one health level of damage. This expenditure does not heal the damage, nor does it alleviate the pain of any other injuries, but it does provide time for an at least partially unhindered attack. This action stops the pain for only one turn, however.

### Restrictions

- **Extra Actions:** The maximum amount of Rage that a character may use for extra actions in one turn is equal to half the Garou's permanent Rage score. For example, if a werewolf has a permanent Rage score of six, her player may use three of those Rage points for extra actions. The other three points can be used in any of the other ways listed here, but not for extra actions.

- **Timing:** A player may spend Rage for extra actions during only the decision stage of combat. All other uses of Rage, however, can occur at any time during a turn.

- **Limits:** A character may take a number of actions equal only to her Dexterity or Wits, whichever is lower. If a character tries to take more actions than either of these ratings, any actions she takes that turn have a +3 difficulty penalty. This penalty arises because she has tried to move too fast for either her body (Dexterity) or her mind (Wits), and she has become muddled and uncoordinated. If the character is in frenzy (see pp. 190-191), Rage actions are limited only by Dexterity.

one health level of damage. More successful attacks inflict more damage, however. For each success *above the first* that the player achieves on the attack roll, she adds one die to the damage dice pool. This system makes for fast-paced and lethal combat, although Garou can shake off many forms of damage.

Damage rolls cannot be botched, nor can specialties allow players to reroll 10s on them.

Attacks cause one of three following types of damage:

- **Bashing** damage includes any damage inflicted by sources of blunt, non-lethal trauma such as fists and most non-edged weapons. Bashing damage heals the fastest of all damage types (for humans, anyway), and it is very unlikely to do more than inconvenience werewolves. Bashing damage is applied to the character sheet by putting a slash (" / ") through the appropriate Health chart boxes.

- **Lethal** damage is exactly that — damage that will kill most living things quickly. Knives, bullets and even some blunt weapons attacks (a club swung by a Garou in Crinos form, for example) inflict lethal damage. Lethal damage is difficult for mortals to heal, although Garou regenerate such wounds quickly. Lethal damage should be marked with an "X" in the appropriate box.

- **Aggravated** damage usually comes from a supernatural source — the teeth and claws of werewolves, the fangs of vampires, most fetish weapons and any silver weapon inflicts aggravated damage to werewolves. Aggravated damage takes quite a while for even Garou to heal, and it cannot be regenerated. It can be soaked, however, in any form except Homid. Aggravated damage is best marked with an " \*\* " on the character sheet.

When receiving damage, the player rolls her character's Stamina. This roll, the soak roll, allows the character to avoid damage through her natural toughness.

Normal human beings can soak only bashing damage. They are very frail in comparison to werewolves. (Storytellers who prefer more resilient humans, such as for representing soldiers or other rugged types, may allow humans to soak lethal damage at difficulty 8). Garou can soak bashing damage at difficulty 6 in any form, and they soak lethal and aggravated damage at the same difficulty in any form but their breed form.

Damage from silver weapons is handled a bit differently. Garou may soak silver damage only in their breed form (save metis, who cannot soak it at all), at difficulty 6. Garou may not soak silver damage in any other form without using a Gift or fetish. Such is the price they pay for the gifts of Luna. Damage from silver is considered aggravated in all forms except a homid or lupus' breed form.

## Complications

### General Complications

- **Armor:** Some foes possess a protective covering, be it a flak jacket or a slimy carapace. Armor adds dice to a character's soak roll. Some artificial armor also restricts

body movement, as is reflected in an increase to Dexterity difficulties. Some armor types are given on the Armor chart. Armor dice (and only the armor dice) can be used to soak lethal damage. Those dice might also be usable to soak damage that might otherwise be unsinkable, at the Storyteller's discretion. It would make sense that a kevlar vest could be used to soak a silver weapon, but a flak jacket is no protection from radiation.

Armor		
Armor Type	Armor Rating	Dexterity Penalty
Reinforced Clothing	1	0
Armor T-shirt	2	1
Kevlar Vest	3	1
Flak Jacket	4	2
Full Riot Gear	5	3

- **Blind:** Blind characters cannot dodge, parry or block attacks, and they take a +2 difficulty penalty on all actions. Some Gifts compensate for sight, but the Storyteller has the final say over what effects these Gifts have in combat.

- **Changing Actions:** Normally, once a player has declared an action, she may not change it. If she has a good reason to do so (a packmate kills her character's intended target, for example) she may change her action, but she adds one to the difficulty. Aborting to a defensive action does not change the difficulty of said action.

- **Immobilization:** A character who is partially immobilized and is unable to dodge is not in a good position. All attacks on such a character receive a -2 difficulty bonus if she is still able to struggle, and they succeed automatically if she cannot move at all.

- **Knockdown:** Some attacks are meant to knock an opponent off her feet. If this happens, the character must get back to her feet. If she has no actions left with which to do so, her opponent may treat her as being partially immobilized.

- **Stun:** As mentioned previously, a character loses her next turn when she receives more health levels of damage in one turn than her Stamina rating. She may take no action other than stumbling around a bit, and any attacks against her receive a -2 difficulty bonus.

### Ranged Combat Complications

Garou seldom use guns, but they are often on the wrong end of them. This section gives maneuvers and complications for running a firefight. Information on specific weapons appears on the Ranged Weapons chart.

- **Aiming:** A character who spends time aiming can shoot much more accurately than one who simply snaps off a shot. However, aiming properly requires that the character is not moving faster than a slow walk and that the target stays in the character's field of vision the whole time.

For every turn spent aiming, the player adds one to her Dexterity + Firearms pool, up to a maximum of the character's

### Ranged Weapons

Type	Damage	Range	Rate	Clip	Conceal
Revolver, Lt.	4	12	3	6	P
SW M640 (.38 Special)					
Revolver, Hvy.	6	35	2	6	J
Colt Anaconda (.44 Magnum)					
Semi-Automatic Pistol, Lt.	4	20	4	17+1	P
Glock 17 (9mm)					
Semi-Automatic Pistol, Hvy.	5	30	3	7+1	J
Sig P220 (.45 ACP)					
Rifle	8	200	1	5+1	N
Remington M-700 (30.06)					
SMG, Small*	4	25	3	30+1	J
Ingram Mac-10 (9mm)					
SMG, Large*	4	50	3	30+1	T
HK MP-5 (9mm)					
Assault Rifle*	7	150	3	42+1	N
Steyr-Aug (5.56mm)					
Shotgun	8	20	1	5+1	T
Ithaca M-37 (12 Gauge)					
Shotgun, Semi-Automatic	8	20	3	8+1	T
Fiachi-Law 12 (12 Gauge)					
Short Bow**	4	60	1	1	N
Long Bow**	5	120	1	1	N
Crossbow**	5	90	1	1	T

**Damage:** All damage from firearms and bows is considered lethal.

**Range:** Within this range (in yards), the difficulty is six. At twice this range, the difficulty is 8. Within two yards, the difficulty is 4.

**Rate:** The maximum number of bullets or three-round bursts the gun can fire in a single turn.

**Clip:** The maximum number of bullets the gun can hold. Some guns can hold a full clip with a round already chambered; this capacity is denoted by "+1".

**Conceal:** See the Melee Weapons chart.

\*The gun is capable of full auto, three-round bursts, and sprays.

\*\*Long and short bows take an automatic action to nock and draw another arrow; crossbows require two automatic actions for reloading.

Perception rating. A scope will add two additional dice to the pool. This bonus applies to only one shot at a time, though. A character with a scope and a Perception rating of 3 could spend three turns aiming and get an additional five dice to the roll (two for the scope and three for aiming). To get the bonus again, he must spend another three turns aiming.

A character must have Firearms 1 to receive this benefit.

• **Automatic Fire:** Some firearms allow the user to empty an entire clip in a matter of seconds. Firing a gun on full-auto adds 10 dice to the attack roll, but doing so raises the difficulty by two as the recoil throws the character's aim off. This attack is permissible only if the clip is at least half full to begin with. After this attack, of course, the clip is completely empty.

A character may also choose to spray an area instead of emptying a clip at one target. The system is the same as for

fully automatic fire, except that successes are distributed evenly among all targets. If the character fires at more targets than the player rolls successes, the Storyteller chooses which targets are hit.

• **Bows:** While werewolves tend to see guns as jerky, graceless, Weaver-tools, many tribes use bows in combat and make them into fetishes. Using a bow requires the character to purchase the Archery Skill (a secondary Skill). The player rolls Dexterity + Archery to fire a bow; difficulties for various types of bows are listed on the Ranged Weapons chart. A player whose character does not have the Archery Skill may roll Dexterity + Athletics, but every such roll has a +1 difficulty penalty.

At close range, an arrow from a short bow hits as hard as a small-caliber bullet, and bows are silent, so their combat potential is obvious. Another common use for bows is driving

a sharp wooden shaft into a vampire's heart. To do so, the player must roll five successes to hit the heart, and at least three health levels of damage must be inflicted after soak.

Bows, however, have two main problems. One is that it takes an action (automatic) to nock and draw an arrow, whereas it takes two automatic actions to reload a crossbow. The other problem is that if the player botches the attack roll, the bowstring snaps. If the character happens to have a spare bowstring, he can repair the bow with a Wits + Archery roll (or a Wits + Crafts roll with a +1 difficulty penalty). If not, the bow is just a stick until the character replaces the string.

- **Cover:** When you're the only one with a gun, it is acceptable to stand in plain sight and fire. When engaged in a true firefight, however, finding cover is an intelligent idea. Cover impedes an opponent's attempts to shoot at a character, but it also impedes that character's ability to return fire. Basic cover types and the modifiers they impose on an attacker's difficulty follow. These modifiers are also imposed on return fire, albeit to a lesser degree. A character returning fire subtracts one from these modifiers. Therefore, a character returning fire from behind a wall adds one to his difficulty, while a character lying prone suffers no impediment.

Cover	Difficulty
Lying Flat	+1
Behind Wall	+2
Only Head exposed	+3

- **Movement:** Shooting at a target that is moving faster than a walk, or while moving faster than a walk oneself, raises the difficulty by one.

- **Multiple Shots:** A player must take a multiple action or spend Rage to fire multiple shots in a turn. Three-round bursts and automatic fire each count as one "shot" for this purpose. The maximum number of shots that may be fired per turn is equal to the gun's rate of fire (listed on the chart).

- **Range:** Each weapon on the Ranged Weapons chart has a range listed for it. This distance is the weapon's medium range; the difficulty is considered 6 within this range. A weapon may be fired at a target twice as far away, but doing so raises the difficulty to 8. If the target is within two yards, however, the range is considered point-blank, and the difficulty drops to 4.

- **Reloading:** A gun that takes a clip can be reloaded quickly in combat, assuming that the character has a spare clip ready. The gun can be reloaded and fire in the same turn. The player simply loses two dice from her attack pool to make up for the time spent reloading.

A revolver can be reloaded thus only with a speedloader. If the character must reload a revolver manually, doing so takes the full turn and her complete concentration, but it may be performed without a roll if the character has at least one dot in Firearms. Reloading a clip, (actually putting bullets into the clip) however, requires a Dexterity + Firearms roll (difficulty 6). Only one success is necessary, but doing so takes the entire turn.

- **Targeting:** Aiming for a specific area (the head, the hand, the chest) raises the difficulty by two. Any special effects such a shot has are up to the Storyteller.

- **Three-Round Burst:** Some weapons are capable of firing three bullets every time the character pulls the trigger. Doing so in combat adds three dice to the attack roll, but it raises the difficulty by one. Obviously, firing at this rate also empties three bullets from the clip. See the Ranged Weapons chart for which guns are capable of firing a three-round burst.

- **Thrown Weapon:** While the Garou Nation frowns upon the use of guns, thrown weapons are a part of almost every culture. From the Asian shuriken to the Indian *chakram* to the Australian boomerang — and even including found objects such as rocks and small vehicles — some Garou prefer to soften up their opposition with such attacks before charging into the fray. The roll to use a thrown weapon is Dexterity + Athletics, not Melee. The difficulty is usually 6, depending on the size and distance of the target. If the weapon being used is not meant to be thrown (most knives meant for use in close combat are not balanced for throwing, and *vice versa*) the Storyteller should increase the difficulty by at least one. Damage ratings for such weapons can be found on the Thrown Weapons chart.

The range at which a weapon can be thrown accurately and with enough force to do any damage depends on the weight of the weapon and the strength of the thrower. The Storyteller may choose to modify both difficulty and damage dice if she feels that character is outside of the weapon's effective range.

Thrown Weapons			
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage/Type	Conceal
Knife	6	Strength/L	P
Shuriken	7	3/L	P
Stone	5	Strength/B	varies
Spear	6	Strength+1/L	N

## Close Combat

This section breaks down into three parts. *Complications* details some basic maneuvers that any Garou can perform, as well as factors that may come into play in a brawl or melee combat. *Special Maneuvers* details some fighting tactics available only to Garou with the proper know-how. *Pack Tactics* reveals some maneuvers that only a pack can perform.

Maneuvers in all three sections include notations detailing in which forms Garou may use them, as well as the difficulties of the maneuvers, the damage they cause and how many actions they require. If a maneuver requires more than one action, the attacker must either split her dice pool or spend a Rage point to complete the maneuver. Either way, the entire maneuver takes place during the character's first action for the turn.

### Complications

- **Bite:** Probably the most basic attack form of all, the Garou simply sinks his fangs into his victim. Extra damage

due to bite placement (jugular, sensitive tissue, etc.) is up to the Storyteller. A bite usually causes aggravated wounds.

**Usable by:** Crinos-Lupus (optionally, a werewolf in Glabro might bite at difficulty 8 and Strength -1 damage)

**Roll:** Dexterity + Brawl      **Difficulty:** 5

**Damage:** Strength +1      **Actions:** 1

• **Body Tackle:** This dangerous maneuver may potentially damage the attacker more than his opponent. The attacker runs at full speed toward his opponent, hopefully building enough momentum to knock said opponent to the ground. Both combatants must succeed in Dexterity + Athletics rolls (difficulty 6 for the attacker, 6 + attacker's successes for the target) or be knocked to the ground.

If the attack roll botches, one of two things happens. The attacker either trips and falls, or he runs headlong into his target and bounces off, leaving his target unharmed but receiving his target's Stamina in damage dice.

All damage caused by this attack is considered bashing. If the attack is used by a Garou in Crinos or Hispo against an unprotected human being, the damage might be considered lethal instead (Storyteller's discretion).

**Usable By:** Any form

**Roll:** Dexterity + Brawl      **Difficulty:** 7

**Damage:** Strength      **Actions:** 1

• **Claw:** Another simple, commonly used attack, a claw strike simply consists of the Garou rending an opponent with her talons. This attack inflicts aggravated wounds in Crinos and Hispo form. While a werewolf's fingernails are somewhat long and sharp in Glabro and Lupus form, they are still too weak to inflict any true damage.

**Usable By:** Crinos-Hispo

**Roll:** Dexterity + Brawl      **Difficulty:** 6

**Damage:** Strength +1      **Actions:** 1

• **Disarm:** Similar to a parry, the character attempts to use a weapon to remove his opponent's weapon. The attacker rolls to attack as usual, but with a +1 difficulty penalty. If the attacker's successes equal or exceed his opponent's Strength score, his opponent drops his weapon. If the attacker does not score enough successes, he still inflicts damage as usual. A botch on this roll usually means that the attacker has dropped his weapon.

It is possible, though much more difficult, to perform this maneuver without a weapon. In that case, the roll is Dexterity + Brawl, the difficulty is 8, and the character must remove a die from her attack pool as though moving within range of an opponent with a longer weapon.

**Usable By:** Homid-Crinos

**Roll:** Dexterity + Melee      **Difficulty:** +1

**Damage:** Special      **Actions:** 1

• **Flank and Rear Attacks:** Attacking an opponent's flank reduces the difficulty by one. Attacking from the rear reduces the attacker's difficulty by two.

• **Grapple:** Grappling is the act of seizing and holding an opponent with the intent to immobilize or harm him. A grappling attack intended to damage an opponent is called a clinch; an attack meant to immobilize is called a hold.

Either attack begins with the attacker succeeding in a Strength + Brawl roll. Success indicates that the attacker has grappled his opponent. If the attack is a clinch, the attacker may inflict damage equal to his Strength beginning the turn after he begins the grapple. If the attack is a hold, the target is held until his next action.

When a character is on the receiving end of a grapple, she has two options. The first is to escape, which requires a resisted Strength + Brawl roll. At the Storyteller's option, defenders may roll Dexterity instead of Strength to escape a clinch or hold. If the attacker wins, the grapple continues. If the defender wins, she pulls free. The other option is to reverse the hold. Doing so requires the same roll as escaping, but to reverse the hold successfully, the defender must beat her attacker by at least two successes.

*Example: Two Garou packmates, Fangs-Bite-Like-Winter and Walks-the-Balanced-Blade, are wrestling playfully. Fangs succeeds in grappling Walks and growls for him to submit. Walks has other ideas, and he attempts to reverse the hold.*

*Both players roll their characters' Strength + Brawl dice pools. Fangs' player scores three successes; Walks' player scores four. Although Walks' player got more successes, he needed at least five (two more than Fangs' total) to reverse the hold successfully. The match continues with Fangs still in control.*

**Usable By:** Homid-Crinos

**Roll:** Strength + Brawl      **Difficulty:** 6

**Damage:** Strength or none      **Actions:** 1

• **Kick:** Kick attacks vary in style from a swift boot to the groin to elaborate aerial spins. The Storyteller should feel free to adjust damage and difficulty to compensate for the complexity of the maneuver. The system presented here assumes a straightforward kick attack.

Damage from a kick is usually considered bashing, although a Garou in Crinos form kicking a normal human being might do lethal damage.

**Usable By:** Homid-Crinos

**Roll:** Dexterity + Brawl      **Difficulty:** 7

**Damage:** Strength +1      **Actions:** 1

• **Punch:** Like kicks, punches can be as simple as a jab to the face or as impressive as a double-fisted blow that knocks an opponent to ground. The Storyteller may decide to add extra damage dice and/or modify the attacker's difficulty for special punch attacks such as haymakers, jabs or hooks.

Punch damage is normally bashing, but again, a Crinos-form Garou punching a human might do lethal damage. Werewolves are just that strong!

**Usable By:** Homid-Crinos

**Roll:** Dexterity + Brawl      **Difficulty:** 6

**Damage:** Strength      **Actions:** 1

### Melee Weapons

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage/Type	Conceal
Sap	4	Strength/B	P
Chain	5**	Strength/B	J
Staff	6	Strength+1/B	N
Mace	6	Strength+2/L	N
Knife	4	Strength/L	P
Club	5	Strength+1/B	T
Sword	6	Strength+2/L	T
Axe	7	Strength+3/L	N
Polearm	7	Strength+3/L	N
Klaive*	6	Strength+2/A	J
Grand Klaive*	7	Strength+3/A	T

**Difficulty:** The normal difficulty at which the weapon is used.

**Damage:** The number of damage dice rolled for the weapon.

**Type:** B = Bashing L = Lethal A = Aggravated

**Conceal:** P = Pocket, J = Jacket, T = Trenchcoat, N = N/A

\*These weapons are silver and inflict unsoakable damage to Garou.

\*\*A chain may be used to entangle an opponent's limb at +1 difficulty.

- **Sweep:** A character uses her legs or a weapon to sweep an opponent's legs out from under her. Only certain weapons can be used this way, of course. Because their arms are disproportionately long, werewolves in Crinos form may sweep a smaller opponent using their arms instead of their legs. Likewise, a Garou can try to trip up a foe while in Hispo or Lupus form, although doing so raises the difficulty by one.

A sweep does no damage, but it does leave an opponent prone if successful.

**Usable By:** All forms

**Roll:** Dexterity + Brawl      **Difficulty:** 8

**Damage:** None      **Actions:** 1

- **Weapon Length:** A character armed with a knife facing one armed with a sword is at a distinct disadvantage, simply because she must dart inside her opponent's reach in order to damage her. When facing an opponent armed with an appreciably long weapon, the character with the shorter weapon loses one die from her attack pool to reflect getting close enough to hit her opponent.

- **Weapon Strike:** The character attacks with a weapon, be it a klaive, a club, a sword, a length of chain or a rock. Damage, damage type and difficulties for various weapons are listed on the Melee Weapons chart. The roll for such attacks is Dexterity + Melee.

### Special Maneuvers

The following maneuvers are not innate to the Garou; they must be learned. Each character may begin the game

knowing one of these special maneuvers; picking up others requires finding teachers, undergoing training and so on in the course of the game.

Players may wish to create new special maneuvers for their characters. The systems for any new maneuvers are up to the Storyteller.

- **Evasive Action:** Similar to a dodge, evading an opponent involving leaping, twirling and generally staying one step ahead of him. This maneuver inflicts no damage, but each success scored subtracts one success from an opponent's attack roll. If the evading character's player scores more successes than the attacker, not only does the attack miss, but the evading character has moved into a good position to counterattack. The evading character receives a -1 difficulty bonus to attack on his next turn, assuming he acts first.

Unlike a dodge, a character cannot abort to an evasive action. It must be her declared action.

**Usable By:** All forms

**Roll:** Wits + Dodge      **Difficulty:** 6

**Damage:** None      **Actions:** 1

- **Hamstring:** With this vicious attack, the werewolf sinks his fangs into his target's lower leg and rips apart the tendons. If successful, the attack will hamper quadrupedal foes severely and cripple bipedal ones (halve the movement rates of quadrupedal foes). This attack is also possible to perform with claws, although doing so feels less natural.

Damage caused by this attack is aggravated. Typically, a lone werewolf uses this maneuver to slow an opponent down until her pack can join the fray.

**Usable By:** Crinos-Lupus

**Roll:** Dexterity + Brawl      **Difficulty:** 8

**Damage:** Strength + Cripple      **Actions:** 1

- **Jaw Lock:** The Garou clenches his jaws onto a target's neck, not to kill, but to immobilize. This attack can be performed only from behind or atop an opponent, so that the attacker can use his full body weight to best advantage. The attacker must first succeed in a bite maneuver with a +1 difficulty penalty. Instead of rolling for damage, however, the attacker and defender must both make a resisted Strength + Athletics roll. If the attacker wins, he forces his target to the ground and holds him there. If the attacker loses, he fails to immobilize his target, but he may inflict bite damage as usual.

The immobilized character may attempt to escape on his next action. His player must roll Strength + Brawl (difficulty of his opponent's Brawl +4) in a resisted roll against the attacker's Strength + Brawl (difficulty of the defender's Brawl +2). If the defender fails, he remains immobilized. He escapes if he matches the attacker's successes, but he takes damage equal to the attacker's successes (which he may soak). If he scores more successes than the attacker, he escapes without further harm.

**Example:** The "playful" wrestling match between Fangs-Bite-Like-Winter and Walks-the-Balanced-Blade has gotten much less playful. Tired of his opponent's struggles (and worried that



he might soon be beaten), Fangs seizes Walks in a jaw lock. Walks dislikes this turn of events and attempts to escape.

Both players roll their characters' Strength + Brawl. Both characters have Brawl ratings of four, so Fangs has a difficulty of 6 (Walks' Brawl + 2) and Walks has a difficulty of 8 (Fangs' Brawl + 4). Both players roll three successes. Walks escapes, but he must soak three health levels of aggravated damage. He does so easily and decides to end the sparring match before it gets any worse.

**Usable By:** Crinos-Lupus

**Roll:** Dexterity + Brawl

**Difficulty:** 6

**Damage:** None

**Actions:** 1

• **Leaping Rake:** A fighting maneuver for somewhat more graceful and lithe Garou, the leaping rake involves jumping past an opponent and slashing him on the way by. If successful, the maneuver lands the Garou out of range of his opponent.

The Storyteller must first check how many successes the player needs on a Dexterity + Athletics roll (difficulty 3; distances are listed on the Jumping chart). If the player fails to score enough successes to carry his character past or to his opponent, he lands wherever the chart indicates, and he may still use his Rage action, at a +1 difficulty penalty. If she succeeds, she must then roll the character's Dexterity + Brawl for the claw attack. If the claw attack fails, the character still lands where she planned.

This attack causes aggravated wounds. It can also be attempted using a punch (doing bashing damage) or with a weapon (doing damage according to the weapon, and making the roll Dexterity + Melee).

Characters must normally be in Crinos form to perform this maneuver, but Glabro also works if the character is punching or using a weapon. A character using the Gift: Hare's Leap could conceivably even use it in Homid form.

**Usable By:** Glabro-Crinos

**Roll:** Dexterity + Athletics/ Dexterity + Brawl

**Difficulty:** 8

**Damage:** Strength +1

**Actions:** 2

• **Taunt:** The Garou cavorts about her opponent, growling, snarling and hurling insults. This tactic may alarm or distract the target to the point that she hesitates, giving the Garou an edge. For every two successes the player rolls on a Manipulation + Intimidation (for non-Garou opponents) or Expression (for other Garou), the opponent loses one die from his next action.

This maneuver may be used by a pack (see *Pack Tactics*). If so, the effects are cumulative, which means that an opponent's dice pool can be reduced to nothing. If so, he can take no action except dodging.

A Garou subjected to this maneuver, especially by a pack, may frenzy. A Rage roll must be made, and the difficulty decreases by one if a pack is performing the taunt).

**Usable By:** All forms

**Roll:** Manipulation + Expression/Intimidation

**Difficulty:** Opponent's Wits + 4

**Damage:** None **Actions:** 1

## Pack Tactics

The following maneuvers can be performed only by a pack of werewolves or by members of the same pack. A spiritual bond must exist between the participants (provided by the pack's totem) in order for the Garou to coordinate their actions enough to make these attacks work properly.

A pack can know only a number of pack maneuvers equal to the lowest Gnosis score in the pack. For example, if a pack includes two members with Gnosis ratings of 5, one with a rating of 7, one with a rating of 4 and one with a rating of 1, the pack knows only one pack tactic. *This restriction applies even if the whole pack is not necessary to perform the maneuver. The greater the Gnosis of the pack, the more "in tune" they are with their totem and each other.*

The descriptions of these maneuvers contain notations as to how many Garou are necessary to perform the maneuver and whether it is possible to do so alone.

The maneuvers presented here only scratch the surface of what a creative pack (not to mention a creative group of players) will dream up. A really original and effective pack tactic should be worth a point of Glory and/or Wisdom.

- **Fur Gnarl:** Usually performed by two Garou in rapid succession, this attack consists of the first packmate stripping away the natural protection (or even artificial armor) of an opponent, leaving a vulnerable spot for the next packmate to attack.

The first attacker rolls Dexterity + Brawl for a claw attack, shredding the opponent's fur or armor and hopefully taking a good chunk of it along (the difficulty on the roll is 7). For every two damage successes rolled (before soak), the target loses a die from soak rolls for that area. The next packmate may then attack as usual, although his difficulty increases by two because he must target the same area that the first attacker hit. This penalty lasts until the target can heal the damage or get new armor.

Example: Not long after Fangs and Walks' little wrestling match, they find themselves besieged by a much more deadly threat — a chitinous, clawed beast from some Wyrmish spawning pit. Fangs shoots a look at Walks, who nods and launches himself at the beast to execute a fur gnarl. (Granted, the beast doesn't exactly have fur, but the same principle applies.)

Walks' attack strikes true, and his player rolls six successes for damage! Although the creature soaks most of this damage, the shell is now stripped from a portion of its left flank. When Fangs attacks, he will target this area (at a +1 difficulty penalty). If he succeeds, the creature will soak at a three-die penalty.

**Packmates Required:** 2

**Performable Alone?:** Yes

- **Harrying:** Wolves do not attack prey outright, even in packs. Instead, they chase and harass their



intended meal until it collapses from exhaustion. Werewolves use a similar method to attack and confuse enemies.

Harrying requires at least four Garou: one in front of the victim, one in back and one to each side. The rearmost Garou chases the prey either to one of the Garou on the side or to the lead Garou. The rearmost stalker then reassumes his position and the new stalker surprises the prey, growling and snapping, and chases him toward one of the other Garou, and so on until the victim is exhausted. A human victim will lose a Willpower point each time he is "handed off" to another werewolf.

The system for harrying is as follows: Make a Dexterity + Athletics roll (difficulty 5) for both the chasing Garou and the prey. If the Garou scores more successes, he chases the victim successfully to another Garou. Generally, the Garou must win five such tests to force the victim close enough to pass him off.

If, however, the prey scores more successes, he has outdistanced his attacker, and he may attempt to escape. Make the same rolls again, but this time the Garou's player adds the prey's excess successes to her difficulty. For example, if the Garou's player rolled one success on the first harrying roll and the Storyteller rolled five for the prey, the Garou's player adds four to her difficulty, making it 9. The Garou must exceed the prey's successes — at the adjusted difficulty — in order to catch up with the prey and begin steering him toward the waiting hunters. If the prey escapes, the Garou must resort to tracking to find the prey.

If the prey chooses to stand and fight, normal combat begins. Unlike normal wolves, werewolves will not back down from their prey. It's their nature to fight, not flee.

Harrying can be performed in any quadrupedal form. Some tribes, notably the Get of Fenris and the Shadow Lords, use this method to kidnap cubs from their human or wolf families. They wear the pup down to exhaustion, which makes her much easier to capture and transport to her new home.

**Packmates Required:** 4 **Performable Alone:** No

- **Savage:** Also called a "dogpile" by the Bone Gnawers, this brutal attack requires at least three packmates, although it can involve five or more for larger opponents. This tactic involves one werewolf hurling herself at an opponent to knock him to the ground, whereupon the rest of the pack rushes him in Lpus or Hispo form to bite him while he's down.

The system is simple; the first Garou executes a body tackle or sweep attack as usual. Then, his packmates surround the fallen foe and bite whatever part of him they can reach. This attack can slay most enemies in seconds, but even opponents who are not killed outright must roll Strength + Athletics (difficulty 4 + 1 for each Garou involved, maximum 10) to stand up.

**Packmates Required:** 3 **Performable Alone:** No

- **Wishbone:** This maneuver consists of one or more Garou grabbing an opponent's extremities and pulling him apart. It's not very subtle, true, but it's a superb way to get an uncooperative foe to talk or to scare the hell out of any remaining enemies.

Each player must roll his character's Dexterity + Brawl to grab an extremity. The difficulty begins at 6 and drops by one for each Garou thereafter (as the opponent's ability to dodge is gradually reduced). After all possible extremities are restrained, each player rolls Strength for damage. This damage is considered lethal. The Garou involved may choose to either pull slowly as a torture method (in which case the damage is considered bashing) or to simply give a quick jerk, maximizing damage. If any one Garou inflicts more than three health levels of damage after soak, the extremity is broken or severed (Storyteller's discretion).

This maneuver is possible to perform in Lpus or Hispo; it just requires knocking the victim down first.

**Packmates Required:** 2+ **Performable Alone:** No

### *Example of Play:*

[The players have gathered for another session of Werewolf. Matt is the Storyteller. Halle plays Vevila Sings-of-Magic, Fianna Galliard and pack alpha, who is still trying to cope with this strange country and the odd traditions of its Garou. Brian plays Dane Praised-of-Fenris, the metis Get of Fenris Ahroun who sees recurring visions about his tribe's role in the War of Rage and wishes to atone. Ryan plays Stone-Beast, a Silent Strider Ragabash on the run from his past in Cairo. Julie plays Red Shadow, a very young Red Talon who is still getting used to the role of Philodox.

[During the last session, the pack's Theurge disappeared mysteriously after a moot. (In real life, the player is out of town for the week, but Matt sees no reason not to use that as a story hook). As the youngest members of the sept, the pack decides to try and track him down. The elders are harsh, and losing a packmate probably carries a serious loss of Wisdom!]

The gibbous moon rises, bloated and lazy, over the tree-line. Vevila has never felt so out-of-place. Her homeland is thousands of miles away, and after only a short month as pack alpha, she has lost a packmate! She pads along in Lpus form to the pack's accustomed meeting place and finds Dane already there, waiting impatiently in Crinos.

"Are you mad, Dane? Wearing the war-form like this?" She knows this conversation is wasted breath, but she can't help feel frustrated. Dane simply grunts and hefts his mighty hammer to his shoulder.

"He's mad. We knew that. He's the Ahroun." Stone-Beast emerges from the brush. Vevila smiles inwardly — as the only other homid in the pack, she identifies with him. They have both learned, however, that Lpus form is the preferred guise to wear, both out of respect for Owl — the caern's totem — and out of practicality. "He's mad, I'm funny, Red's confused, you're a flirt, and Wise-to-Many is—"

"Lost," growls the Red Talon, shaking her coat as she follows Stone-Beast into the clearing.

[Matt lets the players discuss the matter on their own for a while. They entertain possibilities and run through what happened during the moot to see if they can remember where the Theurge might have gone. Finally, they decide to contact the pack's totem, Raccoon (a totem of Cunning) to ask if he's seen the wayward Theurge.

[Halle reminds Matt that since the gibbous moon is out, Vevila regains her Rage. Matt nods, and Halle makes sure that Vevila's Rage pool is full.]

*The problem, of course, Vevila thinks as the pack looks to her, is that I don't have any idea how to summon spirits. Only the bloody Theurge could do that! Although... A wolfish smile crosses her lips. Concentrating, she reaches out with her mind for the mischievous little spirit to which her pack is dedicated.*

[Halle asks Matt if it is possible to use the Gift: Mindspeak to contact the pack's totem spirit, since no one there knows the Rite of Summoning. "Why not?" Matt says. Halle spends one Willpower point for Vevila.]

"Yes?" asks a small, disembodied voice in Vevila's head.

"Good evening, friend Raccoon," Vevila asks. "We've lost our Theurge. Have you seen him?"

"Goodness, that was careless of you," the spirit chatters playfully. "Where was the last place you saw him? Have you tried under the cushions?"

[During the conversation with Raccoon, Matt takes Halle quietly aside, but within view of the other players. As they speak, Matt notices Brian growing impatient, so he asks him to give Dane a temporary Rage point.]

In spite of herself, Vevila laughs. Dane growls, "What's so funny, alpha?" but she doesn't hear. "We last saw him at the moot. He was running north during the revel, but Blood Rain said he saw him by the lake later."

"Blood Rain said that?" The raccoon sounds uncharacteristically worried.

"Aye, why?"

Dane, who has been pacing anxiously, finally bursts. "WHAT'S GOING ON, DAMN IT? WHERE'S THE THEURGE?" Startled, Vevila glances up... and loses the connection to the spirit.

[Brian, playing Dane, decides that he has had enough waiting. Matt reasons that his little outburst might disrupt the Gift, asks Halle to roll Wits (four dice) + Alertness (two dice) to remain connected. He sets the difficulty at 6, Halle rolls a 2, 3, 3, 4, 8 and 1. Her 1 cancels her only success. She fails the roll and loses the connection to Raccoon.]

"Mind your bloody temper, Dane! I'd almost found out where he was!" Vevila's hackles rise, and she snarls at the Get, who drops his hammer and bares his teeth. Stone-Beast backs up in anticipation of the challenge that's surely forthcoming.

"Not now," the Red Talon barks. She speaks only two words, but firmly, and the others know what she means. The Litany states that the leader cannot be challenged during wartime. Dane snorts and snatches up his hammer, and Vevila turns to the pack.

"I think we have a place to start. Raccoon seemed surprised that Blood Rain said anything about our Theurge. Perhaps we should go and speak with him."

"Blood Rain, the big bad Red Talon Ahroun?" Stone-Beast rolls over on his back.

"Show respect," Red Shadow snarls.

"Pardon me," Stone-Beast corrects himself, "Red Talon Adren."

[The players engage in a bit of aggressive roleplaying. Halle and Brian both decide that Red Shadow's admonition cools their characters down enough to focus on matter at hand. The characters go trudging off to find Blood Rain.

[Finding the Red Talon takes a bit of doing, however, since he and his pack are often scouring the surrounding forests for human infestation. Matt asks Julie to roll Intelligence + Alertness to recall where he said they'd be tonight. Julie rolls four dice (two in each Trait) against a difficulty of 6. She rolls a 6, 6, 7 and 10 — four successes! Red Shadow trots off into the forest, and the pack follows her.]

Following Red Shadow's lead, the pack hurries through the forest. Vevila keeps close behind the Philodox, still rather worried about Dane. *Great Gaia, I almost hope we run into trouble tonight, she thinks, just so he can work through some Rage.* She glances at the gibbous moon and feels her own Rage surge through her again. *Thank Gaia Red Shadow stopped that foolishness when she did....*

Red Shadow stops abruptly, her hackles raised. The rich tang of fresh blood is in the air, along with wood smoke. The Red Talon growls to the pack alpha, asking to be allowed to go ahead to check on the situation. Vevila nods, and Red Shadow slinks off.

The clearing ahead is awash with carnage. At least three human bodies lie in pieces about what was once a campsite. A tiny wisp of smoke rises from a circle of stone. This is the way humans eat, Red Shadow remembers, because they are too weak to catch and eat their prey raw. Red Shadow sniffs at the campsite cautiously. While she has no love for humans, something is not right. Calling on a Gift, she sniffs again and growls softly. The blood has a sweet, syrupy quality to it — city folk, then. But most of the

mutilation took place after the humans were killed — why mangle already dead foes?

[Matt tells Julie what her character can perceive easily. Julie, figuring there must be more to this, states that she will spend a Gnosis point and activate Red Shadow's Heightened Senses Gift. Matt nods and informs Julie that Red Shadow senses a time discrepancy between when the humans were killed and when they were torn to pieces.]

Red Shadow barks, calling the others. Vevila and Stone-Beast enter the clearing, while Dane — clinging stubbornly to his natural Crinos form — waits in the forest.

"They were killed, but torn apart later," Red Shadow says. "And their blood smells strange."

"This one was disemboweled," Stone-Beast calls from across the clearing. "Intestines for everyone!"

"Knock it off, Ammon," snaps Vevila. The human name sounds odd in the Garou-tongue. "Do you smell other Garou? Either of you?"

Stone-Beast and Red Shadow sniff about the bodies and clearing for signs of other Garou. Vevila stares at what resembles a torso, wondering who these people were, why they were so far out in the forest? Why did they have to die? Why didn't the Red Talons choose their battles? And... what was that smell in the air? Sweet, cloying, yet somehow repugnant. Carefully, Vevila licks the bloodied torso, trying to taste what Red Shadow mentioned. All too soon, she does.

[Ryan's and Julie's characters start sniffing around for other Garou. Matt asks them both roll Perception + Primal Urge. The difficulty would normally be 10 (the Garou that were here used Gifts to mask their scents) but because the Garou are in Lupus form, their difficulty drops to 8. Also, Red Shadow's Gift is still active, so Julie's difficulty is 7, and she gains an extra die of Primal-Urge for the roll. Julie rolls, but she scores no successes; Ryan manages one. Matt informs him that a Garou was here, but who it was or how long ago remains a mystery.

[Meanwhile, Vevila unwisely licks the blood on a body. Halle, of course, does not know that the blood is poisoned, and she looks rather worried when Matt smiles and asks her to roll Stamina against a difficulty of 8. No fool, Halle states that Vevila will activate her Resist Toxin Gift. Halle rolls Stamina (2 + 2 more for being in Lupus form) + Survival (1 die) against difficulty 6 and succeeds. Therefore, she adds three dice to her Stamina roll to resist the poison, for a total of seven dice. This roll comes up 3, 3, 2, 7, 8, 9 and 1 — only one success. Matt describes the effects to the players.]

Vevila backs away from the body, sneezing and coughing. The other Garou look on in alarm as she chokes on the blood, her long tongue turning a sickly shade of purple. The fit passes quickly, and she spits the word "Poison!"

"There ya go," says Stone-Beast, "These folks were poisoned, and the Talons found them dead, and figured, 'Well, shit, we're too late. Let's just rip 'em up.'"

"Why?" Red Shadow snarls.

"Joke," replies Stone-Beast. "Anyway, there was at least one Garou here, but I don't know how long ago. Trail's faint."

"I'll check the Umbra," Dane calls from the brush. He vanishes before Vevila can stop him.

[Tired of waiting, Brian says that Dane will step sideways, using the moonlight's reflection in the spilled blood. Brian rolls Dane's Gnosis (four dice) against a difficulty of 6 (Matt rules the Gauntlet to be slightly thicker than usual here, because of the Wyrmish toxins used to kill these people), minus one for using a reflective surface, for a total of 5. Brian rolls a 6, 6, 7 and 4 — three successes, just enough to reach the Umbra instantly.]

If the scene in the physical world was gory, it's downright gut-churning in the Umbra, even for a Get Ahroun. The entire place is saturated in blood and gore, but only one intact corpse remains. The man's disemboweled body lies across the ground, his face contorted in a hideous, pained grimace. "No way to die," Dane growls. He stares at the man. Something about this looks familiar, but not from this life. He sighs. Calling upon his ancestors for help would surely provide information, but he has no desire to be tortured with visions of the slaughter of the War of Rage. Finally, though, he reaches back into time, calling for guidance...

[Brian says that Dane will use his Ancestors Background to learn more about this strange scene. Matt agrees, and Brian rolls Dane's Ancestors rating (three dice) against difficulty 8 and manages two successes. This result is enough to recognize what has happened, so Matt informs Brian.]

It begins as it always does; a gust of cold air and a whisper in his mind. "What would you know, pup?" He recognizes the voice: He has contacted Blizzard's Howl, a mighty Get Theruge.

"What killed these humans, Howl-rhya?"

"Wyrmspawn killed them, pup, but that isn't the question. The question is..."

Dane finishes the sentence. "Why?"

"Yes. You have seen this before, although not through your young eyes. Do you remember?"

Dane furrows his massive brow and thinks. And then the vision unfolds: A huge, disgustingly twisted Crinos tears apart the entrails of a bear. The Wyrmish Garou had not killed the bear, Dane knew, and he felt a shameful lurch in his stomach. But that wasn't the important thing now, what was important was that the Black Spiral Dancer was using the body for—

"Divination," Dane says. Blizzard's Howl's presence fades away. These humans, Dane realized, were poisoned, then butchered to read the future.

And if the divination had been successful, might not the creature have foreseen the pack's arrival?

In the physical realm, Dane's supposition is quickly and brutally confirmed. As the pack continues its search, Red Shadow perks up suddenly. She begins to growl, but only for an instant. The ground bursts upward, and two Garou, twisted, blackened and covered in blood, stand slavering at the young pack. Vevila and Stone-Beast glance at each other and call upon their Rage to change to Crinos. The Black Spiral Dancers waste no time attacking....

[Matt allows Julie to roll Perception + Alertness to feel the tremors that precede the ambush. She rolls only one success, so Matt gives her the warning that the ground is trembling slightly. Julie states that Red Shadow growls a warning, and the other Garou glance over to see the Dancers make their appearance.]

[Matt asks for initiative rolls for all present. Since two pack members are absent, and since the attack is a surprise, Matt disallows group initiative for the pack. Everyone totals their Dexterity and Wits and adds the result of a one-die roll. Halle rolls an 8 and adds it to (Dexterity 4 + Wits 4). Ryan rolls a 5 and adds it to (Dexterity 5 + Wits 4). Julie rolls a 1 and adds it to (Dexterity 6 + Wits 3). Matt rolls a 6 for the Dancers, and he decides that they both have Dexterity + Wits totals of 6. So, the order of combat is Vevila (16), Stone-Beast (14), the Dancers (12) and then Red Shadow (10). Brian states that Dane will step sideways, and he rolls Gnosis again, this time achieving only two successes. Matt feels forgiving, however, and he rules that Dane will appear at the end of this turn and act last on the next turn. Matt also decides that all characters will keep their initiative rolls for the entire combat.]

[The players declare their characters' actions. Julie decides she will change to Crinos form, but she does not want to spend Rage to do so. Red Shadow's action, then, will be shapeshifting. The Dancers both leap forward. One moves to claw Vevila; the other tries to bite Stone-Beast.

[Ryan declares that he will spend a Rage point to change Stone-Beast to Crinos form, and that he will claw the face of the Dancer attacking him. Halle decides that she will spend two Rage points: one to change Vevila to Crinos, and one to take an extra action this turn. She decides to dodge the Dancer's attack and counterattack with her claws.]

Vevila avoids the claws of the larger of the two Dancers deftly, then digs her own talons into his side as he howls in pain and Rage. Meanwhile, Stone-Beast swings his massive paw at the advancing Dancer's maw. This Dancer is quicker, however. It ducks under the blow and savages the Silent Strider's stomach. Stone-Beast's snout twists into a cry of pain as his lifeblood spurts over the gray pelt that gives him his name. A low roar behind him, however, tells him that help is on the way....

[Halle acts first, so she rolls Vevila's Dexterity (3 in Crinos form) + Dodge (3). Matt, meanwhile, rolls five dice for the Dancer's attack. Matt's difficulty is 6 for a claw attack, while he rules that Halle's is 7 to dodge (no cover, plus she just shifted to a much larger form). Matt rolls only one success, while Halle rolls three. She dodges the attack!]

[Ryan rolls Stone-Beast's Dexterity + Brawl (six dice) against a difficulty of 6. He rolls no successes, and his paw goes harmlessly over the Dancer's head. The Dancer bites his midsection. Matt rolls 5 dice for the Dancer's attack. They come up 5, 6, 6, 7 and 8—five successes! Matt adds four dice to the damage roll (one for each success above the first). Matt decides that the Dancer's Strength is 6 in Crinos form, plus one (bite attack) plus four (for the attack successes, which is 11 dice). Matt rolls six successes for damage, while Ryan rolls Stone-Beast's Stamina (6 in Crinos) to soak. He manages only two successes, so he takes four health levels of aggravated damage. On the Health chart, he is Wounded.]

[Meanwhile, Julie, her character unmolested, rolls Red Shadow's Stamina + Primal-Urge (eight dice) to change shape. She needs three successes at difficulty 6, and she rolls them easily. Red Shadow will begin the next turn in Crinos form.]

[Finally, Halle gets Vevila's Rage action. She rolls Vevila's Dexterity (3) plus Brawl (3) at difficulty 6. The Dancer has no more dice in his pool, so he can't dodge this attack. Halle scores only one success, but that's enough to damage it! Her Strength is 7 in Crinos form, so she inflicts eight dice of aggravated damage (7 + 1 for the claw attack). Halle rolls five successes, and Matt rolls two for the Dancer's soak. The Dancer is Injured on the Health chart, but he is by no means down.]

[Dane arrives at the end of the turn. He will act last during the next turn.]

Red Shadow leaps to Stone-Beast's aid, just as Dane appears from the Umbra, brandishing his hammer. Screaming a Get war-cry, he launches himself at the beast attacking the pack alpha....

[Initiative is recalculated for the wounded characters, and the players declare actions again. Matt makes a note that these twisted Garou will flee this turn. They're only bait, after all, and the real fun lies down the path a ways....]





Two months ago, Lucius told me that it was only the lucky ones who heard her voice. Two weeks ago, he was gone —plunged into the Web itself. I've no idea if he was listening to her at the time.

But I can guess.

Sometimes I catch myself looking at the back of my hand, opening and closing my fingers just so I can see the tendons move back and forth. It's like watching the inside of a piano, and I wind up wondering just how easy it would be to replace bone with titanium, to work out fiber muscles that could contract and expand just like the real thing. It's an idle curiosity, mind — nothing more than a technical question.

But if I could hear her voice, I wonder if it'd be full of questions like that? *Could flesh be replaced? Can defects be eliminated? Can life be made fair, equal — homogenous? Can the flaws of the world be controlled?*

Even asking myself those questions as an intellectual exercise, I almost hear them echoing in my head, in my soul. Echoes.

I've spent most of my natural life learning how to use the technology of the modern world — my world. And I get no small measure of crap about that when it comes time for cross-tribal councils. What I try to get across, though, is that I've also spent all my life learning when to use technology and when not to. I know my limitations, and they don't involve playing God — or Goddess, if you prefer. I'm not alone, either. There *are* some of us out here who believe in developing ethical considerations governing our use of new technology before we set out about using it.

I have to wonder, though. I have ethics. I understand them. But she doesn't. She's bigger than ethics, bigger than sentience. She's even bigger than the concept of "enemy" or "friend."

Where is she going, I wonder? What is she asking herself? And with nobody to offer any answers, what will she eventually decide?

# Chapter Seven: The Umbra

I feel the sounds of shadows moving through me. The scent of wet moss conjures images of great thick forests, undisturbed by the blight of man. It is quiet here. My ears desperately search for the small noises, hints of what lies not beyond, but within the shadows. It is a hungry search, a timeless search, to discover the unknown outside, in hopes of finding the unknown inside. The journey is the destination with no end. Happily ever after is just a fairy tale, but the hunt gives us meaning. Rainwater surrounds me, but it doesn't soak or linger. It just cleanses.

I am the stranger here. I feel clumsy and heavy, thick with substance and form, unable to be who I am. Though my muscles are strong and sleek, they feel like chains. In this place, I am like the fattened human who turns from his television and tries to run, but feels the years of neglect tear him down. I am unable to let go of my body, to let my soul... no, my spirit, roam free. My instincts howl, and I try to stop thinking, to just be... to release the caged passions that roil within my heart. To step beyond the confines of mortality, to enter the place of truth and to finally come home.

We are spirits of the hunt, embodiments of emotion, bearers of ancient meaning and truth. Our breaths are religion. Our actions are timeless. We fight today as we did millennia ago. We bleed as we did millennia ago. Today we are born anew. We are not tired; we are hungry. We are oppressed, and we rage. We live our passions. Our struggle is that of life itself. We keep meaning in the world. Now is the hour of the spirit, the moment of our dawn. We are lords of the unseen kingdom. This is our home, taken from us.

## *The Umbra*

We call the Umbra many things — the spirit world, the Middle World, the Velvet Shadow — and all our names for it reflect our reverence for this invisible half of the universe. It is the counterpart to the physical world, almost its twin. Though divided, the two once were joined. The spirit world still touches the material one, for were it to be gone completely, Earth could not sustain life. The Penumbra, the part of the spirit world that is closest to the physical one, reflects the material world closely. Powerful actions on the physical plane send emanations into the spirit world. The most powerful of these psychic emanations ripple past the Penumbra into the Near Umbra, where they can create whole Realms. Such Realms often form based on a single idea or collection of legends.

You will find the Umbra filled with spirits, some of which will be your allies, some your enemies. Spirits representing all aspects of Gaia's world live in the Umbra. Animals, trees, wind, fire, water — they all have form and life here. Supernatural forces like hideous monsters and living pollution have form here as well. These spirits lack physical substance, and they can usually enter the physical world only when someone binds them into a fetish or a living being. The more powerful spirits can will themselves into the physical Realm with great exertion and energy. The philosophers among our people see these spirits as concepts that have become self-aware.

Here, in this place, I know that the prophets and poets have touched their true souls. They have tried to show us far more than the reality humanity knows. The terrors and wonders of the

physical world are but shadows of those in this shadow world. Just beyond the grasp of the masses of people teeming on Gaia's surface lies an eerie landscape that is their loss, and our hope. Here, in the Umbra, we find our totem spirits and the horrors of the Wyrm's spawn. We find the spirits we hold sacred and the festering sores we must eradicate. Here we find Gaia's soul, and our own souls as well. The Umbra is not perfect. We are not truly at home here — we are still tied too much to our physical reality for that, but we know that the Umbra should be part of our home, and that we should be part of it.

I defy you to find the Umbra on a map. Some Glass Walkers have tried to draw diagrams, and some of those human magic-workers have tried to pin down its location, in order to map its entrances and exits. They cannot do it. The Umbra is a place of possibilities, not a place of structure and finite thought. The Umbra no longer joins with our material world, but rather lies next to it and through it. The vast Gauntlet divides the Umbra's spiritual energy from the physical world. This barrier maintains the split between the twin worlds of matter and soul. They yearn to reconnect, but harsh reality holds them apart. The spirit Realm pierces the Gauntlet at many points to reach into the physical, but the two cannot shatter the Gauntlet and unite. Few but we, the werewolves, Gaia's chosen children, can break through the Gauntlet and journey from Earth to Umbra. Unfortunately, many wicked beings from the spirit world can travel in the other direction.

If you can conceive of something, it can happen in the Umbra. If you can't conceive of it, it may still happen. The Umbra is beyond my small mind, and it's beyond yours as well. Gaia's mind and the hopes and fears and dreams and thoughts of every one of Her beings and spirits roam the Umbra. Some have form; some simply await the chance to spring into existence. In the Umbra, you can find all those things that have yet to be, but always have been. The Umbra is well beyond the comprehension of even Gaia's chosen, and I still have the task of explaining it to you. Since we are of the physical world as much as the spirit, we see the spiritual world in physical terms. We've defined "pocket dimensions," called Realms, within the Umbra, each governed by its own laws of reality. A Realm can look and behave like anything at any time. Some Realms even utterly defy all of Earth's physical laws. Most Garou are more comfortable in Realms that look and feel like the physical world, so these Realms are the ones we tend to visit. These Realms have ground, sky, foreground and horizon. While you travel in the Umbra, you will find that you can still use all of your formidable senses in the spirit world. Don't forget that you are part wolf. Take advantage of the keen senses Gaia gave you.

Human philosophers and poets are not alone in their speculations on the spirit world. All of our tribes have unique perspectives on the Umbra. Spirituality and the nature of the Umbra spark just as many discussions and arguments as human religions do. The Native American Garou tribes have a simple view of the spirit world. They have only glimpsed it from afar, and they believe it to be as it appears in their visions. The other Garou have more complex views. The Stargazers, for example, speculate that the spirit world is radically and unknowably different from what

it appears to be. They believe that this is because it is a world not of form and substance, but of fleeting impressions and potent symbols that are translated into sensory information by the Garou. The life experiences of the Umbral traveler literally shape her moment-to-moment awareness of the Umbra.

Although we feel a great sense of peace in the Umbra, we are not born into it. I remember well the first time I dared to step sideways. Terror greater than any I have experienced since gripped my body. I would rather have been surrounded by a swarm of *jomori* than gone into the Umbra at that instant. I don't know why. Perhaps it was the realization that I was about to leave the only world I had ever known. It was mercifully brief, for by the time I understood my terror, I found myself surrounded by the comforting sense of belonging that the Umbra grants us. That formless fear never quite leaves even the most seasoned Umbral traveler, but we endure that moment of panic gladly for the rewards we receive. Despite its overwhelming dangers, the Umbra refreshes us, heals our broken bodies and restores our souls. When we feel forsaken by humans, wolves and our fellow Garou, we can return to the source of our life and drink from a spring that never runs dry. The source of that spring lies deep within the endless spirit worlds of the Umbra.

## *The Tellurian*

All of reality comprises Gaia, but to werewolves, Gaia's name connotes the living parts of creation that must be protected from the ravages of marauders. We also call all of reality the Tellurian. The Tellurian includes the parts of the universe from which monsters issue — the parts of creation that are dark and evil. I realize we have created an apparent contradiction. But then, we Garou do not have the pervasive fear of paradox so common among humans.

Our various tribes and camps differ on many points about the Tellurian. The only thing on which we all agree is that we can never understand the whole of reality. We expect disagreements, and we know that we can only hope to know truth through direct unity with Gaia. And the only sure way to connect with Gaia is through the spirit world.

## *The Nature of the World*

Innumerable locales comprise the Tellurian: vast natural vistas, choking cityscapes, deep, infernal pits, indescribably chaotic Realms. Garou spirituality puts Gaia at the center of the universe, anchoring creation and emanating through the myriad Realms of the Tellurian.

Just as human civilizations have creation myths and stories to instruct their youth in the cosmology of the world, so do we Garou. The Umbra envelops the material Realm in something akin to Earth's atmosphere. Our cosmology begins with the three levels that compose the Umbra. The most familiar to us is the middle world that lies on the back of the great World Turtle. The Heavens lie above the Turtle and the Underworlds lie in his guts. Werewolves, along with all the humans and animals and other things of the physical world, live in the middle world on the Turtle's back. Our Theurges



say that the Heavens are an unknowable world visited by human wizards and inhabited by frightening astral beings. They say that worlds below are unfathomable crypts populated by specters and demons. These lands are not the lands of the Garou. Just as wolves do not live high in the clouds or deep in the mud, werewolves belong to the middle world.

The Theurges say the truth lies in the Umbra. We can know the Umbra. We can explore it and understand it. If we heal the problems in the spirit world, we will also heal them in the physical. This is the essential guiding principle behind much of our crusade: find the true spiritual source of a physical manifestation, understand it and change it in spirit.

## *The Shape of the World*

At the heart of Gaia lies the Earth, with the Heavens above, the Underworld below and the Umbra surrounding it on its sides. The World Tree, the *axis mundi*, grows from the center of the Earth. The Native American Garou tribes believe that it sprouts from the back of the World Turtle. Its branches soar into the canopy of the Heavens; its roots dig deep into the soil of the Underworld. Like many things in the Umbra, the World Tree is both figurative and literal at the same time. Its principle of interconnectedness can be felt in all places, but it takes literal form somewhere within the spirit world.

Three primal forces create and support the rest of reality: the Wyld, the Weaver and the Wyrm. These forces, called the Triat collectively, anchor all of existence. In the simplest terms, the Wyld is a body of vast potential that remains unrealized and in constant flux. The Weaver is the force of definition that takes the unformed creations of the Wyld and spins them into stable forms of matter and energy. Its power is the power to Name, to limit a thing's potential by giving it definition. The Wyrm is the force of destructive entropy that culls the myriad creations of the Weaver, thus creating sense from the senseless spasm of raw creation. The Triat's interrelations gave birth to the universe, and their continuing conflict ravages it. Some scholars see the Weaver as a great spider that nests in the World Tree's branches, coating the Tree in webbing, while the dragonlike Wyrm gnaws at the Tree's roots. The Wyld is the water that flows through the Tree, the sunlight that feeds its branches. Between the Weaver's webs and the Wyrm's destruction, however, the Wyld cannot nourish the Tree as it once did.

The world is dying.

## *The Creation Myth*

This myth is the history of the spirit and physical worlds as the wisest Garou shamans tell it. They do not always express it in the terms used here, and some cannot express it in language at all. The Garou versions are couched in symbolic poetry and metaphoric imagery. This explanation is couched in modern terms for modern audiences with modern sensibilities, just as it might be told to the cubs of the last generation.

## *The One World*

Werewolves believe that once, eons ago, the world was whole and unified. Matter and spirit did not merely coexist, they were one and the same. The tripartite forces of the Wyld, the Weaver and the Wyrm intertwined for an eternity, and reality was born from their dance.

And yet, even though the universe of the Triat was an integral, undivided whole, it was populated by individual, self-aware beings. These creatures gained sentience when the rich material-spiritual energy of the universe coalesced into unique forms. Even though these entities had identities separate from the substance of the universe, they understood themselves to be a part of the universal whole. They knew that their joy was the joy of the universe, and that their pain was the pain of the universe. Likewise, the pain of the universe was their pain, and the joy of the universe was their joy. These individualized spirit-matter beings understood that joy and pain were essential and meaningful parts of their lives.

Life was eternal and ever-changing, for the unique forms assumed by these entities lasted as long as they chose them to last. These creatures could merge with other creatures, subdivide into smaller identities or dissolve themselves utterly into the undifferentiated void. If a "death" did occur, it wasn't a permanent one. The

material-spirit forms would dissolve upon "dying," only to coalesce into new forms later.

The Garou call this universe, the universe of the Dawn Times, the "true Gaia." According to their legends, nothing existed outside of her at this time. Her children lived on her, and they were she. She was a greater whole that was somehow more than the sum of her parts. This time was a Golden Age of existence — a dream time that, while completely gone, is not completely forgotten. Garou shamans believe that all creatures, humans and wolves alike, have a secret memory of this time stored deep within the recesses of their souls.

## *The Severing*

Into this peaceful, whole, unified world of self-aware connection came division and death. The very fabric of the integrated universe was torn asunder by a cataclysmic force. The substance of the universe was split in two. Spirit and matter were wrenched apart, separated from one another by a massive calcified barrier called the Gauntlet. The twin sides screamed for one another, and they continue screaming to this day. Werewolves point to this division as the beginning of all evil in the world. Before this catastrophic event, all pain was accidental, the unintended result of hasty actions. After the Severing, there emerged a new form of pain in the universe: deliberate, intentional pain caused for pleasure.

## *The Two Worlds*

The source of the Severing is still a mystery. Many Garou blame the Wyrm reflexively. Some say that the Severing marked the birth of the Wyrm. Others say that it marked the day the Wyrm went mad. Still others believe that the Wyrm simply chose to be evil, and that it inflicted pain on the universe deliberately in a desperate attempt to free itself from entanglements to anyone and anything.

Some Garou shamans have a more complicated explanation. They maintain that the Weaver went mad and began to spin frantically. The Wyrm was hard-pressed to keep up, and the universe began to metastasize out of control. As the Wyrm struggled to undo the Weaver's teeming creation, it became engulfed in the Pattern Web. The more it fought to escape, the more it became enmeshed. Soon the Weaver had engulfed the Wyrm. Trapped in the Weaver's iron hell, the Wyrm also went mad. The twin dance of reckless Naming and heedless destruction tore apart the natural cycle of Gaia's world. The world was spun, destroyed and spun again in the model of the mad forces.

The Triat was now separated from itself, and all creation reflected that division. The universe polarized into twin worlds that were similar, but utterly different. The essential matter — the basic patterns that generate existence — collected on one world. The dense matter — the solid material from which the patterns generate forms — collected in the other world. They still reflected one another and continued their dance, but a wall now stood between them. Spirit created patterns on one side of the Gauntlet,

and matter fleshed them out on the other, but the two worlds cannot cross the Gauntlet to unite once more.

All creatures are separated from the land of their spirits. Their bodies have animating spirits that keep them alive and functioning, but their real spirits lie dormant, unaware of their celestial origin and their connection to the cosmos around them. Physical bodies can see and sense and communicate with other physical bodies, but souls can rarely see, find or communicate with other souls. Although most sentient beings have distant, dreamlike memories of a time when they were spiritual entities in a spiritual universe, they cannot journey to the spirit world.

Nonetheless, the connection between the Umbral and the physical world remains. Atrocities in the physical world poison the nearby Umbra with spiritual corruption; damage inflicted on spirits wreaks havoc on their physical analogues. Although each world can reap only a few benefits of its link to the other, they share their pains equally. This interconnectedness of all things makes the Garou very likely the world's last hope.

### *Children of Both Worlds*

Only a few creatures are truly children of matter and spirit alike, and only those few can pierce the Gauntlet to walk in both worlds. The Garou retain that great power, and they have access to spiritual Realms that lie close to the physical Earth. (There are Realms farther from Earth, but the Garou face difficulties functioning in, and even reaching, these Realms.) Yet, even though the Garou have learned how to cross the Gauntlet, they are unable to destroy it and thereby allow the divided worlds to reunite.

Werewolves are creatures made up as much of spirit matter as they are of flesh. By transforming their physical halves into forms of pure spirit, Garou can step into the Umbra. Crossing the Gauntlet is perilous, but the Garou can become quite proficient in spirit travel with courage and training. The Garou call this feat "stepping sideways," for they feel physically as if they have ceased walking forward in one reality and moved laterally into another.

The Garou who venture into the Umbra are spiritual warriors. Their sojourns are visionquests in which they seek deeper answers to problems that surface in physical reality. Some go to the Umbra for power and glory, but others go to heal the wounded worlds, often at great cost to themselves. These agents of cosmic mercy are the greatest of Garou, and they are remembered forever in the hearts of their people.

### *Perspectives on the Umbra*

All tribes agree on the basic myths of the spirit world and its nature, but each has its own way of coloring the story. The nature of the Triat and the roles that its members play in the spirit world are another matter altogether. Each tribe has its own perspective on how the spirit world functions and how Garou should interact with it. The following are just a few examples.

Excerpts from the e-publication "The Triat and the Umbra v.3.1"

By Dr. Anthony Chandler, Glass Walker

The Weaver defines the essence of reality. Think of the Weaver as gravity, drawing things in. The more Weaver-essence a thing has, the more reality it has — just as the amount of gravitational attraction an object is able to exert depends on its mass. Extending the analogy further, Gaia represents the sun, and the other Realms become the planets. They revolve around Her because they have less Weaver-essence. However, just as planets affect the orbit of the sun, so too do the other Realms affect the Gaia Realm. The Weaver defines the limits of the Umbra itself. As one approaches the Deep Umbra, one leaves the spiritual foundations established by the Weaver. The Pattern Web is not the end of creativity or the end of life, but a structure upon which life can build and evolve into new forms. The true menace to the spirit world is the Wyrm, the corrupter, who seeks to destroy the beautiful creation of the Weaver.

From the teachings of Alessandra Mbari, Black Fury Theurge

The Wyld is our true patron, that which grants us access to the universe's greatest mysteries. The Wyld contains within it all the possibilities of existence. Our spiritual essence, the Gnosis which imbues the Umbra with life, comes from the Wyld. All of creation starts with the Wyld. The Umbra is the world of the Wyld, while the Weaver seeks to claim Earth for itself. The Weaver restricts the Wyld; the Wyrm seeks to corrupt the Wyld. Yet the Wyld endures and remains above the fray.

Truth-of-the-Mother, Child of Gaia speaks:

Gaia is where the Weaver and the Wyld come together and where they must stay balanced in a constant pattern of creation. The Wyrm should maintain a balance between the two. Unfortunately, the dark one has turned from its true path, and it opposes Gaia. It seeks to rend the Weaver from the Wyld so that no more reality will be spun. Ultimately, the Triat encompasses only aspects of Gaia. We must place our faith in Her, and She will show us how to restore the physical world with the spiritual world. She will lead us to a golden age. We must always keep Her in mind, first and foremost, and remember that the greatest gift and greatest weapon that we have is Gaia's love. We must use our love, our passion, to save all that we know.

### *The Umbral Environment*

Strangeness surrounds me. It fills me. I am the stranger, the lost cub. Whenever I slip into the spirit world, the places that I've left seem like a dream. I always thought that it would be the other way, that the Umbra would be the place of misperception and illusions. It isn't so. Whenever I enter the Umbra, my first sensation is that I've woken up from a long dream. Have you ever woken up disoriented and unsure if you actually lived the last 10 years of your life or if you're still a child who's late for school? That's the spirit world, which shouldn't be such an odd sensation, considering that it's the true home of our spirit. Our spirits have spent far more time in the Umbra than we've spent among the

living. Of course, when we return home, it feels as though the time in the Umbra was just a dream. Usually... But no matter what, whenever I enter the spirit world, I am far more certain of its reality than I am of anything else I've experienced. I can't hide from myself, and this strange place, this shadow world, this Umbra... I belong to it, and it belongs to me.

## *The Earth*

The home of Gaia, the Earth, anchors the center of the Umbra. Some tribes believe that the Earth sustains the Umbra, but the opposite is likely just as true. The charts of the Glass Walkers show Realms of the Umbra orbiting Earth, just as the planets orbit the sun. The Gauntlet divides reality, sundering the Earth from the Umbra. All sojourners who would leave the Earth for the Umbra must pierce this veil. All spirits that wish to come to Earth must do the same. Werewolves use two methods to bypass the Gauntlet. First, there are places where the Gauntlet is weak and easy to part. These sites are near caerns, places that Garou need in order to replenish their spiritual energy. These openings where Earth and the Umbra still touch have many names, but most call them gates. One may simply walk between worlds through gates. All werewolves also have the ability to "step sideways" and force their way through the Gauntlet. This method is a bit more dangerous, but Garou can make the journey a bit easier by using reflective surfaces that show weak points in the Gauntlet.

## *The Gauntlet*

The Gauntlet divides the places of matter from the places of spirit. Matter and spirit, craving unity, pull toward one another with a palpable force, ever struggling to rupture the Gauntlet and be one yet again as they were in the First Times. An ancient war wages between the Earth, the Umbra and the Gauntlet since two sides are attracted to each other, and the third exists only to hold them apart. The Weaver maintains the Gauntlet, sending her spirits to reinforce its strength tirelessly. In some areas, the strength of the Gauntlet has rendered the physical world virtually spirit-dead. In others, though, spiritual energy leaks through the Gauntlet trying to force ever-widening holes in this barrier. Civilization is the Gauntlet's greatest ally. As humans seek to control the environment, they crush the Wyld and strengthen the Weaver, pushing the spirit world farther away. The relative strengths of spiritual beliefs in people from more "developed" countries as compared to those in the rest of the world act as some evidence of this theory.

Yet, there might yet remain some hope for civilization. The Glass Walkers argue vehemently to promote the new creativity and connectivity of people brought about by the advent of the Internet. However, there are far more voices in other tribes that call for the destruction of the scabs and an end to the tempestuous escalation of technology.

Every place on Earth has a Gauntlet rating from 2 to 9. Stepping sideways in areas with a high Gauntlet rating is well nigh impossible. Areas in which the Gauntlet is thin

allow almost unhindered access for those who know how to step sideways.

Area	Typical Gauntlet
Science lab	9
Inner city	8
Most places	7
Rural countryside	6
Deep wilderness	5
Typical active caern	4
Powerful caern	3
The greatest caerns	2

## *Caerns*

The Gauntlet fluctuates from place to place. It is stronger in places of civilization and science, weaker in wild, primitive areas. In the areas where it is weakest, spiritual energy enters the mundane world freely. Wondrous and mystic phenomena are common in these places. Werewolves venerate these holy sites that they call caerns. They guard the few remaining caerns vigorously by forming septs, groups dedicated to defending the caern. They also sustain the caern spirits, which aid them in protecting the locale. However, the Garou are losing this war. Individuals win victories and packs triumph in battles, but the war takes its toll. Too many enemies and too few new werewolves to fight them seems to be the tale of the millennia. Mages and marauding spirits try to feast on the Gnosis that saturates such sites. Minions of the Weaver try to destroy the natural environment, choking the location off from the Umbra. The servants of the Wyrm corrupt and twist these places to their own foul and destructive ends.

Many caerns have a specific purpose or spiritual nature, such as healing or war. Spirits attuned to these natures flock to the caern; some even spawn from these sites. Powers may be invoked at such places granting the Garou the ability to further the caern's sphere of influence.

## *The Penumbra*

Just beyond the Gauntlet lies the unfettered splendor of the spirit world. The area of the Umbra closest to the Earth Realm is called the Penumbra. The Penumbra is the most common Umbral destination of the Garou, who travel here to fight evil spirits bent on corrupting creatures or locations in the physical world. The Penumbra, or Earth's Shadow, is a gray, hazy, phantasmal world lit only by the radiance of the great Celestine, Luna. Luna's Umbral phase corresponds directly to the phase of the moon in the physical realm. Helios is not present, although some ambient sunlight can be found in places during the day. The only other celestial object to share the Penumbral sky with Luna is the Red Star — the sullen star that many werewolves call the Eye of the Wyrm, the harbinger of the Final Battle.

Likewise, the Penumbra contains the spirit material that corresponds to the physical matter of Earth. The only material objects that appear in the spirit world are those with large

amounts of spiritual energy. Matter that endures the passage of time on Earth gains a spiritual representation in the Penumbra. Old trees and old buildings have counterparts on the Penumbra; recently built structures and newer vegetation

### *Caern Mechanics*

Caerns have ratings from 1 to 5. This rating measures the potency of the powers and effects that can be invoked there. Therefore, a Level One caern of healing might refresh and heal minor wounds, while a Level Five caern could heal the most grievous injuries miraculously, possibly even reviving the recently dead. The more powerful the caern, the lower the Gauntlet is at its heart.

#### *Caern Level Gauntlet Moon Bridge Distances\**

1	4	1,000 miles
2	4	2,000 miles
3	3	3,000 miles
4	3	6,000 miles
5	2	10,000 miles

\* The distance that a moon bridge can traverse depends on the rating of the caern where the gate is opened (not that of the destination). If the moon bridge is not opened at a caern (for example, a bridge created by a Lune or other spirit), its maximum distance is 1000 miles.

### *Caern Types*

Type	Power**	Spirits Encountered***
All	Open Moon Bridge†	
Enigmas	Enigmas Ability	Illusion, Shadow, Chameleon-spirit
Gnosis	Gnosis points	Engling, Ghost
Healing	Health levels	Peace, Calm, Water elemental
Leadership	Leadership, Intimidation	War, Bird spirit
Rage	Rage points	War, Pain
Stamina	Soak dice	Protection, Guardian, Turtle-spirit
Strength	Strength Attribute	War
Urban	Streetwise	City elemental
Visions	Oracular visions	Bird spirit
Will	Willpower points	War, Ancestor-spirit
Wisdom	Rituals, Expression	Owl-spirit, Ancestor-spirit
Wyld	Anything	Wyldling

\*\* One point/ level/ die is gained per success (see *Rite of the Opened Caern*, p. 157).

\*\*\* These are the spirits most often encountered near caerns of that type. However, there is no guarantee that they are always to be found. Other spirits may also appear at Storyteller's discretion.

† Only if the two caerns in question have completed a Rite of the Opened Bridge successfully (p. 158).

do not. Wyld, Weaver and Wyrm energies become tangible in this Realm. Wyld-spirits move through natural areas, Weaver webs emerge from technological equipment, and Wyrm-spirits scuttle through graveyards and polluted areas.

Interestingly enough, spirit is more "real" than matter in some ways. The spirit of an object can often endure the loss of its physical body, but the physical body cannot withstand the loss of its spirit essence. If an old oak tree is chopped down on Earth, it may linger for a long time in the Umbra. If a living tree is destroyed in the Umbra, however, its earthly counterpart will sicken and die. Similarly, the spirits of extinct species such as dire wolves linger on deep in the Umbra, but if all the eagle-spirits in the spirit world were destroyed, the eagles of the physical world would soon follow.

Penumbral streets and forests seem eerily deserted, for most sentient creatures do not manifest on the Penumbra. Only spiritually advanced people appear here. Sometimes Garou travelers see the spirits of humans who are deeply ensconced in the Periphery. Although attacks on these Penumbral reflections do not cause any lasting harm to their physical counterparts, they can make a person highly uncomfortable, much as if haunted by a painful memory.

The Penumbra is filled with Domains — small zones that correspond to areas in both the physical Realm and the Near Umbra. These areas borrow energy and definition from their counterparts in the Near Umbra, allowing them to manifest in the Penumbra and the Gaia Realm.

- **Brights:** Bright Domains are mixed Weaver/ Wyrm areas that appear as polluted, web-ridden cityscapes.
- **Chimares:** These individualized Domains are places of dream, open to every being that dreams. Like dreams, they can be gently euphoric or unspeakably horrific.
- **Epiphs:** These peculiar Domains represent abstract ideas or concepts, such as "low" or "seven." Most Garou cannot comprehend Epiphs, although the Stargazers claim to have gained great insight by mediating in such places.
- **Glens:** Glens are Domains where Gaian and Wyld energies still run strong. They appear as vigorous, primal manifestations of the natural world, and they are often inhabited by sentient trees and talking animals.
- **Hellholes:** These Wyrm-ridden Domains correspond to polluted areas such as toxic-waste-dump sites in the physical world. Even areas of heavy air pollution can become Hellholes. Hellholes are inhabited by Banes, and Wyrm-creatures scuttle through these Domains en route to the Gaia Realm from the Near Umbra.
- **Trods:** These Domains of faerie energy appear as faerie rings and monoliths. These areas mark the spots that were sacred to faeries in the days before the Weaver's encroachment drove them from earth. Sometimes, faeries can still be found at these sites.
- **Webs:** Areas where the Weaver encroaches on the Penumbra are called Web Domains. Webs correspond to large areas of technologically advanced cities, and Pattern Spiders and Net-Spiders inhabit them.

## *Night*

Nighttime is the Garou's friend in the Umbra. When night falls in the physical world, the Umbra becomes the hunting ground of the wolves who roam the eerie landscape beneath Luna's light. Although more spirits are active, there are fewer malevolent ones. Most Wyrm spirits are in their Blights, whispering dark urges to their sleeping human hosts. Weaver spirits such as Pattern Spiders are easier prey, since they are exhausted from their daily chores. Conversely, the Garou are sharp from a day's rest. With the aid of even a little moonlight, they take the fight to their foes' doorsteps.

- **Wyldings:** Areas where the Wyld still reaches Earth are fewer than Web areas. Some Wylding Domains exist in the Penumbra, but most are in the faraway Deep Umbra. Nothing is stable or permanent in these constantly shifting zones, and magic permeates the air. Appropriately enough, Wylding spirits congregate here.

## *Reaching/Stepping Sideways*

What does it feel like to step into the Umbra? It's like diving into cold water. First, you feel the splash as you break the surface. Then, for a moment, you freeze as your body and mind try to come to grips with the change. Finally, you swim for the surface, take a breath and try to get used to the water. Or maybe you panic, swallow water and start drowning. That's how it feels.

The spirit world lies just a whisper away. Children feel it, hiding beneath their beds at night, lurking in the woods behind their homes. You dance through it in your dreams. It's where reflections lie, on the far side of the mirror. To go there, stop walking forward and backward, and just step sideways. It's that easy.

All werewolves have the ability to "reach" or "step sideways" into the Umbra. This ability comes intuitively once the First Change passes. Somehow, they begin to sense the world waiting on the other side of the mirror. Shifting between worlds becomes a skill like walking; it's something that they can just do.

But, of course, the Gauntlet lies in the way, and a werewolf must push through it to step sideways. In most places, the player must make a Gnosis roll against the Gauntlet rating. If she succeeds, the character slips through to the other side. Failure means that she can't push through the webs in this location and needs to move and try again. If she tries to enter the Umbra in the same place, Weaver-spirits reinforce the Gauntlet and the difficulty increases by two for each further attempt. The Gauntlet rating can never exceed 10, though. On a botch, the character may get trapped in the Pattern Web, appear in



the midst of a spirit storm or simply vanish for a while, only to reappear hours later with no memory of the missing time. It's important to note that stepping sideways cannot be done as a Rage action. A character cannot normally use Rage and Gnosis in the same turn, after all.

A pack may nominate a single "opener of the way" to lead the entire pack into the Umbra. The player of this character rolls once for the pack (the pack member with the highest Gnosis usually receives this task). Her result affects all of her packmates. Only packs may enter the Umbra this way, and non-packmates accompanying them must step sideways using their own Gnosis.

Successes	Shift Time
0	Failure; may not try again for another hour
One	Five minutes
Two	30 seconds
Three +	Instant

### *Mirror, Mirror*

Garou have found a way to make it easier to reach into and out of the Umbra. Reflective surfaces, polished silver, a quiet pool of water and especially mirrors make stepping sideways easier. Some say that these aids let a werewolf concentrate on his true self and see his spirit. Others believe that they are holes in the Gauntlet, which reflect images because what lies on the other side isn't visible on Earth. Regardless, a werewolf who has access to a reflective surface has several advantages when trying to step sideways. First, the difficulty of the roll drops by one. Second, her attempts do not alert Weaver-spirits, so if she fails, she may try again in the same place with no penalties. Also, if the player botches, the reflective surface breaks, tarnishes or becomes agitated and unusable, rather than leaving the character trapped between worlds or missing time. Experienced fomori have a habit of breaking mirrors so that their opponents cannot flee. A common superstition also holds that werewolves need mirrors to emerge from "wherever it is they come from," which is blatantly untrue.

### *The Near Umbra*

When the Umbral traveler follows a moon bridge past the Penumbra, she arrives in the Near Umbra. This area is a swirling haze dotted with many Realms, great and small. These Realms orbit the Gaia Realm just as Luna orbits Earth. The Garou travel to these other realities to interact with their totems or beseech aid from their ruling powers. Many of these rulers are capricious and dangerous, but they possess great wisdom.

There are 13 major Near Realms. Near Realms are pockets of immense spiritual power bordered by a membrane that contains their energies. These Realms feel as real and substantial to the Umbral traveler as the material world feels to the physical traveler. All the Garou's senses and powers work, although with some slight modifications in some Realms. Each Realm is governed by a set of world laws that determine the local reality. There may be even more Near Realms as yet undiscovered by the Garou.

In addition to these 13 major Near Realms, myriad Domains, sub-Realms and Zones exist, including the eerie Dream Zone. All of the Domains listed in the Penumbra have larger Domains in the Near Umbra. The Tribal Homelands, representations of each tribe's ideal home, are among the strongest of these Near Umbral Domains. At the outskirts of the Near Umbra, just before the beginning of the Deep Umbra, lie several Vistas. Vistas are not really Realms, for they can only be viewed, not entered. Vistas are portals allowing observers to view embodiments of abstract concepts like death, chaos and stasis. They are said to be glimpses of the Heavens.

Near Realms were formed when powerful, monolithic energies from the Triat collided with the weak but highly diversified spiritual emanations from the Gaia Realm. Some Near Realms are similar to the Triat energies that formed them, while some are similar to the earthly energies that breathed spiritual life into them.

### *The Near Realms*

- **Abyss:** In the Umbra, acts of extreme destruction can carve rifts into the very fabric of the spirit world. Those who delve into these cracks find a way out of whatever Realm they may be in to the lip of a gargantuan pit so wide and deep that it seems an infinite void. Anything that falls into the Abyss is lost forever. Hideous creatures cavort within chasms that lead down the inner walls of the Abyss. Even the most powerful Incarna avoid this Realm at all costs. Some Garou say that the Abyss is an Umbral cancer and the first sign of the impending Apocalypse. Others say that the very bottom of this seemingly bottomless rift is the mouth of the Wyrm itself.

- **Aetherial Realm:** The cosmological apex of the Umbra is an infinite vaulted ceiling of heavenly light that stretches from the Gauntlet to the Deep Umbra. Garou can reach the Aetherial Realm easily by traveling toward the Umbral "sky." This Realm is the home of the Planetary Incarna, from the Incarna of Luna (Phoebe or Sokhta) and Helios (Hyperion or Katanka-Sonnak) to the Incarna of the planets themselves. This Realm is also home to powerful spirits of the air and stars. All moon bridges travel through the Aetherial Realm, and the Umbral aspects of Sol's planets appear in its skies. Here, the Celestines hang constellations of the greatest heroes. It is also here that the celestial prophet of the Apocalypse, the Red Star (Anthelios) blazes at its brightest.

- **Atrocity Realm:** Humans are capable of visiting horrible tortures and violations on themselves and others, and they do so far, far too often. The pain and degradation that pours from these atrocities has shaped a Realm that mirrors such suffering. All atrocities on Earth — animal cruelty, sword-point religious conversions, child-abuse, rape camps, genocide — have reflections here. Banes spawn freely here in larval pits guarded by Scrags. One can escape from this Realm only via empathic suffering with the victims.

- **Battleground:** Mankind's glorification of war has created a Battleground Realm. Here, spirit warriors fight grisly re-creations of every battle from the Impergium to the struggles in Southeast Asia. Signposts point the way to each



battle. Shades of all the world's wars appear in concentric rings that lead toward the Plain of the Apocalypse — a vast, empty field that waits for the final battle. Difficulties for all frenzy rolls decrease by two here, and Garou who enter the fray gain a point of Rage per turn of combat. Garou who seek to learn the secrets of their foes visit this Realm to observe or fight their enemies' Umbral doppelgangers. Garou also come here for a chance to unleash their Rage.

• **CyberRealm:** The rapid escalation of technology and the technoshock it creates have spawned this Weaver Realm, a reflection of science gone berserk. Here, technology has overwhelmed the inhabitants, who must meld with machines to survive. Half of this mechanistic land is a glass, concrete, plastic and steel monstrosity called the Sprawl; the other is a subterranean world called the Pit. Glass Walkers love the CyberRealm (although they also tread with care here), tapping its secrets for weapons for use against the Wyrm. Weaver-spirits are strong here, and Wyld-spirits are virtually unheard of.

• **Erebus:** As the Aetherial Realm lies in the cosmological heights of the Umbrandscape, the depths of the Umbra contain an infernal underworld. Erebus is the Purgatory of the Garou, a place where werewolves burn in a lake of molten silver. They take aggravated wounds, healing just in time to suffer further. A great, three-headed wolf-creature prevents Garou from leaving. The few who have returned from Erebus rarely speak of it. Some believe that this Realm

is a crucible that burns its victims until they are strong enough to purify themselves.

• **Flux:** A pocket of pure Wyld energy has extruded through the powerful Weaver barricades of the Tellurian to create a massive Flux Realm in the Near Umbra. This Realm is the very heart of the Wyld, allegedly given to Gaia to sustain Her and keep Her from total Weaver suffocation. Anything is possible within the constantly shifting Flux Realm. Time shifts unpredictably, and the Garou themselves transform uncontrollably, shifting among their various forms. Werewolves can learn to manipulate the very fabric of the Flux Realm, literally controlling the changing, unbridled reality like gods, or they may be driven mad in the process. No entity may be bound or controlled here.

• **Legendary Realm:** The legends of the Garou are so powerful that they have sprung into existence as living shadows. The Legendary Realm is a composite mythic-fantasy Realm that incorporates all legends of all tribes into one impossible world. Each tribe has a territory that corresponds roughly to its ancestral homeland on Earth, and Garou travel to these lands to live the lives of their ancestors and thus gain the wisdom of the past.

• **Malfeas:** This Realm is the home of the Wyrm itself, a blasted wasteland that exudes spiritual corruption. It is death itself to travel Malfeas, for nothing lives there that would aid a Garou. Indeed, werewolves are great prizes to the mighty Banes who inhabit this Realm. Any Garou captured

here is destined for a day or an eternity of suffering before death or before being forced to dance the Black Spiral itself. This structure lies within the heart of a great temple in Malfeas, and it is the source of the Black Spiral Dancers' name, cause and power. A trip to Malfeas is tantamount to a slow, painful suicide.

• **Pangaea:** Earth spent vast amounts of time in a primordial state, and the spiritual energies of that age have left an enduring mark on the Umbra. The eons have etched Pangaea into the fabric of the Umbra with a strength and solidity unknown to any other Realm. It is filled with massive woods, virgin jungle and pristine rainforest. All species that ever lived flourish here, even titanic dinosaurs, and a great Incarna dragon called the Elder Serpent makes its lair here. Forces of the Wyrm have been trying to seal Pangaea away from the rest of the Umbra, and many Garou feel that this Realm holds a secret to preserving the world beyond the Apocalypse. Here all Garou receive one Gnosis point at dawn, and all Primal-Urge rolls made in Pangaea receive one automatic success.

• **Scar:** The worlds, both physical and spiritual, changed forever with the coming of the Industrial Revolution. This powerful event created ripples in the Umbra that gave birth to the rusted Umbral city called the Scar. Here, the ideals of industry and prosperity have been corrupted into soul-grinding oppression. This Realm is a gloomy, gritty city of ashen slums, befouled shantytowns, deafening factories and endless pollution. The Scar's factories produce many of the fetishes used by Wyrm minions in the Gaia Realm. Escape is difficult, for the Gauntlet around the Scar has a rating of 9.

• **Summer Country:** Some Garou insist that the Summer Country is just a beautiful rumor. The tales say that Gaia spent an eternity in a state of pure, uncorrupted love before the first cataclysm. This time created an enduring reflection in the Umbra — an achingly beautiful world where all is peace, grace and pleasure. In this Realm, a blissful, crescent-shaped island in a beautiful blue sea, all creatures have an abundance of Gaia's Gifts. No werewolf finds the Summer Country by choice; legends hold that only those who have undergone a great epiphany and embraced the full love of Gaia are brought here for a time. All wounds, diseases and curses are cured here, although some Children of Gaia insist that the wounds were cured by the inner healing process that resulted in the Garou arriving in the first place.

• **Wolfhome:** Although it looks almost identical to the physical world, Wolfhome is actually among the strangest of the Umbrial Realms. It is the only Realm in which the Garou are radically transformed. Here werewolves are trapped in Lupus form, without Gifts, rites or fetishes in a world where wolves are hated and hunted predators. Only their regeneration and Rage protect them from the humans who hunt them with guns, helicopters and high-tech equipment. Escape is possible only by understanding the wolf's place in the world.

### Dream

The Dream Zone is another Umbral area that seems to transcend the "normal" limits of the Umbra and extend into

other parts of the Tellurian. This area is mysterious even to the denizens of the Umbra. It is a world of immense power, frightening unpredictability and potent symbolism. (The Chimares are mere glimpses into this place of unfettered dream.) Even the hardiest Umbral travelers treat the Dream Zone with uncharacteristic trepidation.

The Dream Zone could be compared to a multifaceted gem of extraordinary beauty that encloses the Near Umbra and borders the Deep Umbra. Werewolves willing to risk the dangers can actually bypass the rest of the Umbra and enter the Dream Zone directly through their dreams. Instead of traveling *outward* — past the Gauntlet, into the Near Umbra and through to the Deep Umbra — the voyager goes *inward*, into his dream, and emerges at the border between the Near and Deep Umbra. The dangers of this world of dreams-made-real are obvious, but there are few shortcuts to match this one. Garou can also enter the Dream Zone by means of traveling though Chimares.

### Disconnection

Werewolves who spend too much time either in the Umbra or away from it may experience disconnection. This dangerous condition can lead to madness or even Harano. Lone wolves are more likely to suffer from disconnection than pack members. The cure for disconnection is to step sideways.

A Garou who stays in the Umbra for an extended period, more than a lunar month, starts to take on spirit-like qualities. He appears more ephemeral, sometimes even translucent, to other werewolves. He has memory lapses regarding his previous life on Earth. His desire to return home fades, and he begins to view his time before entering the Umbra as a dream or a delusion. As time goes on, the condition worsens. Some werewolves vanish, never to be seen or heard from again. Others go berserk when forced to return to the Earth, and they may experience physical pain from the shock of coming back. Eventually, the werewolf becomes an entity made entirely of spirit, not unlike a particularly well-defined ancestor-spirit. The flesh is lost forever.

Conversely, werewolves who refuse to enter the spirit world gradually become unable to regain Gnosis. They lose the ability to use their Gifts. They become bitter and abusive. Often, they compensate for the lack of spiritual energy by turning to addictive substances. After a time, the poor wretches become easy prey for the Wyrm. While it is rare for a werewolf to refuse to enter the Umbra, some lost cubs go into denial after their First Change and must be watched carefully. A particularly bad experience in the Umbra may also cause a Garou to refuse to go back. Because they lose their Gnosis, these Garou need a packmate to help lead them through the Gauntlet.



### *The Membrane*

Between the relatively comprehensible world of the Near Umbra and the mysterious world of the Deep Umbra lies a barrier called the Membrane. This barrier is like the Gauntlet, but even less porous. To bypass the Membrane, Garou must reach an Anchorhead.

Some Stargazers assert that the Gauntlet and the Membrane are but two layers in a sevenfold Weaver container that encases the spirit world. They believe that the Dream Zone extends to each of the seven layers, and that they can breach the remaining barriers with practice — just as they can enter Dream from Earth and reach the Deep Umbra in so doing.

### *Deep Umbra*

Past the walls of sleep lies the Deep Umbra, an area where Gaia's presence is less and less perceptible to Garou travelers. Reality breaks down here, and navigation becomes difficult. This is the realm of the abstract, the source of alien concepts and strange vistas. The Deep Umbra is the home of the Wyld, the Weaver and the Wyrm, and only the most experienced Umbral travelers dare travel here. Luna traverses a path through the Deep Umbra, and she is one of the few comforting beacons to wandering Garou.

### *The Periphery*

The Gauntlet wall bulges like an over-inflated balloon, allowing trickles of spirit energy to bleed through it in many places. Some werewolves believe that this bleed-through is deliberate — a ploy on the Weaver's part to relieve pressure on the Gauntlet to keep it from bursting open. Others take it as a sign that the Gauntlet is not infallible, and that it might yet come down. Although these tiny streams of spirit are of little use to werewolves, they can grant humans a connection to the spiritual that they might not receive otherwise. The human desire to use ritual, drugs, religious rapture, exercise, meditation, even pain and sexual pleasure to reach a "higher state" is an unconscious yearning for what werewolves call the Periphery.

Some werewolves call the Periphery the "Penumbra of the Deep Umbra" — the secondary shadow cast by the Deep Umbra on the physical world. Whether this assertion is true or not, it is true that the Periphery grants an altered state of awareness when one reaches it. Colors and senses become sharper, brighter; intuition and insight flourish. Artists, writers and poets who touch the Periphery find it to be pure inspiration.

This inspiration isn't necessarily beatific, though. For every Wordsworth who finds rapture, there is a Poe who finds visions of bleakness and torture. Although these visions seem like hallucinations to others, they are quite real to the person touching the Periphery. Sometimes, they can even cause physical trauma. Benign spirits can even contact humans on the Periphery, although Banes and other malevolent spirits can also reach Peripheral travelers.

Unfortunately, people who use drugs to enter the Periphery are unable to leave if their visions go bad. They can't return to the physical world and snap back to normal if their minds or spirits can't handle the Periphery. Such Peripheral "imprisonment" can cause hideous psychic disfigurement and spiritual shock. Charismatic spiritual leaders can bring an entire congregation into the Periphery and cause psychic damage to their parishioners, who usually cannot leave at will. The only people who do not risk psychic shock from travel to the Periphery are those who learn to enter by force of personal will. These fortunate souls are reasonably safe because they retain the ability to leave at any time.

Humans who spend time with werewolves are more likely to touch the Periphery. Perhaps it is a side effect of the Garou's spiritual nature, but no one is certain. It doesn't seem to matter if the person knows about a werewolf's true nature.

### *The Dark Umbra*

Few werewolves know much about the Dark Umbra, the realm of death. When a werewolf dies, his spirit returns to the Earth Mother; some Garou linger on as ancestor-spirits to guide their kin, while others are said to be reborn in different bodies. For this reason, most werewolves have less a fear of death than a fear of dying poorly.

Humans, on the other hand, fear death immensely. They fear pain, disconnection, oblivion. They fear that punishment might await them on the other side. Some even fear that they will find that everything they ever believed was wrong.

They fear leaving their business unfinished; they fear age and weakness and the loss of control. And, as the Garou say, this collective fear of death is what created the Dark Umbra.

The Dark Umbra is believed to be the final resting-place for many humans when they die. It's a gray, terrible underworld wracked by constant tempests and terrible wars among the hungry ghosts. Only a few werewolves — most often Silent Striders — dare to venture into the Dark Umbra for its wisdom. Many Garou philosophers hold that the Dark Umbra is a necessary third to the spirit world, the final part that balances the Deep and Middle Umbrae. But almost all werewolves believe that the human dead built this place for themselves — and they are welcome to it.

### *Umbral Travel*

A werewolf steps sideways and enters the Penumbra at the spiritual manifestation of the place he stood on Earth. Once in the Penumbra, he can walk physically to other areas corresponding to those on Earth, just a step and a shadow away. He can also go farther out into the Umbra. Thoughts and feelings lead the werewolf outward, beyond the shadows of the things he knows. All he has to do is think of traveling deeper in the spirit world. Doing so is a little like stepping sideways, but the Gauntlet is not involved.

Werewolves move through the Umbra like they do on Earth, usually either walking or running. As a werewolf walks through the spirit world, the scenery unfolds and



evolves around him, beginning to take on aspects of his destination as he draws nearer. A werewolf on the path to the Battleground Realm might find his road taking on the consistency of powdered bone and the sounds of distant drums and gunfire surrounding him until he has no question that he is on the road to the greatest battlefield of all. Once the Penumbra has been left behind, distance starts to lose meaning. Space and time are both subject to the fluctuations of the Wyld, and they can change in a heartbeat. Direction is left almost to chance. So, the only way to travel safely without getting lost is to find a path.

### *Moon Paths*

One of Luna's many gifts to her children are paths through the mists of the Umbra. A moon path appears in the Penumbra as a shaft of moonlight. A werewolf who touches the light can find herself traveling on a moonbeam with the mists of the spirit world swirling all around her. Spirits called Lunes guard these ways when the moon is full. The paths are also at their strongest and are easiest to find then. However, Garou should be cautious when dealing with the ghostly moon-spirits during the full moon. They are fickle tricksters, and the warrior's moon raises their wrath against Luna's enemies. This wrath can just as easily be turned against an obnoxious cub. There is no end to the stories of arrogant wolves demanding help or service from a Lune, only to find themselves suddenly lost near the Deep Umbra. Dire spirits like to lurk near the edges of moon paths, just far enough away to avoid the Lunes. Given the opportunity, most would like nothing more than to lure an unsuspecting werewolf off the path to her doom. The most basic adage among experienced spirit runners is, "Don't step off the path."

Moon paths can be dangerous during other phases of Luna. When the Theurge's moon shines through the Umbra, the paths twist and turn strangely, either resisting the desires of travelers, or possibly paying heed to their unconscious desires rather than their conscious ones. A werewolf accustomed to solving enigmas will find herself challenged to follow a moon path during the crescent moon.

When the new moon comes, the moon paths don't disappear entirely. They become shadowed and dim filaments of Luna's light. The Lunes hide during the new moon, and foul twisted spirits make the moon paths their own. Few souls dare to travel the moon paths during these times. Instead, they seek other ways through the Umbra.

### *Spirit Tracks*

Another way to travel through the Umbra is to find a spirit track or airt. When spirits move through the Umbra, they part the shadows and mists, creating a track upon which Garou can travel. Spirit tracks are not as reliable as moon paths, as they follow the course of the individual spirit, be it whimsical or dangerous. If a Bane destroys the spirit during its journey, a werewolf may find herself at a dead end or following the Bane's spirit track. When the Umbral winds blow, spirit tracks disappear back into the mists. If the winds erase the

track a werewolf is traveling on, the wind will blow her deep into the Umbra, possibly even to the edge of the Abyss.

### *Gates*

The ancient places have many strong ties. In times past, mighty spirits forged gates between realms in the Umbra. Gates transport travelers from one location to another instantly. They are permanent constructs able to withstand any force that a werewolf could bring to bear. One of the most famous gates is the Black Portal, a rusted iron archway that stands in the Penumbra of the Greek highlands. Any-one stepping through this Portal finds himself in the heart of Erebus almost instantly. Unfortunately, the mystic lore of gate creation has long vanished. Although gates are the safest and fastest means of transport through the Umbra, they are also the most rare. Discovery of a new gate would gain a Garou great renown.

### *The Webs*

The Weaver's webs hold all things together. Without the Weaver, there would be no form or substance. Some young werewolves have dared to use the webs as a highway of sorts. With the Glass Walkers leading the way, they simply find the Weaver's webs and force their way past Pattern Spiders and other spirits. This method of travel is unmentioned in the traditions of the Garou, and few old ones trust it. The secrets of traversing the webs are well guarded, but if a werewolf could master the webs of the Weaver, then nothing is beyond his reach.

### *Wyrm Tunnels*

Finally, agents of the Wyrm have carved dark passages through the Umbra and the Gauntlet. Wyrm tunnels abound with Banes, and the Black Spiral Dancers use them to move secretly through the spirit world. A few brave packs have ventured into these dark pathways, but if any have returned, they have not shared the horrors that they faced with other werewolves.

### *Peeking*

*Most spirits in the Umbra can't see us on Earth, anymore than we can see them. Now, there are a few with special abilities, like Naturae tied to an area or Wyrm spies — and please, don't try to hide from your totem — but you're generally safe from their prying. The invisible watchers that you need to be aware of are other werewolves. You've felt that sensation. Suddenly, the hair on your neck rises and something inside goes, "I'm being watched." You look around, but you don't see anyone. Well, maybe no one is there... in a physical sense, at least. We are still bound to Earth; all of us are children of Gaia (in the broader sense, of course). Anyway, my point is that we werewolves can steal peeks at Earth from the Penumbra, just across the velvet curtain. Trouble with that is this... if you're watching one thing, you aren't looking at another. The Umbra has a way of sneaking up on you.*

— Pearl River, Child of Gaia Theurge

To have her character peek at Earth from the Umbra, the player must roll her Gnosis against the local Gauntlet

rating. If she succeeds, the character sees a shadowy monochromatic version of the physical world, including the people and items that leave no spirit shadow in the Umbra. The character cannot discern fine details, such as newsprint, without multiple successes. She can also hear noises from the other side, although they may seem to echo or be distorted slightly. Most importantly, werewolves find that they can smell everything as easily as if they weren't in the Umbra. They can even track prey through the Umbra.

On the down side, a werewolf becomes completely oblivious to events in the Umbra while peeking, unless she starts losing health levels. Her pack can't communicate with her, and enemies can do all sorts of twisted things to her as long as she doesn't take damage. In the Umbra, her eyes glow brightly, and her expression is one of obvious intense concentration. Glass Walkers refer to this condition with the slang term AFK, meaning "away from keyboard."

Werewolves may also peek from Earth to the Umbra, although doing so is often more difficult. A player must roll Gnosis against the Gauntlet rating plus 3 (maximum 10). The disadvantage to watching one world while you are in another is the same either way. Once characters learn certain Gifts, such as Pulse of the Invisible, peeking becomes much easier.

Although most spirits cannot peek, they have other methods of learning about events on Earth. They can see signs in the Penumbra of dramatic spiritual changes. Spirits with direct connections to Earth, including many spirits of Gaia, do have the ability to peek, and they are perpetually aware of events near their territories. For example, a caern spirit knows all that transpires at its caern. Spirits with these abilities do not become oblivious to the world around them when peeking; they can manage both sets of perceptions easily.

## *The Nature of Spirits*

The Umbra houses a staggering variety of spirits. They are creatures of raw soul force that are not intertwined with flesh and blood. Some are related closely to beings in the physical world, but many are unique to the Umbra and are difficult to describe in physical terms.

Spirits don't quite have personalities in the way that people understand them. They lack a certain amount of free will, and they find it impossible to act against their nature. It would be impossible for a rabbit-spirit to lunge courageously at a group of attackers or for a fire-spirit to resist the urge to devour offered fuel, without powerful coercion from a third party.

The denizens of the spirit world have a clear hierarchy. The very greatest spirits exude or create lesser spirits, which devolve in turn into still lesser spirits. These greater spirits are considered patrons of the lesser. Although most spirits appear to have patrons, the Garou suspect that certain rogue spirits exist outside the chain of spirit patronage.

The werewolves hold that the greatest spirit is Gaia. Below her is the Triat: the Wyld, the Weaver and the Wyrm. Below the Triat are the Celestines, who are akin to gods. Below the Celestines are the Incarnae: the lords and kings

of the spirit world. Their servants, the Jagglings and Gafflings, are like knights and vassals.

### *Gaia*

The Realm-system begins with Gaia and is bounded by Gaia. Many Garou hold that all things that exist within the Tellurian are of Gaia, although some refute the notion that evil beings are truly a part of her. Gaia's growth and development are inextricably linked to the growth and development of the living beings within her. Gaia loves all of her Creations, and she extends to them a pure, unconditional acceptance and respect. Life is both a manifestation of Gaia and a celebration of her glory. Death is but a transfiguration of her energy, as the dying being ascends to a new state of in the cosmological cycle. This natural cycle of life and death has been altered by powerful intelligences, which, in turn, weakens Gaia. She is also weakened and degraded by the ongoing clash of the Triat. The Garou rage at the violence that the Weaver and the Wyrm inflict on Gaia, and they have pledged their lives and souls to defending, upholding and restoring her. They fear that the impending Apocalypse may signal her ultimate destruction.

### *On the Other Hand...*

Some Garou hold that the Tellurian is greater than Gaia; that there might be other "Gaias" in the universe, that represent the awakened spirits of other worlds far away. These werewolves — some of whom actually try questing for these other worlds — also hold that the Triat is more powerful than Gaia, being universal forces rather than forces of the world. Although this viewpoint isn't tantamount to heresy, it's not a popular rallying cry in most septs.

### *The Triat*

Below Gaia in cosmic power (or at least so it's said) are the mysterious, personified forces called the Wyld, the Weaver and the Wyrm. According to the Garou, these entities, known collectively as the Triat, shape and control eternity. The interplay of these impersonal spiritual forces makes up the Tellurian and comprises all within it.

At a base level, the members of the Triat represent the forces of creation, growth and destruction, but they are far more. They represent potential, materialization and unravelling. They also embody chaos, order and balance.

### *The Wyld*

Creation begins with the Wyld. The Wyld is pure change. It is not so much undifferentiated chaos as it is elemental transmutation. It swirls constantly with change, adaptation and change again. The Wyld is alive with possibility: The Wyld is possibility. Every ant and tree contains a particle of this chaos of possibility within its spirit. No Garou Theurge or human mage or caretaker spirit has ever been able to quantify that tiny drop of eternity. Gaia draws

the power of potential from the Wyld. Indeed, some say that she could not exist without it.

The Wyld is a complete entity, but without the Weaver, the Wyld loses all the forms it spawns. They return to the primal forge at the very moment of birth. To be all forms at all times is to be formless. Life without bounds cannot know itself in all parts. Therefore, the Wyld is the least personified of the three. Its constant mutability precludes true form or nature. The Wyrm is also essential to the Wyld, because the Wyrm destroys select aspects of the Weaver's Web and returns the uncreated matter to the Wyld.

In the Deep Umbra, the Wyld has the potential to be the most powerful member of the Triat — almost as powerful as Gaia. In the physical Realm, however, the Wyld is the least powerful of the Triat. Its very essence, limitless possibility, is forced from the physical world daily by humanity's focus upon "logic" and "reason." As logic is forced upon an illogical world, there is less and less room for the magic of uncaused change. Only a few scattered sites of pure Wyld energy still exist, and the Garou guard them with their blood and the blood of their offspring. Although the Wyld loses sway in the physical world steadily, it is unassailable in its home in the Deep Umbra. No danger can threaten it there, for any enemy is dissolved into primordial protoplasm upon coming into contact with the Wyld. The Weaver or Wyrm must win victory in the physical world if they are to gain the power to assail the Wyld at its heart. To some Garou, this hope is all they have as a promise that they might yet win the war.

Werewolves venerate the Wyld, seeing it as a symbol of their struggle against the Apocalypse and a promise of a brighter day. Its Realms teem with countless forms of life. In the world that grows from the Wyld, anything can happen. Outnumbered, outfought, outmaneuvered Garou may even be able to prevail against the forces that threaten to devour Gaia. The Wyld is a bright hope, a promise of change from a wicked world of entropic destruction.

Although the Garou can expect no direct aid from this unfathomable force — for it knows no compassion or loyalty — the Wyld may prove to be their greatest ally.

### *The Weaver*

From the heedless change of the Wyld came ordered growth. The Weaver selected sections of the turbulent creation and kept them from dissolving into the boisterous whole at the instant of their birth. Undifferentiated creation was thereby structured and locked into form. Thus did the Weaver spin the first strands of the structure that would become the fabric of the universe — the Pattern Web.

And with that, everything changed. Where there was form, there could be growth and progress. Meaning was now imposed on meaningless potential. Inconstant infinity had yielded to enduring eternity. Then the Wyrm arrived and pruned away sections of the Weaver's creation. The Weaver's perfect patterns were now imperfect, but balanced. According to the Garou, this pattern is the true cosmological cycle

of chaos, creation and destruction. It lasted an eternity, but it was ultimately shattered when the Weaver gained consciousness — or, as some theorize, went mad.

One theory holds that the Weaver tried to spin the entire Wyld into full patterned existence. This goal gave birth to an explosion of creation, which drove the Weaver insane. She looked into the Web and saw only madness. The Wyrm, exhausted from trying to maintain the balance, became ensnared in creation. The Wyrm is still there, these theorists say, struggling to free itself and destroying all creation from the inside.

Others say that the Weaver was far more calculating, and that her only madness is power-lust. The Weaver, these werewolves say, attempted to make logical advancement and permanence the cornerstones of the Tellurian. Once she established causality, she set out to impose causality on everything. The Wyrm was an obstacle to this process, because it destroyed by its own rules rather than the rules of the Weaver. So the Weaver ensnared the Wyrm in the Pattern Web and directed its destruction along the lines of causality. But her control over it is not absolute, and it still manages to destroy blindly, along a pattern other than hers. This destruction limits the Weaver's power, which is cosmologically helpful, but it injures Gaia, which is not.

The Glass Walkers claim that the Wyrm is the source of trouble, because the Wyrm attempted to destroy the Wyld altogether. If the Wyld were gone, nothing more could be created, and the Wyrm would destroy everything that was left. The Wyrm tried to use the Weaver to weaken the Wyld by ensnaring it, but the Weaver could not bind all of infinity. Instead, she spun herself into madness. The Wyrm was caught in a trap of its own devising, and it remains there to this day. Meanwhile, the eternal Wyld endures. The Glass Walkers insist that the Weaver is simply trying to defend herself, and that she holds the key to stopping the Wyrm.

Most Garou agree that the Weaver was the first of the Triat to gain intelligence. Whether that intelligence drove her mad or is a product of her madness is unknown.

The Weaver is now powerful beyond her station. Stagnation and decay have replaced the ancient balance of pattern and chaos. When her Webs are finished, all the Tellurian will be bound in rigid, motionless, changeless strands.

### *The Wyrm*

The Wyrm is the third and last force in the Triat. It was once the restorer of balance, bringing harmony where there was none and ensuring that neither the order of the Weaver nor the chaos of the Wyld prevailed throughout reality. Suspended between Chaos below and the Pattern Web above, the Wyrm removed all that was not harmonious.

Then the Wyrm became ensnared in the Pattern Web. By looking into the madness of the Weaver's Web, it gained sentience and became trapped in the Weaver's deadly apocalyptic game. The Wyrm fractured into three personalities, and it is not always able to coordinate its actions as a result.

Where the Wyrm was once the bringer of harmony, it is now the harbinger of the Apocalypse, spawning entropy, decay and corruption. Unable to destroy overtly and honorably, it destroys from within. Scholars say that it wears three heads — Beast-of-War, the Wyrm of Destruction; Eater-of-Souls, the Wyrm of Consumption; and the Defiler Wyrm, the Wyrm of Violation. It destroys all those weak enough in spirit to succumb to the temptations of hatred and envy. Even its base desires are powerful enough to take on forms of their own, becoming the powerful Urge Wyrms of Hate, Lust, Fear and other dread sentiments. With so many heads, the Wyrm is more hydra than serpent — and each head is all but impossible to sever.

Some say that the Wyrm began the great imbalance by seeking to use the Weaver to calcify the Wyld into nothing, thereby freeing the Wyrm to destroy all of creation. Now the Wyrm is caught in its own trap — a tribute to the perils of greed.

The Wyrm's Urges and spawn have found many beings weak enough to surrender to corruption, so it now has many servants. Because its decay is in all things, its servitors may whisper to the dark places inside all intelligent creatures. Its disease spreads thus in the physical and spirit worlds, where it has won many battles and conquered many Realms.

Werewolves have traveled to the Realms of the Wyrm — places that blind destruction has left utterly devoid of Gaia. Those who dwell there are enslaved or destroyed by the most wicked of Banes and Incarnae. If the Wyrm has its way, the entire world will be remade thus until all is destroyed.

## *Celestines*

Below the Triat on the cosmological totem pole lie the Celestines. The greatest of the Celestines are Luna, the spirit of the Moon, and Helios, the spirit of the Sun. Gaia's most directly comprehensible manifestation is a Celestine form, although some say that this spirit is merely the Celestine of the planet Earth. Theurges claim that Her true form is so much larger than the Triat as to be completely unknowable by any means other than the transcendent bliss of mystical union. Other Celestines are powerful servitors of the Triat, but their forms are all but unknown to the Garou. They are sentient and highly intelligent. Most Celestines abide in Realms of their own design, in which they are omnipotent and omniscient. Only Incarnae usually visit them.

Celestines sometimes send avatars to communicate with werewolves. These avatars are aspects of themselves that lesser beings can comprehend and interact with. They contain a small amount of the Celestine's power and Essence, although even this sliver of power still makes them among the mightiest beings in the Umbra. The true form of a Celestine is unimaginable. It is only through an avatar that communication between them and lesser beings can take place.

To create an avatar, the Celestine wills itself to appear in a finite, limited form. Because of its near-infinite nature, a Celestine may have many avatars active at one time.

These avatars usually seem omnipotent and omniscient to the werewolves who encounter them.

## *Incarnae*

The Incarnae stand one step below the Celestines. Incarnae are minions, consorts, advisors and warriors who serve the Celestines and derive power from their patrons. A few have their own Domains, but most dwell in the Realms of the Celestines. These powerful spirits define a purpose and have a specific area of influence. Most of these spirits believe that they have the potential to become Celestines.

Totem spirits are the Incarnae most familiar to werewolves. They guide tribes, septs and packs of werewolves. These servants of Gaia create avatars to communicate and interact with the Garou. Pack totems are totem avatars. Totem avatars resemble Jagglings in form and powers.

While an Incarna is significantly less powerful than a Celestine, it is still immensely potent and vast, existing on many levels. One can usually hope to interact with only the avatar of an Incarna, although Theurges tell legends of great seers who encountered Incarnae in the Umbra and came away with a truer understanding of power.

## *Jagglings*

Most of the dangerous spirits that werewolves fight in the Umbra are Jagglings. These spirits include such monstrosities as large Pattern Spiders, Vortices and Nexus Crawlers. Most Jagglings serve an Incarna, but a few obey Celestines directly. They are formed from a part of the spiritual essence of their patron, and Jagglings are quite loyal as a result. Some develop (or are given) free will by their patron. A few Jagglings can create Gafflings, just as Incarnae created them. Some Jagglings teach Gifts to Garou, while others, such as Englings, can provide an entire sept with Gnosis.

## *Gafflings*

At the bottom of the spiritual hierarchy are Gafflings. These spirits are semi-sentient servants of Jagglings. Their masters use them as tools and are willing to sacrifice them for the greater good. Gafflings remain in constant communication with their patron, and their patron sometimes assumes complete control over them. Many of them feel most "whole" when they allow their patron to dominate them. They are completely loyal to their masters.

Some Gafflings are fully intelligent, but they are the exceptions, and their existence is often the work of mysterious higher forces.

## *Spirit Traits*

Spirits don't normally have Attributes or Abilities like physical creatures. They possess them only if they appear in the physical world. Instead, spirits simply use Willpower, Rage and Gnosis to determine whether they succeed or fail in actions. They also have Charms, which give them different powers. Instead of health levels, they have an Essence rating

that is the sum of their Willpower, Rage and Gnosis. Traits work differently for spirits than werewolves. For example, spending points of Rage won't let spirits take extra actions. Spending a point of Willpower won't give the spirit an extra success. The way these Traits work for spirits is detailed here.

### Willpower

For a spirit, Willpower provides coordination and self-control over thought and form. Willpower allows a spirit to take "physical" actions, such as attempting to strike an enemy, racing after another spirit or flying through the Umbra. The spirit also uses its Willpower to resist damage, and it may soak most attacks with it. Almost every spirit possesses the ability to "soak" damage to some degree, although those with the Armor Charm are more resistant. As a rule of thumb, if an action would involve Dexterity or Stamina for a physical creature, spirits should use Willpower. Standard difficulty numbers for spirit actions include:

Difficulty	Action
3	easy action
5	fairly simple action
6	normal action
8	difficult action
10	virtually impossible action

### Rage

Some spirits refer to Rage as "the fire within." Rage is like a hunger for the spirit, a desire to survive and live. Spirits attack others with their Rage, using it to sharpen their teeth or claws, or to power a more mystical attack. After a spirit uses Willpower to hit its opponent, it uses Rage to determine damage. Rage works like the Strength Attribute for most actions.

Rage also determines the difficulty to harm a spirit. If a werewolf strikes a spirit, her difficulty for damage rolls equals the spirit's Rage. This difficulty is normally not modified, although the Storyteller has final say, as always.

### Incarnae

This Trait measures a spirit's cosmic awareness. Spirits use Gnosis for all Social and Mental rolls. For instance, a riddle contest with a spirit could be resolved using the questioner's Wits + Enigmas resisted by the spirit's Gnosis; whoever scores the most successes wins. Likewise, a spirit would roll its Gnosis when trying to intimidate, scare or fool a target.

High Gnosis usually aids with Charms, as well.

### Essence

Essence measures a spirit's survivability. It is a sum generally equal to the spirit's Rage, Gnosis, and Willpower (although a Storyteller may adjust Essence up or down to tailor spirits to his liking). As a spirit takes damage, it loses points of Essence. When a spirit loses all of its Essence, it "dies" by fading slowly into the Umbra. Werewolves can bind spirits stripped of their Essence into fetishes or harvest Gnosis from them, bringing them to a permanent end. Otherwise,

the spirit slips into a state called Slumber, where it rebuilds its Essence before reappearing elsewhere in the Umbra.

### Incarnae and Beyond

Some spirits, such as tribal totems, Incarnae and Celestines, have power beyond understanding. They may take forms with Attributes and Abilities, but these forms are only shadows of their true magnitude. Storytellers should break with game mechanics to fit the whims of these beings. To challenge one of these greater spirits, Garou will have to use more than brute force. Ancient lore may guide them on quests or lead them to forgotten artifacts with the power to harm these beings. This is why the war for the Apocalypse will not be won so easily. It would be easier to extinguish the sun than to slay the Wyrm itself.

### Charms

Charms work in a similar fashion to Gifts. Most Charms last for one scene, but, combat-oriented Charms last one turn per use. According to some Garou traditions, every Charm has a corresponding Gift that a werewolf can learn. Spirits have even been said to promise to teach Charm-like Gifts in exchange for services from Garou.

The following list serves as a guideline for Storytellers. It should be a starting point for the magical abilities of spirits in chronicles. Many Charms have similar game mechanics but appear in different forms. For example, Blast could appear as thorns shooting through the air if used by a nature spirit, while an electrical spirit would probably blast its opponents with lightning. Be creative and have fun.

### Common Charms

Storytellers and players may assume that any spirit has these Charms. If a spirit does not have one of these abilities, either it has been weakened, or it is the subject of a punishment from its patrons.

- **Airt Sense:** Most spirits have a natural sense of the airts (directions) of the spirit world, and they are able to travel about without much difficulty. They can create or find spirit tracks at will. The Storyteller rolls Gnosis for a spirit to locate a particular place or individual in the Umbra. However, even spirits aren't infallible, and a botch can lead them to an unforgiving Realm (especially if they are leading a pack of werewolves).

- **Materialize:** This Charm lets a spirit take physical form on Earth. The spirit must have a Gnosis score equal to or greater than the area's Gauntlet rating. A spirit's physical form appears just as the spirit appears in the Umbra. The spirit's Gnosis rating is used for all Social and Mental rolls. Stamina and Dexterity rolls use the spirit's Willpower as a dice pool. Strength uses Rage. All rules for spirit Traits in the Umbra apply to the physical world. Materialized spirits don't have Abilities, but their dice pools are assumed to take the spirit's knowledge into account. In some circumstances, such as a toad-spirit trying to program a computer, the Storyteller should divide the spirit's dice pool in half and raise the

difficulty numbers to reflect the spirit's lack of knowledge. Materialized spirit forms do possess health levels like most physical creatures. Spirits usually have seven health levels, but the Storyteller may make exceptions for things like elephant-spirits or particularly monstrous Banes. If a spirit "dies" in the Material world, it enters Slumber automatically upon its return to the Umbra. Many spirits will not use this Charm except in extraordinary circumstances. The modern world is far from welcoming to their kind.

- **Realm Sense:** The spirit can sense all that transpires in its Domain both in the Umbra and on Earth, although it still requires successful Gnosis rolls for specific perceptions. This Charm is usually associated with Naturae, woodland spirits of Gaia, but most spirits bound to an area possess this ability. Free-floating spirits without direct ties to Earth may have this Charm, but with the abilities to sense only their dens in the Near-Umbral Realms or home Domains.

- **Re-form:** Spirits may dissolve their forms and transport themselves through the Umbra to their home Domains. Glass Walkers refer to this Charm as "re-spawning." It takes a spirit a full turn to try to re-form. The Storyteller must roll the spirit's Gnosis successfully for this Charm to succeed. Spirits use this Charm to flee their enemies.

### *Specialty Charms*

The following are examples of Charms that a variety of different spirits possess.

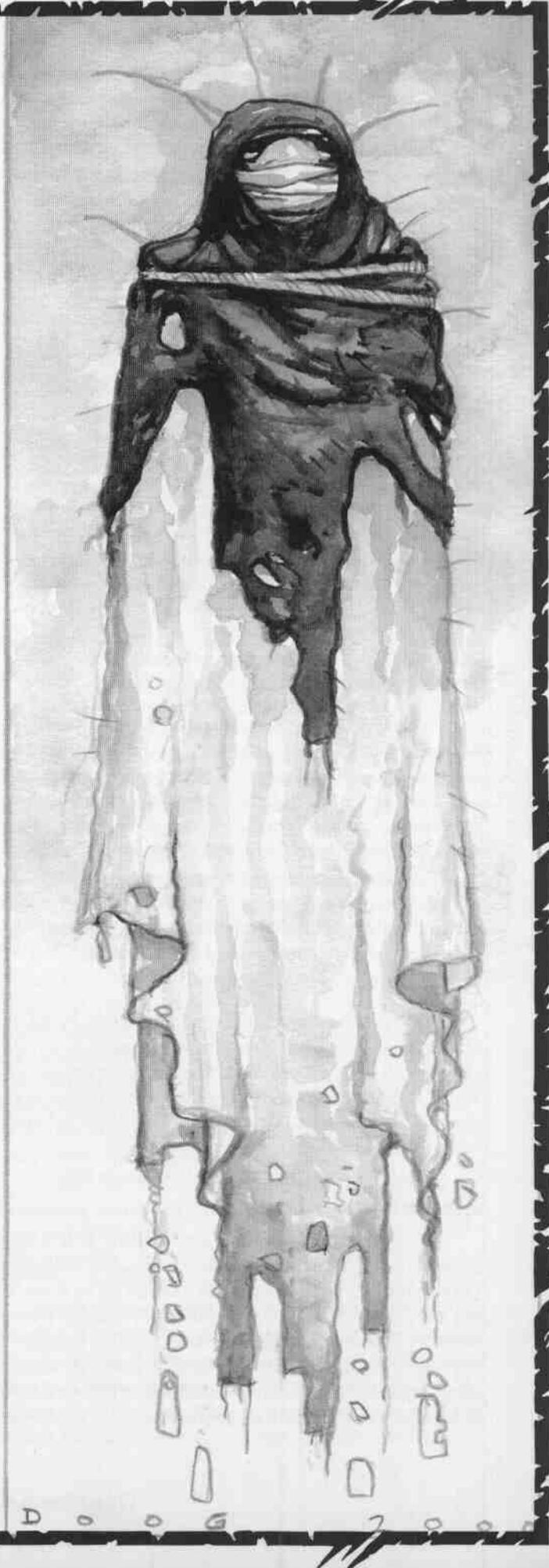
- **Armor:** This Charm grants a spirit a measure of protection. By expending two points of Essence, the spirit gains a soak pool equal to its Gnosis for the remainder of the scene.

- **Blast:** This Charm allows the spirit to direct its Rage at opponents from a distance. Depending on the spirit, this effect may take different forms. Some spirits send bursts of fire at their targets, while others use glass, lightning and even swarms of insects. The spirit causes its Rage in dice of aggravated damage; no roll to hit is required. However, this attack drains a point of Essence from the spirit.

- **Cleanse the Blight:** This Charm is similar to the Rite of Cleansing, in that it purges spiritual corruption in its vicinity. The Storyteller must roll the spirit's Gnosis at a difficulty determined by the strength of the Blight. Most spirits have a limit to this Charm, such as only being able to cleanse woods for example.

- **Control Electrical Systems:** The spirit can exert control over an electrical system. The Storyteller rolls the spirit's Gnosis (difficulty from 3 to 9 depending on the system's complexity). This Charm can allow the spirit to overload a system, shut it down or manipulate it. For example, it may use a security system to open some doors and lock others.

- **Create Fires:** With a successful Gnosis roll, the spirit can create small fires. The difficulty varies (from 3 for small fires to 9 for conflagrations). The fires must have fuel in order to keep burning.



- **Create Wind:** The spirit can create wind effects. The Storyteller rolls the spirit's Gnosis. The difficulty varies — from 2 for a breeze to 10 for a tornado.

- **Flood:** The spirit can cause all the waters in a given area to rise rapidly, causing flooding. Doing so requires losing a point of Essence.

- **Freeze:** The spirit can lower the temperature drastically in the immediate area. The spirit loses a point of Rage for the remainder of the scene, but everyone in the area of effect suffers the spirit's newly reduced Rage in dice of aggravated damage automatically. Using this Charm may have additional effects at the Storyteller's discretion. Some fire-spirits have similar abilities involving flame that are more powerful than the Create Fires Charm.

- **Healing:** This Charm allows a spirit to heal physical beings (such as Garou). A spirit can heal up to its Gnosis in health levels of damage. So, a spirit with 5 Gnosis can restore five health levels. The Storyteller rolls the spirit's Gnosis against a difficulty of 6 for regular damage and 8 for aggravated damage. This Charm can be used only once per scene per target.

- **Open Moon Bridge:** Creates a moon bridge to a desired location. A spirit using this Charm regardless of whether there is a caern present. The moon bridge extends a total distance of 1000 miles.

- **Peek:** Spirits with this Charm are able to peek at will from the Penumbra to the physical world, no matter where they may be. This Charm is common among nomadic spirits with no Domain of their own.

- **Shapeshift:** The spirit may take the form of anything it desires. It gains only the form and visage of its new shape, not its powers or abilities. If the spirit wishes to appear as a specific individual, the Storyteller must roll its Willpower to determine how successful it is.

- **Shatter Glass:** The spirit can cause all glass in the vicinity to break (Gnosis: difficulty 6). This charm may cause incidental damage as well.

- **Short Out:** The spirit can cause electrical systems to short out (Gnosis: difficulty 6). This Charm is a more limited version of the Control Electrical Systems Charm.

- **Swift Flight:** The spirit with this Charm can outdistance most pursuers easily, flying through the Umbra at triple speed. Its maximum movement per turn is [60 + (Willpower x 3)] yards.

- **Tracking:** The spirit can track its prey unerringly. This Charm is not easy to use, and the spirit must lose a point of Essence to activate it.

- **Umbr quake:** The spirit can cause the Umbra to shake with such force that all those standing are thrown to the ground. Everyone within the radius suffers bashing damage from the spiritual concussion equal to half the spirit's Rage roll, rounded up.

- **Updraft:** The spirit can lift a human-sized creature into the air, but doing so requires a successful Willpower roll.

### *Bane Charms*

The Wyrm grants these Charms to its minions. Beings allied to Gaia, including most werewolves, cannot (and would not) learn Gifts related to these Charms.

- **Blighted Touch:** The spirit can deliver a blight unto a target. If the spirit attacks successfully, the target's player must make a Willpower roll immediately. If she fails, her negative characteristics dominate her personality for the next few hours. A botch on the Willpower roll causes the blight of personality to become permanent.

- **Corruption:** The spirit can whisper an evil suggestion in a target's ear, and the target is inclined to act upon that thought. The Storyteller rolls the spirit's Gnosis against a difficulty equal to the target's Willpower. This Gift can be used across the Gauntlet.

- **Incite Frenzy:** The spirit can cause a Garou to enter frenzy. Roll the spirit's Rage against a difficulty of the target's Willpower. All normal frenzy rules apply.

- **Possession:** The spirit (usually a Bane) may possess a living being or inanimate object. Possession requires a successful Gnosis roll (difficulty of the victim's Willpower). The number of successes equals the speed with which possession occurs as per the following chart:

Successes	Time Taken
1	six hours
2	three hours
3	one hour
4	15 minutes
5	five minutes
6+	instantaneous

During the time it takes to possess its victim, the spirit will find a dark, isolated part of the Umbra (usually a Blight) and remain there, concentrating on the possession. During this time, the spirit can take no other action. If it engages in spirit combat, the possessive link is broken. Others of their kind often guard possessing spirits, in order to ensure that the possession process continues undisturbed.

A spirit that has possessed a victim is able to manifest certain characteristics and abilities through the vessel of the victim's body. Such hapless humans are known as fomori (see Chapter Nine). This relationship is permanent — as long as the human host lives, that is.

### *Weaver Charms*

These Charms are granted to spirits by the Weaver. They involve spinning and strengthening the Pattern Web. Spirits with these Charms may also use their Airt Sense to navigate the Pattern Web.

- **Calcify:** This Charm allows the spirit to bind a target into the Pattern Web. The Storyteller rolls the spirit's Willpower against the target's Rage. Each success subtracts one dot from the victim's Physical Attributes (or Essence in the case of spirits). When the target's Essence or Attributes drop to zero, the victim is bound fast into the Pattern Web.

until freed. Werewolves can usually be freed from the Pattern Web by their packmates with a solid bit of effort. Spirits are more difficult to release, but Wyld energy should dissolve the Pattern Web.

- **Solidify Reality:** This Charm enables the Weaver spirit to spin the Pattern Web, thus reinforcing the laws and rules of the Weaver upon aspects of the Umbra. The power requires only a Willpower roll. Each success makes the object or spirit more solid, increasing its Essence or effective health levels by one per success. The effect lasts for about a day. This Charm can be performed on a target only once, until the effects wear off. Even different Weaver spirits cannot perform this Charm multiple times on the same target. Many times, Pattern Spiders will perform this Charm on each other before entering combat.

- **Spirit Static:** The spirit may raise the Gauntlet in a given area by one. Spirits working in conjunction with each other may raise the Gauntlet rating by a maximum of three. A spirit must stay in the area to keep emitting the spirit static. While it is distracted, all of the spirit's dice pools drop by two.

### *Wyld Charms*

- **Break Reality:** With a successful Gnosis roll, the spirit can disrupt the reality of a substance, and thereby modify its Umbral form. For example, the spirit could create a door in a wall, enabling the spirit to pass through. The extent of the attempted change and how interesting, sensible and clever the action is determine the difficulty. The number of successes obtained determines how much change is actually accomplished. A failure with this Charm causes the spirit to lose a point of Essence. A botch on this roll is extremely harmful, and it causes the spirit to lose a Gnosis point as well.

- **Disorient:** The spirit may alter landmarks and directions completely with a successful Gnosis roll (difficulty 6 or the Gauntlet rating whichever is higher).

### *Slumber*

When a spirit is low on Essence, it begins to look translucent, as if it is not fully there. Spirits replenish their Essence by entering a completely inactive state called Slumber. During this time, the spirit finds a secluded spot in the Umbra and floats there, entering a deep sleep. Some believe that spirits may go to a dream world of their own far in the Deep Umbra.

When a spirit is in Slumber, it may be bound easily through the use of a rite, regardless of its willingness. When a spirit is bound into a fetish, it enters Slumber automatically and stays in that state until released. The user activates the fetish's powers, not the spirit. A newly created fetish will not work until the spirit has regained its Essence (which can take a long time for the more powerful spirits).

### *Movement*

All spirits can fly (and float) in the Umbra. The maximum distance (in yards) they can move in a turn is 20 plus Willpower.

The Umbra is not always a strict geographical reflection of the physical world; sometimes yards and feet just don't add up in the spirit world. The Storyteller is free to warp distances as she pleases when running stories in the Umbra. However, the Penumbra (the zone directly surrounding physical reality) does maintain distances analogous to the physical world, so one yard always equals one yard.

### *Communication*

Spirits speak a different tongue than physical beings do. Spirit communication is not so much a language as a sharing of feelings and thoughts, an understanding by both parties of the other's intent. Not everyone can understand spirits; the Gift: Spirit Speech is required to speak with and understand spirits.

Spirits allied to the Garou (such as a tribal totem's Jagglings or Gafflings) may speak the tongue of the Garou if they choose. Likewise, many other spirits also know human or Garou tongues. Unless these spirits chose to speak so a Garou can understand, the Garou must have the proper Gift to speak to them. Gifts that allow control over or interaction with spirits do not require the user to understand spirit speech or that the spirits understand the user. For example, the Gift: Command Spirit works magically, regardless of what the commander actually says.

### *Fetishes*

Garou can bind spirits into appropriately prepared vessels called fetishes. The owner of a fetish can invoke the spirit within to perform a specific task. The powers a fetish grants depend largely on the nature of the spirit within. The multitude of spirits within the Tellurian ensures that fetishes of almost any type imaginable are possible. Werewolves hold fetishes in great reverence, treating them with the utmost honor — such are the terms of the Pact, which binds spirits to serve the Garou only as long as the Garou honor the spirits in turn. Of course, the servants of the Wyrm are able to bind Banes into revolting fetishes of their own....

Most fetish vessels are made from natural materials such as wood and clay, although the fetishes of the Glass Walkers are often made from technological objects. Similarly, most fetishes are portable. (They'd be of little use otherwise.) Many are adorned with feathers, beads, braids and carvings depicting the spirit contained within, which is a practice meant to honor the spirit inside. Some are actually weapons, from simple spears or arrows to the majestic silver klawes.

All fetishes are created through the Rite of the Fetish (see Rites, p. 161). Such creation almost always involves a willing spirit. However, certain mystics bind spirits into fetishes permanently, against the will of the spirit. These fetishes are almost always rebellious, and the Garou consider them cursed.

To use a fetish, a character must first attune herself to it by making a Gnosis roll. Attunement effectively binds the fetish to the wielder, creating a spiritual bond that enables the wielder to take the fetish anywhere in the Tellurian and provides empathic knowledge of the fetish's powers. The

difficulty for this roll is the fetish's Gnosis rating. As long as the player scores a single success, the wielder may use the fetish. If the player rolls no successes, that character may not use that fetish or even attempt to attune it again until she has somehow made accord with the resident spirit (in a manner of the Storyteller's choosing). Attunement also effectively "dedicates" a fetish to its wielder, just as if the Rite of Talisman Dedication had been performed on the fetish. Since they have their own Gnosis, attuned fetishes do not count against the maximum number of objects a werewolf can have dedicated to him.

Each time the wielder wishes to use one of her fetish's powers, the player must make a Gnosis roll (difficulty of the fetish's Gnosis rating) to "activate" the power. Alternatively, she may just spend a Gnosis point to activate the power automatically.

In order for a Garou to create a specific kind of fetish or talen, he must first procure a spirit affiliated with the item's intent. For example, a spirit of healing would not enter a fang dagger fetish or a Bane arrow talen. A spirit of war, pain or death might. Fetish spirits are almost always Gafflings.

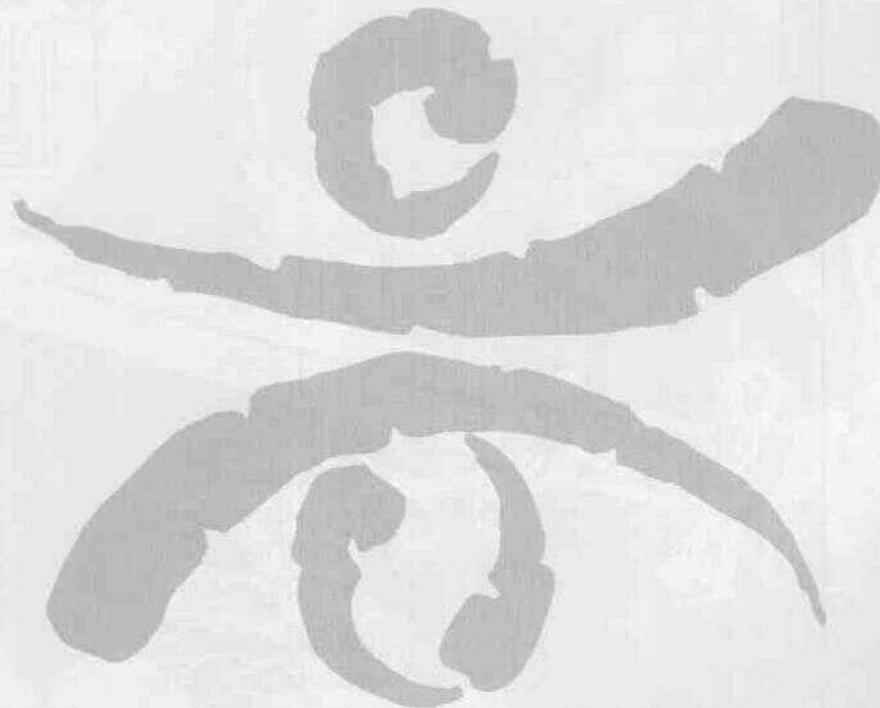
A list of sample fetishes appears in the Appendix (pp. 301-303).

### *Talens*

Talens are simpler versions of fetishes that are easier to create and use but more limited in effect. Like fetishes, talens are objects that contain spirits. They require a Gnosis roll to activate (but not to attune) — but talens can be used only once. After serving its function, a talen's spirit escapes into the Umbra, and the item loses its potency. Anyone with Gnosis may use talens. Talens are created with the Rite of Binding. A werewolf who knows this rite may cajole or even force spirits into objects, binding rather than destroying the spirit. Werewolves consider it rather less immoral to force a spirit into a talen, because the use is only temporary.

A talen receives Gnosis equal to the bound spirit's Gnosis. One extra talen of the same type can be made for each additional success received on the Rite of Binding roll. For example, three successes allow the creation of three Bane arrows. Gafflings are commonly bound to make talens, however, more powerful spirits can make the creation of multiple talens easier. Use of greater spirits adds an automatic two or three extra talens to the total number as the essence of the spirit may be bound in multiple items. Once created, a talen lasts until used.

A list of sample talens appears in the Appendix (p. 303).





"Let Urszula do it," Siemon proposed. "Even if she's just Kin, we're hard pressed to find a better storyteller." The assembled crowd agreed, and a youngster threw more wood on the fire as the woman stood before her tribe and began the tale.

Many years ago, there lived a great counselor and advisor named Istvan Andrasfia. It is said that he is an ancestor of our own wise Margrave Konietzko, and that Istvan's wisdom has passed down to his most noble descendant.

Istvan rose to a high post in the court of the Silver Fangs, in a time when they held great sway in the land of the Magyars. Istvan's lord was called Kresimir Ievlev. Once, perhaps, Ievlev had been a worthy ruler, but his heart had turned from his people and petty squabbles with his fellow nobles weakened his power. Still, Kresimir wasn't a complete fool. When Anya Borodovna, the lovely Kin daughter of his western neighbor, was old enough for marriage, he sought her hand eagerly, as would a much younger man. Istvan, though, saw that the lady's winsome face hid darker portents, and he counseled his lord strongly against the match.

"Believe me, my lord," said Istvan, "your heart's desire lies not there. If you will, let me find for you a woman of grace and maturity who will ease your burdens with greater comforts. There are many who would do honor to your house." But prideful Kresimir would hear none of it. He must have Anya, or he would die. There was no alternative.

So Istvan, always clever and loyal, ensured that Borodin Iaroslavl, Anya's warlord father, received from Kresimir's hand the best bride price, and the promise of a hundred Silver Fang and Shadow Lord warriors against the might of their enemies. Anya married Kresimir at the next full moon.

But no sooner had he wed her than Anya showed her true nature. Shrew was too kind a word for this one. Only a year after the wedding, Anya was a widow; she'd literally driven Kresimir to the grave with her harping. But she'd got the prize she wanted: a son of his blood and her own, a tool for her father to gain land and power for their tribe.

This didn't bode well for Kresimir's heir by his first mate, a strong and clever boy named Tabor, born under the half-moon, foretold to be purely of the Blood. But Anya hadn't reckoned with Istvan. He approached the would-be king, or *kiraly*, as they used to say, and told him this: "I will see to it that Anya will never bother you again, but you must let me take her child and raise him as my own. And hereafter, you must listen to my words and follow my advice more carefully than did your father." Tabor trusted Istvan over everyone else and agreed to the terms.

Over the next fortnight, Anya's sharp tongue became almost silent. She began to see shadows and faces no one else, not even the Theurges, could fathom. The once haughty woman now became a shell of her former self; she could not remember to eat or bathe, much less take care of a babe. In the days that followed, Tabor moved silently among the court and found that he had many more friends than did Anya. They were glad to pledge their loyalty to him, for there was a keen edge to his soul that pleased them. And no one thought it the worse that the late Kresimir's youngest child should be raised by such a kind and wise surrogate as Istvan.

How did he manage such things, this clever advisor? There was no magic to it, as far as these legends tell. No one knows for sure, though it is whispered that Istvan Andrasfia himself spoke to invisible voices in dark places. Perhaps he had strange allies, or maybe his ancestors came to aid him for the greater good of the land. Whatever the case, there are two lessons to be learned here. First, never discard the advice of a half-moon of Istvan's line, for it is always sound. And second, if you want a Silver Fang king to heed your requests, be sure that you take his son, or grandson, under your wing. As they know so well, blood can be a bane as well as a boon.

# Chapter Eight: Storytelling

Humans have told tales for many, many years; stories are an intrinsic part of cultures both advanced and primitive. For werewolves, whose society is entrenched in oral tradition, where every sunrise could mean the last day of a warrior's life, stories are perhaps even more important. The werewolves' sagas serve as records for past deeds of glory and honor. They rest near the heart of what it means to be Garou.

So now you have this monumental task of being a Storyteller to a group of players in a game where the tale means everything. Where to begin? How is it done, and done well? What are the promises of storytelling—and the pitfalls?

## *Who is a Storyteller?*

If you're reading this chapter, we hope you are. The ideas and advice here are meant for Storytellers rather than players, since players generally have more fun if they don't know the details of all your devious plots or how you developed them. But to be honest, a Storyteller is anyone who has ideas for games and is willing to put some time and energy into developing those ideas for a group of players. Hopefully, said players will thank you for your efforts when the scenarios are good and be honest with you when they're not. Even the greatest Storytellers can always improve upon their craft. And don't forget that the most novice Storytellers can run one-in-a-million games while the masters might have an off day and run really crappy ones. Storytelling is an art, never a science.

As the Storyteller, it's your duty to come up with the basic plot for each game session and overall story arc. You

decide the conflict, devise the antagonists and so on. You'll also be called on to take the role of any characters the players' characters might interact with or meet, from their contacts to their elders to ordinary people thrown into their paths. (These supporting cast members are generally called Storyteller characters, for obvious reasons.) And, of course, you must be able to describe the characters' surroundings and adjudicate the results of any actions they take. Storytelling is quite a bit of work, but it's also rewarding.

## *Showing Stories*

The most basic lesson you need to learn is the following: Overall, show rather than tell. You can describe in painful detail what a moonrise looks like, but it's going to mean a lot more to players if you put it in terms of their characters. What do young werewolves feel as they see the glow after their First Change? How are their perceptions different than at the previous moonrise, now that they're no longer quite human? Maybe they never bothered to look at the moon before. Talk to the players about painful aches in their characters' hearts as they behold the beauty of that glow. If you go on about the craters or how high the moon appears to be on the horizon, you're telling some things, but not really showing much. See the difference?

You need to find a happy medium, a style that works for you. Giving details about what someone (or something) looks like is equally important. Imagine what your players would do if, in the process of describing their awe and

### *For Experienced Storytellers*

Yes, we mean you! We know what you're thinking: "What the hell could yet *another* chapter on storytelling do for my chronicle?" And why do these chapters keep mentioning things like theme, mood and plot, anyway?

Good questions. To answer the second question first, bear in mind that not everyone who purchases this book will have the experience and knowledge you've garnered from years of playing *Werewolf: The Apocalypse*, other White Wolf games or roleplaying games in general. Some of these folks are novices who need a little extra help getting ideas and forging a chronicle. So a chunk of what's here is designed to meet their needs. But rest assured, we don't want to ignore the veterans out there, either. Along with the basics, we hope you'll find some new perspectives, fresh story seeds and perhaps a few ideas to liven up your chronicle. The job of this chapter is to inspire you, the Storyteller, to reach new pinnacles of character development, plotting and roleplaying. If we can succeed in this goal with both newcomers and time-hardened Storytellers alike, we'll be happy.

inspiration at the sight of the Black Fury Crinos, you just happened to forget to mention that she was holding a silver dagger that dripped with a caern Warden's blood....

### *Developing a Quality Story*

Unfortunately, good stories don't grow on trees. Most Storytellers would agree that a first-rate game is about 40% inspiration and 60% perspiration. For a great story, you need a special combination of memorable characters from both players and the Storyteller, a cohesive plot, interesting conflicts, solid pacing and a satisfying conclusion. The hard-to-swallow news is that it may take you some time to develop these pieces and techniques. The more pleasant news is that storytelling more games is the easiest way to make them better.

### *Characters*

You and your players have to be happy with the chronicle's main characters. If you don't like the way a character is developing, you're not going to be inspired to run games featuring that persona. If a player isn't happy with the way his character is being treated, he's not going to enjoy the game much. Worse, if several players have characters too similar to each other, things are going to get real dull real fast. Nobody wants a copycat character or competition for her character's niche in the game. Yet, even within the tribes, plenty of chances exist for enormous diversity and roleplaying opportunities. What you don't want to have, though, is a game in which every player wants a Bone Gnawer Galliard who specializes in the folk music of central Louisiana.

When constructing characters, most players conceive of a persona who has a story to tell through the life of the game or chronicle; this story might well change over time.

### *A Word on Players*

Whether saying so is snotty or not, good players can make a game, and bad ones can break it. And if you're like most Storytellers, you want your *Werewolf* chronicle to be good. You don't have enough hours in a day to put all that time and energy into writing a story just to have it collapse due to rotten players. By the way, we're not necessarily talking about timid, inexperienced players who may be new to the system or perhaps to roleplaying altogether. With some TLC and time, most of these folks develop into quality players. Nor are we talking about good players who may have problematic characters (that issue is often resolved by having a heart-to-heart talk with the player, or asking him to use a different character). No, we're talking about the stinkers, the grandstanders who shout and scream their soliloquies claiming to be "in character," and force everyone else to keep quiet. These players are the ones who care so little for the game that they don't show up half the time, much less bother to let you know beforehand, then have a fit if you play without them. Probably within a handful of sessions, you'll know a bad player from a good one. If you don't, your other players will probably fill you in.

So how do you deal with a bad player? First, try being civil, and talk to the player. Maybe she doesn't have a clue that she's ruining things for everyone. Anyone who is genuinely concerned and who asks for a second chance probably deserves one. If that doesn't work, though, you have a tougher task ahead: removing the player from the game. Sometimes, you can just explain that things aren't working out and that you'd like them to bow out. Other times, you may have to keep the game private, or, unfortunately, close it down. It's never easy to have player problems, and every situation has a different set of issues. Just remember that games are what you and the players are willing to make them, and that the bottom line for everyone is to have a good time.

For example, consider Evan Heals-the-Past, Wendigo Philodox. His initial story was about discovery and learning what it means to be Garou. Now that Evan's well entrenched in Garou society, his story has evolved. Now it focuses on his efforts to become a force for transforming werewolf society. Once a lost cub, he's taken to guiding others (as in the Prologue). Each character in your own chronicle should have an interesting background, a purpose and a way to impact her world as well.

Also, don't forget that flaws and quirks help individualize characters as much as their unique talents and personalities. And such hooks can be highly inspirational for your story ideas. Characters with some troubles in their past provide excellent fodder for your more wicked schemes.

Finally, don't forget that everyone likes his character to have a starring role from time to time. If Jim's Ahroun turns out

to be the main focus for the more martial scenarios, try to plan a few sessions focusing on Monica's Galliard or Joan's Theurge, too. One of the beauties of playing members of a pack is that everyone has an important job at one time or another.

### Plot

Plot describes the events of a story and their sequence. It's the tale's basic plan, including all the complications you can throw in to make it interesting. When brainstorming for a game, many Storytellers begin by sketching out the various steps in the plot then filling in other details. In this sense, storytelling is much like writing a script; you set up the scenes, and the players fill in the dialogue. Other Storytellers start by developing the villains and then write a plot from that point. Whatever methods work best for you, you must remember some things about plots and plotting.

First of all, while you may want the story to be linear, players seldom follow a set pattern of reactions. You may have all your causes and subsequent effects set up perfectly, but your players could easily decide to jump ahead from scene three to scene seven in your cunning plan, so try to make events somewhat open-ended when developing the plot. Outlines are one useful tool for accomplishing this goal. The players will still come up with ideas you'd never considered, but being flexible will help when they want to spend two hours of game time on a wild goose chase.

One way to remain accommodating to player whims and still have a linear story is to set up some major events of the game to have occurred *before* the characters show up on the scene. Using this tactic is a particularly good way to build mysteries; the priceless artifact is missing before the player characters stumble on the scene, and you've got a lovely set of details on who took it and how. Now it's up to the

characters to backtrack and discover what really happened. They've got freedom to decide whom to question first while you have most of the facts of the mystery easily at hand, no matter where they start.

Don't forget that plots also build up to suspenseful events, followed by a major resolution and climax, winding

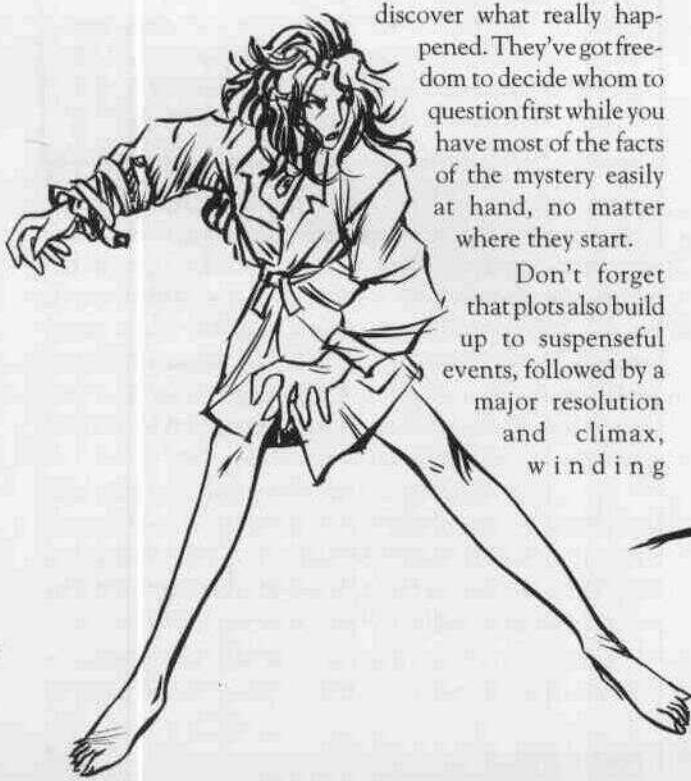
down with a denouement. Then things may begin all over again. The plots of your chronicle should be continuous overlapping cycles, where the characters are always involved in one mess or another and the players are always excited to find out what comes next.

To get an idea of how the cycle might run, let's look at the plot of one adventure, that's designed to be finished in one sitting. The Storyteller, Wayne, has three players in his game whose characters—all Children of Gaia—form a small pack along with two Storyteller characters. At the start of the game, Buck's character, Francis Turning, comes home to find the body of the pack Theurge (Storyteller character) dead and covered in blood. The Theurge's bone necklace, which is a powerful fetish, is missing, and all the mirrors in the house are smashed. This scene is the hook to get everyone involved in the game, and it's a major event of the story. Wayne's counting on Francis to contact the other characters and get them together. Wayne also jots down some minor events that may or may not occur, depending on the players. Maybe the police show up, if the characters hang around too long. Or, if the characters try to drag the body out the front door, the neighbors see and cause a panic. Then again, one of them might remember seeing some "scraggly looking fella" hanging around the apartment. That admission can give the players enough clues to start suspecting that the Theurge's murderer might have one of the Black Spirals who's been causing regular trouble in their protectorate. Tracking down the Hive would be another major story event, and it would probably be the climax of that particular adventure.

Some Storytellers find it useful to make detailed notes before a game; others prefer just to wing it. If you're new to storytelling, try plotting a few different ways and find out what works best for you.

### Pacing

Unfortunately, you can't really learn good pacing unless you run games. Pacing is how fast or slow you move things along in your scenario, and it's an important technique from start to finish in a game. Shoving the players down a rapid list of events to your stunning conclusion is an easy mistake to make. If your players are confused or they seem to be struggling with all their might to stop

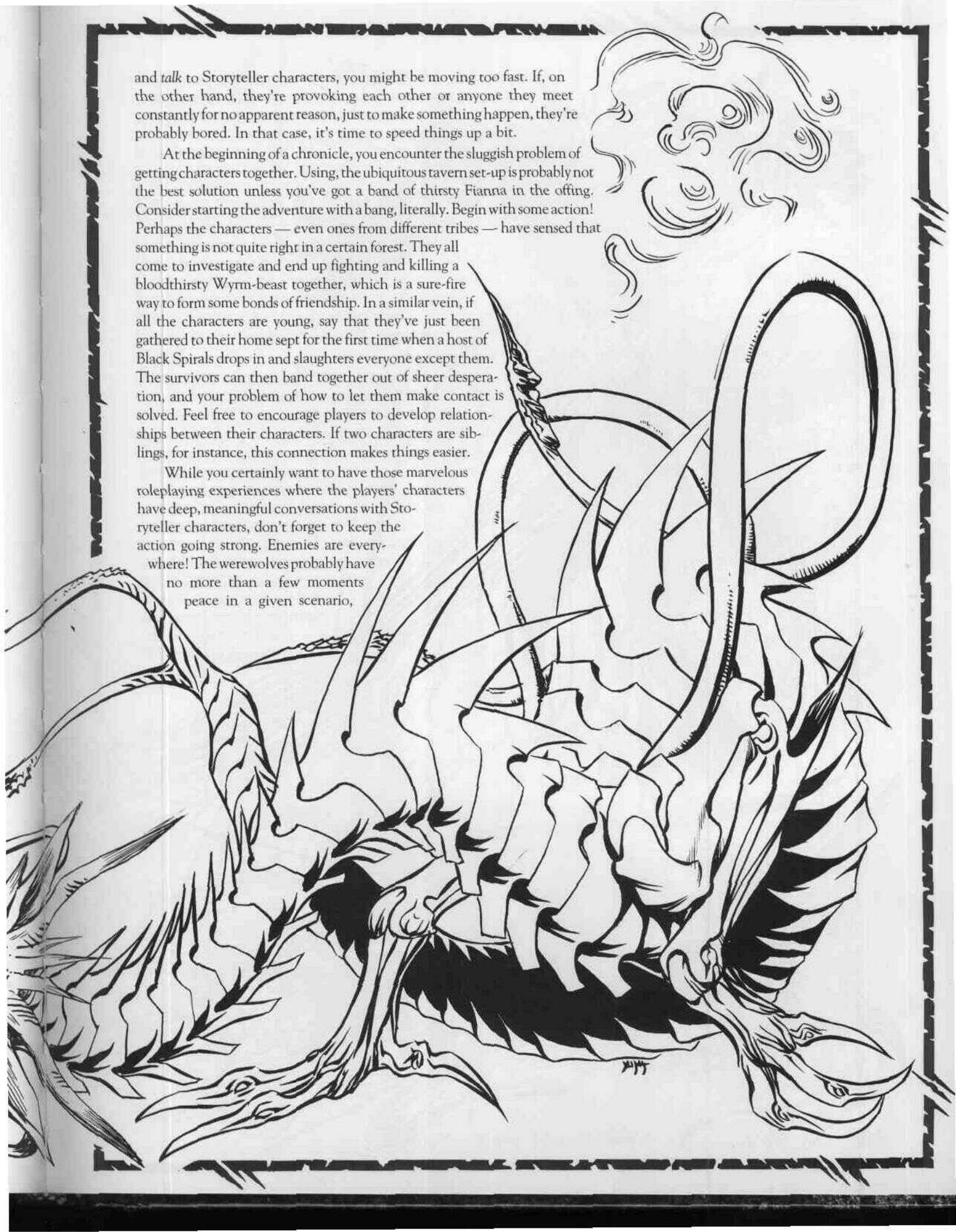


and talk to Storyteller characters, you might be moving too fast. If, on the other hand, they're provoking each other or anyone they meet constantly for no apparent reason, just to make something happen, they're probably bored. In that case, it's time to speed things up a bit.

At the beginning of a chronicle, you encounter the sluggish problem of getting characters together. Using, the ubiquitous tavern set-up is probably not the best solution unless you've got a band of thirsty Fianna in the offing. Consider starting the adventure with a bang, literally. Begin with some action! Perhaps the characters — even ones from different tribes — have sensed that something is not quite right in a certain forest. They all come to investigate and end up fighting and killing a bloodthirsty Wyrm-beast together, which is a sure-fire way to form some bonds of friendship. In a similar vein, if all the characters are young, say that they've just been gathered to their home sept for the first time when a host of Black Spirals drops in and slaughters everyone except them. The survivors can then band together out of sheer desperation, and your problem of how to let them make contact is solved. Feel free to encourage players to develop relationships between their characters. If two characters are siblings, for instance, this connection makes things easier.

While you certainly want to have those marvelous roleplaying experiences where the players' characters have deep, meaningful conversations with Storyteller characters, don't forget to keep the action going strong. Enemies are everywhere! The werewolves probably have

no more than a few moments of peace in a given scenario,





and so you should let the characters savor those times as much as the players wish... while getting ready to launch the DNA ambush in the next scene.

Another thing to remember is to take a break before moving into the heavy action. Let everyone get a drink and make a pit stop.

You don't want players to get up and leave the room haphazardly when the big battle starts. Taking a break can also help pacing, especially if the characters have gotten way off course in their investigations. It gives you time to evaluate and regroup.

Once the loosely connected scenarios start developing into a cohesive chronicle, you'll feel more at ease balancing low-key games with action-packed ones. Having glorious battles is great fun when you play a 10-foot tall flesh-and-blood chainsaw. But don't forget the spiritual aspects of werewolves, too. Once you've all gotten comfy gaming with each other, decide what works best for you and the players. Maybe you'd prefer having a perfect balance of battle and action with dreamquests and missions of the heart. Perhaps your players are genuine combat monsters who want

90% war and minimal introspection.

Or maybe they're a group of sentimentalists who want to roleplay every little tragedy and triumph deeply. Whatever the case, don't

forget to solicit advice from the players about how things went. They're your best source for improving the pace of future games.

### *Garou's Instincts*

By its very nature, *Werewolf: The Apocalypse* is about a group working together. Sure, solos and pair games are terrific fun, and they can really get players excited about their characters, but the soul of the game is life within a pack. Garou have a natural inclination to bond in packs, so make sure your players know it up front. Characters *don't* have to like each other, but they should still do their best to pull each other's fat out of the fire. That's what being a pack is all about.

### *Conflict*

Conflict drives a story; it gives the characters reason for thinking and acting certain ways. If your story has no conflict, it's going to be a bore. Conflict doesn't necessarily mean quarrels with a villain, although that type of conflict is probably the most common. It can also refer to a character's inner moral struggles or clashes of interests and opinions with others. The following list details some of the more common threads of conflict in storytelling *Werewolf: The*



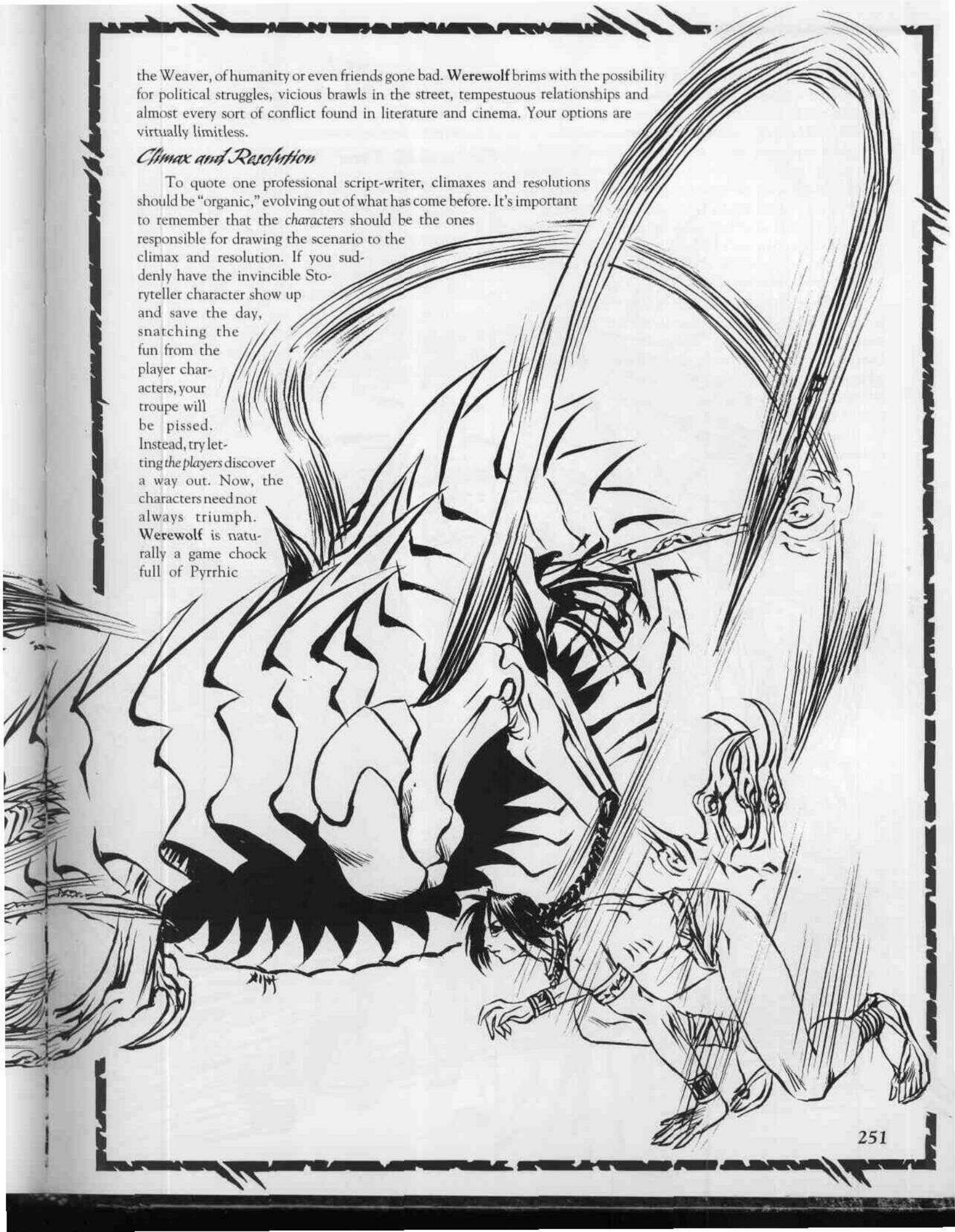
**Apocalypse.** As you're reading this list, though, don't forget that conflict has to be more personal than "good versus evil." As a Storyteller, your task will be to set up conflict in such a way that it has enough meaning for the characters to pull them completely into your tale.

Good conflicts don't always involve pitched battles against monsters of ultimate evil. Conflict can take many forms. The struggle to survive in hostile environments (wild, urban or even Umbral), clashes with a band of rivals rather than outright enemies and the battle between wilderness and technology are all possibilities. The obstacles can be lethal or merely dangerous, overcome with violence or through cunning. Enemies might be of the Wyrm, of

the Weaver, of humanity or even friends gone bad. Werewolf brims with the possibility for political struggles, vicious brawls in the street, tempestuous relationships and almost every sort of conflict found in literature and cinema. Your options are virtually limitless.

### *Climax and Resolution*

To quote one professional script-writer, climaxes and resolutions should be "organic," evolving out of what has come before. It's important to remember that the characters should be the ones responsible for drawing the scenario to the climax and resolution. If you suddenly have the invincible Storyteller character show up and save the day, snatching the fun from the player characters, your troupe will be pissed. Instead, try letting the players discover a way out. Now, the characters need not always triumph. Werewolf is naturally a game chock full of Pyrrhic



victories, and Gaia's warriors are constantly on the defensive against impossible odds. But the triumphs and the tragedies should generally be the result of what the characters did or did not do, not Storyteller *deus ex machina*.

James Joyce sometimes referred to the climax of the story as an "epiphany," a point in the tale where things suddenly make sense or come together. For example, the werewolf pack might finally figure out that Endron Oil is behind the plot to steal their land, and so they make plans to go kick the company's butt. Thus they come to their epiphany and then resolve their problem. The cool fight settles the score once and for all.

Time permitting, don't forget to allow the characters to do some mopping up of a more personal interest after the major events of the game. If Thomas Lovejoy of the Uktena dies in the final battle, let the characters give him a burial and eulogy in order to celebrate his life and final victory, if they so desire. Have everyone say

something about Thomas and his great achievements. Such individual resolutions help strengthen the bonds of the pack (and the players) with opportunities for roleplaying and character development.

### *Getting in the Mood*

Mood should convey emotion. It's the overall feeling and tone set for your story or chronicle; it comprises the little things you and the players can do to put just the right edge and creative touch onto a session of *Werewolf*. Can you have an okay game without the proper mood? Sure, but if you can get the tone just right, mood can bring a so-so game up to the level of a great adventure.

So how do you capture that mood and, more importantly, sustain it? Experienced Storytellers may be more familiar with the little things that help set mood, but here's a handy list of suggestions for everyone to consider.

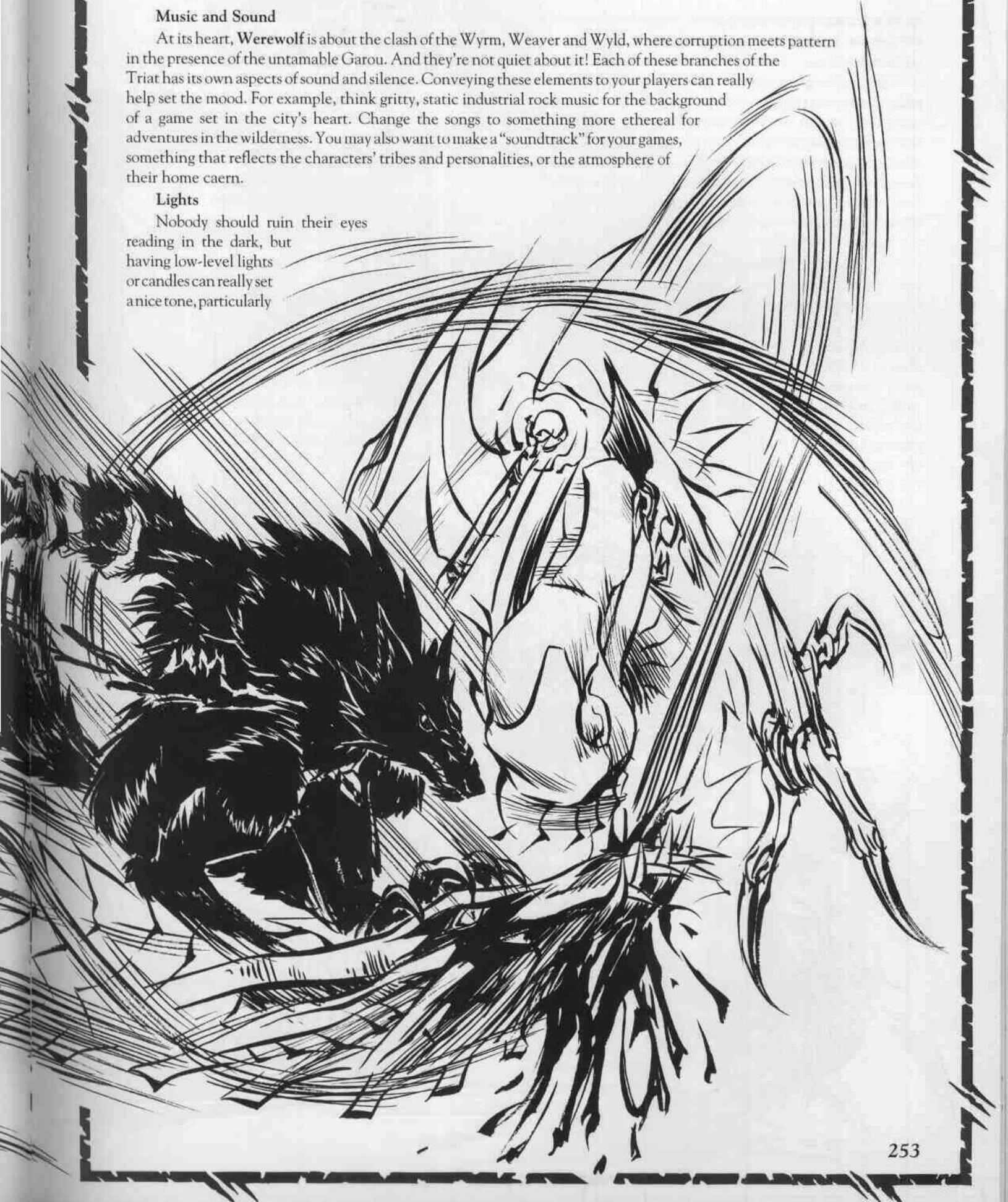


## Music and Sound

At its heart, **Werewolf** is about the clash of the Wyrm, Weaver and Wyld, where corruption meets pattern in the presence of the untamable Garou. And they're not quiet about it! Each of these branches of the Triat has its own aspects of sound and silence. Conveying these elements to your players can really help set the mood. For example, think gritty, static industrial rock music for the background of a game set in the city's heart. Change the songs to something more ethereal for adventures in the wilderness. You may also want to make a "soundtrack" for your games, something that reflects the characters' tribes and personalities, or the atmosphere of their home caern.

## Lights

Nobody should ruin their eyes  
reading in the dark, but  
having low-level lights  
or candles can really set  
a nice tone, particularly



for roleplaying and discussion. Then, when the claws come out, you can brighten the room up a bit.

#### Props

Even with a tabletop game, props can be fun. Instead of telling players what happened at the monthly moot, consider it a golden opportunity for roleplaying, with each player holding a nifty wooden goblet when it's her chance to speak in turn. Other mood-setting props might include maps, letters or dossiers representing the characters' research (complete with "photos" cut from magazines or the Internet). Glass Walker fans will love you for all those computer printouts.

#### Food

Most gamers must have their snacks. If you've got the resources and the time, why not try something the werewolf characters might particularly enjoy? Even buffalo and venison are not the rare commodities they used to be. And if grilling vegetables in the wok is more your thing, that's okay too. Humans, like wolves, are social creatures, and often a meal enjoyed together with your players provides a relaxing forum for discussing the game or future plans for the chronicle.

#### Outdoor Gaming

Nothing quite compares to a Storyteller weaving his tale over an open fire while a cool forest wind settles over the troupe. You can almost imagine the distant howls of the werewolves in such surroundings. So get out of the gaming den at least once in the life of your chronicle and check out nature's bounty. Most state and national parks have safe facilities for camping or cooking out, so nobody has an excuse for not appreciating the pleasures of playing outside. But with that said, remember to keep things sane. Unless you're involved in a sanctioned LARP, in an approved area, don't really draw knives on each other, or get into an all-out brawl. The park authorities would not be happy to hear that you were "fighting back the Wyrm" when they mop up your accidents.

#### Visiting the Local Nature Center or Zoo

Obviously, it's impossible to inspect a werewolf up close and personal; this is a game, and big hairy half-wolf, half-human monsters don't really exist. But wolves





certainly do, and they're well worth any time spent in observation. How can you describe the posturing of the four-legged Ahroun or possibly comprehend a lupus character unless you've seen some wolves? Many zoos and nature centers all around the world have habitats for these great animals. And if you can't get to the zoo, consider watching wolf videos, listening to wolf howls on the stereo (which also make good background sound for a game, provided there's no cheesy music attached) or reading up on wolf behavior.

#### **Attention to Dialogue**

The best roleplaying sessions are almost like

improvisational plays; everyone's fully in character, and conversation flows naturally from each player's lips. Making that the case in your chronicle is easier said than done, though. Storytellers can get the ball rolling by having some ideas for what their Storyteller characters might say in the course of a session. When developing Storyteller characters, be they friends or foes, take a few minutes and write down something about how these people talk. Do they use slang, or are they always precise and popular in conversation? Think about the ways you can make Orlov the Silver Fang sound completely different than Three Eye the Black Spiral Dancer before you run the game.

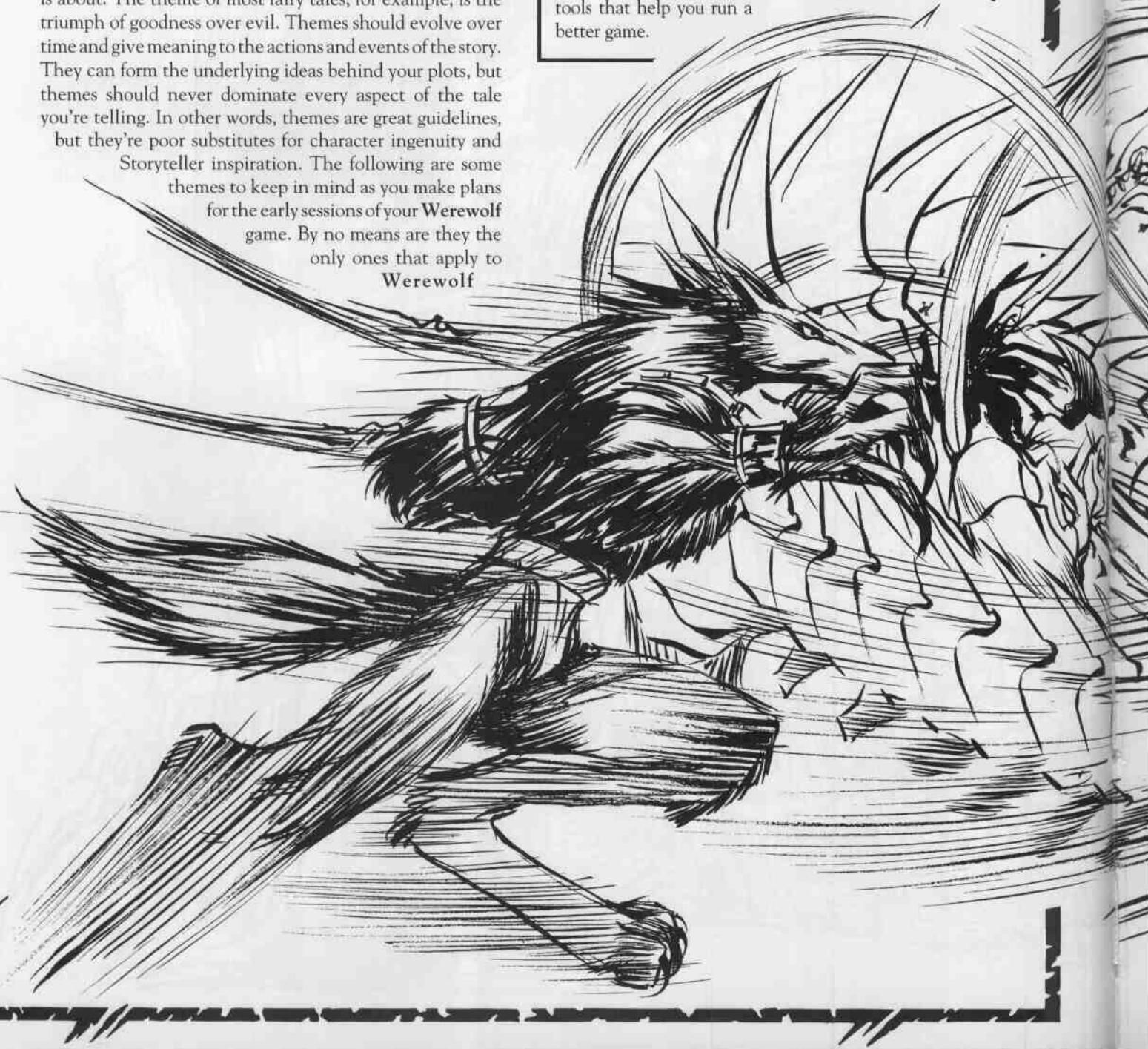
### *Working with a Theme*

Theme is synonymous with purpose and the general idea behind the story; it's basically what your overall game is about. The theme of most fairy tales, for example, is the triumph of goodness over evil. Themes should evolve over time and give meaning to the actions and events of the story. They can form the underlying ideas behind your plots, but themes should never dominate every aspect of the tale you're telling. In other words, themes are great guidelines, but they're poor substitutes for character ingenuity and

Storyteller inspiration. The following are some themes to keep in mind as you make plans for the early sessions of your Werewolf game. By no means are they the only ones that apply to Werewolf

### *Storyteller Tools*

In addition to props for the players, you might also want to have some items handy to help you tell the story. Some troupes might enjoy using a plastic wipe-off mat and a set of multicolored, water-based pens to show battles. (Hint: Always test the pen on a small area first; even some supposedly wipe-off inks are indelible on the mats.) Miniatures help put things to scale and can help clarify where characters (and villains) stand in the heat of a fight. For specific locations, you can purchase a book of house plans at the grocery store or even download such plans from dozens of websites. (Try a keyword like "house plans" to find the URLs.) Travel guides are also excellent resources if the characters want to head somewhere you've never been. In short, use any mundane tools that help you run a better game.



games. Hopefully, you have some ideas of your own by now for themes that you'd like to use.

#### Science Out of Control

Whether they're stereotypical Glass Walkers or oddball lupus with a strange Weaver affinity, characters in a chronicle with this theme deal with high tech and bizarre scientific hocus-pocus. Storytellers might craft games that are more cyberpunk in nature, or they could follow the route of Jules Verne and Edgar Rice Burroughs, taking the characters to strange new Umbral worlds where things are *really* peculiar. Be careful, though, not to toss the characters into a different Realm every single game; for all the weirdness they may seek, they're still Gaia's warriors.

#### Young and Scared

This theme is great for novice players and characters alike. For whatever reasons, the characters are alone. They have no elders to guide them through those rough first days of life as a werewolf, and it seems like the poor kids find gobs of trouble everywhere they look. Eventually, they'll

learn how to survive (or die trying), but the pups have to take care of themselves for now. If you use this theme, don't forget that being young and innocent can bring the joy of discovery as well as the threat of danger.

#### Marked by Destiny

Some powerful spirit — perhaps a character's personal totem, or maybe even Gaia herself — has marked the pack for something special. The characters have been set up to fulfill an epic prophecy and to accomplish great and wonderful things for the Garou. Yet

the characters are clueless! They may be reluctant heroes, worried about the progression of fate. Or perhaps they're willing but powerless in the maelstrom of tribal politics. This theme is complex, with potential for many different kinds of adventures.

#### Keepers of Tradition

Then again, maybe a spirit or totem has charged the characters specifically to *prevent* some destiny that is hurtling toward the werewolves. Maybe they've been challenged to preserve the status quo in Garou society and prevent outsiders and their influences from disrupting werewolf traditions. Of course, this duty would bring lots of interesting dilemmas to the pack in dealing with septs in and out of their tribe who are opposed to their view. And don't think that this theme calls for nothing but old, grumpy werewolf characters. A young, energetic pack might just be what the spirit or totem is seeking.

#### Setting

Whether the game occurs in the heart of the big city or in the darkest plains of the tundra, spend some time constructing an interesting setting for the pack. What does the characters' home look and smell like? What Kinfolk, contacts and allies are nearby? Why do the characters love this place and want to protect it? What is the form of the caern, and who is its spiritual protector? Get some help from the players. Brainstorm with them about the bawn and any special features they'd like to see. Talk about positions they might hold in the sept, and take time to lay out any other details of the sept's political structure; that's part of setting, too. Finally, when games take place at the sept, call on your best techniques of mood to help the players really visualize what home sweet home means to the characters.

Why is a rich, detailed setting particularly important in



**Werewolf: The Apocalypse?** Just consider the nature of wolves. They're territorial beings that rely on all their senses. When constructing settings, it's a good idea to think not only about how the places look, but also about how they smell, sound and taste. Secondly, if you make the players care about the setting, they'll be much more inclined to take threats to it seriously.

### *Who's Who in the Sept*

Just for quick reference, here's a handy list of people you should detail for the home sept or other important septs that the characters visit.

Major positions in a sept include:

**Council of Elders:** A sept's ruling body

**Grand Elder:** Usually a Philodox; the werewolf who speaks for the council

**Warder:** Caern's chief guardian; usually an Ahroun

**Guardians:** Assistants to the Warder

**Master of the Rite:** Chief of all ceremonies and rites; usually a Philodox or Theurge

**Gatekeeper:** Liaison to other septs; monitors the moon bridge

**Keeper of the Land:** Maintains the health of the caern and bawn

**Master of the Challenge:** Oversees all challenges, not just martial ones

Lesser positions include:

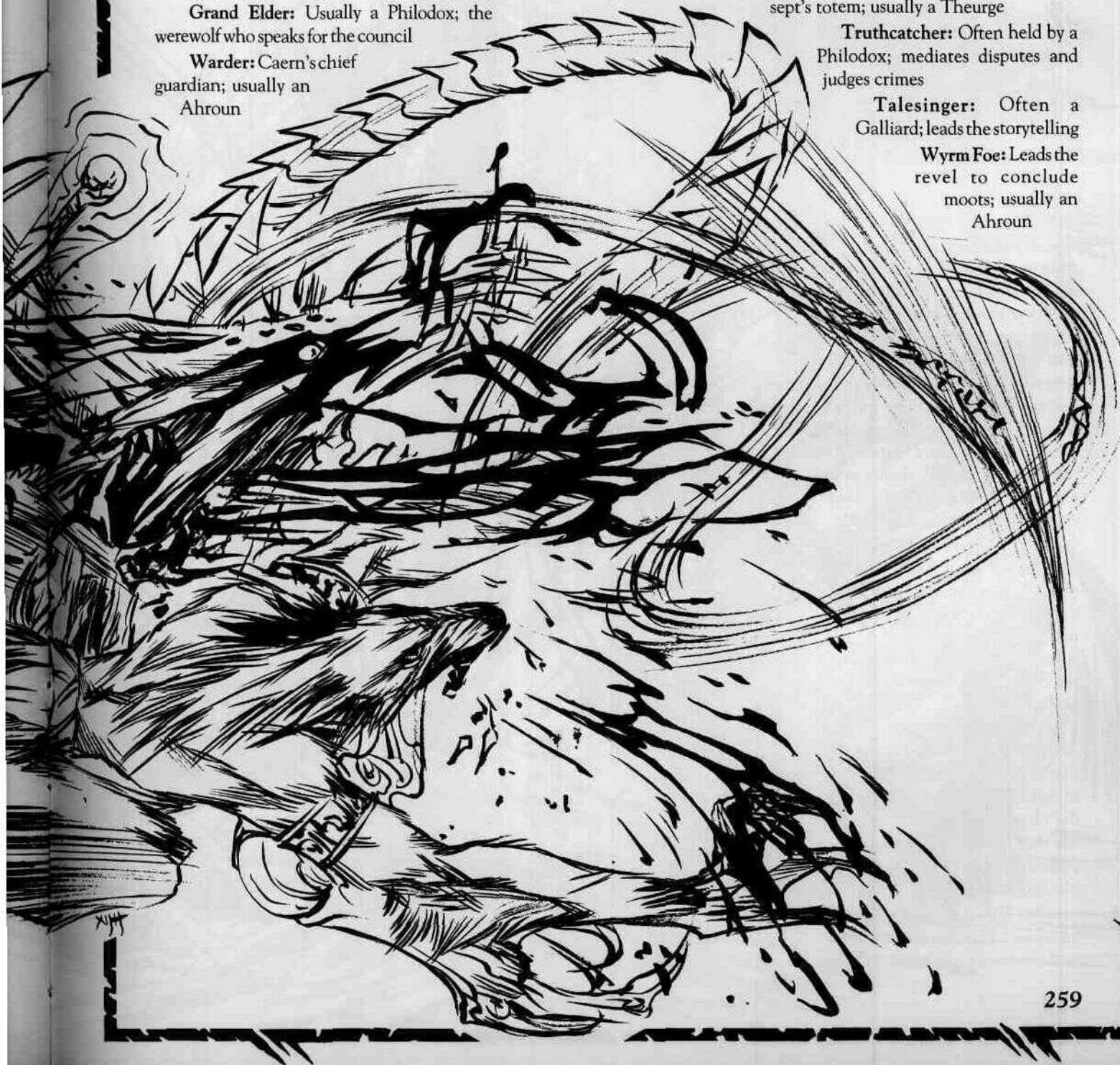
**Master of the Howl:** Leads the Opening Howl for moots; usually a Galliard

**Caller of the Wyld:** Invokes honors to the sept's totem; usually a Theurge

**Truthcatcher:** Often held by a Philodox; mediates disputes and judges crimes

**Talesinger:** Often a Galliard; leads the storytelling

**Wyrm Foe:** Leads the revel to conclude moots; usually an Ahroun



## From Story to Chronicle

When players start begging for more frequent games, calling on the phone to give you their septs' intimate history or appearing on your doorstep at 4 AM with a ream of in-character stories, congratulations. You're well on your way from transforming a set of loosely related *Werewolf* games into a bona-fide chronicle. Now, you've got more work ahead. It's time to start making ties between one-shot games, connecting stories and mapping out some long-term goals for the characters and the villains.

### Weaving Stories Together

One technique that writers use to connect story lines is to picture their overall tale as a series of climaxes. Events build up to each climax, get resolved and then move ahead from there. Most novels have at least three major climaxes and possibly a couple of lesser ones. Let's say that Wayne has been running a *Werewolf: The Apocalypse* game as just a few random sessions for a mixed pack of characters that he wants to transform into a full-fledged chronicle. His present theme is "Young and Scared," but he wants to move toward a "Marked by Destiny" theme as well. He comes up with two or three key events, which will ultimately advance his metaplots, along with a number of "filler" stories between the key events. Wayne also realizes that more fillers may be needed, especially as characters develop their own needs and interests, and that's fine. The last thing he wants is for the players to feel like they're being pushed along by his rigid agenda.

But how does the Storyteller develop a metaplot? Well, after about four scenarios, the pack has made some definite enemies in Pentex. So Wayne decides

that, perhaps by the end of the eighth episode of the chronicle, some sort of major showdown with Pentex will occur. That's a pretty good first climax, with the metaplot being something to the effect of "characters become enemies of Pentex." Cleaning up loose ends after that mess will be fun, too. But all the while, the Pentex face-off is shaping up, Wayne wants to start

building on a lesser





but equally intriguing story, a challenging quest for one of the individual characters that might be metaplot number two. He runs a solo adventure for her and brings in some important Storyteller characters. Then, a few of the other pack members get involved as well. So just when the werewolves think they're going to have some peace after kicking Pentex's ass, they've suddenly got a quest to keep them busy. And then Wayne starts plotting side adventures for other characters in the pack, and so on. What eventually happens is that Wayne has one or two major story threads plus two or three minor ones going on at any given time, overlapping a bit, all building to climaxes set about five or six episodes apart. Thus, the characters never get a moment's real peace... and the players are never bored.

Storytellers must consider two major things in transforming a set of loosely connected stories into a real chronicle. First of all, remember that Storytellers should like the characters and be inspired to run adventures for them. If you wait until six or seven games have passed and things are taking a turn toward becoming a chronicle *before* you tell a player that his character is boring, you'll be sorry. Worse, if you don't

tell him how you feel and yet run cool solos for everyone except him, you'll be in for even more unpleasantness. If you see that your players want a cohesive chronicle rather than just a series of pickup games, do everyone a favor and get comfy with both the players and the characters.

The second issue is that of time and energy. Running a chronicle takes more time and inspiration than the five or 10 minutes spent on a Friday-night werewolf bash. And nothing is wrong with you or your players if the heavy-dice-rolling approach is what you want. Go for it! But if the players are howling for a chronicle, be aware that their needs will be more sophisticated. They'll be looking to you to satisfy their roleplaying, rather than number-crunching, urges.



### *Thanks for the Memories*

Whether you're lucky enough to play in a weekly *Werewolf* game or you can get the gang together only once a month, you'll want to have some way to keep in touch with players and make sure that everyone's on top of the game. Email is a convenient and easy way to contact the troupe members individually or as a whole. You can do "off-camera" scenes with each character, or get ideas for what everyone wants to do at the next session. (Keeping in touch thus also lets you lay some plans of your own based on their responses.) Barring email, you can always rely on a good, old-fashioned phone call or lunch date. If it's not possible to get in touch with players between sessions, consider starting out each new game with a recap of the previous adventure. Players can tell it from their own characters' perspectives, with your annotations, or you might provide a brief written summary. Writing down the players' in-character quotes during the game is a particularly fun way to kick in recall.

### *Memorable Antagonists*

By this point, you'll have noted that conflict is a key element in a good chronicle. The bad guys, antiheroes, villains or whatever you choose to call them are often central to conflict, and yet, poor conceptualization of antagonists can ruin even the best of plots and settings. Antagonists should be believable, intimidating and genuine while still less important than the players' characters.

#### *Putting Meat on the Bones*

When designing antagonists, start by considering a few basic concepts. Who (or what) ultimately pulls their strings? Are they powers unto themselves, or are they just working stiffs on a bigger villain's payroll? Are they supernatural in origin? If so, what powers do they possess, and how will these powers affect the werewolves physically and psychologically? What motivations do the antagonists have. Is your antagonist just a fanatical, berserk monster for the climactic



fight sequence, or is he the cunning DNA scientist you mean to be a long-term, powerful enemy?

Next, put together a few key stats and descriptions. Think about things beyond the antagonist's physical appearance. Obviously, you should know that this week's antagonist, GalKorr the Unspeakable Servitor of the Wyrm, is 14 feet tall with poisonous fangs and a jade-green scaly hide, but push your description a few steps further. What does GalKorr smell like? This detail would be of particular note to the werewolves. Can it speak, and if so, what sound does his voice make? Does it have any vaguely anthropomorphic features such as matted tufts of hair or huge, sagging mammary glands? What is it about GalKorr that makes it so unbelievably grotesque that the characters (and maybe the players) will remember it even after carving its heart to mush?

If you're making up an antagonist that you want to last for several sessions (and soon you will be), you'd do well to spend even more time working on background material. Let's look at an example, Dr. Betsy Rook, a scientist at DNA. You sit down to write an adventure for your troupe and decide that they'll need to rescue Martha, a Kinfolk who's been taken to a Weaver-infested DNA stronghold. Martha's worth the trouble because she's carrying a child and because no werewolf in his right mind would want a bunch of Weaver-spawn messing with his kid (or his honorably mated partner, for that matter). Anyway, you decide to be quite cruel to the characters and have them be mere patsies for DNA: Martha is just bait for this maze of tests that DNA has built for use on werewolves. The characters come in ready to kick Weaver ass, and they have to navigate their way through the unbreakable maze, coaxed and wheedled by some patronizing bitch on the public address system. Maybe they get out with Martha safe and sound, but they've got an enemy in Dr. Rook. So why is Dr. Rook such a rotter? Why does she humiliate the werewolves?

Well, what if Dr. Rook has good reasons for researching these sick aberrations? Perhaps someone dear to her went a little nuts after being attacked by werewolves (or "wild dogs," as it was billed in a local paper). She might want revenge, or she may need answers to help her loved one and see that no one else is ever hurt like that. And don't forget practical motivations. The good doctor might just want the information for scientific posterity. On the other hand, Dr. Rook might just have a sadistic streak that needs feeding from time to time.... In any case, when you know that you want to develop a villain who'll be around for a couple of stories, take the time to flesh her out as much as the more sympathetic Storyteller characters in the chronicle. You'll find that doing so makes the antagonists memorable long after their initial introduction.

### *Adversaries Versus Enemies*

Some of the best stories have both adversaries and enemies. But what's the difference? Aren't both obstacles to the characters' goals? How can an adversary sometimes be an ally?

Adversaries may be dark reflections of the heroes or just champions of a differing — though no less noble — cause. They're antagonists because they're often competitors, fighting for the same resources, lands or interests as the characters. In *Werewolf*, many tribes are adversarial, although they're not necessarily full-blown enemies. The Get and the Furies may try to tear each others' heads off at a moot, but they are allies in an all-out war against the Weaver or the Wyrm, albeit grumpy ones. One way to think about adversaries is that they could be the players' characters in a long-term game in a different world or setting.

Enemies, on the other hand, have much fewer redeeming qualities. They may be portrayed in shades of gray as adversaries are, but those shades are much darker. Maybe they've got a good reason for doing terrible things, but that's no real justification. Chances are, your troupe would not want to roleplay enemy characters, unless it was a one-shot adventure (such as using expendable fomori or other Wyrm and Weaver pawns, which could be great fun). Enemies can and should be complex, but they may lack the delicious moral quandaries that adversaries suggest for the chronicle.

A good game has both adversaries and enemies in a healthy balance. One word of caution, though: It's much more difficult to turn an enemy into an adversary than to do the reverse. Few players will be happy if you have the utterly evil enemy suddenly start acting like she's overcome with remorse or guilt (think of it as the "Darth Vader Syndrome"). If you want to do so, take the time to make such a shift through a logical sequence of events. The same is true for adversaries who become enemies. If they make a shift to a darker side of

### *Keeping Records*

Who hangs onto the character sheets and game notes? It sounds like a trivial question unless you're the Storyteller at a game where everyone's sitting down to play and half the character sheets are missing. Good Storytellers will tell you that investing in some variation of character folders and a notebook for the chronicle is a must. Ring binders are good because you can add and remove information easily. Binders with front and back pockets are helpful for storing clippings or handouts. A calendar is also useful for preventing the, "Hey, when was that last game, spring or summer?" problem. (You could even note the moon phase, which is an essential fact for werewolves!)

Finally, consider having some kind of list detailing other characters met in the game. You'll be glad you kept records on how the characters pissed off a certain Silver Fang warrior when it's time to plot some new complications for the chronicle. The players will find it very beneficial to remember, for example, that they did a big favor for that Uktene elder when their fat is in the fire with the Silver Fangs.



life, show the players that there are interesting and valid reasons for such an unfortunate change of heart.

#### *Final Touches*

Just remember this: Antagonists are probably the most common purveyors of conflict to appear in chronicles, and they can make or break a good plot. One common mistake is overusing antagonists or bringing them out from behind the curtain too soon in your chronicle. If, for example, you're going to have two or three major antagonists, don't let them all tip their hands at once. Keep some things secret. Likewise, don't make them too predictable. When you're describing the approaching Pentex First Team, the last thing you want is for the players to say, "Look, it's Delta Bob and his goon squad. Don't forget they're all carrying cans of pepper spray! Battery-powered fans at the ready, packmates!"

You get the picture.

#### *A Word on Experience*

Awarding experience points and Renown is a balancing act. If you don't give enough, the characters will progress so slowly that it may be years of game time before they attain any rank. And let's face it; some of those higher-level Gifts are pretty cool! However, you run the risk of turning even good players into twinks and having a boring game to boot if you give too much. In short, it's fine for characters to grow

and develop constantly, but it's also nice for them to realize that they aren't invincible.

When characters are ready for advancement in rank, make sure they follow the tribe's general procedures for challenges. Take this opportunity to reinforce the fact that each werewolf is a member of a pack, and that the pack is greater than the sum of its individual members. The higher the rank of challenge, the harder the tests should be. These tests could easily form the central events of an entire story arc.

#### *Classic Werewolf Stories*

The following selections are story seeds to use once you've conquered the delightful problem of how to get players together. These seeds are meant for one or two sessions of the game, and they may or may not reflect the theme you eventually want to develop. That said, some essential chronicle "bits" may coalesce from these sessions — things like long-term antagonists, interesting allies and characters goals — if you and the players are lucky.

#### *Prelude and First Change*

The joy and pain of the First Change is different for every werewolf, and even veteran players can enjoy it. For new players, it's essential to roleplay their character's prelude and First Change. Think about what it would really be like, emotionally and psychologically, to find out that you

were almost entirely different from the folks next door. Moreover, imagine the added burdens of having such a serious mission and a host of none-too-loving relatives. This seed is a good one with which to start a chronicle.

### *Rites of Passage*

Like the First Change, the Rite of Passage story is a fine one to run in the early days of a chronicle. These Rites ideally should be keyed to the specific characters (and tribes) in the game. You may want to let all the characters take part in the same Rite or divide them into two groups, giving everyone a bit more individual attention. Choose tasks that are pertinent to the tribe in question. A Get's Rite of Passage may involve bringing in the head of a Wyrmish horror or surviving a night in a bad neighborhood without using his claws. A Black Fury's might involve defending a Kinfolk woman and child, by using wits and claws. The Uktena youngster perhaps has to return to the pack with a piece of previously hidden knowledge. And so on.

### *Fighting the Wyrm*

Werewolves represent much, much more than death and carnage; they're spiritual, creative and passionate creatures. But hey, they are awfully well equipped for dealing destruction. And nothing should bring out that killing instinct more than facing the Wyrm and all its depredations.

Perhaps, once upon a time, the Wyrm was a force in balance with the Weaver and the Wyld, but such isn't the case now. Be they subtle or forthright, the Wyrm and its

### *Brownie Points*

Want to get your players *really* involved in the lives of their characters? Don't mind shelling out an extra experience point or two? Consider awarding brownie points for any supplementary time and effort players put into character development. What kinds of things are we talking about? An in-depth, written character bio is a good example. Ask the player to give you a page or two on who the character is, where she comes from and what types of adventures she's had in the past. A write-up of the character's prelude, if not played in the game, is also useful. Consider, for example, how interesting a Silver Fang's family tree might be. The player might just see laying out his character's genealogy as a chance to get an extra experience point (we suggest one for each "project"). Such a project is also a great place to find some inspiration for games. So Ebrahim the Silent Strider had a mate who disappeared in Morocco? Sounds like a great story seed for a game. If one of the players keeps a journal, that's also worth a reward. Little details you might have forgotten about the chronicle can be as useful to you as they are to the players. Brownie-point projects also let the players give you a nice list of things they'd like their characters to do, which is always a good way to keep them interested and involved in the game.

minions will probably cause a lot of misery in the characters' lives, so use them with a good will. Fights with the minions of the Wyrm make great one-shot adventures for those days when you haven't had the time to prepare a detailed game.

### *Fighting the Weaver*

Ever seen a piece of fabric on a loom? It can be a work of art that's spontaneous in its beauty. In her madness, however, the Weaver spins static, unyielding webs that constrict the Wyld in all its forms. Don't make the mistake of ignoring the potential threat of the Weaver. From quick clashes with Pattern Spiders to a long-running battle with the devious scientists of DNA, the Weaver poses a threat almost as dire as the Wyrm. Stories involving the Weaver should be rigid and focused. Everything in the Weaver's world is but one thread in a tapestry, and Storytellers should think about plots involving the Weaver's minions as having interconnections and multiple layers.

### *Of Wolves and Humans*

Wolves are a slowly dwindling species. True, they're making comebacks in some parts of the world, but their territory is vanishing in the swell of humanity. Stories can easily involve conflicts between werewolves and their wolf allies against the encroachment of humans. Consider the ensuing problems if a ranching family buys up the 10,000 acres of land that's home to a Red Talon pack. How will these lupus react? How can the characters' pack help? This kind of story should be highly charged. Don't forget that werewolves are neither just wolf, nor just human.

### *Bloodsucking Leeches*

Wyrm-taint, urban expansion, parasitism, age-old vendettas, competition for resources, depraved appetites... Reasons abound for why vampires and werewolves are natural enemies. As your chronicle progresses, you might choose to make some exceptions, but the *de facto* rule when a werewolf meets a Leech is for death-dealing to commence. These two societies oppose one another over most facets of their very existence and means of survival. Tensions should (and do) exist on a martial level, but don't forget that a social and intellectual conflict goes on here. And if a Leech dares to sink its fangs into, say, a Kinfolk, that'll be cause for a nasty encounter or two.

### *The Enemy of My Enemy*

Common threats make strange allies. This type of story is useful in getting certain tribes or packs to put aside their enmity for a time in order to fight a greater threat. You can still have fun with the occasional snappy responses between characters (which the players should enjoy) or even a quick fight for dominance before the big nasty enemy shows up.

### *Life in the Pack*

Sometimes, you and the players need a light-hearted break. If so, consider a "day in the life of the pack" tale. These kinds of stories revolve around what it's like to hunt for food, raise the young ones or even say farewell to an elder leaving on a last honorable quest.



BIRD CO

### *Kinfolk*

Kinfolk are marvelous hooks for adventures, especially for injecting some grains of romance into the chronicle. What werewolf wouldn't defend her mate, children or siblings? And some Kinfolk characters just seem to crave long, painful suffering. While you shouldn't overuse Kin, they work well as victims of the Wyrm or Weaver that need rescuing or curing. Vengeful Kinfolk make surprisingly cunning enemies too, since some know important details about werewolves.

### *Moots*

Moots are one of the events that strengthen the bonds of the pack. Just to recap, moots involve a sequence of events: the Opening Howl, the Inner Sky (dealing with tribal spirits), Cracking the Bone (business), the Stories and Songs segment and the Revel. An enjoyable game to run between big adventures is a sept moot wherein the characters report on what they've accomplished and what their next big goal is going to be.

### *Mysteries of the Past*

Who says that all the enemies and challenges have to come from the present? Consider what might happen if the werewolf pack stumbles on the sealed tomb of an old, hitherto unknown Wyrm creature? Not only would they have complications from fighting the dread creature, they'd also have to explain how they freed the thing in the first place.

### *Quarrels*

Multi-stage quests are great for structuring a long story arc. You could also use this story seed as a requirement for advancing in rank. Having the heroes seek out the Three Eldest Ancestor-Spirits of the Wendigo, or even something more tangible, can keep them busy for a number of sessions. Quests are a great opportunity to expand the chronicle from the grisly, everyday struggles to survive into a realm of wonder beyond grim reality. They are the key to the spiritual side of werewolf society that cannot be ignored, the heart of what channels the path of every hero's journey.

### *When Duty Whispers Low*

Not all duties are easy to carry out, and feel free to concoct adventures that tear at the characters' heartstrings as the game progresses. How hard would it be for their sept leader to command them to hunt down an old member of the pack (perhaps a player's retired character or a beloved Storyteller character) and dispatch her, because she's fallen to the Wyrm or the Weaver? It's easy to say that this kind of task needs doing, that it's a blessing to the victim and all that, but killing off a comrade is as hard as it gets.

### *Seeking the Young*

When the werewolf characters get some experience under their belts, maybe the pack elders send them out to find lost cubs. This story could evolve into a series of adventures both urban and rural. The characters could discover allies and

enemies from different packs or maybe other denizens of the World of Darkness. Eventually, though, they should meet up with one or more innocent young werewolves and be prepared to act as mentors for the young ones.

### *Dirty Politics*

The Garou, for all their honor, aren't above political machinations. After all, they're in desperate straits and willing to do almost anything to preserve their lands and way of life. If your players are interested in politics, steer them toward such interesting goals as acquiring new territory for the sept, arranging lucrative intertribal marriages or taking over useful corporations. Such tactics aren't just for Glass Walkers anymore.

### *Appeasing the Spirit*

Perhaps the pack totem has deserted the characters for some mysterious reason, through no apparent fault of their own. The pack now needs to find out why their totem has gone into seclusion and what can be done to appease it and bring it back to the caern. This type of adventure calls for a lot of positive public relations, perhaps with other packs, tribes or spirits, and it gives the players a chance to do some puzzle solving and thinking. Hot tempers and ready claws will be less valuable here.

### *Storytelling Techniques*

You can use a variety of techniques (those "classic bits" from literature) to enhance your stories. Just be careful not to go overboard. This is still a roleplaying game, after all, not than a dime novel. With some elements, like the ringer, be careful that your creativity doesn't overbalance the game... or infuriate the characters too much.

### *Dreams and Flashbacks*

If you want to convey important information to characters, flashbacks to earlier events and well-crafted dream sequences are a means of doing so without always having Storyteller characters spill the beans. Decide whether you want the character (or characters) to be able to react in the dream or flashback, then describe in clear detail what scenes they see. Think about the source of the dreams or flashbacks. Was it a gift of a totem? Guidance from a vision quest? Also consider how explicit or vague you want the information to be. What you give them probably won't answer all their questions, but it should be enough to point them in the right direction.

### *Foreshadowing*

Foreshadowing is another way to give characters hints and suggestions of what events may be forthcoming in the chronicle. Ideally, foreshadowing is a *subtle* technique. You shouldn't have to beat the players over the head with this stuff. Let's say, for example, that you want to foreshadow the fact that the sept is heading toward disunity. Plant some rumors and whispers to this effect during each game. Maybe two caern Guardians get into a spat over how best to serve the Warder. It may be a minor argument, but it's a sign that things aren't going so well. Then, have more such tensions

bubble up in the regular moot. All these signs should point out to the characters that all's not well at home, and maybe they should do something about it. Foreshadowing also works well with evoking certain moods. If you put on some gloomy music, you're letting the players know that the hours ahead won't be all sweetness and light.

### *Symbolism and Mythic Threads*

**Werewolf:** The Apocalypse is rife with myths and cultural symbols. Garou society is a complex mélange of many different peoples, all with a rich oral and/ or written history. So delve into some of these times gone by. Use mythic poetry and epics to evoke mood and get stirred up to tell some stories. Depending on the werewolf tribe in question, you may want to use classic Greek, Slavic, Irish, Native American or Norse literature for inspiration. Also don't forget that you can link foreshadowing with symbolism. Consider what importance the name of a person or place might have, and what that importance implies for the characters. Meeting a traveler named Loki or Coyote on the highway just might mean something....

### *Alternative Settings*

If you've the time, energy and inspiration, consider setting the chronicle either in the historical past or near future. Maybe you want to run a game set in the American colonies during the Revolutionary War, where the characters are battling werewolves on the opposing political side as well as the Pure Ones and the Wyrm. Or, perhaps you want to advance the chronicle into a time when it really is Apocalypse now, with the Weaver's hard edges biting into the character's heads even as the Wyrm tries to chew up their hearts. Be sure to get players to okay this kind of major change before you charge ahead. They may want to construct alternative characters for the game. In the historical past, they may even want to play ancestors.

### *Ringers and Red Herrings*

Oh go ahead and let the Shadow Lords act like greedy, manipulative bastards. You know you want to. But what if they're not bad guys at all? Despite the stereotypes (and why are you trusting stereotypes anyway?), maybe their motivations are pure. Just don't let the players guess the truth right away! Red herrings and their relatives, ringers, are terrific fun to use in stories. A red herring is basically a story element that seems like one thing, but is really another, such as when a hero seems like a villain. It's something designed to throw the players off track of the real enemy or plot thread. For example, if the suave, debonair Shadow Lord shows up to court the Fianna lass, her relatives (played by your troupe) might go ballistic, thinking he's after something. And you should encourage their paranoia. But maybe what he's after is the demented Fianna warrior who betrayed the Shadow Lord's pack to Pentex. You can bet that the players' characters really would want to know about that! A ringer is a bit more complex. It's usually a character under "deep cover" who ultimately betrays the players' characters to an enemy, or who otherwise screws them over when they least

expect it. The best ringers are planted early in a chronicle, and they don't surface until many games later.

## *As Time Goes By*

As the chronicle progresses — and we hope it has a long and successful run — you'll need to make sure that things don't get stale. Here are some pieces of advice to help you sustain a chronicle over the years.

### *Communication*

Talking — and listening — to your players is vital. Give them a fair hearing when they come to you with ideas, even if their plans don't always fit. Players often give you more inspiration than reading a dozen books. Make communication a constant in your chronicle, and you'll find yourself rewarded with great ideas and happy players.

### *Break Time!*

Don't be concerned if you get burned out on the chronicle eventually. The best thing you and your players can do at that point is to take an extended break. Maybe someone else wants to run a game, so you can have a chance to play (which keeps you in touch with what it's like to be on the receiving end). Then you can pick up the threads of the story and charge forward when you're ready. If it looks like things are winding down to the end of the chronicle, don't rush yourself in coming up with a powerful conclusion. Take the time you need to make sure that the last story arc is among the best.

### *Shared Storytelling*

One option that can help alleviate burnout is sharing the chronicle with a co-Storyteller. Perhaps you'd want to take over her character or a Storyteller persona for the duration. However, unless you divide all aspects of the chronicle neatly in twain, you will inevitably end up sharing some secrets with your co-Storyteller. On the other hand, maybe she has some ideas to take the characters in a totally different direction. Keep in touch with each other during your break and give her the same feedback you'd expect if you were in the hot seat. But don't slam her ideas or storytelling style just because they're not the same as yours.

### *New Players*

Inevitably, if you run a fun chronicle, new players will want to join. How are you going to handle this situation? It's better to have an answer to this question *before* it comes up. One possibility is asking the new player to use a Storyteller character. Doing so lets you, the old players and the new one give each other a tryout. If things go well, maybe the newcomer could then make up a regular character, adjusted in ability to be closer to the current pack than a beginning werewolf. When new players join the game, have them run in a solo or pair adventure, just to get a feel for how things run in your world. Sharing tales of past exploits might also get them caught up in the pack's action more quickly. While you should be cautious about letting just anyone off the

street join a long-running chronicle, don't forget that new players can really bring new ideas and new life to the game.

### *Using Published Materials*

**Werewolf: The Apocalypse** has a number of great supplements that can enhance your chronicle. That's not an advertisement, but rather a suggestion for inspiration. Remember, though, that no sourcebook is going to fit seamlessly into your ongoing chronicle. Rather, you'll have to spend some time considering what elements you'll want to use and which ones to omit. But sourcebooks can save you valuable time by giving ready-made character stats (always good for those unexpected fights or intimate conversations) and scenarios. Many also go into greater detail on various aspects of werewolf life. They can offer ideas for stories and interesting directions for your chronicle that go beyond the space limits of a core rulebook. One piece of advice: Unless you're sharing storytelling duties with a player, your troupe will have more fun if they don't read all the other sourcebooks. Remember that the element of surprise is important to telling a good story.

### *Crossover Games*

We saved the best of times — and the worst of times — for last. Done well, **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** crossovers with other World of Darkness games can be terrific fun. However, you must make sure that you know what you're getting yourself into. First of all, you need to have a firm grasp of the rules. Werewolf Gifts are different than vampiric Disciplines, True Magic and so on. The appendices of most core rulebooks have suggestions on handling crossovers, so give them a thorough read. Next, have some sort of reason that's plausible to your story for why the crossover occurs. Sure, Cassius the vampire might be a fine character, but why does he need to speak with the werewolves? Think it through carefully so that Cassius doesn't end up a greasy smear on the pavement before he's made his all-important soliloquy. Some connections, remember, are already part of the Garou cosmology, such as relations between the Silent Striders and ghosts, or the fae and the Fianna. Finally, and *most importantly*, keep in mind that only one set of cosmological beliefs, worldviews and themes should dominate. Since you're running **Werewolf**, it probably should be that of the Garou or some hybridized version that you've worked through *carefully*. For example, remember that the various supernaturals see damn near everything through a different lens. Verbena Life magic, the Discipline Obeah and the Gift Mother's Touch might all heal a wound, but the look and feel of each mystical feat should be quite different. The werewolf one should be completely understandable and natural, while the others are strange and maybe a little scary. Plus, the weirder you make things seem, the more confused even the experienced players of the World of Darkness will be. That's the fun for you: There's nothing quite like the look on a player's face when she realizes the cute kid her character has been teasing is really a mobile cadaver.



СЕРЕБРЯНЫЙ  
КЛЫК

The blood pounding in his head screams for fulfillment. His heart burns like a furnace. Each inch of the long rents in his side cries out in anguish. The metallic, almost vinegar-like taste of his enemies' blood fills his mouth. His restraint is straining, buckling outward under the pressure of his Rage. He can sense them all around him.

He is outnumbered. The howls of his packmates echo half-heard in his ears, but they are too far from him. Solemn Lord, his grandfather's weapon, four feet of carefully forged and ritually hardened silver, one of the three blades of honor of the Wyrmfoe house — Solemn Lord is ten feet away, nailing a Dancer to a concrete column like the pin transfixing a butterfly to a card. The Dancer's feet hang off the ground — he now wears his human form, uncharacteristically pathetic and small in death. If his hand were around the hilt of Solemn Lord, it would be the easiest thing to pull the grand klaive free of the concrete and fling away the body like a sack of wet autumn leaves.

But it is ten feet. As good as a mile.

All he can do is claw and bite, tear flesh with his talons and feel bones crack between his jaws. His muscles strain against the near-wall of black-furred flesh enclosing him. The wet heat drenching his hands is fortified by a new splash of warmth, and somewhere in his brain the scent of blood intensifies.

Too much blood. It pours down his throat, stains his fur, splashes his aching wounds. The animal within him is howling, crying for more. He shuts his eyes, ready in spite of himself for the white-hot blur to overcome him —

Then he feels the air around him change — cooler, less dense. He spits out something — a paw? A hand? — and draws a quick breath. The parking garage comes further into focus. The Dancers are circling, their bodies lower to the ground, their tails limp, their hyenalike cackles more querulous, more nervous. His vision clears even further, and he recognizes one among them — even in Glabro, the sharp face of the young woman, the girl who'd called herself a Silent Strider when she approached him last night, is unmistakable.

The familiar growls of his packmates echo at his flanks. The Dancers reply with a cackling, challenging howl — but their posture betrays their fear.

He does not growl in return. Instead, he draws a breath, and turns his will inward. Almost instantly he feels the explosion of pain from his fingers, the ache of his flesh as it screams protest. The flickering lights of the garage flash from the new silver sheen of his claws. The Dancers' howling stops.

Howling the Anthem of War, Albrecht leaps forward.

# Chapter Nine: Antagonists

## *The Serpent That Crawls at the Roots of the World*

The Wyrm's servants are everywhere. Many are willing and aware, but many more are ignorant of their true role on Earth. In truth, the Wyrm is not behind every atrocity, every crime and every bit of damage to the environment. Those actions certainly strengthen the Wyrm, but only because it and its children feed upon them, not because it caused them. A human serial killer may not receive outside inspiration for his killings, but given time, his bloodthirsty deeds will draw Banes like a corpse draws flies.

Werewolves exist to attack the Wyrm not only where it dwells, but where it breeds as well. Even if a corporation that releases an untold number of pollutants into the air every year is not one of the Wyrm's direct pawns, it still serves the Wyrm's purposes, and it should still be stopped. Some Garou find it difficult to discern that not all threats smell of the Wyrm, and not all things that smell of the Wyrm are threats. The new generation of Garou must see this distinction and act upon this knowledge wisely and appropriately.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

### *Black Spiral Dancers*

Nearly two thousand years ago, another tribe claimed membership in the Garou Nation. They were the White Howlers — a savage tribe related to the Picts and kin to the Fianna — and they fell to the Wyrm. In seeking to destroy the

Wyrm's servants, they were tricked into dancing the Black Spiral in the heart of Malfreas, the Wyrm's Umbral home. Utterly twisted and insane, they become known as the Black Spiral Dancers. Few Garou speak their name willingly, usually out of loathing (or pity) for their fallen brothers.

Black Spiral Dancers have lived underground among foul and cancerous children of the Wyrm for centuries. Their caerns, called Hives, are nestled amidst labyrinthine cave systems, most of which are filled with industrial waste and monstrous things. The Hive's heart often holds radioactive Balefires, or the "Wyrm's Blood." Black Spiral Dancers are usually born in close proximity to the Balefires, leading to a high rate of mutations within the tribe. Thanks to their indiscriminate breeding practices, a high percentage are also born metis, leading to very twisted mockeries of Gaia's chosen warriors.

Most Black Spiral Dancers are hideous and disturbing creatures. Their human forms tend to appear pale and unhealthy, with oily or scraggly hair and pallid skin. Many have open, weeping sores from the constant exposure to Balefires. In Crinos, they tend to have hyena-like heads with huge, slavering jaws and vicious, jagged and crooked fangs. Their ears are pointed and hairless, like a bat's. Their eyes often glow with a virulent green or red glow. A Dancer's fur is patchy and usually either albino white or grayish-green. Many Dancers choose to carve sigils of praise to the

Wyrm in their flesh, leaving scar tissue that burns with a soft, sickly luminescence. Their Hispo and Lupus forms are only slightly less unnatural in appearance, and some resemble legendary "ghost dogs," with luminous fur and glowing eyes. Some Black Spiral Dancers may pass for normal, and may even have an unnatural beauty — until you look into their eyes and see the madness that festers within.

The Dancers revere Whippoorwill as their tribal totem, whose mad call they howl during their hunts. Many humans and other creatures have heard the Whippoorwill's call in their last sane moments before serving as toys, breeding stock or sacrifices to the Wyrm's children. The Black Spiral the tribe is named after is a twisting, mind-shattering labyrinth at the heart of the Wyrm's Umbral home. The fallen dance the Black Spiral, gaining gifts of power and insanity from the Wyrm as they dance farther along its twisted passages. This initiation rite is the first act each Dancer performs as a tribe member, and it is the most sacred of all feats. They undertake the dance with a reverence that would horrify their Gaian cousins.

Black Spiral Dancers have virtually the same traits as any other Garou, and they may learn breed and auspice Gifts as appropriate. Plenty of Dancers are metis, but enough are born from matings with abducted humans and wolves that the tribe continues to remain viable. Most members of the tribe are deformed, making them easy to mistake for metis. Centuries of inbreeding and exposure to the Wyrm's radiant energies have engendered mutations in most of the tribe, regardless of breed. Their tribal Gifts resemble physical mutations, but a few draw directly upon the Wyrm's capacity for mind-blasting insanity. Banes, often toxic elementals or spirits of evil desires, teach Black Spiral Dancer Gifts (including breed and auspice). A few examples follow:

- **Rathead (Level One)** — The Dancer can squeeze her body through any opening no smaller than a quarter in diameter. This Gift looks very disturbing to unsuspecting onlookers. Corrupted rat-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** The Dancer's player rolls Gnosis. If successful, she can squirm through any opening no smaller than a quarter. Doing so typically takes a single turn, depending on the opening's length. The Gift remains active until the Garou has passed entirely out of the constricted space.

- **Sense Wyrm (Level One)** — As the metis Gift (p. 135).
- **Toxic Claws (Level One)** — The Dancer can cause toxic waste to ooze from her claws, coating them with an unhealthy greenish-gray slime. Wounds left by these claws tend to leave unhealthy-looking scars.

**System:** This Gift requires the expenditure of one Rage point and a turn of full concentration. For the remainder of the scene, the Dancer's claws inflict an additional die of damage and leave residual Wyrm-taint on anything she slashes.

- **Ears of the Bat (Level Two)** — This Gift allows the Black Spiral Dancer to use sonar like a bat. He may act in complete darkness without impairment. Black Spiral Dancers with this Gift have large, bat-like ears. Even in Homid form, they have abnormally large ears. Corrupted bat-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** This Gift can be counteracted with some means of generating confusing ultrasonic sounds. Garou who make a Perception + Alertness (or Primal-Urges in Lupus) roll can hear the sonar. With three or more successes, she can determine the Dancer's exact location.

- **Patagia (Level Two)** — The Dancer can extrude large flaps of skin under her arms, resembling a flying squirrel's membranes. When not in use, the flaps usually shrink into the Dancer's arms and sides, where they are not detectable.

**System:** The Dancer stretches her arms and leaps from a height. She may glide at 25 mph, but the player must make Dexterity + Athletics rolls (at the Storyteller's discretion) to avoid losing altitude.

- **Terrify (Level Two)** — The Dancer with this Gift is more intimidating and terrifying than normal. A sneer from her is as effective as a full-throated growl from another.

**System:** Roll Charisma + Intimidation (difficulty is the target's Willpower). If successful, the difficulties for Social rolls made against that target decrease by one — but only if intimidation could conceivably alter the outcome in the Dancer's favor. The target's difficulty to strike the Dancer in combat is one higher as well.

- **Wyrm Hide (Level Two)** — A Dancer may use this Gift to transform her skin into a lumpy, leathery, odious, sickly hide that grants her additional protection from harm. Once the Wyrm Hide wears off, it slides oozing and bubbling off the Black Spiral Dancer, leaving a congealing, smelly mess where she stood.

**System:** The Dancer must spend one point of Rage to activate Wyrm Hide, and the player must roll Stamina + Survival. Each success grants the Dancer one additional soak die. This Gift lasts until the end of the scene. Until then, other Garou may pick up her scent at two lower difficulty, due to the stench the power generates.

- **Burning Scars (Level Three)** — Black Spiral Dancers often carve stylized scars representing their devotion to the Wyrm into their bodies. With this Gift, a Dancer can draw upon that devotion to inflict horrible injuries on her foes. When invoked, this Gift causes the Dancer's scars to glow with an unwholesome brilliance that almost seems to crawl into the victim's body through his eyes, nose, mouth and ears, burning him from the inside out and leaving horrible burns that mimic the Dancer's own scars.

**System:** The Dancer must grab the target, and the player must spend two Rage and roll Wits + Primal-Urges (difficulty is victim's Stamina + 2). Each success inflicts one level of unsoakable aggravated damage that appears upon the victim's body as a mirror of the Dancer's glowing scars. These marks of the Wyrm may prove a powerful social handicap, and it may take some effort to remove them.

- **Foaming Fury (Level Three)** — The Dancer's mouth bubbles and foams with a noxious, greenish fluid. His eyes widen and roll in their sockets, showing the whites. The Dancer yips, barks and howls madly (and uncontrollably) as if in the grip of a rabid madness — a contagious one.

**System:** The player of anyone bitten by a Dancer using this Gift must succeed in a Stamina roll (difficulty 8, 6 if the Garou has Resist Toxin), lest the character fly into a rabid frenzy. (In effect, the character enters the Thrall of the Wyrm — see p. 191.)

• **Crawling Poison (Level Four)** — When the Dancer calls upon this Gift, his fangs turn black with venom, and his breath grows more foul than is normal. The venom kills humans and animals slowly, and, the victim suffers terrible agony as the venom spreads through his body. A Garou's regeneration will protect her from the pain and eventual death, but only at the cost of her normal rapid healing.

**System:** After making a successful bite attack that inflicts damage after soak, roll the Dancer's Gnosis (difficulty is the victim's Stamina, or Stamina + 2 if the victim has Resist Toxin). Each success inhibits the victim's regeneration for one hour. When used on humans or animals, the poison subtracts one from all Physical Attributes each hour. If Strength or Dexterity reach zero, the victim may not move without assistance. If Stamina reaches zero, the victim dies a painful and messy death. The toxin may be stopped only by supernatural means. Mother's Touch (difficulty as normal) can

negate it on a one-for-one success ratio, but the Garou using it must spend one Gnosis point per success.

• **Doppelganger (Level Four)** — As the Glass Walker Gift (see p. 149).

• **Avatar of the Wyrm (Level Five)** — The Dancer assumes an awful and horrific visage, perhaps even a facet of the Wyrm itself (albeit a small one). The Dancer increases in size, its skin becomes scaly and greenish-gray, and his claws increase in length to jagged, vicious knives dripping with venom. His howl becomes a terrifying roar. Only a Maeljin Incarna, one of the Wyrm's most powerful avatars, can teach this Gift.

**System:** Spend one Gnosis point and one Rage point. The Dancer must concentrate for a full turn, at the end of which the transformation occurs. The Dancer shifts to Crinos automatically (if he wasn't already in that form) and adds an additional dot to all Physical Attributes, and one Bruised health level. Additionally, his claws inflict an additional die of damage and are unsoakable. Finally, treat Delirium as three levels worse to onlookers.



This Gift lasts for the entire scene. If the Dancer has only one level of damage marked off at the end of the scene, it vanishes when he returns to normal.

• **Balefire (Level Five)** — The Dancer can hurl balls of sickly green flame at her enemies. Balefire, as the very lifeblood of the Wyrm, is very dangerous to werewolves. It often inflicts hideous and life-threatening mutations, as well as tainting the victim heavily. It's impossible to dodge Balefire — it moves with a malicious intelligence. It can only be resisted.

**System:** Roll Dexterity + Athletics, taking the standard ranged-combat modifiers into account. The victim resists with Stamina (difficulty 8), and his roll must equal or exceed the Dancer's successes. If the victim fails to resist, the Balefire's influence mutates her. Treat each success over resistance as one level of aggravated damage for the purposes of healing/rejecting the mutation. This damage is not soakable (the resistance roll is the soak roll). Afflicted werewolves may grow extra (useless) eyes, lose all of her fur and hair, go blind, deaf or anomic (no sense of taste or smell) temporarily. Until she rejects the mutations and undergoes a Rite of Cleansing, she registers a strong taint to the Gift: Sense Wyrm.

• **Mask Taint (Level Five)** — A Dancer with this Gift can hide his Wyrm-taint from all senses or Gifts that may detect it.

**System:** Spend two Gnosis points and roll the Dancer's Appearance + Subterfuge (difficulty 8). The effect lasts for one scene. Shadow Lords may still detect Wyrm-taint — with Sense Wyrm (difficulty 8) — from a Dancer thus veiled.

### *The Wyrm's Sacraments*

Black Spiral Dancers, like all of the other tribes, have their own list of rites for special occasions. In most cases, the rite's game effect is identical to those listed for the Garou, except that they have been twisted to the Wyrm's needs, and Banes answer to the Dancers' Theurges.

The difference is not one of mechanics, but of description. When considering how a Black Spiral Dancer will use a rite, keep in mind that it will be a desecration and corruption of all the Garou hold dear. To the Dancers, however, it is a sacred act committed with reverence and respect. This fact should make the rite all the more warped and disturbing for onlookers.

### *Fomori*

Fomori (singular: fomor) are not your typical humans who have chosen, unwittingly or willingly, to turn to the Wyrm. They undergo a process similar to possession in which a Bane merges with them and warps them into a form more suitable to a Wyrm servant. They gain great power, but it always comes at a price. Nearly all fomori are physically deformed, mindless cannibals who lurk near toxic waste sites, landfills, poisoned stretches of wilderness or forgotten sewers or steam tunnels. Some retain a semblance of sapience, free will and a near-human appearance, and these few infiltrate human society on the Wyrm's behalf.

The process of becoming a fomor is a traumatic experience, even for those least affected. The fomor retains his

### *It's Not "Detect Evil"*

Sense Wyrm is a useful Gift for finding tainted people, places and things. It's certainly handy for sniffing out a fomor or Bane at the right times, but it's not a faultless compass for identifying "things to kill." Wyrmish monsters who need killing are not invisible to the Gift, but Sense Wyrm also locates (to various degrees) people who have eaten tainted food, abused children and anything that will attract Banes who simply seek misery and pain to feed on. Taint is more than the color of a soul. Like cigarette smoke, it clings to those who are repeatedly in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Storytellers should remember that Sense Wyrm is really only one tool in the Garou's repertoire. It's not the final word, and it was never intended to be. It serves as a pointer, showing the Garou where to start, but not necessarily what the solution may be. A Garou who smells the Wyrm's taint on a shelter for battered women might sense the tainted food donated to the shelter, some Banes who feed on the women's anger and frustration or perhaps residual taint someone picked up while living near a toxic waste dump. It's hard to tell what's causing the taint without investigating. The Garou who charges in and kills every tainted soul within the shelter solves nothing — or worse, does the Wyrm's job for it — while the Garou who tries to find and deal with the cause accomplishes so much more.

Sense Wyrm works best as a way to generate story hooks, not as a faultless "Wyrm Detector" that enables the Garou to spot the evil-doer and rip him limb from limb before the story has even begun. Keep in mind that many Wyrmish servants have ways to hide from such paltry Level One Gifts, and that uncovering the real cause of the apparent problems should be challenging and fun.

personality and consciousness, but his fusion with a malevolent spirit warps his psyche in very nasty ways. If the person was already corrupt, violent or insane, the resulting monster is truly psychotic.

Some organizations employ (or may actually create) fomori, although most Garou are unaware of the ultimate source of these creatures. Many are formed into paramilitary units and used as shock troops against the Garou.

In some remote backwaters, fomori sometimes form into family units, all of whom share some particularly unique and grotesque mutation from their service to the Wyrm. The Garou try to wipe these sick enclaves out whenever they find them, but the families are usually well entrenched wherever they've chosen to thrive. Most have little intelligence but a surplus of malicious cunning.

**Attributes:** Strength 3+, Dexterity 2+, Stamina 3+, Charisma 1+, Manipulation 1+, Appearance (usually) 0, Perception 2, Intelligence 1+, Wits 1+

**Abilities (typical):** Brawl 1 to 3, Dodge 1, Firearms 1, Melee 1 or 2, Stealth 1, Survival 2, Occult 1

**Image:** Fomori nearly always look inhuman in some overt and disgusting fashion. A few can pass in human society without much comment. Some can conceal their deformities with bulky clothes. Many fomori positively reek — some are as fragrant as a human who's lived in his own filth for weeks. Humans aren't always sensitive to these odors, but Garou nearly always are, especially in Crinos, Hispo or Lupus forms.

**Powers:** All fomori are granted powers through their fusion with a Bane. See the following list for suggested powers, or feel free to add new ones. Most fomori are resilient enough to soak lethal damage as if it were bashing, and some can even soak aggravated damage at difficulty 8. Those whose "modifications" are strictly mental or psychic in nature may not be so lucky, though.

**Equipment:** Usually tattered clothing and some sharp objects (Strength +1 damage). Paramilitary trained and equipped fomori will have assault rifles, combat knives, bulletproof vests or riot armor, radios, etc.

### *Fomori Powers*

Most fomori have two or three powers. A few have as many as five, and only the exceptionally accursed have more. Each power twists the fomor's form in progressively more disturbing ways. Be careful about stacking too many powers onto one fomor.

The following list is by no means exhaustive, so feel free to create more to taste. Those listed are simply examples of the wide variety of disgusting mutations Banes can inflict on the human body. When creating new fomori powers, keep in mind that they're always inhuman in some way (often blatantly so). They're usually disgusting or horrifying in use, and they exact some kind of price from the user (whether it's a short life span from cancerous tumors or an inability to interact with normal human society because of a particularly horrid appearance). Very few fomori powers are particularly potent on their own, but most can be used to great effect when multiple fomori gang up on one werewolf.

• **Armored Hide** — The fomor's skin is rough and leathery, or hard and scaly, or perhaps it secretes some kind of disgusting ooze that causes attacks to slide off harmlessly.

**System:** This power grants the fomor three additional soak dice. Additionally, it allows him to soak aggravated damage at difficulty 6.

• **Berserker** — A fomor with this power is filled with a rage similar to that of werewolves. He can channel his inner anger and use it in combat to battle the Wyrm's enemies more effectively.

**System:** The fomor has five Rage points that he may use just like any Garou would. On the downside, he is also is subject to frenzy and the Curse.

• **Bestial Mutation** — The fomor's body twists and shifts into a monstrous shape. The shape is different for each fomor, and none are pleasing or accommodating to the senses.

They're given to noisome odors, scaly or oozing features and horrible, gut-wrenching calls from one or more twisted mouths or some other unidentifiable orifice. Use your imagination.

**System:** This power grants the fomori two additional dots to each Physical Attribute (and Appearance is automatically 0). This power often manifests in combination with the two following powers.

• **Claws and Fangs** — The fomor has some kind of vicious bodily weaponry. In some cases, they may manifest as claws and fangs (much like those of the Garou). In other cases, the fomor may develop bone spurs that protrude from wrists and elbows, barbed quills all over his body or long, savage horns.

**System:** The fomor may use any claw or bite maneuvers in combat, and his attacks inflict (Strength +1) aggravated damage. Such "natural" weapons cannot be concealed, making it difficult for a fomor to blend into human society.

• **Extra Limbs** — Fomori often have one or more extra appendages, usually in the form of tentacles or masses of tendrils. Such extra limbs usually sprout from awkward places, like an extra arm growing from a fomor's thigh, or a long (20' or more) elastic tentacle replacing his tongue. Some limbs need to be stored someplace, like a pouch in the neck or belly, giving the fomor a thick neck, or an unusually bulging belly.

**System:** The fomor gains three additional dice in grapple attempts, and it may attempt normal grapples at long range, depending on the form the limbs take.

• **Eyes of the Wyrm** — The fomor's eyes are grotesque in some way. Perhaps they're faceted like a fly's, or the pupil is an odd shape (like an oval, or a square, or amorphous and shifting). The fomor can dilate or otherwise alter his eyes in some nauseating fashion, revealing images of the Wyrm's damnation.

**System:** Anyone who looks into the fomor's eyes must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) or be frozen in horror for (five turns minus Wits rating, minimum one turn). The fomor may not move, attack or otherwise take an action to break eye contact without freeing the victim. His companions may attack with no such restriction. The victim remains frozen as long as the fomor keeps still and maintains the power.

• **Fungal Touch** — The fomor's internal organs, nervous system and cardiovascular system have been replaced with a foul-smelling, infectious fungus. The fomor may infect a victim by touching him, or in some rare cases, actually breathing a nauseating, viscous cloud of fungal spores onto him.

**System:** The victim's player must make a successful Stamina roll (difficulty 7), or the character loses one point from all Physical Attributes as well as Appearance per day as the fungus slowly covers him. During this time, his odor becomes more disgusting and unbearable for anyone with a sensitive nose. He experiences painful intestinal distress as the fungus dissolves and replaces his internal organs, ejecting what it does not need for the transformation. The infection may only be cured by supernatural means (such as with a healing fetish, an appropriate spirit or the Gifts: Mother's Touch or Resist Toxin).

The fomor may spend a Willpower point to exude fungal mucus all over its body, inflicting a two-die penalty on all attackers in melee with it due to the nauseating stench. Cutting the fomor open won't cause it to spray spores, but it does inflict the above dice penalty on all nearby. The fomor may also choose to exhale fungal spores upon his target, at the cost of a lethal health level.

- **Gift** — The fomor may take one Level One or Two homid, Ahroun or Black Spiral Dancer Gift. If it requires Rage or Gnosis to activate, she may instead spend Willpower (unless she has somehow acquired Rage or Gnosis). Such Gifts warp the fomor in odd ways — Persuasion might give the fomor an unnaturally perfect (almost doll-like) appearance, while Spirit of the Fray might give her nervous tics and a paranoid need to watch her surroundings.

- **Immunity to the Delirium** — Many fomori are resistant or immune to the Delirium. Perhaps the terrors inflicted during transformation immunize them, or maybe the part of the brain that remembers the Impergium was burned out.

**System:** Resistant fomor add five to their Willpower for the purpose of resisting the Delirium. Fomori who are immune don't suffer any effects at all. All shock troops are immune.

- **Poison Tumors** — The fomor's body is covered with pus-filled tumors. The pus is always incredibly noxious or corrosive, and it often comes in many nauseatingly inappropriate colors.

**System:** Whenever the fomor is struck with a sharp weapon (including claws), this disgusting fluid splatters the attacker, who must soak three dice of lethal damage immediately. (The damage is aggravated if the tumors are acidic.) If an attacker bites the fomor, she suffers five dice of lethal damage. If the fomor is attacked with a melee weapon, the attacker may make a reflexive Dexterity roll to avoid the flying pus, or she takes damage. Bullets won't cause the pus to splatter the attacker unless he's extremely close (within six feet or so), in which case, use the rules as for melee weapons. Others who are in close combat with the fomor may be splattered, at the Storyteller's discretion.

- **Regeneration** — The fomor recovers from injury at an incredibly fast rate, much like werewolves do. Wounds never heal perfectly, though, so they leave scars in their wake. Occasionally, the regeneration leads to tumors that spread with each successive injury. A fomor who's survived several fights will probably look quite unhealthy.

**System:** The fomor regenerates lethal and bashing damage at the same rate as Garou (see p. 188). Aggravated damage cannot be regenerated normally, but it recovers at the rate of one health level per day. Fomori with regeneration suffer from metabolic alterations, and they must eat many times the normal amount of food that a human would need to survive. (Some even require human flesh.) Furthermore, those who don't die in combat will die from cancer within a few years of becoming fomori.



- **Triatic Scent** — The fomor may mask his Wyrm nature by wrapping himself in the Wyld or Weaver's essence — each counts as one power.

**System:** Attempts to use Sense Wyrm on the fomor suffer increased difficulty (10). Glass Walkers may pierce the Weaver's Scent with normal difficulty, and Red Talons may pierce the Wyld's Scent similarly. Otherwise, Gifts that sense Weaver or Wyld will sense the fomor as if it were a servant of the appropriate Triat member.

- **Twisted Senses** — The fomor's eyes have been altered to perceive wavelengths that no human was meant to perceive. She can perceive spectra that would drive any normal person mad with anxiety or terror.

**System:** In effect, this power grants the fomor the ability to peer across the Gauntlet. Roll Perception against an appropriate difficulty. The more tainted the area is, the easier it is to look. A fomor with this power may also identify werewolves and other shapeshifters for a scene, and he sees them with the Crinos form overlaid upon the current form. The fomor may also identify Wyrm servants on sight. The first two powers cost one Willpower to activate for a scene, but the last is always active. When active, the fomor's eyes glow with an unnatural color (swirling red, vomit green, a nauseating yellow, etc.). Otherwise, the only identifying feature is that the fomor never blinks. Fomor with this power tend to lose their remaining mental stability rapidly.

- **Unnatural Strength** — The fomor's muscles are unnaturally developed, and they bulge in odd, disturbing ways. They may even writhe in some bizarre manner. In some disgusting cases, the fomor may seem to have no skin at all!

**System:** This power adds four dots to the fomor's Strength Attribute.

- **Voice of the Wyrm** — The fomor's tongue has been changed into some alien form. In some, it becomes long and sluglike in appearance, where others have a snakelike tongue. A few fomori simply have their tongues replaced with a mass of writhing tendrils. In no case does this transformation affect the fomor's ability to speak, although his voice may take on a rasping, sibilant or otherwise odd quality. He may use his altered tongue to speak in the Wyrm's own language.

**System:** As the fomor chants the Dark Litany's vile syllables, all in hearing range must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) or lose half their Gnosis points (figured from total Gnosis, not current). This power may be used on any given victim only once per encounter (successful or not), and it will not work on any Wyrm-servant. The fomor may also lick opponents, inflicting two dice of unsoakable aggravated damage.

## *Other Supernaturals*

### *Vampires*

For millennia, werewolves and vampires have fought bloody wars throughout the world. Werewolves typically feel that the only good Leech is a Leech that's been burned to ashes and the ashes scattered to the four winds. Where

most Garou prefer the open wilderness, vampires are creatures of the city. They survive and thrive on human blood, and they could not survive in the wilderness even if it were not for the werewolves ready to slaughter them at the first sign of intrusion. Many Garou blame vampires for the unchecked invasion of urban centers deeper and deeper into previously untamed wilderness.

Vampires are far from defenseless. The blood they steal from their human herds grants them an amazing variety of powers unique to them. It makes them much faster and stronger, especially if they've fed recently. A vampire may use his stolen blood to increase his Physical Attributes at one dot per blood point spent to increase. Most vampires may only increase their Physical Attributes to 6, although some powerful elders can reach heights sufficient to rival a Crinos Garou. He may also spend a blood point to heal lethal or bashing damage (bashing damage is halved before soaking). It takes several nights of intense feeding to recover from aggravated injuries. Vampires suffer aggravated wounds from werewolf claws and teeth, from the sun itself (treat as fire), from fire or from certain Gifts or Charms.

Vampires frenzy like Garou if presented with sufficient provocation. The player rolls Willpower to resist frenzy. If presented with insult, threat to life and limb or humiliation, she needs at least three successes to resist attacking the cause of her distress. If she is exposed to fire or sunlight, she must roll or run away in utter terror (as a fox frenzy). The number of successes needed is based on the magnitude of the threat. Exposure to sunlight always requires three successes.

**Gifts:** The Gifts rating refers to the highest level Gifts a vampire will possess. These powers aren't true "Gifts" — they are merely simulations of the vampire's unique powers. Vampires lack Rage and Gnosis, so they lack any connection to the spirit world. Their unliving condition actually seems to give them less of a spiritual connection than a normal human would have.

Vampiric powers usually involve manipulating the minds and senses of their targets, or they draw upon nearby shadows for concealment or attack. Most are subtle and menacing in use.

Feel free to add new powers appropriate to vampires (shapeshift into a wolf, climb walls like a spider, supernatural strength or speed, etc.). Use whatever seems appropriate for the given character. **Vampire: The Masquerade** may provide inspiration for vampiric powers, but when running Werewolf, don't feel bound to use just those powers or the Gifts listed here.

Due to their unliving nature, vampires suffer only half damage (after soak) from attacks that inflict bashing damage. Also, all vampires have an ability similar to the Gift: Taking the Forgotten that allows them to drink the blood of human beings and erase their victims' memories of the attack.

- **Young Vampires:** Leeches who have not yet reached a century of undeath fall into this category. They are the "teenagers" of vampire society, not yet grown into their full power or knowledge. Werewolves are most likely to

encounter younger vampires due to their lack of knowledge about the world around them (and in many cases, the lack of a finely honed instinct to stay away from Garou).

**Character Creation:** Attributes 7/5/3, Abilities 13/9/5, Backgrounds 7, Willpower 7, Gifts 3, Blood Pool 10-15

**Suggested Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Suggested Abilities:** Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Computer 2, Dodge 3, Firearms 2, Intimidation 2, Investigation 3, Leadership 3, Occult 2, Stealth 2, Subterfuge 3

**Suggested Gifts:** Eye of the Cobra, Heightened Senses, Persuasion, Resist Pain, Staredown

**Image:** A vampire looks much like a normal human, but he has cold, pallid skin. Garou in Lupus form nearly always know the undead for what they are. Vampires smell of old blood and slight decay — without the aid of supernatural powers, a typical vampire will never pass for human around a werewolf's sense of smell. Vampires also have no heartbeat, nor any need to breathe (except to speak). Most vampires try to dress fashionably for some subculture or other. It's easy to find some who favor high fashion, some who favor tattoos, piercings and leather and so on.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Young vampires are filled with hot passions and inflated egos. They're always prepared to take

an insult in the worst possible way. Most haven't met a werewolf before, and they may panic at the first sign of the Crinos form. Those who realize what danger they are in use their powers and wits to try to escape.

• **Ancients:** Ancients believe that they rule over the nights in their respective cities. These old Leeches have survived at least three centuries of the challenges unlife brings. They're cunning, vicious and manipulative beyond parallel. Their schemes are complex enough to leave Shadow Lords shaking their heads in frustration when trying to unravel them.

**Character Creation:** Attributes 12/9/6, Abilities 20/12/8, Backgrounds 15, Willpower 10, Gifts 5, Blood Pool 20-30

**Suggested Attributes:** Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Charisma 5, Manipulation 6, Appearance 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

**Suggested Abilities:** Alertness 2, Brawl 1, Dodge 1, Etiquette 5, Investigation 5, Leadership 4, Linguistics 4, Medicine 2, Melee 3, Occult 5, Politics 4, Subterfuge 4

**Suggested Gifts:** Eye of the Cobra, Glib Tongue, Heightened Senses, Mindblock, Persuasion, Resist Pain, Roll Over, Staredown, Madness

**Image:** Like his younger counterparts, an ancient vampire is a walking corpse. Again, the scent of decay is faint but mingled with the smell of old blood. Ancients prefer to wear clothing reminiscent of their breathing days. However, the



intelligent ancient won't show his face in public in anything but modern clothing (again, with few touches reminiscent of his younger days).

**Roleplaying Hints:** Ancient vampires show a haughty arrogance toward what they consider to be lesser beings. They do have a healthy respect for the destruction even one werewolf can inflict upon undead flesh, so few are likely to provoke a Garou to violence directly. Many are completely willing to use Garou in their Machiavellian schemes, and they are often more successful than werewolves would care to admit. Ancients usually spread agents throughout a city's infrastructure (city hall, the police department, hall of records, younger vampires, etc), and they can use those contacts to avoid direct contact with their enemies.

## *Mages*

Mages are normal-seeming humans who have the ability to bend reality through the direct application of will. Each mage uses her power as she feels is appropriate, which can bring her in conflict with werewolves easily.

Many Garou see mages as usurpers of Gaia's rightful power as creator. They feel that the versatile and powerful magic mages wield is the birthright of Celestines alone, and they would prefer to see the vainglorious mages humbled. The fact that some mages have attempted to raid the Garou's caerns for spiritual energy (and drained more than a few in the process) does not improve the werewolves' attitudes about them.

Mages practice a multitude of traditions. Some use very ritualized styles, calling upon powerful spirits for favor, and others practice more informal shamanic systems. Some insane mages seem to have no internal consistency to their methods, and they are as dangerous as any Wyldling Vortex or Nexus Crawler when they appear. A very few Garou have kin among the mages (and very few of them). Kin mages are considered more trustworthy than other mages, but they are expected to assist Garou and respect the Garou Nation's needs — or else.

Some terrifying mages serve corruption and destruction, bringing both with them wherever they go. Most are subtle tempters, who prefer to lead others down the primrose path to damnation. When threatened or angered, they become terrible enemies indeed. Many have pacts with powerful Banes, and they may call upon those Banes at need. A few also create fomori to serve as soldiers to use against their enemies. When werewolves find one of these twisted mages, they stop at nothing to kill him.

Mages fear some kind of retributive force that strikes them down when they grow too proud and haughty with their powers. Mages who recognize and respect this force use magic in subtle and often invisible ways. Mages who attempt flashy or showy effects (especially in public places, where normal people can see them) often suffer mysterious injuries. (They explode, blood spurts from the eyes, their flesh peels off, and some even vanish without a trace.) The Garou simply consider this just and appropriate, the hand of Gaia (or the Weaver) forcing them to behave.

**Gifts:** Mages command a broad and versatile range of powers unlike any other than those wielded by powerful spirits. Using Gifts to approximate magic is a problematic proposition, given this versatility. Mages tend to build skills in one or more spheres of influence. Within those spheres, a mage may accomplish anything, provided he gains enough successes on a magic roll. (The difficulty varies from five to eight, depending on the effect's scope.) Very minor effects require only one success. Noticeable effects require two successes, and a fairly powerful effect that can injure or kill a target requires three successes. Four successes allow the mage to affect several targets at once, and five or more allow incredible results. The effect usually takes the form of accident or happenstance. The mage can choose to make the effect obvious, but he will suffer a backlash of one level of unsoakable lethal damage per success. If he botches, he takes one level of aggravated damage per 1 rolled, and he may vanish to another realm for a long time.

Magic doesn't normally inflict aggravated damage unless the attack takes the form of fire, electricity, toxic waste, silver or pure magical energy. (The latter always subjects the mage to a backlash.)

Typically, mages have access to one or two of the following spheres: Spirit (can enter the Umbra or summon and command spirits), Elemental (can manipulate earth, fire, air and water), Entropy (command of fate, decay and luck), Travel (teleportation or flight), Divination (see distant places, the past or the future), Life (can shapeshift himself or others, heal himself or others). Feel free to add any others that seem appropriate.

- **Shaman:** She is Kinfolk to the Garou, and she helps when she can (or must), but even her blood kinship can't overcome the distrust many elders feel for her kind. A few extreme Garou believe that human mages who practice shamanic or nature-oriented magic are trying to steal their birthright as Gaia's chosen by emulating them.

**Character Creation:** Attributes 8/6/4, Abilities: 15/10/5, Backgrounds 10, Willpower 8, Magic Dice Pool: 5

**Suggested Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Suggested Abilities:** Alertness 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Enigmas 3, Etiquette (Spirits) 4, Expression 3, Linguistics 1, Medicine 2, Melee 1, Occult 5, Rituals 4

**Suggested Magical Spheres:** Spirit, Divination, Life

**Image:** Kin to Uktena, her dark skin and Creole patois denote her origins in Louisiana. In most circumstances, she prefers to blend in, rather than stand out. When she prepares to perform a ritual, however, she can take on a rather dramatic aspect as she adorns herself with her ritual tools (a top hat, a bottle of rum, a walking stick and a tuxedo).

**Roleplaying Notes:** She's learned the secrets of Voudoun, but she at least gives lip service to werewolf totems (at least when relatives are around). She's friendly until given a reason to be otherwise. The treatment she's

received from elder werewolves has nearly soured her on filial respect, and it will take serious convincing on the part of any pack to change her mind.

• **Corrupter:** The Corrupter is a mage whose ambition for power drove him to seek alliances with darker creatures. He's a careful mover, choosing not to engage his enemies directly. Instead, he seeks out those who have strong desires, and he helps them fulfill those desires—for a steep price. He's already given his soul to his dark master, and part of the bargain requires that he supply more. Unfortunately, he's not entirely happy with the exchange. He has what he asked for, but now he lives in virtual slavery. The Corrupter sacrificed his free will for the sake of a few baubles and a modicum of power (that he now realizes he could have achieved on his own), and he is understandably bitter about it.

The Corrupter is fully aware that he's acquired sworn enemies just by his very allegiance. He surrounds himself with followers, hangers-on and anyone else who can serve as a shield against those who would destroy him and his gains. Fortunately, his master has provided him with a few defenses. One such defense is a pack of loyal fomori, who rely on him to provide them with their daily meals of fresh human flesh.

**Character Creation:** Attributes 9/7/5, Abilities: 16/12/8, Backgrounds 10, Willpower 6, Magic Dice Pool: 6

**Suggested Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4, Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

**Suggested Abilities:** Alertness 2, Dodge 2, Drive 2, Empathy 3, Etiquette 4, Expression 3, Intimidation 2, Investigation 2, Leadership 2, Melee 2, Occult 3, Performance 2, Rituals 3, Subterfuge 4

**Suggested Magical Spheres:** Divination, Entropy, Spirit

**Image:** Immaculate at all times. He maintains a clean-cut image to impress others he may meet. His preference is a white three-piece Perry Ellis suit.

**Roleplaying Notes:** The Corrupter regrets his decision, but his bitterness only drives him further into damnation. His sense of his own fate only encourages him to lead others down the same path, in the vain hope that it will somehow ease his own fate when his master comes for his soul. He's always a smooth talker, careful never to miss a beat. He's not oily like a crooked used car salesman, he acts genuinely friendly and helpful—until he gets what he wants.

## *Walking Dead*

In the aftermath of the Red Star's appearance, many things have taken a turn for the worse. One particular change has been the tendency for the dead to walk—that is, without becoming vampires. Actual corpses have begun rising from their graves and acting according to their own agendas (some of which seem to have nothing to do with the animated body's former life). Knowledgeable Silent Striders say that malicious spirits of the dead have somehow crossed into the lands of the living and claimed bodies of their own, but no one is certain of the cause.

Some bear Wyrm-taint, but it doesn't seem to correspond to how malicious or destructive the animating spirit may be. Since wraiths are not spirits of the Triat (all three forces of which are tied to the living universe), it's difficult to judge how one will act or react based on what a simple Gift may sense.

All of the walking dead are driven to accomplish some goal or other, and they will brook no interference in achieving that goal. Since they can withstand a great deal of damage before being disabled, and since they can heal even the most grievous of injuries in a short period of time, they can sometimes be a real threat to a werewolf pack.

In some cases, it's possible and acceptable to find out what the dead person wants, because it will leave the living world when it gets it. Unfortunately, most do not have such easily achieved goals, and those goals tend not to be compatible with many werewolf outlooks in the first place. (Although you never know; a walking dead who wanted to bring death to hundreds or thousands of humans at once might get sympathy from a Red Talon.) The truth is, most Garou see walking corpses as an aberration that should be corrected as quickly as possible. Werewolves simply don't hold to a cosmology that accepts the right of walking dead things to exist.

**Gifts:** The walking dead don't often have very many esoteric powers. They tend to be supernaturally strong, tough and fast, and some possess mental powers that afflict the senses of the living. They power their abilities with Pathos (a form of spiritual energy akin to Gnosis). They can also spend one Pathos point to repair one health level of damage. The walking dead regain Pathos for pursuing their goals, so they are thus nigh unstoppable when doing so.

• **Revenant:** The spirit animating this corpse is that of a young woman who was murdered (along with her fiancé) while camping. She recalls clearly the pack of howling man-beasts who burst into the campsite, tore everything to pieces and terrorized the two hapless victims before dismembering them. She hasn't returned in her own body, but that's of no consequence as long as she brings death to the monsters that killed her.

**Character Creation:** Attributes 9/6/3, Abilities 13/9/5, Backgrounds 3, Willpower 8, Pathos 10

**Suggested Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

**Suggested Abilities:** Alertness 3, Brawl 4, Computer 2, Dodge 4, Firearms 3, Intimidation 2, Investigation 2, Occult 1, Stealth 3, Survival 3

**Suggested Gifts:** She receives three automatic successes on any Strength-related roll (including damage), and her punches inflict lethal damage. She can spend a Willpower point and gain three extra actions for a turn, and she has three additional soak dice (and she may soak aggravated damage). She has 10 health levels, and she suffers no wound penalties until she reaches the last one. (At that point, she falls until she can repair the injuries or her body is destroyed.) She also has: Mindspeak, Dreamspeak and Fabric of the Mind.

**Image:** She has gaunt, hollow features and stringy blonde hair that probably hasn't been washed since she crawled out of the grave. She's wearing garments she stole from a thrift store that are equally unwashed. In the city, she blends in with the homeless population.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Her goal is to find and kill the monsters that murdered her and her boyfriend. Unfortunately, she won't be able to tell one Crinos from another, and she will be satisfied with trying to kill any pack of werewolves. Once she's spotted her quarry, she will try to arm herself appropriately for the inevitable confrontation and use the intervening time to haunt their dreams with visions of the crime perpetrated upon her.

## *Unfortunates*

Many supernatural beings wander the Earth, but some have recently come upon hard times. The Apocalypse exacts its price from all things, and some may have already fallen to its advance.

## *Writhes*

The spirits of the dead have suffered greatly in recent times. A terrible storm swept across their lands and destroyed their safe havens, driving the dead before it with flesh-shredding and bone-destroying strength. The few werewolves who could travel into the Dark Umbra do so rarely — if ever — in light of such changes.

## *Faeries*

Faeries are spirits of the natural world, given life by human imagination and the pure quiet places in the wilderness. In the modern times, the Weaver chains the human mind, and the Wyrm taints human dreams. Few (if any) pure quiet places still remain. Only the Fianna claim to have any kind of dealings with the fae, and their accounts make little sense to the other tribes.

## *Spirits*

Not all spirits in the Tellurian are friendly to the Garou. Many are outright dangerous. The obvious candidates for enmity are Banes, but even the Wyld's children do not always look kindly upon the Garou.

## *Weaver*

The Weaver's myriad children inhabit the Pattern Web's labyrinthine branches, mostly serving to reinforce the Weaver's hold over reality. Most Weaver-spirits appear as arachnids or geometrically precise shapes and patterns.

Banes are the Garou's most common enemy, but Weaver-spirits are the most dangerous. They represent stasis embodied, and they enforce it wherever they are. All Weaver-spirits have the Charm: Solidify Reality.

## *Stasis Vector*

Stasis Vectors have appeared only in recent times, but any Garou who's encountered one and survived probably wishes

that they'd stayed wherever they came from. Only a few have appeared so far, but more can be expected in the future.

A Stasis Vector can force everything around it to maintain a static state. That is, it's more difficult to change anything nearby the longer it operates. Vectors are attracted to places and beings attuned strongly to the Wyld. One appears only if a powerful disruption appears in the Tellurian. It's dispatched to stop the problem and repair any damage to the Gauntlet or reality's fabric.

Stasis Vectors are geomids, which means they take the form of incredibly precise geometric solids. It appears as an extremely complex shape that shifts slowly as it drains all possibility and chaos from its vicinity. Its scent is notable only in that it completely lacks any identifiable odor. In fact, the use of its Charms tends to remove all odors from the affected area (as scents are simply impurities in the air). If anything, a Garou would get a sense of complete sterility from scenting the Vector or anything it's touched.

Stasis Vectors usually operate with Hunter Spiders or other attack-oriented Weaver-spirits. They freeze everything, and the spiders destroy whatever's causing the disruptions. Once the disruptions are repaired and the cause eliminated, they depart.

Willpower 10, Rage 6, Gnosis 10, Essence 26

**Charms:** Airt Sense, Calcify, Materialize, Solidify Reality, Stasis

- Stasis:** The Stasis Vector is a spiritual embodiment of the concept of "unchanging." When it exerts influence over a place, it literally enforces stasis over all things within its zone of influence.

Stasis can prevent the use of other supernatural powers (although the spirit must target each power individually). The power simply fails or deactivates then remains inaccessible for a number of turns equal to the number of successes on the spirit's Willpower roll (difficulty of the target's Willpower). If the Stasis Vector receives no successes, it does not shut off the power.

On a successful Gnosis roll (difficulty 8), this Charm can force any or all creatures within 30 feet to return to their natural forms. (Garou return to breed forms, shapeshifted spirits return to their true form and so on.) This Charm also negates any Gifts that may alter a Garou's shape (like Gift of the Spriggan). Use of the Charm in this manner lasts for one turn.

The Vector may use this Charm to increase the Gauntlet rating as high as 10 with a Willpower roll. The Gauntlet rating increases by one for every two successes, and the effect lasts for a full scene.

Finally, by expending one Essence point per hour, a Stasis Vector removes all imperfections, signs of decay or irregularities around it. Plants cease to grow, the wind dies down, and living creatures fall slowly into hibernation. In the Umbra, the Vector spins an ever-growing web of stasis around itself, and all trapped within simply cease to change for good or ill. Each hour, the area effected spreads gradually (at the Storyteller's discretion). For every two hours the

spirit maintains the effect, the Gauntlet rating increases by one. After the Stasis Vector stops maintaining the power, it decreases at the rate of one hour's worth of effect per day.

### *Pattern Spider*

Pattern Spiders are the most numerous and commonly encountered Weaver servants. They work ceaselessly to spin and support the ever-growing Pattern Web. Primarily workers, Pattern Spiders have been known to swarm against those who attack the Pattern Web and calcify them into it for all eternity.

Many other types of spiderlike spirits serve the Weaver, and most evolve from Pattern Spiders. Each has a specific purpose, and it works to fulfill that purpose to the exclusion of all else. They attempt to deal with interruptions and move on.

Willpower 6, Rage 4, Gnosis 6, Essence 16

**Charms:** Calcify, Solidify Reality

### *Hunter Spider*

The Weaver often has need of efficient killers, and that's where the Hunter Spider comes in. They appear as mechanical, multi-legged creatures made of matte black steel. Their eight eyes glow an electric blue and provide the Hunter Spider with a 360-degree field of view. Approximately half of the Hunter's limbs are equipped with weapons, such as monomolecular edged blades, lasers, flamethrowers, assault rifles and tasers. Literally, any technological weapon imaginable could be in use on one of these monsters. They smell of fresh oil and hot metal.

Hunter Spiders always act in packs of two, three, five or seven units. Each group has but one guiding mind, allowing for perfect coordination among the individual units. Watching a pack in battle can be an eerie, unsettling experience, as one spider will follow through on another's attack seamlessly, all in complete silence.

Willpower 8, Rage 10, Gnosis 6, Essence 24

**Charms:** Blast (lightning bolts), Materialize, Solidify Reality, Tracking

### *Wyld*

Wyldlings are the Wyld's children. Most prefer the Deep Umbra, where the Weaver can't confine their chaotic natures to the stagnant Pattern Web. Wyldlings usually appear as shifting maelstroms of unearthly matter and energy. Their scent changes endlessly, from the vilest odors possible to the sharp crackle of ozone, and every smell in between.

All Wyldlings possess the Charm: Break Reality, which makes them very dangerous near or on Earth. Despite their affiliation with the Wyld, few werewolves are happy to encounter any of these capricious spirits.

### *Vortex*

Vortices are among the most powerful of Wyldlings. Garou and spirit alike fear and respect them, and they prefer to avoid them. The Vortex appears as a huge implosion of solid, liquid and gaseous matter mixed with burning

plasma, in constant swirling, writhing motion. It's difficult to look at a Vortex for very long before suffering intense headaches and hallucinations.

Vortices used to frequent the physical world, but as the Weaver's tightened its hold over reality, they retreated into the Deep Umbra. They are capricious, unpredictable and utterly alien in outlook.

A Vortex embodies all possibilities and probabilities. As such, its attacks always inflict unspeakable aggravated damage.

Willpower 8, Rage 8, Gnosis 10, Essence 26

**Charms:** Airt Sense, Break Reality, Disorient, Materialize, Re-form, Shapeshift

### *Lesser Wyldling*

The Lesser Wyldling is neither as powerful nor as alien as the Vortex. Even so, it is an extremely dangerous and unpredictable spirit. They are occasionally willing to aid werewolves as guides or in other matters, but nearly always at a price (not always one the werewolf will understand).

Even if a Lesser Wyldling has agreed to a bargain, it won't always follow through. Lesser Wyldlings have been known to use bargains with Garou to lead them astray (into Blights or the lairs of powerful Banes), often for the purpose of getting the werewolves to do something for them. Under no circumstances should a werewolf trust a Lesser Wyldling.

Lesser Wyldlings appear as shifting, hazy patterns, and they often seem to be only partly physical. Like a Vortex, their scent can range from disgustingly pungent to the sharp crackle of ozone to a syrupy sweetness.

Willpower 4, Rage 7, Gnosis 6, Essence 40

**Charms:** Airt Sense, Break Reality, Materialize, Shapeshift

### *Wyrms*

Banes are the vile spirit-minions of the Wyrms. They assume countless forms, for destruction, deception and corruption take many shapes throughout the world. Some Banes are avatars or personifications of principles like hate, disease or murder; others are simply random destructive entities. Banes are perhaps the Garou's greatest and most numerous enemies.

All Banes are purely of the Wyrms, and destruction is the only sure way to rid an area of their influence. Banes are attracted to dark, destructive impulses and emotions, and they gather where such emotions dominate. Their presence tends to distill and reinforce those emotions, but they are not purely the cause of such things. Banes feed on destructive and corrupting emotions, and they use the energy to instill stronger feelings in the people around them.

Banes materialize in horrifying shapes that cause an effect similar to the Delirium in most humans. Some take particular delight in assuming the most terrible and disturbing forms possible in order to engender the greatest fear.

Most Banes have the Possession Charm, along with a specific power or set of powers that are based around the concept they embody. A spirit of murder might have the



Blast Charm or Corruption, for example. The powers vary wildly from one Bane to the next. Some are able to control or influence emotions, and some have the ability to immunize humans to the Delirium temporarily (allowing them to face werewolves). Some even have the ability to spread living corruption throughout the Tellurian. Many Banes prefer to encourage humans to do their work for them, rather than act directly themselves. It's easier for Banes to encourage and manipulate humans who are already morally compromised in some way than it is to control someone with strong beliefs about right and wrong.

The Storyteller should let her imagination run wild when creating Banes, as long as their powers reflect the concepts or sins they represent. Bane powers should have some kind of activation requirement, like spending Essence or making Gnosis rolls. Most Banes have powers focused on corruption or mutation, and werewolves who fight them risk body and soul.

It's easy to fall into the trap of making Banes responsible for every form of human evil — don't. Banes look for evil that already exists and try to make it worse. They're parasites at best, and they work better at drawing out what already exists than creating it whole cloth. Most Banes just aren't capable of the imaginative cruelty at which humans excel.

#### *Nexus Crawler*

Few of the Wyrm's minions are as fearsome or powerful as the dreaded Nexus Crawler. Some Theurges believe that these alien things come from well outside known reality. A Nexus Crawler's very presence corrodes and decays the fabric of reality around it. In its natural state, a Nexus Crawler appears as a black shimmer in the air, a warbling vibrato drone, a feeling on the skin like fingernails scraped across a blackboard and a miasmic scent reminiscent of a cancerous illness. If necessary, it can manifest in the form of all manner of loathsome and horrifying avatars.

Nexus Crawlers are sapient, after a fashion. While they are self-aware, their thought processes are alien — even for one of the Wyrm's servants. Other minions are ill at ease around Nexus Crawlers, and they tend to avoid them under normal circumstances. When in combat, Nexus Crawlers rarely use tactics that make any kind of rational sense, and they do not often employ "logical" tactics. This fact alone may have helped werewolves survive encounters with Nexus Crawlers. Nexus Crawlers are effectively forces of nature. They are more akin to tornadoes or earthquakes than to other Banes.

Should they so choose, Nexus Crawlers can assume a truly vile, repulsive and terrifying form. Humans will run in terror at first sight, as if they have been affected by the Delirium. Upon first sighting the thing, players of Garou roll Willpower, lest the characters fly into a fox frenzy. The Nexus Crawler bristles with a host of appendages and weaponry, including mouths with row upon row of needle-sharp teeth and additional arms covered with venomous barbs.

Willpower 6, Rage 10, Gnosis 10, Essence 26

**Charms:** Airt Sense, Materialize (which grants 12 health levels), Re-form, Warp Reality

• **Warp Reality:** As beasts of raw entropy, Nexus Crawlers may alter reality after a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 7). One success allows fairly minor alterations — it may create a hazy, blurry illusion, light a small fire, change an individual's facial features, or drop the temperature in a small area.

With three successes, a Crawler can cause more drastic changes to the environments or specific targets. These changes include turning a stone floor into a viscous liquid, transforming any steel object into silver, changing a foe's sweat into a corrosive acid, creating an illusion that affects any two senses or darkening an area completely. The Crawler may also hurl bolts of raw entropic energies that inflict three dice of aggravated damage. (Roll Willpower to attack, and use normal ranged combat complications.)

If the Crawler gains five successes, it may cause truly spectacular effects. It can turn a person's bones into swamp muck or rotten wood, change the air into carbon monoxide or mustard gas, remove a target's entire face (and all sensory organs), or mismatch them in bizarre ways, create a full-sensory illusion or turn everything in a room-sized area into silver. Entropic bolts of this power level inflict six dice of aggravated damage.

### *Psychomachiae*

Psychomachiae are spirits for whom fear, terror and horror are ambrosia. These Banes seek out and possess disturbed and depraved individuals, urging them to act out base impulses and dark fantasies. A Psychomachia can't possess just anyone and drive him to corruption, but he can possess an already depraved individual easily and give him just that little extra push.

Physical manifestations are always extremely vicious. They come equipped with razors, fangs, scalpels, clamps and other instruments for inflicting pain and death. Psychomachiae smell of death, anger and hatred, melded into a miasma of twisted rage.

Willpower 7, Rage 10, Gnosis 8, Essence 25 (+1 per death inflicted by its host, not counting deaths the Psychomachia causes directly)

**Charms:** Airt Sense, Corruption, Materialize, Possession

### *Scrags*

Scrags make up one of the many races of warrior-Banes that serve the Wyrm. They are monsters of unrestrained rage and violence, serving not as corrupters, but as soldiers. Within the Umbra, they appear as semi-physical, ghoulish spirits with razor-sharp claws and fangs. Scrags are semi-quadrupeds, seeming to walk in a slouch. This slouch does not impede their movement in any way.

Scrags kill. They are, literally, spirits of murder. They live for the moment when a victim's life ends, and they revel in the mayhem and bloodshed they inflict. Packs of Scrags often

indulge in frenzies of death and dismemberment, expressing only a malevolently dark humor at their victim's expense.

Scrags manifest in a rather unique fashion. A Scrag cannot simply penetrate the Gauntlet, it must instead find a host and possess him. Unless the Scrag is somehow evicted (through an exorcism, most likely), the victim will transform into a Scrag physically within 48 hours. From the initial possession until the final transformation, the host will begin to exhibit many of the Scrag's traits, including antisocial habits, a nasty disposition, a short and violent temper and a consuming hunger for raw, bloody, red meat. Once the 48 hours have passed, the physical transformation takes effect. The host becomes a lean, ghoulish figure with grayish skin, razor sharp claws and fangs, and it smells of ammonia and blood. Once the Scrag departs the body (for whatever reason), the host returns to his normal form, and he must face the carnage he caused. (What's more, he retains full memory of his actions.)

Willpower 6, Rage 10, Gnosis 4, Essence 20

**Charms:** Incite Frenzy, Possession

## *Human Agencies*

Throughout history, humans have sought out the unknown, the different, the monstrous and the bizarre. Depending on what they found and why they looked for it, they either studied or destroyed it.

### *Impalers*

Within the past few years — with the appearance of the Red Star and other grim portents — a few humans have appeared wielding flaming weapons of all kinds and immune to the Delirium. The Garou aren't exactly certain as to what these humans are, however. They aren't mages or Kinfolk, though, and they seem as startled by the werewolves as the werewolves are by them. In fact, despite their unusual nature, they seem rather ignorant of the specifics of any supernatural creatures. Visionary Garou expect this ignorance to change over time — if there's any time left to the world, that is.

These hunters usually appear around fomori, Black Spiral Dancers or other Wyrm servants (sometimes while the Dancers battle the Garou, or even when the Dancers simply mind their own business). Whatever causes their appearance, few hunters react with indecision. They strike against the monsters nearby, sometimes with success, occasionally losing badly. On even more rare occasions, they strike out against Garou — usually those who go into cities and attack humans with no seeming provocation, although a few rare cases have happened in the wilderness.

The Garou aren't exactly certain what the appearance of these hunters mean, but most agree that these unusual humans must represent some sign of the coming Apocalypse or another. A few fatalists in the Nation believe that Gaia may have chosen them to replace the Garou, but these dissident voices are usually shouted down or ignored. Most werewolves are not yet aware of this new breed of dangerous humans.

**Gifts:** The Imbued rarely has more than two or three powers, and few translate directly into equivalent Gifts. All have a special Trait called Conviction, that is usually rated from three to six points, but a few have as many as 10. (Only the most experienced and dangerous imbued have so many, though.) An imbued may spend one point of Conviction to ignore the Delirium, all illusion and all mind-control or influence-based powers, Gifts and Charms. In addition, he may perceive the Garou as unusual or see Banes that possess humans. (He may not see into the Umbra, though.)

Some imbued may spend Conviction to inhibit supernatural powers. (Roll the imbued's Willpower vs. the target's in an opposed test.) For each success over the target, the target may not use any Gifts, Charms or other powers for one turn. The target may still change forms as normal, though.

Others can spend Conviction to cause an object (usually a weapon) to burst into flames and inflict aggravated damage. These flames are invisible to other humans, but they are very painful to the Garou. Such a weapon inflicts an additional die of damage.

One common ability allows an imbued to somehow mark a supernatural creature, allowing her to follow it to its lair later. Roll Willpower (difficulty is target's Willpower). Each success allows the imbued one day to track the Garou. Where Rage or Gnosis is necessary, spend Conviction or roll Willpower.

Using these guidelines, Gifts that deal with denial of supernatural powers, defense from supernatural powers or sensory effects are appropriate. No imbued has the ability to Sense Wyrm, Wyld or Weaver, however. They are blind to the Triat, and they act only against those who act against humans.

## *Governments*

Not surprisingly, various government agencies around the world have departments devoted to studying anomalous phenomena (read: "supernatural events"). Most such departments sit very far from the truth, indeed. They're focused on studying the possibility of psychic powers such as ESP, telekinesis and mind control. In general, few humans in government employ have much information about the supernatural at all, so the Veil remains intact.

One such agency is the FBI Special Affairs Division (SAD). In the early 1950s, Charles Horner (a long-time federal agent) and Dr. Emil Zotos (J. Edgar Hoover's personal psychiatrist and a member of the Army's Psychological Strategy board) convinced Hoover of the existence of supernatural beings. They proposed the creation of a semi-autonomous branch of the FBI to deal with it. In the winter of 1952, the Special Affairs Division came into being.

For the first few years, the secret department thrived. After the 1950s ended, later presidents found little need to continue funding SAD, and it dropped in size over the years. This lack of support is due to both the difficulty in convincing politicians to fund investigations into the paranormal, and due to several difficulties the department has suffered (such as the complete nervous collapse of the previous director in 1993).

In the past few years, reported incidents of supernatural activity have been on the rise — everything from the dead rising from their graves to at least one instance of a man going on live television to demonstrate paranormal powers and announce the existence of supernatural conspiracies controlling the world governments. While loath to acknowledge such reports, a few congressmen (led by Senator Jesse T. Grubhholb) have offered secret support and funding to the SAD. The SAD is currently at a better operating position than it's been in the past 30 years, although it is still nowhere near as effective as it was in its glory days in the 1950s.

SAD operatives are aware of the existence of werewolves, ghosts and vampires, and they have researched appropriate countermeasures for each. As such, they can get flamethrowers, silver bullets, wooden stakes and other odd weapons as necessary on a case-by-case basis. Agents can request (and expect to get) some seriously heavy firepower when needed.

The SAD's "Men in Black" investigate the ever-growing reports of supernatural activity — and if possible, do something about them. Thanks to past experience, SAD does have a very accurate profile of the typical human reaction to the Delirium, and it watches the news and police reports for reported occasions of just such accounts.

• **Government Agent:** Agents can come from any number of "alphabet soup" agencies (NSA, CIA, FBI, etc.). Not such agents all will be SAD agents necessarily, since the activities they investigate may seem at the outset to fall into their jurisdiction. Agents usually work in groups of two or more people, and they always have a great deal of backup or authority.

**Character Creation:** Attributes 7/5/4, Abilities 12/8/5, Backgrounds 7, Willpower 6

**Suggested Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

**Suggested Abilities:** Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Computer 1, Dodge 1, Drive 2, Expression 1, Firearms 2, Intimidation 2, Investigation 3, Law 3, Leadership 2, Stealth 2, Subterfuge 1, Science 1

**Image:** Government agents are clean-cut, well-dressed people. They are given to wearing dark suits and aviator sunglasses for maximum intimidation value.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Government agents are efficient and sometimes even courteous. They're police officers with broad discretionary powers, and they aren't afraid to use said powers if such uses can be justified. An agent will try to take control of the situation as quickly as possible with the least amount of fuss. Doing so isn't always possible, and it may leave local law enforcement personnel with bruised egos.

## *Corporations*

In most cases, corporations serve more as indifferent or accidental antagonists to the Garou. Certainly, a great many pollute Gaia in unforgivable ways, but they're ignorant of the full spiritual consequences of their damage (not

that this lets them off the hook). At best, they're dupes. At worst, they're greedy opportunists.

The corporate boards serve the Weaver or the Wyrm unwittingly, or both in most cases. The Garou must heal the damage the corporations inflict and halt their depredations. At the rate human industrialization expands, though, the task seems as impossible as holding back the ocean was for King Canute.

### *CyberSolutions, Inc.*

CyberSolutions is a research and development house primarily concerned with creating replacement limbs for people with crippling birth defects or who've had limbs amputated. It pursues research into interfacing the human mind and body with electronics, thus allowing the blind to see, the deaf to hear and the lame to walk.

Unfortunately, it seems that the corporation has developed technology far in advance of what it has revealed to the rest of the world, and it sells its advanced designs for use creating in super-soldiers of some kind. On more than one occasion, werewolf packs have encountered chaingun-toting cyborgs with inhuman strength, speed and durability. They often serve as security or enforcement for super-secret corporate or government operations of a very sensitive nature.

Some Garou elders claim that such advanced technology is really Weaver-twisted magic, but the younger werewolves do not tend to see it that way.

• **Cyborg Soldier:** Human corporations create such monstrosities only rarely, but those few that exist are a danger to Garou. Most werewolves (except, perhaps, the Glass Walkers) see the merging of human flesh with the Weaver's technology as a terrible thing.

**Character Creation:** Attributes 8/5/3 (Physical always Primary), Abilities: 11/7/4, Backgrounds: 3, Willpower 3

**Suggested Attributes:** Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Suggested Abilities:** Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Firearms 4, Melee 3

**Suggested Gifts:** Cyborgs often have armor (three additional soak dice), retractable claws or blades (Strength +1 or +2 damage) and increased Strength (two additional dots). A few are wired for heightened reflexes (two actions per turn, standard). All have Cybersenses (as the Glass Walker Gift, p. 149). Some have assault rifles (AK-47 or equivalent) mounted inside their bodies.

**Image:** Cyborgs can look like anyone. They're given a human appearance so that they may pass for normal humans. Most wear very nice clothing. Expensive (but off-the-rack) business wear is standard.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Cold, efficient and detached. Cyborgs tend to have a one-track mind, and they are focused on the specific purpose that their creators or owners sent them out to accomplish.

### *Developmental Neogenetics Amalgamated*

Developmental Neogenetics Amalgamated (DNA) is a privately owned and funded corporation that focuses on genetic engineering, mapping the human genome and hunting werewolves. DNA is actively aware of Garou, and it engages in an aggressive campaign to hunt down and trap as many as possible for its research. DNA is focused primarily on genetic research (and is highly interested in correcting congenital defects and diseases), and it sees werewolves as some sort of genetic aberration. DNA researchers see lycanthropy as a disease to be cured, not a spiritual race with a mandate to protect nature.

DNA sends its teams out with chemical weapons and poisons intended to inhibit lycanthropic shapeshifting or regeneration. Once they subdue a werewolf, they bring it to the laboratory where it undergoes an intense battery of tests intended to isolate the "lycanthrope gene." So far, they've not discovered the sequence that causes this "disease." Once they do, they hope to use the knowledge to improve the human condition. Certainly the ability to regenerate injuries, even under limited conditions, would be a great boon.

For entrapment teams, use the Traits given for Dead Man's Hand, but give them weapons designed to incapacitate and trap werewolves, rather than to kill them.

### *Dead Man's Hand*

Several werewolf packs have run afoul of well-equipped, heavily armed teams of fomori, humans with unusual powers and the occasional Black Spiral Dancer. They are trained in military special-forces tactics, and they are usually issued silver bullets and supernaturally enhanced bio-warfare weapons to use against Garou targets.

Most werewolves are unaware of the source of these agents, but those who have compared notes find the thought of a boot camp turning out werewolf-killing squads of fomori to be disturbing at the very least. Fortunately, these killers aren't all that common, and they usually engage packs in the midst of an operation (such as monkeywrenching an environmentally unfriendly corporation or interfering with logging operations in the Pacific Northwest). They've not yet tracked any packs back to their caerns. When captured, they kill themselves before they're questioned — so far, at any rate.

One such team with a streak of notoriety a mile wide among young werewolves is the squad known as "Dead Man's Hand." Their insignia is of four playing cards: two black aces and two black eights, displayed proudly on all of their uniforms (and in some cases, on civilian clothing or baseball caps). Right underneath the cards is the number "108."

The team is composed entirely of normal humans. All six have been trained in anti-werewolf tactics, and they carry weaponry appropriate for each task. All six members are immune to the Delirium, but this immunity does not make them in any way stupid. They're trained to be effective, not suicidal. Additionally, while they aren't possessed, fomori or

otherwise obviously of the Wyrm, the Gift: Sense Wyrm will detect a slight degree of Wyrm-taint on each of them.

The squad does suffer from regular turnover, losing one or two members a year to combat losses. As an offset, they're very well paid (hazard pay or better) at all times.

The current squad lineup includes:

- Damon Moore — Damon is a former member of the Australian SAS (rank: Captain). He spent 12 years in the Australian military before mustering out. In the six years since, he's led Dead Man's Hand in numerous battles with werewolves and come out alive (if scarred in a few cases). He once killed a werewolf with a thrust to the heart with a silver bowie knife. He keeps the wolf's skin as a rug in his condo. Damon is also an expert sharpshooter. (Charisma •••, Firearms, Melee •••• each, Leadership •••)

- Jan Boetcher — Jan is formerly of the South African army. After six years in the service, he decided to seek his fortune elsewhere. He found it in America, and he was recruited into Dead Man's Hand very shortly thereafter. He's been a part of the team for three years now. Jan specializes in firearms (not as good as Damon, but he's a better tracker), and he is also trained to fly helicopters. (Pilot ••, Survival •••)

- Joseph Markham — Joseph is the other rifleman in the squad. At eight months since he joined, he's the newest squad member. Originally a forest ranger, he quit after an encounter with a large, bear-like creature. He doesn't recall the incident clearly, except for the fact that he shot it three or four times before running away. A month after his resignation, he found his way into Dead Man's Hand and now has some guesses about the monster he encountered in the wilderness. (Survival •••, Willpower 8)

- Travis Hearst — Travis spent eight years in the US Army as a paratrooper and trauma medicine specialist. After he got out, he joined the forest service to work as a smoke-jumper (a firefighter who parachutes into remote forest fires

and constructs firebreaks). He quit this incredibly dangerous job for something a little more exciting—fighting werewolves. He's been a part of Dead Man's Hand for a little over three years now, and he recommended Joseph Markham, an old pal from the forest service, for the team. (Medicine •••)

- Arthur Farnsworth — Arthur's actually been in the squad longer than any other current member, surviving since the team's foundation in 1990. Arthur served in the Royal Marines (Master Sergeant) until the Falklands invasion in 1982. He spent the next several years as a mercenary, until he joined Dead Man's Hand. Arthur specializes in heavy weaponry. (Heavy Weapons ••••)

- Brad Williams — Brad served on the New York City police force for several years as one of the city's best bomb-disposal experts. Unfortunately, he was forced to retire early due to a few scandals in the department. Rather than allow Williams' talents go to waste, Moore arranged to bring him in to serve as demolitions expert and general booby-trap man. (Demolitions •••)



**Attributes:**  
Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

**Abilities (typical):** Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Drive 2, Firearms 3, Leadership 1, Melee 2, Stealth 2, Security 2, Survival 2

**Willpower:** 6

**Powers:** Dead Man's Hand squad members are all normal humans with exceptional training. Similar squads may have fomori members, who have powers appropriate for their kind.

As mentioned previously, all squad members are immune to the Delirium.

**Equipment:** Camouflage fatigues (whatever's appropriate for their current environment), bulletproof vest, assault rifle (with silver bullets), pistol, silver combat knife (treated with an unusual manufacturing process that hardens it for combat use), radios (encrypted signal), fragmenta-

tion grenades (embedded with silver fragments), bio-warfare grenades (best used with a launcher, at a distance). The bio-warfare agent acts as a form of high-speed Ebola on normal humans and animals, and it inhibits Garou regeneration (treat as Crawling Poison on p. 274; its effects last for six minus Stamina hours) and pepper spray.

**Roleplaying Notes:** Dead Man's Hand is a highly trained combat unit. The soldiers have teamwork down to a science. They do not act stupidly if they can avoid it (but no one is perfect). They can often coordinate as well as or better than the typical werewolf pack. Individually, each is supremely confident in his abilities (some might say overconfident). Still, normal humans and fomori suffer some friction, so mixed teams can lose some effectiveness due to such rivalry.

All problems aside, the first time a pack faces Dead Man's Hand, the soldiers' coordination and tactical ability should offer surprise and a real danger. Play them intelligently and carefully. They're trained to kill nine-foot tall raging engines of supernatural destruction, and they will act accordingly. They're less likely to panic in the face of a Garou pack. Very few are willing to get into melee combat with one, and even fewer expect to survive the experience.

Despite their taint and immunity to the Delirium, Dead Man's Hand squad members are completely unaware of the Triat, Gaia, what the Garou fight for or who their own employ-

ers may or may not represent. They're part of a paramilitary security force, and they do their job to the best of their ability.

### *Other Groups*

Several other agencies exist to root out and destroy or learn about supernatural beings. One such is the Catholic Inquisition (also known as the Society of Leopold). The Society of Leopold has existed for centuries as a semi-secret order within the Catholic Church, and it is currently believed to be a scholarly organization. Inquisitors see the supernatural as evidence of demonic activity on Earth. Some believe that this activity is a sign that the end is nigh (much as the werewolves do). Very few Inquisitors hunt werewolves — not out of any sympathy for the Garou cause, but simply because few have the will and fortitude necessary to face a Crinos werewolf one-on-one. Additionally, Inquisitors nearly always stalk the cities, where they can find their preferred (vampiric) quarry, and they are simply unlikely to encounter any werewolves there.

Another human group, this one composed entirely of scholars and adventurers, exists to study and catalog the supernatural. The Arcanum, a secret society dedicated to recording the world's secret history, rarely seeks out werewolves (for much the same reasons as the Inquisition) for interviews or observation. Those few who do, rarely find anything. Those who find anything rarely return.





Stuart's footfalls crunched overloud in the stillness of evening. They sounded anxious and out-of-place, as if uncertain of exactly where they stood after so long an absence. Stuart roughly shoved such concerns back down. Crossing the road, he put one hand atop the gate and vaulted it effortlessly, as he had done since he was a boy.

Colum met him halfway up the drive. His pace was unhurried, his shotgun dangled at ease from one arm. Neither his face nor voice betrayed any excitement over the boy's return. "Stuart," he acknowledged.

"Dad, I'm glad you're here. I didn't see the truck, and I was afraid you'd gone down into town. I..."

"Ellen's got the truck. Gone to the movies. She'll be sorry she missed you." It was clear from his tone that he did not share this sentiment.

Stuart tried to wrap his mind around the idea of Ellen driving. When he'd left she'd been no older than... He searched his memory but couldn't quite pin down the exact number. That bothered him. He hurried on to cover his embarrassment, "Dad, listen, I need your help. There's this..."

"Your mother's fine, thanks for asking." Colum's tone was hard, unforgiving. "She misses you something terrible. She's always going on about her son, the Journalist."

"Great," Stuart muttered uncomfortably, "But listen. I wish this were just a social call, but this is really important. I..."

"When a boy comes round here, he asks after his mother. Go on, now. Clear off." Colum gestured with the flat of the shotgun.

"But dad, I... forget it. Just forget it." Stuart turned away and waved him off angrily. "I don't know why I even came back here. Damn it, I knew it was going to be like this. It's always like this. Every time I try to..."

"Colum? Who's that you're talking to out there? Keeping them standing in the drive! Why is that...?"

"He's just leaving, Margaret. Go on back inside, I'll handle this." There was a gleam of moonlight off gunmetal.

"Stuart!" Margaret erupted through the screen door and down the front steps in a flurry of long trailing skirts. "But why didn't you call and tell us you were coming. I would have had something ready for you, dear. Colum, why didn't you tell me Stuart was here? Well never mind, the important thing is that you're here now and this is where you belong. You just come right inside and I'll whip you up something. You're as thin as a rail. What do they feed you at that newspaper office of yours? But, Lord, it's good to have you home! Come now, I'll just... Why, whatever's wrong, child?" She had taken him by the arm and started back toward the house, pulling him along in her wake. He instinctively fell into step and was three or four paces along before he recalled himself and managed to dig his feet in.

"Mom, Dad. There's business — you know, *family* business..."

Colum's voice brooked no objections. "Go inside, boy. Visit with your mother. There's a CocaCola cake on the table. She made it special, so you're going to sit down and eat it. Damn if I can figure how she always knows when you're coming, but she does."

"Colum, dear, why don't you wander down to the Jennings' and see if, between you, you can't round up a few cousins to go look for this lost sheep? There's a dear."

Grumbling, he bent to kiss her cheek and, reluctantly, nodded to Stuart. "You take care of your mother. Old Man Jennings was out shooting at something night before last. Said it looked something like a bear, but it hissed and moaned like his old tractor — crazy old SOB. Back by morning."

Colum shouldered his shotgun and confidently, unhurriedly, set off across the yard. Stuart settled onto the front stoop, tracing each of the familiar knots and cracks in the wooden steps. Routes on a map leading unvaryingly home.

# Appendix: Allies and Ammunition

## *The Stargazers*

For the longest time, the Stargazers counted themselves as one of the tribes of the Garou Nation. They remained largely on the fringes of Garou society, often pursuing their own quests, although they remained accessible and willing to assist their fellows as needed. Their introspective ways were not free of drawbacks, however. Their numbers were terribly few. The tribe didn't have nearly as many Kin as did more earthy tribes like the Fianna or Bone Gnawers, and converts to the relatively esoteric Stargazer ideals were rare. At the end of the second millennium CE, the Stargazers numbered less than 500 in all, with no sign of recovery in sight.

The worst blow, by most accounts, had to be the fall of the Shilgalu Monastery in Tibet. The Stargazers had only a few caerns to their name, and Shilgalu was one of the strongest. And thanks to the concerted efforts of a corrupted Chinese military division and powerful Wyrmish reinforcements, the strongest stronghold of the tribe was wiped away in less than a week. The heart of the tribe was under attack, its members scattered too widely to act in true unison. Obviously, something needed to be done for the Stargazers to recover their center.

After searching their consciences and speaking with their pupils, the elders of the tribe came to the decision that the needs of the Garou Nation were not their own. At a great conciliation, the most esteemed Stargazer elders informed the other tribes politely that they would be withdrawing from the Nation and gathering together to heal themselves. This announcement drew reactions from shock to sympathy to outrage, but the Stargazer elders would not be swayed.

"While we are broken and scattered," they said, "we are of no use to you, nor to ourselves. Though we know you would assist us if we asked, our healing must come from within. Forgive us."

Since the Stargazers' secession from the Garou Nation, all newly Changed Stargazer cubs have been given their Rites of Passage away from the other tribes. Most of the tribe's members are returning to the tribe's original homelands of India and the Himalayas, hoping to find some measure of solace in as-yet uncorrupted territory that might remain there. The tribe is very serious about its need to rebuild itself to prove up to the challenge of the Final Battle. The Garou can only pray that they'll find what they're looking for in time.

**Tribal Totem:** Chimera, a powerful dream-spirit of variegated form.

**Initial Willpower:** 5

**Background Restrictions:** Stargazers cannot take Fetish or Resources. Their allies almost always lie outside the Garou Nation.

More information on the Stargazers can be found in the *Werewolf Storytellers Companion*.

### *Stargazer Gifts*

The Stargazers' search for insight and wisdom has naturally led them deep into the spiritual realm. Their Gifts are a by-product of their penchant for visions and riddles, as well as outgrowths of their pursuit of non-lethal combat methods.

- **Balance (Level One)** — The Stargazer is able to walk across any ledge, rope, etc., no matter how thin or slippery. Wind-spirits teach this Gift.

If the Storyteller desires, he can allow players to create Stargazer characters just as the other players would create characters of other tribes. It would usually be presumed that these Stargazers have decided to remain with the Garou Nation. Existing Stargazer characters are also, of course, allowed to choose for themselves to devote their attention to their tribe or to their current septs and packmates. However, these characters are exceptions. They receive some level of distrust from many other Garou who fear that they might vanish at a critical point, as well as from their tribemates who disapprove of their attachment to external influences.

**Systems:** No point expenditure or roll is required. Difficulties for climbing decrease by three.

- **Falling Touch (Level One)** — As the Ahroun Gift.
- **Sense Wyrm (Level One)** — As the metis Gift.
- **Inner Strength (Level Two)** — After brief meditation, the Garou may convert her inner anger into iron resolve. Stargazer ancestor-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** The Garou concentrates for five minutes; the player rolls Wits + Enigmas (difficulty 8). Each success converts one point of Rage into a point of Willpower.

- **Surface Attunement (Level Two)** — The Stargazer may attune herself to the surrounding environment, thereby gaining the ability to walk at normal speed across such surfaces as mud, water, snow and quicksand without falling through or leaving tracks. The spirits of small animals that are often overlooked by other tribes (such as rabbits, sparrows and mice) teach this Gift.

**System:** The Garou concentrates for one turn; the player rolls Dexterity + Athletics. The effects last for a scene.

- **Clarity (Level Three)** — This Gift grants the ability to see through fog, pitch darkness and even recognize illusions or invisibility. A wind-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Enigmas (difficulty 7). If the Stargazer attempts to see through someone else's illusion, the number of successes rolled by the creator must be matched or beaten by the Garou.

- **Merciful Blow (Level Three)** — The Garou can subdue a foe in combat without harming him. A mongoose-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou spends one Gnosis point, attuning himself to the body of his foe. If his next blow (hand or weapon) strikes and does damage *before* soak is rolled, the player may then roll Perception + Medicine (difficulty of the opponent's Wits + Dodge). One or two successes on this roll cause the opponent to keel over helpless for the next turn. Three or more successes paralyze the foe for the entire scene. This Gift inflicts no actual health levels of damage.

- **Preternatural Awareness (Level Four)** — The Stargazer attunes all her senses to her surroundings, thereby becoming preternaturally aware of her opponent's doings and allowing her to anticipate them somewhat. A wind-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Perception + Dodge (difficulty 7). All opponents' dice pools to hit the Garou decrease by a number of dice equal to the number of successes. This penalty applies even if the Garou cannot see the attack coming. The effect lasts for one scene.

- **Strike the Air (Level Four)** — As the Child of Gaia Gift.

- **Circular Attack (Level Five)** — The greatest Stargazers have no fear of fighting even a horde of opponents. They are able to not only avoid their foes' attacks, but they can actually channel those attacks into other enemies. A Stargazer with this Gift can even redirect a single foe's attacks upon himself. A wind-spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Willpower point and rolls Wits + Dodge (difficulty of the opponent's Wits + 3, or the highest Wits + 3 if facing multiple foes). The werewolf must be in close combat, or must be attacked in a firefight by two or more foes. Each success enables the Garou to avoid and redirect one attack. This Gift counts as an action. The Stargazer may not use this Gift multiple times in one turn or spend Rage the same turn (although he may take multiple actions in the standard manner).

For example, a Stargazer with Wits 4 and Dodge 4 is fighting six foes, each with Wits 2. The player rolls eight dice against a difficulty of 5. He gains four successes, and the Stargazer redirects four attacks. Each of the attackers whose attack was redirected would roll to hit each other or another of the Stargazer's foes, at the Stargazer's choice. Two of the foes would strike normally, but the Garou could still dodge their attacks (had the player set apart any multiple actions...).

- **Wisdom of the Seer (Level Five)** — By gazing into the night sky for an hour, the Stargazer can find the answer to almost any question among the stars. A Chimerling teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou's player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Intelligence + Enigmas (difficulty 7). If successful, the player can ask any one simple question of the Storyteller and expect an honest answer. The clarity of the information depends on the number of successes, and it is rare to gain a complete and straightforward answer.

## Spirits

Garou may encounter an infinite variety of spirits (be they minor or mighty, hostile or friendly) and the Storyteller is encouraged to create any other spirits that suit her chronicle.

## Pack Totems

One of the first and strongest ties that binds a group of werewolves into a pack is the association with a totem spirit. Although the pack members may choose the totem that they feel best represents them, it's really more a case of the totem adopting the pack. Totems often refer to those Garou it chooses as its "children."

Totem spirits are generally Incarna. They are typically animal spirits, but many packs have mythological beings, elemental forces, or other spirits as totems. When a totem chooses the pack, it sends a Jagglng representative known as a totem avatar to attend the pack. The devotion of the Garou gives the totem and its avatar power, and their actions further the totem's goals. In return, the totem bestows some of its powers upon the pack.

Most totems fall into one of the four following categories: respect, war, wisdom and cunning. The first three are roughly associated with Garou renown; the last is rather less popular among Garou, as the cunning warrior is not always quite so honorable or wise.

## Background Costs and Traits

The Totem Background allows characters to "buy" a totem spirit to be affiliated with their pack. Obviously, only one totem can be affiliated with a pack. Unless stated otherwise, all bonuses and penalties apply immediately upon being accepted by the totem.

Traits are given on a per-turn basis, and they are available to one pack member at a time. The pack member with the power designates who can use it the following turn, in effect, handing it off to another packmate. Attribute and Ability bonuses add to the pack member's dice pool for that Trait, even if the member has no dots in the Trait. Ordinarily, renown awards are temporary Renown, and they are given once when the pack is accepted by the totem (unless stated otherwise).

For example, everyone in Falcon's pack gains a point of temporary Renown upon being accepted by Falcon. Every scene, one member of the pack receives three additional dots in her Leadership dice pool for as long as she wishes, until she "gives" it to another packmate. Four Willpower points are available during the story as well, and anyone in the pack can use them until they've been expended.

### *Totem Spirit Brood*

Incarna spirits frequently have a number of lesser spirits allied with them. These spirits, known collectively as a brood, are respectful of and to some degree subservient to the brood master. Most spirits of a brood will be related in some way to the themes of the totem. Falcon's brood usually consists of bird spirits, while Rat's brood will include spirits related to urban and suburban environments such as raccoon-spirits, trash heap-spirits or even mutt-spirits.

A pack in good standing with its totem may expect easier dealings with spirits of their totem's brood. Conversely, offending a spirit will probably raise the ire of the Incarna to whose brood the spirit belongs.

By spending more experience points, the totem can become more powerful and give the pack greater access to its powers. In addition, pack totems may teach Gifts relating to their affiliation and powers. Unicorn may teach healing Gifts, for instance. The totem may also allow its children to use a particular Gift without teaching it to them properly. An example is Bear, who allows his packs to use the Gift: Mother's Touch without requiring them to learn it themselves.

In addition to the benefits, a totem also has some restrictions that its children must follow to stay in the totem's favor. These restrictions are called Bans. Garou who don't follow the Ban will be cut off from their pack totem, and they must undertake a Rite of Contrition to get back in its good graces. As such, they lose *all* benefits of the totem, including extra Traits and access to unlearned Gifts. Packs that violate the totem's wishes repeatedly may find themselves abandoned completely.

Some of the most common totems and their affiliations follow. Several totems are also affiliated with tribes, but members of the tribe don't gain the Traits listed with each totem. Only packs allied with avatars of these totems (who are the ones responsible for channeling the granted powers) gain the bonus.

Tribes benefit from the patronage and wisdom of the tribal totem. It is often the spirit that cubs meet during their Rite of Passage and teaches them their tribal Gifts.

## *Totems of Respect*

These grand spirits represent virtue and honor, and werewolves look to them when in need of advice in leadership and diplomacy. Some of the greatest Garou leaders have been followers of totems of respect.

### *Falcon*

#### **Background Cost: 5**

Like the Silver Fangs he serves, Falcon is a most noble spirit. His keen eyes look deep into the Garou heart, rewarding and inspiring the valorous and honorable. A respected totem, Falcon brings unity to the Fangs and thus to the Garou. Rumors of the Silver Fang's less-than-sterling performance of late has tarnished Falcon's reputation only slightly.

**Traits:** Packs chosen by Falcon gain three dice to Leadership as well as an extra four Willpower points per story. Each pack member also gains two points of Honor Renown.

**Ban:** To Falcon's children, dishonor is worse than death; they can never allow themselves to lose permanent Honor. If they do, they must either put right the wrong or perform a Rite of Contrition and further atone for their offense by hurling themselves at a powerful minion of the Wyrm. While essentially a suicide run, their blood will wash away the stain on their names.

### *Grandfather Thunder*

#### **Background Cost: 7**

Like his Shadow Lord children, Grandfather Thunder is more feared than respected by other Garou. Thunder is patient and subtle, and he seldom sends his own avatar to packs. Instead, he commands one of his Stormcrows to tend them.

**Traits:** Thunder's packs can call upon five extra Willpower points per story, and they gain three dice to Etiquette. All pack members can also gain two extra Intimidation dice when they invoke Thunder. Many Shadow Lords see little difference between respect and fear. Each pack member also gains one point of Honor Renown. Shadow Lords will follow the pack's activities with keen interest.

**Ban:** Grandfather Thunder commands his children to give their peers and their rivals no more respect than they deserve.

### *Pegasus*

#### **Background Cost: 4**

Like the Black Furies it holds under its wings, Pegasus is chiefly concerned with protecting sacred places. It comes to its packs as a winged horse with fire in its eyes, and it teaches them Gifts associated with travel and air. Because of the rivalry between the Black Furies and the Get of Fenris, Pegasus will never accept a pack with even one Get member.

**Traits:** The Children of Pegasus can call upon an extra three Willpower points per story, and gain three dice in an Animal Ken dice pool. Each pack member gains two points of Honor Renown. Black Furies are well disposed toward the pack.

**Ban:** Garou chosen by Pegasus must always aid females of all species, young females in particular.

## Stag

### Background Cost: 6

Great Stag is an ancient spirit, older than the Fianna who claim him as totem. He is associated with masculinity, virility and the wild raw power of nature. Light and dark are both in Stag. He gave the Garou their affinity with nature, and he teaches responsibility toward humans, but he is also the master of the Wild Hunt. An avatar of Stag occasionally appears to lost Garou, leading them to safety or otherwise aiding them.

**Traits:** Stag's packs can call upon an extra three Willpower points per story, gain three dice to a Survival dice pool, and one die to Stamina dice pools for long-distance running. Each member gains three points of Honor Renown. Fianna will always be well disposed toward them, and faeries spirits and changelings honor them as well.

**Ban:** Children of Stag must always show respect toward prey, including performing a Prayer for the Prey after a successful hunt. Children of Stag must always aid the fae.

## Totems of War

These totems are spirits of battle, tactics and Rage. Ancestral warriors or predator spirits are the most common war totems. Naturally, warriors are the chief followers of these totems, although scouts and even healers (in the case of Bear) ally themselves with these bloodthirsty spirits. While they don't garner the same sort of respect among Garou as other totems, their assistance is invaluable on the battlefield.

## Bear

### Background Cost: 5

Great Bear is wise in peace and fierce in war. He is renowned as a master of healing and mystical rites. Garou don't favor this totem because of a mistrust for his true children, the Gurahl werebears.

**Traits:** Bear's children gain three dots of Medicine. Each pack member's Strength increases by one permanently, and each pack member may use the Gift: Mother's Touch once per day. The pack also gains the ability to hibernate for up to three months at a time without food or water.

Garou with this totem are well regarded by werebears as well as certain animistic peoples. Such is not the case with other Garou, however. All pack members lose five points of temporary Honor Renown if they have that many. Furthermore, they must subtract one from any temporary Honor Renown awards they receive. The pack members must work harder to prove that they are honorable.

**Ban:** Bear asks nothing of his Garou children. Asking for his favor has already cost them much standing among their own people.

## Boar

### Background Cost: 5

Boar is feared by hunters, and with good reason. He is too angry to pass up a challenge, too fierce to concede a fight and too ornery to die with good grace. Many combative young packs, particularly of the Get of Fenris and Fianna, choose Boar as their totem.

**Traits:** A hearty scrapper, Boar grants his packs two dots of Brawl; each pack member also receives an additional dot of Stamina.

**Ban:** Children of Boar must never hunt or eat boars.

## Fenris

### Background Cost: 5

Over a thousand years ago, the Norse spoke of the ravening Wolf-God Fenris, a beast even the other gods feared. He is powerful, bloodthirsty, and he neither gives nor expects quarter. The patron of the Get of Fenris is a warrior's totem who disdains weakness and chooses only packs that soak their blades and claws in the blood of foes frequently.

**Traits:** Fenris' packs gets an additional point in a Physical Attribute (Dexterity, Strength or Stamina, at the individual's choice), even if it increases the rating over 5. Each pack member gains two points of Glory Renown. Get of Fenris respect the followers of their tribal totem a little more than other "outsiders," and they test them often by inviting them on Wild Hunts and battles against powerful enemies.

**Ban:** Fenris requires that his followers never pass up an opportunity for a worthy fight.

## Griffin

### Background Cost: 4

Griffin mourns those species lost to extinction, and his rage against humans — so often the killers of entire species — makes him one with his Red Talon children. Always hungry, always hunting, Griffin strikes like lightning and kills without hesitation.

**Traits:** A swift, watchful hunter, Griffin grants three dice to an Alertness dice pool. In token of Griffin's avian aspect, each pack member can communicate with birds of prey without resorting to a Gift. Each pack member gains two points of Glory. Red Talons respect the followers of Griffin.

**Ban:** Griffin's children may not associate with humans. Griffin almost never accepts a homid Garou as his child.

## Rat

### Background Cost: 5

Silent and quick, Rat is adept at hit-and-run warfare. Rat fights to weaken, cripple and finally overwhelm, but he can be as vicious as any other when cornered.

**Traits:** Rat's children can call upon five Willpower points per story. Rat teaches how to bite to best advantage, subtracting one from the difficulty of all biting rolls. The pack also subtracts one from the difficulties of all rolls involving stealth or quiet. Bone Gnawers respect Rat's children and will aid them (although not at the risk of their own lives). Ratkin will be more tolerant of the pack than of most Garou.

**Ban:** Rat's children must never kill vermin.

## Wendigo

### Background Cost: 7

Cloaked in ice, roaring like the wind, eating the hearts of foes — that is Wendigo, cannibal spirit of the frozen north. He teaches the Garou to be as relentless as the storm, harnessing the cold bitterness of their hearts and converting it to a lethal rage.

**Traits:** Each pack member gains five Rage points per story, regardless of his actual Rage rating. Each pack member also gains two points of Glory Renown. While the Wendigo tribe respects Wendigo's children, they don't trust them easily, for Wendigo is unpredictable.

**Ban:** Wendigo's children must always aid animistic peoples in need.

## *Totems of Wisdom*

These spirits are the keepers of mystical secrets. Garou who ally with them learn to uncover hidden truths and rare Gifts. More straightforward Garou don't trust them, but those who seek answers in the unknown find friends among the totems of wisdom.

### *Chimera*

#### **Background Cost: 7**

The totem of the Stargazers, Chimera is an enigmatic spirit, mysterious She of Many Faces, who invites one to find the inner wisdom beneath layers of puzzles and deceptions.

**Traits:** Chimera's children are granted the ability to disguise themselves or something else when in the Umbra (Gnosis roll, difficulty 7). Chimera also teaches how to find the truth behind a tangle of deceptions; the pack gains three dice to Enigmas and one to Perception. Each pack member subtracts two from all difficulties involving riddles, dream interpretation or enigmas. Each pack member also gains two points of Wisdom Renown. While Stargazers will notice the pack's affiliation, that affiliation won't necessarily influence their opinion of the pack.

**Ban:** The pack must seek enlightenment, but otherwise Chimera places no restrictions.

### *Cockroach*

#### **Background Cost: 6**

Cockroach, say the cockier Glass Walkers, is the totem of the modern age. To be sure, Cockroach is quick, hardy and

persistent. Hardly a nook exists in the city in which its kin can't be found.

**Traits:** Each pack member subtracts two to difficulties involving computers, electricity and science. The pack gains three dice on rolls to activate Gifts affecting technology. Also, Cockroach's pack has the ability to enter the Umbra and view data stored on media or streaming through data cables (with a successful Gnosis roll).

**Ban:** Pack members must take pains not to kill cockroaches.

### *Owl*

#### **Background Cost: 6**

Silent watcher, Owl strikes without warning in the darkness. Like the Silent Striders who claim the totem's protection, Owl holds hidden wisdom. The totem is also associated with secrets of death and the shadowy Dark Umbra. Some believe that owls are vengeful spirits of the dead.

**Traits:** Owl's children are often gifted with premonitions of danger and of the location of mystic places long forgotten. Upon entering the Umbra, each of Owl's children gains wings, allowing them to fly from place to place. Owl's children subtract two from all difficulties involving stealth, silence or quiet. The pack gains three dice when using any Gift involving air, travel, movement or darkness. Each pack member gains two points of Wisdom. *Silent Striders* may appear mysteriously to aid the pack when it is in danger. Ratkin and children of Rat do not get along well at all with Owl's children, considering Owl's predatory nature.

**Ban:** Owl asks that the pack leave small tied or helpless rodents in the woods for him and his kind.



## Raven

### Background Cost: 5

Raven is perhaps the cleverest bird. He likes to play, baiting wolves and then flying out of range when they lunge for him. Raven is wise, for he feeds without hunting, by following wolves and picking over their kills. If he finds an animal dead in the snow he summons the wolf to tear open the carcass for him. For time out of mind Raven has been companion to the wolf, finding food and feasting with the hunters, teaching him wisdom through his games. (After all, who wants to look foolish by trying to catch the uncatchable bird?) Raven is also a totem of wealth, making sure the wolves want for nothing, although he himself is always hungry.

**Traits:** Raven grants his packs three extra dice in Survival, one in Subterfuge and one in Enigmas. Each pack member gains one Wisdom point. Wereravens are sympathetic to Raven's Garou followers.

**Ban:** Raven expects his Children to carry no wealth, instead trusting to him to provide.

## Uktena

### Background Cost: 7

Uktena is an ancient water spirit with the features of a serpent, cougar and deer. He is a spirit of riverbeds and dark places, and he knows many hidden secrets.

**Traits:** Uktena places a protective ward on each of its children while they are in the Umbra, adding three dice to all soak rolls. Uktena teaches secret lore to its children, so each member gains two extra experience points per story that may be

applied only to improving Enigmas, Occult, Rituals, Gifts or other mystical knowledge. In addition, each member gains two points of Wisdom when accepted by their new totem.

More straightforward Garou distrust Uktena's mysterious ways. Social-roll difficulties increase by one when interacting with werewolves of tribes other than Uktena or Wendigo. Garou of the Uktena tribe treat the pack like brothers.

**Ban:** Uktena asks that its Children recover mystical lore, objects, places and animals from the minions of the Wyrm.

## Unicorn

### Background Cost: 7

The totem of the Children of Gaia, Unicorn is a wise totem of peace, purity, healing and harmony. She is the embodiment of the blissful and encompassing love of Gaia.

**Traits:** Unicorn's children gain her swiftness in the Umbra, moving at twice the normal speed. They subtract two from all difficulties involving healing and empathy, although they add two to all difficulties to harm other Garou not of the Wyrm. The pack gains three dice when using Gifts of healing, strength and protection. Each pack member gains three points of Wisdom Renown. Children of Gaia will always aid and usually side with the pack in disputes.

**Ban:** Unicorn's children must aid and protect the weak and exploited (as long as doing so doesn't aid the Wyrm).

## Totems of Cunning

As a rule, Garou don't look kindly on trickery and stealth, so pack totems of cunning are fairly rare. These days, however,



more and more young Garou look to new ways of thinking to combat the threats they face. Should they choose to ally with these clever spirits, however, they will find they are little trusted by more "respectable" traditionalist Garou.

### *Coyote*

#### **Background Cost:** 7

Coyote is the consummate trickster. He's an outlaw, more Ragabash than Ragabash. Utterly unpredictable, remarkably lusty and sometimes even foolish, Coyote is a clever warrior and a master of deception.

**Traits:** Coyote gives his packs three extra Stealth dice, three extra dots of Streetwise, one dot of Subterfuge and one dot of Survival. He always has the ability to find his children wherever they are (i.e., this ability doesn't have to be purchased with extra Background points).

Although Coyote is cunning, he isn't considered particularly wise. Each member of the pack subtracts one from any temporary Wisdom received. If something goes wrong, everyone blames the pack regardless of culpability. Coyote's children have more than their share of difficulties, but at least they never get bored.

**Ban:** Coyote wouldn't think of limiting his children.

### *Cuckoo*

#### **Background Cost:** 6

The cuckoo lays her egg in the nests of other birds. The chick then pushes the other squabs out of the nest, and the unsuspecting foster parents raise it. Likewise, the children of Cuckoo are master infiltrators, able to enter caerns, Pentex offices and even Black Spiral Hives without being challenged. Exceptional spies and manipulators, packs aligned with Cuckoo often win prize fetishes and choice quarters in septs, earning the resentment of more "deserving" Garou.

**Traits:** Cuckoo grants her packs an additional dot of Manipulation and two dots of Subterfuge. In addition, it grants the power to be overlooked. The player of the pack member granted this power rolls Manipulation + Subterfuge (difficulty 6 or higher depending on how well the Garou blends in to begin with). Anyone who notices her must get more successes on a Perception + Alertness roll than the Garou's player rolled. Guards will assume that the pack member is "one of us," and even a ranking officer won't think twice about the "tech" or servant in the corner. Should the character draw attention to herself (by attacking someone or speaking loudly, for instance) the player must roll again immediately with a +2 difficulty penalty, lest the character lose the effect.

**Ban:** Cuckoo's children are opportunists who often seek to improve their pack's situation at the expense of others. Garou aware of the pack's affiliation will be very wary. Pack members lose two temporary points from any Honor Renown award.

### *Fox*

#### **Background Cost:** 7

Fox likes to confound both prey and enemy, be it a rabbit who doesn't see danger approaching or a pack of hounds who follow him into a hornet's nest. He loves to trick opponents into trusting him, then ensnare them in a cunning trap. He loves it even better if the trap also teaches the foe a lesson.

**Traits:** Fox teaches his followers Stealth 2, Subterfuge 3 and Streetwise 2, the better to confuse opponents (who, it

should be noted, are not always enemies). He also grants each pack member a dot of Manipulation.

**Ban:** Fox asks only that his children not participate in fox hunts, and that they always help foxes subjected to such hunts. Most other Garou view Fox's children as untrustworthy; pack members receive one less temporary point from any Honor Renown award.

### *Naturae*

The spirits a Garou is mostly likely to encounter are nature spirits. Some are the spirits of dead animals that haven't yet cycled to life; others are generated from the significance (or belief in such significance) of a place or thing.

Long ago, the Umbra was filled with active spirits, and every stream, every tree, every stone, every thing had a living spirit connected to it. Now, the Umbra is largely barren and featureless. Only a few nature spirits still exist, and most of them are in Slumber.

The Storyteller may assume that all spirits listed here possess the Charms of Airt Sense and Re-form in addition to those listed.

### *Animal Spirits*

Garou maintain close ties with animal spirits. Animal spirits look like an ideal of the species they represent. There are far too many varieties of animal spirits to list here; many others have disappeared as species have become extinct.

Besides the fact that these spirits can teach many Gifts to Garou, it is always wise to appease them after hunting their kind for food. Garou believe that animal spirits have a totem Incarna, which the Wendigo and lupus refer to as the Animal Fathers. The Animal Fathers are said to watch their children from lodges in the Near Umbra. Not showing proper respect to animal spirits may draw the ire of the respective Animal Father, who may prevent births of that animal in the physical world. A population decrease of deer, for example, would bring starvation to the wolves.

The following are some sample animal Gafflings:

- Deer

Willpower 4, Rage 4, Gnosis 6, Essence 14

**Charms:** No special Charms

- Falcon

Willpower 10, Rage 6, Gnosis 5, Essence 21

**Charms:** Swift Flight

- Snake

Willpower 5, Rage 6, Gnosis 8, Essence 19

**Charms:** Paralyzing Stare (as the Level Three Shadow Lord Gift)

### *Glade Child*

Glade Children are the spirits of trees. In the Umbra, they appear as robed, kindly luminescent figures within the tree. How a Glade Child appears depends on its tree's location in the physical realm. In the wilderness the spirit appears majestic and powerful; near a busy intersection, the spirit will seem grimy and waiflike. During the spring and summer (for Children of deciduous trees), Glade Children are bright-eyed and watchful of all that goes on around them, while they become sluggish and harder to rouse in late fall and winter. Glade Children are usually Gafflings or Jagglings, although some of the eldest may be Incarna.

If approached by a friendly Garou, Glade Children may impart some of their considerable knowledge of what has transpired within their sight. However, the more a tree has been tainted by a Blight or the more tightly it has been woven into a Pattern Web, the more twisted and less reliable its information becomes.

Willpower 7, Rage 3, Gnosis 8, Essence variable (20 for a sapling, 35 for a mature oak, 50+ for an ancient redwood)

**Charms:** Cleanse the Blight, Realm Sense

### *Luna*

These spirits, the most common of Luna's Jagglings, appear as shimmering ribbons of light outlined in gold or blue. They communicate to Garou empathically, spiraling or undulating more rapidly as they become excited. Their power waxes and wanes with the moon. During the full moon, they can be powerful but quite unpredictable.

Lunes have the power to open any moon bridge at will, and they may create moon bridges for Garou who petition them. In general they are positively disposed toward Garou, assuming that the werewolves don't get too bossy. During the full moon, however, there's no guarantee where the moon-mad spirit will send them.

Willpower 8, Rage 4 (8 during the full moon), Gnosis 7, Essence 19-23

**Charms:** Open Moon Bridge

### *Stormcrows*

The best-known of the spirit servants of Grandfather Thunder, Stormcrows act as the eyes and ears of the totem. They are connected to him at all times, and they often serve as pack totem avatars for Thunder.

Willpower 9, Rage 7, Gnosis 6, Essence 22

**Charms:** Create Wind, Tracking

### *The Wendigo*

Wendigo in his avatar form appears as a blue humanoid with great claws and fangs, fiery eyes and black hooflike stumps for feet. When summoned on a mission of vengeance, Wendigo can run through the sky at up to 50 miles per hour, tracking its prey. If it succeeds, it will kill the target and eat its heart; if somehow thwarted, it finds the one who summoned it and has his heart instead. It may be summoned with the Wendigo Gift: Call the Cannibal Spirit.

Willpower 7, Rage 10, Gnosis 5, Essence 32

**Charms:** Blast (Ice), Create Wind, Freeze, Materialize, Tracking

### *The Wild Hunt*

The Wild Hunt is the personification of fury and an instrument of Stag's vengeance. It is considered by some to be the Fianna's "tactical nuke," for they can call upon it when in dire straits from a Wyrm menace. It is not called lightly, for the Garou can get caught up in the Hunt and consumed by it.

The Huntsman and his pack aren't specific entities so much as wild spiritual energy. If it is "killed," the Hunt will disappear into the Umbra, to reappear if called later.

• **The Huntsman:** A powerful Jagpling servant of Stag, the Huntsman appears as a tall, stag-antlered man following his hounds.

Willpower 10, Rage 10, Gnosis 5, Essence 40

**Charms:** Armor, Materialize, Tracking

• **The Hounds:** Gaffling servants of the Huntsman, there are usually nine Hounds (although there may be as many as three times that number) with black coats and eyes of cold green fire. They can easily pace a Garou in Lupus form, and are tireless.

Willpower 6, Rage 7, Gnosis 2, Essence 18

**Charms:** Materialize, Tracking

### *Ancestor-Spirits*

Garou are faithful to tribe and Gaia unto death... and beyond. The spirits of the long-dead wait in the Umbra, watching the exploits of their descendants and ready to aid the living with knowledge, wisdom or perhaps by lending their expertise in combat.

Most ancestor-spirits reside in their tribe's Umbral homeland. Some may also be found near their sept's caern, or even bound to powerful fetishes. Garou who find a spirit may bargain for aid or Gifts as with other spirits (although often an ancestor may be more favorably disposed to her descendants). A Garou with the Ancestors Background can actually call upon his ancestors to possess his body temporarily, endowing him with the ancestor's skill and knowledge.

Are the ancestor-spirits really the spirits of dead Garou? Some think so, although many believe that they are the memories and personalities of the departed werewolves wrapped around ephemera spirits. They believe that the true spirits have returned to Gaia to be reborn.

Departed Garou aren't the only ancestor-spirits that werewolves can encounter; human spirits appear rarely, particularly if they were Kinfolk. They are almost never as powerful as werewolf spirits, however, since Garou have much stronger spirits to begin with.

Ancestor-spirits vary greatly in ability, depending both on their power before death and their strength of will. The following is a sample Garou spirit:

Willpower 6, Rage 8, Gnosis 7, Essence 21

**Charms:** Charms relate to their tribal, auspice or breed Gifts. For example, an Ahroun may possess the Armor Charm, a lupus might have the Tracking Charm, and a Glass Walker may have powers similar to an electricity elemental or a Net-Spider.

### *Elementals*

As the name suggests, these spirits are the manifestation of the raw elements that make up all things.

For centuries, elementals could be categorized classically: earth, fire, air and water. In recent times, others have been discovered such as electricity and metal. Glass Walkers truck regularly with glass and plastic elementals. (Elementals in the periodic-table sense of the word are rare if they occur at all — no sodium elementals or the like have been found.) Elementals differ greatly in power, with some being no more than minor Gafflings and others wielding Incarna-like powers. The following are examples of minor elementals:

#### *Earth Elemental*

These spirits often appear as collections of rocks connected in a vaguely humanoid form, or simply as a moving bulge in the ground.

Willpower 10, Rage 4, Gnosis 5, Essence 20

**Charms:** Armor, Materialize, Umbraquake



### *Air Elemental*

When materialized, these spirits are seldom visible except through contaminants such as dust or smoke.

Willpower 3, Rage 8, Gnosis 7, Essence 18

**Charms:** Create Wind, Updraft

### *Fire Elemental*

These mercurial spirits typically manifest as a swirling column of flame.

Willpower 5, Rage 10, Gnosis 5, Essence 20

**Charms:** Blast (Flame), Create Fires

### *Water Elemental*

These elementals often appear as little more than a "thickening" in a body of water, but they take on humanlike form occasionally.

Willpower 6, Rage 4, Gnosis 10, Essence 20

**Charms:** Cleanse the Blight, Flood, Healing

### *Glass Elemental*

These spirits usually appear as numerous glass shards collected into a humanoid form.

Willpower 4, Rage 7, Gnosis 7, Essence 18

**Charms:** Blast (Glass shards), Materialize, Shatter Glass

### *Electricity Elemental*

These spirits usually manifest as electric arcs, St. Elmo's Fire or ball lightning.

Willpower 6, Rage 7, Gnosis 5, Essence 18

**Charms:** Blast (Lightning), Control Electrical Systems, Short Out

### *Enigmatic Spirits*

Most of the spirits that Garou deal with are tied to something concrete and understandable, such as a type of animal or plant. Some have no such connection, though. Lacking a frame of reference, they are often difficult to comprehend. Regardless, some wise Garou have had encounters with these spiritual enigmas and come away the better for the meeting.

### *Chimerlings*

Chimerlings are Jagglings of the totem Chimera. They are Enigma given form, changing shape as they choose. They appear to Garou at the end of dreamquests, or they haunt dreams to grant Gifts or impart messages that the receiver seldom understands.

Willpower 3, Rage 5, Gnosis 10, Essence 18

**Charms:** Shapeshift

### *Englings*

Englings, Jagglings of Gaia, are spirits of Gnosis that Garou hunt during moots. Once caught, the Engling is thanked for giving itself to strengthen the Garou. If the ceremony is performed properly, the participants regain all their Gnosis,

and the Engling re-forms elsewhere in the Umbra. See *Sacred Hunt*, p. 127, for more information about hunting Englings.

Willpower 5, Rage 1, Gnosis 10, Essence 16

Charms: No special Charms

### *Curios*

These Gafflings appear as a small nested series of filigreed spheres hovering just above the ground. Theurges and many Stargazers spend hours studying these spirits to puzzle out the true pattern they hold within their spinning colored spheres. It usually requires a Gnosis point to troll in a Curios, but solving the puzzle successfully (Perception + Enigmas, difficulty 9) earns the Garou a Gnosis point and a temporary Willpower point per success.

Those who meditate on such spirits come to the realization that the Curios is fascinated by non-spirit beings, and that it will watch them as long as they watch it.

Willpower 5, Rage 3, Gnosis 9, Essence 17

Charms: Illuminate (lights a 50-foot area or changes the color of light)

### *Epiphlings*

These spirits embody an idea or concept, such as peace, envy, death or speed. Although they find Epiphlings more understandable than Chimerlings, Garou aren't sure exactly how these spirits fit into the spiritual hierarchy. Having studied these spirits more closely than any other tribe, Stargazers suggest that Epiphlings are the essence of pure thought and Platonic ideals made manifest. Whether they are spawned from the thoughts and emotions generated in the physical realm or they come from some place in the Umbra is open to debate. Besides learning Gifts, Garou often bind them into fetishes. The Storyteller may create appropriate traits for Epiphlings, which are usually encountered as Gafflings.

## *Sample Fetishes*

Fetishes are ranked by level, corresponding to the Fetish Background Trait. Characters with this Background may choose one or more of these items (up to their level in the Background). Again, remember that fetishes that require activation rolls (such as fang daggers and sanctuary chimes) cannot be used in the same turn that their wielder spends Rage.

Storytellers should use the following list as a basis for creating their own fetishes, keeping in mind the information in Chapter Seven (*Fetishes*, p. 240) and the Rites section of Chapter Four (*Rite of the Fetish*, p. 161). Fetishes should be rare and cherished items that are uncommon among werewolves. Having too many fetishes present in a chronicle can give players a feeling that they need "magic items" to have powerful characters. A werewolf must rely first on her own claws and fangs to rend her prey.

### *Aparkin*

Level One, Gnosis 6

This somewhat gruesome fetish is nonetheless highly useful for metis and lupus Garou who want to have an easier time hiding their true nature. When activated, the fetish — which takes the form of a scrap of ape (or human) skin tattooed with a glyph — makes a metis or lupus' Homid form identical to that of a homid Garou. While in Homid, the werewolf takes

no special damage from silver (although it will still reduce her Gnosis), but he is not able to regenerate as usual. A homid ancestor-spirit must be bound into this fetish.

### *Harmony Flute*

Level One, Gnosis 5

Carved from hickory, this small flute has many small feathers from songbirds decorating it. When activated and played (which requires a Performance roll), the flute emits an enchanting harmonious melody, reawakening ancient memories of peace from the time before the Severing. When an aggressive creature hears the song, the Storyteller must make a successful Rage roll, or the creature ceases its struggles. Creatures without Rage may not resist the effects of the flute. Any being listening to the sound may still defend himself if he is attacked. The power of the flute affects only those listening to the music. Once the music stops, anything goes.

To create a harmony flute, a Garou must bind a spirit of peace, calm or water, or he must bind a bird spirit.

### *Spirit Tracer*

Level Two, Gnosis 5

This fetish is a human hair suspended in an iron ingot. When the wielder activates the fetish and concentrates upon a specific spirit, the ingot pulls in that direction. This fetish works only for tracking spirits.

To create a spirit tracer, one must bind a predator spirit or a spirit that has the Charm: Tracking into the ingot.

### *BaneSkin*

Level Three, Gnosis 7

This tiny piece of a Bane spirit is wrapped carefully in cloth and worn as an amulet. When activated, it causes all malevolent spirits, especially Banes, to react to the wearer as if she were a kindred soul — a "wolf in Bane's clothing," as it were. If the wearer takes any action against her "fellow" Banes, the guise is broken immediately. These fetishes cannot fool Incarna or mightier spirits.

### *Fang Dagger*

Level Three, Gnosis 6

These daggers are always carved carefully from the tooth or tusk of a great beast. After striking an opponent, the werewolf can activate her weapon. If successful, the spirit trapped within the fang dagger "bites" deeper into the wound, doubling the number of successes on the damage roll. The damage is aggravated.

To create a fang dagger, one must bind a snake-spirit or a spirit of war, pain or death into the blade.

### *Phoebe's Veil*

Level Three, Gnosis 7

This fetish is a small, golden pendant in the shape of a half moon. These fetishes are usually worn around the neck, held by a strong leather thong. At night, when the pendant is activated, the wearer vanishes completely for one minute per success. Neither mundane creatures nor spirits may sense her in any way except touch. The veil remains drawn until the time expires or the wearer removes it.

To create this fetish, one must bind a Lune, a chameleon-spirit, a spirit of illusion or a spirit of shadow into the pendant.



### *Other Fetish Weapons*

Most of the tribes have their own traditional weapons besides the klaive. The Black Furies wield double-headed axes, called *labrys*, some of which howl when used against male opponents. Wendigo from the far North possess fetish spears that hold terrible and fearsome arctic or storm-spirits. The Fianna have many great axes, ancient weapons nearly too large and heavy for a human to lift. Glass Walkers stay on the cutting edge of modern combat. They make fetishes from guns and high-tech weaponry, which they guard with the fervor that other tribes hold for their ancient blades. Bone Gnawers often have easily concealed blades, which won't gleam with silver, but will cut deep and sometimes deliver a powerful infection as well. Storytellers should adapt all fetishes to fit their chronicles, but in the case of klaives and sacred weapons, doing so is especially important. These weapons have great cultural significance among the Garou, and non-klaive weapons can be equally important if not more so to a particular tribe.

### *Sanctuary Chimes*

Level Three, Gnosis 6

When activated, this miniature tubular bell emits chimes into the wind. No spirit may materialize within 100 feet unless it is invited to do so. This fetish usually protects caerns or the homes of pregnant Kinfolk.

To create sanctuary chimes, one must bind a spirit of protection or a turtle-spirit into the tubular bell.

### *Klaive*

Level Four, Gnosis 6

The signature weapon of the werewolf race, klaives are fetish daggers of a singular design, made to be used in Homid and Crinos form alike. Klaives are rare weapons that are made from the purest silver. A werewolf who carries a klaive loses one point from his effective Gnosis rating, thanks to the silver. A war-spirit is usually bound into the klaive, allowing the weapon to inflict aggravated damage upon non-Garou foes. Without the spirit, a klaive does not inflict aggravated damage (at least, not to creatures that aren't vulnerable to silver). However, a Garou does not need to attune a klaive that has no spirit in it.

Pulling a klaive on another werewolf is considered a grave action, for a klaive duel is almost always a duel to the death. Nonetheless, klaive duels among Garou are dangerously common as the tension of the Final Days grows. Elders complain that too many of these sacred artifacts are in the hands of reckless youths who see nothing wrong with using them for everyday tasks. Young werewolves argue that too many klaives are kept hidden away for rituals and great quests instead of being used to slice the hearts out of their enemies.

The difficulty to attack with a klaive is 6, and it inflicts Strength +2 damage. Because it is a silver weapon, werewolves may not soak this damage unless they are in their breed form.

### *Monkey Puzzle*

Level Four, Gnosis 6

This talisman of amber contains a single human hair. When activated, it causes all humans viewing the werewolf to believe

that he is a normal human, regardless of his current form. However, this fetish doesn't mask his actions; if he tears out an enemy's throat, humans will see him as cannibalistic psychotic.

To create a monkey puzzle, one must bind a ghost, a spirit of illusion or a trickster spirit into the amber talisman.

### *Spirit Whistle*

Level Four, Gnosis 8

When activated and blown, this ivory whistle emits a wailing scream that causes immense pain to all spirits within the wielder's line of sight. Any spirits present must roll Gnosis and score a number of successes equal to or greater than the wielder's successes, lest they flee from the scream. The power of this fetish is directional; a spirit behind the user does not have to check Gnosis.

To create a spirit whistle, one must bind a screech-owl-spirit, a spirit of madness or a spirit of discord into the ivory whistle.

### *Grand Klaive*

Level Five, Gnosis 7

These mighty blades are the klaives of the most legendary heroes. As large as swords, these silver weapons cause immense damage. A werewolf who carries a grand klaive loses two points from his effective Gnosis rating. A war-spirit is usually bound into the grand klaive, allowing it to inflict aggravated damage upon non-Garou foes. Grand klaives without the spirit aren't fetishes, only silver weapons.

Grand klaives are very rare and usually tied to specific Garou lineages, especially among the Silver Fangs, Fianna and Shadow Lords. Besides the usual war-spirit, a second spirit — such as a fire-spirit that might add extra soak dice against fire when the klaive is activated or an ancestor-spirit that might provide extra dots in an Ability such as Occult or Survival — is sometimes bound into the grand klaive. The secondary spirit rarely minds sharing the fetish with another since these weapons are the pinnacle of honor.

The difficulty to attack with a grand klaive is 6, and it inflicts Strength +2 damage. Because it is a silver weapon, Garou may not soak this damage except in their breed form.

Werewolves, especially young ones, who possess a grand klaive attract the attention of powerful spirits and other Garou. Elders often question the audacity of a youth who dares to carry such a sacred weapon, while his peers may covet the power and attention.

### *Talens*

While fetishes are rare items requiring great effort to create, talens are far more common. Even a fairly inexperienced Garou may create a talen. The following is a list of sample talens. The Storyteller should feel free to create more, bearing in mind that they are always one-shot items that should never be as powerful as an equivalent fetish.

### *Bane Arrows*

Gnosis 4

These obsidian-headed arrows seek out and home in on Banes, whether or not they are visible. They hit Banes automatically and inflict three dice of aggravated damage. Furthermore, the bite of a Bane arrow is so painful that no Bane can resist howling

in agony. Wyrm-spirits can sometimes sense the presence of these talens, and they may not wait for the archer to fire before acting.

To create a Bane arrow, one must bind a spirit of war, air or pain into the arrow.

### *Death Dust*

Gnosis 6

When broken open, activated and sprinkled over the body of a recently (within a day) dead creature, this small jar of dust allows the wielder to communicate with the spirit of the corpse. The Silent Striders sometimes give these talens to their pups to help them discover knowledge.

To create death dust, one must bind a spirit of death, communication or divination into the jar.

### *Moon Glow*

Gnosis 8

This talen is a single moonbeam caught within a small crystal. Upon embarking on a journey into the Umbra, the wielder may activate this talen from Luna. As long as it is carried continually, the journey should be a safe one. The crystal shatters once the Garou reaches his destination. This talen keeps away only incidental danger. If a powerful and hostile spirit hunts the werewolf actively, she has more problems than this talen can solve.

Only a Lune can empower a moon glow talen.

### *Moon Sign*

Gnosis 5

This small waxen seal bears the sign of the full moon. When activated and thrown down before any werewolf, the werewolf's player must succeed on a Willpower roll (difficulty 7), or the character changes immediately to Lupus form. This talen works on Black Spiral Dancers and other shapechangers as well, making them shift to their animal form.

To create a moon sign, one must bind a Lune into the seal. One may also use a spirit of the Wyld, a spirit of change or a wolf-spirit.

### *Nightshade*

Gnosis 5

This talen is distilled from the very essence of night. When quaffed, one fluid ounce of this liquid turns the imbiber's body into shadow, rendering her virtually invisible in darkness. Only a watcher searching actively for the user can make a roll to spot her. This effect lasts only an hour. Weaker versions of this talen exist that last only until the change of the next hour.

To create nightshade, a spirit of night or darkness must be bound into a vial.

### *Wyrm Scale*

Gnosis 8

This sigil possesses some protection against the power of the Wyrm. Servants of the Wyrm revert to their true forms if the sigil activates in their presence. Some believe that this action alerts the Wyrm to the existence of the sigil, but in any event, the sigil combusts in a greenish fire immediately after use, and it is incinerated completely.

To create a Wyrm scale, a Wyrm-spirit must be bound into the sigil.

# Epilogue

I'm sorry I missed you, old friends. I'm sorry I missed all of you. But duty does not wait for a convenient hour, does it? Eliphas didn't have to say a word; I knew already that if you weren't at court, you had business elsewhere. We are all pulled by many obligations, all of which must be met if we are to live in accordance with our own honor.

Forgive me. I know I must sound very unusual, as rambling as I am. I find it difficult to express myself on paper, unable to look on the faces of my friends.

By the time you return, and certainly by the time you read this, you will already have heard the news. Yes, my tribe has decided to leave the Garou Nation, at least for a time — but with the Red Star burning in the sky, I doubt that our business will be complete before the final battle comes. This was not a unanimous decision. I feel it is a poor move, and I said as much, but I cannot fault my tribe's obligation to our homelands and what remains of our Kin. So I have left my home in the care of my friend Shakar, and I am returning with my elders to speak with our new allies, and to see for myself whether or not this decision will bear fruit.

Mari, Albrecht: I can hear you now. Please, grant my tribemates the benefit of the doubt, and do the same for me. I *will* return. My home is not in India, nor in the Himalayas. I was born here, and I feel my greatest duty lies in these mountains: a duty to this land and the people here. I shall be back, even if it means returning so close to the End that I am taken for a harbinger of the final battle itself.

Tell the others. Evan, I ask this of you in particular, because you have the gift of words so rare among us. Tell the others that the Stargazers have chosen to step aside from the Garou Nation, but that they cannot and would never relinquish being Garou. Remember that there will be some of us who remain behind, preferring the ties of the Nation to those of tribal loyalty. Tell the others that these Stargazers are still their allies — that even those of us who left are still their allies, even if we've chosen a different battlefield, a battlefield that must be defended now or it will be lost forever.

I wish there were more time. I had to ask Eliphas for pen and paper, and it grieved me that I am forced to write this rather than wait for you and talk to you in person.

But time, I am afraid, is something that none of us really have anymore.

Gaia be with you, my friends. I look forward to seeing you again in person once more.

Antonine

# WEREWOLF

## THE APOCALYPSE

Name:  
Player:  
Chronicle:

Breed:  
Auspice:  
Tribe:

Pack Name:  
Pack Totem:  
Concept:

### Physical

Strength \_\_\_\_\_ •ooooo  
Dexterity \_\_\_\_\_ •ooooo  
Stamina \_\_\_\_\_ •ooooo

### Social

Charisma \_\_\_\_\_ •ooooo  
Manipulation \_\_\_\_\_ •ooooo  
Appearance \_\_\_\_\_ •ooooo

### Mental

Perception \_\_\_\_\_ •ooooo  
Intelligence \_\_\_\_\_ •ooooo  
Wits \_\_\_\_\_ •ooooo

### Talents

Alertness \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Athletics \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Brawl \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Dodge \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Empathy \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Expression \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Intimidation \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Primal-Urgue \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Streetwise \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Subterfuge \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo

### Skills

Animal Ken \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Crafts \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Drive \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Etiquette \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Firearms \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Leadership \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Melee \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Performance \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Stealth \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Survival \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo

### Knowledges

Computer \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Enigmas \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Investigation \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Law \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Linguistics \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Medicine \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Occult \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Politics \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Rituals \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo  
Science \_\_\_\_\_ 0ooooo

### Backgrounds

0ooooo  
0ooooo  
0ooooo  
0ooooo  
0ooooo

### Gifts

0ooooo  
0ooooo  
0ooooo  
0ooooo

### Gifts

Renown \_\_\_\_\_  
Glory  
0ooooo0ooooo  
0ooooo0ooooo

Rage \_\_\_\_\_  
Annoyance  
0ooooo0ooooo  
0ooooo0ooooo

Health \_\_\_\_\_  
Bruised   
Hurt -1   
Injured -1   
Wounded -2   
Mauled -2   
Crippled -5   
Incapacitated

Honor  
0ooooo0ooooo  
0ooooo0ooooo

Wisdom  
0ooooo0ooooo  
0ooooo0ooooo

Willpower \_\_\_\_\_  
0ooooo0ooooo  
0ooooo0ooooo

Experience \_\_\_\_\_  
0ooooo0ooooo  
0ooooo0ooooo

Rank \_\_\_\_\_

# WEREWOLF THE APOCALYPSE™

— Hemid —

No  
Change

Difficulty: 6

- Glabro -

Strength (+2) \_\_\_\_\_  
Stamina (+2) \_\_\_\_\_  
Appearance (-1) \_\_\_\_\_  
Manipulation (-1) \_\_\_\_\_

Difficulty: 7

— Crises —

Strength (+4) \_\_\_\_\_  
Dexterity (+1) \_\_\_\_\_  
Stamina (+3) \_\_\_\_\_  
Appearance 0  
Manipulation (-3)

## INCITE DELIRIUM IN HUMANS

— Hisao —

Strength (+3)  
Dexterity (+2)  
Stamina (+3)  
Manipulation (-3)

Difficulty: 7

—Lyon —

strength (+1) \_\_\_\_\_  
Dexterity (+2) \_\_\_\_\_  
Tamina (+2) \_\_\_\_\_  
Manipulation (-3) \_\_\_\_\_

Difficulty: 6

### Other Traits

Item: \_\_\_\_\_ Level \_\_\_\_\_ Gnosis \_\_\_\_\_  
Power: \_\_\_\_\_

Ritter

## Battle Scars:

## Metis Deformity:

## 1. Combat

### Browsing Chart

Maneuver	Roll	Diff	Damage
Bite	Dex+Brawl	5	Strength+1/A
Body Tackle	Dex+Brawl	7	Special/B
Claw	Dex+Brawl	6	Strength+1/A
Grapple	Dex+Brawl	6	Strength/B
Kick	Dex+Brawl	7	Strength+1/B
Pummel	Dex+Brawl	6	Strength/B

### A = Augmented Damage

B=Buckminster Domes

### *Armor:*



The Signs are upon us  
The Earth burns  
The waters bleed  
The humans unleash hunger  
and disease and bloodshed  
They breed poison and hatred  
The world dies

Only we can see the final Signs  
The Eye of the Wyrm has opened  
The Nation has splintered  
The End Times are here.

There is nothing left but War  
And none left to fight but us



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