WEREWOLF
THE APOCALYPSE
CORE RULEBOOK

WEREWOLF
THE APOCALYPSE

Gaia is dying.

The ices melt, while the seas swell.

The heat rises, while the forests wither.

Extinction threatens millions, in favor of the few.

The Garou — warlike shapeshifters torn between Rage and spirit, between Wolf and Man, and champions of the earth-mother — have failed.

The Apocalypse is here.

Yet, a new generation of Garou now call upon their Rage to confront the forces of destruction, avarice, and greed ravaging the earth-mother. With tooth and claw the Garou will wrest her from the brink of death — or follow her enemies to the grave.

Will you answer their howl?

What legends will the Garou sing of you?

When will you Rage?

A Storytelling Game of Environmental and Spiritual Horror

RENEGADE GAME STUDIOS
renegadegames.com

WORLD OF DARKNESS
www.worldofdarkness.com

paradox INTERACTIVE

/PlayRGS @PlayRenegade @Renegade_Game_Studios /RenegadeGameStudios

Manufacturer: Renegade Games, LLC. 306N West El Norte Parkway #325, Escondido, California 92026. Importers: Renegade France 52 Avenue Pierre Semard 94200 Ivry sur Seine France. P:+33 (0)1 77 37 60 47. Renegade Games, LLC. Solar House 915 High Road London, London, England N12 8QJ.© 2023 Renegade Game Studios. All Rights Reserved.
© 2023 Paradox Interactive AB. VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE, WEREWOLF: THE APOCALYPSE, and PARADOX INTERACTIVE are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Paradox Interactive AB in Europe, the U.S., and other countries. Any other trademark, logo, and copyright is the property of its owner.
Made in China

R 18+ CE UK CA

Mature Advisory: contains graphic and written content of a mature nature, including violence, sexual themes, and strong language. Reader discretion is advised.

Lot Code: 041723-01
$55.00
ISBN 978-1-957311-36-4
55500>
9 781957 311364

WEREWOLF
THE APOCALYPSE

Written by Justin Achilli, Basheer Ghouse, Christopher Gunning, Dylan Jennings, Sasanehsaeh Jennings, Khaldoun Khelil, Karim Muammar, Juhana Pettersson, Pam Punzalan, and Bianca Savazzi

Development and Design by Justin Achilli and Karim Muammar

Additional Design by Karl Bergström and Kenneth Hite

Edited by Edward Austin Hall

Concept Diversity Consultancy and Diversity Reading by Bizhiki Culture & Dance Company, Maple Intersectionality Consulting, and Noordin Ali Kadir

Art Director: Tomas Arfert

Cover Art: Krzysztof Bieniawski

Interior Art and Illustration: Tomas Arfert, Uzuri Art, Peter Bergting, Krzysztof Bieniawski, Mirko Failoni, Gabriel de Goes Figueiredo, Per Gradin, Felipe Headley Lima Frazão da Costa, Michelle Jack, Ronja Melin, and Martyna Zych

Glyphs: Felipe Headley Lima Frazão da Costa

Graphic Design and Layout: Tomas Arfert

WORLD OF DARKNESS TEAM

Vice President: Sean Greaney

Editor: Karim Muammar

Art Director: Tomas Arfert

Marketing Manager: Jason Carl

Partnerships Manager: Dhaunae De Vir

Community Developer: Martyna "Outstar" Zych

Licensing Manager: Nikola Filipov

Campaign Manager: Viktor Bovallius

RENEGADE GAME STUDIOS

President & Publisher: Scott Gaeta
Vice President Sales & Marketing: Sara Erickson
Controller: Robyn Gaeta
Director of Operations: Leisha Cummins
Associate Project Manager: Katie Gjesdahl
E-Commerce: Nick Medinger
Marketing Manager: Jordan Gaeta
Marketing Assistant: Anais Morgan
Senior Producer of Board & Card Games: Dan Bojanowski
Associate Producer, Board & Card Games: Kane Klenko
Producer, RPGs: Kevin Schluter

Lead Developer, World of Darkness: Juhana Pettersson
Product Developer, RPGs: Jason Keeley
Senior Game Designer: Matt Hyra
Game Designers: Dan Blanchett & Christopher Chung
Director of Visual Design: Anita Osburn
Creative Director, Games: Jeanne Torres
Creative Director, RPGs: Sarah Robinson
Creative Production: Noelle Lopez & Gordon Tucker
Customer Service Manager: Jenni Janikowski
Customer Service: Bethany Bauthues
Finance & Sales Coordinator: Madeline Minervini

PLAYTESTERS

Timothy Adams, Tomas Arfert, Katya Boestad, Angela Bond, Viktor Bovallius, Stephanie "Galador" Devenny, Dhaunae De Vir, Dominic "Pyrofox" Fahey, Josh Fiehrer, Nikola Filipov, Olof Friström, Brian Fisher, Thor Forsell, Louis Garcia, Sean Greaney, Josh Heath, Kettil Henriksson, Michael Heyes, Amanda "Huddy" Huddleston, Karim Jebari, Mats Karlöf, Dave Martin, Steve Mellifont, Charlotta Nilsson, Tod Puletz, Terry Robinson, Ben Shepherd, Kapil Shetty, Keegan Sullivan, Martyna Zych

© 2023 Paradox Interactive AB. VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE, WEREWOLF: THE APOCALYPSE, and PARADOX INTERACTIVE are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Paradox Interactive AB in Europe, the U.S., and other countries. Any other trademark, logo, and copyright is the property of its owner.

Visit the World of Darkness online at **www.worldofdarkness.com**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 9
- **Welcome to a Dying World** 10
  - Walkers Between Worlds 10
- **What Do Werewolves Do?** 11
- **Storytelling Games and Roleplaying** 11
  - The Storyteller 11
  - The Players 12
  - Play Aids 13
- **Mature Content Warning** 13
- **Lexicon** 15

Chapter One:
A World of Darkness 17
- **Age of Apocalypse** 17
  - Cometh the Hour, Cometh the Wolf 18
  - An Animistic Worldview 20
- **A World of Darkness** 21
  - Ruinous Forces 21
  - Secret Truths 22
  - Gothic-Punk 22
- **Apocalypse Upon Us** 23
  - Cities 24
  - The Countryside 25
- **The Umbra** 26
  - Both Familiar and Entirely Alien 26
  - Caerns: Places of Power 28
- **Endless Enemies** 30
  - Agents of Entropy: Servants of The Wyrm 30
  - Agents of Stasis: The Weaver 31
  - Agents of Chaos: The Wyld 32
  - Other Werewolves 32
  - Sample Conflicts 33

Chapter Two:
Being Garou 35
- **The Shadow of the Past** 35
  - The Impergium 36
  - A Concord and Secrecy 36
  - The Garou Nation 37
- **Auspice and Tribe** 39
  - Auspice 39
  - Tribe 40
- **Becoming Garou** 41
  - The First Change 42
  - Kinseekers 43
  - Packs and Tribes: Family of Choice 43
- **Garou Culture** 46
  - The Litany 46
  - Social Structures Among Garou 47
- **Harano and Hauglosk** 51
  - Harano 51
  - Hauglosk 52

Chapter Three:
Auspices and Tribes 55
- **Auspices** 55
  - Ragabash 56
  - Theurge 56
  - Philodox 57
  - Galliard 57
  - Ahroun 58
- **The Tribes** 58
  - Favor and Ban 58
  - Archetypes 59
- **Black Furies** 60
  - Who Are the Black Furies? 60
  - Patron Spirit 61
  - Black Fury Archetypes 61
- **Bone Gnawers** 62
  - Who Are the Bone Gnawers? 62
  - Patron Spirit 63
  - Bone Gnawer Archetypes 63
- **Children of Gaia** 64
  - Who Are the Children of Gaia? 64
  - Patron Spirit 65
  - Children of Gaia Archetypes 65
- **Galestalkers** 66
  - Who Are the Galestalkers? 66
  - Patron Spirit 67
  - Galestalker Archetypes 67
- **Ghost Council** 68
  - Who Are the Ghost Council? 68
  - Patron Spirit 69
  - Ghost Council Archetypes 69
- **Glass Walkers** 70
  - Who Are the Glass Walkers? 70
  - Patron Spirit 71
  - Glass Walker Archetypes 71
- **Hart Wardens** 72
  - Who Are the Hart Wardens? 72
  - Patron Spirit 73
  - Hart Warden Archetypes 73
- **Red Talons** 74
  - Who Are the Red Talons? 74
  - Patron Spirit 75
  - Red Talon Archetypes 75
- **Shadow Lords** 76
  - Who Are the Shadow Lords? 76
  - Patron Spirit 77
  - Shadow Lord Archetypes 77
- **Silent Striders** 78
  - Who Are the Silent Striders? 78
  - Patron Spirit 79
  - Silent Strider Archetypes 79
- **Silver Fangs** 80
  - Who Are the Silver Fangs? 80
  - Patron Spirit 81
  - Silver Fang Archetypes 81

Chapter Four:
Characters 83
- **Why and Who?** 84
  - Concept 84
  - Auspice and Tribe 84
- **Attributes and Skills** 85
  - Attributes 85
  - Health 88
  - Willpower 88
  - Skills 88
- **Advantages** 97
  - Merits 97
  - Backgrounds 100
- **Renown** 106
  - Three Types of Renown 106
- **Gifts & Rites** 108
- **Touchstones** 108
- **Finishing Touches** 109
  - Garou Motivations 110
- **Experience Points** 110
  - Awarding Experience Points 110
  - Alternative Progression 111
- **The Relationship Map** 111
  - Arrows and Descriptors 112
  - Starting the Map 112

Chapter Five:
Rules 115
- **Time** 115
- **Using Dice** 116
  - Simple Tests 116
  - Dice Pools 118
  - Difficulties and Target Numbers 118
  - Dice Pool Results 121
  - Permutations 122
  - Describing Roll Results 123
  - Contests 123
  - Conflicts 123
  - Damage 127
- **Special Cases** 129
  - Feats of Strength 130
  - Throwing Things 130
  - Grappling 131
- **The Golden Rule** 131
- **Ways of the Werewolves** 131
  - Rage 131
  - Rage Dice 133
  - Werewolves and Health 133
  - The Forms 134
  - Frenzy 139
  - Harano and Hauglosk 140
  - Renown 141
  - Delirium 142

Chapter Six:
Gifts, Rites, and Gear 145

Gifts 145
Using Gifts 145
Gift Systems 146
Native Gifts 146
Ragabash Gifts 149
Theurge Gifts 152
Philodox Gifts 155
Galliard Gifts 158
Ahroun Gifts 161
Black Fury Gifts 164
Bone Gnawer Gifts 166
Children of Gaia Gifts 167
Galestalker Gifts 168
Ghost Council Gifts 170
Glass Walker Gifts 171
Hart Warden Gifts 172
Red Talon Gifts 174
Shadow Lord Gifts 175
Silent Strider Gifts 177
Silver Fang Gifts 178

Rites 180
Rite Systems 180
Common Rites 180
Social Rites 187

Talismans 188
Apeskin 188
Gaia's Tear 188
Harmony Flute 188
Klaive 188
Partridge Wing 189
Shadowshard 189
Spirit-Catcher 189
Wind Whistle 190

Caerns 190
Caern Systems and Traits 191

Weapons, Armor, and Equipment 195
Base Weapons and Weapon Types 195
Armor 195
Guns, Gear, and Other Goodies 196

Chapter Seven:
Storytelling 199

Your Troupe''s Story:

Chronicle Tenets 199
Tenets and Consequences 200

The Big Picture 200
Theme: Alienation 201
Theme: Familism 201
Theme: Old Dogs, New Tricks, Young Blood 201
Theme: The Path to Hell... 201
The Real Problem With the Garou 202

Structuring Stories 202

Session Zero 203
Character Questions 204
Personal Boundaries 205

The Pack 205
Local Conflicts, Global Implications 206
The Characters in Crisis 206

Storytelling the Umbra 206
The Dying Spirit World 206
Known Quantities 207

Planning and Presenting Vivid Scenes 208
The Two Questions 208
Clarity of Location 208
Appeal to the Senses 209

Realizing the Spirit 209
Violence vs Combat 209

Building Memorable Antagonists 210
Variety 211
The Antagonist Axes: Scope and Aggressiveness 211

The Three-Act Structure 212
Opportunities for Action 213
Act One: The Beginning 214
Act Two: The Middle 216
Act Three: The Climax (and Conclusion) 217

Chronicle Rewards 218
Experience 219
In-Setting Rewards 219
Anticipating Rewards 219
The Storyteller's Role 220

Problems Werewolves Face 220

Chapter Eight:
The Umbra and Spirits 223

An Era of Apocalypse 224
Garou and the Umbra 224

A Realm of Metaphor and Verity 224
No Universal Truth 224

A Cosmological Map 225
The Light of Thought and Emotion 225
the Shadow Next Door 225
Stranger Depths 226

The Triat 226

Encountering the Umbra 227
A Changing Spiritscape 227
Spiritual Reflections 227

Entering the Umbra 229
Stepping Sideways 229
The Gauntlet: Barrier Between Worlds 230

Traversing the Umbra 231

Spirits 232
Who Spirits Are 232
Hierarchy of Spirits 232

Chapter Nine:
Allies and Antagonists 239

Antagonist Formats 240

Spirits 240
Banes 243
Weaver-Spirits 253
Wyld Spirits 257
Gaian Spirits 259

Fomori 262
Brutes 263
Corrupters 265

Pentex Group 268
Operation 268
Patron Spirit 270
Banes and Fomori 271
In Stories 271
Pentex Group Adversaries 272

Other Werewolves and Shapeshifters 277
Black Spiral Dancers 277
Cult of Fenris 279
Stargazers 280
Stolen Moons 282
Starving Remnant 283
Stranger Shifters 284

The Supernaturally Attuned 285
Vampires 285
It Gets Weirder 287

Werewolf Hunters 288
Information Awareness Office 288
Special Affairs Division: Project Twilight 289

Other Common Antagonists 290
Clergy 291
Animals 291

Appendix One:
Loresheets 294

Appendix Two:
No Matter How Small 300

Previous Events 302
Coming up Muller! 302
Cult Connections 302
Restoration 302
Out and About 303

Acts and Turning Points 303

Act One: Ritual Murder 303

Turning Point One (Inciting Incident): Foul Play 303
Turning Point Two: Investigating Development Copse West 305

Act Two: Putting Pieces Together 308
Who's Who 308
Turning Point Three: Muller's House 309
Floating Scene: Harcorte's House 312
Act Two Complications 314

Act Three: The Showdown 315
VanGelder's House 315
Turning Point Four: Confronting Muller 315
Denouement 317

Appendix Three:
Advice For Considerate Play 320
Emotions 320
The Context of Play 320
Characters 321
Sex And Romance 321
Fascism 321
Tools 322

Index 324
Character Sheet 328
Instant Werewolves 330

We howl, and our howl echoes Gaia's lament. Our world, our mother, lies dying, and her murderers dance across what remains of her body, digging deeply of her wounds to forge the icons that signify to other hierophants the excess of their glee.

We howl, our song stoking our fury.

We howl, our packs taking the war-form, biting, tearing, killing as Gaia bid us do, but her subjugators are myriad. Those who take from the world to foster their own greed. Those who take from the world so that they can accumulate more — the better to keep taking and taking in the nights to come, until Gaia's bones have been picked clean.

We howl, our dances around the fires stoking our fury.

We howl, in each other's presence, to signal to our undiscovered Kin and to call to others of our kind, across tribe and moon-sign. We must put aside our differences, turn the killing-urge against those who paint the mark of the Wyrm upon themselves, and not against each other.

We howl, our memories of our lost and our fallen and our spirit-sick betrayers stoking our fury.

We howl, wondering, questioning, doubting if stoking our fury can revive our dying mother, or if our fury is but a paean to vengeance, an empty, anguished, monstrous roar at the end of the world.

Do you howl with us? And against whom? Who stokes your fury?

When will you Rage?

Introduction

We have doomed the wolf not for what it is, but for what we deliberately and mistakenly perceive it to be – the mythologized epitome of a savage ruthless killer – which is, in reality, no more than a reflected image of ourself.

– FARLEY MOWAT, NEVER CRY WOLF

Werewolf: The Apocalypse is a storytelling game about radical solutions, exploring an environmental apocalypse in which a range of injustices throughout the world provokes urgent responses and violence. And that violence is (almost) always righteous, if only subjectively. It's a game about tearing apart your enemies and living with the repercussions. The people who've sold off your future because they don't think you deserve a future at all? Rip those motherfuckers in half.

It also is a game that explores the differences between people and the mutual sacrifices made to effect — or endure — global consequences. Who cares about a few acres of old-growth forest or the poisoning of the local water table if it drives quarterly share value ever upward? Werewolves do, and they possess unique advantages to prevent such disasters. Saying and doing are two different things, though, and werewolves are just as likely to fight among themselves as they are to take the battle to the true despoilers. Almost all werewolves agree on what's going wrong, but they often disagree violently on how best to make the necessary changes (or even what those changes should be).

Werewolf is also a game about spirituality. Each of the World of Darkness games provides a different perspective or set of truths it considers to be incontrovertible, and for **Werewolf**, those truths are animistic. The world crumbles in an ongoing environmental apocalypse because powerful decision-makers have opened themselves up to spiritual corruption through attitudes of short-term greed. Other spirits, however, seek to put the world in order, or to continuously refresh reality with inchoate creation. What was originally a cycle among momentous spiritual forces has instead become a malfunctioning imbalance, and werewolves find themselves and their world trapped within it.

If you're familiar with previous editions of Werewolf, let us be up front and state that this fifth edition is a re-imagining, not a continuation. You can even call it a reboot if you prefer. The truths and "lore" of previous editions aren't necessarily true in this edition. Take this book and the world it proposes at face value.

Werewolf: The Apocalypse Truths

- Werewolves have the ability to take numerous forms on a spectrum from lupine to hominid
- Werewolves belong to multiple worlds — spirit and flesh, wolf and human — but are wholly accepted by none
- Werewolves are feared and mistrusted by each of the worlds to which they partially belong
- Werewolves are creatures of Rage, forever at risk of losing control of themselves
- Werewolves are charged with an unreliable greater purpose by Gaia, a spiritual entity who is herself inherently unknowable
- Werewolves consider the Wyrm — a primal force of entropy and decay — to be the chief threat to Gaia, and much of Garou existence is spent confronting its agents, real or imagined

WELCOME TO A DYING WORLD

You knew something was wrong, even before your First Change. You could taste the poison in the air and the chemicals on the streets and sidewalks. It was an alienating experience: None of your friends cared quite so much. It just didn't bother them the same.

Then came the First Change, and your horror at the realization of what you were: a werewolf.

A Garou.

After your First Change, you put the pieces together. Gaia. Spirits. The world that you inherited imposed upon you a duty to protect it and to destroy the enemies responsible for despoiling her. Your view of the world expanded, grew more nuanced, more certain as things fell into place, one by one.

You could turn on the news, and although they didn't speak there about it in Garou terms, the meaning was the same: endless stories of new ravages, perpetrated by monsters in human form, wearing expensive suits, ready with excuses and explanations. But this time, you could not be fooled. You smelled the greed surging inside them. You had their scent.

Every werewolf makes a journey on which they come to understand the world in the Garou way. As their senses sharpen, they also acquire an understanding of what's happening in the world, why it's important, and how to interpret new information about it. They learn to disregard the well-paid PR flacks justifying the unjustifiable and to listen to those voices speaking about Gaia with the same urgency the Garou themselves feel, whether it comes from scientists, activists, or indigenous people.

Eventually this path leads to a view that the world is in a catastrophic state and the time to act may have passed. This generation of Garou dwells in the midst of Apocalypse. It's too late to avert the end.

That's no cause for fatalism, however. The Apocalypse may be upon them, but that means every victory now becomes that much more important. Garou before them have failed Gaia, but this generation of Garou still has purpose. Take back lost places of power, repair the blights in the spirit world, and rip the goddamn throats out of the death merchants who profiteer their way through a world their actions make miserable, even — especially — the pack's home territory.

Otherwise, there will be no tomorrow.

WALKERS BETWEEN WORLDS

Most Garou see themselves as having a distinct purpose in service to Gaia, yet another part of the undeniable tragedy in being Garou is the fact that they straddle multiple worlds but are truly native — or welcome — in none. Part human, part wolf, but not wholly either, they are at once feared and even reviled by both wolves and humans. As creatures also partially of spirit and partially of flesh, they often find themselves at odds with creatures connatural to one of those realms or the other — spirits remember the ancient pacts that bind them into service to the Garou, and physical creatures experience delirious memories of the terrors wrought upon their kind by werewolves in times long past.

No surprise, then, that the pack has become a social unit which offers safety and belonging to the Garou. Even as flawed as most packs are, Garou find company and fellowship in one another because the worlds they inhabit are terrified by them. At the same time, though, they find potentially violent rivals in those fellow Rage-driven territorial creatures they know all too well.

WHAT DO WEREWOLVES DO?

The most immediate things that werewolves do is *fight to take back what has been lost.* The Apocalypse has happened or is happening, and now it's up to each pack of Garou to strike back in a way that its members find meaningful. This sort of conflict is often the crux of a story or chronicle. This often, but not always, involves confronting the influence of the Wyrm or stopping rampaging avarice from feeding it further. The pack may need to reclaim a site of spiritual importance that's been overrun by corrupt werewolves, kill their way through an occupying enemy force, or retake a Garou-claimed territory that a multinational wants to strip-mine or deforest. It's also the part of their lives that has the most immediate fallout with "normal" people, who are likely to see the Garou as dangerous radicals or, worse, rampaging, blood-spattered monsters ready to tear humanity asunder.

Over the course of the story, werewolves are *building their own legend*. Renown is especially important to the Garou: It represents the deeds they've accomplished that have value in werewolf society, and it represents spirits' esteem for them and willingness to help them perform special Gifts and Rites. It's said that the greatest Garou don't die but, in fact, live on as spirits themselves and practically become the legends they have made for themselves.

The spirit world plays no small part in a werewolf's life, and packs almost invariably find themselves *exploring the mysteries of the Umbra.* Garou have any number of reasons to venture into the increasingly scarred and alien Spirit Wilds, whether on brief jaunts to engage capricious spirits; on treks through the spiritscape to ambush unwary enemies in the physical world; or on epic undertakings whereby they fight spiritual malignancy at its root, eliminating hostile spirits that nourish themselves off corruption's sway in the physical world. The spirit world is home to enigmatic secret-keepers, bellicose tempests of emotional power, and fickle beings who might be convinced to grant their boons in service of a righteous cause.

Speaking of mysteries, werewolves must be forever vigilant for others of their kind who don't yet know what they are. Kinseeking Garou are always *looking out for others of their kind*, whether to mentor them in the ways of their pack or Patron Spirit, or to keep them out of the clutches of the so-called fallen tribes. Werewolves are few and far-between, and there's almost nothing so ruinous as the loss of kin-wolves to the extreme ideologies of wayward tribes or to the realities of being a werewolf with no knowledge of how to handle it.

All of these exploits and more belong to your troupe, as you gather to tell stories around the table, virtually, in a live-action format, or in any number of other ways.

STORYTELLING GAMES AND ROLEPLAYING

Storytelling began with humanity, as language transformed us from fire-wielding apes to something else. Those stories, we tell ourselves, began around a fire as warnings of real or imagined dangers and temptations waiting in the surrounding darkness. Our stories changed from campfire warnings to epic poetry, plays, novels, operas. They added new dangers and temptations, many of them now waiting inside us. In the 20th century, stories moved out of human voices and minds into display and spectacle. Movies, comics, television, and the limitless reaches of digital entertainment still kept that flickering light in the middle, even as they carried our stories almost as far as our imagination could go. Almost.

The roleplaying game, as one of the newest storytelling art forms, completes the arc from those first firesides to the glow of modern monitors. In roleplaying games, players tell or act out stories for an audience of themselves, guided by the rules or logic of the game, but limited only by their imagination. If you've never played a roleplaying game, don't worry. It's as easy as playing house or bang-you're-dead was when you were a child — but with more sophisticated stories and greater emotional significance.

Most importantly, and making them distinct from traditional, told-to-you media, storytelling games are about making choices. A group of players and its Storyteller — the troupe — collectively tells a tale of environmental apocalypse, spirits and secrets, the ravening monsters humans perceive and the complex personalities motivating them.

THE STORYTELLER

As a **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** player, you take on the persona and role of a character that you create, and you then pretend to be that character during the course of the story. One of the participants, the Storyteller, creates and

guides the story. They build the setting and populate it with a cast of supporting characters. The Storyteller describes what happens in the world as a result of what the players say and do. It is the Storyteller who arbitrates the rules and brings horrifying new challenges into the game.

The Storyteller's primary duty is to make sure the other players have a good time. They do that by telling a good story. Unlike novelists or film directors, however, they don't simply tell the story from hook to climax. Storytellers create the setting and set the plot in motion — leaving a "player-shaped hole" for the other participants to make their own decisions in the roles of the primary characters, defining the story outcomes and setting as they go. Storytellers maintain a careful balance between narration and adjudication, between entertainer and umpire, between story and game, between planning and improvisation. Sometimes Storytellers set the scene or even describe the action, but mostly they decide what occurs in reaction to the words and actions of the characters, as fairly and impartially as they can. Storytellers are co-creators, not tyrants.

THE PLAYERS

Although the Storyteller plays the game and indeed portrays dozens or hundreds of characters, the term player refers to those participants at the table who assume the roles of the central characters in the story. As a player in **Werewolf**, you create one main character and then roleplay them. You speak for them, you impel them to action; you decide what they desire in the world of the game and how they want to attain or accomplish it. The Storyteller tailors the story to those desires; the players build characters who have a role in that story, and whose actions complete or transcend it.

Often after you describe the actions you want to take, the Storyteller may ask you to make a dice roll to see if you succeed in doing what you have described. Your character's Traits — descriptions of their strengths and weaknesses — dictate how well your character can do certain things. Knowing your character's abilities, both natural and supernatural, gives you the tools to choose from in providing that character the best chance of success. As a werewolf, your character is definitely good at high-grade violence, but violence very rarely proves to be the best solution to the problems they face. That's important. As a player, you're not trying to "win," necessarily (though your character may well be...). Instead, you're working with the other players and the Storyteller to tell an engaging story. Success is great, but failure cre-

ates consequences, which usually make more story in turn.

Thus, a good player balances acting and strategy, considering their character's personality and desires alongside their Traits and werewolf nature. You employ your character's strengths and work around their weaknesses to achieve your goals, even as the world remains hostile and dangerous. Your character's actions help shape the world; as a player, you can also add ideas and elements to the story. The Storyteller incorporates them (or chooses not to) in fostering the most dramatic, engaging, and challenging narrative possible.

As with all World of Darkness games, the potential for intensity and intimacy in **Werewolf** rewards player focus: on their own character, and on the dramas and desires of their fellow players' characters. Much of the game's mystery and flavor is lost when players must compete for the Storyteller's (and one another's) attention. The story likewise can become unfocused if the spotlight must be shared among a large entourage of "main" characters. We find that **Werewolf** plays most enjoyably with one Storyteller and a troupe of three to five players.

PLAY AIDS

In the format we detail in this book, **Werewolf** is designed to be played at a table; on a virtual tabletop; or via some emergent format, such as online chat servers. The game has no board, but dice, pencil, and paper (or their virtual substitutes) require a table (or virtual substitute) for proper use. Tables also provide a common focus for player attention. You need photocopies of the character sheets (located at the end of the book or downloadable from the World of Darkness website) and something — a large piece of paper, a cork board or whiteboard, a tablet screen — to house the Relationship Map (see p. 111). The dice required are 10-sided, available in any game store. You need two colors of 10-sided dice: one color for regular dice, the other color for Rage dice.

MATURE CONTENT WARNING

For the past few decades, World of Darkness games have addressed the darkness in the real world through horror stories. These games have addressed AIDS, capitalist exploitation, sexual predation, the resurgence of far-right political extremism, religious fanaticism, state and private surveillance, and many other issues. This entry in the World of Darkness series doesn't shy from any of these themes, and we believe exploration of such subjects is as valid in roleplaying games as it is in other media. Inclusion of a problematic subject in a Storytelling game is not the same as glorifying it, and if you take the chance to explore it critically, the result can be the exact opposite. If we understand the problems facing us, we are better armed to fight them.

Werewolf: The Apocalypse may include in-world references and expressions of the following: child harm, substance abuse, sexual violence, mental illness, pandemics, political extremism, physical violence and gore, mind control, torture, abuse, imprisonment and kidnapping, racism, sexism, homophobia, and spiders, to name a few. It's a game about monsters and the cruel things those monsters do to people. It's also a game about people who

may have to endure circumstances caused by others' actions, and who do so with incomplete knowledge. For example, an individual might become so desperate that they "invite" spiritual possession, but that doesn't mean they "deserve" being turned into a monster.

"Why are you telling me this?" you might be thinking. Someone at your table is not familiar with this game. Someone at your table has dealt with some of these issues in real life. Someone at your table wants to know that you read this warning and that you will be considerate to them as players, even as you put their character through the wringer.

In the third Appendix, you can find specific techniques on how to handle difficult subjects in your game in a fashion that's respectful to your players and their experiences. Determine beforehand which techniques your group wants to use. People have different needs, and not every method works for every person.

This is a game about monsters. But it is only a game.

Don't use it as an excuse to be a monster yourself. ■

LEXICON

Apocalypse: The physical and spiritual end of the world, brought about by relentless human greed and consumption

Auspice: The moon-sign under which one experiences one's *First Change* into a werewolf; an indicator of one's role in werewolf society

Bane: A foul spirit in service to the destructive cosmological force known as the *Wyrm* (see also)

Caern: A place where the spirit world and the physical world are in close accord or proximity; to many werewolves, a "holy place"

Crinos: The war-form of the Garou; the nigh-mythical "wolf-man" form; up to nine feet tall

Delirium: Confusion, terror, and/or fugue state that afflicts humans who see werewolves for what they are

First Change: The initial time that an individual transforms into a werewolf and, thereby, realizes what they truly are; the First Change can happen almost any time after the age of maturity

Fomor, Formori (plural): An individual or animal suffering long-term possession by a Bane

Gaia: The mother-spirit of the world, of earth itself; believed by many werewolves to be dying or dead

Gaia's Howl: An audible indicator (capable of sometimes affecting other senses) of the age of Apocalypse, perceptible only by Garou and perhaps some spirits

Garou: A werewolf; a creature both wolf and human, Rage and spirit

Garou Nation: A loose coalition of Garou *tribes*, ostensibly with common goals in service to Gaia; the Garou Nation has sundered in the age of Apocalypse, and invoking it now can come across as idealistic or backward-looking

Harano: A state of werewolf misery or despair in which they believe that nothing matters, so why try?

Hauglosk: A state of werewolf fervor or fanaticism in which they believe that they must take urgent action immediately

Homid: The "human" form of the werewolf

Impergium: In times of legend, a vicious culling by which werewolves slaughtered humans, seemingly resulting in the generational terror that now provokes the *Delirium*

Kin: A Werewolf who has not yet been accepted as *Garou* — a werewolf who doesn't yet know that they're a werewolf

Kinseeker, Kinseeking: A werewolf who looks for nascent, unknowing werewolves; the act of looking for *Kin*

Klaive: A ritual dagger made of silver; prized among traditional Garou

Litany, the: A set of maxims and mores by which werewolf society conducted itself in the past, but viewed askance in a modern context as insufficient to help the Garou prevent the Apocalypse

Lupus: The "wolf" form of the werewolf

Moot: A cultural, political, or practical meeting of werewolves, often at a *caern* and hosted by a *sept*

Pack: The basic social unit of werewolves; packs may form from a sense of duty or be mandated by elder Garou, or they may emerge out of dependency, self-preservation, or mutual alienation

Rage: The werewolf's fury made manifest; the raw, destructive force of being Garou, at once a blessing and a curse

Sept: A number of packs sworn to the protection of a *caern*; a sept can consist of a lone pack or many

Spirit: An incorporeal entity believed to consist of thought, emotion, or other resonant force; a component of the animistic worldview of the Garou, who understand the true substance of reality

Talisman: An object of supernatural power, spiritual significance, or other wonder, held in high esteem by Garou

Triat: Three cosmological forces — Wyld, Weaver, Wyrm — that form a sort of cosmological cycle or state of reality

Tribe: A faction of werewolves pledged in service to a particular Patron Spirit; a tribe's outlook represents a way of facing the Apocalypse

Umbra, also Spirit Wilds: The spirit world; the shadow or reflection of the physical world, seemingly caused by emotional resonance

Veil, the: A euphemism for the human world's ignorance of the supernatural, especially werewolves, reinforced by the *Delirium*

Weaver: The cosmological forcer of order, structure, and stasis; part of the *Triat*

Wyld: The cosmological force of creation, change, and chaos; part of the *Triat*

Wyrm: Ascendant in the age of Apocalypse, the cosmological force of destruction, decay, and entropy; part of the *Triat*

CHAPTER ONE
A World of Darkness

The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.

– ANTONIO GRAMSCI, *PRISON NOTEBOOKS*

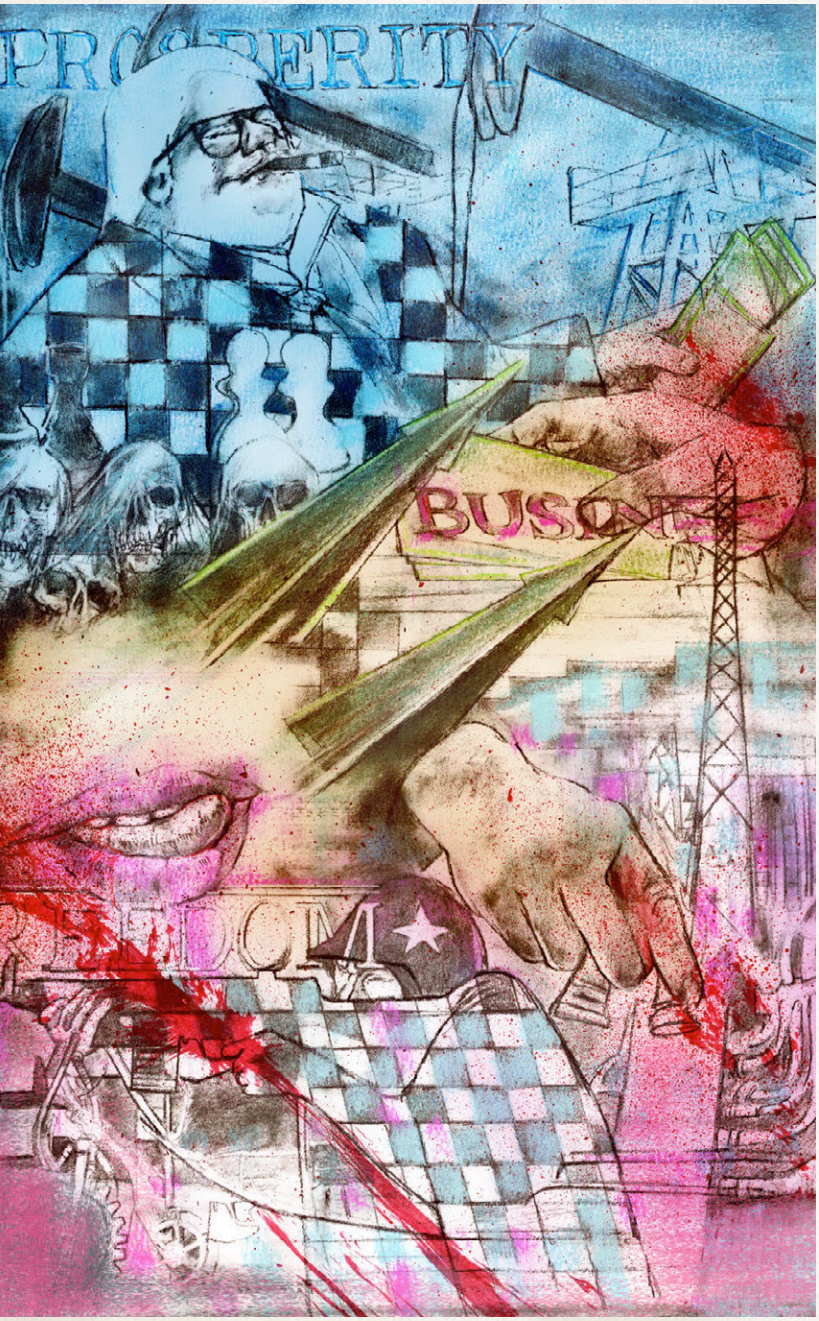
They have walked among us since before recorded history; they have observed us and shared our fires and joined our communities. We have shared families with them, warred against tyrants beside them, served time with them. We have befriended them in the real world and in virtual spaces. And more times than we can count, we have hunted them, torn them apart, left their broken bodies in ruins on cliffside rocks or abandoned in downtown alleyways. They are like us and yet so very different from us.

We are what humans call werewolves. We are Garou.

AGE OF APOCALYPSE

War. Famine. Pestilence. Death. The world ends not with a bang, but with a sonorous, doleful howl.

The world is in its death throes, shuddering in the grip of the Capitalocene era, its oceans acidified, its forests denuded, its climate superheated, its lifeforms plunging into extinction, all to sate that which is insatiable: the avarice of human beings. Autocrats rise to power, funding militaries and police forces that thrive as the



people they ostensibly exist to protect languish, sicken, and starve.

To the people of the world, however, life goes on. People have more entertainment choices than ever before; their phones and computers receive a steady flow of data, most of which desensitizes the owners of these devices or offers easy escape. Pundits bloviate from televisions, on streaming services, in angry gatherings — millionaire actors paid by billionaire patrons to stoke everyone's fury at every other, to tell people whom to hate, whom to blame for their problems. Sports, music, games, luxury on demand. Easy credit. Phantom money. Take out a loan to buy a car to drive to work to pay off the car. Hustle on the side. Acquire. Discard. Relax. Work harder. Invest. Enlist. Declare. The frog doesn't realize it's slowly being boiled to death.

Born of material despair, spiritual rot takes hold, serving as a beacon to cruel spirits and tempting a forlorn world into greater catastrophe. Greed is a virtue. Consumption is liberation. War makes us safe. Cruelty to one's fellows and one's environment is the pinnacle of achievement. "Normal," as a human concept, has yielded to an unending series of crises, from the economic to the humanitarian to the ecological to the existential.

By any sane definition, the Apocalypse is upon us. The forces of entropy have won. The residents of the world dwell on what shall soon become a corpse, borrowing from the banks to take one more joyride before the seas swallow the coasts and the filthy air becomes too hot to breathe.

The foulness in the aftermath of this unbounded exploitation leaches into the spirit world as well, and — perhaps semi-sentiently — the spirit world seemingly seeks to distance itself from the physical. The boundary between these worlds grows more resistant than ever, the spirits increasingly hostile and alien to their counterparts in the physical world. If the spirit world is the physical world's shadow, then it is a shadow perhaps seeking to emancipate itself from that which casts it. The spirit excises the physical cancer; the ideal rejects the tangible.

COMETH THE HOUR, COMETH THE WOLF

Throughout this dying world prowl the werewolves, who call themselves Garou.

The Garou have long foretold Gaia's death, the end of the world, the destruction of all things — the Apocalypse. Since time out of mind, the werewolves' personal mythology has been as the vanguard against the world's ruination. As Gaia's defenders, their role was to cull that which would threaten their world-mother, to avert Apocalypse.

Inarguably, though, that time is past. Now, the only Garou who believe that the Apocalypse has yet to come and can still be deterred — or, more absurdly, that the Apocalypse came and the Garou triumphed over it — are those in the throes of denial or delusion.

The world doesn't know the Garou as its ostensible protectors, though. It knows them only as monsters, blood-drenched shapechangers stalking people from the darkened corners of ancestral nightmare. Deep down,

on a subconscious level, people recall the purges that werewolves visited upon humankind during a mythic age — or so the Garou believe. Even now, just the sight of a werewolf provokes a primal fear in humans, driving them to flee or collapse into insensate terror.

And yet, for all of their fearsome abilities, the Garou cannot by themselves change the world. Their tragedy is that they are a weapon only. Possessed of the ability to inflict catastrophic violence upon their enemies, they find themselves in a world where yet more violence is often the worst possible solution. Given that the alternative is to do nothing, to watch the corpse-robbers plunder the remains as Gaia takes her last breaths, what is their alternative? To do nothing? To join a beaten humanity in whiling away the hours until the end? To throw in with the despoilers and hasten the world's ruin? Or to fight back and make what difference they can — to rage against the dying of the light?

Forever Apart and Feared

Tales of humans taking the shapes of beasts have existed practically since the earliest of peoples could speak to each other about what they had witnessed in the world. The werewolf's relationship with the world is complex, and all too often, those who perceive only part of the truth fill in the gaps on their own terms.

Garou can make places for themselves in the worlds of humans or wolves, but werewolves often relegate themselves to the peripheries of either, except in very special cases. These strange relationships form part of the superstition that surrounds the myth of the werewolf (and often of the mundane wolf) in the collective consciousness.

Tales of humans with eyebrows that converge, or exceptional body hair, or long fingers, or even such non-physical characteristics as being the seventh son of a seventh son, may be the result of cruel folk calling attention to noteworthy individuals — but in many cases, these stories speak to an innate human unease around Garou who just happen to bear those traits.

A territory considered the hunting grounds of a "lone wolf" might be that of a Garou, and a place given wide berth by the true wolves of the region, who lack the ability to truly drive away or destroy the werewolf.

Werewolves meeting a spirit (whether in the world's spirit-shadow or possessing some physical entity) may find it resistant to acknowledging them and resentful of the ways that the Garou have enforced pacts and obeisances from spirits, even if these particular Garou weren't responsible for any of those interactions. Spirits' collective memory is long (such beings might not even conform to notions like time...), and few want to find themselves or their ilk bound into an infinity of servitude.

AN ANIMISTIC WORLDVIEW

The spirit world, known to the Garou as the Umbra, is as vast as it is fearsome. As the word Umbra suggests, werewolves perceive it to be the spirit-shadow cast by the physical world. Humans can't perceive it, nor can most animals. At best, they may have a vague feeling that "There's something more," or "Something's out there" — nothing they can act upon tangibly. Unbound by notions of physical geography, the Umbra is very much an "otherwhere," a complementary portion of reality that has a presence beyond the physical.

Individual spirits also populate the Umbra. Many of the people and animals, features, and even ideas that exist in the material world have a spirit counterpart. In the Umbra, one might find anthropomorphic spirits of human emotion; a pack of howling, ephemeral wolf-spirits; an immovable, curmudgeonly rock-spirit; and the irascible, self-absorbed spirit of an entire city.

Because it is the world's reflection, the Umbra also reflects the ruin and the despair of the material world. The age of Apocalypse doesn't spare the spirit world.

And it doesn't end there. The Umbra is also home to things that simply don't exist in the physical world, or that humans, with their limited perception, aren't aware of. Spirits made of pure thought, spirit-relics of now-extinct creatures, and even stranger things are there. The mighty Patron Spirits that grant favor to the numerous tribes of Garou are among them, often vaguely familiar in form, but just as often inscrutable in their immediate thoughts and long-term desires.

Some spirits are antagonistic, such as spirits of violence, greed, and wrath. Some are remarkably powerful, perhaps becoming the Patron Spirits to enemy Garou. And sometimes, hostile spirits pierce the border that separates the two worlds and possess people or animals who have "invited them in" during moments of insecurity or anxiety. In the age of Apocalypse, more than ever, desperate people and suffering creatures unknowingly make themselves vulnerable to spiritual possession, and that never ends well for them.

Much like knowledge of exactly what's in the sea eludes most humans, definitive knowledge of the true depths of the Umbra eludes the Garou. Werewolves' legends (and even some of the tales of elder werewolves' travails) tell of a time when the Umbra wasn't as broadly hostile to the Garou. Those times are gone, however, and werewolves now find the Umbra can be a fearsome place if they are unprepared for a visit there. It's another of the tragedies that punctuates Garou existence, that they find themselves monstrous outsiders in both of the worlds they call their own.

Cosmology and Collapse

The Umbra is home to a spiritual cosmology that defines an eternal conflict, in which the Garou and even Gaia are participants. The Triat is the name by which Garou know this cosmological cycle, and it consists of three parts.

* The Wyld represents creation and change
* The Weaver represents the emergence of order from chaos
* The Wyrm represents entropy and destruction

When functioning properly, the Triat represents a cosmos in a natural cycle — akin to birth, growth, and ultimately decline and death. It's not so simple as all that, of course, but in the broadest strokes, the primordial chaos of creation leads to an emergent order, and that order eventually breaks down, from which the next elemental creation emerges... and on and on.

Problem is, the Triat is in imbalance. The Wyrm is now ascendant, emboldened and empowered by consumption and exploitation, and thus fueling the cycle. Their Rage incited, Garou despise the fact that rampant, unmoderated consumption "feeds the Wyrm," forcing the world into an ever-greater despair, which drives humans to seek more comfort via consumption, changing the Triatic cycle instead into a downward spiral with only one logical conclusion.

To many Garou, that conclusion is inevitable. What they must not do, though, is simply accept it.

You're one of the Garou. What song will your pack howl of your accomplishments at the end of the world?

A WORLD OF DARKNESS

So, what does it all look like?

The world in which the Garou prowl through the liminal spaces is much like our own. Its cities are the same, its leaders are the same, it is occupied by the same people, who have the same loves and endure the same troubles. It has the same bars and clubs, the same slums and high-rise apartment buildings, the same multinational companies, and the same scandals.

Which is to say, the Garou occupy a world very similar to our own, suffering through the same luxury Apocalypse, where the profits of oligarchs have much greater influence on law and policy-making than the wellbeing of everyone and everything living on the planet. It's a world governed by the principle of "Can the worst people in the world extract profit from this?" rather than by ones of mutual aid and cooperation.

That stated, the differences between our world and this World of Darkness are important.

RUINOUS FORCES

The supernatural exists and is proximate to an oblivious humanity. Monsters are real — literal, genuine monsters, from the Garou themselves to blood-drinking vampires to ghosts, warlocks, and even stranger things. And these literal, genuine monsters hide within the structures and communities of human society — they may be lurking anywhere, whether the flat next door, or the governor's mansion, or the refugee camp just inside the protectorate of a never-ending border dispute bereft of anyone to defend the most vulnerable.

Such monsters' influence is subtle and pervasive: The governor herself isn't the supernatural, but she depends upon campaign contributions from the same spiritually compromised individuals whose holdings the Garou sabotage. The police know about the unsettling vagrant making her home beneath the metro station bridge, but whenever they show up, she waves them past and they ignore her. The farmhouse on the abandoned partition out past the airport has been "haunted" as far back as anyone can remember, but no one in a position to do anything about it ever does so.

The influence of the supernatural can be subtle when it's not overtly destructive... and the Garou find themselves on both sides of that divide. They are the terrors in the darkness whom the humans fear, but they are also those who stand against different horrors, the ones humanity invites and exalts and looks to as paragons of civilized virtue, even as they bring ruin upon the very places humans live.

Every level of society is infiltrated. Every community might be preyed upon. And in a world that's already subjugated by avarice, where the ability to reap profits and consolidate power takes precedence over the protection of the vulnerable, werewolves fulfill an ancient obligation to the world that community leaders or civic authorities abandon in pursuit of money, influence, and material comfort.

From a Garou perspective, this despoliation is why the Wyrm is ascendant. Human greed has upset the cosmological balance, and now the spirit world reflects the physical world's trends of destruction, extraction, ruin — so long as profit can be derived from it.

And that, of course, creates a cycle of preferred attachment, a self-fulfilling prophecy. The rich get richer, and continue the exploitation that made them rich, buying laws and bribing regulatory agencies.

Opposing this exploitation is the role of the werewolf, and it's one that humans misinterpret almost every time. Granted, the werewolf way of dealing with things — ripping out throats and leaving what remains in a streak of victims' own gore — terrifies humans. At the same time, humans simply can't see the world through the same animistic lens as werewolves can. Most are oblivious to the presence of spirits; almost all are wholly ignorant of the Umbra. Even those humans who share an animistic

view of the world don't perceive it in the same way that werewolves do.

And so, the tragedy of the Garou continues. They share the world with humans and act to protect it, but in a way that makes humans fear and revile them.

SECRET TRUTHS

The World of Darkness is a world of secret truths. Seemingly mundane threats, such as a murderous cop or "malfunctioning construction equipment" might actually be hostile spirits affecting the physical world. If nothing else, the supernatural has a tremendous aptitude at hiding itself, or everyone would believe in monsters.

Being a monster oneself also requires secrecy. "Honey, I'm a werewolf" is rarely a message a spouse or partner entertains eagerly, assuming they survive their partner's First Change. Even should one choose to be so honest, the innate self-preservation of the human mind strains to justify why what the witness saw was something else or didn't happen at all. It all adds up to lonely lives for the Garou and dangerous relationships with the humans or wolves whose company a werewolf seeks. No wonder, then, that the Garou pursue the companionship of other werewolves in the form of packs.

Serving Gaia means keeping other secrets as well. The aftermath of the pack's fight to defend a spiritual strongpoint might look like mere property damage to mortal authorities investigating afterward — and despite being able to kill their way through much of what police can bring to bear, werewolves know that's not a viable long-term solution.

Beyond intentional conflicts, more than one werewolf has injured or even killed a loved one. Werewolves make mistakes — lots of them — and the guilt that follows can make a Garou wonder whether they truly are monsters, or if they're even making any difference at all.

GOTHIC-PUNK

All of this churn occurs in a world that's visually almost identical to our own real world, but one in which certain themes and experiences come to the fore. Or rather, your troupe will tell stories that bring them to the fore. We refer to this this dramatic narrative worldview as Gothic-Punk.

Gothic

The Gothic draws on a literary tradition and heavily symbolic setting construction as a reaction to clinical reality. Always emotional, at times overwrought, the Gothic approach emphasizes the strange and the forbidden — and the pleasure we take in experiencing them.

Superstition is often at odds with science or rationalism in a Gothic tale, and in many cases, the rational wins out against the supernatural. Note that this outcome won't always be the case in your stories, however — your protagonists are themselves supernatural, after all. The conflict is what's important to the storytelling, and rival supernatural creatures or "rational" circumstances or human hunters may overwhelm the pack, no matter how vigorous its devotion to Gaia.

At the same time, the Gothic exults in the sublime, the thrill and wonder we take from fear, terror, and horror. The Gothic provokes in us the same sort of response we would have to beauty. The sublime element, the

forbidden thrill, comes in being overwhelmed by some element of the Gothic world. The impossible wonder of the Umbra is a perfect example here: a literal other world where truths of the material world simply have no bearing. Separately, imagine being so stunned by your lover's beauty that you yield to them, enraptured, even as their body contorts, revealing their claws and fangs.

Morality often comes to the fore in the Gothic, usually amid situations in which it sharply contrasts. A degenerate priest. A family of distinguished lineage harboring a dreadful secret. An innocent child playing alone, as the long shadow of something fiendish and otherworldly falls across them. A single unblemished flower growing against all expectation on the grave of the murderer. Whether literally or symbolically (often both), the Gothic juxtaposes what is good and just with what is wicked and unjust, and some sort of power almost always resides with the wicked and unjust. This collision is particularly germane in modern tales where the platitude "our economy lifts people out of poverty" is blatantly at odds with that economy's reliance on industrial processes that produce toxic runoff and indelibly damage the locale.

Just as a word of caution here: We're cherry-picking. The actual, historical Gothic literary movement has some truly unenlightened attitudes, especially regarding gender, ethnicity, and matters of "civilization vs. barbarism." Use the cool parts of the genre, not the parts that should be relegated to the historical dustbin.

Punk

At its core, punk is rebellion, change, the casting down of the status quo. By definition, the players' Garou or other protagonists of the World of Darkness embody this punk ethos because they are inherently agents of change. They make choices that result in consequences, and the assumption is that they don't want to reinforce the status quo. (What the players' characters actually want may well be morally fraught, but that's where your story's narrative comes into play, as well as aspects of their tribe.)

The werewolves' antagonists have power — whether that of an oil-industry executive in the bespoke suit, lording over the 40th-floor boardroom, or the Cult of Fenris terror that has reduced the refugee camp to quaking fear. The players' characters break those antagonists' ill-claimed power.

In the context of Werewolf, each antagonist (or perhaps more than one) exists to take or reinforce control. In many cases, they are agents of the status quo, groups that exist to keep things as they are: functioning to the benefit of a minute group of individuals who derive their wealth, power, status, etc., by dictating structures that prevent, well, practically everyone else in the world from achieving self-determination. The oil-industry executive clings to power and profit. The Cult of Fenris werewolf insists that other werewolves to do things their way. A possessing spirit tempts its host into ever-greater depravity.

For example, the Pentex Group (see p. 268) invests heavily in various companies providing everything from energy solutions to private military companies, but it does so to generate profit regardless of the costs and to impose its superiors' control, not to altruistically provide energy or security. At the same time, a Cult of Fenris pack (see p. 279) opposes the various Pentex Group fronts as tools of the Wyrm, but the packmates don't care at all who gets hurt in the process or even whether the solution fixes the problem of exploitation. The players' characters probably don't want either outcome and rebel against both.

Thematically, this detail is especially complex. The players' characters are the protagonists, but that doesn't mean they're the good guys. And in fact, they're emphatically not the good guys, because you want the moral ambiguities of their ends and actions to come to the fore. Those consequences are among the costs that make your stories more than simple fables. It's part of the tragedy of werewolves being great at violence, but violence often being the worst way to deal with the problems the pack faces.

DIY

Of course, the Gothic-Punk aesthetic is best thought of as a spectrum or a dial. Your troupe will have its own tastes and preferences, so use the Gothic-Punk mentality to flavor your stories, rather than dictating a narrow experience. We're just suggesting a starting point.

APOCALYPSE UPON US

A solitary wolf walks along a road, the scalding hot surface burning its paws. It's confused and disoriented from the smoke and the destruction of everything it has known in life. Small as it is, it has no understanding of the forces that have come together to create the conditions for the wildfires that rage across California.

A heating atmosphere turns forests into kindling, ready to go off at the first spark. Millions of animals burn

or lose their habitat in a conflagration that promises to come again and again until there's nothing left for those sparks to ignite.

The flatlands are covered with black muck interspersed with raging geysers of fire spewing greasy smoke high into the sky. This isn't some Umbral spiritscape but, instead, an oilfield in the aftermath of a war. Igniting the oil wells denies the enemy their use. Unfortunately they're also incredibly difficult to put out, so sometimes the "strategy" is just a hope that they'll eventually exhaust themselves.

Some never do. The Gates of Hell in the badlands of Turkmenistan has been burning since 1971, a tangible manifestation of a world where life has been extinguished.

Deep beneath the earth and the oceans lies a strata of oil and natural gas, compressed over millennia from remnants of past life. Each cup of oil represents another opportunity for humans to kick back and enjoy the lifestyle provided by cheap energy as their skies heat up.

CITIES

A helicopter lands on top of a skyscraper, carrying the pet dog of a fintech executive so he can take it for a walk before it's flown back to his seaside mansion.

The relentless grind for profit makes the lives of office workers into a marathon of tedium, destroying their ability to understand the environmental consequences of their work.

A city administration bleeding from a thousand budget cuts becomes incapable of efficient garbage collection, letting the thousand poisons created by modern industrial life stagnate and pool on the streets.

Lower still, stranger things, twisted things, creep in the sewers, feeding off the misery trickling down.

Tortured call center workers slowly losing their humanity, inviting predatory spirits to fester within. Seedy corporate executives hiring jackboots to beat up protesters or journalists close to exposing their misdeeds. Corrupt werewolves who have cultivated the life of the urban apex predator. All of them can brush shoulders in a single taxi queue at 3 AM.

Ask the most reactionary among the Garou, and they may tell you that every city is a blight on the land, a tangible manifestation of how humanity and the Weaver suppress everything that's alive and beautiful until only dead concrete remains. Every city gone to seed, its sidewalks taken over by greenery, is a cause for celebration.

Most Garou are content to argue that humanity and other animals need their respective habitats. For a human, that can be a city, but a wolf needs to roam free. And so does the werewolf need its own territory. Of course, in this age of Apocalypse, many Garou come to grudging terms with their urban lifestyles. What they share is their distaste for the grotesque, untreated effluvia of human civilization: the poisons seeping from garbage dumps and the lifeless surfaces of soulless office blocks.

From a boardroom perspective, the remaining

untouched bastions of Gaia are nothing but future profit opportunities, ripe for development (or any other euphemism for short-sighted exploitation). Garou seeking flesh to rend and problems to rectify can find plenty of justification for their prejudices in pretty much any city on Earth. Political corruption, whether local or national, makes reining in the vanguards of Apocalypse an impossibility. Well-dressed people in pristine meeting rooms make decisions that lead to another gaping lesion in Gaia's flesh somewhere far away.

Certain werewolves might have the inclination to navigate the halls of power, but most Garou are far happier with their claws sunk deep into a concrete foe. The city provides plenty of those. After all, what is a city other than a concentration of the most malignant among the Weaver's and the Wyrm's forces, a place where every block teems with individual stories of consumption, desperation, and degradation?

THE COUNTRYSIDE

It's easy for urban Garou to romanticize the countryside as an unspoiled wilderness they've told themselves they're fighting to protect. The truth is that vast industrial farms cover rural territory with genetically engineered monocultures designed to force farmers to buy seeds from the same company every year. Factory-farmed animals are kept in miserable conditions — poultry living their entire lives in tiny cages where they can barely move; pigs fattening in fear as they're tortured by the millions, just to shave a few cents off the cost of business. And, as ever, where goes humankind follows exploitation — farm workers lead very different lives from those of agribusiness farm owners.

Even forests, those symbols of untrammeled nature, are steadily replaced by tree farms devoid of biodiversity or animal habitats.

There's no place to escape the poisonous touch of avarice. A Garou wandering the deserts of Central Asia may see fuel trucks approaching in the shimmering heat, followed by billowing clouds of white dust. The exploitation of the Athabasca tar sands has turned the Canadian landscape into a black scar visible from high in the air. The world is losing its ability to breathe as profiteers log the Amazon rainforest, turning the vegetation that preserves the planet's atmosphere into a graveyard of stumps. No matter how far from human habitation a Garou chooses to dwell, soon caustic chemicals poison the fish in the local river and turn the water in their well flammable. A Garou pack devoted to restoring an abandoned spirit-node must remain alert for the rumble of forestry machines coming to tear everything down.

As the toxic influence of industry crawls across the globe, so spreads the monstrous presence of the Wyrm. Every seemingly pristine little town can host the most monstrous of fomori possessions, cultivated by the detrimental activities of resource-extracting business. There's no escape for a werewolf who wants distance from the war: Wherever they go, the Wyrm may already await them.

The war is global. The enemy has already advanced across the face of Gaia, from forest to desert. Distance from human authority emboldens despoilers such as energy companies, and militaries that are their own authorities are some of the worst of the world's polluters. That remoteness also means that the Garou can fight without having to worry about accidental witnesses, though.

It's tempting to see the Wyrm's virulence as a symptom of industry, just because so often the two go together. In reality, the Wyrm has always been present, and is, when in balance, a vital part of the metaphysical Triat. However, some of its most horrifying incursions into the physical world are ancient, and who knows what might be long dormant, sleeping under the earth in seemingly untouched environments. They can spring terrible surprises on unwary Garou who assume that a spirit-site has been forgotten, when in fact it binds something awful, deep within Gaia herself; or who assume a geological survey has been underwritten for a benign purpose.

Drawing Distinctions

It's important to understand the context of the ongoing environmental apocalypse that defines **Werewolf**'s setting and conflicts. Despite the setting's grand-scale cosmology, humankind is responsible for the choices it makes, and for the outsized effect those decisions have upon Gaia (whom they don't perceive as such).

Companies aren't themselves bad by definition. Companies represent one approach to large-scale cooperation. Even accumulations of capital aren't inherently bad, so long as they're put to positive use. One important differentiation to make is between large-scale effort and exploitation. Jeopardizing the wellbeing of life from here onward for the sake of personal profit now constitutes the environmental apocalypse the werewolves see the world facing.

It's an emotional issue, but that's why it features front and center for **Werewolf**. The Garou are creatures of high passion, particularly Rage. Theirs is a fight in which they have distinct assets that make poor weapons in the war to reverse the results of exploitation — but they're great assets to have in individual battles to stop that exploitation. One of the core conflicts of the game is the need to make a change, but having to work against one's own nature in trying to best effect that change.

The Bottom Line

The Wyrm doesn't itself cause exploitation or turn people to greed. The Wyrm ascendant is a manifestation of greed, not the origin of it. Humans are responsible for their own actions and choices. But, certainly, greed and exploitation strengthen the Wyrm, and the fundamental insatiability of greed means that once the Wyrm strengthens, it continues to strengthen. As humans, we've done this, or allowed it, and in **Werewolf** stories, we're able to do something immediate about it.

THE UMBRA

Beyond the physical world we know lies its spiritual counterpart, a mirror's image of the material world and a shadow cast by the "illumination" of thinking, feeling things' perception and emotions.

The world's shadow — or the Umbra, as the Garou know it — is at once a reflection of the physical world and a good deal more than that. Although many Garou use those statements synonymously, they're individually true, and then some. The Umbra is a shadow *and* a reflection *and* a reality of truth, ideal, *and* metaphor.

Much as a shadow can seem long or wide, faint or deep, so is the Umbra the physical world "through the looking glass" and a distortion of it. This distortion might be, at the same time, more or less than that which casts it, a thin half-world or a bottomless spirit-chasm that feels as if it could swallow the material world whole.

BOTH FAMILIAR AND ENTIRELY ALIEN

In the Umbra...

- A cobalt mine in the physical world may appear as a horrific scar
- A city might appear, from far away, as a livid lesion teeming with maggots
- A shipwrecked oil tanker may appear as a vast harpoon in Gaia's side, with oil suppurating as blood
- Sunset behind a remote mountaintop might appear as a sparkling teardrop-jewel at the apex of one enormous volume of stone
- A dilapidated dream-shack, hazy as the memory of it slowly fades, might appear more spacious on the inside than the outside form suggests, but within it, stepping into any corner painfully transports a visitor immediately back outside
- Or a location in the Umbra may appear with no significant difference from its physical counterpart

More than anything else, it is somewhere other, where the truths of the physical world may or may not apply, and exactly how they don't apply varies by where — or perhaps who — one is. Even the Garou, intimately familiar with these Spirit Wilds, aren't their masters.

They simply know how to get there by crossing the Gauntlet that separates the Umbra from the material world.

Even these words are misleading, for the things one encounters in the Umbra are, by certain definitions, both material and physical, though mystics among the Garou claim that it is some other substance than that in the world of humans. Touch a spirit; it feels real because it is real. Now apologize, because you had no pact in place that permitted you to touch that spirit.

That last bit is important, because it shows two truths the Garou know well: The Umbra has its own rules and customs, and for those who traverse it, it is unknowable and potentially terrifying. What appears tonight as a moonlit grove, with winsome spirits flitting among the shadowy trees in the midst of a wood found in the material world might, a moment later, appear as bone-dead raking claws reaching toward an abyssal sky, the spirits having become shrieking horrors, all because one violated some unknown custom. As the wisest of theurges, the Garou's experts in matters spiritual and Umbral, knows, the Spirit Wilds are vast and inchoate, and they will kill an unprepared werewolf with chilling alacrity.

Umbral Apocalypse

Not surprisingly, as the shadow of the physical world, the Umbra exhibits the twisted agonies of the physical world in the time of Apocalypse. The same developments afflicting the physical world that the Garou occupy are evident in the Umbra, too, taking on pronounced spiritual resonances. Wounds in the earth weep ceaselessly in the Umbra, tormented spirits of natural features flit about in pained agitation, and sites of resource exploitation appear as corrosively barren or livid and violent.

Tonight, the Umbra itself seems to recoil from the Garou, or perhaps even to repel them. Many Garou speak of their caerns losing connections to the Umbra, or of being personally expelled from the spirit world after entering it. The spiritual boundary known as the Gauntlet has itself become more difficult to cross than it was in the past.

Perhaps this growing impermeability is the legacy of werewolves having failed Gaia, or perhaps it is a simple response mechanism to the cruelties happening in the physical world — the shadow trying to tear itself away from that which casts it.

CAERNS: PLACES OF POWER

As places of great spiritual energy — where outsized spiritual forces may be prevalent, and where nature or some other very strong emotional force may defy the prevailing physical reality — caerns are sanctified spaces and ritual sites, ones sacred to the Garou. At its simplest, a caern is a place with whose spiritual energy exceeds that of its surroundings in the physical world, and where the separation between the physical and spirits worlds is thin, making for a positive feedback loop. Such a place has a strong emotional significance, so that it becomes spiritually potent, so that the boundary between the two worlds thins, so that it's even more responsive to spiritual and emotional resonance, and so on. A human can often feel that there's something special about a caern, even if they don't understand the spiritual energies present — the resonances are that significant.

Today, caerns are precious. Many have been lost or gone untended as their guardian Garou have fallen. Many more have been forgotten or neglected, with no one to protect them in the age of Apocalypse. Thralls of

the Wyrm have taken once-proud caerns for their own purposes, or have constructed their own near such sites of environmental despoilment as strip mines, chemical contamination ponds, wastelands, and landfills. Other caerns have been completely co-opted by other supernatural creatures: vampires and their covens, mages, or changelings, all unwilling for their own reasons to share such power with Gaia's protectors.

Finding, retaking, re-awakening, and otherwise nurturing caerns is greatly renowned among Garou. They're where the give-and-take between a caern's Garou protectors and the spirits that dance within the site is clear. As the places where the spirit and physical worlds can be brought into harmony, and where communication with spirits can be performed with ease, the value of caerns is inestimable. That value is even greater if caerns can be taken from enemies, turned from vile purposes toward the restoration — or perhaps in memoriam — of Gaia.

The community of Garou that forms around caerns is known as a sept. A sept may include multiple recognized packs, might be a single pack, or might be a decentralized, informal who's who of local werewolves devoted to cultivating the caern on the pretense of shielding these places against the sheer onslaught of humanity, ruinous influences of the Wyrm, or the greed and ambition of other supernatural creatures.

Examples of Caern Sites

Part of the engagement in telling Werewolf stories that involve caerns is discerning why the caern is important in the first place, and what the spirits drawn to it desire. Any place that can be embellished with a cool description or connection to the story's greater locale can make for a memorable caern. There are no generic, unimportant caerns — every one of them has its own story.

- A pristine forest glade, untouched by human despoilment
- A coldly humid cavern, far from the nearest human settlement, that entombs the physical remains of… well, the pack's not really sure, but it needs to stay dead
- The penthouse residence of an extremely well-to-do urban werewolf, constructed of glass and steel to resemble a geodesic "eye"
- The center of a dark marsh, where the air smells sweetly of mallow and thrush.
- A stepwell that should be dried up and abandoned, but still flows with water and teems with life at its lowest levels.
- A cellar beneath the capitol streets — now walled off from the hotel to which it was previously attached — that once hid bootleg liquor during the Prohibition Era
- A dormant volcano still treated with reverence by knowledgeable humans as well as its Garou protectors
- A cataract downriver from a particularly noxious meat processing plant, where all of the runoff and waste gathers, prowled by debased werewolves
- A chapel, temple, or other site holy to human faiths in the past, but abandoned by them and restored by Garou who recognized the place's spiritual resonance

ENDLESS ENEMIES

The world hasn't entered Apocalypse of its own volition. Even beyond the ambient greed of humans, numerous entities hostile to werewolves thrive amid the violence, exploitation, and paranoia of the world in decline. The Garou face many foes — some in secret, some in the open — who have pushed it to this precipice, and would push it further. They are varied, resourceful, and lethal, even against the might of the Garou.

AGENTS OF ENTROPY: SERVANTS OF THE WYRM

The Wyrm is a metaphysical force benefiting from some of the most brutal and insidious of the Garou's enemies. Frequently, when Gaia's champions fight the unjust, they find the lingering traces of the Wyrm's malignant presence. The Wyrm thrives when its servants and champions — whether cognizant of the Triat or ignorant of it — continue their own efforts to capitalize on the ongoing ruin of the world.

Banes

Banes are spirits in service to the Wyrm. Each reflects something of whichever Wyrm-aspect they serve, their form twisted to exult their master and embody their purpose. Although stereotyped as brutish, ugly, and warped, their forms can be as varied as any other spirit's. Banes are just as likely to engender pity or sympathy as they are to seduce or mercilessly maul. Decay, violence, illness, and hate are just a few of the ideals that have individual Wyrm-spirits associated with them.

Beyond their servitude to the Wyrm, Banes are infinitely varied. Some are inherently malignant, but many spirits turn to distorted aspects of their former purpose, or they are embodiments of destructive concepts, or are simply the spirits that dwell in regions fallen to the Wyrm's influence. Some Banes are overt and monstrous, but many Banes are subtler and find a spiritual "wound" into which to burrow themselves.

Banes are strongest in the Umbra, where they can use their spiritual powers to serve the Wyrm's purposes forthrightly or abstractly. To affect the material world they must generally possess humans, animals, or other hosts.

Fomori

Fomori are humans or other hosts who have been possessed by a Bane for an extended period. As tragic as they are dangerous, fomori seldom agree to the fate to which their Bane has twisted them, and even fewer would have if they knew what it would entail.

Banes are often the metaphorical foot soldiers of the Apocalypse, rank-and-file servants in thrall to the power of the Wyrm. Many fomori lose their will and sense of self, but the most dangerous, and most unfortunate, know exactly what they have become but either cannot or will not do anything about it. On occasion, though, a powerful individual (in self or possessing spirit) emerges as a unique threat to the Garou.

Prolonged Bane possession warps the body into a mirror of the spirit within. Often this change is subtle, but observable, as with a fomor possessed by a Bane of wrath, who flushes with anger and tension, their features shifting harshly and muscles swelling with potential violence. It might even be all but invisible, as with a fomor who looks as if they'd merely been sleep deprived or even made more attractive by the possession of a Bane of temptation. In desperate times, or when they know they've been discovered by Garou, fomori may drop the attempts at subtlety and evince a body-horror bristling with foul weaponry to use against their foes.

Pentex Group

Pentex Group is a holding company whose upper echelons are aware of the animistic nature of the world and have aligned themselves with powerful spirits themselves in service to the Wyrm. Through an ever-adapting collection of corporate fronts, the Pentex Group is forever profit-seeking, increasing its wealth through exploitation and then using that wealth to fund further exploitation. In an era when business and economies are more important than people, even if its front companies are caught and punished, the fines or other repercussions are usually less than the profits and can simply be written off as operating costs.

Acting largely through subsidiaries, Pentex Group remains hidden through financial dishonesty and sheltered by technicalities of law. It's a true multinational, but one that opts not to draw attention to itself and prefers to conceal its own identity wherever possible. Pentex Group has controlling interests in everything from cosmetics to weapons manufacturing to global energy operations, but each serves the Wyrm's purposes in its own ways. Although a pack of Garou may well discover any given

front operating in their territory, the connections between that arm and Pentex are probably obscured.

Pentex Group's methods are corporate and subtle, thriving in the resignation that modern societies have been bullied into accepting as the way of the world. It lobbies for relaxed environmental regulation, looses mining runoff into rivers and nature preserves, crushes indigenous peoples and local economies in the name of greater profits, sells arms to all who might want them, and fills the air with smog and the ground with poison, all through its portfolio of front companies. Pentex Group proper arms itself with lawyers and cash and the letter of the law just as much, if not more, than it does with mercenaries, Banes, and fomori.

This semblance of rectitude can make Pentex difficult to fight. Many of its activities push the world closer to emissions red lines and critical benchmarks on the graphs of climate scientists. Most of its employees are perfectly normal people, simply trading their hopes in exchange for steady employment and decent pay, yet entirely unaware of the spiritual devil's bargain the parent company's holding company has made with cosmological forces.

Dealing with Pentex Group is a war the Garou weren't made to fight, but one this generation of werewolves will have to learn to wage.

Agents of Stasis: The Weaver

Some Garou legends claim that the Weaver went rogue well before the Wyrm's ascendance, and its attempts to bind the world drove the Wyrm to its present state. In a world leaning increasingly on punitive expressions of "law and order" over justice, and where building something to extract money from a place or even a culture is considered progress, the Weaver's children are themselves in overdrive, creating a world of glass and networks, rules and jails. Packs devoted to war against the Wyrm wonder if they should heed those legends.

Historically, the Garou have viewed cities as strongholds for the Weaver even more so than of the Wyrm, at least in a broad sense — the Weaver thrives in the concrete-and-steel confines of the cities themselves, while the Wyrm exults in the numerous injustices and toxicities that can be found in the slick alleyways, corporate conference rooms, and windowless manufactories contained therein. Even abstractions like social calcification and the structures that funnel money upward from the people who do the work to the people who own their tools can be analogous to the Weaver. Infinite construction projects; an ongoing cycle of build-up, knock-down "development"; and perpetual suburban sprawl indicate the presence of the Weaver, at least to the Garou way of seeing things.

As well, technology often has some connection to the Weaver, according to Garou perspective. The intransigence of computer logic, any number of binary on-off states, and even the tools used to build other expressions of tech — whether housing tenements or surveillance networks or cryptocurrency "mining" facilities — all suggest the Weaver. And although the Garou aren't inherently anti-technology, they often take a stance against technology they consider untrustworthy — which is an extremely subjective argument. Can the tool choose the purpose to which it's put?

As with the Wyrm, the most numerous among the Weaver's servants are humans, acting indirectly in its purpose. Although not conscious of their patron, their constant development and the calcification of their civilizations further the Weaver's aims well enough. However, such developments are coincidental — a gradual shift in the way humans live their lives, rather than the choking stasis that the Garou fear. Are the true threats elsewhere?

Monster-Hunters

Those daring individuals who actually take up arms or any number of investigative tools don't generally see the world through the same animistic lens that werewolves do. That they are "servants of the Weaver" at all is more of a threatening convergence of circumstances. For the most part, in seeking to eliminate werewolves, monster-hunters want to return the world to "how it should be": a nostalgic-imaginary state of stasis on their part.

Worse, the institutional hunters, such as those funded by governments, are often themselves agents of the status quo, intended not only to preserve unjust power structures but also to make sure all the modern world's injustices keep money and power flowing in the right direction. Can't have werewolves fucking up the billionaires' investments — it's bad for the economy. And what is an economy but a tool, a technology?

At a very high level, there exists an informal alliance of world intelligence agencies that share information, tactics, and specialists, thus enabling one another to hunt things that go bump in the night. And although these hunters don't (usually...) have the supernatural prowess and spiritual gifts of the Garou's other enemies, some can call upon technology, skill, and the overwhelming might of the institutions they serve to grant them an edge in their pursuit of monstrous targets. Then again, they may

have silver bullets and some way to track werewolves, but they fundamentally don't understand the Apocalyptic conflict they've stepped into.

Weaver Spirits

The most numerous of the Weaver's direct servants belong to its seemingly infinite host of spiderlike spirits, literally weaving order and inflexibility across the Umbra. Among their purported accomplishments are having sewn the Gauntlet into place and weaving an ever-growing spirit-web throughout the Umbra in their attempt to encase reality in stasis. Although largely passive workers, they retaliate violently against attacks on their webs, and their spinning often threatens to calcify elements of the Umbra or the material world.

As Apocalypse unfolds, these spider-spirits have become an escalating problem while they grow more aggressive and construct harmful Umbral defense structures in ever greater numbers. More than at any time in the past, the Umbra reveals the presence of these spider-spirits, and Garou moving through the spiritscape can feel the encroaching threads of the Weaver's web, even as they hear the dying howls of Gaia.

AGENTS OF CHAOS: THE WYLD

The most unpredictable of the Triatic forces, the Wyld can exist anywhere something changes, breaks through, or emerges anew, from esoteric ideas to metaphysical creation. Provided there's enough "spiritual illumination" present (see p. 225), the Wyld may represent literal physical metamorphosis or transformation, as with a caterpillar becoming a butterfly, metal becoming molten, or classical plate tectonics. Heady stuff, much of it, to be sure.

Change and creation can take many forms, and it's unlikely that the Garou have true enmity with the Wyld, except in certain situations. Even in these cases, the "antagonists" associated with the Wyld are often more a matter of circumstance than mortal opposition.

Conflict with situations attributed to the Wyld can be exceedingly difficult for werewolves to come to grips with. How might a Garou pack fight back a flood or hurricane? How does one tear the throat out of an idea? Can a memory be disemboweled? Can one beat creativity into submission?

Even more troubling is the fact that the role of the Wyld seems diminished somehow in the era of an ascendant Wyrm and Weaver. Is creation itself coming to an end beneath the rigidity and decay of the Triatic imbalance? And is Wyld-aspected behavior as erratic and desperate as it is because it knows it's coming to its (unnatural) end?

OTHER WEREWOLVES

Even as the world smolders, the werewolves' greatest enemies may be themselves. Tribes that have turned from Gaia's purpose, or that actively serve the Wyrm, exist among the Garou — the Cult of Fenris and Black Spiral Dancers, respectively — as do those who undertake this Apocalypse war in a different way, such as the Stargazers.

And even among those still loyal to Gaia, great rivalries and grudges ensue, for Garou passions are ever near the surface, and legendarily volatile. A werewolf may meet her death not at the claws of a venomous fomor or in the bowels of a caustic chemical plant, but by losing an overzealous duel of honor to another werewolf, by spirit trickery into disadvantage against a duplicitous ally, or even by betrayal and subsequently being torn to shreds at a moot. Whenever werewolves meet, despite a high likelihood of participants "being on the same side," camaraderie is far from certain. The possibility of violence always lurks throughout such an encounter.

For more information on the dangers posed by other werewolves, see The Shadow of the Past on p. 35.

SAMPLE CONFLICTS

With all that in mind, what might a Werewolf story concern itself with? What friction might occur in a chronicle? Which disputes might a player's character experience while playing Werewolf? Some examples follow.

- A toxic mine operates in the pack's territory, and its security forces are surprisingly competent. The pack has options: Some Garou may favor approaching in the physical world, having scouted an infiltration route, while others may propose a risky ingress via the Umbra (with all the otherworldly dangers that doing so entails). Of course, what's actually in the mine and its horrifying implications remain to be discovered.
- The players' pack get word of a Pentex front operating a factory farm with dismal conditions for animals and workers alike. Once there they find that the farm is harvesting something far more sinister than meat and dairy.
- An important agreement with a powerful spirit is nearing the end of its hundred-year duration, but no one knows where the spirit has gone or how the compact might be renewed.
- A tear in the border between the physical world and the Umbra has appeared nearby, and spiritual bleedover is making the local flora and fauna aggressive.
- Renowned werewolves from a more accomplished pack attend a meeting of the tribes and make a case to take the characters' territory away from them.
- Radical elements among the Garou push for a raid on a nearby human community, hoping that killing them all will discourage exploitative corporate interest in the area.
- The players' pack has responsibility for a caern in their territory, but a powerful and truculent spirit has no interest in observing the longstanding pacts for its protection with the werewolves.
- A grisly series of killings risks exposing the players' pack for what they are to the community — it sure looks as if a werewolf has been performing these murders.
- A Garou who has not yet learned of her werewolf nature has been discovered, and a rival pack seeks to force her First Change and have her join them instead of the characters' pack.
- A pack of corrupt werewolves has been terrorizing one of the disadvantaged parts of town, hoping to drive down property values so an opportunistic real-estate developer can acquire the real estate on the cheap.
- A respected werewolf elder's remains have been found, and he appears to have been skinned alive; could a powerful werewolf with no tribal allegiance, and new to the area, have skinned the elder and performed a ritual to become a shapechanger?
- A well-funded team of monster-hunters hears of "Lupine activity" in the region and captures an ally of the players' characters, in hopes of drawing them out.
- One of the pack's contacts has gone missing, and after ruling out some more obvious culprits, the packmates discovers that the ally has been abducted by vampires — or has even become one.
- The power company has built a new dam upriver, and the spirits are in tumult, with aspects of the Weaver, Wyrm, and Gaia all present and clashing. ■

CHAPTER TWO

Being Garou

Conquered, we conquer.
– PLAUTUS

As if discovering that one is a werewolf isn't enough, the complications of being Garou don't stop there. Garou society has faced violent conflict throughout its history. In fact, as its role in history, so much of what shapes Garou society is the reality of being forever at war. And the war itself is complicated, waged against a spiritual force that the rest of the world cannot see, when the rest of the world already considers the Garou to be monsters from its own terrifying past. So let's start there.

THE SHADOW OF THE PAST

A history of the Garou is both impossible and reductive. The stories of the past that werewolves tell are oral histories, part legend and part reality, revised, reinterpreted, and redone, according to the needs of the generation doing the telling. They contain multiple narratives that are all considered to be true. The finer details, locations, and players in these grand dramas may shift with the times, and with the storytellers spinning the tale for those listening to them. But the Garou consider a few common events to be undeniable truths in their collective story.

Long ago, before human history as we typically understand it, powerful shapeshifting creatures held dominance over the natural world. These lineages of Gaia's children were half-spirit and half-physical, their forms tied intimately to a particular array of animals and to humanity.

Werewolves stood at the apex, as Gaia had created them to be the world's protectors. The Garou were meant to ensure that the three primeval forces — the Wyrm, the Weaver, and the Wyld — remained in check, and that the mundane reality of creation balanced between itself and the ephemera of the spirit world. No one force from the Triat of the Weaver, the Wyrm, and the Wyld was meant to be stronger than any other.

Weaver's children, however, were, despite their frailties, a stubborn and intrepid lot that reproduced and spread over creation as quickly as the Weaver did. And so one of the most significant tasks the Garou had was keeping humanity in check.

Let's just say that the phrase "keeping humanity in check" is hotly contested among Garou.

Some of the lore-keepers and legend-singers among the Garou claim that werewolves may not have been intended as the sole stewards of the earth. They say that Gaia placed many different spirits in charge: crocodile-shifters, bear-shifters, raven-shifters, and so on. Perhaps all creatures and spirits pledged to Gaia were meant to be humanity's keepers — and perhaps the Garou ruined that diversity by believing that there had to be a natural order of things with them as kings.

THE IMPERGIUM

None of the great spirit-pledged tribes agree on what happened to cause the spirit-guardians' relationship with humanity to go so wrong during this time of legend. But most do agree that a reign of terror known as the Impergium was a result of the Garou becoming too aggressive in dealing with the Weaver's children.

WHO SAYS HUMANS ARE THE WEAVER'S CHILDREN? THEY'RE JUST PART OF THE GREATER WHOLE. IT'S WHAT THEY DO THAT MATTERS.

Human settlements — whether they were the result of people being herded into specific places of the Garou's choosing or of humankind seeking strength in numbers — lived in fear of the night, when werewolves prowled beyond their borders. As those settlements grew into towns and, later, became cities, the Garou would steal into the communities throughout this entire process, taking and killing as they pleased.

Some claimed it was a matter of justice by the light of the moon, with Gaia as their witness. Others did it for sport. The effects of centuries of being prey to terrifying predators left lasting effects on humankind's collective consciousness that often manifest as mass delusion whenever the truth of Garou and their supernatural realities come to light. This trauma may be why most humans instinctively shiver in fear at the mere thought of a wolf pack watching them from the depths of a thick, dark forest.

And so the werewolves ran rampant, unchallenged in their power. Perhaps they had grown so arrogant as to believe that they alone could handle the sacred duties Gaia entrusted to her most favored spirits. Perhaps they had simply lost control of themselves. Either way, they subjugated and slaughtered humans and even other sympathetic spirit-folk, seemingly at whim.

Eventually, some werewolves recognized the terrible violence that the Garou had visited upon humankind and believed that, in their role as guardians, perhaps it was time to approach humanity with more compassion, and teach them, in turn, to respect Gaia. Conversely, some werewolves howled for ongoing purges or retribution, a means to show humanity its place.

FUCK YOU. YOUR SINS. YOUR GUILT. YOUR SHAME. NOT MINE. BUT NOW I HAVE TO PAY YOUR COSTS.

Silver: The Wolf's Weakness

Did the Children of the Weaver discover the secret of silver all on their own? Were they aided by other supernatural forces? Had Gaia intervened and given them the tools to fight her own wayward offspring? No one knows for certain, and perhaps it doesn't matter. What's certain is that people discovered silver to be anathema to the monsters who oppressed humanity. Thus, combined with an uncanny amount of unity and coordination that they had not previously possessed, the world's first hunters turned the tables on the Garou. Damaged and fractious, the werewolves looked on in horror as fragile humankind rooted out packs and picked off their own.

And the Garou's vengeance was terrible, sustaining the Impergium for untold years.

Eventually, the killing times came to a close. Again, the stories differ by whose legend (or whose shame...) is the subject of the telling. But the damage had been done — humans had come to see werewolves not as defenders of Gaia, or the stewards of a spiritual harmony, but as man-eating killers lurking the darkness outside the safety of their homes.

Even tonight, the existential fear of the killing times remains, though specific memories of werewolves have faded. Werewolves call this phenomenon the Delirium. Anytime a human confronts the awful reality of werewolves' existence, they panic, lose consciousness, flee, or even rationalize to themselves the impossibility of the horror they face. Thus, the existence of the Garou has faded from tense understanding to ongoing terror to myth and superstition.

A CONCORD AND SECRECY

Some werewolves realized what terrible violence the Garou had done to humankind, and they felt that people were, if not justified, at least understandable in their anger. Thus, they believed that perhaps it was time to approach humanity with more compassion, and teach them, in turn, to respect Gaia. Other werewolves wanted humanity's just punishment to continue. Still other Garou believed that humans had overstepped their boundaries and needed to be slaughtered wholesale for their crimes. And some felt that the Garou must turn inward,

leave humanity to its own devices, and focus instead on the damage werewolves caused.

Garou argued for days and nights untold at grand pack and tribal gatherings before coming to a tenuous agreement called the Concord. They would retreat from an overt presence in the world of humans and focus, instead, on protecting Gaia "from behind the Veil," a fanciful term suggesting secrecy in relation to humankind about who and what werewolves were. The Concord represented a momentous agreement by which Garou would maintain their own society, separate from that of humanity.

Thus, the Impergium ended and werewolves began to fade from the collective consciousness of humankind. Soon, rather than warring against humanity, the Garou took to fighting among themselves in pursuit of prime hunting grounds and powerful caerns, or even just out of thirst for destruction as creatures of Rage. During these times, the Wyrm and the Weaver became significant threats, as cities grew and human greed thrived in relative safety.

The overall success of the Concord kept many dissenting voices from turning their fangs against the quick spread of humanity across the globe. Many werewolves chose to integrate in secret with humankind and its growing cities, civilizations and empires, as blending in with the flock brought about many benefits for enterprising Garou. Many Garou in Europe, for example, can trace family histories back, through conquerors, rulers, and firebrands across the continent. Many wolves also stalked in the shadows of naval explorers, and of migrants hoping for a better future across the seas. And any number of Garou watched with dread as colonial efforts came to their shores, fighting back where they could, but usually overwhelmed by the sheer number of human ships.

THE GAROU NATION

The Garou Nation, as it was known, existed for a brief period of relative success, but even there, its actual duration is unknown and varies by who's reciting the history. Was it decades? Centuries? Millennia? Because the historical events involved in it date to various times across myriad locations, to say with any certainty is impossible, and even spirits speak of it in terms unsuited to the physical world.

The Wyrm's growing strength manifested through numerous tools, and through agents who goaded many werewolves into participating in colonial conquest by imperial powers, which tapped the Garou's inherent love

Historical Trauma and the Connection of the Garou

Similar to the Garou, and suffering similar internecine conflicts concerning how best to be effective, native people have struggled with historical trauma in their communities.

The notion of historical trauma is rampant throughout tribal communities in the United States and Canada. Historical trauma refers to harmful events and the often invisible scars they leave behind for individuals who endure extreme hardship and pain. In the case of many Indigenous American communities, forced assimilation by the United States federal government, removal from traditional homelands, cultural genocide, and other forms of tribal eradication are rife in United States history.

Historical trauma emanates from past generations that have passed this trauma forward through DNA. Young Indigenous children in the late 1800s and 1900s were routinely sent to boarding schools or missionary schools, where their unique tribal languages were forbidden, their traditional attire and practices often wiped away. That generation would frequently associate language and culture with danger and would therefore refuse to teach the next generation. The conditions in many of these schools were horrific, leading to them frequently being a place full of disease and abuse. Unmarked gravesites have been found around many of the residential schools in Canada, which had its final one closed in 1997.

These collective effects bring us to the present day. Many tribal communities are struggling with language and culture loss. Some communities have lost all fluent first language speakers. Some tribal communities are divided politically, which most likely emanates from the strong divides invoked by the United States' assimilatory process.

— Dr. Waabizii Benjamin, Silver Fang philodox

for dominance. At times, these agents took advantage of the uncertainty brought about by the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and the Industrial Revolution. They tempted the Garou through familial or cultural ties, lured them with promises of power, or abandoned them if they didn't prove useful enough, then cultivating more of their own.

Modern Garou scholars hang their heads in shame as they recall such events as the slaughter of Garou and Kin in North America, and the subjugation of the Philippine Luntiang Kuko, a sept of witch-wolves that had protected the archipelago and significant portions of Southeast Asia. The White Howlers fell sway to the Wyrm and reforged themselves in its image as the Black Spiral Dancers. Over time, untold tribes and camps suffered — or chose — similar destruction, whether at the fangs and claws of other Garou, through choices to ally themselves with foul forces, or through abstention entirely from the once-sacrosanct compact with Gaia. Some even disappeared, details unknown, such as the sept near the North American East Coast colony of Roanoke , which vanished without a trace.

The loose alliance of tribes that formed after the Concord proved unable to stand. On the course of walking from the shadows and alongside humanity, while attempting to do as they needed (or as they pleased, under the guise of what they believed was right), many werewolves found themselves making enemies among their fellows, as well as among the growing fellowships of mortal hunters and yet stranger creatures of the night. Differences in needs, principles, and desires — especially ones pertaining to the flock that was humanity — proved the source of many vendettas, and the death of many a Garou. Even tonight the fragments still fall from the shattered Garou Nation, with the Stargazer tribe removing itself from the Concord to seek new solutions, and the Cult of Fenris abandoning the Nation to pursue its own vision of a glorious never-ending war against the Wyrm.

Suffice to say, all these factors contributed to the collapse of what was once a powerful, generally united front in this Garou Nation. Committed to their opposition of the Triat's imbalance, tribes succumbed to enemies from within — or, worse yet, to their own short-sightedness, arrogance, and Rage.

AUSPICE AND TRIBE

The Garou are ever creatures of duality: inheritors of Rage and spirit, one foot each in the worlds of human and wolf, ravening monsters and dutiful protectors.

So it goes with their cosmological parentage. Gaia is their mother — according to the prevailing wisdom, at least — but so, too, do they enjoy the favor of other spiritual entities. Not long after their First Change, nascent werewolves learn about Gaia's sister Luna, another spiritual benefactor, and how she grants them advantages based upon when they experienced their First Change — that is, during which moon-sign. At the same time, Garou learn about the tribes, which are cultures of community fostered by a Patron Spirit (each of which has its own complex relationships to Gaia in the hierarchy of spirits). In such ways is the complex Garou duty and legacy expressed: duty to Gaia, a view of one's abilities as shaped by Luna, and patronage of a mighty spirit. Obviously, mentorship in these topics is very important to the Garou, as mentors instruct new werewolves in the truths of their kind.

That's the hope, anyway. Indeed, in these uncertain times, more than a few werewolves experience their First Change with no one to guide them through the journey of truly becoming Garou. These wretched individuals, with no comprehension of the spirit world, no relationship to Luna, and no Patron Spirit to provide them a tribal community, are effectively lost in a world that fears and despises them as rapacious beasts... and many are just that until, eventually, they meet tragic and grisly ends. More on them later; here, now, are the auspices and tribes of the Garou.

AUSPICE

The Garou revere a set of traditional cultural roles imparted by Luna, sister to Gaia.

* A werewolf's auspice is their moon-sign, almost always in alignment with the lunar phase at the time of their First Change.
* One's auspice implies a role among Garou society, an expectation of temperament and a suggested set of responsibilities.
* The Garou venerate high degrees of competency in the "craft" of auspices. For example, at moots, many Garou look

forward to the galliards regaling the werewolves in attendance with tales of great renown.

For more information on auspices, see p. 55.

The Auspices

The role of the *ragabash* is to question authority, challenge unexamined tradition, and even mock that which is worthy of derision — a highly subjective topic.

The role of the *theurge* is that of a mystic, to develop an expertise in matters of the Umbra and relationships with the spirits.

The role of the *philodox* is to preserve and interpret the ways and customs of werewolves, to arbitrate and render judgment based upon the (largely oral) history of the Garou.

The role of the *galliard* is to promote the legends of the werewolves, to sing the songs of bygone comrades and tonight's champions of the Garou, thus inspiring the legends to come.

The role of the *ahroun* is that of the warrior: to take the challenge to the enemy and meet them head on or, otherwise, to deliver unto that enemy their deserved fate.

Moon Cults

One phenomenon that seems to have no historical precedent is the emergence of what some Garou term "moon cults," which consist of werewolves who have turned their back on Gaia and instead see themselves in service first to her sister Luna, the spirit of the moon. To the cultists' reasoning, if Gaia herself is dead or dying, better to leap boldly into what's next than to cling to the ways and causes of the past and fade into obscurity with them.

The existence of moon cults is a point of tension for many Garou. They're not exactly anathema, and they don't seem to be aligned with the destructive forces that wage Apocalypse. They do, however, flout convention around what it means to be Garou. At the same time, however, many young Garou reject the ways of their elders and predecessors whose inaction or errant actions brought the world into Apocalypse itself.

So, are the moon cults a path of wayward heresy? Or are they an evolution of the werewolves' role amid the Apocalypse to come?

TRIBE

Garou culture also consists of a number of tribes, each of which has distinct characteristics.

* A tribe emerges from the patronage of a powerful spirit. When a Garou pledges their lives to a specific Patron Spirit, they become a part of that tribe.
* Given the patronage of that spirit, a tribe bears a certain outlook. It's a worldview, as well as an implicit call to action in service to Gaia.
* Tribe membership confers some degree of culture and belonging, but all tribes consist of werewolves, who are passionate creatures and prone to infighting. Tribes are not lockstep perspectives, but fractious and factional groups based upon certain commonalities.

For more information on tribes, see p. 58.

The Tribes

Black Furies serve Gaia by opposing injustice and perceived injustice, but they have a reputation for escalating their pursuit of justice into vengeance. Their Patron Spirit is Gorgon.

Bone Gnawers serve Gaia by hiding in plain sight and digging up dirt, discovering the secrets others leave discarded amid their detritus. Their Patron Spirit is Rat.

Children of Gaia solve enigmas, particularly ones surrounding Gaia's crisis and the mysteries of the Umbra. Their Patron Spirit is Unicorn.

Hart Wardens serve Gaia by expanding, cultivating, and protecting their territory and that of their pack, offering hospitality to those who ask it of them, fiercely settling accounts for any abuses of that hospitality. Their Patron Spirit is Stag.

Galestalkers serve Gaia as hunters, trackers, and provider who are known for their hardiness and the relentlessness of their pursuit. Their Patron Spirit is North Wind.

Garou of the *Ghost Council* favor unconventional approaches and challenge taboos to use rivals' weaknesses against them in service to Gaia. Their Patron Spirit is Horned Serpent.

Glass Walkers serve Gaia by developing technological acumen to court spirits of glass and concrete, circuits and steel. Their Patron Spirit is Spider.

Red Talons serve Gaia by giving a voice to those who lack words, protecting the unspoiled places, and clawing back what they see as unjust encroachment. Their Patron Spirit is Griffin.

The *Shadow Lords'* outlook is that might makes right and that the role of the weak is submission, but that might can take many forms. Their Patron Spirit is Thunder.

The *Silent Striders* are forever on the move; master travelers, deft with many customs, as well as with the gathering and sharing of information. Their Patron Spirit is Owl.

Silver Fangs serve Gaia through inspiration, leadership, and nobility as a self-styled aristocracy among the Garou. Their Patron Spirit is Falcon.

WAYWARD TRIBES

Some tribes have strayed from the path of Gaia, abandoning her or opposing her in her time of dying. Though they're all werewolves, and are legitimate tribes (with Patron Spirits), they're considered outsiders to the greater Garou Nation. For more information on these werewolves, see p. 277.

Black Spiral Dancers despise Gaia. They seek to defile what remains of her and bring about the collapse of the world in hopes of hastening whatever comes next in the cycle of destruction. Their Patron Spirit is Bat.

The *Cult of Fenris* turned service to Gaia into fanatical zealotry. They see in other werewolves an allegiance to innumerable enemies. The Patron Spirit of the tribe from which the Cult emerged was Wolf.

Stargazers saw the fracture of the Garou Nation before it happened and left it to seek other ways to thwart the looming Apocalypse. Their Patron Spirit was once the ever-changing Chimera, but who can say if that's still true?

You know your tribe because the Patron Spirit speaks to you. It might take the form of guidance from a mentor. Or you might meet a spirit that invites you to chase it, and you end up before an aspect of the Patron Spirit. You might see symbols around you and intuit what they mean. You'll know. And once you do, all that remains is performing the Rite that binds you to others in your tribe.

– MARI CABRAH, BLACK FURY THEURGE

How could you not know your tribe? Listen.

– EATS-EYES, RED TALON PHILODOX

You'll see a lot of weird symbolic shit, and it all points one direction. All of us owe Gaia, right? Well, you're going to feel… attracted, I guess… to a particular way of doing things. That's your tribe, right there. That's your purpose. It's what you feel strongest about. It's what you're willing to kill for. And you'll probably do a lot of that.

– JOAKIN MACHADO, GALESTALKER, AUSPICE UNKNOWN

BECOMING GAROU

Not everyone's a werewolf. Not everyone can become a werewolf. As near as the Garou figure it, exactly who's going to emerge as Garou is already decided by the time they're born. The finding-out part is where it gets complicated.

Although the prevailing Garou understanding of what they are converges around a general acceptance of Gaia as a natural, spiritual force, there's less consensus regarding where they actually come from: What happens at what point in a previously human life to radically shift it to become a Garou life? (And of course, no two Garou understand Gaia in the exact same way, so it's no surprise that the origin of the species is similarly contradictory.)

Gaia chooses. It's that simple.

– EATS-EYES, RED TALON PHILODOX

No one knows. Everyone has an idea. As with so much else among the Garou, contention becomes conflict, and conflict risks violence. Since before recorded history, much debate has occurred, with some arguing heredity, some arguing spiritual intercession, and some trusting in a gnostic process that werewolves themselves simply cannot understand. Curiously, some werewolves have human origins, and others have wolf origins, which is to say one might have been born human or born wolf, but one's true werewolf nature eventually makes itself known.

The spirits know, and they pull on the threads that coax us into our duty. Even before we're born, and certainly before we grow into knowing who we are, the spirits have left a mark of favor that blossoms into a gift, but one that this fallen world stigmatizes as a curse.

– ODION AKPAN, SILENT STRIDER GALLIARD

Is it genetic? Is it wholly spiritual? Is it caused by a specific event? Or is it something that lies dormant, only to be awoken by a horrific event that rouses Rage and leaves the individual marked forever after? Whereas ideas like the "curse of the moon-beasts" are certainly florid (and more than a bit lurid), is there something to the idea that the Garou condition is provoked rather than innate?

Each Garou belongs to a lineage that wends back through an epoch of Gaia's grace, before the killing-times, when the mother bore us and Luna kissed our first breath into our lungs. It's why we seek our own legend, to ensure that those who come after us have a glorious example to heed.

– ANTONIA GAVRIELLE FLORES CASTRO, HART WARDEN THEURGE

Only one thing is certain: Many Garou have Garou in their family lineages, whether human or wolf. Philodoxes, galliards, and theurges all have various takes on what this means, whether Gaia's original Garou in the epoch of legend have created generations-spanning lineages of their own, or whether there's more to the superstitious "seventh son of a seventh son" and similar observations of past eras. Whatever the case, few argue with proof of their own pasts and those of others — but at the same time, it's almost impossible to forecast who might become werewolves in the future, casting an even more tragic pall over the Garou plight.

Fuck if I know. Maybe it's like reincarnation, but punishment-style. Maybe every Garou did something really heinous in a previous life and now has to clean up the aftermath of some shitstorm they caused.

– PETE THE LIP, GLASS WALKER RAGABASH

THE FIRST CHANGE

Probably for the majority of Garou, realizing what they are comes after the traumatic First Change — when a previously "normal" person, having transformed into the ravening war-form, comes to their senses amid the aftermath of atrocity... one they gradually realize that they committed. That's a gruesome example, but it's also a true one more frequently than many Garou like to acknowledge. Many werewolves experience their First Change and immediately succumb to frenzy in that moment of fear, rending friend and foe alike, until eventually the Rage subsides and they find themselves draped in the tatters of whoever witnessed the fateful transformation. Lovers torn asunder; bitter vendettas instantly resolved; life horrifyingly dimming in the eyes of children, siblings, partners, lovers, parents, innocent onlookers. In the bloodiest way possible, the secret keeps itself.

Not every First Change happens so dramatically. Some individuals experience their First Change by taking the shape of a wolf in their dreams and waking to find it true, or themselves in communion with a place of natural beauty. Some individuals belong to human cultures with animistic traditions of their own, and have their spirituality guide them to understanding or even find themselves guided to it by a mentor or friendly spirit. These comparatively gentle realizations of the Garou condition are the exception rather than the rule, however. Most First Changes are turning points of violence, shame, tragedy, and regret.

The First Change can happen at any time in a Garou's life, whenever a moment of such especial tragedy shocks or forces an unknowing Garou out of their self-ignorance into a harsh and immediate realization of self-knowledge. For many, the First Change comes in late adolescence or early adulthood, almost as a blood-soaked *oh fuck here's one more thing I have to deal with in an already complicated life*, but for some it comes later and disrupts lives that were steeped in consumption or crisis. Individuals shocked by the state of the world, who were feeling that they can't do anything about it, suddenly realize that they can.

First Changes before the age of maturity are all but unheard of.

KINSEEKERS

The understanding that some amount of the Garou condition may be hereditary has resulted in a rather ironic term for Garou that no one (including themselves) yet knows are werewolves: Kin.

The unceasing need during the Apocalypse for more of Gaia's champions to fight in her name keeps many Garou, even whole packs, on the prowl for emerging Kin. The problem, of course, is that Garou nature often emerges as the result of shock, trauma, terror, or self-preservation in the face of grievous harm.

On a surface level, Kinseeking is perhaps the kindest possible way to introduce prospective Garou to what they are. A latent werewolf may have their First Change at any time, but for the majority of those who join Garou society, some kind of confrontation with another Garou probably shocks that First Change into happening. It may be overt, with one or more Kinseekers themselves shapeshifting in the Garou-to-be's presence, and even attacking — reinforcing the myth of a curse transferrable by bite — or it might be something more contrived, a "brush with death" staged by the Kinseeker amid the intention of shocking the First Change into effect. Indeed, what often spurs a pack to action is a credible lead suggesting that a latent Garou has been discovered, and so the pack must seek the possible latent. The confrontation itself doesn't cause the First Change, but it can force that Garou's destiny to the fore.

The practice, of course, has an even darker side than dragging unwilling werewolves into their own new lives as shapeshifters. Those who suffer the provocation of Kinseekers but aren't werewolves don't often survive to tell the tale, which makes it both existentially risky and ethically perilous to inflict such a confrontation without forethought.

Darker Doings

There are other ways, crueler ways, to become a werewolf, but those other methods do not allow one to become Garou. A few depraved individuals, or ones driven mad by seeking such forbidden knowledge, do succeed in stealing the ability to shapeshift into wolf form — and for some, even something akin to the crinos form.

Known as Stolen Moons, these false werewolves are universally reviled among Garou. One way they attain the ability to shapeshift comes from flaying a true werewolf and donning its skin as their own. Needless to say, skinning a werewolf is not an act undertaken lightly, and even once one has such a skin, the individual must also perform a bleak and harrowing ritual to merge the skin with their own to take on its properties.

For more information on Stolen Moon antagonists, see p. 282.

PACKS AND TRIBES: FAMILY OF CHOICE

It's a lot to take in. You're the modern scion of bloodthirsty monsters who are, in fact, secretly spiritual warriors charged with the defense of a dying world, but the world is filled with people who resent being defended in the way you're most adroit at doing it.

Finding a Tribe

After learning that they are Garou, werewolves learn about their spiritual aptitudes and (usually) form a relationship with a Patron Spirit — a unique and quite personal journey for each Garou. Some feel solidarity with a certain perspective and seek out the Patron Spirit, and thus the tribe, that best matches that perspective. Others describe having a vision or similar epiphany that indicates their tribe has chosen them, rather than the reverse. Some have the benefit of a mentor to guide them. Some learn through very bloody self-discovery.

Whatever the case, the neophyte Garou undergoes a ritual, makes a pledge, or otherwise associates themselves with the Patron Spirit, thus bonding them with that tribe. This transition usually occurs under the guidance of another Garou, and quite often one who was present at their First Change. A Garou need not always bond with the same tribe as their Garou mentor, but this outcome is probably the most common one. The new werewolf likewise spends at least some time as a member

of that mentor's pack, assuming they don't join it permanently.

Wolf Life

Although many burgeoning werewolves attempt a "normal" life after the First Change, most find the challenge insurmountable. Smoldering Rage risks turning an outburst to a massacre, and even if tempers are held in check an ill-timed shape shift risks subjecting friends and family to Delirium. Work and colleagues present similar hazards, never mind that most werewolves find their old ambitions pale in comparison to the plight of Gaia and the spirit world. While a few Garou manage to lead double lives, most retreat to the fringes of society or leave it altogether — taking up residency in camps or compounds with their pack, or adopting a vagabond lifestyle.

Finding a Pack

Much like actual wolves, the Garou are pack creatures. Constant war against the Apocalypse emphasizes dependencies among pack members, heightening the strengths that a pack has and helping to abate weaknesses. Pack dynamics are based on the array of potential borne by the auspice moon-signs that indicate an individual's role in the pack. In these desperate times, packs often don't have a member of each auspice, but Garou legend makes much of "classical" pack-auspice composition. To this end, modern pack dynamics have adapted to reflect that one member of every auspice might not be what constitutes a given pack.

Whether it's a fourth ahroun joining an already war-like pack of three, or the perfect "missing" auspice filling out a pack that had not quite the full range of moon-signs, the new member quickly finds a place to occupy, as well as needs to fulfill. Ideally, that is. Few packs of Rage-driven werewolves are as harmonious as the ones in the galliards' songs, and with creatures of such high emotion and capacity for violence, aggravated tensions can provoke ruinous outcomes.

Packs in a Modern World

Such versatile problem-solvers as the Garou take their war against the Apocalypse to numerous enemies in many different ways. As you come together with other players to tell a Werewolf story, consider the group identity that your pack might have, in addition to your individual Garou identities. The pack may have an overall identity that brings it together (though there's nothing wrong with having a motley variety of werewolves whose relationship evolves over time). A few examples:

* **Urbex:** Packs that claim territory within cities may be forever on the hunt amid derelict buildings, abandoned transit tunnels, and exploitative new developments, and the movements of the city's disenfranchised are likely to uncover secrets of their own in a world that wishes to sweep away such folk entirely.
* **Occult Investigators:** Some packs have a distinctly "paranormal" interest, following up on strong relationships with spirits and attunement to the otherworldly evidence of pollution, exploitation, and overtly supernatural malfeasance.
* **The Open Road:** Packs of a more nomadic bent may have a collection of vehicles that allows them to travel across broad swaths of territory, whether they be RVs, classic roadsters, motorcycles, or ATVs. Someone in the pack probably has a relationship with the vehicles' spirits themselves. And exactly how they're fueling the caravan may become a point of contention.
* **Radical Resistance:** The pack identity may be guerilla freedom fighters, eco-activists, or other rebel groups actively at odds with local law enforcement or military factions, particularly in a region where control of conflict resources is at stake or individual rights are under attack.
* **Party Animals:** The pack may be part of a local counterculture scene or nightlife movement, with interests in the leisure spaces where substances have more value than cash and humans may themselves become commodities (or victims for different sorts of monsters).

The most effective kinds of packs for chronicles are proactive — troublemakers, if you will, but overall the sorts of Garou who investigate where conflict thrives, rather than waiting for it to come to them. Docile werewolves don't turn back the tide of Apocalypse.

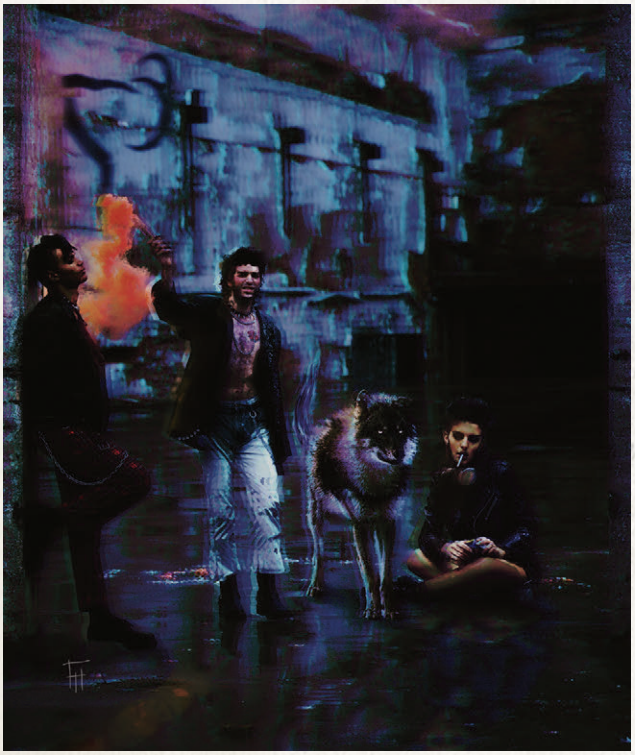
Packs may also find that their initial concept changes over time, or when they acquire resources to protect, such as a caern that ties them to a particular location. That's great! Not only will the characters themselves change as the chronicle progresses, new dynamics of how those characters work together as a pack can emerge, as well.

Werewolf Names

After their First Change, each Garou has a decision to make about their identity. They are no longer who they once were. In response, many werewolves at least partly set aside their human names or wolf identities, whether immediately or gradually. In many cases, individual Garou keep their first name, to be appended with a moniker bestowed on them by their pack, imparted to them in communication with their Patron Spirit, or discovered as part of the journey in realizing what they are and what it means to them.

Over time, the Garou may choose to change their name again — as many times as they feel like it — to reflect their accomplishments and express their Renown. Which is to say, any number of colorful names may identify a werewolf, from the ambitious to the ironic. Garou names may reflect the cultural norms and mother tongue of the Garou's homeland, or they may become quite esoteric, and even borrow from the language of spirits.

The bottom line, as many Garou see it: I'm a fucking werewolf now — by what name do I want others to know me?



We call ourselves werewolves, but maybe that isn't entirely accurate. We're more like were-spirits. A human half and… something else. Nature wild, hungry, and angry. The wolf is just the form it takes for us, I figure, summoned up from some primal memory of feral horrors lurking beyond the light of the fire. I guess that explains why we make people go nuts. But it makes you wonder about other places, other people. What form would the primeval wilderness take for a San hunter-gatherer? Or an Inuit whaler?

GAROU CULTURE

The very phrase is almost — almost — a misnomer during this age of Apocalypse. So much of what the Garou once had is gone, so many customs and traditions neglected or collapsed or consciously abandoned as ineffectual. After all, some werewolves ask, if they were worth observing, wouldn't they have helped the Garou avert the Apocalypse?

THE LITANY

Much of the Garou's history is oral, more within the realm of legend and even self-mythology than a true history. Given the animistic perspective of Garou, when one says, "the mighty Silver Fang rode upon Falcon's back," that might literally mean a werewolf rode an enormous falcon in a legendary time, or it may mean that a falcon-spirit carried the werewolf, or even that Falcon himself transported the werewolf through the Umbra.

So it goes with the Litany, a code of Garou custom that's equally as impressionistic and open to interpretation as the animistic lens through which werewolves see the world. Many — probably most — Garou know the Litany in some form, whether verbatim as presented here, via a series of parables, or perhaps even as a series of lupus-scratched warning glyphs on a pile of stacked stones at the edge of the Schwarzwald. Even if they don't know a single word of it, Garou of all but the most isolated packs surely find themselves influenced by the Litany in some capacity.

The philodoxes are great interpreters of the Litany, and it often falls to them — especially when werewolves of many packs and backgrounds come together — to render judgments upon transgressors, thus shaping the sort of social justice that informs the customs of werewolves worldwide. Galliards sing great songs of Renown gained in observation of the Litany; ragabash chide its failings with the intention of making it stronger or clearer. The Litany belongs to all Garou.

Tenets of the Litany

- Combat the Wyrm Wherever It Dwells and Whenever It Thrives
- Respect the Territory of Another
- Accept an Honorable Surrender
- Submit to Those of Higher Station
- Respect Those of Lower Station, for All Are of Gaia.
- The First Share of the Kill for Greatest in Station
- Eat Not the Flesh of Humans
- The Veil Shall Not Be Lifted
- The Leader May Be Challenged at Any Time During Peace
- The Leader May Not Be Challenged During Wartime
- Take No Action That Causes a Caern to Be Violated

Living by an inflexible code that's actually flexible when someone powerful decides it should be has a dark side. The Litany is an imperfect set of rules by which to wage a guerilla war of resistance during an ongoing Apocalypse. Those rules mean different things at different times to different werewolves, and the oral tradition of the Garou is rife with the Litany being used to justify self-dealing or even atrocity. Young Garou find themselves targeted by elders who wield the Litany as a weapon to bully them into action or shame them into forbearance, as needed by the gray-furs whose failures brought the world to this point in the first place. Veteran Garou see demands to honor the Litany as an accusation against them, and they cite the folly of holding to tradition for tradition's sake.

Also, given the nature of Garou society, certain aspects of the Litany can emphasize the worst aspects of that society. The tenet *The Leader May Not Be Challenged During Wartime* is practically an invitation to authoritarianism, because when you're Garou, *it's always fucking wartime*, and *Submission to Those of Higher Station* gives quislings a reason to just follow orders given by more Renowned Garou. For all of the self-glorifying tales that old Garou tell around the fires, younger werewolves note that the Garou Nation didn't collapse because the Litany was so goddamn perfect.

Changing Ways

Werewolf society is ever at risk of fundamentalism and authoritarianism, relying as it does upon outsized personalities to rile up its packmates "for Gaia and glory" to send them charging furiously into battle, and to deride as corrupt anyone who doesn't heed their Gaia-baiting. An increasing number of Garou see this behavior for what it is, however, and in many cases realize that its intractability is part of the Garou's failure to avert the Apocalypse and defend Gaia. Tonight, Gaia needs more than murderous maniacs... which is one of the tragedies of the Garou, in that they are so prone to Rage. Rage cannot solve every problem, however, so each Garou needs to find how they can best fulfill their spiritual charge — or whether they must abandon it.

SOCIAL STRUCTURES AMONG GAROU

Both humans and wolves are gregarious creatures, so it comes as no surprise that werewolves are also that way, despite the Garou predilection for tremendous physical violence. By turns, Garou can be caring, supportive, protective, and even dependent on one another. Just don't get on their bad sides — and with the numerous forms they can take, they have many bad sides.

Kin

As traumatic as it can be to discover that one is a shapeshifter, the sympathy of other werewolves may seem like strange comfort, but any port in a storm. Kin aren't always pleasant, but most Garou understand the state of their kind, and they ultimately welcome another once they feel that they can trust the other's nature — itself no mean feat. Many Garou are more than happy to make room for another packmate. That said, not all Garou share that perspective; some view other werewolves as rivals for prey or challengers over status.

The Pack

As the basic Garou social unit, the pack is critical to the success of werewolves in almost any initiative, from the spiritual to the mundane. Werewolves fight as a pack, protect packmates, and perform Rites as a pack. Going into the Umbra, in particular, is a Rite performed most easily as a pack.

Packmates in particular offer support through the various favors of the spirit world. Many packs exalt the auspices, noting the synergies between the Gifts offered by various moon-signs and how they might best heighten a pack's prowess in combat or otherwise under duress.

PACK STRUCTURE

As werewolf communities seek to shift and adapt as best as possible in the face of the Apocalypse, the internal workings of packs vary vastly according to locale and context. Packs usually form around a purpose or even to thwart a specific enemy or environmental threat. In some cases, revered elders declare the creation of packs and even their members. The most common case, though, is that Garou who find each other and depend on each other usually have no shortage of problems to address or foes to assail, and that becomes the impetus to stick together. Surviving against hunters from federal organizations, being drawn by a strange spirit, or just navigating territory brutally exploited by an energy company are all reasons to stand strong as a pack.

The pack leader is the general authority figure to whom other members of the pack look for guidance or decision-making. A leader may emerge, be elected, or have the duty passed on to them by a leader who chooses to step down — all generally as a result of the purpose a pack chooses for itself. For example, a war pack might have a leader chosen by combat, whereas a pack of saboteurs might put the best strategist in charge, and a pack devoted to plumbing the Umbra's mysteries might always want a theurge as leader. It's a somewhat fraught position, as Garou culture can reward domineering personalities and authoritarian perspectives, an ugly aspect of a Renown-based society. Declaring a leader may take the form of a social Rite the pack observes (see p. 187), or it may be informal in the extreme — "Fuck it, follow me and I'll get us back to the caern alive."

The Sept

When multiple packs cooperate to defend and cultivate a given caern, they form what's known as a sept. Every caern is unique, even apart from being a locus of the physical and spiritual. It may have been a caern protected since before the Apocalypse began, or it could be especially meaningful to a specific tribe, or have a fearsomely puissant spirit associated with it. In this age of Apocalypse, the greatest and the most humble caerns alike have septs supporting them, whether the sept consists of one pack or a half-dozen.

As one might expect, the inter-Garou politics surrounding septs are often fraught and confrontational. The inherent Rage of the Garou keeps packs on edge, even as savvy philodoxes and wise theurges argue for the most pragmatic efforts to protect them.

Septs in Stories

Werewolf: The Apocalypse assumes that many packs eventually come to protect a caern or other territory of their own, the better to give the players' characters a sense of investment in their immediate locale. In particularly cosmopolitan places, the characters' pack might well be part of a greater sept — or at odds with one, owing to anything from old hostilities between predators to violent disagreement about how best to tend the caern.

Septs are also destinations to which Garou can travel, thus taking them out of their home territory and putting them on unfamiliar ground — both socially, among the sept's protector werewolves, as well as geographically, in a physically different and potentially unknown place. A sept's territory might be a destination for a moot (see below) or simply a place to meet other Garou and spirits. And the journey itself can mark an opportunity for unforeseen challenges and conflicts.

Septs are high-value targets for spiritually aware antagonists, because destroying caerns deprives the Garou of important resources Even better (from the antagonist perspective) is usurping a caern or sept, because not only does it deprive the Garou of such a place of power, it provides that resource to the enemy, whether it's in the middle of Manhattan or the Serengeti.

Notable Septs

Sept of the Green: Located in Manhattan's Central Park, the Sept of the Green is warded by members of every tribe. It stands particularly strongly against not only the Wyrm but also the Weaver-spirits rampant in this North American metropolis.

Sept of the Wheel of Ptah: Among the last caerns reputed to support mysterious Umbral byways, this one can be found in Casablanca, Morocco. Travelers who have visited the sept note that these Umbral travel routes seem to have collapsed, and the sept there remains committed to restoring them — although exactly how they'll do this remains unknown.

Sept of the Blood Fist: This sept, located in Germany's Black Forest, has historically been associated with the Cult of Fenris, but once those werewolves fell to Hauglosk, the members of the sept left it undefended when pursuing hostile spirits into the Umbra. The multi-tribal sept that arose to hold it stands vigilant against the Wyrm, but its members also know that Cult werewolves are sure to return some night and attempt to retake what they believe still to be theirs.

Hell's Hand Hive: The Black Spiral Dancers who hold this sept somehow managed to relocate it from its former place in the Amazon, where the caern had been compromised by packs belonging to the Garou Nation. Using the powers of baleful spirits, Black Spiral Dancers moved the physical portion of the caern to an unknown location, which remains connected to one of the Umbral lesion-sites that nourishes the Wyrm.

SEPT COMPLICATIONS

Despite the strengths of their packs and the desires of their member Garou, septs aren't panaceas, where itinerant packs can find everything they need in a convenient one-stop location. Each caern has particular types of spiritual resonance, and the werewolves who protect it usually adapt themselves to the site's needs, rather than try to have the caern focus on theirs. Tribe and auspice wisdom offers its own interpretations of how a werewolf might best foster the spiritual connection and rebuild in the shadow of Apocalypse. Werewolf packs might visit an esteemed sept in a strange city and find themselves coldly rebuffed — and possibly never realize that an elder of the sept despises one of their own on principle, thanks to an old grudge.

Another aspect of the trouble surrounding effective safeguarding of caerns comes from a self-fulfilling prophecy. Because defending them can yield great Renown to Garou seeking to build their own legends, caerns invite the already well-Renowned into the septs that serve them, thus putting the most capable Garou in positions of reactivity and defense. At the same time, septs are rare and valuable. The number of remaining caerns of such size that multiple packs must protect them is dwindling. And many a new caern hasn't been around long enough for a sept to be viable in its vicinity. These last locations are particularly worrisome, as the member packs of a sept that loses control of its caern suffer significant chagrin over the caern's fall. Thus, fewer and fewer packs are willing to attach themselves to such septs, which in turn means the at-risk caerns in the greatest need of protection often go without, and so they disappear or become corrupt.

Moots and Other Meetings

Some of the most momentous events in Garou society occur when multiple packs convene to address an imminent concern facing the werewolves. These convocations, known generally as moots, serve to bring many different packs and perspectives together, most often with the purpose of deciding on a course of action for a looming problem.

Not all moots occur to deal with crises. Some are lingering traditions from the times before the Garou Nation collapsed — formal opportunities for werewolves to get together, share knowledge, perform rites, acknowledge new Kin, and celebrate victories or mourn losses. Some are celebrations of great werewolves' deeds, whereas others are solemn affairs commemorating the fallen. Almost all of them have an element of violence — as might be expected from the creatures of Rage who attend them — albeit violence in thought, directed toward an enemy, or otherwise turned toward a specific purpose. Not that a human onlooker would be able to discern the difference...

Spirits may or may not play a significant role in any given moot. Some moots may literally be held to honor the spirits and please them, whereas others may be held to decide the best way to "discourage" a power company from establishing a fracking operation in the region.

As well, moots might not be called for all members of all relevant packs. Tribes, not surprisingly, host their own moots, usually as a matter of much regional prestige, but just as frequently to plan a tribe-specific response to some Wyrmfoe or other crisis. Auspices are inherently somewhat less organized than tribes (which are themselves largely ad hoc communities), but they host their own moots to extoll the (worthwhile) traditions of the Garou and the nuances of their moon-sign's methods.

And a moot can happen anywhere. It makes sense to hide it away from the superstitious eyes of humans, but certain sites hold specific meaning to the Garou and may justify a moot to commemorate or otherwise acknowledge these places. Caerns are the obvious choices here, but the site of a great victory on the Smoky Hills of the upland Great Plains might be a moot-site, as could a disused Metrô station where a pack of Rio de Janeiro's Garou brought down a wicked elder vampire.

After the fracturing of the Garou Nation, certain packs have made it their interest to forever rove from moot to moot, passing along the decisions and information gained at one to the werewolves hosting the next that they reach. Such packs usually receive a warm welcome from the Garou community, but these visitations don't always go well. Most werewolves are smart enough not to "shoot the messenger," but no one likes to receive news of further disasters.

Moots in Stories

Moots can serve a number of specific story purposes:

* **Social Interaction with Other Garou:** In many cases, the werewolves other werewolves see most often are their packmates, followed by other Garou who have an interest in the community or territory. Moots provide opportunities to introduce other characters, whether on a recurring basis or to deliver critical information and then move on. Social interaction can be cooperative, with werewolves sharing secrets and helping perform grand Rites, or it can be conflict, with secret agendas taking shape and alliances being undermined by bad-faith schemers.
* **Violent Conflict with Other Garou:** There's no avoiding the fact that werewolves are violent creatures, and any gathering of them will almost certainly include some violence. For story's sake, that can be good, as violence is conflict and conflict drives stories. Conflict with other Garou at a moot might be a formal, ritual duel to first blood or to the death, or it can be some full-on skullduggery shit where a pack of scumbag werewolves from far away sets an ambush for someone they've got a grudge with. The players' characters don't even need to be the primary combatants. Perhaps they have an opportunity to intervene against a combatant who's cheating at a duel, or maybe they witness (and can circumvent) the scumbag ambush.
* **Communicate Information:** Garou live for getting an informational jump on foes, or being able to act first in other capacities. Moots can be a perfect time to catch up on whatever happened to old enemies, news of emerging or revived caerns, or which locations are at risk. Such stuff can come up as gossip among traveling werewolves, or even as part of what's being discussed in the moot's formal purpose. Storytellers, that's your cue to have key characters drop hints... or attempt to occlude them.

Moot Perils

For all the good they can bring, moots are first and foremost gatherings of werewolves, with all of the risks of Rage-fueled grudges and the re-litigation of past slights that one might expect from such volatile creatures. Hauglosk and harano are often on full display at moots, especially at moots called in response to dire circumstances — "If you don't follow or lead on this, you're obviously sympathetic to the enemy!" or "Five packs died the last time we tried this gambit, so it's hopeless to take any action at all" and variants thereof are sure to be uttered around the drums and fires.

Similarly, duels, settling old scores, and other direct Garou conflicts come to the fore at many moots, as they may offer the only time that certain werewolves see each other and have the opportunity to redress grievances. Arguably, this opportunity is beneficial, as it gives werewolves a formal environment to make their umbrage known while surrounded by (ideally) wiser, more level-headed Garou, and well-acknowledged expressions of Renown can occur. Much better than the alternative, which is to run into a mistrusted rival while out and about some night, under the dark skies of a new moon, and find them eager to settle a bloody vendetta.

One often-neglected consideration when hosting a moot is the possibility of discovery. In eras past, it was easy to convene in what amounted to the middle of nowhere and have a war-rally moot or a spirit-sating

debauch. But in these times of domestic spying and omnipresent drone surveillance, all it takes is one Garou on the authorities' watch list to alert well-funded and well-equipped hunters to the occurrence of the moot — to say nothing of the unlucky, oblivious hiker or that pickup truck full of horny teenagers who accidentally discover the goings-on.

HARANO AND HAUGLOSK

The Garou don't have it easy. Imagine this: You're young, you're struggling with family, education, work, identity, relationships, trying to see the potential shape of your future. Your newly discovered life as a werewolf alienates you from your old friends, who can't know about what happened to you.

You find it difficult to hold down a job, because a voice you hear on the other side of reality tells you about weird shit in your hometown involving murderous violence in pestilential sewers, not to mention your tendency towards violent outbursts.

You know that the enemy is real and the urgency is immediate. You don't have to doubt the worthiness of the cause. The pollution festering everywhere, rising sea levels, spirits in thrall to decay and destruction, fallen tribes of one-time comrades... all of these things are tangible and clear. Gaia's death rattle is omnipresent, something that defines your world.

The real trouble is in the futility of it all. How come it's all down to someone like you and your pack? Nobodies who turn into monsters, outsiders who can't really fit into human society.

You watch politicians and business leaders explain why you must have a balanced approach to staving off climate change. You can't rush into it. Surely it's possible to be carbon neutral by 2080! Or 2180! Or maybe it's good if the planet gets a little warmer? It'll create new opportunities for shipping in the Arctic!

You see the aftermath of each of your supposed victories, of every bitter struggle, and the tiny, imperceptible change you effect. You see the relentless progress of your enemies, their complacent gloating as they pretend to care while their executives give interviews from their private planes and luxury yachts.

You're just a few ragged fighters cursed with the ability to see the pain of the world too clearly. Against you stands arrayed human apathy, capitalism, greed, spilling over in the form of the Triat and its many servants. Incomprehensible forces that you nonetheless see everywhere, seemingly acting upon every goddamn thing. Eventually, it becomes too much.

Game systems for harano and hauglosk can be found on p. 140.

HARANO

Why fight when you can't win? What's the point? The Garou call it harano, a state of hopelessness that encourages you to just give up. It's despair, the belief that it's too late to change things, that nothing the Garou do will matter, and that the Wyrm's victory is a fait accompli. Werewolves suffering from harano have difficulty motivating themselves to take significant actions, believing them to be ultimately meaningless.

A mental health professional might use a word like depression, but for the Garou, harano is considered to have a spiritual component: You forsake your purpose in service to Gaia.

Harano in Chronicles

For example:

The pack seeks counsel from a grizzled old Red Talon, only to discover that she has retreated to a solitary life in a deteriorating territory. To get her to open up, the pack must remind her of all the things that make the fight worth fighting.

A corporate wetworks team murders a promising young ragabash. They were charismatic, well liked among the territory's Garou, and the pack has seen signs indicating that their loss could cause multiple episodes of harano throughout the beleaguered sept. How to celebrate the life of their lost compatriot without descending into maudlin fatalism?

A renowned elder has been advocating for increasingly cautious, conservative tactics. Every time a young Garou proposes a plan of action, he argues that it's too bold, liable to cause more damage than good. What at first resembles prudent caution is actually a case of harano, as the elder simply seeks reasons not to fight. Can the pack restore his fighting spirit, or do they need to depose him from his leadership position?

Social Repercussions

Not surprisingly, those who find themselves in the grip of harano provoke a range of responses among the rageful Garou. Those who suffer from it may find themselves belittled, erased, or they may be remembered and despised. Especially among those desperate to act and do some-

thing, anything at all, harano is often mischaracterized as weakness or cowardice. It's one of the uglier aspects of werewolves' Renown-driven society.

For many Garou, though, it's hard to hate those who succumb to harano. The temptation to give up is too real, too understandable. Instead, those suffering harano remind their compatriots that there but for the grace of Gaia go I. Their existence is cause for sadness and reflection. Among these more astute Garou, harano is so relatable that blowhards who go after those who suffer from it gain little traction.

Indeed, some pretend that a friend or a packmate who fell to harano never existed. Not out of spite — rather, it's because they find harano too hard to contemplate, even when they're sympathetic to it.

Coming back from harano isn't impossible. Some Garou rekindle their will to fight and rejoin the war against the Apocalypse. It would be foolish to say they come back stronger, because sometimes the weight of harano tangibly burdens even those who recover. Still, wise Garou take a long view often lacking in the young and hotheaded: They are still creatures of Rage but that Rage can be tempered by compassion. Perhaps, even in a society of monsters, misery loves company.

Harano offers an opportunity for a slower, more reflective Werewolf story. As the player characters deal with a Garou who has succumbed, they have to think through their own reasons for fighting. After all, how can they motivate someone else if they aren't sure themselves?

HAUGLOSK

In a desperate fight against an overwhelming enemy, the ends justify the means. Everything is on the table. Victory at any cost. This is hauglosk, the conviction that your absolute moral certainty justifies everything you do.

Hauglosk is a state of extreme righteousness. A Garou in a state of hauglosk believes that the cause is all, that their way is the only way. If more harm than good is caused, well, that's a cost that must be paid. Note that hauglosk is a long-term, often permanent, state and is thus different from Rage or frenzy (though hauglosk may well result in a destructive rage or catastrophic frenzy...). Werewolves suffering from hauglosk undertake their course without regard for its consequences, so impassioned are they by the need to do *something, anything at all.*

Hauglosk in Chronicles

For example:

An aging Silver Fang grows jealous of the achievements of younger Garou. The stories of his accomplishments fade; the enemies he fought, forgotten. Desperate to feel as if he still matters, he resorts to calling for the killing of everyone who's ever worked at a certain Pentex Group front in the territory, from board members to drug store clerks. He argues that, once the corporate evil took root, the community could not be redeemed. The pack has to decide whether they agree with the policy of mass extermination and, if not, how to stop it. Is it

possible to talk the Silver Fang out of it? If not, how can they bring the Silver Fang back to reason?

A prominent Shadow Lord argues that one of the players' characters has succumbed to hauglosk and must be exiled for the good of the pack and the caern. Does the accusation cause dissension within the characters' pack, or do they stand in solidarity against the Shadow Lord? How do they deal with the demand for the exile of one of their own? And what's the Shadow Lord's true objective, beyond the ostracism of her scapegoat?

Members of a rival pack argue that, to fight for Gaia, the Garou themselves must be pure. Are they really free from the taint of the Wyrm? They challenge the players' characters at every moot to prove their bona fides, and never accept that the pack is good enough. Are they committed to the fight, or do they waste time with their Touchstones, coddling fragile humans in the Weaver's den? Do they hate the enemy enough, or have they expressed sympathy for the way the Wyrm turns victims into minions? How do the players' characters navigate being subjected to the hauglosk of their rivals?

Social Repercussions

In practice, hauglosk is dynamic and often harder to detect than harano before things get really serious, because it all sounds like what the Garou want to do anyway... until it's obvious that the individual doesn't care who's harmed in the process. Those who succumb to hauglosk take up a lot of space at moots, argue passionately, and can even seem like ambitious candidates for leadership roles. It's not unusual for someone who falls to hauglosk to be mistaken for an uncompromising moral voice, at least at first.

The specific manifestations of hauglosk can take many forms. It's common for those who are afflicted to justify ever greater human casualties, ignore their own mistakes, and argue that everyone with even the mildest and most subjective whiff of corruption deserves to die. (In fact, such absolute terms are indicators, themselves — "corruption" of that which is pure, "degenerate" behavior or conditions, "sympathy" for those who don't deserve it....) They often declare Garou who don't agree with them to be blood enemies, subject to even greater hatred than what a rampant Apocalypse has wrought upon the world.

What's worse, Garou often find themselves in alignment with some of the goals of werewolves suffering hauglosk, at least until the extremes make themselves known. And there's no greater example of hauglosk than the fate of the Cult of Fenris — see p. 279. ■

Hauglosk provides an opportunity to examine the ethical questions of a righteous war. If you're willing to kill for your goals, as the Garou certainly are, how certain do you have to be that your enemies deserve it? What kinds of values are negotiable and which aren't? Do the players' characters themselves have convictions over which they'd be willing to fight another Garou to the death?

CHAPTER THREE

Auspices and Tribes

He who makes a beast of himself gets rid of the pain of being a man.

— SAMUEL JOHNSON

Garou society has certain elements and traditions that help werewolves understand who they are in contrast to one another, such as auspice and tribe. These ideas also have game mechanics attached to them, the better to help you express systemically what your stories explore narratively and socially.

Treat none of what follows here as truth. Or, rather, treat all of it as true, even in its contradictions. Does a Patron Spirit truly grant the Garou special prowess? Or does the Garou simply ***think*** it does, thus granting the werewolf a confidence they didn't know they had? As with so many things Garou, one's own position informs all perspectives.

AUSPICES

The moon and her journey across the sky have a great bearing on the Garou, imparting upon them Luna's favor at the time of their birth. Indeed, the moon itself is a symbol of what sets werewolves apart from the world of wolves and humans, an augury of the part they play in a world ushered into Apocalypse. A werewolf's auspice may be reflected in their personality, and it strongly influences the role they play in the pack as well as in wider Garou society. Indeed, no werewolf, despite their legend, can be all things to the Garou as a people. Auspices are part of the reason pack culture exists among the Garou — each auspice strengthens the pack when it acts in the collective.

Auspices are different from tribes in one very important way: Werewolves choose their tribes but have very little control over their auspices, as they're defined by the First Change. It's another point of spiritual uncertainty for the Garou, in that they fear their mother, Gaia, to be dead or dying, while Luna's connection to her nieces and nephews remains as strong as ever — but Luna remains silent on the matter of her sister's existence.

As a social construct, auspice informs other Garou what sorts of methods and disposition a werewolf might have. As a game Trait, it serves as a prerequisite for most Gifts or duties in the pack or sept.

RAGABASH

Who is the greater fool? The headstrong dipshit, or the knuckleheads who follow him willingly into folly?

Changed under the sign of the new moon, the ragabash are the tricksters of Garou society, the auspice given the greatest latitude to challenge traditions and question "the way things have always been done." Not least because "the way things have always been done" has resulted in Apocalypse.

Ragabash may be capricious or jovial, pointing out foibles with jocularity, or they may be cunning and cynical, with an "I told you so" attitude toward the sorts of traditions that have brought the Garou where they are today. They may pull a practical joke or disrespect a vain opponent with some clever wordplay — so long as someone looks foolish or the conventional wisdom is questioned, the ragabash is doing their job.

In play ragabash might expect to trick a stubborn opponent, misdirect an unsuspecting human conspirator, mock a more renowned werewolf, and sneak past an overconfident sentry.

THEURGE

The spirits have an elaborate language, and their movements are nuanced and meaningful — continue to treat them as disposable tools and you will find that they have abandoned you in your time of greatest need.

Changed under the sign of the crescent moon, the theurges are the mystics of Garou society and the auspice with the greatest aptitude for interacting with spirits.

Theurges may be eerie or sage or both. Their mastery of the spirit world may be time-tested and traditional, or it may be experimental, even controversial. They may affect strange accessories, or beguile spirits with subtle and esoteric movements of the body. Some are daydreamers or visionaries, whereas others are purposeful ritualists.

In play theurges might expect to summon a reluctant jaggling, invoke ancient pacts of comradeship, placate revered elders with their service, and even bind rogue gafflings.

PHILODOX

Do our ways exalt tradition or do they further justice? Can they do both?

Changed under the sign of the half-moon, the philodoxes are the judges and arbiters of Garou society — the auspice with the responsibilities of mediating conflict by wisely interpreting the ways of the werewolves, and knowing the letter of the Litany.

Philodoxes may be gentle or stentorian, seeking out all the facts or austerely committed-to rules and custom over circumstances. Some suggest insightful courses of action inspired by centuries of legend and lore; others gather information and formulate plans that they change as new information makes itself known. A philodox may be judgmental or compassionate.

Philodoxes in play might expect to evaluate secrets a cagey ally has, uh, "discovered," interpret the strange behavior of an errant packmate, punish an unrepentant transgressor at a moot, and judge the virtues of a daring raid, especially after having considered all aspects of a matter.

GALLIARD

Hear me as I sing the song of the wolves we are, the people we can be, and the legends we shall become! It is a song of both tragedy and majesty, of horror and heroism.

Changed under the sign of the gibbous moon, the galliards are the storytellers and lore-keepers of the Garou, and the auspice that maintains the oral record of the werewolves and upholds the spirit of the Litany.

Galliards may be rambunctious spotlight-stealers or subdued chroniclers. They may aggrandize their pack's absolutely amazing exploits, or they may recite every honest detail, down to the most minute. Some rejoice in the performance of the legend itself, from poems to songs to wildly gestured ribaldry; others spin gripping yarns of context and sociological understanding. Some can hold their liquor, and others, well....

Galliards in play might expect to regale other werewolves with a fable or legend, hype a packmate whose star is on the rise, unite Garou with a dirge for one of their dead, or bluster their way past an intransigent sentry.

AHROUN

Claws go in, blood sprays out.

Changed under the sign of the full moon, the ahrouns are the warriors of Garou society, the fighters of a people who are entirely disposed to ferocious violence. They are often looked at for leadership in times of war, and given the belligerence of many septs, this often means "until further notice".

Ahrouns wreck shit and tear out throats. They may be frenzied whirlwinds of fang and claw, or wary, methodical predators, inflicting terror through exacting tactical precision. Other packmates might find them inspiring with their fearlessness or resent them as reckless gorehounds.

In play ahroun might expect to fight, attack, destroy, and charge into a fray. Fuck you, Wyrm.

THE TRIBES

A Garou's tribe is a community of werewolves sharing a similar purpose, mindset, goal, or outlook on the world. As with so many other aspects of werewolf life, a tribe is very much a spiritual alignment, as tribes are pledged by finding a Patron Spirit and declaring fidelity to them. Pledging oneself to a Patron Spirit and joining a tribe is a relationship — not only does the Garou promise to heed the Patron Spirit's values, the Patron Spirit agrees and thus accepts the Garou. Furthermore, the werewolf is effectively sworn to the other members of the tribe, at least insofar as anything like a Garou consensus can ever be reached. In reality, tribes are often hotbeds of rivalry, because Patron Spirits have many more things to do than adjudicate the petty grudges of ill-tempered tribe members.

In some cases, tribe can even have some amount of heredity to it, such as with a distant relative who passed along some of the lessons of their Patron Spirit or even acts as a current Mentor. This latter relationship contributes strongly to some folkloric beliefs about the Garou, such as "lycanthropy" occurring as a family curse or from being the seventh child of a seventh child, but such situations have no actual bearing on whether one becomes a werewolf. For more information on the imperfect understanding of who becomes Garou, see p. 41.

Tribes have existed since before human history, though whether they have always been these tribes is a matter of some debate. Certainly, other tribes have existed, and some still do, though not all observe the same duty to Gaia. Each still has a Patron Spirit in some form or another, however, as that status is the definition of a tribe in the context of the Garou.

FAVOR AND BAN

Favor and Ban describe the special aptitudes and behaviors that, to the Garou perspective, come as a result of a Patron Spirit's support. One way of looking at the tribes, Favor, and Ban is as a declaration of what the character finds important. For example, if you want to play a character who opposes injustice, that's the Black Furies; if you want to play a character who flouts taboo, that's the Ghost Council. Thus, Favor and Ban are systemic expressions of those values that relate directly to the tribe's Patron Spirit — they're the ways the Garou define their relationship to Gaia, by aligning themselves with the powerful spirits in her service. Favor and Ban are critical to defining what it means to be a Garou, a member of a tribe, and not just a slavering flesh-hungry monster.

ARCHETYPES

Most of the archetypes described for each tribe are homid in function or concept, even for tribes that have proportionately more werewolves who prefer the lupus as their most frequent form or have wolf origins. This emphasis lets the descriptions propose a wider variety of allies, antagonists, and possible character concepts. Furthermore, in the setting, many lupus-favoring Garou find themselves having to adopt identities and personalities suited to the human world.

Game Concepts: Trait Interrelation

As a player, think about the overlap of your auspice and tribe. Auspice and tribe can be said to be what you do and why you do it, respectively. Consider what those things say about your character and how they might inform your roleplaying. Even though they might find some common ground, a Glass Walker ragabash and a Glass Walker ahroun are two very different individuals, and even though they might find some (different) common ground, a Glass Walker ahroun and a Red Talon ahroun are also two very different individuals.

BLACK FURIES

You don't have to pick on someone your own size. Try picking on someone my size.

The Black Furies bestow paramount importance on justice, especially for those who find themselves disadvantaged because of the actions of others. The tribe is renowned for circumventing or shattering obstacles — whether a literal barrier, in the form of an enemy formation, or a "glass ceiling" that prevents fair outcomes.

That stated, their sobriquet identifies them as *furies* with good cause. Even among Garou, the Black Furies have a reputation for escalation in situations where compromise would, in their opinion, yield only half-measures. At their best, the Black Furies want to set the balance right. Provoke them too greatly, however, and the Black Furies pursue justice *at all costs*. After all, there's no value in convincing the chemical plant to dump *a little less* toxic runoff into the river. Just burn the whole fucking thing to the ground.

Black Furies in play might expect to *liberate* a victim from an oppressor, *overcome* the local media's manufactured consent to a hazardous power plant, *dismantle* that recalcitrant chemical plant, and *demolish* a caern that's too tainted by its previous occupiers to reclaim.

WHO ARE THE BLACK FURIES?

The world is an unfair place, made all the worse by those who benefit from — and so perpetuate — that unfairness. From outsized corporate influence buying favorable legislation down to the greasy-spoon restaurateur who demands inappropriate favors from his serving staff, the story is the same wherever people are, regardless of the culture or the locale. To the Black Furies' perspective, nothing is so despicable as those who are in positions of advantage and use it to harm the less fortunate. It's a point of view that resonates greatly with the Garou service to Gaia, and thus are the Black Furies renowned as being among the most righteous (or self-righteous...) of all werewolves.

Their enthusiasm puts Black Furies at the forefront of many meaningful conflicts, whether the high-visibility, well-attended causes dear to the public, or the well-hidden, greenwashed, backroom deals where some unaware and unlucky soul is left holding the bag. Police brutality and wage inequalities, public-utility scams and yet another landfill full of consumer garbage — these events and others earn the ire of Black Furies looking to set things right. Of course, "set things right" often has a very different meaning for Garou than it does for humans, and not every Black Fury gives a fuck about fair wages if, in their opinion, fair wages equate to "too many humans." Numerous Black Furies hold perspectives that might charitably be described as Darwinian.

It's a role that requires vigilance and self-criticism. All too easily, empathy can turn to pity, and pity to disdain, and Black Furies who long ago took on noble causes can find themselves worn down by the constant need of those who have been marginalized. At the same time, righteousness can turn to hatred, and a Black Fury may have enemies for the sake of having enemies, even where none truly exist — a perilous risk when mixed with Garou politics and caern meetings.

At their most extreme, Black Furies can even become accelerationists, consumed by infinite campaigns of bloody vengeance. Why wait for the crypto farm to waste a small nation's GDP in energy costs when you can wreck the mining operation before a bunch of techbro choads can buy new Teslas? Fuck Tesla anyway, since most of the power for their "green" electrical cars comes from fossil fuels. And fuck you for doubting.

PATRON SPIRIT

The patron spirit of the Black Furies is Gorgon, who was herself treated unjustly by an even more powerful spirit. Gorgon and the Black Furies are associated with Glory, particularly glory gained tearing down anyone or anything in a position of systemic power — an act justified in itself to the vengeance-spirit of Gorgon.

Indeed, not acting against a perceived abuse of power is considered an act of neglect by many members of this tribe, and those seeking the favor of their patron can be vigilant to the point of belligerence.

Favor: Gorgon calls upon her followers to eliminate barriers and punish those that create or maintain them. Black Furies player can add a die to a pool used to oppose or circumvent someone or something in a position of power (relative to themselves or someone in their care).

Ban: Gorgon demands that her followers always try to correct an injustice. If they let persist an injustice that they could've prevented or addressed, they may recover only a single Willpower at the start of the next session, instead of their Composure or Resolve rating.

BLACK FURY ARCHETYPES

Most Wanted

The Most Wanted made a name for themselves before their First Change by attending all the public-facing city council meetings, where they quickly earned a reputation as a pain in the ass. Just after their First Change, however, the Most Wanted realized that there are faster ways to make a change than by pleading a case to elected officials who have a vested interest in things not changing. Falling in with a group of like-minded individuals — their pack and a handful of trusted allies, naturally — the Most Wanted now does what needs to be done without being hindered by unjust laws, and now has their name on multiple lists as someone dangerous.

EMT

First in the family to go to college. First aid. First responder. First Change. It's been a life of firsts for the EMT, and that probably won't change anytime soon. Both their job and their pack seem to involve a lot of opportunities to help people in harm's way, and that gives the EMT a sense of purpose, but also a personal pride that they can be there for someone who needs it. Life is struggle, and the way the EMT sees things, they get people back in the fight. It's getting harder and harder to do, with budget cutbacks meaning fewer shifts and cheaper supplies. That's a fight that, eventually, will need to be had, too.

Musician

The Musician knows how to work the crowd. Their set list is blistering, their take-no-prisoners stage persona ignites the crowd, and their rebellious choruses have audiences chanting slogans as they're singing along. That adrenalized feeling the Musician builds on stage is second only to the Rage the Musician expresses as they take crinos form and rend their way through the sorts of assholes their songs are about. On stage or off, it's all about knocking 'em dead. Sometimes literally.

Outrider

Despite its being a human term, the Outrider prefers lupus form while prowling and patrolling the borders of the territory they feel duty-bound to protect. And there's a lot of it — the perimeter of the caern, the mobile-home park at the edge of town, and that spill pipe near the river where the wildlife is always unnaturally aggressive. It's the Outrider's job to lope the fringes of the territory, then keep the rest of the pack informed as to what they've seen. Sometimes they're overzealous at this task, which their packmates mock as "crying wolf," but the vigil must be kept. Sometimes it means trouble after the fact. Come to think of it, ***usually*** it means trouble after the fact.

BONE GNAWERS

> This one guy known as the Honorable Ballsack once said that behind every great fortune someone did a great crime, and the moment I can hold that someone accountable, you better fucking believe I will.

The Bone Gnawers seek to discover the obscured in all its forms: secrets, passwords, shortcuts, anything they might use to advantage over the obvious. They are especially adept at hiding in plain sight, and they often exist amid groups of a lower socioeconomic status, those who go unseen by people who consider themselves superior and are indifferent to what their "lessers" think or see.

Bone Gnawers in play might expect to *infiltrate* a restricted area, *pilfer* a compromised journalist's laptop, *eavesdrop* on dirty cops, *witness* an illicit deal happening, and *surmise* how they're all related.

WHO ARE THE BONE GNAWERS?

Moving unnoticed among the masses, Bone Gnawers have found themselves perennially in the company of society's castoffs, even within Garou culture — and that's saying something for a culture that includes people who sleep in ditches and attend moots with bloody muzzles still slick with petrochemical waste.

No surprise, then, that Bone Gnawers frequently find themselves among the countercultures and disadvantaged segments of society. Whether part of the city's transient populace, slumming with the crust punks in the bohemian neighborhood, drunk with the touring outlaw-country band, or scavenging literal trash with the feral dogs at the landfill, Bone Gnawers are often among those from whom the rest of the world uncomfortably averts its gaze.

Bone Gnawers find any number of ways to suss out the secrets that sustain them. Some are hardy survivors, staking out their target during a pandemic. Others perfect the art of not being seen, or, even better, making sure someone else is caught on the main entrance security camera while they sneak in through the loading dock. Whatever the case, they're looking for answers to the questions they obsess over, the ethical shortcuts and crooked politics that trouble their communities or even Gaia herself.

It's a classic chicken-and-egg story. Were the Bone Gnawers always at the bottom, so they adapted to the tricks and trades of the bottom? Or were they so good at skullduggery and dirt-finding that they were pushed out of "polite society" by colluding pipe-smokers and

rhyme-saying furhead "nobles"? Who cares? Because when it comes down to it, who's got the goods? The rangy, shadow-slinking wolf who knows how to creep where creeping nets the most information, or some bespectacled ponytail with elbow patches on his tweed jacket?

And that's one of the ironies (or tragedies, perhaps) of the Bone Gnawers: They're really good at what they do, and what they do is critical to the Garou cause, but they rarely earn any respect around the fires. That stated, wise leaders recognize and laud the Bone Gnawers, because unwise leaders who snub them end up getting doxxed or having their private lives on display in an anonymous social media leak.

Patron Spirit

The patron spirit of the Bone Gnawers is Rat, who is often present but unseen, and sometimes unwelcome when his presence is known. Rat and the Bone Gnawers are associated with Honor, which some prideful Garou find incongruous... until a Bone Gnawer turns up with decisive proof that a rival had planned to betray them. Indeed, part of Rat's ruse seems to be to seek out and cultivate those who would otherwise evade notice. Clever, Rat. Very clever.

Favor: Rat implores his followers to discover that which others fail to spot and, once discovered, use that which they learn in in creative ways. There's no value in knowledge for its own sake — each finding has a purpose. A Bone Gnawer can add a die to a dice pool used to find something lost or overlooked.

Ban: Rat seems like an ignoble figure but, in truth, works for the wellbeing of his nest and brood. If a Bone Gnawer passes up a significant opportunity to give the disadvantaged a leg up, they regain only a single point of Willpower at the beginning of the next session, instead of their Composure or Resolve rating.

Bone Gnawer Archetypes

Zine Raconteur

The Zine Raconteur has a nose for news and has an amazing record of following the most worthwhile tips to their dirty truths. They do it all, from investigation to photography to copy to layout. Sure, it's local news — neighborhood news, really — but local is where the Zine Raconteur's DIY approach means the most. And if it takes a quick shapechange to make a getaway or a spirit's help to cause a power failure, well, the story justifies the means. Also, the Zine Raconteur has a wide distribution network of the neighborhood's more notable individuals, who just happen to be first-rate informants.

Sound Tech

It's not a glorious job, but everybody's favorite band sounds better the nights when the Sound Tech is on the board. To be honest, the Sound Tech took the job to be close to where the action is, but it turns out they had a knack for it, and they learned more than a little bit of improvisational electrical engineering while fixing amps, monitors, oh, and the goddamn lights that Maurice won't pay to have professionally repaired. Since the music's great and the vibe at the club is chill, guests let their hair down and talk about the most outrageous shit that they get up to while they're on the clock. And that? That's a gold mine for the Sound Tech.

Friend of Ours

Everybody owes the Friend of Ours favors, and that's because the Friend of Ours is always eager to do favors for a friend. Sometimes the favors the Friend of Ours asks require a little looking the other way, but that's no big deal, and it's how things have been in the neighborhood since anyone can remember. It's not like the Friend of Ours is asking anyone to do anything that's actually illegal. Probably. No one really minds, since the Friend of Ours somehow pays for the street festival every June, and the only people who get hurt there have it coming anyway.

Gig Wheelman

Everybody has to get someplace, and the Gig Wheelman is there for them. Sometimes they need to go to the airport, sometimes they need to get to the cathedral, and sometimes they need to get to the law office by a quarter past two and just wait here for a few minutes if you don't mind, I'll be right down; what, no, I had this briefcase with me when I went in. The Gig Wheelman makes a few bucks getting people where they want to be, but mostly they want to know why all these people are trying to get where they need to be. The Gig Wheelman is great at putting together the details.

CHILDREN OF GAIA

So may Gaia howl in this era of spiritual ruin, but as her chosen, are we the voice of her howl, or are we complicit with those who harm her?

The Children of Gaia concern themselves with the greater mysteries of their namesake and seek to understand the enigmas that exist in her presence. A Child of Gaia is challenged by nothing so much as a conundrum to investigate or a wound, literal or figurative, to mend, and they are especially drawn to the esoteric Umbra.

Children of Gaia in play might expect to *discover* a cache of artifacts left by legendary Garou, *discern* the true nature of a trickster-spirit, *heal* the injury others suffer, or *puzzle out* the solution to an Umbral quandary.

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN OF GAIA?

If the Garou are creatures of Rage, the Children of Gaia embody that Rage paradoxically, in many cases by seeing themselves as the conscience that must accompany the inchoate fury of the Garou. Anything else would make them the veritable monsters the rest of the world sees when the Delirium falters.

Which isn't to say that they're pacifists. Quite the contrary: The tribe's perspective is that Rage is a force of nature, like a relentless tsunami or an untended flame. Any natural force can destroy, but so can those destructive forces be turned to positive ends.

Such existential questions define the Children of Gaia, who seek first and foremost to understand the nature of werewolf service to the mother who birthed them. They are the Garou who ask "why?" and "to what end?" when other werewolves invoke the mother-spirit to justify some hot-headed rampage into the Wyrm's gullet or insist that a bloody atrocity somehow ultimately serves their purpose. As the stone stands firm and redirects the stream around it, so too does the insightful Child of Gaia guide the power of their pack.

More than anything else, Children of Gaia seek to understand. They look into the details behind an unpop-

ular political candidate suddenly gaining momentum with the same open-mindedness that they negotiate a fair sacrifice to navigate a spirit's territory by learning what the spirit wants and why. Neither the physical world nor the spirit world is a list of facts for a Child of Gaia. Each is a myriad of questions to be answered. Glib werewolves dismiss the Children of Gaia as harmless or even un-werewolf-like. To the Child of Gaia, however, the purpose behind their endless seeking of answers is to fix immediate problems. A bee may sting and a bullet may pierce, and knowing what caused the wound helps best determine the way to heal it.

Patron Spirit

The patron spirit of the Children of Gaia is Unicorn, herself a mystery and a wonder to the modern world. Humans think of Unicorn as a spirit of the forests, and that can be true, but just as much, Unicorn is a spirit of mysterious places, those locales that are themselves as elusive as she. Unicorn and the Children of Gaia are associated with Wisdom.

Favor: Unicorn encourages her followers to learn how people and spirits interrelate, understand what makes the Umbra and the physical world work as they do, and restore things to their function. A Child of Gaia may add a die to an Awareness or Insight dice pool related to learning something about an individual person, animal, or spirit.

Ban: Unicorn is forthright and despises dishonesty. If a Child of Gaia must lie or misdirect, or hides truths specifically for personal gain, they may recover only a single Willpower at the start of the next session, instead of their Composure or Resolve rating. (If you have to argue whether it's "for personal gain," that's maybe an indicator of the intent...)

Children of Gaia Archetypes

Sawbones

Specializing in patching people up on the fly, the Sawbones doesn't have a clean office or a friendly receptionist. If you need the Sawbones, you have to know where the Sawbones *is*, and that secrecy keeps them busy with the sorts of patients who aren't exactly seeking well-appointed waiting rooms. The Sawbones knows how to keep their mouth shut, and, let's be honest, has plenty of... peccadilloes of their own that wouldn't exactly thrill a certification board, especially given how much of the Sawbones' ability is based on intuition and spiritual bargaining rather than traditional medical science.

Dealer

Lotsa people looking to expand their horizons, and the Dealer is willing to help them do just that. Pay it forward, you know? Sometimes you can be someone's ferryman on the journey of self-discovery. Nothing too harsh, nothing that's gonna give anyone a bad trip or have 'em waving a kitchen knife at the neighbors. The thinking is, if the Dealer can let someone in on their own personal mystery-world, they'll form the sort of lifetime relationship that'll keep any secret safe, including the secret of what they found on the Other Side.

Wayfarer

The Wayfarer has made many journeys and will make many more before seeking the Umbral horizon. Where the light won't go, under the heavy canopies in the forest; where the world smells like purple and fear, in the foothills; where the rain sounds like a million moon-spirits in chorus. All of these and more: The Wayfarer always discovers something to find and follow across the border between worlds, and inevitably something's there to greet them on the other end.

Miner

It may look like backbreaking work, and it is. The Miner considers themselves a bit of a doctor, practicing medicine by delving into Gaia's wounds and extirpating the Wyrm's foulness within. Deep within corridors of stone, beyond boundaries of ancient rock and spiritual calcification lurk truths and troubles, some of which have even fallen out of the memory of the tribes themselves. To this end the Miner brings mysteries back to their pack, and back into the awareness of the Garou.

GALESTALKERS

Tell you what, I'll give you a head start. Hide where you want. Just, wherever you want. Doesn't matter. See you soon.

Namesakes to the wind that crosses the tundra, the Galestalkers are tireless. These unparalleled trackers never lose awareness of their prey, regardless of whether that prey hails from the Spirit Wilds or the physical world. They go to great lengths to bring back what they have committed to hunt — and their packmates know they can depend on them.

Galestalkers in play might expect to *track* their prey across a despoiled waste, *ambush* the foe by cleverly predicting where it will travel, *pursue* the prey doggedly if it foolishly flees, and *harry* the prey until it finally falls.

WHO ARE THE GALESTALKERS?

Whether pursuing their quarry into a trackless Brazilian jungle, across a deteriorating spirit-path in the Umbra, or through the alleys of downtown San Francisco, the Galestalker tribe excels at the hunt. Certainly, all Garou are predators, capable of bringing down prey, but the Galestalker *raison d'être* is the pursuit and kill — sometimes capture — on the hunt. Their word is their bond, and when they promise to pursue, only the direst of outcomes can lure them away. And a Galestalker packmate exalts in nothing so much as sharing a kill with their fellows.

The Galestalkers are widely respected by other Garou, but the other tribes nonetheless often view them as brooding and taciturn, even distant. In many cases, though, this temperament stems from the Galestalkers' intimate attention to their hunting senses. These werewolves constantly read the environment for clues that might go unnoticed amid the stink of a city, the pomp of a moot, or in the horror of an Umbral atrocity site.

Some of these well-rounded hunters take in all evidence of the hunt. Others may focus narrowly upon a single element of their Garou selves as hunters, perhaps relying on advantage-granting weapons or potent artifacts that make them inescapable beyond the Gauntlet.

To hear the Galestalkers tell it, there are as many ways to hunt as there are beings worth hunting.

In the era of the Apocalypse, however, Galestalkers often find it hard to decide what, exactly, merits their attention and that of their pack. With so many threats and crises that must be dealt with, they are not unlike the wolf loosed in the rabbit's hutch: Where to snap one's jaws first? They are providers more than they are leaders, except in the case of burgeoning Galestalker legends. In this sense, they rely greatly on other Garou and strong pack relationships, lest they find themselves as undirected as the wind.

PATRON SPIRIT

North Wind itself is the Patron Spirit of the Galestalkers, with its boundless power, great endurance, patience, and ability to rouse the elements. North Wind and the Galestalker tribe are associated with Honor — when they commit to a course of action, other Garou can depend upon it.

Favor: North Wind is tireless, even unstoppable. Having formed a pact with the Galestalkers as its hunters, North Wind bestows some amount of that uncompromising devotion upon Garou of the tribe. A Galestalker may add a die to dice pools directly related to the pursuit of their prey.

Ban: North Wind has an insatiable hunger, and so do those who pledge themselves to it. For any day that a Galestalkers does not partake of fresh kill (regardless of whether it was they who hunted it), they regain only a single point of Willpower at the beginning of the next session, instead of their Composure or Resolve rating.

GALESTALKER ARCHETYPES

Drifter

West Coast, then on up to New York, maybe into Canada a bit, then down through Mexico and into Belize. The rolling stone gathers no moss, and the Drifter calls no place home, truly. They had a hard life after their First Change, and the truth of what the Drifter is always seems to turn the circumstances against them and push them on to whatever's next, usually while trailing blood. As only the Drifter and their packmates know, they aren't a drifter at all. They're hunting something — someone — very specific, and if the Drifter ever loses too much time, the trail will go cold.

Spiritwalker

Specializing in forays into the Umbra and pursuit of inscrutable spirit prey, the Spiritwalker frequently braves the strangeness of the Spirit Wilds. They may seem distracted or aloof in the physical world, but that's usually because the Spiritwalker is peeking beyond the Gauntlet, looking for clues and spirit-spoor that simply don't exist in the world of fleshly hunts — five senses are hard enough to process, but ten make unparalleled demands. Once the Spiritwalker has discovered their quarry, however, the pack would do well to heed their preparations, as the Spiritwalker rarely bothers with innocuous prey.

Gaucho

In many cases, Garou make animals nervous, almost certainly because the latter sense the predator common to all werewolf forms. But every now and then, a bond forms, as it has between the Gaucho and the horse they've come to trust on their journeys across the Pampas. Theirs is a vanishing way of life, but the gauchos bear a legend almost as extensive (and certainly more widely known) than the Garou. The Gaucho likes it further and further south, where the nights are long and the wind is cold and everything the pack can see to the horizon exists under their stewardship.

Leechtalker

Cities are full of the unquiet dead, blood-drinkers who play the world of the living against itself to their own benefit. No surprise, then, that these Leeches are so often attached to the same agenda of avarice as the most short-sighted humans. The Leechtalker knows their patterns and their stink, and can root them out from their nests, given enough time and patience. But it's not always so simple; these deathless things don't seem to have spirits, and the Leeches know a lot about the cities where they reside. Sometimes a deal can be made.

GHOST COUNCIL

The greatest advantage lies in determining which weapons one's enemies deny themselves.

The werewolves of the Ghost Council are great seekers of mystery, but they are regarded as somewhat secretive by more straightforward Garou, who sometimes misunderstand the tribe's regard for questions of higher purpose. Among the Ghost Council's members may be found guides, academics, and even a panoply of religious folk.

To the Ghost Council — or "Ghosts," individually — the destination or the path might be the objective; what matters most is that the seeker understands why they have undertaken a particular journey and can therefore learn about the Garou's world. The journey itself is of great import to Ghost Council werewolves, as it represents an opportunity for discovery along the way... as well as a chance to tease out the secrets of the journey's environment.

At the same time, it's a chance to find out which paths the other tribes deliberately avoid, and to learn why. For what is a taboo if not a tool a competitor willingly sets aside?

Ghost Council werewolves in play might expect to *travel* to a shunned corner of the Umbra, *solve* a pernicious riddle posed by a haughty spirit, *subvert* an enemy's tools for use against them, and *unearth* a dangerous secret.

WHO ARE THE GHOST COUNCIL?

Motivating the Ghost Council is a desire, a hunger, a *need* for knowledge, particularly of a practical and spiritual nature. That practicality often comes to the fore as an ability to affect the world around them. Ghosts collect secrets the better to get results. Whether tricking an unsuspecting spirit into letting them pass unmolested or learning where in his mistress' apartment the executive hid incriminating documents, werewolves of the Ghost Council look for the boundaries others draw around themselves, the flaws they build into their own armor. They want every option on the table, even the "forbidden" ones, because when you're in the middle of a goddamn Apocalypse, no option should be "forbidden."

This philosophy has earned the Ghost Council a reputation as subversives among more traditional Garou — and Ghosts don't seem to care. "The ends justify the means" usually comes across as a dangerous political doctrine, but for the Ghost Council, finding an answer or opportunity excuses how it's accomplished. If something comes of maintaining a relationship with a confidant

from a fallen tribe or forging pacts with forbidden spirits, the Ghost is satisfied — and validated, in their minds.

As might be expected, other Garou often view the werewolves of the Ghost Council as having suspect motives. A fair criticism is that Ghost Council concern themselves with solving the "how" of mysteries for the sake of power, with too little regard for the reasons such power manifests in their means of discovery. The pack has the rival's klaive — that's what's important. Results now, costs later.

Holistically, the discovery of hidden truths requires going to them. Every human society has traditions in this vein, and the Ghost Council has had members among many such traditions and societies. Members of the tribe are often enthusiastic about opportunities to travel, be it to a strange and remote Umbral mystery site, a cross-country road trip in a caravan, or a thrilling run across conflict-scarred taiga to find a specific and key fork in a river.

PATRON SPIRIT

The Patron Spirit of the Ghost Council is Horned Serpent, no stranger to dark places and hidden truths. Horned Serpent and the Ghost Council are associated with Wisdom. Of all the tribes, the Ghost Council has what is probably the most transactional relationship with its patron, a formal acknowledgement of give-and-take of almost fairytale quality... one that sometimes takes on a sinister cast to some outside the tribe.

Favor: Horned Serpent encourages looking at things from all angles and taking the most advantageous one. A Ghost Council Garou may add one die to Investigation, Occult, or Subterfuge dice pools related to revealing a kept secret.

Ban: Horned Serpent is known for Wisdom, but spirits and Garou alike look askance at the ways she garners knowledge. For a scene in which the Ghost Council werewolf has an opportunity to satisfy their curiosity but doesn't, they regain only a single point of Willpower at the beginning of the next session, instead of their Composure or Resolve rating.

GHOST COUNCIL ARCHETYPES

Contemplative

Far from the worldly concerns of human society, the Contemplative is among the many monastery residents who hold themselves apart for reasons both spiritual and personal. The First Change was a horrific turning point in the Contemplative's life, one for which they feel they will forever be making amends. And to do so, they adopted the ascetic's ways, hoping to impose that sense of balance on their own dualistic Rage and spirituality. It works... mostly... until it doesn't... and more amends must then be made.

Saboteur

A career spent with private military companies, fighting in off-the-books conflicts and demolishing black sites, has given the Saboteur know-how they can use in Gaia's interests. Such know-how isn't always legal, but it's effective. Modern military parlance burnishes the Saboteur's role as an "engineer," but they harbor no illusions — they knock things down and kill people. Using tools or coaxing spirits, it's all the same thing to the saboteur: Find the weak spot and do what needs to be done to it to pull the whole thing to the ground. Figuratively, of course; the Saboteur has no desire to be at ground zero when their work culminates.

Witch

Gaia is a metaphor, and so are spirits. It's all in the way the individual sees the world, which eyes they choose. The right word or pact or offering lets the Witch will these forces, these quite natural forces, into manifesting the outcome they want. It's not parlor tricks — the way so many charlatans try to pass off the Gift — it's a genuine relationship with the world beyond the boundary of the one most humans can perceive. They are blind, whereas the Witch can see, and Witch's packmates would do well to remember the elective ignorance in which human society chooses to cloak itself.

Shepherd

Born into a culture of semi-nomadic reindeer herders, the Shepherd watched as, bit by bit, their ancestral lands were annexed by human governments and their customs were forced into obscurity. The same human powers curtailed the territories of wolves and Garou, and the Shepherd has had enough. With a rebellious declaration of sovereignty, the Shepherd, their pack, and a handful of human companions established a "protectorate," itself declared a rogue faction by regional and national government. Now the Shepherd defends that territory and herd of reindeer with the aid of spirit-guardians, seemingly forever at odds with human legal entities intent on subsuming the renegade province.

GLASS WALKERS

> You want something torn to pieces, yeah, I can probably handle that. You want something built up, though, that's where I shine. I'll get it working.

The Glass Walkers are among the werewolves most proficient with applied science, given their knack for solving problems with technology, or — more accurately — the spirits of technology, many of which are often unfamiliar to more traditional Garou. The ranks of the Glass Walkers include engineers, technicians, and inventors, whose skill at making machines work usually takes the form of coaxing the spirits inhabiting them into performing exceptionally.

In play, Glass Walkers might expect to *research* the blueprints of an energy company HQ before a raid, *build* a security system to defend their caern, *hack* a defense drone so that it reports back to the pack instead of its command center, and *repurpose* a sequence of blast doors to trap a gang of fomori.

WHO ARE THE GLASS WALKERS?

Since time out of mind, while other werewolves relied on tooth and claw, the Glass Walkers favored cleverness and tools. Of all the tribes, since history has been recorded, Glass Walkers have observed a remarkable sympathy with humans, as opposed to setting themselves apart. And, in an act for which many other Garou still haven't forgiven them, they are said to have helped humans build fences, traps, and alarms to help people withstand the Impergium. Shameful as many werewolves find the Impergium itself, it still rankles other Garou to know that the Glass Walkers were on the wrong side of that war.

More than anything else, though, Glass Walkers adapt. In this era of spiritual malady, they have appropriated the tools of the modern world for use in navigating the Apocalypse: computers, firearms, machines, top-of-the-line communications devices, anything that can give the tribe an advantage over their foes and minions of the Wyrm. From the Glass Walker perspective, it's hard and even foolish to deny themselves the sorts of versatility and firepower that tools from the world of humans can offer — a perspective that earns them few accolades around the fires of multi-tribal caerns and moots.

Naturally, this predilection for tools and technology keeps the Glass Walkers in frequent community with hu-

mans, and extraordinarily few members of the tribe have lupus origins — a number that dwindles daily. Even privately and among themselves, many Glass Walkers worry that they're in danger of "losing the wolf," forsaking part of their hallowed connection to Gaia and supplanting it with something external and artificial — something more akin to the Weaver's purpose. For the time being, though, the Glass Walkers' ties to their Garou heritage still stand, and the spirits still honor the long-sworn pacts between them.

Indeed, Glass Walkers cultivate relationships with spirits other Garou eschew or literally don't even know to exist. Money spirits, trash-spirits, spirit-sparks that travel cities' power lines, strange manifestations of their Patron Spirit, even potent but localized spirits that can empower a city caern if so cajoled by a competent theurge — all of these entities, and others besides, call the Umbral city their home. The urban spiritscape needn't be bleak and empty of spirit presence, especially when a savvy Glass Walker knows where to look and what to offer.

PATRON SPIRIT

The Patron Spirit of the Glass Walkers is Spider, whose carefully constructed webs echo in the Glass Walkers' drive to make things of lasting duration and effectiveness. This desire does not endear the tribe to many other Garou, who see in the patronage of Spider a subservience to the Weaver rather than a duty to Gaia, so Glass Walkers often have to distinguish themselves that much more to earn the trust of the other tribes. Spider and the Glass Walkers are associated with Wisdom.

Favor: Spider reveals the interconnectedness of all things as webs and strands, suggesting an orderly approach. Glass Walkers can add one die to Technology or Science dice pools related to building or repairing things.

Ban: Spider has an extensive brood of kindred spirits and forbids the Glass Walkers to harm any of them. If they destroy any complex machines, such as vehicles, computers, or assembly equipment, they may recover only a single Willpower at the start of the *next* session, instead of their Composure or Resolve rating.

GLASS WALKER ARCHETYPES

Urban Planner

Many people won't go where you tell them to go, but almost all of them will go where you guide them, particularly when you guide them by letting them think they're making the decision in the first place. The Urban Planner puts this ethos into practice every day, building traffic flows that reduce pollution, designing green spaces that thrive in the city environment, and inoculating people in proximity against murderous road rage. It's also a great way to keep an eye on "development projects" and the exploitative cronies who seek to despoil public spaces for private profit.

Car Liberator

"No beaters. Only the high-end stuff." Sounds like a high-glitz operation, but really it's to free mistreated machines and their spirits from people who can afford to have their cars stolen. Maybe there's a bit of ethical gymnastics there to justify the whole enterprise, sure, but it's just property crime, so who cares? And if the Car Liberator ends up with a bit of personal gain from what they tell themselves is a Robin Hood operation, well, who does it help if they deprive themselves? Quit being so rigid. Good, now pass the socket wrench. The Car Liberator also knows a handful of well-connected individuals who can help move parts where they need to be, and who have a remarkable sense of when to keep their mouths shut.

Detective

The streets tell a thousand stories, most of them tragedies, at least from the Detective's point of view. Garou may be violent, but they rarely exalt the cunning cruelty that humans can muster, and in the Detective's experience, each one of those cruelties has a reason. Might be personal, might be premeditated, might be passionate, but sometimes the reason opens up something big, something that needs a few overtime hours to untangle, sometimes on all fours.

Tattoo Artist

It calls for a combination of raw talent and cultivated skill, plus a whole lot of calm. But it's worth it, not only for the street cred that keeps the Tattoo Artist in demand (and privy to all the ill shit that happens in the neighborhood), but also for the prestige that comes from inking the most accomplished Garou in the territory. Every werewolf builds their own legend, and many werewolves want to tell that legend not only around the fires but on the canvas of their bodies. The Tattoo Artist can make that happen, and shoot the shit with the best of them while they're doing it.

HART WARDENS

> Be welcome in our caern. It is our hearth and home. Warm yourself at our fires and feed yourself at our table.
> A word of caution, friend – abuse our hospitality and we'll string your innards up in all those lovely trees you saw outside.

The Hart Wardens are the keepers and stewards of nature, whether hallowing the pristine "undiscovered" places in the world or cultivating someplace particularly important to them toward a more structured purpose, such as a farm or orchard. It might be a sprawling country estate, a tarnished river valley that needs to be revived, or even a hidden bit of green space in the CBD in New Orleans, but the Hart Wardens are there, coaxing the promise they can out of their pack's bit of creation.

If the Garou have one foot each in the worlds of flesh and spirit, the Hart Wardens have one foot each in the modern world and a world of their own mythmaking. They are greatly passionate about what they find and nurture, and any gathering of Hart Wardens will soon turn to celebrations of history (and no few tall tales...) as regards their own tribe and the Garou in general.

In play, Hart Wardens might expect to *reclaim* a foothill region from a quarrying operation, *cultivate* a caern there to placate the spirits disrupted by the quarry, *nurture* the newly established caern, and *protect* it from the grasping agents of the front company that wants to continue extracting its resources.

WHO ARE THE HART WARDENS?

In times of legend, the Garou had no home, and they wandered the world and Umbra in Gaia's service. Their most renowned, on a hunt through primeval forest with their vast and ever-growing packs, saw a magnificent hart and took on the wolf-shape to give chase. Through the trackless forest, the Garou pursued, over rolling hills, up stony promontories, and across mountains, meadows, and badlands, never gaining a single step on the hart. Finally, after an epoch of chasing across the whole world, the Garou cornered the hart in the shadow of an inescapable vale.

"Your faith and drive are admirable," said the hart, multiplying in size to reveal himself as Stag. "Look behind you. Look where we have ranged, together. Pledge yourselves to me and I grant you this, your home, and

the husbandry of all we have crossed to come here." And those who would call themselves Hart Wardens so bound themselves to Stag's pact.

Since that day, the Hart Wardens have taken that pledge seriously, dedicating themselves to an individual region, purpose, or even person and tending it to the full extent of their ability. To them, the world is a bounty to be cultivated and shared, and at the same time protected against those who would abuse it or exploit it to place themselves above others. They honor a curious blend of old ways and modern ones, exalting hierarchy, but one built upon obligations owed as opposed to wealth hoarded. For the truly deserving, fortune will follow duty.

And so today the Hart Wardens build tiny personal holdings and great caerns alike and tend them. The tribe seeks those places dear to Gaia that have fallen and takes them back from plunderers. They sing songs and embellish stories to remember great deeds, showing great pride in their role as wardens among the werewolves. And woe betide any who would dispossess a Hart Wardens or a member of their pack, for the Hart Wardens are loyal to Gaia, to Stag, to their duty, and to their fellows — fiercely loyal.

PATRON SPIRIT

The Patron Spirit of the Hart Wardens is Stag, who introduced all the Garou to the ways of nature and particularly favored the Hart Wardens. Stag and the Hart Wardens are associated with Glory, and they especially revere their galliards, who can stoke those fires of Glory in the singing of their legend or recitation of their deeds.

Favor: Stag is looked to by many as the father of the forest, with great sway over beasts and even flora. Hart Wardens may add a die to any dice pool involving Survival, Animal Ken or nature-related Craft.

Ban: Stag observes long-standing traditions of hospitality. If harm comes to someone while under a Hart Warden's hospitality, the Hart Wardens may regain only a single Willpower at the start of the *next* session, instead of their Composure or Resolve rating.

HART WARDEN ARCHETYPES

Huntsman

The rest of the world sees an antiquated role attached to a privileged manorial lifestyle, and even the lord and lady think the job somewhat quaint. No one other than the Huntsman knows the true need to cull the wildlife populations, lest everyone, man and beast, suffer. Along with the role comes an intense study of regional knowledge: The Huntsman knows intimately every detail of the grounds they keep and has two lifetimes' worth of hunting experience — as homid and as lupus.

Digital Caern Strategist

Think of it like a game. You gotta put things in the right places, mind the resource economy. Traps around the boundaries keep the creeps from slinking in. Stay on good terms with the spirits, give them somewhere pleasant to go; they move back your fog of war. The pack, now, that's your heroes. That's who you want out there when the push comes in — because it's going to come in, and not down the channel you think. Stay alert, stay healthy. You don't want anyone on cooldown when you need them shredding fools on the front lines.

Emcee

Not everybody gets it when they hear about the oral traditions and code-switching practices of Queensbridge in New York. When the beat shakes the foundation and the Emcee spits fire, though, ain't no ass in the house still in its seat. Bravado-laden tales of the crew's rebel antics and epic disses of pack rivals keep the block party going well into the night, and the SoundCloud hits keep coming, lighting up the Emcee's fans as far away as Southwest Asia and the Baltics.

Local Legend

On the nights when the mists rise heavily above the swamps and a horned moon hangs low and heavy in the sky, one might hear the terrified cry of a human who has lost their way and won't live to find it again. Such are the nights when the Local Legend haunts the wilds, prowling for the flesh of the greedy, the careless, or those who simply saw more of the Local Legend than they would have preferred. Some make the beast out to be a vengeful stalker, but the Local Legend knows their own truth, and keeps the knowledge of their pack's secret glade well obscured.

RED TALONS

Put that down. Go away. Or die.

The Red Talons are the only modern tribe with a substantial number of Garou whose First Change happens among wolves. Like all Garou, Red Talons feel anger at the ongoing Apocalypse, at seeing Gaia murdered for the sake of insatiable greed. Just as angrily, Red Talons see animal (especially wolf) populations worldwide destroyed by human encroachment and entitlement, a ruinous suborning of the natural order to further that same greed.

But anger is an energy, and Red Talons turn that energy toward giving a voice to those who lack words, to acting as advocates for those who cannot wield the tools of mankind, and to pulling down the human constructs that defile Gaia. In these ways, they are also one of the most radical tribes, and they actively seek to curtail the influence of humankind over Gaia, sometimes going so far as to cull populations of humans where such a thing can be reasonably (to their perspectives) effected.

In play, Red Talons might expect to *ruin* individuals and facilities they perceive as challenging their territory, *ward* places dear to Gaia against intrusion, *reduce* dependency on human technologies, *cull* excessive populations of creatures that would imbalance local ecologies, and even *purge* a location of invasive (human or otherwise) occupants — bloodily, if necessary.

WHO ARE THE RED TALONS?

As humanity continues in relentless exploitation of the world, places where animals and their prey may thrive dwindle ever more. Gaia herself is being mutilated, parceled out in an infinitude of shortsighted human transactions that threaten all life. With each passing day, the territory of the wolf (and wolf-born Garou) is further chipped away, backing them into a metaphorical and sometimes literal corner.

And a cornered animal is a desperate animal. In these circumstances, the Red Talons turn to strident action to fight back and reclaim lost territory from human encroachment. Red Talons favor decisive solutions, to the extent that even other werewolves often think the tribe brutal. Razing a city to rubble would stop the sprawl that extends like cancer from it, for example. Tearing out the throat of the bulldozer operator is much

more immediately effective than challenging zoning laws or devaluing corporate P&L sheets.

In the point of view of other werewolves from the now-shattered Garou Nation, the Red Talon perspective borders on the heretical. Red Talons often think that it isn't the Wyrm that's the imbalanced element of the Triat, but rather the Weaver, with its ever-expanding restrictiveness and malignant expansion in the form of cities, development, and "civilization." Among the most extreme of Red Talons — even expressing such a sentiment is shameful — the Wyrm is a victim of the Weaver, and the Wyrm's tools have their place.

All Garou know the stories of the Impergium, the time when werewolves waged an open war against the world of humankind. Detractors seek to frame the Red Talons as revanchists and Impergium apologists with a longing for "the good old days." This characterization oversimplifies their plight, though, and attributes malice where the motive is actually survival. To the Red Talons, Impergium may be the only option they have left.

The Garou struggle is the Red Talon struggle. The rest of the Garou just don't know it yet.

PATRON SPIRIT

Griffin is the Patron Spirit of the Red Talons — Griffin, who stands guard against the Weaver's encroachment and never prioritizes human interests over those of animals. Griffin and the Red Talons are associated with Honor — albeit an honor whose context often eludes Garou whose foremost context is the society of humans.

Favor: Griffin is implacable, a ferocious fighter in the face of impossible odds. Red Talons can add a die on Brawl tests whenever their Health is below half.

Ban: Griffin abhors complexity and seeks to simplify his followers' relationships with the world. If a session occurs in which the Red Talon makes use of a Academics, Driving, Finance, Firearms, Science, or Technology dice pool to repair or utilize (rather than subvert or destroy), they may recover only a single Willpower at the start of the next session, instead of their Composure or Resolve rating.

RED TALON ARCHETYPES

Bounty Hunter

Hard to imagine that even among depraved humans, some people are more depraved than the rest of them. In wolf society, pariahs are driven away. Among humans, they're trapped in menageries that no one visits. Sometimes they get out of their menageries. Sometimes they run away before they can be collected and brought to the menagerie. The Bounty Hunter makes it their job to retrieve those who flee. Uncomplicated by human compassion, the Bounty Hunter doesn't give a thought to whether their targets belong in the menageries, or the justice of putting people in menageries. If the Bounty Hunter had their way, all humans would be in a menagerie.

Maneater

Once the Maneater catches the scent of human blood, there's no turning back. Traveling with their pack across the Kamchatka expanses, the Maneater grew fat and comfortable on reindeer while still young, and experienced their First Change in response to a hunting expedition's helicopter flying overhead. Those same hunters took the pack but paid for it with their lives — and ever since, the Maneater has traveled from open sore to open sore, across Gaia's face, trying to get the balance right, and meeting others like themselves along the way.

Prepper

Prepper's got a bunker, 18 feet under the surface, stocked with meat. Not that freeze-dried chemical stuff the brain-pill people try to sell you on the innernet. Real meat. Killed it. Smoked it. Dried it. Last forever. That's all you need. Got a weird mindset, Prepper does. They're not just setting aside supplies for when the human supermarkets and systems fail. They're looking forward to it, in a real angry sort of way. Makes the rest of the pack not entirely comfortable. But Prepper's always had their backs. So far.

Plague Dog

The Plague Dog creeps into occupied territory, spreading terror and disease. Standing up and slugging it out with an enemy isn't their style; the Plague Dog prefers to mitigate risk to themselves and reduce their prey to quivering fear with a few snarls from the darkness, and — aided by a few choice pacts with disease spirits — a virulent bite that leaves the victims infected and contagious. They're not seeking the pompous Honor of the arrogant tribes around their vain fires. Instead, the Plague Dog seeks the silent Honor of retaking the territory such self-aggrandizers have yielded time and again.

SHADOW LORDS

Everyone has a plan until they look down and see their own blood wetting the ground. Figuring out what comes next is the true test of a Garou's worth.

Dominance and submission constitute the Shadow Lord creed. Those who demonstrate strength justly deserve to dominate; the role of the weak is to submit, to roll over and show your throat. The greatest Shadow Lord legends are mighty, but true strength comes in discovering how to exploit the weaknesses of one's enemies.

The Shadow Lords count among their number some of the great strategists and warlords of Garou legend, and it therefore stands to reason that the purview of the Shadow Lords is a pragmatic — some would say ruthless — prowess for planning. Shadow Lords value shrewd intuition and calculating minds, the better to put in motion their schemes to undermine the Wyrm, whether via a frontal assault or through clever positioning. Of course, this worldview sometimes makes other Garou nervous: When a Shadow Lord looks at you, are they thinking how best to use your skills? Are they scrutinizing you for weakness? Are they thinking how your sacrifice might be used to greatest effect?

In play, a Shadow Lord might expect to *envision* the true extent of an exploitative rare-mineral concern in their territory, *plan* the ultimate downfall of these enemies of Gaia, perhaps even *scheme* with the enemy in order to discover their weaknesses from within, and ultimately *intimidate* anyone who stands between them and what they want.

WHO ARE THE SHADOW LORDS?

The Shadow Lord tribe is most known for two distinct traits: power and cunning. Power takes all forms, from political power in their communities or among the tatters of the Garou Nation to raw physical power when standing against a minion of the Wyrm or against a rival werewolf. Cunning may seem at odds with the Rage-fueled nature of the Garou, but as the Shadow Lords see it, outsmarting an opponent and convincing them of one's superiority is its own proof. Indeed, in this way, cunning *leads to* power, and Shadow Lords often favor being the power behind more immediately recognizable leaders. One of the most important skills a Shadow Lord learns is to pick only the fights they know they're going to win.

Although they have a well-deserved reputation as schemers, Shadow Lords should also be recognized for their acumen with attending to a plan's details. A caern

isn't going to run itself — its guardian spirit would eventually return to the Umbra in this era of Apocalypse. And raiding the mercenaries' camp sounds laudable until one realizes that the pack's plan is to go berserk and shred its way through the front barricade, at which point the Shadow Lord points out that this childish "plan" would simply get everyone killed.

Much as they are known for both power and cunning, a similar contrast embodies the Shadow Lord identity. In one sense, Shadow Lords are oppressive, even domineering. In another sense, they are inspirational, and perhaps the most meritocratic of the tribes, based on accomplishment alone. To be one of the "less-accomplished" Shadow Lords cannot make for a *happy* existence, but those Garou do find their place in their packs, supporting the werewolves around them... and perhaps biding their time for the moment that can elevate them to the true status they deserve.

PATRON SPIRIT

Thunder, the Patron Spirit of the Shadow Lords, drives the meek into their dens and announces the arrival of vengeful storms. Thunder is often distant, but always fearsome. At other times, Thunder is the furious herald of action and change. Thus, Shadow Lords maintain that a calculated feint sets up a mighty strike. Thunder and the Shadow Lords are associated with (largely their own) Glory.

Favor: Thunder can provoke great fear in those to whom he announces his presence, and the Shadow Lords can seemingly summon his mien to act similarly. A Shadow Lord can add a dice to Animal Ken, Intimidation, or Subterfuge dice pools relating to threats or the exploitation of weakness.

Ban: Thunder shows no more deference or respect than has been earned, and the Shadow Lords follow suit. If a Shadow Lord suffers defeat in a conflict to any Garou of lesser Total Renown, they may recover only a single Willpower at the start of the next session, instead of their Composure or Resolve rating.

SHADOW LORD ARCHETYPES

Boyar

They come from a tiny country once recognized by the Warsaw Pact, but the Boyar — who hails from a long line of hereditary nobles that can trace itself back through the centuries — counts, as far as modern nobility goes. The Boyar's domain is no longer as wealthy as it once was, and it finds itself surrounded by greedy neighbor-states and multinational interests that think they can simply apply enough pressure and take the territory's natural resources. The Boyar would be hard pressed to find anyone in history who has been so very, very wrong as these would-be exploiters, and won't hesitate to call up ancient pledges of fealty among the country's proud citizens to beat back these plunderers.

Hacktivist

Everyone in the world is dirty, and the Hacktivist specializes in digging up that dirt. The Hacktivist uses every tool available to them — whether technological methods, such as plundering encrypted online databases; flesh-and-spirit social engineering endeavors; or taking on the mantle of the wolf and sneaking into restricted locations. Pretending to have established "HardTarget SoftDev" at the defense contractors' retreat running in conjunction with the Bilderberg conference? No problem. The Hacktivist has one goal: to find information that can be weaponized against their enemies. Er, their pack's enemies.

Midnight Terror

On long nights when the weather grows chill and the winds howl, one might look up to the mesa and see the Midnight Terror in silhouette against the moon. The local populace wants to appease the Midnight Terror however they can, but it doesn't really know anything about what the Midnight Terror actually wants. They left behind only bloody smears when the brothers went missing from the pharmaceutical facility, and you can still see the video on the Internet of the night the doctor was mauled at the strange clinic that opened on the edge of town. It's been quiet since then, but only the Midnight Terror and their pack know who they're going to take next.

Assassin

History has its share of great leaders and wise advisors, many of whom share a common characteristic: They give orders, they don't wield the killing blade themselves. The Assassin gets their hands dirty at the behest of a pack leader who can't let themselves be seen removing opposing voices — so the Assassin does it for them. And let's be honest: Everyone knows the Assassin for who they are. That's how they prefer it, wielding a reputation that limns them with fearsome glory.

SILENT STRIDERS

I've been everywhere, man, and let me tell you, you're going to want to hear this.

Among wolves, Garou follow where prey leads the pack, and among humans, Garou have historically been found in cultures that are either migratory or diasporic. Deep in their own history, the Silent Striders were themselves... cursed? by a powerful spirit, malignant and not wholly understood, and as a result they often find sympathetic peoples and familiar practices among ever-moving or dispersed cultures.

Wisely, the Silent Striders have made opportunity of this misremembered crisis in their past, and they have assumed a role as travelers, messengers, and news-bearers among the Garou. It makes for a difficult life, certainly, especially in the wake of a shattered Garou Nation and the travails of the Apocalypse, but it's absolutely a better fate than a collapse into oblivion... or the tragic paths that lost tribes have taken.

In play, Silent Striders might expect to *journey* great distances through difficult territory, *scout* whether they might be facing hostile Garou or antagonistic spirits, *deliver* a sensitive message or critical talisman, and even *sabotage* those who would waylay them before they get the chance.

WHO ARE THE SILENT STRIDERS?

The presence of a Silent Strider is something that many Garou regard as portentous, to say the least. Many are itinerant, and when one arrives in the territory, they invariably possess something every Garou wants to know or possess. It may be news of a caern falling, a message from a legendary elder, or proof of a mighty spirit's corruption. Whatever the case, a Silent Strider's charge is something that requires an individual to deliver and confirm.

Master travelers, the Silent Striders find themselves uniquely suited to finding their way into places where others don't want them and finding their way back out again. Diving headfirst into an Umbral disaster site or a hostile pack's territory rarely yields more than pain and suffering, to the Silent Strider way of thinking. Why not explore first and find out the most *effective* way, rather than the most direct? At worst, one may confirm another method not to undertake things. At best, one has discovered a way to get what one needs without anyone becoming aware of the Silent Strider's having been there.

As such, Silent Striders are often broadly versed in cultures and customs, from the death rites and funerary paraphernalia of indigenous South Americans to the spirit-greetings of Addis Ababa to the Master of the Howl at New York's Stained Glass Sept's birthday. And in these vast travels, they accumulate numerous relationships but also bear the weight of their reputations for bringing bad news.

The territory over which a Silent Strider ranges need not be vast — they take on many roles in the greater fulfillment of their pledge to Gaia's service. They may be go-betweens and brokers of peace for long-feuding packs a stretch of highway away from each other, or they may be the diplomats bringing wisdom among a half-dozen prominent caerns scattered across continents. They may or may not remain part of any particular pack for long, but when they do, it's almost always with the intent of learning something or finding something that a distant someone will need. It can be a lonely path, even among peers.

PATRON SPIRIT

Owl is the Patron Spirit of the Silent Striders, who encourages those his followers to approach matters on their own terms. From his high vantage point Owl carefully observes and does not act until he has seen everything there is to see. Only then does he make the plunge — swiftly and decisively. Owl and the Silent Striders are associated with Wisdom.

Favor: Owl's wisdom extols the virtue of flight when necessary. Silent Striders can add one die to Athletics or Stealth dice pools related to traversal, escape, or infiltration.

Ban: Owl remains ever alert to the return of the rival spirit-haunt that tormented his tribe in the past, and he makes sure to do so by honoring the presence of this "other" sort of spirit. If a Silent Strider causes, participates in, or even witnesses death but doesn't perform a commemorative rite to acknowledge it, they may recover only a single Willpower at the start of the next session, instead of their Composure or Resolve rating.

SILENT STRIDER ARCHETYPES

Kinseeker

The Garou are dying — that's the way the Kinseeker sees it. With that desperate outlook, the Kinseeker travels endlessly, forever seeking werewolves who don't yet know they're werewolves. It's generally a lonely path, but one that brings the Kinseeker into contact with any number of other Garou, themselves ideally fighting the good fight. This life isn't one they'd wish upon anyone else, so the Kinseeker hasn't yet been a mentor to any other werewolf or introduced them to Owl's ways. Much better to let them find a pack with a caern that they can call home than to help them choose a bitter existence forever in the spaces between.

Ambassador

Conventional wisdom says to make lemons into lemonade, so as the Ambassador realized the Patron Spirit who called to them would have them ever on the move, they'd need to turn their talents to suit that calling. With "home" effectively a neglected flat in the capitol, the Ambassador travels far and wide, putting their outgoing personality to use in negotiating partnerships and resolving old grudges. The company the Ambassador keeps, and the packs all over the world with whom they stay in contact ensures that diplomatic dinners are the least fraught of their many appointments, wherever they are.

Revivalist

Putting up the big tent outside of town and preaching a gospel of love and forgiveness, the Revivalist runs a touring salvation show that provides ample excuse to move among the caerns all across the territory. It's a strange combination of Pentecostalism and Gaia's creed, but the service is vibrant and energetic, and it may have brought around more than one true believer in these cynical times. Itinerancy also gives the Revivalist the opportunity to see just how widely the energy company's influence has spread, as the revival traverses the region where it's a huge employer.

Long-Haul Trucker

Logistics makes the world run, and moving things from Point A to Point B is a good way to cover ground when the Long-Haul Trucker is tracking their true quarry, whether it's fugitives or they're simply moving a shipment of much-needed medical supplies during an era of global illness. Be your own boss, set your own hours, hunt your own prey. And if it just so happens that the payload is something that ***shouldn't*** arrive at Point B whole and intact, well, the Long-Haul Trucker has had more than one "insurance incident" that buys time and ruins materiel.

SILVER FANGS

Power is a means to an end, a life's work constructed in service to Gaia. It is as much a responsibility as it is a privilege, if not more so.

Garou society is inherently tribal, and where tribes exist, leaders emerge. For werewolves, the mantle of leadership was long ago claimed by the Silver Fangs, who are as close to a noble lineage as Garou culture produces. Theirs is a legacy of aristocracy, decisiveness, and, as grudging as other tribes are to admit it, unification in dire circumstances.

Silver Fangs in play might expect to *motivate* their pack, *lead* them into battle, *rally* them from desperate defeat, and *inspire* them to grand achievements.

WHO ARE THE SILVER FANGS?

Heavy hangs the head that wears the crown, and this adage is true for none so much as for the Silver Fangs, as they claim the burden of leadership among the tribes that also elevates them among other Garou. Of course, few other werewolves are so sanguine about this legacy of nobility — but few can argue that the Silver Fangs do indeed make good leaders.

Then again, because the Silver Fangs have traditionally held the role of leaders among the Garou, aren't they somewhat culpable for the collapse of the Garou Nation and its failure to avert this age of Apocalypse?

Garou culture, by its nature, seeks strong leaders, and historically it has fallen to the Silver Fangs to assume this role. To its credit, the tribe is ever cognizant of the risks of such roles, and since time immemorial it's had complicated relationships with both harano and hauglosk. At one end of the spectrum bellows the Silver Fang tyrant, deranged by hauglosk, tearing apart those who would question their might or wisdom; at the other end of the spectrum stands the Silver Fang racked by harano, feeling that no matter how many young Garou they hurl into the maw of the Wyrm, the battle is already lost. Thus, accompanying the prestige of the Silver Fangs tribe is a note of tragedy.

The tribe's relationship with the spirit world is likewise complex. Many spirits — probably even more than

the Garou themselves — still honor the old pacts forged by Silver Fang legends. Hierarchical as they are, spirits' respect for Silver Fangs runs deep, though it can prove to be a double-edged sword. Simple, intractable spirits fail to see the nuance in a Silver Fang's ethically weighted choices.

Werewolves of other tribes, particularly the young members of those of tribes, disavow "hereditary aristocracy," in which light the Silver Fangs cast themselves. Among tribal elders, anachronistic practices still hold sway, from Gaia-aligned notions of divine right, to the keeping of concubines, to simple affectations for outdated modes of dress. Certainly, moot participants endure recitations of countless deeds for which the Silver Fangs are lauded, but how that translates into inherited nobility in the time of the Apocalypse has greatly come into question — perhaps most surprisingly among the young Garou of the tribe itself.

Patron Spirit

Falcon is the Patron Spirit of the Silver Fangs, and his keen sight and noble bearing inspire the Silver Fangs to pursue their goals, and to inspire others to follow them in that enterprise. Falcon and the Silver Fangs are associated with Honor.

Favor: Falcon calls upon the Silver Fangs to lead, both by example and in demeanor. Silver Fangs can add one die to Persuasion or Leadership dice pools related to making others follow their advice, suggestions, or outright orders.

Ban: Falcon is a proud spirit, and dishonor brings great shame to him. If a Silver Fang takes an action that causes them to risk chagrin or losing Renown, they may recover only a single Willpower at the start of the next session, instead of their Composure or Resolve rating.

Silver Fang Archetypes

Local Celebrity

The Local Celebrity has practically made a career out of looking great and knowing the right people. People who want to do them favors seem to be everywhere, which contrasts greatly with their completely fucked credit rating and their willingness to seek "crash space" when the need to lie low arises. All those fancy clothes come from maxed charge cards or secondhand-store wizardry; all those drink tabs are comped by friendly bartenders; even that flash car is a loaner. And why not? The Local Celebrity knows that you can't take it with you, and that they're likely to meet a gruesome end as part of the hairy secret they're hiding. Live in the now!

Hetman

Not every war makes the front pages, and not every war ends when the media says it does. The Hetman's fighting one of those wars, unglamorously and off the books, in a country that no one's heard of, but that doesn't mean the fight isn't happening against the usual assholes who think the country is theirs to take and sell off piece by piece. Money's not a problem (there's always money, usually from some other assholes, but the Hetman will cross that bridge later), and there's no shortage of violent volunteers willing to bleed for pay. It's the Hetman's job to turn those violent volunteers into organized fighters and not just a bloodthirsty mob. That's the kind of leadership that inspires loyalty — *unquestioning* loyalty.

Glory-Days QB

You shoulda seen it — fourth and nine, five points behind, but the Glory-Days QB dug deep, rallied the Trojans, and sailed a perfect spiral over the Lions' heads and into the endzone, where the WR hauled it in for the win. A winner never quits and a quitter never wins, and if the Glory-Days QB gets hurt, they just rub a little dirt on it and get back in the game. Now that they've found that their life is more than Friday-night lights, though, that same never-say-die spirit keeps them going, giving a hundred and ten percent.

Noble-in-Exile

Bearing and nobility mark the Silver Fangs, but to some, that legacy is a millstone. Unsure of what Falcon sees in them, the Noble-in-Exile can't seem to not tarnish their self-image, indulging in any number of vices, indiscretions, and unseemly habits because that's all they've ever known, and they can afford it, because the family money runs deep and old. When it comes down to what's important — fighting for Gaia and opposing the Wyrm — the Noble-in-Exile is as enthusiastic and passionate as any other Garou, and perhaps even more so. When it's not time to lead the charge, though, the Noble-in-Exile can be found in the bottom of a bottle, passed out on a brothel bed, having forgotten to eat for the past three days. ■

CHAPTER FOUR

Characters

> Be thankful you weren't cursed with perfection. If you were perfect, there'd be nothing for you to achieve with your life. Imperfection is the source of every action….We're not supposed to be perfect. We're supposed to be useful.
>
> — LEONARD PELTIER, *PRISON WRITINGS: MY LIFE IS MY SUN DANCE*

In the world of **Werewolf: The Apocalypse**, your character is your "game piece" — a distinct, individual Garou with their own goals and interpretations of their duty to Gaia. This chapter helps you to define them, from the Traits that represent how they interact with the World of Darkness to the characteristics that make them different from the other players' characters, and from the allies and antagonists portrayed by the Storyteller.

It's also important to consider the role your character will have in the pack while working closely with other werewolves. For this reason, we recommend having the troupe create characters together, so that a sense of pack purpose emerges, as well as a strong individual character identity. This time also offers an excellent opportunity to have everyone contribute to the Chronicle Tenets, which serve to define some thematic boundaries. For more information on running a "session zero" that helps the troupe collectively create characters and define Chronicle Tenets, see Chapter 7: Storytelling.

Remember, too, that **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** deals with mature themes and difficult subject matter — before you dive into telling your troupe's tales, take care to establish any boundaries necessary to ensure respectful play. See the Appendix on p. 320 for more information on this approach.

Character Creation Summary

Choose Concept, Auspice, and Tribe
Allocate Attributes (see p. 85)
- Take one Attribute at 4; three Attributes at 3; four Attributes at 2; one Attribute at 1
- Record Health (Stamina + 3) and Willpower (Composure + Resolve)

Allocate Skills
- Choose a spread; see p. 89

Allocate Advantages (see p. 97)
- 7 points of Advantages, 2 points of Flaws
- Allocate Renown: 2 Renown based on tribe's Patron Spirit, 1 additional Renown of another type
- Choose three Gifts — one Native Gift, one Auspice Gift, and one Tribe Gift — and one Rite (see Gifts, Rites, and Gear on p. 145)

Choose Touchstones (see p. 108)

WHY AND WHO?

Every Garou has a cause. Whether they're staunch zealots for Gaia or reluctant monsters navigating the alienating life of a werewolf, they believe in something, and they do what they for reasons dear to them.

Some of your character's Traits will let you quantify what they believe, thus helping you to understand why your character can do what they do. Certain Traits also grant systemic reasons for advancing those causes and ways of dealing with the consequences they create.

CONCEPT

Your character concept is like a pitch: a high-level hook, your character's "thing." "Werewolf soldier-of-fortune" or "drug-addled shapeshifter oracle" or "Edward Snowden, but he exposes corporate malfeasance." If you know the **Werewolf** setting, you might have a concept that pairs particularly well with a tribe or auspice: "arms dealer" might be a perfect fit for a Shadow Lord or "disillusioned priest" for a theurge.

Remember that for many characters, being Garou is a full-time job. Those that manage to uphold a human life in parallel to their duty of Gaia do so with a lot of effort, luck, or both. Most Garou have a human history, however. A good question to ask when creating a character is "What kind of life did their Rage issues force them to leave behind?"

Think about the pack taking shape and the other players' characters whom you'll be alongside. Come up with concepts that play interestingly off those packmates. Farida creates an ex-cop driven off the force, so you create a former labor organizer with a history of taking things too far.

Born of Wolves

Creating a Garou descended from wolves does not require any special systems, and such a character is created using rules no different to human-born. Rather, try to imagine what kind of challenges and aptitudes a wolf finding itself in human shape and in human society would have. A wolf-born Garou would likely have a high rating in Animal Ken, Stealth, and Survival, while dots in Driving and Technology would be few or absent entirely. Advantages and Flaws such as Spirit Pacts with animal spirits and Destitute can be used to further illustrate the feral history of the character, depending on the time since their First Change.

It's your responsibility to create a character who works with the pack or, at least, doesn't sabotage the group or the game. That said, conflicts are bound to arise between packmates, and those conflicts make for interesting stories — your character and Farida's probably don't see things entirely the same way, for example.

Decide why your Garou joined their werewolf packmates, and why they stay together. Do they have an immediate common enemy, or a mutual change they want to see happen in their community? Are they mystically or politically connected? "Complementary auspices or tribes" works perfectly well, especially if you're new to Werewolf. More robust and character-driven answers will take shape the further you grow familiar with the game. Play will help, as well.

AUSPICE AND TRIBE

A Garou's auspice and tribe play a significant role in how they face the era of Apocalypse. Substantial information on auspice and tribe can be found in their own chapter — see p. 55.

ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS

When a werewolf wants to smooth-talk their way past a vigilant spirit, disembowel the gang of rapacious fomori pursuing them, or dig through the ruins of a neglected caern, they use both their natural Attributes and learned Skills in an attempt to succeed. Even when lacking any special training, a werewolf can use their innate Physical, Social, or Mental Traits to attempt the task at hand.

Attribute and Skill ratings range from 1 (inferior) through 2 (average) to 5 (superlative), though ratings of 0 are possible. For an Attribute, 0 indicates actual debility. For a Skill, 0 merely signifies a lack of training or experience. A Skill of 3 might indicate veteran prowess, a Skill of 4 means an expert level; someone with Skill 5 is probably the best in the city or even in the nation. Most people get by perfectly well, and even make a living, with 2 in a frequently used Skill.

ATTRIBUTES

A character's Attributes indicate raw potential, the individual's basic ability to interact with the world and others in it.

At character creation, take one Attribute at 4; three Attributes at 3; four Attributes at 2; one Attribute at 1.

Physical Attributes

Physical Attributes measure a character's general strength, agility, and stamina. Strong, quick, or tough werewolves might look muscle-bound, graceful, or meaty, or they could appear sinewy, lean, or even just possessed of a supernatural mettle beyond what their frame suggests.

STRENGTH

Strength governs how much you can lift, how hard you can punch, and how much force you can push your body to exert.

(The rough amount you can deadlift without an Attribute test appears in parentheses below.)

- • You can easily crush a beer can. (20 kg: a Christmas tree, a stop sign)
- •• You are physically average. (45 kg: a toilet)
- ••• You might be able to break open a wooden door. (115 kg: a large human, an empty coffin, a refrigerator)
- •••• You are a prime physical specimen, perhaps with visible musculature. (180 kg: a full coffin, an empty dumpster)
- ••••• Absolute unit, you are a true powerhouse and can probably break open a metal fire door, tear open a chain-link fence, or snap open a chained gate. (250 kg: a motorcycle, a piano)

DEXTERITY

Dexterity governs your agility and grace, how swiftly you avoid incoming violence, and how much fine motor control you possess when up against the clock.

- • You're a bit clumsy; balance and dodging are a challenge.
- •• Your sprint is natural, and sometimes you appear graceful.

••• Your agility is impressive, and your coordination is as good as any trained amateur.

•••• You could excel at acrobatics and move in a way few humans can.

••••• Your movements are like liquid, almost superhuman.

STAMINA

Your physical resistance: Stamina absorbs physical harm, such as a speeding bullet or a rival werewolf's slashing claws, and lets you persevere through hazards and arduous effort.

Your Stamina + 3 equals your Health (see p. 88).

• Even lesser exertions make you winded.

•• You can take a beating, but consider suing for peace.

••• Several days of hard hiking with a backpack is no problem for you.

•••• You could win a marathon or endure copious amounts of pain, at least physically.

••••• A cardio virtuoso, you never even break a sweat.

Social Attributes

As social creatures, Garou have great cause to use interpersonal skills, and their culture is richer for it. Social Attributes determine first impressions, as well as the character's ability to charm, inspire, and motivate people. In addition to impressions made on physical individuals, spirits also respond well to social acumen — when some point of relatedness can be found with them.

CHARISMA

Charisma measures your natural charm, presence, and sex appeal. If you have it, it draws people to you. Charisma doesn't always depend on good looks, which are their own Merit (See "Looks," p. 98).

• You can speak clearly, though few people care to listen.

•• Generally likable, you may even have friends.

••• People trust you implicitly, and you easily make friends.

•••• You possess significant personal appeal and draw followers readily.

••••• Pure animal magnetism, that's you.

MANIPULATION

Manipulation is your ability to convince others of your point of view, lie believably, and walk away after duping a mark without anyone being any the wiser.

• As long as you stay honest, you can convince people to do what you want.

•• Your ability to deceive outstrips the resistance of the weak-willed and simple-minded.

••• You never have to pay full price for anything.

•••• You could be a cult leader or a successful lawyer.

••••• You could convince people to give the surplus value of their labor to someone who simply owns things for a living by calling it "freedom."

COMPOSURE

Composure allows you to remain calm, to command your emotions, and to put others at ease despite anxiety. It also represents your ability to stay cool in everything from firefights to intimate encounters.

Your Composure + Resolve equals your Willpower (see p. 88).

- The slightest insult or confrontation raises your hackles.
- •• You can subdue your bestial instincts in most nonhostile situations.
- ••• Others look to you for guidance when the blood spatter hits the fan.
- •••• You can effortlessly bluff at cards and negotiate multimillion-dollar deals without any tells.
- ••••• You probably wouldn't have paid $44B for Twitter.

Mental Attributes

Mental Attributes represent the capacity for learning, intuition, and focus. High Mental Attributes might indicate native genius, superb education, or a burning desire to know why. Low Mental Attributes might derive from naiveté, ignorance, or just incapacity at thinking. After the First Change, some Garou may experience a mental awakening that parallels the way their physical bodies become capable of superhuman feats.

INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence measures your ability to reason, research, and apply logic. You can recall and analyze information from books or from your senses. No puzzle or mystery can thwart the truly intelligent.

- You can read and write competently, though some terms confound you.
- •• You are smart enough to realize your limitations.
- ••• You are bright, able to piece together clues without difficulty.
- •••• You're not only knowledgeable, you have theories about how people come to know things and can improve that process.
- ••••• Genius is a humble term for the depths and range of your intellect.

WITS

Wits indicate thinking quickly and reacting correctly on little information, reaction time and split-second decisions. "You hear a sound" is Wits; so is "The band's PR agent isn't making eye contact with you as she says that the musicians hadn't heard about the disappearances from their concerts." Wits let you smell an ambush or answer the Shadow Lord at the sept right away, instead of thinking of the best response the next night.

- You get the point eventually, but it may take some explaining.
- •• You can bet the odds in poker or apply the emergency brake in time. Usually.
- ••• You can analyze a situation and quickly work out the best escape route.
- •••• You are never caught on the back foot and always come up with a clever riposte.
- ••••• You think and respond more quickly than most people can comprehend.

RESOLVE

Resolve provides focus and determination, and it measures concentration and mental fortitude. Resolve powers all-night watches and blocks out distractions, especially in a modern, technological society rife with incentives to shift your attention elsewhere.

Your Composure + Resolve equals your Willpower (see p. 88).

- • You have minimal focus for all but the most pressing things.
- •• You can settle in for the long haul, as long as it's not too long.
- ••• Distracting you takes more effort than most other people want to spend.
- •••• You can brute-force your way to a deduction past any obstacles.
- ••••• You can think in a gunfight or patrol the entirety of the perimeter and then clean up every shell casing or spilled bit of gore.

HEALTH

Health measures a character's physical wellbeing, such as how much violence they can withstand, whether an illness may prove debilitating for them, or what they suffer after exposure to a toxic environment. Health is a tracker, with both a maximum rating and a temporary pool of points.

A character's maximum Health rating equals their Stamina + 3. As such, a character's Health increases if their Stamina increases. Additional Health boxes cannot (normally) be purchased with experience points or during character creation, except as a result of increasing Stamina.

A werewolf's Health varies greatly during a chronicle, a story, and even single scenes — Garou encounter frequent physical threats. For more information on Health, damage, healing, and regeneration, see p. 127.

WILLPOWER

Willpower measures a character's confidence, mental stability, and competence at overcoming unfavorable odds. Like Health, Willpower is a tracker, with both a maximum rating and a temporary pool of points.

A character's maximum Willpower rating equals their Composure + Resolve. You cannot buy extra Willpower, either during character creation or with experience

points, but you can get more through increased Composure or Resolve.

A character's Willpower pool probably fluctuates a lot during the course of a story or chronicle. It is spent every time a player uses a Willpower point to enable their character to do something extraordinary or to resist unwanted impulses. Social conflict can also drain Willpower. For more information on spending Willpower, see p. 122. For more information on Willpower damage, see p. 127.

SKILLS

Skills are the Traits used to describe your general fields of competency and what you've learned to do. Whereas Attributes represent your raw potential, Skills represent the ways you've learned to use that potential. You may not need anything but brute strength to smash through a door — but if you're trying to use sheer muscle power to force an engine part into place without breaking anything, you'd better have some understanding of mechanics.

Like Attributes, Skills are spread across the Physical, Social, and Mental categories. Each Skill typically covers a broad range of aptitudes. When rolling dice, you may pair a Skill with an appropriate Attribute to properly

depict the combination of potential and know-how that's necessary for getting things done. (See "Dice Pools" on p. 118.)

Note that the Skill categories are only generalizations. Although Academics (for example) is usually paired with Mental Attributes to form pools, it is entirely feasible for the Storyteller to call for a Composure + Academics test (for the character to keep a straight face while presenting an intentionally falsified theory) or Stamina + Academics (when forced to apply advanced knowledge under physical duress).

At character creation, pick one Skill distribution.

* **Jack of all trades:** One Skill at 3; eight Skills at 2; ten Skills at 1
* **Balanced:** Three Skills at 3; five Skills at 2; seven Skills at 1
* **Specialist:** One Skill at 4; three Skills at 3; three Skills at 2; three Skills at 1

Take one Skill Specialty. Add free Specialties to Academics, Craft, Performance, and Science Skills.

Skill Specialties

Characters receive one free Specialty during character creation to apply to any Skill, and they can buy further Specialties with experience points.

A Specialty represents a particular expertise in one aspect of a Skill. It's a field where a character may be especially practiced, have a personal aptitude, or be engaged in deeper study.

If the Storyteller decides a character is attempting a task that falls under their Specialty, the player gains one extra die for their dice pool. A character may apply only one of their Specialties to a single roll. A character can have only as many Specialties as they have dots in the Skill (unless otherwise specified, as with Craft).

Each Skill includes sample Specialties, but this list isn't exhaustive. Players can consult the Storyteller to develop other Specialties that more precisely model their characters.

Storytellers shouldn't allow Specialties that are so broad that they always, or even usually, apply to the uses of a Skill. Specific martial arts styles, for example, should not be treated as Specialties of Brawl: Because any use of Brawl could entail a Muay Thai strike, taking Muay Thai as a Specialty would effectively equal a free extra die in every Brawl test.

Four Skills come with one automatic Specialty when acquired: Academics, Craft, Performance, and Science.

Physical Skills

Physical Skills depend entirely, or at least in large part, on physical control, aptitude, or effort.

ATHLETICS

Athletics describes an aptitude for competitive physical performance, whether against another athlete or against the parameters of a sporting-type challenge.

Athletics allows you to outpace someone in pursuit, leap out of the path of an oncoming car, and climb or swim with vigor. A character can use Athletics in place of any Physical combat Skill in a conflict roll, but in that case, they never inflict any hits on their opponent, no matter how many successes they roll. (See "Dodging" on p. 125.)

- You were always attentive in gym class, and you still have a spring in your step.
- •• You've had some training, or you have a remarkable knack with sporting-themed physical activity.
- ••• You are fit as a fiddle and excel at sports.
- •••• An exemplary athlete.
- ••••• Olympic records await you; only a very few peak humans can achieve what you can.

Specialties: Acrobatics, Climbing, Endurance, Jumping, Parkour, Swimming, Throwing

BRAWL

Brawl enables characters to hit their target when they swing a fist, boot, or claw. As long as you have no weapon in hand, the attack constitutes a brawl, from graceful martial arts to drunken fistfights.

For werewolves especially, using the monstrous fangs and claws of their shapeshifting forms (and even the natural weapons of the lupus form) usually counts as Brawl. See p. 134 for more information on the forms.

- You were the snarling and snapping rascal in your den.
- •• You received some training in hitting someone hard and accurately.
- ••• You more than hold your own in a scrap.

•••• Either you received institutional training, or you learned the hard way in numerous werewolf escapades.

••••• You could win MMA championships, even without the use of your Garou advantages.

Specialties: Animals, Armed Humans, Bar Fights, Ceremonial Combat, Grappling, Unarmed Humans

CRAFT

Craft broadly encompasses artisanry, creation of items and utilities beautiful or functional, and arts and crafts from throwing pottery to architecture and interior design. Some Garou Rites also require knowledge of this Skill to be properly performed.

When you take this Skill, you get a free Specialty.

- You are an amateur, but you know what you're doing.
- •• Your crafting is admired for its functionality.
- ••• Your creations can be beautiful or horrifying, but their intent is always clear.
- •••• Your skill is highly respected among those who are aware of it, whether they are supernatural or mundane themselves.
- ••••• You are a virtuoso, capable of visionary breakthroughs in your chosen medium.

Specialties: Carpentry, Caern Rites, Design, Painting, Sculpting, Sewing, Weaponsmithing

DRIVING

In most cases, mere driving isn't particularly difficult. The Driving Skill connotes ability to drive speedily and safely under adverse conditions or in stressful situations: to drive off-road; speed away from ambushes; win street races; and escape from pursuit by hunters, police, or security forces.

- You are a cautious driver, unlikely to make any mistakes.
- •• You can put your foot down without much fear of an accident, providing visibility is good.
- ••• You have won car chases and earned a reputation in certain circles.
- •••• You could be a stunt driver; few can match your skill and knowledge.
- ••••• Wanna race for pinks?

Specialties: All-Terrain Vehicles, Construction Equipment, Evasion, Motorcycles, Street Racing, Stunts, Tailing, Trucks, Vintage Models

FIREARMS

Leaving a victim torn to shreds will raise the wrong eyebrows. Leaving a victim with holes in their head? Just another Saturday night in a rough city like this one. Garou use Firearms not only for human reasons (efficiency and thrills) but also to avoid revealing the secret of their existence. This Skill comprises familiarity with small arms, from holdout pistols to assault rifles. It also includes other trigger-operated weapons, such as crossbows and shoulder-fired rocket-propelled grenades, as well as archery bows. Finally, it encompasses cleaning, unjamming, and rapidly reloading such weapons.

- You've fired a gun a few times, at the range or in less-formal circumstances.
- •• You know (and know how) to keep your weapon clean, take it apart, and reassemble it.
- ••• You've exchanged fire with hostiles and come out the other side.
- •••• You can handle trick shots, called shots, running shots — really anything ending in a gunshot.

••••• If it's in range, you can hit it dead center.

Specialties: Crossbows, Gun Dealing, Gunsmithing, Handloading Ammunition, Quick Draw, Sniper, Trick Shooting

Storytellers should discourage Specialties in "Combat Shooting," "Pistols," or even "Glock 17s." A Specialty in a personal "signature weapon" might be allowable, because if you carry into every gunfight the personally engraved Colt that's balanced to your grip, you're much more likely to drop it, have it stolen, or have its ballistic fingerprint connect you to a series of murders.

LARCENY

This Skill entails familiarity with the tools and techniques for picking locks, planting bugs, deactivating standard burglar and car alarms, manual forgery, hot-wiring automobiles, or even safecracking, as well as countless forms of breaking and entering. Characters also use it for setting up "unbeatable" security systems or deducing how and where systems failed during a break-in. Doesn't matter which side of the law you're on, Larceny relates to the doing of dirty deeds as well as to the countermeasures.

These days, most high-end security systems feature computer controls, video surveillance, or electronic alarms, so they might also involve the Technology Skill to defeat.

- • You can pick a simple lock or a careless pocket.
- •• You can hot-wire a car or shoplift with ease.
- ••• You can identify the likely locations of security cameras and alarms, the better to bypass them.
- •••• You can defeat a keypad, retool an ID card, or crack a safe.
- ••••• You can break into — or out of — the vault at a multinational bank.

Specialties: Alarms, Forgery, Grand Theft Auto, Housebreaking, Lockpicking, Pickpocketing, Safecracking, Security Analysis

MELEE

Use Melee to wield such handheld weapons as knives, chains, baseball bats, or klaives with prowess. Feel free to improvise with a length of rebar or, hell, maybe a manhole cover, if you can swing it.

- • You can wield a bat or blade and mostly strike the people you intend to.
- •• Your clear competence with a weapon in hand should give attackers pause.
- ••• You know when to use Thibault against Capo Ferro, but you keep your Agrippa at the ready.
- •••• The fools brought a gun to your knife fight.
- ••••• Your weapon moves, instinctively, like an extension of you.

Specialties: Axes, Chains, Clubs, Foils, Disarming Blows, Garrotes, Improvised Weapons, Knives, Stakes, Swords

STEALTH

Stealth allows a character to shadow a target, whether in an urban environment or some remote wilderness. They benefit from the ability to spy, sneak, and blend in with crowds when needed. Lupus-form Garou are often quite adept at stalking, particularly if they've grown up in wolf communities that hunt their every meal.

- • Spotting you under the cover of darkness or in camouflage proves difficult.
- •• You can sneak by casual observers and stalk unknowing victims without drawing any attention.
- ••• Moving softly and hiding easily, you evade patrolling guards.
- •••• Your subtle, silent passage could make you the bane of creatures born as prey.
- ••••• Your victim doesn't even know there's a there when you're there.

Specialties: Ambushes, Crowds, Disguise, Hiding, Shadowing, Urban, Wilderness

SURVIVAL

Survival conveys the ability to exist in the wild and under adverse conditions. Navigating by the stars, establishing a makeshift shelter, and noticing the spoor of prey and predators are all parts of it, as is foraging for food and seeking cover. Whether in city parks or amid trackless wastes, the intent is the same.

- • You know the trails and wilderness of your locale.
- •• You spend more time outdoors than inside, and you can probably track anyone who possesses a lesser degree of your craft.
- ••• You can subsist when denied "home," setting traps and building shelter as necessary.

•••• Like the true predator you are, you can catch as catch can.

••••• Your hardiness is a lesson to all Garou.

Specialties: Desert, Hunting, Jungle, Tracking, Traps, Shelters, Urban, Woodlands

Social Skills

Social Skills operate in the space between humans, Garou, and even spirits and stranger things. Although these Skills depend on your ability and your personality, the other party's response contributes something to the effort. Without proficiency on your part, that response tends to be negative.

ANIMAL KEN

Animal Ken allows you to manage, pacify, and even befriend fauna. This Skill lets you predict how an animal might react in a given situation, train a domesticated creature, and even try to soothe beasts — or enrage them. Note, though, that using Animal Ken won't allow you to flawlessly command animals, nor is their response instantaneous — Animal Ken is a Skill, not a supernatural power in and of itself.

Animal Ken also makes for familiarity with various animal spoor, remains, and even behavior. "Something bigger than your average wolf must have made these bite marks."

Without this Skill, most creatures pointedly avoid the obviously predatory Garou.

• Animals shy from you but do not bolt or snap.

•• Animals are docile around you, acting as if you aren't there, unless you build a rapport with them.

••• Animals treat you as if you were a familiar, friendly companion, unless provoked to do otherwise.

•••• You draw animals into your orbit. Few hostile creatures maintain their aggression in your presence.

••••• You can predict animals' feelings and thoughts, and they can feel and act on yours.

Specialties: Attack Training, Cats, Dogs, Falconry, Horses, Pacification, Rats, Snakes, Wolves

ETIQUETTE

Etiquette is the ability to identify and respond to current social conventions, set new protocols, and please everyone around with your good graces. It represents all forms of respecting customs, from tea rooms and hierarchies of royal address to showing proper respect for Renown around the moot-fires, and is also useful when conducting certain Rites.

• You know the conversational difference between the various inflections of "get the fuck out of here."

•• You know the rules of behavior in all the popular nightspots.

••• You impress others with your command of politeness, deference, and grace.

•••• Your behavior sets trends, especially if you do something to buck an etiquette norm.

••••• You're Beau Brummel when need be, but you could get away with being Lord Byron.

Specialties: Celebrities, Corporate, Garou, One-Percenter, Spirits, Secret Society

INSIGHT

Insight grants you the ability to interpret body language, note subtle cues in expression and tone, and distinguish truth from lies. It also allows you to perceive and understand the motives behind another's actions.

• You can see right through hollow boasts.

•• You pick up on the hidden emotion between humans and among Garou.

••• It's hard to put one over on you; you're almost never the mark.

•••• You are a veritable lie detector. Only the most mendacious can slip one past you.

••••• People are as books to you, and they are printed in large type, easy to read.

Specialties: Discerning Lies, Empathy, Interrogation, Motives, Phobias, Spirits, Vices

INTIMIDATION

Intimidation is the power to bully, coerce, threaten, and strongarm your way to a social victory. Werewolves who rely on Intimidation never hesitate to crush the wills — and occasionally the skulls — of their rivals.

• Your words are cudgels.

•• You can push your way around most humans without difficulty.

••• Your swagger and cruel behavior have earned you your reputation.

•••• You're far past mere physical threats.

••••• Even higher-Renown Garou may step back as you loom.

Specialties: Extortion, Insults, Interrogation, Physical Coercion, Stare Downs, Veiled Threats

LEADERSHIP

Leadership grants you the ability to lead a crowd, command a detachment, boost the morale of your supporters, and subdue (or provoke...) a riot. As Garou Renown rises, so, too, does expectation, and esteemed werewolves are often expected to lead ones of humbler Renown.

• You have led informal clubs and can organize packmates of like mind.

•• Your voice makes itself heard at the moot, and even your superiors sometimes listen.

••• You can command on the battlefield and lead soldiers to their deaths.

•••• You can inspire the injured and dying to action, so long as you are there to lead them.

••••• Your presence could rouse an entire sept to hurl itself into the very lair of the Wyrm.

Specialties: Command, Down But Not Out, Inspiration, Oratory, Team Dynamics, War Pack

PERFORMANCE

Performance covers a range of arts, from dance to poetry and comedy to melodrama. You may be a gifted performer in your own right or simply an enthusiastic student of the arts. Many Rites rely on being able to put on a good show as well.

When you take this Skill, you get a free Specialty.

• You are the life of the party, but you wouldn't take your act on stage.

•• You have performed for others, to mixed reviews. Some love you, others have no opinion.

••• You are an expert student of your chosen lively art.

•••• You perform your practiced art form stunningly, winning over even the most curmudgeonly critics.

••••• You play an audience's emotions as if you're strumming a familiar instrument.

Specialties: Comedy, Dance, Drama, Drums, Guitar, Moot-Songs, Poetry, Rites, Rap, Singing, Violin, Wind Instruments

In theory, the Storyteller could break down these Specialties endlessly — can even a five-dot pop star also perform as a coloratura soprano and a country crooner? But in practice, unless the whole chronicle happens in a musical or theatrical milieu, allow broader Specialties.

PERSUASION

Use Persuasion when trying to bring others around to your point of view — or convince others that you know what's best for them. Skilled persuaders make effective arguments and organize their positions well, but they can also play on victims' emotions and appeal to peers' reason. Persuasion applies in law courts and around caern-fires, in boardrooms, barrooms, and bedrooms. Some spirit-Rites also require a good grasp of this Skill.

• You can sell to a motivated buyer.

•• You can always nab a discount or get on the inside track of the latest gossip.

••• You can usually figure out a compromise in a given conflict.

•••• "I mean, sure, the Litany *says* that, but..."

••••• You may be the original silver-tongued devil.

Specialties: Bargaining, Fast Talk, Interrogation, Legal Argument, Negotiation, Nonstop Bullshit, Rhetoric

STREETWISE

Streetwise enables characters to speak the language and negotiate the societies of the streets and the underworld. You can understand code words and slang, interpret graffiti tags, and emulate gang signs. Streetwise doesn't inherently require criminality, but they do seem to overlap in many situations...

- • You know where to buy weed that isn't oregano.
- •• You know which gangs operate in the area, including their signs and rivalries. You may have your own graffiti tag.
- ••• You can tell good shit from bad, score guns, and blend seamlessly into streetlife.
- •••• When someone connected says, "I know a guy," they mean you.
- ••••• You can hire, orchestrate, or set up an alibi for almost any criminal activity, anywhere in your city.

Specialties: Arms Dealing, Black Market, Bribery, Drugs, Fence Stolen Goods, Gangs, Graffiti, Sex Trade, The Best Parties

SUBTERFUGE

Subterfuge is the art of lying convincingly, pressing an agenda, and making good excuses for bad actions. This Skill defines your talent for intrigue, secrets, and double-dealing. Subterfuge can also be used for seduction and for imitating human and wolf behavior.

- • You can tell believable, simple lies.
- •• You can hustle naive people, old or young, into giving you their things.

- ••• You can operate on multiple levels, telling lies intended to be uncovered to bolster *other* lies.
- •••• You can operate endlessly under deep cover: a perfect double agent. Maybe you are one!
- ••••• Nobody believes you have even a single dot in Subterfuge.

Specialties: Bluff, Corporate Double-Talk, Impeccable Lies, Innocence, The Long Con, Seduction

Mental Skills

Mental Skills depend almost entirely on specialized knowledge, as well as on the character's core intellectual gifts.

ACADEMICS

Academics reflects understanding, higher education, and ability to research fields within the humanities and the liberal arts. Historical study, for instance, is hardly "just academic" when considering the ubiquity of the Garou and their presence amid human societies since time out of mind.

When you take this Skill, you get a free Specialty. For foreign languages, use the Linguistics Merit (p. 98).

- • Basic primary and secondary education; a night class at community college
- •• Basic university education or tutelage from a standard mentor; a four-year degree
- ••• Advanced university education or dedicated personal tuition; an excellent four-year degree, a doctorate
- •••• Advanced specialized study beyond university, with learning in subjects few understand
- ••••• Refined and advanced scholarship; you're likely to be sought out for advice and tutelage

Specialties: African Literature, Architecture, History of Art, History (specific Field or Period), Migration Practices of Predatory Animals, Journalism, Philosophy, Research, Teaching, Theology

AWARENESS

Awareness encompasses your perceptions. The hair may stand up on the back of your neck before the fomori spring an ambush, you may spy a key dropped into the trash, or sense a lingering perfume.

- • You have a history of knowing when something is out of place.

•• You can spot erratic or pattern behavior in an individual.

••• You can see through most disguises and sense concealed dangers or hidden clues.

•••• Even when you are distracted, few things elude your notice.

••••• Your senses are preternatural.

Specialties: Ambushes, Camouflage, Concealed Objects, Hearing, Instincts, Smell, Sight, Traps, Wilderness

FINANCE

Finance allows you to identify trends in the market, invest well, manipulate stocks, and know when a fall is coming. It also lets you assess — and trace — the wealth of others and broker financial deals. You can generally appraise art, property, or any other noncriminal goods, as well as trace a money flow that someone (or something) wants to keep untraced.

• You can run a business and keep books.

•• You can manage a corporate division or bank branch; you file impeccably plausible tax returns.

••• Thanks to international trading, you make a fine broker on foreign stock exchanges.

•••• Investment banks follow your financial lead. You have no trouble concealing fraud.

••••• You can make money do anything, including stick to your pockets or crash cryptocurrencies.

Specialties: Appraisal, Banking, Black Markets, Corporate Finance, Currency Manipulation, Emerging Markets, Forensic Accounting, Meme Stock Speculation, Money Laundering

INVESTIGATION

Investigation allows you to unravel cases of mundane and mysterious doings, spot clues, interpret them, and trace missing persons. Garou find this Skill especially useful when connecting the dots between immediate tragedies and the exploiters funding them, as well as when performing certain Rites.

• You love a good mystery novel and fancy yourself an amateur sleuth.

•• You have a firm knowledge of criminology and the telltale signs of gross malfeasance.

••• You are, or could be, a detective by trade. Nothing at a crime scene escapes you.

•••• You could be consulted by local detectives when unknown parties have risked the community's safety.

••••• You set riddles for others and may live an enigmatic existence few can penetrate.

Specialties: Criminology, Deduction, Forensics, Missing Persons, Murder, Racketeering, Traffic Analysis

MEDICINE

Medicine enables you to give health aid to people or animals who need it and to diagnose causes of death or sickness. It also lets you use medical equipment, prescribe drugs, and stanch (or encourage) rapid blood flow. Characters use Medicine to heal Aggravated Health damage (see p. 129).

• You know basic anatomy and how blood flow differs for a vein versus an artery. You can perform CPR and other first aid.

•• You can comfortably treat minor traumas and illnesses and narrow down a diagnosis. You may be a nurse or EMT.

••• Your training allows you to perform major operations and treat serious injuries. You may be an internist, pediatrician, or general practitioner.

•••• You can diagnose and treat all but the rarest of illnesses. You may be a surgeon or specialist.

••••• You might be a noted medical expert, sought out for your knowledge and insight.

Specialties: First Aid, Hematology, Pathology, Pharmacy, Phlebotomy, Surgery, Trauma Care, Veterinary

OCCULT

Even though Garou are themselves creatures of supernatural origin, that doesn't convey any inherent understanding of the fine details of beings other than werewolves that share such origins. Even to the Garou, the Umbra remains a strange place, to say nothing of liminal parts of the world that don't conform to the werewolf perspective.

Occult represents knowledge of the mystical world — whether the rites (or Rites) and practices of various cultural notions, such as the Umbra, or knowledge of esoterica to any degree. You can recognize occult sigils and folk-magic practices, effective or not.

• You know a handful of the world's secrets at a rudimentary level.

•• You can sift the truth out of pop occult nonsense.

••• You have firsthand experience of something inexplicable, even by Garou standards.

•••• You could execute a physical model of Garou cosmology with some degree of accuracy.

••••• Theurges and Silent Striders consult you on obscure lore.

Specializations: Alchemy, Faeries, Ghosts, Goetia, Grimoires, Metaphysics, Parapsychology, Spirits, Umbra

POLITICS

Politics covers diplomacy, both human and Garou, as well as the bureaucracy of human institutions. You can work with, and possibly put pressure on, city government or levels even higher. Among Garou, you know the inside scoop on which packs claim which territories, who's nursing a grudge with whom, and where more than a few bodies are buried. Literally.

• You follow human political affairs in your region, and you know "the lay of the land" as regards local Garou politics.

•• You can apply influence at a local level, or you know who can.

••• You could run political campaigns or political machines, or make waves among werewolves as an up-and-comer.

•••• You know the true personalities of the real movers and shakers, human and Garou, in your area.

••••• You're either acknowledged now as an eminence grise or will be someday.

Specialties: City Government, Diplomacy, Media, National Politics, Pack Territories, State or Provincial Politics

SCIENCE

Science is a broad remit, covering everything from basic principles of life to the understanding of universal entropy. The laws of science govern the physical world — mostly — and Garou who are a part of that world study them.

Levels of the Science Skill roughly match ones in Academics, from some college to world-famous scholar. Also as in Academics, characters with a rating in Science get a free Specialty.

• You dabble in the sciences and understand the principles behind the building blocks of life.

•• Your study goes deeper than the surface, explaining much why as well as much what.

••• You make an excellent scientific manager; you can run a laboratory, interpret scientific findings, and come up to speed on scientific research in most fields. You can repair scientific equipment.

•••• You are an expert in your field and in persons allied to it.

••••• Few peers match your understanding, and others come to you for guidance.

Specialties: Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Demolitions, Engineering, Genetics, Geology, Mathematics, Physics

TECHNOLOGY

As a Skill, Technology exists as something of a moving target; it governs the operation and understanding of "modern" technological developments, with an impres-

sionistic definition for modern. A hundred years ago, Technology might have most often concerned itself with steam engines and electricity. Now, it means computers and computer systems. Of course, now computers govern almost everything, including steam turbines in power plants and electrical systems in office buildings.

- You know how to upgrade a home PC and keep it protected from viruses.
- •• You can conceal your IP, operate drones, and fake a digital photograph.
- ••• You can create and unleash your own viruses without fear of detection.
- •••• You could personally manage cybersecurity for a business or region.
- ••••• On the Internet, nobody knows you're a wolf — or that you're there at all.

Specialties: Artillery, Coding, Computer Construction, Data Mining, Energy Systems, Hacking, Networks, Phones, Surveillance Systems

ADVANTAGES

In addition to unique Attributes and discrete Skills, Garou characters have many possible Advantages when they start play, whether a knack with languages or a squad of sympathetic bat-swinging hooligans available on demand. Like everything else, we demarcate Advantages with dots, usually ranging from one to five. There's no penalty for having zero dots in an Advantage — that's just normal. Few rolls directly involve Advantages, though the Storyteller might call for Intelligence + Linguistics to decipher a departed elder Garou's personal journals written on tattered leather, or Subterfuge + Contacts to plant amid the downtown demimonde a rumor about that goddamn Silver Fang.

Advantages are divided into Merits and Backgrounds. Flaws, the flip side of Advantages, cause ongoing problems for the character.

Note that the Storyteller can disallow or limit Advantages that come into conflict with the chronicle setting.

Gaining and Losing Advantages

The Storyteller should respect points spent or gained on Advantages and Flaws. Losses to Advantages should be considered temporary unless experience points are also reimbursed (or in the case of Flaws spent) to make the new situation permanent. A player should, for example, be able to replace a lost Contact, or receive the attention of a new Stalker, if the former met with an unfortunate accident.

MERITS

Merits describe knacks, gifts, and just plain good fortune inherent to the character. Although something could happen in the course of play to change them — especially once weird realities start to overlap — characters' Merits remain fairly constant over the course of the story.

Caern

Core to Garou society and practices, caerns are nodes of spiritual energy, and much effort is spent on finding, maintaining, and defending these places. Packs are often part of a caern's sept or are otherwise dedicated to finding a new one to call their own. While the awakening and nurturing of a caern is usually in the purview of story,

this Advantage allows a character to get a head start (or a handicap) in these pursuits.

See Caerns on pp. 190–195 for more information,

- **Caern Access:** You are allowed to make use of a specific Caern belonging to another sept, as long as your actions do not interfere with their activities or jeopardizes the safety of the caern. You should agree on the nature of the caern and the warding sept with the Storyteller.
- ••••• **Awakened Caern:** You are part of a sept warding a caern that has already been awakened to some degree, or you are on the verge of discovering a caern of significance, already half-awakened. Add one to the caern value of the first caern you join or discover. This Merit does not stack, but multiple members can "chip in" to accumulate the five dots, at the Storyteller's discretion.

Flaw: (•) **Caern Pariah:** You have made yourself unwelcome in any and all caerns on your turf (home town or other area central to the chronicle). You either need to pay dearly for the privilege of access, usually by performing dangerous services, or resort to stealth. If caught, things are likely to escalate to violence. This does not apply to a caern whose sept you belong to, though it can provide an excuse should someone in your sept want you gone.

Day Job

Despite the fact that you're a goddamn werewolf, you somehow manage to hold down steady employment, or at least the appearance of it. This post can provide everything from an alibi for your whereabouts to the protection of your hairy secret. It doesn't necessarily provide a noteworthy income — that's Resources, though a combination of a Day Job and significant Resources can make for a curious werewolf indeed.

- **Day Job:** Efforts to obscure your Garou nature by using the job gain a one-die bonus to relevant pools, such as Subterfuge ("Wasn't me; I was at work that day") or Persuasion ("How many werewolves do you think the cable company employs to do installations?").
- •• **Corroborated Day Job:** As with Day Job, above, but individuals with whom you work (or pretend to) back up your work claims, providing substantiation beyond basic employment documents. Add two dice to similar pools as above.

Linguistics

Every character has fluency in their birth language and (unless the player and Storyteller have a reason to declare otherwise) in the dominant language of the chronicle setting. For example, a Mexican werewolf in a chronicle set in the Utah Badlands can speak and read Spanish and English. Storytellers may opt to allow Garou whose birth tongue matches that of the setting to take a second language anyway.

Each dot in Linguistics allows the character to fluently speak, write, and read one additional language apart from those two default languages.

Note that reading certain old documents or chanting in a strange dialect may impose additional Difficulty to Academics or Occult tests.

Flaw: (••) **Illiterate:** You cannot read or write. Your Academics and Science Skills are capped at 1, and you can have no Specialty in them that incorporates modern knowledge.

Looks

Not all werewolves have the glamor of a cover model or iconic actor. Some of them look even better. And some, of course, look far worse.

Looks modifiers apply only when you can be seen. The Storyteller rules whether these modifiers apply during Social conflicts on a conflict-by-conflict (or even pool-by-pool) basis.

- **Clement Lupus:** Your lupus form appears more dog-like than wolf-like, and unless they have a reason to believe so, no human onlooker who sees you in lupus form thinks that you're a wolf.
- •• **Beautiful:** You add one extra die to all appropriate Social dice pools.
- •••• **Stunning:** You add two extra dice to all appropriate Social dice pools, as above.

Flaw: (••) **Repulsive:** You lose two dice from all relevant Social dice pools.

Flaw: (•) **Ugly:** You lose one die from all relevant Social dice pools.

Safe House

Safe House represents a degree of security or distinction for one's domicile above and beyond a place to sleep and prepare meals. It may be an apartment, a house, a loft, log cabin, cave or den — whatever, so long as the Garou con-

siders it secure. A character may take both Safe House Merits if they desire.

- •• **Obscure Safe House:** Efforts to seek out the Garou and anyone with them while they're at the safe house suffer a 2-dice penalty.
- •• **Secure Safe House:** Add 2 dice to relevant pools to learn of or resist unauthorized entry into your safe house.

Some World of Darkness games treat Safe House (or its equivalent) as a more substantial Background, but for most werewolves, the place they're likely to spend the most time is the caern. The Safe House Merit should specifically not be used to represent a caern – there's a separate system for that (see p. 190). A Safe House is almost always a (mostly) mundane location, unrelated to the connection to the Umbra suggested by a caern.

Substance Abuse

Unfortunately, many Garou find themselves indulging in substances to cope with the ongoing Apocalypse and their sense of obligation to addressing it. With one of these Flaws, you have an addiction to a substance, perhaps even a supernatural one. Remember to specify the substance you use.

The player and Storyteller decide what effect the drug of choice has, but few drugs yield anything more than a temporary penalty to certain pools, no matter how good it makes the user feel about themselves or their abilities. Note that Substance Abuse is a genuine health issue and is included here to represent the systemic and narrative drawbacks of how it affects the Garou. Labeling it as a Flaw here isn't a value judgment.

Flaw: (••) **Hopeless Addiction:** Lose two dice from all pools when you did not indulge your substance of choice during the last scene, except pools for actions that immediately obtain your drug.

Flaw: (•) **Addiction:** Lose one die from all pools when you did not indulge your substance of choice during the last scene, except pools for actions that immediately obtain your drug.

Supernatural Situations

Even though Garou are themselves supernatural, sometimes greater mysteries visit themselves upon werewolves to mark them in ways unfamiliar. These Merits and Flaws don't change the Garou's werewolf nature, but they do hint at circumstances wherein lines of distinction between werewolves and other elements of the secret world aren't so absolute.

- **Moon-Quickened:** The moon inspires you more than it does other werewolves. The first time you howl at the moon on any given night, you may restore a point of Superficial Willpower damage.

••• **Moon-Riled:** The moon stokes your Rage to a degree even beyond that of most other werewolves. You gain an additional point of Rage when you first howl at the moon each night.

Flaw: (•) **Folkloric Bane:** You take Aggravated damage from a folkloric bane. Folkloric banes include:

- Holy water (damage as fire)
- A weapon wielded by a devout believer in their own faith
- A weapon adorned with moonstone (hecatolite), or moonstone itself (damage as weapon damage; simply touching a moonstone or piece of moonstone jewelry does one point of Aggravated damage)
- Some other bane you and the Storyteller agree upon

Flaw: (•) **Folkloric Block:** When faced with a folkloric block, you must shy from it or spend a Willpower point to push past or through it.

Each folkloric block you take counts as a separate one-point Flaw. Folkloric blocks include:

- Wolfsbane or other herbs considered to have mystic properties
- Holy symbols presented by any believer
- The presence of a virgin at the age of majority or older
- Seeing silver brandished (above and beyond the normal Garou aversion to silver — see p. 134)
- Being addressed three times consecutively by the name you bore before your First Change (even if it's the same as your name now)
- Some other block you and the Storyteller agree upon

Flaw: (•) **Folkloric Tell:** You bear some sort of indicator that makes people think something's unsettling about you, regardless of whether they associate the tell with werewolves specifically.

Those who discern your folkloric tell mistrust you, giving you a -1 dice pool penalty to all Social tests other than ones based on Intimidation. (In the case of this Flaw, it's the provoked response that matters, not the specific tell.)

Each folkloric tell you take counts as a separate one-point Flaw. Folkloric tells include:

- People hear howls in your presence (whether anything is actually howling or not)
- Your shadow is that of a wolf when you're in human form and human when you're in wolf form
- Milk spoils and plants wither upon your arrival
- Some other tell you and the Storyteller agree upon

Flaw: (••) **Crone's Curse:** Either some spiritual malediction has affected you and aged you rapidly, such as a Bane's disfavor or some prophetic circumstance, or you simply experienced the First Change well past your prime. Your health has suffered, and you have one box fewer on your health tracker than you otherwise would.

Flaw: (••) **Moon-Thrall:** The moon has undue sway over you. Whenever you see the moon for the first time on any given night, you must change form to glabro or hispo (and make any concomitant Rage checks).

BACKGROUNDS

Backgrounds describe advantages of relationship, circumstance, and opportunity: material possessions, social networks, and the like. Backgrounds are external Traits, not internal, and the player should always rationalize how the character came to possess them, as well as what they represent. Who are your Contacts? Why do your Allies support you? What investments do you possess that yield your four dots in Resources, and do they cause you to feel like a hypocrite? You don't have to do all of that at first, but be ready with an answer when the Storyteller asks during play, or be ready to suggest an answer that ties into the ongoing storyline.

One possibility here is that some amount of a Garou's Background may be connected to human institutions. Certainly, a werewolf's story doesn't have to include a connection to the sorts of organizations the Garou fight against — it's perfectly possible to have Allies of one's own — but some Garou experience their First Change as a result of some pang of conscience over seeing where their Resources come from or via some demonstration of Background-related soft power.

Backgrounds are discrete, not progressive, Traits. The same Background can be acquired multiple times.

EXAMPLE:

Martin purchases the Allies Background twice, once at one dot (his neighbor/ lookout) and once at three dots (a guilt-racked sheriff), representing two different Allies. Characters can also share the Safe House Background and buy into it mutually with the rest of their pack. *See p. 98.*

Allies

Allies are other people who support and help you: family, friends, or even an organization that owes you some loyalty. Although Allies usually aid you willingly, without coaxing or coercion, they are not always available to offer assistance. They have their own concerns and do only so much for the sake of your relationship. Usually, Allies appear about once per story. They're not part of the pack, and they're not Garou or spirits.

Allies can be almost anyone with some reasonable connection to you, depending on what your Storyteller will allow. You may have friends in the precinct morgue, at a tabloid newspaper or gossip blog, among railway nomads, or at a rural ecommerce fulfillment center. Allies are generally trustworthy (though they probably don't know about your werewolf nature, or even that the supernatural exists). However, nothing comes for free. If you wind up asking favors from your friend at the Border Patrol, he'll probably ask you to do him a favor in kind in the future.

Enemies are the opposite of Allies and are taken as Flaws.

You can use the Supporting Character Template rules to create Allies or Enemies when you buy them or first call upon them, and you can write them down on the Relationship Map (see p. 111), though many troupes leave this process to the Storyteller.

Build Allies or Enemies from a budget of points based on their Effectiveness and on their Reliability. The maximum points in one Ally is six. Ally or Enemy groups appear in numbers equal to the number of players' characters.

All Enemies are rated two fewer dots than their Effectiveness. For example, a Gifted individual costs three dots as an Ally but provides only one dot as a Flaw. Enemies all have the same Reliability: Whenever the Storyteller thinks they should show up, but probably at least once per story (even if indirectly).

EFFECTIVENESS

- Weak individual, probably useless in a violent or potentially violent situation.
- •• Average individual or a tight-knit group of Weak individuals (capricious dockworkers, a poorly organized union, NGO chapter)
- ••• Gifted individual or a dangerous group of Average individuals (a street gang, a celebrity entourage, a well-organized blue-collar union local)
- •••• Superlative individual, a Gifted individual potentially with supernatural powers, or a well-armed group of Gifted individuals (a private security squad, a contingent of lawyers, a team of trained athletes)

RELIABILITY

No dots: The ally cannot be called upon at will but will assist you when they are in the vicinity.

- When you call on them, they appear half the time.
- •• When you call on them, they appear within 1–10 hours (roll a die).
- ••• When you call on them, they appear as soon as possible.

Flaw: (•) **Stalker:** You have a tendency to attract people who become a tad too smitten with you for your own good. A Stalker harbors unhealthy feelings for you and desires a more substantial relationship, whether or not you agree. They may be jealous, love-maddened, desperate, opportunistic, or any combination or variation thereof. Should you rid yourself of them, another soon appears.

Supporting Character Templates

Use these templates to build Storyteller characters when full character details are unnecessary. Supporting characters are known more for what they can effect, rather than distinct Traits, as with players' characters. Advantages might be unnecessary, based on the supporting character's concept (as they might be better reflected by an action pool). Come to an agreement with the Storyteller over what the supporting character should be able to accomplish, and how. For more information on General Difficulties and pools, see "Antagonist Formats" on p. 240.

Weak Individual (2/1)

Pools: Two key action pools at 3, three at 2
Advantages: None

Average Individual (3/2)

Pools: Two key action pools at 5, three at 4, four at 3
Advantages: up to 3 points (2 points maximum Flaws)

Gifted Individual (4/2)

Pools: One key action pool at 8, two at 6, two at 4, two at 3
Advantages: up to 10 points (4 points maximum Flaws)

Superlative Individual (5/3)

Pools: Two key action pools at 10, two at 8, two at 6, two at 5
Advantages: up to 15 points (no Flaws)

Contacts

You know people — helpful people — from many different walks of life. Contacts primarily provide you with information in their areas of expertise, and they may want to exchange favors of various kinds. For different kinds of help, call on your Allies (p. 101) or Mentor (p. 104).

A Contact is someone in an excellent position to get information. They might be a police dispatcher, rather than a homicide lieutenant, or a congressional staffer, rather than a senator. Information brokers, reporters, underworld fixers, and transport drivers make excellent Contacts.

You can define your Contacts when you buy this Background or as you need to introduce them in play. Whenever you create them, make sure to add them to the Relationship Map (see p. 111).

- One Contact who can provide you with common but specialized information, such as a weed dealer or a car salesman.
- •• One Contact who can provide you with uncommon and privileged information, such as a small-time gun dealer or a psychiatrist.
- ••• One Contact who can provide you with critical and even government-classified information, such as a security systems expert, narcotics agent, or elite lobbyist.

Fame

People know your name and eagerly seek out news of your activities. You might be a movie star, rock star, or other celebrity. Fame grants pull in mass and social media; you have more ways than most people to influence what specific groups of (usually) humankind think. You probably have ways, such as a body double, to mask the fact that you're involved in things that you prefer to keep secret.

In some circumstances, the Storyteller may allow you to use Fame in a Social test dice pool, rather than some other Trait, especially to get into an otherwise exclusive venue or event. "Do you know who I am?" doesn't work everywhere, but it does work. Each level of Fame subtracts one from the Difficulty of Social tests involving your audience or supporters, so long as the test doesn't involve anything too outlandish. (If it does, consequences surely follow.)

Fame has its downside, of course — it's harder for you to tail someone unobtrusively, for example, and if groupies start hanging around the caern, that caern is probably compromised by something woefully mundane, like Instagram. You should look into taking Disguise as a Skill Specialty.

By default, Fame applies among humans, but you might make an argument for what amounts to some sort of special-case wolf Fame. Some supernatural creatures are especially aware of news and trends and might be aware of you, as well, Garou included, so the Storyteller determines whether Fame benefits apply to any given supernatural individual.

- A select subculture knows who you are and admires you.
- •• You are a local celebrity, recognized by a majority of the city.
- ••• Most people in the country know at least your name.
- •••• Everybody who even vaguely cares about social trends or your field knows something about you.
- ••••• Your Fame reaches mass national or even global audiences. You are a major movie star, stadium-filling rock act, or Internet personality.

Flaw: (••) **Infamy:** You are famous for something horrible. At the very least, the Difficulty of most reaction tests increases by the amount of the Flaw; at worst, the authorities attempt to kill or capture you on sight. You may be on a government's most wanted list, or Pentex Group might circulate your description as a dangerous individual among its various fronts.

Flaw: (•) **Dark Secret:** The Dark Secret Flaw is similar to Infamy, but your black deeds remain unknown to all but you and perhaps one or two very motivated foes. It's also easier to uncover than a truly life-threatening secret. Examples include a significant debt to a criminal or having a file with a governmental werewolf-hunting agency.

Flaw: (•) **Infamous Partner:** Your spouse, lover, or some other significant individual to you has Infamy (as above) that occasionally tarnishes you by association.

Loresheet

Loresheets represent certain ties to various events or specific factions important to Garou society. To take this Advantage, buy a specific Trait from a particular Loresheet and integrate the story of that lore into your character's backstory and connections. Loresheets may occasionally have specific prerequisites, such as tribe, auspice, or other characteristics.

Each level of a Loresheet is self-contained and must be bought separately. It does not automatically convey the "lower" levels of that Loresheet.

A character cannot choose traits from more than one loresheet. The Storyteller is of course free to waive this rule as well as restrict characters from specific loresheets depending on the chronicle.

See Loresheets on p. 294 for more.

Mask

As individuals who must sometimes work in secrecy or with a degree of plausible deniability, Garou find great value in being able to protect themselves with false identities, or even in going wholly "invisible."

By default (at no dots) a werewolf either has no need of a Mask, such as those who haven't yet run afoul of the law or other governmental agencies to generate such records, or has a viable fake ID that can stand up to a traffic stop or similar surface scrutiny. A zero-dot Mask cannot pass a background check, much less a proper investigation by the authorities.

- You have a good fake identity, including a credit card, bank account, credit history, birth certificate, etc., all in your Mask's name. You can pass a state or provincial-level background check.
- •• Your Mask can pass a background check with the national police: FBI, Scotland Yard, or the equivalent. If you have a military or intelligence record, it has been classified.

If you have a two-dot Mask, you can also buy the following Advantages for one dot each:

- **Zeroed:** Someone in high places has purged your real records. You officially don't exist.

- **Cobbler:** You can make or source Masks. Making a Mask takes three days per dot and possibly exposes you online; sourcing Masks takes one day per dot, but costs something in return. How much depends on your leverage, margin on the Social test, or whatever else the Storyteller decides.

Flaw: (••) **Person of Interest:** Your biometrics, name, history, known associates, and aliases appear in several intelligence agency databases, probably flagging you as a potential terrorist. Any government agency operator (or comparable analyst) can probably put two and two together to realize what you've been up to.

Flaw: (•) **Serial Error:** Somewhere, someone made a mistake to your detriment. As a result, anyone who does a background check on you will learn that you died recently, are on a watchlist as dangerous, or are otherwise (unjustly) worthy of detention or a call to the police. (Of course, you may well be worthy of detention, just not for this particular reason.) This Flaw also applies to any database lookups on your identity.

Mentor

This Trait represents a lone Garou, or even a pack of them, who looks out for you by offering guidance, information, or aid once in a while. Such a role may fall to an individual who helped initiate you into the ways of your tribe or auspice, or it may be someone who helped save you from a disastrous end after your First Change. Or they might be of an entirely different perspective; you might not even know you have a Mentor, if they're the type to intervene on your behalf from some level of remove and obscurity.

The relationship might even be contentious or purely pragmatic. Your Mentor might trade information to mutual benefit, or even come to your aid if you have respected the relationship. A Mentor may be powerful, but their power need not be direct. Depending on the number of dots in this Background, your Mentor might be no more than a resentful old gray-beard with a remarkable information network, or they might be some nigh-legend of the Apocalypse with tremendous influence and reputation among those who surround the moot-fires. They may offer advice, negotiate with a powerful sept on your behalf, steer law enforcement clear of you, and are almost certain to give warning when you're walking into situations you don't understand. A Mentor could even be a spirit, making that relationship different from that of your tribe's Patron Spirit (though it could be an avatar or lesser incarnation). See p. 232 for more information on the spirit hierarchy.

Your Mentor may well expect reciprocity or some kind of return on their personal investment in you. Whoever they are, write them on your Relationship Map when you buy them (see p. 111).

As a general rule, Mentors provide a helpful word and the occasional political push or cover, but they don't fight your battles or call in valuable favors. If they must do so for their own sake to aid you, after arousing their ire you probably lose a dot or more of this Background.

- Renown 1 Garou in their most acknowledged category / respected gaffling
- •• Renown 2 Garou in their most acknowledged category / established jaggling
- ••• Renown 3 Garou in their most acknowledged category / respected jaggling
- •••• Renown 4 Garou in their most acknowledged category / honored jaggling
- ••••• Renown 5 Garou in their most acknowledged category / legendary jaggling or lesser and enigmatic Incarna, acting on your behalf in ways that need to be interpreted

ADVERSARY

A rival Garou who generally wishes you or your pack ill, an Adversary is the Flaw inverse of the Mentor Background. Adversaries count as two dots higher than their Flaw rating and range from a one-dot whelp to three-dot elders or packs. The Storyteller uses either the Adversary's Status or some specific other Trait when building dice pools with which to oppose the player characters, not the dots in Adversary.

Resources

This Background describes an abstract form of wealth or other assets you can turn to your advantage in many situations. These benefits are not necessarily financial in nature and are seldom completely liquid. (The World of Darkness games don't use many "price lists," because such minor details aren't often important to the narrative.) Especially as the state of modern banking becomes almost entirely digital, well-connected rivals and supernatural nemeses can freeze or deplete bank accounts, so Garou may hoard their Resources as cash, or in gold, art, materiel, or even contraband.

To make use of this Background, add your Resources rating to an appropriate dice pool as a bonus once per session. This formula represents acquiring a speedboat for sale in a hurry, negotiation, or bribery, but it isn't in-

tended to model such things as "buying the corporation" or "funding my own goddamn hunter organization." Examples include Manipulation + Subterfuge + Resources for a subtle bribe, Charisma + Politics + Resources to affect a local election, Intelligence + Streetwise + Resources for a significant drug buy, etc.

Being Garou often clashes with traditional employment or even business hours. Dots of Resources provide an income for you to maintain your standard of living, but you must detail the source of your income and the form this Background takes. After all, it might dry up, get stolen, or otherwise vanish during the chronicle. Note, too, that for high ranks in Resources, the character may well be involved in the sorts of exploitation and profiteering that has ushered in the age of Apocalypse, making for blatant hypocrisy at the least, and probably the enmity of Garou who take issue with the origins of the character's wealth.

- • Paycheck to paycheck lifestyle
- •• Middle-class lifestyle
- ••• Upper-class lifestyle
- •••• Wealthy lifestyle
- ••••• Ultra-rich lifestyle

Flaw: (•) Destitute: You have no money and no home.

Spirit Pact

You have entered into a mutual pact with a lesser spirit and gained its loyalty. The spirit acts as an ally and will provide help to the best of its abilities when summoned, usually with the Rite of Spirit Summoning (p. 183). The exact type of spirit should be agreed upon with the Storyteller, but the various spirits in the Allies and Antagonists chapter (p. 239) can provide a good starting point. Most Garou prefer to make pacts with Gaian or Wyld spirits, though some, such as Bone Gnawers and Glass Walkers, might make deals with servants of the Weaver. A few, often of the Ghost Council and Red Talon tribes, even seal pacts with Banes and other Wyrm spirits, though very carefully and in utmost secrecy.

The type of help you can expect from the spirit depends on the spirit. Gafflings and most lesser jagglings have a very limited perspective on existence. For example, asking an animal spirit what's next door might yield answers relating only to whether anything in there was edible or scary, while a machine-spirit will only provide information on the effectiveness and degree of functionality of any objects there. Still, most spirits have an ability or Skill or two that can come in handy, and they can always be considered on hand for the purpose of teaching Gifts, should they grant any.

- • Power 1 spirit / minor gaffling
- •• Power 2 spirit / moderate gaffling
- ••• Power 3 spirit / major gaffling or lesser jaggling
- •••• Power 4 spirit / minor jaggling
- ••••• Power 5 spirit / moderate jaggling
- •• **Companion:** The spirit is able to accompany you wherever you go as long as you do not encounter spiritual wards or other applicable countermeasures. If the spirit doesn't also have a physical host (see below) communication with it is restricted to the Umbra or by accessing the Spirit Wilds through the use of Penumbral Senses (see p. 147). Areas with a strong Gauntlet can therefore cut off communication with the spirit even if it is still present on the other side.
- • **Host:** The spirit has a persistent host body, such as an animal, or the ability to possess another kind of recurring feature, such as trees or monitors. This allows it to interact with you and anyone else in the physical world. (Note that spirits without the *Companion* trait still need to be summoned.)

Flaw: (•) Pact Condition: Your pact relies on you performing or avoiding certain acts in exchange for the service, such as a fire-spirit requiring you to light a candle in every building you enter or a beetle-spirit forbidding you to intentionally harm insects. Failing to adhere to this condition angers the spirit and it won't count as an ally until a suitable penance has been made, as decided by the Storyteller.

Talisman

You possess something other Garou regard as significant, whether it's spiritual, martial, or otherwise special. Examples include a klaive, a spirit-trap, or a meditative focus. Sometimes, a Talisman is as much a burden as it is a benefit, as jealous rivals or bloody-minded antagonists may want to take it from you. See the "Talismans" section on p. 188 for specific Talismans, or work with the Storyteller to create a new one.

RENOWN

Those who dwell outside the world of the Garou see only ravening werewolves, Rage-fueled monstrosities who rend and tear and fight until death and beyond, vessels of incarnate destruction and terror. It is perhaps a self-deception of self-preservation that allows the Delirium to work, the better to block such horrors out of the collective memory of humankind. Unto themselves, however, the Garou lead lives resolute and inspired, duty-bound as they are to Gaia. Toward this principle, the measure of a Garou's contribution to the world and werewolf society is measured in terms of Renown.

Renown is both internal and external, a reflection of other Garou's esteem for an individual and the respect spirits hold for them, as well as a sense of self-worth and purpose. More than anything, *Garou live and build their own legends*, and Renown helps quantify that holistic legend in terms of how well a werewolf can impose their intentions on the world.

Renown doesn't measure ideals of good or evil; Renown doesn't pretend to designate "good people," only Garou who have earned the acknowledgement of spirits and other werewolves. Renown does, however, reflect specific characteristics prized by Garou culture.

It's worth noting that Renown makes no accounting for motive. Although honesty and earnestness may themselves be worthy of honor, that's separate from the action itself. It's entirely possible, for example, for a Shadow Lord — *known by everyone to be a scumbag* — to make a great show of generosity, in the interests of reaping such glory. The more perspicacious of philodoxes might say that the Shadow Lord is "praying in public" or the like, but the generosity itself earned the Renown, with no accounting for the motive. Surely the Shadow Lord's duplicity will make itself known soon enough.

During character creation, the player allocates two dots of Renown to the Renown type associated with the werewolf's tribe, then assigns one additional dot of another type of Renown.

This amount of starting Renown represents Garou with some experience as werewolves. Experienced troupes may wish to modify starting Renown to model anything from young werewolves not yet Garou to scarred veterans of a dozen conflicts.

THREE TYPES OF RENOWN

Garou society is complex, and it elevates a number of different values, the foremost of which are Glory, Honor, and Wisdom. In many cases, these values may conflict — the Glory-hog Garou who charges into battle against a dozen fomori may not be a paragon of Wisdom, for example....

Most importantly, Renown reflects how a Garou undertakes a given challenge. Sundering a hive of rampant Banes with overpowering force would yield Glory, building an alliance with local spirits and enlisting their aid to oust the Banes yields Honor, and driving out the Banes through a plot to make human authorities clean up the physical site of the Bane infestation yields Wisdom.

Note, too, that this breakdown doesn't mean everything a werewolf's every act is a clearly defined example of only a single form of Renown. Purging the hive of Banes certainly deserves Glory, but it also yields Honor, and in the long term it's likely to be evidence of Wisdom. Especially in caerns and septs, and around the moot-fires where songs are sung of Garou greatness, much retroactive (and perhaps posthumous...) consideration goes on regarding the Wisdom of Glorious and Honorable acts.

TOTAL RENOWN

Total Renown is a term for the sum of all kinds of Renown possessed by an individual character. It is used to determine the availability of Gifts as well as pecking order if the type of Renown being compared is unclear or irrelevant.

Glory

Glory speaks to the immediacy and success of taking action. As creatures of Rage, Garou esteem Glory because it validates their impulses to tear down whatever opposes them. At the same time, Glory emerges from courses of action that bring accolades for their own sake, such as acting selflessly or sharing in a hard-won bounty. Fighting against seemingly overwhelming odds is glorious, but so is noble sacrifice. Even a masterly deception can yield its own brand of Glory, provided it's turned against an otherwise invulnerable enemy.

In Garou society, Glory can be a double-edged sword. Obviously, werewolves exalt Glory as a virtue, and the fight against the Wyrm probably affords more Glory than any other virtue — but to what end? An endless war against an invincible foe may be a call to Glory, but what's all that fighting bring? Look no further than the

Cult of Fenris and its descent into hauglosk to see an object lesson in the dark side of Glory.

THE WAYS OF GLORY

I shall be valorous
I shall be dependable
I shall be generous
I shall protect the weak
I shall slay the Wyrm

Honor

Honor speaks to justice, the righteousness of a cause, and respect for the long-standing pacts between the Garou and the innominate fellow-dwellers of Gaia and beyond. As creatures of (partial) spirit, Garou have a role to fulfill, as does any spirit. Duty compels the Garou, and the virtuous fulfillment of those duties — especially when many of them seem to conflict — is intrinsically respectful. Honor equals trust, and trust among packmates is part of what grants them advantage over less principled foes.

Occasionally to its detriment, Garou society places a high value on Honor. The heeding of tradition, the Litany, and the customs of Rite and even Renown are, themselves, expressions of Honor. But Honor without cause is simply a rote performance of gestures. Disingenuous appeals to Honor can quickly turn into authoritarianism or tyranny. Following an unjust custom simply because it is custom might seem honorable but is in truth ethically bankrupt. In a time of existential war and shifting tactics, "This is the way we've always done it" may well be self-destruction.

THE WAYS 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

Wisdom speaks to sound judgment, thoughtfulness, and a careful consideration of circumstances and motivations. The observant Garou realizes that the spirits are hostile; the wise Garou knows how to placate them. Wisdom is the motivating force behind any effort sensible Garou make; it is the why of any endeavor, whether it be a howling bloodbath in a poachers' encampment or a clever shutdown of a labor camp greenwashed as a rehabilitation project. Wise Garou enjoy a rightful place of prestige in any sept, or around any moot's fires.

An over-reliance on Wisdom can lead to inactivity, however, and all the shrewd evaluation in the world doesn't help when the Wyrm has intruded upon the caern and must be beaten into retreat. Young Garou notice this conundrum especially with esteemed elders of Wisdom, who sometimes seem detached from the world as it is — many greatly accomplished gray-muzzles think, in fact, that the Apocalypse has come and gone, having been forced into remission, and what remains is the cleanup in the aftermath of the war itself. The master strategies of battles gone by, although admirable, often have little bearing on the urgent crises of today, and reliving past Wisdom clouds the call to act now.

THE WAYS OF WISDOM

I shall learn
I shall consider
I shall be prudent
I shall be merciful
I shall think before I act and listen before I think

The Risks of Renown

Renown is at once a blessing and a curse for the Garou. To be sure, one's great deeds yield great accolades and personal recognition. But the core Garou experience is one of pack structures, of cooperation with the other tribes and auspices in duty to Gaia. More than one pack has been brought low by prideful members seeking Renown for themselves at the expense of the accomplishments made by their pack.

This contradiction is often difficult for young Garou to understand, and many believe Garou society sends conflicting messages about one's personal responsibilities and duties to one's fellows. And while it may be frequent among young Garou, it is probably more pronounced among high-ranking werewolves, many of whom may have lost packmates in their long and distinguished campaigns against the Wyrm but gathered many laurels in the midst of those tragedies.

In systems terms, players are likely to occasionally find their characters' Rage, as well as their tribal Favor and Ban, in conflict with their ambitions for Renown, which is to be expected. That's a good thing, because it makes their choices nuanced and brings dramatic consequences.

GIFTS & RITES

Gifts represent abilities and powers that a werewolf can call upon, even beyond that of their "regular" werewolf abilities. A character's selection of Gifts is determined by their auspice and tribe, though there is also a good amount of universal, Native Gifts available to all werewolves. For more on Gifts, see p. 239.

A werewolf character starts with three Gifts: One Native Gift, one Auspice Gift, and one Tribe Gift. These Gifts usually rely on a certain type of Renown for their dice pools, so be mindful of picking ones that make use of the Renown of the character.

Characters also receive a single Rite at creation. Rites rely on certain Skills to be performed effectively, though a character without that Skill can still provide valuable support to another character performing that Rite. For more on Rites, see p. 180.

TOUCHSTONES

Garou have a complex relationship with humankind and an even more complicated relationship with their own nature, which puts werewolves apart from humanity but amid it. Whereas most werewolves are born to human families, those who began life as wolves must also cope with the part of themselves that is human. Even after the First Change, Garou retain connections to friends, lovers, family, and home. Few werewolves sever all contact with their past, and those who do often still secretly cherish the memory of what once seemed to be an ordinary life.

For the Garou, the fight for Gaia becomes concrete in people, the Touchstones who help them keep their spiritual selves in balance with their wolf and human natures. Furthermore, these Touchstones allow Garou to maintain their connection with Gaia: Under the pressures of a losing war and a dying people, keeping Rage and despair in check without such an anchor can be difficult.

Individual Touchstones have some personal connection to the werewolf and most likely have no knowledge of the supernatural. The relationship can be complex or simple or even one-sided. An individual Touchstone might be a spouse, a parent, an unrequited love observed from afar so as not to terrify them with the Garou's nature. Remember, too, that a Touchstone may come from a Garou's connections to wolves, such as a litter-sibling or a respected pack leader (though they tend not to be so long-lived as humans).

Systemically, Touchstones can travel and take actions — and be threatened. Maintaining Touchstones is important, as they're the connection between the Garou and the greater world. Without Touchstones, a werewolf may quickly become no more than a ravening monster, acting upon their Rage without any sense of human or wolf grounding.

Pick one to three Touchstones. The more Touchstones the character has, the better they're able to mitigate their monstrous impulses, but the more vulnerabilities they have. But that's the point, because Touchstones being at risk may happen often in the chronicle, as the costs of being a werewolf come into the narrative spotlight.

EXAMPLES:

Tony's character has a child with a mother who didn't want any part of the increasing anger she saw building in her lover. Tony's character knows the relationship with the mother is beyond repair, but the child... well, the child needs a world to grow up in, and Tony's character intends to give the child that future.

Kendra and her best friend from college took very different paths after graduation, but they remain in close contact with each other. It's complicated, because Kendra

has grave misgivings about her friend's career as a pharmaceuticals rep in the for-profit healthcare business, but she still loves her friend like a sister.

Losing Touchstones

A Touchstone can be lost for a number of reasons. They can drift apart from the Garou or change to the point where they no longer fill the role of an emotional anchor. They can die, from natural causes or due to their involvement (intentional or not) with the Garou. They can even in very rare cases turn into something else, such as a vampire or other werewolf, and while they might still play a role in the Garou's life at that point, their new inhumanity makes them unsuitable as Touchstones.

A Garou may replace a lost Touchstone or even replace a living one, but such a thing should occur in consultation with the Storyteller. Touchstones shouldn't be replaced on a whim; they're individuals with whom the werewolf has a deep connection or meaningful relationship.

Wolf-Born and Wolf Touchstones

Some players may enjoy the ability to represent their characters as being wolf-born, with a Touchstone connection to reflect it. Note that wolves typically don't live as long as humans, and they don't have the same volition informing their ability to move or take actions as do humans. Whatever the case, we don't recommend having more than a single wolf Touchstone, if any; touchstones are intended mostly to ground Garou characters in their extended human community.

Remember, too, that even with a connection to a community of wolves, a wolf-born Garou isn't wholly wolf. Just as Garou in human environments are ultimately monsters amid people, so too is a Garou in a wolf environment a monster amid animals.

EXAMPLE:

Stone remembers chasing fish in the river with his sibling, Smoke. But then one night the sky turned orange, and the spirits screamed, and Stone and Smoke were separated. Every now and then, Stone peeks in on Smoke, while staying carefully out of scent distance so as not to scare him, but he can't help noticing that the old pack's hunting grounds are dwindling.

Touchstones in Play

Garou characters gain multiple benefits from having Touchstones in their lives, but those Touchstones carry some risks, by being both important to the Garou and sometimes proximate to them.

The player may take advantage of each of the benefits below once per story, no more than once per session. (That is, you can do each one once per story, but no more than one in a given session.)

- A Garou may lower their Rage to one by spending a scene or period of downtime with a Touchstone.
- A Garou may restore or heal a point of Aggravated Willpower damage by spending a scene or period of downtime with a Touchstone (see p. 108). This benefit is in addition to the standard Willpower recovery as detailed on p. 128.
- A Garou may spend a scene or period of downtime with a Touchstone and move one mark on either the harano or hauglosk tracker to the other. (see p. 140)

The following risks are also associated with Touchstones.

- When a Touchstone is threatened or injured as a result of the Garou's actions (or inaction), the Garou faces a risk of harano (see p. 140)
- When a Touchstone is lost as a result of the Garou's actions (or inaction), the Garou automatically gains a point of harano or hauglosk (to be agreed upon by the Storyteller, based on context) on the relevant tracker (see p. 140)

FINISHING TOUCHES

Bear in mind that your character, more than a collection of Traits on a character sheet, is a unique individual. How do they look? Where do they live? Who are their friends? Where's their local? What do they like to do when not "on the clock" as a werewolf? Do they have kids? Do the kids know? Have they killed anyone? Anyone dear to them? How have they dealt with this misfortune?

One very important thing to bear in mind about your character is how they view being Garou. How do they feel about living through an ongoing Apocalypse? Do they believe it's the Apocalypse at all, or is that doomer nihilism? Do they know other werewolves, and if so, how do they relate to them? Or is their pack isolated, and does their sense of "Garou culture" begin and end with the pack?

Do they care a great deal for their tribe and how it affects their sense of self? Or is the Patron Spirit an aloof

and alien entity, with horrific expectations and incomprehensible desires? Does your character place more importance on auspice? How does your character interpret Gaia? Does Gaia talk to them? Or is Gaia a strange and distant enigma? Is Gaia real at all? Or just an attempt at giving meaning to the otherwise nonstop cavalcade of blood and terror that comes with being an enraged werewolf?

GAROU MOTIVATIONS

As with all of the World of Darkness games, the question of what the characters do can occasionally arise. Some troupes prefer to have their werewolves deal with the complications of their human lives after their First Change, to thread the needle of their human side and the monsters they've become after the fact. Other troupes lean into the grand-scale struggle against the Wyrm and Triatic imbalance.

Why should the player care? Every Garou realizes that the age of Apocalypse is upon us, or at least that the state of the world is unsustainable. That call to action prompts any number of responses. For Storytellers and troupes looking for a bit of a jump-start into motivating characters, bear the following in mind.

Being Garou means having a combination of selfish and altruistic motivations that call an individual to action. If nothing else, the Garou can always justify taking a certain action in service to Gaia, or with the intention of gaining Renown.

The reverence werewolves have for the spirits of greatly Renowned Garou is part of who they are. In the self-mythologizing Garou culture, one way to "live forever" is to acquire high amounts of Renown. Werewolves almost always seek to build their own legend in the belief that they can live on as legendary spirits, even if their body should die.

From a Storyteller perspective, this belief allows for ways to prompt the characters into action. Whether they have their own lives and homes, or whether they dwell full-time in the caern as a pack, spirits or other contacts can always come to them and inform them of Bad Things Happening in the physical world or the Umbra, and expect that the werewolves might take an interest. Being Garou definitely imparts a sense of duty, and those feelings of obligation should cause interesting clashes of priorities in the characters' lives.

For new players, urgent calls to action include fighting in Gaia's name, battling the Wyrm and other agents of Triatic imbalance, and opposing environmental injustice. For more veteran players, delving the nuances of spiritual complexity and the volatility of Garou politics can reveal even more conflict. It's simply a question of where the Storyteller chooses to shine the light and what calls the players' characters to act or react.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Werewolves learn things over time as they're building their legends. As their characters acquire experience points, players can spend those points on improving their characters' Traits. (For more information on experience points, see p. 219.) The experience point cost of a dot varies depending on what type of dot it is and how many dots you already have in that Trait.

"New level" on the table below means the level of Trait you want to buy. For example, if you want to go from two dots of Composure (••) to three dots of Composure (•••), you need to pay 15 experience points, because Composure 3 × 5 = 15.

Trait	Experience Points
Increase Attribute	New level × 5
Increase Skill	New level × 3
Specialty	3
Renown	New level × 5
Advantage	3 per dot
New Gift	New Gift amount × 2
New Rite	5
Caern Value	New level × 5

You cannot skip ahead and buy four dots of Composure (••••) for 20 points if you currently have only two dots of Composure (••). You first need to buy the third dot of Composure (•••) for 15 experience points, *then* buy four dots of Composure (••••) for 20.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE POINTS

At the end of each session, the Storyteller should reward players with experience points to represent their having learned something during that particular session. The exact amount can vary, but obviously, the faster the players gain these rewards, the faster their characters become more potent. A standard experience award is roughly two to four points per session, whereas a fast-paced journey into the Apocalypse might be represented by six to eight

points per session. A chronicle with a slow burn might yield just a point or two per session (but rewards might also come in other forms, such as information or narrative progression). See p. 115 for more information on time increments and terms.

Storytellers, don't feel that you always have to award every category below; they are simply examples. Remember that two to four experience points per session is assumed to be typical.

Situation	Experience Point Reward
Participation	1
Perform something remarkable during the session; the whole table's appreciation of the character doing or saying a certain thing	1
Use a Skill, Gift, or other Trait in a clever or critical way	1
"Tell me something important your character learned this session."	1
Conclude a story within the greater chronicle	2–3

Justifying Gains

When increasing or gaining a Trait, Gift, or Rite, the character should provide a reason for earning it. It is not enough to purchase a Gift — the player must provide an explanation on how they came to an agreement with the Gift-granting spirit, either in the ongoing story or between sessions. Likewise, only after having performed a deed worthy of Renown should the Storyteller allow the characters to spend experience to increase it. That said, the Storyteller can be generous in this regard, and the simple application of a Skill in a story is usually good enough justification for an expenditure to raise it. Likewise, Renown isn't a "use it or lose it" deal — a character should be safe in knowing that a Renown-worthy deed isn't forgotten, and that they can spend experience to increase their Renown in good time, once the necessary experience points have been accumulated.

Alternative Progression

At the Storyteller's discretion, experience and character progression need not follow the model above. Some Storytellers prefer to offer progressions at certain key points during a story or chronicle, whereas some Storytellers forgo feature progressions altogether and focus on narrative progression only. The choice belongs to the troupe and should be discussed during chronicle planning, just to communicate expectations.

Some suggestions for alternative progression rewards include:

- Increase a Skill at the end of a given session, or an Attribute at the end of every second session
- Take a new Gift or Rite at the end of a given session, after having a fruitful interaction with an appropriate spirit
- Increase Renown at the end of a story in which the pack or individual demonstrates the virtues of that Renown

The Relationship Map

Werewolf depicts dramatic action. Drama occurs between people — when two people interact, they create, reinforce, or change a relationship. By drawing a Relationship Map, you can bring drama visually to the forefront, keep track of supporting characters you've encountered, and provide both Storyteller and players with emotional substance for those interpersonal scenes.

You begin the game with your players' characters, each of whom has Touchstones. Then you add people who have meaning in their lives; human (or wolf) siblings, lovers, and friends; or a shady journalist who always somehow knows what scumbaggery one of the local businesses is up to. You almost certainly add the ranking leader of a rival pack, as well as a more sympathetic member. Even the overt antagonists — lurking fomori, Black Spiral invaders, the Bane that keeps turning up — merit entries on the Relationship Map. You never know when you might encounter them again, to scatter their guts around the caern (or perhaps to make a compromise).

As you draw lines and describe connections between your characters and these new Storyteller characters, the Relationship Map of your chronicle takes shape, and your game takes on life and possibility.

As more supporting characters appear and as relationships change, you scribble in new names and cross out old truths. Make note of that rundown cabin or the seemingly endless cavern that the Child of Gaia found. Update the map as allies become adversaries after a moot that got out of hand, or as the Cult of Fenris manages to claim that wayward Kin. Soon enough, the map becomes a mess of scribbled notes about the characters, Post-

its with pictures, memorable quotes, wine stains, and sketches.

Your Relationship Map becomes your mad conspiracy wall or your pictures-and-string investigation board straight out of *The Wire*. Use it not just to drive drama, but also to keep track of the tangled web of spirits and physical individuals. Keep it near the table, where everyone can read it. Its form is up to you: a big sheet of butcher paper, a digital mind map, a presentation deck, a printout of the map of the region with overlapping pack territory boundaries drawn in.

You can use whatever colors you have in a drawer or on the computer, but the Relationship Map illustration in this chapter uses these elements:

- **Black** denotes player character names, locations, and notes
- **Red** denotes fellow werewolves, their territory, and their interests
- **Blue** marks humans, their activities, and their places of note

Arrows and Descriptors

You can go as deep into the graphical woods as you like. For example, every line between two characters can be an arrow, pointing from the dominant party to the weaker party. If the sides have actual equality, then the line has no arrow ends. Draw one in once you figure out who really called the shots all along.

The other thing a relationship line needs is a label: a description of what the relationship means. Relationships always go both ways, and they are seldom equal or the same in both directions. Humans and Garou alike are masters of wearing masks and hiding their true feelings, so an attitude arrow can be "hate" in one direction and "love" in the other. Other possible descriptors include: "overprotective," " jealousy," "on the take," or "POSSESSED?"

Write one party's descriptor of the relationship on one side to the arrow, close to their name. Write the second party's descriptor on the other side, close to their name. Relationships you set at the beginning of the game and between pack members might well be both true and mutual, but connections the players and Storyteller add as the chronicle progresses show only what the players believe in the moment. Update the chart as true motives emerge, or as passions change.

Starting the Map

During session zero, you begin the Relationship Map, possibly working in pencil at first. At this outset stage, draw in the player's characters, along with several relationships and supporting cast members.

Pack Relationships

Write down the names of the characters in big letters. Then draw lines (or arrows) between your character and two of the other werewolves in the pack. Write a positive relationship on one of the arrows and a negative one on the other. Positive pack relationships might include: "fascinated," "old friend," "confides in," "owes big time," and "fellow Umbra explorer." Negative descriptors could read: "mistrust," "competes over X's affections," "needs to upstage," "slept with her girlfriend," or "former Fenris cultist."

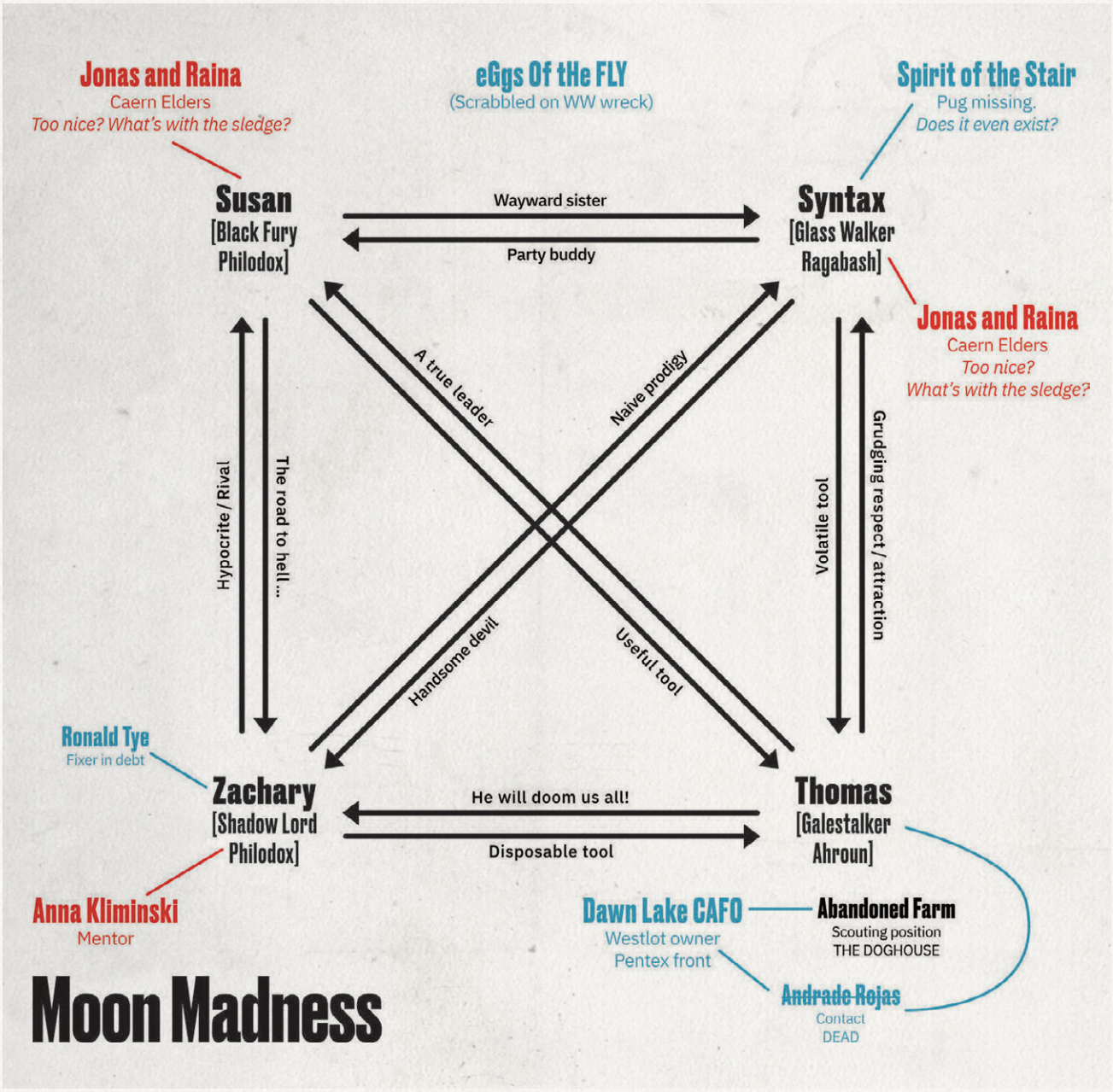
Remember, you can change these relationships for the better or worse during character creation if you think of something better, something that fits into the characters' story more elegantly, or in response to the events of the chronicle.

Turning Point

Write the name and details of your character's First Change. Draw an arrow pointing at your character and describing — initially — why (or if...) they've taken up Gaia's cause since then. Descriptors might include "lost a loved one," "relentlessly seeking justice," "fascinated by spirits," "are tribes actually chosen?" and "hates."

Supporting Characters

In many chronicles, Garou have connections to various non-werewolf characters. Whether an inspiring fellow-traveler that one looks up to or a particularly duplicitous rival among the local xenophobic survivalists, werewolves aren't alone in the world. Ask the Storyteller for two local individuals, or take a connection from another character's entries or supporting cast. Write any newly named Storyteller characters in boxes, just as you did your character's. From your character box, draw an arrow to or from each one and add descriptors. One relationship can be positive: "seeking mentorship," "respects her candor," "in awe of," "fought against the Face-Taker together," "fellow amateur mycologist," or "weirdly attracted to." The other is negative: "owes me money," "backstabber," "coward," "tech-junkie," or "creepily into me." None of these relationships (yet) equal full Advantages or Flaws, though you can always put dots into them later.



Relationship Map

Note, too, that not every Werewolf chronicle features large casts as prominently as some might. A Relationship Map doesn't have to be sprawling to depict a remarkable story. ■

CHAPTER FIVE

Rules

> Order is a necessary condition for making a structure function.
>
> – RUDOLF ARNHEIM, *ENTROPY AND ART*

Werewolf: The Apocalypse uses mechanical game rules to provide a reliable framework to the world. Neither the Storyteller nor the players want the Storyteller to make up everything as they go along, after all, or to feel forced into a prefabricated plot. Games require interactivity, and the rules help determine the outcomes of players' choices.

The most basic of these rules, and thus the fastest and cleanest to use in play, appear here. They are the core of the Storyteller System. Expanded rules that provide systems for less frequent (but still dramatic!) situations can be found at worldofdarkness.com/account, available for free.

You can run the whole game using nothing but these rules, the character rules, and the rules for Garou and their unique characteristics.

But here beats the heart of the matter, from rolling dice to shredding flesh to telling time.

Time

Time passes in the World of Darkness just as it does in our normal world, even if more of it seems to happen at night. That's because you don't need to play out every minute, or even every day, of the time that passes in your chronicle. One game session might last four hours of real time but cover two weeks of stalking suspected Black Spiral Dancers and snooping through supply sites or one chase across the tundra and subsequent combat — and it's all a matter of troupe style and story development.

Werewolf uses five basic units to describe game time:

Turn: The amount of time needed to take a fairly simple action, such as clawing the lungs out of a fomor, searching a backpack, or attempting to kick down a door. Turns are abstract; they take as long as the action takes. Turns generally get shorter during action scenes and longer in social scenes. It takes longer to buy someone a drink than to snap one's fangs — in some bars, a lot longer.

Scene: Generally, a compact series of actions and interactions that take place in a single location or among a single set of characters. Raiding the motorcycle club's compound might constitute a scene, as might a strange conversation between a pack and a spirit trapped in the Umbral shadow of a landfill. You know how scenes work from plays, movies, television. A scene contains as many turns as pacing requires; a scene containing pure dialogue or interaction might have no turns per se in it at all.

Session: One game session, sometimes called a chapter. Werewolf doesn't rely on this division of time as much as some games do, but it can provide regularity and balance to some rules' effects. It also has the advantage of being unambiguous: It's always pretty clear when you've stopped playing for the night.

Story: A full narrative arc, complete with introduction, rising action, and climax. Some stories can take several sessions to complete; others can be finished in one. Some short stories are effectively vignettes that are nothing more than a single scene. It might help to think of this term as similar to a "season" of a television show.

Chronicle: A series of stories connected by the characters themselves and their ongoing narrative. Some chronicles possess a unifying theme or specific antagonists. Others are a picaresque series of "one damned thing after another." Most chronicles maintain a common tone, be it brutal action, thrilling suspense, gangland espionage, operatic tragedy, or spirit-world exploration. Individual stories or chapters can shift tone within the greater context of the chronicle for variety's sake or to underline changes in the setting. For example, scenes occurring within the Umbra might have a sense of weirdness and "otherwhere," whereas smuggling a potential Werewolf out of the hospital before her First Change probably juxtaposes the familiarity of a hospital setting with the urgency of the Apocalypse.

USING DICE

Story — not rules — governs a **Werewolf** chronicle. Proper pacing can build a narrative to thrilling heights of tension, and slack pacing can kill even the deadliest horror. For this reason, Storytellers can change the mode of the game to suit their sense of pacing. Many scenes play just as well — and much faster — without rolling dice at all, as players and Storyteller riff on one another's contribution, dialogue, and actions.

As a rule of thumb, roll dice:

* When an action's outcome is uncertain
* When the degree of success or failure matters
* When a Garou's Rage might have an effect on an outcome
* When failure could yield an interesting complication

There's no need to roll the dice to "run fast," but when the characters need to run fast *and jump a gap between rooftops in a cityscape*, that's the perfect time to consult the Fates.

Don't think that you need to roll them throughout an entire scene, either. You can roll them once and then play the scene toward the outcome you pre-determined with the dice at the beginning. ("Okay, looks like you got spotted by the trench coat guy. How did that happen?") This practice works especially well for dialogue scenes — roll at the beginning to see who wins the debate or whether the suspicious security guard will be persuaded, then both players and Storyteller can shape their narrative toward the known result. Even combat scenes can work this way, should the players and Storyteller prefer it.

In short, you can play any scene with lots of dice rolls, with one roll at the beginning or the end, or with no dice at all. Use the dice to help the story, not to dictate it.

SIMPLE TESTS

Most of the things characters do during a game happen without any rules governing them. Characters start cars, scrutinize strangers, search via Google, load weapons, cross streets, read books, and do a thousand other things as easily as anyone in the real world.

Even a commonplace activity, however, might require a dice roll if performed under stress, in a hurry, or amid obstacles. And activities that invite stress, haste, and obstacles require dice rolls more often than not.

To begin, tell the Storyteller what your character wants to do. The Storyteller may just tell you that you succeed automatically: Sometimes skipping a roll just speeds up play, especially for an easy or average feat or for something your character really excels at (see "Automatic Wins" on p. 120).

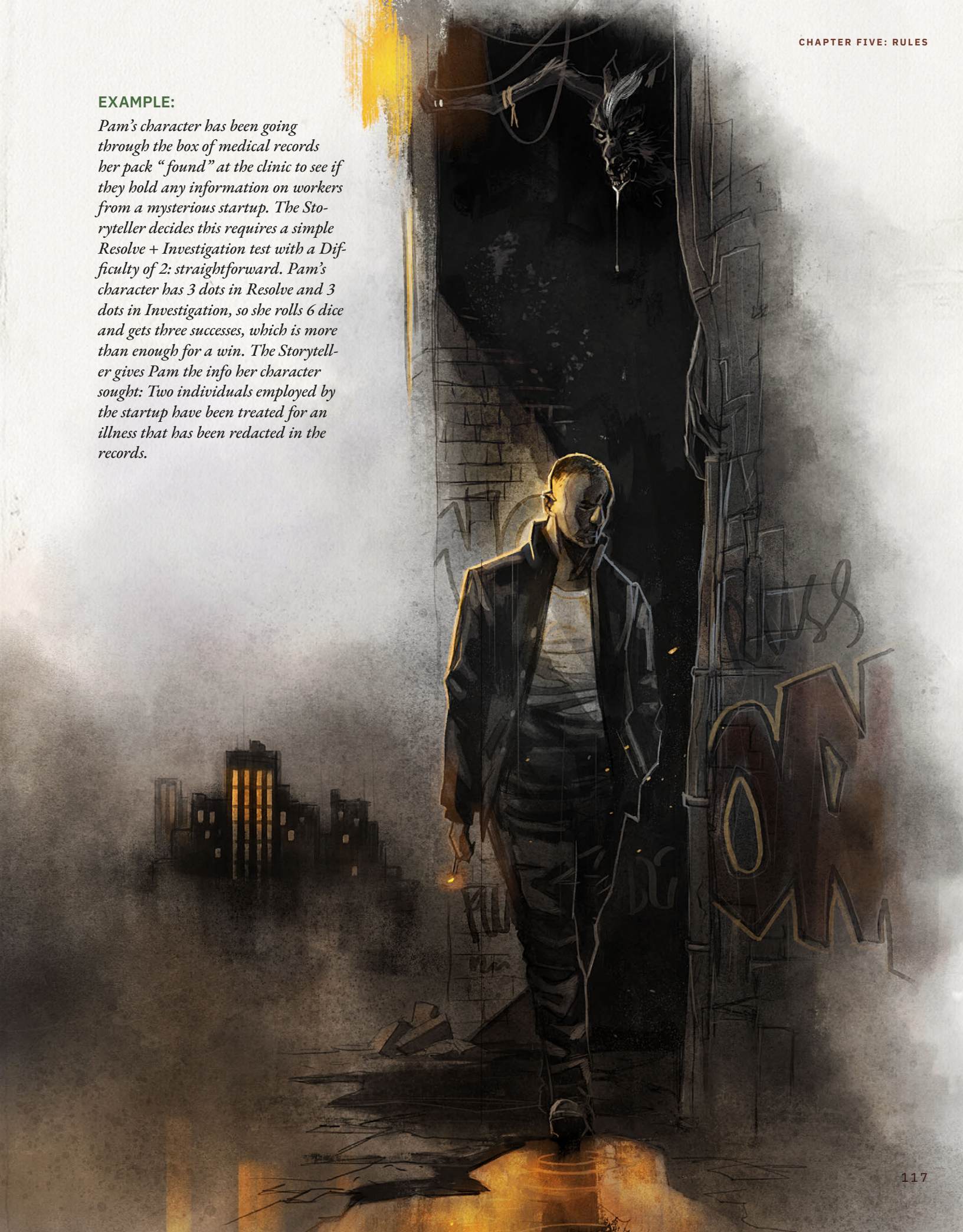
But let's say that the outcome is in question, such as when you want to do something harder than usual — scaling a sheer cliff, reading a language in which you're not fluent, or picking the lock on a door. These activities call for simple tests.

To determine how successful or unsuccessful such an action is, you make a simple test. Simple tests go like this:

* Describe what your character is trying to achieve and how
* The Storyteller tells you which of your character's Traits to use to assemble a dice pool
* The Storyteller sets a Difficulty; this number may be kept secret, depending on circumstances and play style
* Unless you are allowed to Take Half or the test is an automatic win (see p. 119), you roll the dice pool and count your successes. Every die that shows 6 or higher is a success. (A 0 on the die means a result of 10: a success.)
* If the number of successes you get equals or exceeds the Difficulty, you win the test and your character accomplishes that action

EXAMPLE:

Pam's character has been going through the box of medical records her pack "found" at the clinic to see if they hold any information on workers from a mysterious startup. The Storyteller decides this requires a simple Resolve + Investigation test with a Difficulty of 2: straightforward. Pam's character has 3 dots in Resolve and 3 dots in Investigation, so she rolls 6 dice and gets three successes, which is more than enough for a win. The Storyteller gives Pam the info her character sought: Two individuals employed by the startup have been treated for an illness that has been redacted in the records.



DICE POOLS

A dice pool is a number of dice used to determine an action's margin of success or failure. It is determined by one or more Traits.

The Storyteller tells you which combination of Traits creates your dice pool, the number of 10-sided dice you roll, for any action. Traits usually have ratings between 0 and 5, so pools generally range from one die (the minimum pool size, if you can roll at all) to 10 dice or more.

In general, actions use a Skill pool (Attribute + Skill), but a few use only Attributes to build the pool. For example, two Attributes can combine to make a pool such as Resolve + Composure to resist many supernatural effects. A character who lacks a Skill rolls only the pool's Attribute, with no additional penalties.

In very specific cases, Traits other than Attributes or Skills form the basis of a dice pool (such as Renown for Gift pools).

Once you've determined your dice pool and the Storyteller is ready to interpret the results of your action, take a number of 10-sided dice (d10s) equal to the pool value and roll them.

EXAMPLE:

Tomas' character wants to convince a gas station attendant that there's no way they just saw a werewolf vanish into the darkness, because there's no such thing as a werewolf. He has three dots of Manipulation and two dots of Persuasion, and thus possesses a pool of five dice.

Especially when dealing with social actions, such as seduction or diplomacy, don't force the dice into the path of the roleplaying. If a player's character says something particularly inspired (or painfully wrong), opens with a truly tempting (or utterly insulting) gambit, or offers a cunning (or transparently false) explanation, the Storyteller should feel free to modify the Difficulty or even let the character succeed (or fail) without involving dice and Traits.

The Storyteller should perhaps warn a character with a high Trait away from a disastrous approach — "Given your knowledge of Medicine, you're pretty sure that reaching into the container of medical waste would be very risky." But even a one-dot Skill can shine if the player applies the right polish.

Special Cases

Rage Dice: In most cases, werewolves substitute Rage dice for standard dice in their pools to affect the result. See p. 133 for more details.

Specialties: Characters may possess greater aptitude or expertise in one particular aspect of a Trait. If a character attempts an action that falls within one or more of their Specialties for the Trait used, they gain one extra die for their dice pool. For more on Specialties, see p. 89.

Trackers and Pools: Certain Attributes relate directly to three special pools called trackers:

- Health equals Stamina + 3.
- Willpower equals Composure + Resolve.

Tracker pools go up and down as characters spend from them or take damage to them. Tracker pools cannot exceed their starting value, as determined by their component Traits.

If the Storyteller calls for a roll using a tracker, the dice pool equals the current pool of that Trait, not the tracker's full rating. No dice pool can fall below 1 (see "Modifiers," below), so a roll for an empty pool still has one die.

EXAMPLE:

Stefan has a Willpower of 6 but has spent 2 points this session, so his player would roll four dice, not six, for a Willpower roll.

DIFFICULTIES AND TARGET NUMBERS

The Storyteller determines the Difficulty of the action a player wishes to attempt, expressed in terms of how many successes they need to "win" that attempt — that is, to accomplish that action. See the table below for some examples of actions and the Difficulty to accomplish them. The Difficulty is the number of successful dice required to accomplish a task. The target number for individual dice rolled is always 6 or higher.

EXAMPLE:

Terrence has a dice pool of five, and the Storyteller has determined that the Difficulty is two. Terrence will need two of his five dice to show a 6 or higher on the roll.

Remember that the duration to perform an action may vary, so the roll itself may represent a few seconds, an entire scene, or even longer. It takes longer to walk a tightrope than to fire a gun.

Note, too, that sometimes a given action is literally impossible. For example, attempting to log in to a detective's email account without a computer isn't going to happen, and you probably can't pick a lock without a set

of lockpicks. Usually common sense applies here, but the Storyteller is, of course, the ultimate arbiter of such.

Difficulty of Action	Number of Successes
Routine (striking a stationary target, convincing a loyal friend to help you)	1 success
Straightforward (aggravating someone who's already spoiling for a fight, intimidating a weakling)	2 successes
Moderate (leaping a gap between two rooftops, persuading an indifferent bus driver to hold the bus)	3 successes
Challenging (locating the source of a whisper, creating a memorable piece of art)	4 successes
Hard (convincing a cop that this isn't your cocaine, placating a hostile spirit)	5 successes
Very Hard (running across a narrow ledge while under fire, calming a hostile and violent mob)	6 successes
Nearly Impossible (finding one specific homeless person in Los Angeles in one night, flawlessly reciting a long text in a language you don't speak)	7 or more successes

Modifiers

The Storyteller might decide to add or subtract a modifier to any dice pool. Werewolf has two basic types of modifiers:

- **Change the size of the dice pool:** This modifier reflects a change or circumstance for the character: They are drugged, they use a Specialty, they appear terrifying, etc.
- **Alter the Difficulty:** This modifier generally reflects an external change or circumstance for the action: rainy weather, badly maintained or superior equipment, performed under gunfire, at a loud concert, etc.

In general, shifting the dice pool up or down by two dice has roughly the same statistical effect as decreasing or increasing the Difficulty by 1.

Storytellers should use common sense when stacking modifiers. Unless extreme circumstances apply (in which case, consider whether the roll is necessary), cap modifiers at plus or minus 2 to the Difficulty, or at three dice added or removed from the character's pool. This guideline applies to ad hoc Storyteller modifiers, not to modifiers from Specialties or other specific rules.

Penalties can never cause a pool to drop below one die.

Taking Half

Storytellers may let players "take half" instead of making a roll. To take half, count the number of dice in the pool, divide it in half, rounding down, and treat that as the number of successes attained. Similarly, Storytellers should whenever possible use this method when determining successes for storyteller characters, to save time and avoid the inevitable one-in-a-million statistical outlier (unless desired).

Knowing when to use this technique is part of the Storyteller's craft. Taking half saves time and reduces rolls, and therefore uncertainty, and also circumvents Rage dice complications (see p. 133). To keep things interesting, Storytellers can keep the exact Difficulties of tests secret, though descriptive hints such as "this seems really beneath you" or "you're not sure you can crack this without serious effort" are all fine.

EXAMPLE:

Marcin's character is hiding from a PMC security detail, and Marcin attains three successes on his Stealth roll for the character to evade notice. The Storyteller sees that the soldiers have an Awareness pool of four and takes half to keep the scene flowing. Taking half of the pool of four means the soldiers count as having two successes on that Awareness roll, so with his three Stealth successes, Marcin's character remains unnoticed... for now.

AUTOMATIC WINS

If a character's dice pool is twice the task's Difficulty, the Storyteller may similarly opt to rule that the character wins automatically without a dice roll, even if the player doesn't opt to take half. Automatic wins streamline play and reduce distracting rules interludes.

Apply automatic wins as much as possible, especially for tests wherein character failure creates no interesting outcome: information-gathering tests, conversation-openers, or gambits that open up the scene or let it move forward dramatically. Automatic wins are especially valuable to Storytellers, as they allow the Storyteller to determine where chance should play a factor and where certain outcomes are good enough to move the story forward.

Taking Half and Automatic Wins in Combat

Unlike other World of Darkness games, Werewolf encourages Storytellers to allow players the benefit of taking half and automatic wins in combat, particularly against antagonists who would probably be overwhelmed by the Garou. The dice can create statistically unlikely outcomes — when the pack is facing down a single mercenary at the base camp, let them wreck him. It's part of the werewolf fantasy to simply mow through "lesser" enemies, especially when they're alone, and they can give it as much narrative flash as it's worth.

As a rule of thumb, conduct the combat with dice when:

- The opposition is substantial and encounter provides a credible risk of defeat, such as when facing supernatural opponents or well-trained werewolf hunters
- Time is critical, and having an antagonist can slow down the players' characters so someone else can get away, or for the helicopter to arrive, etc.
- The circumstances or environment for the combat are strange or risky, such as in the Umbra or on a scaffold over a vat of caustic acid
- Remarkable success or failure, or the risks or Rage, would make for interesting consequences

Let the players enjoy automatic wins in combat when:

- The antagonist is obviously no match for the pack, or even a single Garou — getting your ass kicked by a desk clerk isn't usually what the players signed up for
- A statistically unlikely but bad set of rolls would result in the pack consuming resources that would compromise some of the drama later in the scene

DICE POOL RESULTS

When you roll a dice pool, every individual die result of 6 or higher is a success, including a result of 10 (represented as 0 on most d10s).

If you roll a number of successes equal to or exceeding the Difficulty number, that's a win.

Garou can also achieve states of almost inconceivable violence. See p. 133 for more information on Rage dice and their outcomes.

Criticals

A result of 10 on two regular dice (0, 0) is a critical success. A critical success counts as two additional successes above the two 10s — so that's four total successes. This rule represents the character performing exceptionally well. A winning roll including at least one critical success is called a critical win, or sometimes just a critical. Be sure to acknowledge the critical win narratively, as the character performs their task quickly, stylishly, or with ruthless finality!

Each pair of 10s counts as its own critical success, so three 10s (0, 0, 0) would add up to five successes, whereas four 10s (0, 0, 0, 0) would count as eight.

In some tests, a critical win yields additional effects apart from the one stated above, and the Storyteller can even award complete wins regardless of Difficulty when a situation warrants it.

Criticals in Play

The Storyteller should get used to critical successes showing up in play. With larger dice pools, they become more and more common: A 10-dice pool has a slightly higher than 25 percent chance of rolling a critical success. Of course, a 10-dice pool represents someone at the absolute pitch of perfection — or someone who has worked the odds carefully enough (or perhaps drawn on enough supernatural power...) to resemble perfection.

Be aware of this math when adding extra dice to players' pools — if a critical seems like it might break suspense or harm the narrative, just lower the Difficulty instead. Mathematically, lowering the Difficulty by 1 is more or less the same as adding two dice to a character's pool.

But that stated, our advice is to lean into criticals. They allow players to show off their characters, and even when the opposition gets them, they produce rapid, dramatic effects — kind of ideal, we think, for stories of werewolves calling upon their incandescent Rage to fight back in the era of Apocalypse.

Margin

The number of successes exceeding the Difficulty of the roll is called the margin. If the Difficulty was 4 and you rolled seven successes, your margin is three. Damage, many Gift or Rite effects, and some other rules use margin to calculate the degree of effect.

Even outside those circumstances, the Storyteller should narrate a degree of success depending on the size of the margin rolled: the larger the margin, the greater the success. For example, if a roll to persuade results in no margin, a player's Garou convinces adequately but unremarkably, but the three-success margin above would, on a roll to persuade, convince the subject quickly, zealously, or might even yield unexpected information.

Total Failure

If your roll includes no successes at all, your character has totally failed. Total failure sometimes means only that your character didn't achieve the desired result. At other times it means dire consequences occur. The Storyteller defines what total failure means according to each situation and circumstance, and decides whether you can try again after a total failure.

Remember, too, that in a narrative sense, failure is a consequence of trying something. Even though an attempt to do something has failed, that failure can create interesting outcomes, and prompt subsequent choices. Once you fail to talk your way out of an arrest, what happens next is probably pretty memorable. And when you fail to outrun the pack of Black Spiral Dancers on your heels, it's time for Plan B. Ideally, you have a Plan B.

EXAMPLE:

Rosa rolls no successes when courting a capricious river-spirit. The spirit not only ignores her, but flits away offended, coursing around her as flowing water would around a stone as it departs.

PERMUTATIONS

The following systems allow for variations on the core resolution systems. Storytellers are encouraged to employ them as opportunities to build nuance and purpose into the outcomes of dice rolls, and also to build a sense of common purpose among the players' packmates.

Teamwork

By the nature of what they do, Garou are disposed toward helping members of their pack. If two or more characters can effectively work together on a task, such as chasing down prey or breaking into the supply depot, roll the largest pool among the participants, adding one additional die for each character assisting who has at least one dot in the Skill involved. If no Skill is involved, anyone can assist.

Win at a Cost

If your roll includes any successes, but still fails, the Storyteller may offer you a win at a cost. In such a win, you achieve your goal, but something happens to make things worse for you anyway: You take damage, attract unfriendly (and powerful) notice, lose something you value, etc. You or any other player can suggest the cost, but the Storyteller is the final arbiter. Generally, winning at a cost should scale with the number of missing successes. If it's too high, you can always opt to fail instead.

EXAMPLE:

The pack is chasing a group of insurgent survivalists, fleeing in an SUV, whom the werewolves think are connected to the Cult of Fenris. One of the players' Garou attempts to leap onto the SUV in crinos form but doesn't quite accomplish a win, so the Storyteller instead offers that character's player the option to hang on but lose the keys to the survivalists' bunker. The player can decline, but that would mean the insurgents might escape. Quite a quandary!

Try, Try Again

If a character fails an action, they can usually try again, unless some circumstance actively prevents them. After all, failing to pick a lock doesn't mean the character can never insert a lockpick into that door again. To justify such an attempt, the situation must merit it — the character obtains a better set of lockpicks, for example, or their skill has improved, or time simply isn't an issue and they can make another attempt.

Characters can repeat most actions in combat, chases, or other conflicts. Conflict is inherently stressful, and failure often carries its own cost in such circumstances.

Spending Willpower

Characters may spend 1 point of Willpower to re-roll up to three dice on any one Skill or Attribute roll, including a roll involving Gifts or other special advantages. Characters may not spend Willpower to re-roll Brutal outcomes on Rage dice (see p. 133), or on a tracker roll such as Willpower, or on a check die (see below). A spent point of Willpower counts as having sustained a level of Superficial damage to Willpower (see p. 127) and is marked as such.

For more on Willpower, see p. 88.

Checks

Unlike tests, checks use a single die. The player makes a check by rolling one die, attempting to achieve a target number of 6 or higher.

Werewolf primarily uses checks to determine various Rage expressions (see p. 133), in which a Garou's Rage might be temporarily exhausted by manifesting it through various powers and effects.

Players may not use Willpower to re-roll their character's checks. Automatic wins and taking half never apply to checks.

DESCRIBING ROLL RESULTS

After a test is resolved, describe what happens in vivid detail, according to the circumstances. This description narrates what has happened — for better or worse. Let your words be guided by the result of the dice, the mood you're going for, the personality of the character acting, and the specific circumstances of the situation. The player and the Storyteller are encouraged to help out each other in descriptions, but ultimately the Storyteller is the final arbiter of what the result of any given test or check is.

CONTESTS

Storytellers use contests to model direct opposition: e.g., negotiating with a truculent customs importer, sneaking past a guard dog trying to sniff out your location, or seducing an investigative reporter.

In a contest, the acting character and their opponent each determine their dice pool. This process does not have to use the same pool; the Storyteller might tell the sneaking character to use Dexterity + Stealth but roll Wits + Awareness for the guard dog.

Basic contests go this way:

- Describe what you want your character to do and how
- The Storyteller decides someone opposes your effort and tells you which of your character's Traits to use to assemble a dice pool
- The Storyteller chooses which of the opponent's Traits to use to assemble a dice pool
- Each contestant rolls their dice pool and counts their successes
- If the acting character rolled equal to or more than the number of successes rolled by the opposing character, the test is a win

Players' characters can definitely engage in contests against each other! The Storyteller still determines which character assembles which dice pool, however.

CONFLICTS

Situations involving basic contests that result in damage — physical or mental — are called conflicts. The basic conflict rules value simplicity and speed of play, and they apply to any hostile interaction, from shotgunning one's way across a haunted moor to a disagreement with an embittered Silent Strider around the moot-fires. Storytellers and players should invest these basic conflicts with as much narrative detail as they like, clothing the bare dice results in rich narrative context and detail.

For more advanced conflict systems, a set of free rules additions can be found at the worldofdarkness.com website.

The Conflict Turn

Conflict happens in a flurry of blows, physical or rhetorical. When each participant in the conflict has acted once (or declined to act), that defines a turn. Turns take as much time as the narrative indicates they should. A single mighty slash with a storied klaive might happen in less than a second and end a fight, whereas a point-counterpoint debate against a fellow theurge on the finer details of Luna's favor and spirits may take an hour or more. Thus, one roll does not necessarily represent one swing of a baseball bat, unless the Storyteller says it does.

At the start of every turn of the conflict, each player declares their intent: what they want to achieve. It can be anything, whether trying to dive-tackle the Pentex account executive over the edge of the rooftop helipad, confounding a predatory spirit so the rest of the pack can escape with the would-be possession victim, or simply taking cover.

EXAMPLE:

Fabian, Tracy, and Leah have been ambushed in the bowels of a medical research facility, and they are now fighting for their lives. Going left to right across the table, the Storyteller asks their players to describe the characters' intended actions. Fabian wants to dive for cover, Tracy plans to activate a Gift, and Leah seeks to gut the pain-maddened fomor bearing down on her.

Once all players have decided on their course of action, the Storyteller makes the same decisions for the antagonists (and any Storyteller character allies) and then tells the troupe which dice pools to build. The players then roll to attempt it.

EXAMPLE:

No one attacks Fabian, Tracy is surprised by a spirit, and the fomor continues coming after Leah.

Conflict Pools

The dice pool each participant uses in a conflict turn is called their conflict pool. In a fight, the conflict pool might be Strength + Brawl or Composure + Firearms; in a debate, it might be Charisma + Persuasion or Manipulation + Etiquette. Characters might change pools during a conflict — if, for example, they pick up a tire iron or change debate tactics from flattery to bullying.

EXAMPLE:

Jennifer rolls for her character to shoot at enemy, using Composure + Firearms against the foe's Dexterity + Athletics, while Malik engages in a Strength + Brawl vs Dexterity + Melee contest with a machete-wielding killer.

The attacker and defender roll their pools simultaneously in a basic conflict. As with other basic contests, the side that scores the most successes wins that turn of the conflict. The winner subtracts the loser's successes from their total and applies the remainder as damage to one of the loser's trackers: Willpower or Health (see Damage, p. 127).

If the conflict is one-sided, such as when the defender is trying to avoid getting shot, only the attacker can inflict damage. If both participants are able to cause harm to their opponent, the conflict is two-sided, with both sides counting as attackers. In this case, the actions of both parties are merged into a single conflict roll. A tie results in each party inflicting damage on the other with a win margin of one.

RANGED WEAPONS

Ranged combat is resolved as a contest — usually vs the defender's Dexterity + Athletics. In cases where two combatants are attacking each other at range, you can resolve it as a two-sided Firearms conflict as above. Standard ranged attacks assume that the subject has access to limited cover, such as a car or the corner of a building. A character with no available cover subtracts 2 from their defense pool, whereas superior cover (sandbags, concrete fortifications, and similar bullet-proof obstacles) merits a bonus of 1–2.

DODGING

When engaged in a Brawl or Melee conflict, the defender can always opt to use their Dexterity + Athletics instead of a combat Skill to defend. If they do, they inflict no damage on the opponent, no matter the margin, if they win. Sometimes it's best not to aggravate the rival Garou any further.

MULTIPLE OPPONENTS

In a conflict during which teaming up makes sense, a character facing multiple opponents loses one die from their pool when they defend against each successive opponent that targets them. This applies only to situations wherein the character *strictly evades* additional attacks.

To attack and deal damage to multiple foes, a character must instead split their dice pool, dividing it among those they wish to attack. Any opponents not attacked are defended against as normal: full pool minus a die for each previous opponent.

EXAMPLE:

Tony's character is fighting three roughnecks on an oil rig. With Strength 3 and Brawl 4, his character's conflict pool is seven against the first guard's attack, six dice against the second guard, and only five dice against the third. He will be able to deal damage only to the first opponent.

If he wants to deal damage to two of the rig workers during the turn, he must split his seven dice into two pools: four dice and three dice, for example. He would then defend against the third roughneck with five dice — his full pool, minus one for each previous opponent — but will deal no damage to that one.

Who Goes First?

This question arises mostly during physical combat — in debates, having the last word may be more valuable than lobbing the first allegation.

Unless one side has surprise (usually resulting from a success on an earlier test, perhaps of tactics or sneaking to set up an ambush), characters act in descending order of action:

- Close combat between already engaged parties, then
- Ranged combat, then
- Newly initiated physical combat, then
- Anything else that might be transpiring
- If necessary, break ties by comparing Dexterity + Wits or, if equal, by dots of the Skill used.

EXAMPLE:

In the conflict above, Leah fights simultaneously with her attacker, as they are mutually engaged in close combat. Tracy resolves before her attacker, because ranged goes before initiated close combat. Whether Tracy goes before Leah is moot. It doesn't matter when Fabian resolves his action, as no one is interacting with him.

Three Turns and Out

We strongly recommend ending conflicts after about three turns, unless everyone is still having fun. Too much dice rolling slows down the drama and becomes harder and harder to describe creatively. The World of Darkness games don't focus as heavily on the wargaming roots of the hobby as do some roleplaying games. This game and its cousins intentionally sacrifice a bit of tactical detail in favor of "chunkier," definitive outcomes.

Even for **Werewolf**, which is often considered the most combat-focused of the World of Darkness titles, the violence is thematic and narrative, in service to the Garou's burden of Rage. A werewolf in full crinos freakout is unlikely to be a master tactician. That brute simply wants to *kill*.

If the Storyteller and players want the old-school feeling of fighting down to the last Health box, they're welcome to do so, of course. But for the rest of us, here's a few ways to decide who won if you've gone three rounds and both sides remain standing.

- As mentioned above, Storytellers can allow the players' characters to use automatic wins against any "minor" hostile, especially when they're in crinos form, assuming Delirium (see p. 142) hasn't already made them a non-issue.
- Allow the players to break the conflict off if they want. The Storyteller may call for a basic contest to do so (for example, Strength or Dexterity + Athletics to flee a fight, or Composure + Etiquette to divert a discussion), or their foes may simply let them leave. The roll here is to suggest context and prompt narrative detail to describe the end of the combat.
- If the characters' foes have taken more losses — or even an unexpected amount of damage — the Storyteller can simply decide that they break off the conflict, as above. Not everyone wants to fight to the bloody end with a pack of fang-and-claw death-tornadoes.
- Simply award victory to the side that won the most contests or to the side with the fewest points of Aggravated damage. The Storyteller narrates the end of the conflict based on the results of the previous contests. Ideally, if the players' characters lost, they have a chance to flee or at least to surrender with some dignity.
- Change the situation. Perhaps some new, third force enters the scene, such as a monster-hunting strike team. Perhaps the conflict simply changes venue from the alley to a nearby warehouse or from the top of the mesa into the river valley below. The change should present new options to both sides.
- Use a single roll to determine the conflict's outcome, and then fill in that outcome with narrative detail (see "Using Dice" on p. 116)

DAMAGE

When injury occurs, the Storyteller decides which tracker the conflict damages. In a physical conflict, it is normally Health; a social, psychic, or other "sense of self" conflict normally damages Willpower.

The winner of each contest applies their success margin to the loser's relevant tracker as damage. A character using ranged weapons likewise has their margin applied from their attack test.

Sometimes, circumstances mandate extra damage after the contest:

- If the winner used a weapon, add the relevant weapon's damage rating to the total damage or apply other conditions of the weapon (see p. 195)
- In a social conflict, add damage, depending on the audience. The Storyteller may also add damage if the loser particularly values the audience's opinion.

EXAMPLE:

After Clara fires her shotgun at a police officer, Clara's player achieves a margin of two successes. In adding the shotgun's weapon rating of +4, the officer suffers 6 points of damage.

Types of Damage

In the Storyteller System, damage comes in two types:

- ***Superficial damage*** causes bruising, sprains, and the like but not immediate life-threatening injury. Fists, kicks, and nonlethal weapons, such as tasers, do Superficial damage to humans. Superficial damage in social conflict means embarrassment, a bruised ego, or shaken confidence and has no lasting effect on the target's image of others or themselves.

  Unless otherwise noted, Superficial damage is always halved (round up) before applied to the Health tracker.

- ***Aggravated damage*** causes broken bones, wounds, and life-threatening injuries. Cutting and piercing weapons do Aggravated damage to humans, as do fire and firearms. Attacks that reveal secret knowledge about the target or attacks from close friends and trusted figures do Aggravated damage to Willpower.

If you're tired of being all banged up, there are certain ways to recover, of course. For more information, see "Healing" on p. 128.

Werewolves are especially durable, but they still suffer damage of these same types as other creatures. For more information on Garou recovery, see "Regeneration" on p. 134.

The Way of All Flesh

Supernatural creatures present numerous special cases. Not all creatures suffer Aggravated damage the same way as humans do (such as vampires), and certain types of creatures suffer Aggravated damage from the legendary banes of their kind (such as fire and sunlight for vampires, and silver for werewolves). Some creatures are supernatural in potential, but human in body, such as sorcerers and warlocks, and perhaps the Good Folk. Other entities, such as spirits, may not suffer damage in the same way individuals with physical bodies do. In this game, whenever a weapon states *Superficial* or *Aggravated* physical damage it does so for the purpose of werewolves and other creatures with Enhanced Resistance (see p. 243). We trust you to figure out what counts as Aggravated towards mundane humans. (A good rule of thumb is "pretty much anything beyond fists". Humans are fragile creatures.)

Antagonist descriptions often include special rules for various supernatural creatures, from what they consider Superficial or Aggravated, to ways of recovering expeditiously. See the Antagonists chapter for more.

Tracking Damage

Characters apply their damage to the relevant track: Health or Willpower.

Unless otherwise stated, divide Superficial damage in half (rounded up) before applying it to the tracker. Mark each level of Superficial damage on the character sheet by making a "/" on one box on the track.

Mark Aggravated damage on the character sheet by making an "X" on the tracker.

Certain systems have the same effect as damage, indicating the depletion of personal wellbeing. When a point is voluntarily spent from a tracker, such as when using

Willpower to reroll dice, mark it as Superficial damage, a "/"; if all points are already Superficially damaged, turn one into Aggravated damage instead, per the Impairment rules (see below). Superficial damage sustained through spending this way is never halved.

Health ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Willpower ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Impairment

Once the character sustains enough damage (of either type, or a mix) to fill their tracker, they are Impaired. Impaired characters lose two dice from all relevant dice pools: Physical pools from Impaired Health, Social and Mental pools from Impaired Willpower, and any other pools the Storyteller believes to be similarly Impaired. At the Storyteller's discretion, human characters or other mundane creatures under their control are incapacitated at this stage.

For every level of damage of either kind, Superficial or Aggravated, that a character takes while Impaired, convert one previously sustained Superficial damage to Aggravated damage on a one-for-one basis. Turn the "/" to a "X" on the track. (Remember to halve Superficial damage as usual before converting it.)

THE END OF THE TRACKER

A character with their tracker completely filled with Aggravated damage is out of the conflict, possibly permanently. In a physical combat, they are comatose or dead in most cases.

EXAMPLE:

The officer from the example above suffers 6 levels of Aggravated damage (shotgun vs mortal), but he has only 5 health levels. He promptly expires.

Filling the Willpower tracker with Aggravated damage outside of a social conflict (due to things like Gifts or spirit abilities) has no immediate effects other than Impairment. If it happens within a social conflict, the defeated character completely breaks down and loses face. They may be shunned by the members of the pack or sept, blackballed by Renowned Garou, publicly embarrassed, or suffer any other consequence the Storyteller decides. (Note that one such consequence may very well be the death of the character.)

EXAMPLE:

The pack is in hot water at the moot for bringing down the feds on the sept's territory. Those who lose all their Willpower in the ensuing social conflict are unable to defend or deflect their blame, and it might even be time for chagrin (see below) or even disbanding the pack. Then again, it's perhaps the first step in an arduous vindication plotline.

Fire and Burning

Fire can be a terrible threat to werewolves; compared to silver, it's often overlooked (see p. 134) as being anathema to the Garou. Garou might encounter perilous fire in any number of ways, whether a chemical fire ignited during a rampage across a development site or a frenzied ahroun hurling a challenger into the bonfires at a moot.

Fire deals Aggravated Health damage to a character, based on the amount of their body exposed, as dictated by the Storyteller. Having one's hand shoved into an open flame might deal one point of damage, whereas being engulfed in a roaring inferno would deal three or more per turn.

Fire effects of specific weapons, such as Molotov cocktails and flamethrowers, can be found on p. 196.

Healing

Below are the rules for humans, as well as Garou in the comparatively mundane homid and lupus forms. Garou possess superlative regenerating powers in certain circumstances — see p. 134 for more detail.

SUPERFICIAL HEALTH DAMAGE

Characters may remove Superficial damage at the beginning of a session, if the Storyteller determines that enough time has passed since injury that they'd have had time to recover (especially if they're Garou).

SUPERFICIAL WILLPOWER DAMAGE

At the beginning of a session, characters can remove a number of Superficial damage levels up to their Composure or Resolve rating (use the higher value) from their Willpower track.

EXAMPLE:

Mira has Resolve 2 and Composure 4. She suffered 5 levels of Superficial damage to her Willpower tracker during a tense standoff with a Bane trying to possess her. Her player can erase 4 levels of Mira's Superficial damage at the beginning of the next session.

AGGRAVATED HEALTH DAMAGE

Aggravated damage is serious business. The comparatively frail nature of the physical body is the reason so many Garou seek to build their Renown, so that they can continue to fight as a legendary spirit after their physical body has given its last. How reliable such a process is, well... that's a separate conversation.

A character with Medicine can convert Aggravated damage on the Health tracker to Superficial damage. Their player must succeed at a simple test of Intelligence + Medicine; the Difficulty equals the total Aggravated damage sustained by the patient. Attempts to heal oneself add +1 to the Difficulty.

The maximum points of Aggravated damage that a character can convert is half that character's Medicine rating, rounded up.

This healing happens over the course of the night. The Storyteller decides whether any remaining injuries require only another day of similar treatment or hospitalization.

Hospitalization avoids the need for more dice rolls, but injuries requires the patient's total Aggravated damage in weeks to heal fully. The Storyteller can lessen this duration to fit the story better or allow the character to walk around injured — wearing a cast, for example.

AGGRAVATED WILLPOWER DAMAGE

Like Aggravated Health damage, Aggravated Willpower loss is perilous, especially for Garou, which is why they have such a problem with harano, hauglosk (see p. 140), and the like. At the end of each session, a character who has acted in accordance with their tribe's associated Renown (see Chapter 3) can heal 1 level of Aggravated Willpower damage. Storytellers should be permissive with these interpretations, and should also be mindful of those Garou who have broken their tribe's Ban, many of which have Willpower risks of their own.

However, the other consequences of losing a Social or Mental conflict — a bad reputation, susceptibility to mental control or social dominance, or even the risk of harano — may continue as long as the Storyteller chooses.

SPECIAL CASES

As decidedly physical monsters, werewolves occasionally find themselves lifting or throwing things in expressions of Rage, or find themselves restrained by enemies or even well-meaning packmates who don't want to see them plunge headlong into disaster. You might see the following systems used more frequently than you'd expect.

FEATS OF STRENGTH

Storytellers should feel free to set a Difficulty to perform any given feat of strength based on the character's Strength Attribute, and completely ignore the chart below. The usual pool for lifting or smashing things is Strength + Athletics; for throwing heavy things, the Storyteller might use the worse between Strength or Dexterity + Athletics.

Note, too, that Garou have ways to affect their Strength scores, which is why the scale goes beyond 10. Other supernatural creatures might possess remarkable strength, as well. For example, vampires might express undead strength via a Standard or even an Exceptional Dice pool.

For Storytellers who prefer hard-and-fast numbers, this chart provides the minimum Strength needed to deadlift various weights or perform feats of strength without a test. Characters of lower Strength may use a Strength + Athletics Attribute test to affect heavier weights than their Strength ratings allow.

Strength	Feat	Deadlift Weight (kg)
1	Crush a beer can	20 (Christmas tree, stop sign)
2	Break a wooden chair	45 (toilet)
3	Break down a wooden door	115 (manhole cover, empty coffin, refrigerator)
4	Break a wooden plank; break down a standard interior door	180 (full coffin, empty dumpster)
5	Break open a metal fire door; tear open a chain link fence or chained gate	250 (motorcycle)
6	Throw a motorcycle; snap handcuffs	360 (tall steel street lamp)
7	Flip over a small car; snap a padlock	410 (horse)
8	Break a lead pipe; punch through a brick wall	455 (telephone pole, grand piano)
9	Punch through concrete; break chains; rip open a car door	545 (tree trunk, small plane)
10	Rip open a steel pipe; bend an I-beam	680 (speedboat)
11	Overturn a car; punch through 2.5 cm–thick sheet metal	910 (Predator drone)
12	Break a metal lamp post; throw a wrecking ball	1.3 metric tons (police helicopter, sports car)
13	Overturn an SUV; toss a sports car	1.8 metric tons (police car)
14	Overturn a bus; rip open a vault door	2.25 metric tons (empty shipping container; SUV, pickup truck)
15	Overturn a truck; toss an SUV	2.75 metric tons (Humvee)

Lifting is all or nothing — if you fail the roll, nothing happens. At the Storyteller's discretion, dragging an object may be easier than lifting it; increase the character's effective Strength by 1 in such a case.

THROWING THINGS

A character throwing a weapon at a target tests Dexterity + Athletics. For werewolves, this may include things not usually considered weapons, like pieces of I-beam or whole cars or containers of volatile chemicals — or even helpless foes.

GRAPPLING

A combatant can attempt to grapple, hold, tackle, or otherwise restrain a foe by rolling Strength + Brawl. If the grappler gets more successes than their opponent, they do no damage but, instead, restrain the target, preventing them from moving and from engaging other opponents, though the target can still act against the grappler as normal. In the next round, the grappler may engage their foe in a contest of Strength + Brawl. If the grappler wins, they hold the foe in place and can choose from the following options:

* Damage the foe based on their margin of successes, as a normal attack
* Do nothing apart from hold the foe in place

If the grappled combatant wins, they escape and can move freely during the next round.

THE GOLDEN RULE

This rule is the most important of all, and the only real rule worth following: The story belongs to you and your troupe. This game should be whatever you want it to be, whether that's a nearly diceless chronicle of in-character intrigue against the crumbling remains of the Garou Nation or a long-running tactical chronicle with each player controlling their own pack of werewolves.

If the rules in this book interfere with your enjoyment of the game, change them. The world is far too complex; no set of inflexible rules could possibly reflect it. Think of this book as a collection of guidelines: suggested but not mandatory ways of capturing the World of Darkness in the format of a game. You decide what works best in your game. And you may freely use, alter, abuse, or ignore these rules at your whim.

WAYS OF THE WEREWOLVES

The following rules specifically reflect the Garou experience. Systems such as those for shifting form, the Delirium, and Rage itself relate to the individual Garou, while Harano and Hauglosk affect the relationship of a Garou to the society of their fellows. Together they demonstrate how Garou wage their desperate battles in the age of Apocalypse.

RAGE

Perhaps the single most defining characteristic of werewolves, Rage forever roils in the hearts and souls of Garou. It becomes manifest in their bodies and allows them to perform terrifying acts of brutality. Throughout

stories, players must decide how to best channel their characters' Rage — whether to feed its fires or to invoke it but risk not being able to call upon the fury of the Garou at some critical point.

Rage is a tracker spanning from 0 to 5. Any Garou can achieve Rage 5 — no fixed trait restricts its accumulation, and it is frequently in flux. Rage can most easily be tracked by keeping a corresponding number of Rage dice (see below) at hand and adjusting the number of dice when the Rage value changes.

Starting value for Rage is determined by the narrative situation. A Garou who isn't involved in an ongoing conflict and has had a good night's sleep starts at 1, whereas opening *in medias res* with a fight-or-flight situation would yield player characters 3. If questions arise, assume a starting Rage value of 2.

Gaining Rage

- **The Moon:** Howling at the moon for the first time on a given night stirs the Rage and yields one point. If the Garou is at 0 Rage, they have "lost the wolf" (see below), and this method is the only way to gain Rage outside of such mystical means as Rites, where specified.
- **Provocation, Harm, or Humiliation:** If the Garou suffers harm, pain, or other emotional or physical agitation, they gain a point of Rage, maximum one per turn. Note that once combat begins, most damage and injury don't yield additional Rage; low-level provocation, such as insults and trash talk, don't provoke further Rage, either.
- **Rites or Rite-like Practices:** Spending a scene getting psyched up, performing a tribe- or auspice-related activity ranging from a solemn retelling of past grievances to picking fights at a soccer match can yield one or two points, at the Storyteller's discretion.
- **Gifts:** Some Gifts can modify Rage.

If any effect or provocation would take a Garou's Rage past 5, the character sustains a point of Superficial Willpower damage for each point of Rage that would exceed 5.

The Rage Economy

Both the Storyteller and the player are responsible for Rage gains. A player is encouraged to suggest a gain whenever they feel it's appropriate, just as the Storyteller shouldn't be afraid to apply it liberally and thematically. The rate at which characters gain Rage is also a powerful Storyteller tool. Stories in which Rage is always available tend toward the more action-oriented and violent, whereas a lower rate of Rage gain is better for evoking a sense of desperation, where any exercise of Rage jeopardizes the Wolf within. Likewise, a Storyteller should be mindful of players attempting to game the system by using Gifts or other abilities for the sake of dumping Rage. Spirits tend to frown on such abuse, and recklessly calling upon them to perform Gifts is sure to have consequences.

Spending or Losing Rage

- **Regenerate:** Garou can heal rapidly by expending Rage and making a Rage check (see below)
- **Shapeshifting:** Changing and maintaining forms can require a Rage check, depending on form (see p. 134)
- **Using Gifts:** Some Gifts require Rage checks to activate. This restriction is noted in the Gift description.
- **Gift Effects:** Some Gifts can soothe a Garou and allow them to shed Rage voluntarily, whereas other Gifts can rob them of Rage, their desire to retain it notwithstanding.

Rage Checks

When a Garou wants to release their Rage-borne powers, their player makes a *Rage check* with a single die (see "Checks" on p. 122). On a win — a 6 or better — the Garou's Rage stays the same, but a failed check — 5 or less — causes their Rage to drop by one point. Make the Rage check at the same time as the act provoking it, ideally with its own identifiable die.

Rage decreasing in this manner doesn't necessarily represent the Garou becoming "less angry", but rather models how the Rage is expressed, the pent-up energy manifesting as Gifts or a more vicious supernatural form.

LOSING THE WOLF

A Garou with no Rage left has "lost the wolf" and can no longer perform acts that require a Rage check, remain in a supernatural form, or use Rites or Gifts. Rage can never go below zero, and any loss that would suggest it — such as one incurred from a failed double Rage check at Rage 1 — is ignored. The only way a Garou can regain the wolf, other than by mystical means, is to howl at the moon (see Gaining Rage, above).

RAGE TRACKER SUMMARY

- **Rage is a 0–5 tracker**
- **Rage is gained from howling at the moon, provocation, and certain Rites or Gifts**
- **Rage is expended through Rage checks on regenerating, shapeshifting, and Gifts**
- **Gaining Rage over 5 results in Willpower damage**
- **A Garou at Rage 0 cannot perform acts requiring Rage checks or sustain a supernatural form**

RAGE DICE

For each point of Rage possessed by a character, one Rage die replaces one of the regular dice when assembling dice pools. Rage dice function like regular dice, but the "1" and "2" faces are considered special: each is a *Brutal* die result.

On its own, a single Brutal result is simply treated as a failure, but two or more on a single test yields a Brutal outcome. A *Brutal outcome* causes a test to fail (usually with something being wrecked, harmed, or destroyed), *unless the aim of the test was to cause damage or injury*, in which case a Brutal outcome yields four additional successes.

Note that the Storyteller is the final arbiter in what counts as benefiting from Brutal outcomes. Although firing a sniper rifle to take out an enemy has the goal of causing damage, the activity requires a far too composed mindset to benefit from unbridled Rage. Likewise, some nonviolent acts, such as resisting mental coercion or making a giant leap, might be treated as benefitting from Rage, at the Storyteller's discretion. (A Brutal outcome would of course *also* cause destruction and harm, while simultaneously aiding in the attempt. Rage is a double-edged sword.)

Brutal die results cannot be rerolled by spending Willpower, but other Rage dice results can.

RAGE DICE SUMMARY

- **For every point of Rage, replace a regular die with a Rage die in pools**
- **Rage dice have similar faces to regular 10-sided dice, except that "1" and "2" are considered Brutal die results**
- **Two or more Brutal results cause a *Brutal outcome*, usually causing the test to fail, unless the goal was to cause harm or damage**
- **Brutal die results cannot be rerolled by spending Willpower.**

Using the Werewolf Dice:

Regular Dice

Blank face = 1–5 = Failure

= 6–9 = Success

= 10 = Success, potential critical win

Rage Dice

= 1–2 = Brutal result

Blank face = 3–5 = Failure

= 6–9 = Success

= 10 = Success, potential critical win

WEREWOLVES AND HEALTH

No matter what form werewolves have taken, from the rampaging crinos to the nimble lupus, they are far more hardy than ordinary humans and can survive injuries that would put a regular person in the grave. In werewolves' supernatural forms, their healing abilities are even greater, as mighty flesh withstands vicious blows and grievous wounds knit themselves together before an onlooker's eyes.

Regeneration

Any damage not caused by fire or silver, or that is otherwise stated as doing Aggravated damage to werewolves, is considered Superficial, regardless of form. In addition, while in their supernatural forms, a werewolf rapidly regenerates any Superficial damage sustained. As long as they're in a supernatural form, a Garou's player can make a Rage check to instantly heal a level of the character's Superficial damage each turn, or two levels if the character is in crinos form. Doing so isn't itself an action and can be performed in addition to any actions the werewolf is performing. Regenerating in this manner is done at the start of the turn, when actions are declared. Aggravated damage takes far more effort: Regenerating each level requires two Rage checks.

Incapacitation and Death

A Garou who has been incapacitated by Aggravated damage is taken out of action and falls unconscious, unless they're able to regenerate at least one point of Aggravated damage. (This can be done even if unconscious, providing they have enough Rage.) If allowed to rest for a night they also regenerate one Aggravated health level automatically, as normal, but if they Sustain aggravated damage from fire or silver before resting, they die.

Note that no other form of damage, short of complete bodily annihilation, can kill a Garou, as their mangled form refuses to yield to anything but the banes of their existence. It's tough to kill a death-machine that doesn't want to be killed.

Once dead, however, the corpse of a dead Garou always reverts to the form of their birth, leaving no trace of their supernatural qualities.

Werewolves and Silver

Cutting or piercing damage from silver is always Aggravated to a werewolf. Once they transform into one of their supernatural forms, the mere touch of silver burns their flesh as if it were red-hot. A Garou in glabro, crinos, or hispo form sustains one level of Aggravated damage per turn during which they touch silver with their naked flesh or fur. They also gain one point of Rage with each level of Aggravated damage sustained in this way.

THE FORMS

Garou have the ability to transform their bodies into multiple forms. Each form has advantages and disadvantages, as well as limitations with regard to manual and social interaction. The glabro, crinos, and hispo forms are known as the ***supernatural*** forms, and they have regenerative properties, as well. Most Gifts can only be performed while in a supernatural form.

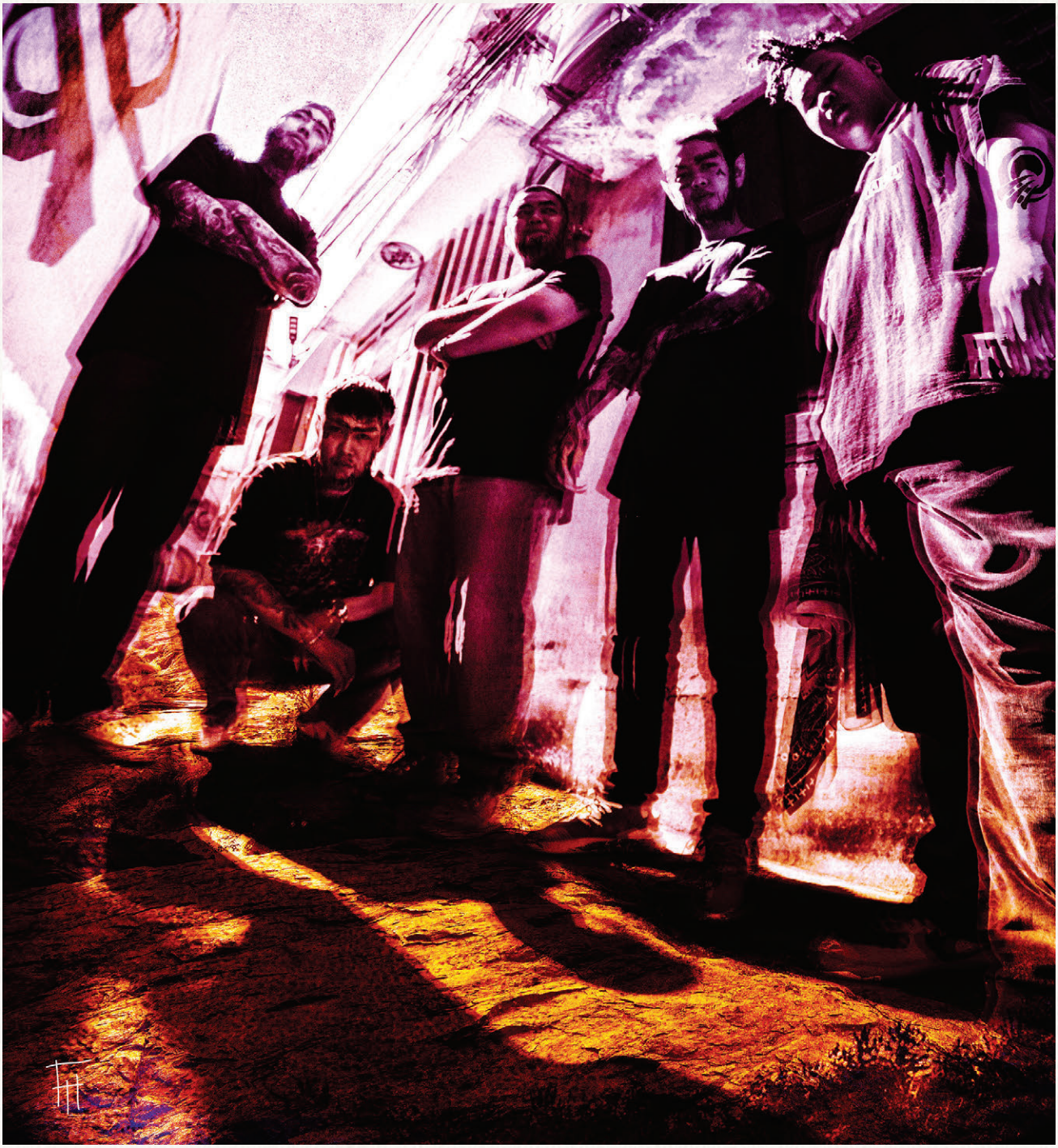
Especially among Garou, taking specific forms is a powerful signifier and has undeniable social impact. Standard pack interactions are almost always in the homid and lupus forms — generally whichever the individual is most comfortable with, or to show deference, as in rolling over for the lupus. Taking other forms usually has a purpose beyond the tool-use and movement benefits. For example, a galliard may adopt the glabro form during a climactic moment while regaling sept-mates with a song of sacrifice; or an indignant Black Fury may go crinos at a moot, signifying, "Fuck politics, I'm challenging you to a fight to the death, right now." Choose your form wisely.

Shapeshifting

Shifting form is a two-dice minor action and requires a Rage check, according to the form's *cost*. (This cost must also be paid for each additional scene in which the Garou maintains the form.) If the check causes them to lose their final point of Rage, the shift fails and they lose the wolf, as a Garou needs at least one point of Rage to stay in a supernatural form. Just as with Gifts and regeneration, shifting takes place at the beginning of the turn, as actions are declared, and a character can shapeshift only once per turn.

Note that too-frequent (or frivolous...) shifting takes a terrible toll on body and mind. Should a character shift back and forth multiple times in a short time span, such as by seeking simply to shed Rage, the Storyteller may realize such massive bodily stress by inflicting appropriate levels of Aggravated damage to Health and/or Willpower. (Let the player know before you do so, the better to inform their decision-making.)

Shapeshifting in front of mundane humans normally causes them an episode of the Delirium (see p. 142). Certain individuals familiar with the truth of the Garou ***might*** not be affected, but in almost every case, the self-preservation instinct written into human memory quickly comes to the fore.



Homid: The Human

The homid form is the one similar to that of a regular human, and it is the natural form of most Garou tonight. For most non-supernatural methods of detection, homid form is indistinguishable from non-Garou. Being homid is great for using tools, communicating, and handling most of the interactions of the modern world.

Cost: None

Abilities and Limitations: In homid form, Garou are unable to regenerate, but they are able to touch silver without suffering damage.

Glabro: The Near-Human

The glabro form is a big, hunched, and hairy human. It's not overtly supernatural, and more sinewy than hypermuscular, but the wolf is just beneath the surface. Close inspection reveals a surprising amount of body hair as well as a loping gait. Taking glabro form is still good for using tools, but is also a bit more durable than homid form — it's good for wielding weapons and for not making people go *holy shit a giant fucking wolf-monster just tore those people to ribbons* while you're doing it.

Cost: One Rage check

Abilities and Limitations: While the form isn't obviously unnatural, Garou in this form make regular humans uneasy, and non-Intimidation Social tests with them suffer a two-dice penalty. The following also apply:

- A 2-dice bonus to all Physical tests
- The Garou can regenerate one Health level with one Rage check

Crinos: The War-Form, the Monster

The crinos form is a nightmarish hulk of claws, fangs, and whipcord muscle, combining the most fearsome traits of wolf and man. Walking carnage, the crinos form always means death for something. Just the sight of it terrifies most mundane individuals, whether they're human, wolf, or anything else is in its path. It's the form that immediately screams *werewolf!* to anyone observing it. Having been so horrified, though, they might not recall the experience afterward.

Cost: Two Rage checks

Abilities and Limitations: Ordinary communication is nigh-impossible, and a Garou in crinos has difficulty forming expressions beyond single words — "kill," "enemy," "Wyrm," — usually with a guttural, snarling delivery. This condition makes non-Intimidation Social and Stealth tests automatically fail. The following also apply:

- A 4-dice bonus to all Physical tests
- 4 bonus Health levels (apply any damage to them to the regular track if not regenerated before shifting back)
- Natural +3 damage claws (Superficial vs werewolves, vampires, and other supernatural creatures with similar resistance)
- Natural +1 Aggravated damage bite
- The Garou can regenerate two Health levels with one Rage check
- Mundane humans witnessing it almost certainly experience the Delirium (see p. 142)

At the start of a turn, if they didn't kill something in the previous turn, a werewolf in crinos form must spend one Willpower point to avoid going into frenzy (see below). Upon leaving crinos form, their Rage is reduced to 1.

Hispo: The Dire Wolf

The hispo form resembles that of a huge, primordial wolf. It's "That's a really big dog"-big, but not immediately visibly supernatural. The hispo form is great for long-distance travel, both in terms of four-legged speed and remarkable hardiness. It's not great for speaking or using tools, but it has a fearsome bite, as well as superior senses.

Cost: One Rage check

Abilities and Limitations: In this form, a Garou cannot speak as a human would, but the werewolf can communicate well enough with wolves and other Garou who understand such form-based nuances. Due to the form's fearsome size and presence, tests to avoid detection are done at a two-dice penalty. The following also apply:

- A 2-dice bonus to all non-Stealth Physical tests
- Natural +1 Aggravated damage bite
- The Garou can regenerate one Health level with one Rage check

Lupus: The Wolf

The lupus form is that of a regular-sized wolf. Indeed, it might easily be mistaken for a large dog in certain areas (particularly where wolves are infrequent visitors...). The lupus form excels in distance travel at speed and in navigating areas where its comparatively small size aids at stealth or accessing difficult-to-reach areas, such as digging under a fence or creeping into a drainage pipe.

Cost: None

Abilities and Limitations: In this form a Garou cannot regenerate but is not affected by silver. It cannot speak as would a human, but it can communicate well enough with wolves and other Garou via primal body language and vocalization. Depending on the environment it can also gain various two-dice bonuses, such as to Survival or Stealth, depending on whether being a wolf would be beneficial in that specific situation.

FRENZY

When in crinos form, Garou always feel under threat of losing control. And while "ordinary" Rage can make them lash out in the moment, frenzy is a complete, extended loss of control as the werewolf unleashes their full fury on everything around them.

Entering Frenzy

A Garou enters frenzy if, at the start of a turn while in crinos form, they didn't kill anything in the previous turn and they fail to spend a point of Willpower. This can be voluntarily, as a response to overwhelming odds, or involuntarily if the Garou's Willpower is completely depleted. The Storyteller can also call for a frenzy test in cases of extreme provocation, such as any harming of Touchstones, in which case a Willpower test must be made against a Difficulty of 2 (or 3 in crinos form).

Frenzy Effects

When a Garou enters a frenzy, their Rage immediately increases to 5 and they shift to crinos. They then mercilessly attack anything perceived as a threat, starting with whoever, or whatever, provoked the frenzy, if applicable. If anyone is attacking them, the werewolf must try to close the distance and engage the target with their natural weapons. If no one is attacking, they try to pursue those who flee, and thereafter they assail any bystanders. The Garou does not perform any defensive acts, such as taking cover or attempting dodge tests against ranged weapons, but does attempt to regenerate Health, making Rage checks as normal to do so.

While in frenzy, the Garou becomes immune to Health-based penalties (such as Impairment) short of dismemberment, and they receive a three-dice bonus to resisting Mental Gifts or Gift-like effects, such as vampiric powers, unless the powers specifically affect a target in frenzy. The werewolf cannot themselves use Gifts, however, and must keep acting out frenzy, or the player must yield control of the character to the Storyteller. The player may not use Willpower in any way, such as rerolling dice.

Leaving Frenzy

Once every perceived threat is dead or silenced, the player can make a Willpower test at Difficulty 2 to leave Frenzy. If they choose not to or the test fails, the frenzy resumes until no one but the frenzying Garou is left standing, their Rage drops to zero, or the scene ends. (Certain Gifts and other abilities can also end the frenzy.) No matter how the frenzy ends, the Garou reverts to their natural form and has their Rage set to zero, losing the wolf (p. 133).

FRENZY SUMMARY

- **Garou characters enter frenzy when they fail to spend Willpower due to crinos form or if they are severely provoked and fail a Willpower test.**
- **On entering frenzy, Garou increase their Rage to 5 and shift to crinos. (Make Rage checks as normal.)**
- **While in frenzy, Garou ignore impairment penalties and gain a three-dice bonus to resist most mental abilities of effects.**
- **Garou cannot use Gifts while in frenzy.**
- **Garou can leave frenzy by winning a Willpower test at Difficulty 2 when all enemies are dead or incapacitated. Failing this they will keep rampaging until out of Rage or the scene ends.**
- **On leaving frenzy a Garou's Rage drops to 0, causing them to lose the wolf.**

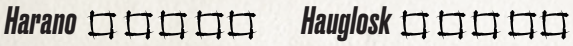
HARANO AND HAUGLOSK

The Garou have a seemingly impossible task before them, whether they believe their call to be bringing Gaia back from the brink of death, correcting the imbalance of the cosmological Triat, or the outright destruction of the Wyrm and its host. They are intensely passionate creatures, even beyond the violent expressions of bloody rage that characterize them. It's no surprise, then, to discover that the emotional states of Garou are often affected by the enormity of what lies before them.

Overall, the Garou are certain of their own principles. Inspired by their spiritual duty to Gaia and guided by their own individual (and pack...) interpretation of that purpose, the stalwart Garou fight on, roused by the pursuit Renown and an innate sense of what's right in an endless war that quite possibly cannot be won at all.

For some Garou, though, that righteousness gives way to one of two particularly perilous kinds of fatalism: harano and hauglosk.

Harano and hauglosk are represented by a mirrored 5-box tracker on the character sheet. (5 left for harano, 5 right for hauglosk)



Both trackers start empty — the Garou has neither experienced enough failure nor turned callous enough to show.

Harano

As the werewolf experiences setbacks, and the apparent futility of their struggle becomes apparent, so do they slide toward harano, a state where they succumb to hopelessness and give up on serving Gaia. For such Garou, the war isn't worth fighting anymore. Wretched creatures, Garou in harano may abandon their Patron Spirit's Favor and Ban, and some even seem to lose the ability to shapechange at all.

Little by little, harano can set upon even the most confident of Garou, eroding their confidence with self-doubt and emptying whatever hard won victories that might have been. Harano is most common among werewolves who bear leadership roles, but it can seize any Garou by making them doubt the value of their contribution.

HARANO IN PLAY

Every time the Garou suffers a major setback, or their Touchstones are put in danger or damaged due to the actions (or inactions) of the Garou, the player must make a *Harano test*, with a dice pool equal to the amount of filled boxes on *both* the harano and hauglosk trackers. (This test is made at a minimum of one die; do not use Rage dice for this test.) The Difficulty is usually 1, but the Storyteller can decide that severe setbacks or other crises warrant a higher Difficulty. Failing the test results in a box being filled on the harano tracker, from right to left. If the tracker ever becomes filled, the werewolf has succumbed to harano, leaving the service of Gaia and their role as a playable character.

DESPERATE RAGE

A Garou player character can voluntarily fill one of the harano boxes to increase their Rage to 5, which represents them tapping into their finite reserves of desperate fury. This action can be done only once per session, and the Storyteller can decide to prohibit this if playing a limited one-shot story.

HARANO SUMMARY

- **Harano tests are taken at major setbacks or other tragedies**
- **The Harano test dice pool is equal to the number of filled boxes on both the harano and hauglosk trackers**
- **If the test is failed another harano box is filled in**
- **The player can opt to voluntarily fill a box on the harano tracker to immediately increase their Rage to 5**
- **If the harano tracker is completely filled the Garou character succumbs to harano, leaving the game**

Hauglosk

Hauglosk is the dread state of a werewolf who has lost all compassion and mercy to the fanaticism of their cause. Every time they disregard consequences and let the ends justify the means, they slide closer to hauglosk.

Although hauglosk has always been a risk for the Rage-driven Garou, its losses are keenly felt now, in light of the Cult of Fenris having forsaken what remains of the Garou Nation to combat the Wyrm on its own terms. Similarly, debates rage at moots around the world as to whether the Impergium was a period of hauglosk for the entirety of the werewolf kind.

Note that hauglosk is different from mindless rage (though hauglosk may result in many a mindless rage). Werewolves suffering from hauglosk undertake their

course without regard for its consequences, so impassioned are they by the need to do *something*, anything at all. Hauglosk is also a long-term ongoing state, and many Garou never come out of it.

HAUGLOSK IN PLAY

Every time a werewolf violates a chronicle Tenet (see p. 199) they must make a ***Hauglosk test***, with a dice pool equal to the amount of filled boxes of both the harano and hauglosk trackers. (This test is made at a minimum of one die; do not use Rage dice for this test.) The Difficulty is usually 1, but the Storyteller can decide that severe violations or transgressions warrant a higher Difficulty. Failing the test results in a box being filled on the hauglosk tracker, from left to right. If the tracker ever becomes filled, the werewolf has succumbed to hauglosk, becoming an unredeemable fanatic and a Storyteller character.

MERCILESS WILLPOWER

A Garou player character can voluntarily fill one of the hauglosk boxes to restore all Willpower damage, which represents them summoning up a merciless resolve to keep going, everyone else be damned. This action can be done only once per session, and the Storyteller can decide to prohibit this if playing a limited one-shot story.

HAUGLOSK SUMMARY

- **Hauglosk tests are taken when a Garou violates a chronicle tenet**
- **The hauglosk test dice pool is equal to the number of filled boxes on both the harano and hauglosk trackers**
- **If the test is failed another hauglosk box is filled in**
- **The player can opt to voluntarily fill a box on the hauglosk tracker to heal all Willpower damage**
- **If the hauglosk tracker is completely filled the Garou character succumbs to hauglosk, leaving the game**

RENOWN

As do many Traits, each Renown score has a ranking of one to five. Overall, a werewolf's Renown represents how well they embody being Garou, from how virtuous other werewolves perceive them to be to how positively the animistic spirits of the Umbra regard them.

A Garou's Renown has a few important functions.

- For most Gifts, the Renown type associated with that Gift contributes to the dice pool to use that Gift and determines how effective it is. See the individual Gift descriptions for more.
- In certain cases, various Renown types may add dice to Social pools, as they represent not only the individual Garou's growing legend but also their reputation among spirits and other werewolves. The Storyteller determines whether a Garou may rely upon their Renown to affect an interaction with a spirit or another werewolf. In most cases, this use of Renown shouldn't be the case — specific Skills and the Status

Background represent such an episode more fully. But in certain situations, calling upon one's Renown as a cultural gesture makes sense.

EXAMPLE:

Diwata Hammer-of-Banes is making an appeal to the Garou in attendance at the moot. It's a bombastic call to war, and the Storyteller agrees to let her player add her Glory value to Diwata's Charisma + Persuasion roll.

General rules for how Renown affects characters can be found on p. 106.

Chagrin

A werewolf can temporarily suffer a reduction in Renown, affecting not only their reputation but their legend and the willingness of spirits to reward entreaties via Gifts.

When a Garou acts in overt opposition to a Renown virtue's creed, and in an especially noteworthy way, the Storyteller may declare that character to be *in chagrin*. Mark that Renown type on the character sheet as subject to chagrin.

Chagrin shouldn't come up in consideration of every action a werewolf undertakes — it's dramatic when used only in important circumstances, as a temporary but significant consequence for certain actions. Don't overuse it, and don't let it complicate the flow of a scene with minutiae.

- Fleeing a battle out of cowardice would potentially cause Glory chagrin; simply retreating from a conflict would not
- Betraying a packmate to a rival Garou would potentially cause Honor chagrin; giving a false name to a cop would not
- Revealing the location of the caern to a Black Spiral Dancer whom one is trying, against the pack's wishes, to "rehabilitate" would potentially cause Wisdom chagrin; accidentally pursuing one's quarry into a well-laid ambush would not

A Garou in chagrin reduces the value of that Glory, Honor, or Wisdom score by 1 (or 2, if subject to the Rite of Shame, p. 184) for all dice pools to which it is relevant. Also, as long as a character has a Renown type subject to chagrin, no experience points can be spent to increase it.

Chagrin is a temporary status, and emerging from it is based on the character's contrition. In most cases, performing an act of noteworthy Glory, Honor, or Wisdom suffices. In particularly egregious cases, a Rite of Contrition may be required (see p. 182). Ultimately, the player whose character is in chagrin and the Storyteller should discuss what is needed to emerge from chagrin, with the Storyteller as the ultimate arbiter.

Delirium

Why doesn't the world know about werewolves? Or, rather, why is what the world knows about werewolves inconsistent, clouded by folkloric interpretation, and looked down upon as superstition rather than trusted fact?

Ironically, humanity *does* know about the presence of the Garou — it's just buried at a fundamental, subconscious, racial-memory level. Humans do indeed understand the terror that werewolves can inflict, and people still grasp the cultural lessons of the Impergium, even if no modern individual can remember the specifics of it.

The result is what Garou know as the Delirium, and what humans recognize as an existential need to avoid werewolves.

When a human, animal, or other "nonsupernatural" onlooker observes something that obviously reveals an individual as Garou — such as changing shape, especially into the crinos war-form — the onlooker is likely to panic, flee, or even lapse into catatonia. Even afterward, once they regain their senses, affected individuals rationalize what they saw — or even block those memories entirely.

In general (unless the Storyteller opts otherwise), the effect of the Delirium upon a human witness depends on that individual's Composure + Resolve.

Composure + Resolve	Outcome	Do they forget what they witnessed?
1-5	Fear	Yes
6-9	Controlled fear	Usually
10	Resignation	No

An outcome of *fear* usually indicates that the individual will flee if the opportunity exists. Other potential fear responses are panic, disbelief, fetal-position catatonia, and desperate but probably ineffectual "playing possum" responses.

Controlled fear indicates the urge toward self-preservation, but with possible rational or protective responses, such as shooting at the horror while running away or a desperation to escape that includes locking doors or turning over obstacles in hopes of inhibiting pursuit.

Resignation indicates that the onlooker accepts what they're dealing with and makes a decision from there. In

most cases, people resigned to a hulking werewolf before them realize that fleeing is the wisest course of action, but some people choose to stand their ground or even fire a desperate shot at the monster. These people usually die, but the important distinction is that they kept their wits about them.

Forgetting what they witnessed can take a number of forms. It may literally be forgetting the episode, as with a blackout; it may be a rationalization, no matter how implausible ("And then a pack of wild dogs tore the guy apart!"); or it may be an episode of fugue or self-doubt ("I can't even remember what it was I saw, but there was blood everywhere..."). If the details of what a witness remembers matter, the Storyteller decides what's most appropriate or dramatically interesting.

Delirium and Technology

In times past, the Delirium was a failsafe for the Garou. Information traveled slowly, and eminently fallible eyewitness reports were the only way the Garou remained at the edges of human memory and terror.

In modern times, however, the Delirium hasn't kept up with the myriad ways humans surveil one another, and therefore the Garou in their midst. Omnipresent security systems, private and institutional drones, and the fact that everyone has at hand a supercomputer with a camera all conspire to stretch the protections offered by the Delirium to the thinnest they ever have been.

No surprise, then, that certain civil authorities and even long-dormant security agencies have found themselves responding to the exact sort of "unusual threats" represented by rampaging Garou packs. (For more information on werewolf hunting organizations, see pp. 288–290.)

The Delirium doesn't take effect for those who observe the behaviors of werewolves through *any* level of technological remove. That is to say, YouTube and Instagram videos of a werewolf going apeshit don't send people fleeing in terror when these things show up in people's feeds. Probably they elicit wonder at the quality of the "special effects" on display. Security camera footage of werewolves tearing a dockside warehouse apart doesn't send the federal agents watching it into mental shutdown, and it probably ends up in an evidence file somewhere. Audio recordings of werewolves aren't as immediately damning, because it's less obvious who or what is making any given noises, but they often include other details that may well bring down trouble on an indiscreet pack's heads.

Delirium and Other Creatures

Delirium affects humans in particular. Animals generally recognize the Garou as terrifying predators on their own, especially as werewolves assume the more aggressive forms, and flee instinctively when a Garou assumes more wolfish (and generally faster-moving) shapes. But animals don't have an innate sense for who's a werewolf, unless someone reveals themselves as such.

Other supernatural creatures are often unaffected by the Delirium — at least those beings of a first-order nature. That is to say, vampires seem to be immune to the Delirium, but the miserable, blood-addicted thralls who often travel in their wake are still (usually) affected. Of course, many vampires seem to understand the immediate threat a werewolf poses on its own and choose, rationally, to flee the Garou's presence, instead of being compelled by the Delirium.

Will-workers and hunters seem to be special cases. Overall, sorcerers seem to have a fundamental understanding that the supernatural exists, thus negating the effect of the Delirium upon them. Hunters, on the other hand, are affected as normal humans, for the most part, though some of them seem to have the ability to suppress the urge to flee. At least, in most cases, this breakdown is true. Garou who treat its details as universally true may find themselves surprised at a most inconvenient time... ■

CHAPTER SIX

Gifts, Rites, and Gear

> Every gesture of retribution carries in it the risk of escalation. It is not an insignificant possibility that the morally right may result in the morally wrong.
>
> – Ágnes Heller

This chapter describes the various forms of supernatural benefits werewolves can call upon, as well as certain common hardware such as weapons and equipment that might turn up in a chronicle. Also, it details the ways that Garou can cultivate their caerns, places of spiritual power and import.

Gifts

A Gift and its effects are the expression of a pact between a werewolf and a spirit. Garou active during the age of Apocalypse spend much of their time seeking out and forming relationships with spirits, as well as maintaining the ones they already have.

Using Gifts

When Gifts manifest, each one is different, and even the same Gift appears different when employed by different Garou. Some involve a whispered prayer, others the touching of a brand signifying the spiritual pact, and yet others begin with a chilling howl. Unless otherwise stated, the use of a Gift is always overt, and other Garou recognize that a Gift is being used, even if its nature isn't immediately obvious. Humans are less likely to notice Gifts' use, and if they do, they're prone to mistake the act as a religious or cultural oath, gesture, or curse.

Troupes should feel free to vary the spirits involved for more local spirits, if the flora, fauna, and other spirit-scape residents would suggest it. For example, a capybara-spirit might teach and perform the Gift Open

Seal in South America and the Umbra there, rather than a raccoon-spirit.

GIFT SYSTEMS

By default, Gifts can be used only while the user is in one of the supernatural forms: glabro, crinos, or hispo (see p. 134). Some Gifts can be used in other forms or are more limited in some way, which will be noted in the system description. Because shapeshifting is a two-dice minor action, *free action* and *full action* Gifts can be performed in the same turn as shapeshifting. *Minor action* Gifts are treated as full action Gifts if performed in the same turn as shapeshifting, receiving the two-dice penalty as normal.

Gifts share a number of aspects: *Renown, Cost, Action,* and *Pool*.

Renown: The type of Renown associated with the Gift. Higher levels of this Renown will positively impact use of the Gift in some way.

Cost: The expenditure of either Rage or Willpower needed to appease the spirit associated with the Gift. The cost applies simultaneously to the use of the Gift, so the Rage check (see p. 133) can be made as the pool (below) is rolled, and the Gift takes effect regardless of whether the Garou "loses the wolf" as a consequence. At the Storyteller's discretion, purely cosmetic use of a Gift (to add color to a scene) is free so long as it provides no mechanical advantage.

Action: How much of a turn activating the Gift takes. A free action Gift can be performed at the same time as another action without penalty. A minor action Gift counts as a two-dice minor action, yielding a two-dice penalty to another action performed in the same turn. A full action Gift requires the full attention of the user and can be performed only with another minor (non-Gift) action. Only one Gift can ever be activated in a single turn, and the Gift, just like shapeshifting, takes effect at the start of the turn, before the resolution of other conflict actions.

Pool: The aggregation of dice associated with using the Gift, if applicable. Also called a Gift test when rolled.

Learning Gifts

All Garou can learn any Native Gifts. Other Gifts have prerequisites, in the form of auspice or tribe. All Gifts also have a Total Renown requirement, and the Garou must match or exceed that Total Renown value before they can learn it. (If the same Gift has different Total Renown requirements as an auspice or tribe Gift, use the lower of the two.)

Spirits grant and enact all Gifts, and receiving a Gift from a particularly hard-to-find or recalcitrant spirit might be its own scene or even story. For more on learning new abilities, experience, and character growth, see p. 110.

NATIVE GIFTS

These Gifts can be learned by a Garou of any tribe or auspice.

Total Renown 1

CATFEET

The Garou gains supernatural balance and agility, together with an ability to survive falls from great height. Narrow, slippery, or moving surfaces provide little difficulty, and the werewolf can traverse them with equal ease. A cat-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Free

Pool: None (Wits + Survival to activate reflexively)

System: The Garou automatically succeeds in any attempt to keep their balance on any surface, so long as that surface can support their weight. They become immune to falling damage from heights of up to ten times their Honor in meters. If surprised, the Garou can activate this Gift reflexively with a Wits + Survival test at Difficulty 3. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

EYES OF THE OWL

Their eyes glowing an ominous yellow, the werewolf gains the ability to see in complete darkness. An owl- or cat-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: The user can see in any natural darkness without penalty. If the darkness is of supernatural origin, they gain their Wisdom as bonus dice on any attempt to resist it, if resistance is possible.

Duration: One scene

HARE'S LEAP

The Garou can leap great distances, horizontally and vertically. This Gift is granted by a leaping animal spirit, such as a hare-, frog-, or kangaroo-spirit.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Strength + Glory

System: The player tests Strength + Glory and leaps three meters horizontally or two meters vertically for every success on the test.

Duration: —

PENUMBRAL SENSES

The Garou's senses become attuned to both the physical realm and the Umbra at once, enabling them to perceive both worlds simultaneously without penalty. A pattern spider grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Free

Pool: Intelligence + Wisdom

System: The player tests Intelligence + Wisdom against the Difficulty of the local Gauntlet (usually 2–5). If successful, the Garou can perceive and interact with denizens of both aspects of existence without penalty, at the Storyteller's discretion. Although this ability doesn't make them visible to physical entities if used from the Umbra, it does alert some spirits to their presence if used in the physical world.

Duration: One scene

RAGING STRIKE

The Garou channels their Rage directly into their blows. A dire wolf-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: The player makes a Rage Check to gain bonus dice equal to their Glory on a single Brawl attack.

Duration: One attack

STAREDOWN

With an unyielding gaze, the Garou establishes themselves as an apex predator, causing humans or animals to cower or submit. Other supernatural creatures are less likely to yield, but even they can be shaken by the burning eyes of a werewolf. A legendary wolf-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Charisma + Honor vs Composure + Resolve

System: This Gift can be used on any single human or animal, within two meters, with whom the Garou can establish eye contact. The Gift succeeds automatically on mundane humans and animals and causes the target to get out of the werewolf's way while averting their eyes, if not outright groveling. Supernatural creatures and humans aware of the Garou and their powers are unaffected unless the player wins a Charisma + Honor vs Composure + Resolve test. A subject can be targeted by this Gift only once per scene, and the Gift cannot be used during a physical conflict. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

Total Renown 4

SHARPENED SENSES

The werewolf heightens their senses to a level combining the most sensitive traits of wolf and human. In homid and glabro forms, they gain the senses of a wolf, whereas other senses while in crinos, hispo, or lupus sharpen to that of a human. A wolf-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: Upon activating this Gift, the Difficulty of all Awareness tests made by the player are lowered by the character's Wisdom, to a minimum of 2. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

SPIRIT OF THE FRAY

Moving like a blur of fur, claws, and muscle, the Garou is able to attack multiple opponents within reach. A wolverine- or badger-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: One Rage Check per additional opponent

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: The Gift allows the Garou to attack additional opponents, within reach, up to the character's Glory, without penalty. Make a single attack roll and apply it to every opponent engaged and covered by the Rage expenditure (see cost). Any additional bonus to the attack applies to all opponents.

Duration: One attack

THWARTING THE ARROW

Combining their nature as a tool-using human with the unpredictable nuances of spirit, the Garou exerts dominance over incoming projectiles — spears, arrows, and even bullets — causing them to waver in flight, reluctant to harm the user. A Weaver vector-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: The Garou gains their Honor as bonus dice to all tests to avoid projectile weapons. This Gift can be used only in crinos form.

Duration: One scene

Total Renown 7

BODY SHIFT

The Garou is able to use fine-tuned shapeshifting to change the very nature of their physical body, becoming lither, stronger, or more dense at will, without changing form completely. The Gift is granted by a water-spirit.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: Stamina + Glory

System: The player tests Stamina + Glory at a Difficulty of 2. Each success in the margin allows them to redistribute a single dot from one Physical Attribute to another. No Attribute can drop below 0 or exceed 5 dots through use of this Gift. At the Storyteller's discretion, this Gift can also allow the user to contort their body to fit into spaces too tight for a normal body to traverse, such as common air ducts or water pipes. In this case, the Difficulty is based on the dimensions of the target space.

Duration: One scene

JAM TECHNOLOGY

As creatures of inherent volatility, Garou who learn this Gift can extend the energies of the Wyld that exist within themselves to wreak havoc on the minute laws of order that govern technology — any device reliant on electronics or moving parts — to the point where they stop working. Computers freeze, cars won't start, and cameras show only static. The effect is only temporary, and equipment resumes operation once the duration expires. A Wyld spirit of discord grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Honor

System: The Garou beseeches the spirit for a turn and their player tests Resolve + Honor against the table below:

Device Complexity Level	Difficulty
Computers (including mobile phones)	2
Electronics (including cameras)	3
Electrical or combustion engines (cars, trains, etc.)	4
Firearms and other chemical reactions (explosives, fire, etc.)	5
Strictly mechanical devices (winch, bicycle, mechanical lock)	6+

All equipment within 20 meters with a Difficulty matching or falling below (see table) the number of successes rolled stops functioning for the duration of the Gift. Note that it is entirely possible to overshoot the target,

taking out a far wider range of devices than what was intended, but such are the vagaries of the Wyld.

Duration: One scene

TONGUE OF THE BEASTS

The Garou has learned one of the secret tongues of the animal world and may communicate with — and even command — wild animals. A lion- or moose-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Manipulation + Wisdom, Charisma + Wisdom

System: The werewolf can speak freely with any animal, understanding them as if they would a person, limited by the animal's perspective and mind. The animals might not generally be inclined to help the Garou but can be convinced to yield information with a Manipulation + Wisdom test or convinced to perform a task or service with Charisma + Wisdom. Difficulties range from 2 (asking a racoon where the factory dumps its trash) to 5 (having a pet stick insect sacrifice itself by shorting out an old circuit box). In general, the further from mammals the animal is and the more dire the information or service, the higher the Difficulty.

Duration: One scene

RAGABASH GIFTS

Total Renown 2

BLISSFUL IGNORANCE

By standing completely still, the Garou can render themselves invisible to all observers, including monitoring devices and most spirits. A chameleon-spirit grants this gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: The Garou becomes practically invisible, so long as they remain still and silent. Any attempt to spot them is done at a Difficulty of 2 + the Gift user's Wisdom. Any movement breaks the effect, and attempts to use the Gift for ambush are subject to the normal ambush rules, as the target has a chance to spot the attacker before the attack lands. (Test Wits + Awareness against the attacker's Composure + Stealth.)

Duration: One scene

CROW'S LAUGHTER

The werewolf spreads their jaws wide and directs a laugh of such derision at their target that the subject must exert all their will not to lose their temper. Whatever insecurities the target harbors rise to the fore, and self-control crumbles in their desire to shut the heckler up. Garou can use the Gift to distract a foe by drawing their attention, or as a desperate means to embolden packmates or other allies. A crow-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Manipulation + Honor vs Composure + Insight

System: The Gift must target a subject within sight and hearing of the user. The ragabash attacks the target in a Gift vs Composure + Insight conflict to cause superficial Willpower damage. A target successfully subjected to this Gift must then direct their attention and attacks at the user, unless they spend a point of Willpower to resist this urge. This Gift can also be used in homid form.

Duration: One scene or until resisted.

GREMLINS

By intimidating the spirit within a technological device, the Garou can cause that device to malfunction or break down permanently. A havoc-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Charisma + Glory

System: The user targets a device in sight and within five meters and tests Charisma + Glory against the Difficulty of the device (below). A win means that the device is rendered unusable for the rest of the scene; a critical win renders the device completely inoperable and beyond repair. This Gift can also be used in lupus form.

Device Complexity Level	Difficulty
Computers (including mobile phones)	2
Electronics (including cameras)	3
Electrical or combustion engines (cars, trains, etc.)	4
Firearms and other chemical reactions (explosives, fire, etc.)	5
Strictly mechanical devices (winch, bicycle, mechanical lock)	6+

Duration: One scene or permanent

SPIDER'S SONG

By listening to the vibrations of the Weaver's web, the werewolf can eavesdrop on any kind of long-distance verbal communication, whether sent by airborne signal or through a wired connection. The Garou must be aware that a conversation is happening to listen in on it, though they don't need to know the identities of all the participants. A spider-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Wisdom

System: The Garou's player makes a Resolve + Wisdom test, with the number of successes indicating how much of the conversation they manage to catch. A single success yields only a few scattered words, whereas five or more (or a critical win) allows the user to hear every word, and possibly even identify who's on the other end of the exchange. For conversations via landlines, the werewolf must place their ear against a telephone wire or cord; to listen in on cell phone discussions, they need only see one of the devices being used. Any encryption increases the Difficulty by 1 or more. This Gift can also be used in homid form.

Duration: One scene

Total Renown 5

BLUR OF THE MILKY EYE

The werewolf's form becomes a shimmering, indistinct blur, as though seen through a thick mist or a skewed lens, even in broad daylight. The Garou does not become invisible, but the Gift makes spotting or attempting to land a physical attack on them much harder. A chameleon-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: The ragabash gains their Wisdom bonus to all Stealth tests, as well as to defensive tests against physical attacks for the rest of the scene. The Gift lapses as soon as the user interacts directly with a subject, such as attacking them or engaging them in conversation.

Duration: One scene

OPEN SEAL

The werewolf coaxes a spirit to open a physically locked or barred lid, door, or seal. Electronic locks present progressively higher Difficulties, as do devices sealed by mystical means. A raccoon-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Manipulation + Honor

System: Purely mechanical locks or bars open automatically when this Gift is employed. Electronic or supernatural devices require a Manipulation + Honor test versus a Difficulty set by the Storyteller (2 for a regular electronic lock, 5 for a sorcerously augmented fingerprint scanner). Some extremely advanced locks might even be beyond this Gift's ability to open, at the Storyteller's discretion. This Gift can also be used in homid form.

Duration: —

PULSE OF THE PREY

The werewolf can home in on anyone and track that individual, as long as the user knows the target's name and face. Targets actively hiding are harder to track, but even they can be found, given enough time and effort. A dog-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Intelligence + Wisdom

System: No roll is required to track a human who isn't in hiding. Tracking a supernatural creature, or a human who is actively hiding, requires an Intelligence + Wis-

dom test against Intelligence + Streetwise (for urban hiding places) or Intelligence + Survival (in rural areas). The Difficulty rises if a target has supernatural ways to conceal themselves. The time required depends both on the distance to the target and the result of the roll. The higher the margin, the quicker the target can be located. This Gift can also be used in lupus form.

Duration: One session

SCENT OF RUNNING WATER

Use of this Gift lets the Garou make themselves impossible to track via mundane means while also making supernatural tracking harder. A fox-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: Free / 1 Willpower

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: Subsequent to the Gift's activation, the Garou leaves no physical evidence of their passing (footprints, disturbed vegetation, DNA traces, etc.). The Garou also gains their Wisdom as a bonus to any test to avoid supernatural tracking. Activating this Gift is free for its user, but by spending a Willpower the player can extend the Gift's effects to their character's pack for one scene. This Gift can also be used in lupus form.

Duration: One scene

Total Renown 8

LUNA'S BLESSING

By howling a prayer to Luna while she's visible in the sky, Garou can convince her to temporarily rescind her silver curse. Until the next sunrise, as long as the user can see the moon in the sky, the Garou is no longer vulnerable to silver, and the lunar metal is treated like any other. A Lune grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Rage Check + 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: To activate this Gift, the moon must be visible to the Garou. Once activated, by a beseeching howl directed at Luna, treat silver damage up to the Wisdom of the user (per damage source) as Superficial.

Duration: One night

THIEVING TALONS OF THE MAGPIE

The Garou can steal the supernatural powers — werewolf Gifts, the blood-curses of vampires, or other equivalents — of others for their own use. While in the user's possession, these same powers are unavailable to the original owner. A magpie-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Intelligence + Honor

System: This Gift can target a supernatural power or ability of anyone in sight of the user, who needs only to have witnessed the power in use by the subject. The ability must be one learned by, not inherent to, the target. (A Garou's Gift can be stolen, but their ability to shapeshift cannot, for example.) The player tests Intelligence + Honor against the rating of the power: the Rank of a Gift or appropriate value for another supernatural target. (If no rating exists, the Storyteller should assign an appropriate Difficulty.) On a success, the target loses the power, and any effects derived from it expire immediately. Starting with the next turn, the werewolf is able to use

the power as if it was a Gift possessed by them, substituting Honor for any non-Garou Trait required. At the start of each turn thereafter, a Willpower point must be spent or the power returns to the original owner.

Duration: One turn for each Willpower spent

THE THOUSAND FORMS

This Gift allows the Garou to transcend the limitations of their werewolf nature and assume the shape of any mundane animal, ranging in size from a chicken to a grizzly bear. The Garou gains the senses of the animal they transform into, but the user is subject to the same limitations in regard to communication as when assuming the lupus form. A Wyld-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 or more Rage Checks

Action: Minor

Pool: Dexterity + Glory

System: The player tests Dexterity + Glory. If the shape desired is particularly large, small, or exotic, the Difficulty may increase by 1 or more at the Storyteller's discretion. Upon a failure, the user can repeat the attempt by making another Rage check and adding successes to the previous test. The Gift user keeps their Mental Attributes, but their other pools depend on the shape assumed. (For examples, see animals on p. 291.) This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

WHELP BODY

This terrible curse causes a foe's body to shrivel and weaken, their arms shaking with effort and their legs buckling beneath them. Only those who have enough knowledge of the spirits involved are able to mount an effective defense against the effects. Use of this Gift on fellow Garou is considered a dire affront, and duels have been fought to the death for less. A disease-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Honor vs Stamina + Occult

System: This Gift can target anyone within five meters and in sight of the user, whose player must test Resolve + Honor against Stamina + Occult of the target. For each success in the margin, the target loses a single dot from one of their Physical Attributes (to a minimum of zero) as their bodies are ravaged by a withering spiritual affliction. The effects persist for the rest of the story, though they can sometimes become permanent, at the Storyteller's discretion.

Duration: One story

THEURGE GIFTS

Total Renown 2

ENSNARE SPIRIT

Invoking mandates given by Gaia in times of legend, the Garou halts a spirit in its tracks, as well as weakening its defenses against further Gifts. A Weaver-spirit of law grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Wits + Honor vs Power

System: The spirit must be present and in the same realm (physical or spiritual) as the user. The target spirit is subject to a two-dice penalty in any attempt it might make to resist or that the user might make to bargain with it or command it (including the use of Command Spirit). The spirit is also forced to stay where it is, unless it breaks free on a Power test (subject to the two-dice penalty) against the Wits + Honor of the user. This Gift cannot be used on an already hostile spirit, and any attempt to harm the spirit causes the Gift to lapse.

Duration: One scene

MOTHER'S TOUCH

The theurge channels spiritual power through their hands to heal the wounds of any other living creature. This Gift may not heal the user, spirits, or the undead. A bear-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Intelligence + Glory

System: Make a Gift test. The subject heals Superficial physical damage equal to the number of successes. If the number of successes exceeds the subject's current Rage, a single level of Aggravated damage can be healed in place of a Superficial one. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: —

SHADOW SENSE

This Gift allows the user to sense the supernatural world around them and pierce supernatural deceptions. It does not automatically allow a Garou to detect intent or allegiance, however, and much of what they see will be colored by their own preconceptions. A raven-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Free

Pool: Wits + Wisdom

System: On a successful Wits + Wisdom test, this Gift alerts the Garou if supernatural elements or creatures are nearby, though it does not specify their exact location or identity. The Difficulty for the test is 2, but it can be modified by powers that allow supernatural creatures to conceal their presence, such as the vampiric ability to elude observation.

Duration: One turn

SIGHT FROM BEYOND

The wielder of this Gift receives prophetic visions — glimpses of the Umbral landscape, the future, or the past, sometimes as dreams and other times in waking moments. The visions are rarely clear and appear dream-like or symbolic, but they can warn of immediate danger or act as beacons in the face of difficult choices. A dream-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower or free

Action: Full or free

Pool: Intelligence + Wisdom

System: The prophetic visions can come unbidden, in which case the Storyteller decides when and how they manifest. If desired, the Storyteller can have the player test Intelligence + Wisdom to reveal clues about the story or warn about danger in some degree and clarity determined by the number of successes. Once per scene, a player may also try to provoke these visions intentionally by spending a point of Willpower. A similar test is then made, with the Storyteller revealing clues to clarity and extent based on the number of successes.

Duration: —

Total Renown 5

BANISH SPIRIT

Invoking their role as spiritual guardian, the Garou looses their Rage upon a spirit possessing an object or person and attempts to drive it back into the Spirit Wilds. An Incarna avatar grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Glory vs Power

System: The spirit must be present and in the same realm (physical or spiritual) as the user. On a successful Resolve

+ Glory vs Power test, the spirit is forced to abandon the object or person possessed and retreat fully into the Umbra. Upon leaving, a malevolent spirit can cause its Power minus the margin on the Gift test as Aggravated damage to its possessed subject. Once banished, most spirits cannot inhabit another subject for the entire scene, though some can, at the Storyteller's discretion. If used in the Umbra, this Gift will instead force the spirit to retreat or flee.

Duration: One scene

GRASP FROM BEYOND

This Gift allows the user to bring objects in and out of the Umbra, assuming they have a physical form to begin with, even if they aren't Dedicated to the user. (See Rite of Dedication, p. 183) A magpie-, beaver-, or possum-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1–3 Willpower

Action: Free

Pool: Resolve + Wisdom

System: As part of crossing the Gauntlet (see p. 230) or while peering into the physical world from the Umbra, the user grips the physical object firmly and pulls it into the Spirit Wilds — or out, making a Resolve + Wisdom test against the local Gauntlet. Failing the test means the object remains where it is, though the user is unaffected. Willpower cost depends on the size of the object, with a small item (a book or laptop) requiring a single point, and a large one (a car or tent) requiring three.

Duration: —

MINDSPEAK

The werewolf may send and receive thoughts to a single subject, establishing two-way communication if desired. A dream-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Wisdom

System: The user concentrates and sends a mental message to the chosen subject. If the user hasn't met the subject in person, the target must be in line of sight. If the subject is known to the user but not present, a Resolve + Wisdom test is required to establish contact. (Difficulty depends on the distance and whether the user is familiar with the subject's location. A subject relaxing at home is a 2, whereas a subject hidden on another continent is 5.) Once contact is established, thoughts can travel in both directions, so long as both participants are willing. This Gift cannot be used to read the mind of a subject; only thoughts intended for the other party can be sensed. Any major distraction, such as either party being harmed, breaks the connection. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene or until contact is broken.

UMBRAL TETHER

Entering the Umbra is always perilous, not least because of its shifting spiritual geography, which one moment corresponds to the physical world and the next appears as something else altogether. This Gift allows the user to find their way back to their entry point by creating a silvery thread that connects them to the point where they first crossed the Gauntlet. A pigeon-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: The user must activate this Gift as they enter the Umbra. From then until they exit the Umbra, they can always find their way back by following the silver cord, which can be seen only by the user. They also gain their Wisdom as bonus dice to any attempt to navigate the Spirit Wilds, as the tether helps them avoid going in circles or retracing their steps. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: Until exiting the Umbra

Total Renown 8

COMMAND SPIRIT

This Gift allows the werewolf to dominate a spirit by issuing commands that must be obeyed. The Gift does not allow a Garou to summon spirits at will, however. Most spirits take offense at being subjected to this Gift, and clever spirits often try to subvert the intent by twisting the word of the command to their benefit — or to the misfortune of the user. An Incarna avatar grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Charisma + Honor vs Power

System: The spirit must be present and in the same realm (physical or spiritual) as the user. For each command, the player must defeat the spirit in a Charisma + Honor vs Power test. Spirits cannot be ordered to inflict harm on themselves or anything that they are bound to or possessing, and neither can they be ordered to depart from a bound or possessed object or creature.

Duration: One scene

DRAIN SPIRIT

The Garou is able to suck the essence out of a spirit, draining it like a leech to fuel the user's own mental reserves. Most werewolves are unwilling to use this power except as a last resort against already antagonistic spirits, but some unscrupulous spirit-talkers have fallen into the callous habit of treating every spirit as a potential battery. Needless to say, use of this Gift will permanently antagonize the spirit subjected to it. A leech- or lamprey-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Glory vs Power

System: The spirit must be present and in the same realm (physical or spiritual) as the user. By the player's engaging in a Resolve + Glory vs Power test, the werewolf can restore a point of Superficial Willpower damage for each success in the margin, damaging the spirit by an equal amount. Failing the contest causes a point of Aggravated Willpower damage to the user. A spirit can be affected by this Gift only once per scene.

Duration: —

FERAL REGRESSION

By channeling the power of the Wyld into a subject, the Garou devolves their target's mind to that of an animal. Usage of this Gift on other Garou is considered a heinous violation, and reprisals are usually quick and dire. Only those who have enough knowledge of the spirits involved are able to mount a significant defense against the effects. Various Wyld gafflings teach this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage

Action: Full

Pool: Intelligence + Glory vs Resolve + Occult

System: The Gift can target anyone within sight of the user, whose player must test Intelligence + Glory against Resolve + Occult of the target. For each success in the margin, the target loses a single dot from one of their Mental Attributes, though no Attribute can go below 0. The effects persist for the rest of the story, though they can sometimes become permanent, at the Storyteller's discretion.

Duration: One story

LIVING WARD

By concentrating, the Garou can turn themselves into a ward against spirits, repelling all but the most powerful Umbral entities. They cannot perform other actions as long as they maintain this ward, however, and upholding it for any length of time takes a heavy toll on their mind. A legendary wolf-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Honor vs Power

System: As long as the user concentrates, no spirit can come within three meters of the living ward without defeating the werewolf's player in a Power vs Resolve + Honor test. If the Garou using this Gift fails in this contest, they must immediately lower their ward or spend Willpower equal to the amount by which they failed the contest.

Duration: One scene unless lowered earlier

PHILODOX GIFTS

Total Renown 2

ANCESTRAL CONVICTION

The Philodox taps into the conviction of the Garou as a people, imbuing their words with weight and credibility. A legendary wolf-spirit grants this gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: The Garou gains their Honor as bonus dice on Persuasion Skill tests versus other Garou. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

GAIA'S CANDOR

The Gift's user looms over the subject and asks a question, their voice infused with threat and the promise of swift punishment. By the subject's scent, the user can tell whether the subject believes their own answer or not. (Note that the victim can still decline to answer.) A truth-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Charisma + Glory vs Composure + Subterfuge

System: No test is required for a human unaware of the Garou or their powers. Another supernatural creature or a human with previous experience of the Garou can attempt to resist the effect, in which case the user's player must win a Charisma + Glory test against Composure + Subterfuge.

Duration: One question

PORCUPINE'S REPRISAL

Damage sustained in close combat by the Garou rebounds on their assailant, administering instant justice. A hedgehog-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: Upon receiving damage from a brawl or melee attack, the user can make a Rage Check to immediately deal Superficial damage equal to their Glory on the attacker. The damage cannot exceed the amount sustained in the original attack.

Duration: —

SENSE THE TRUE FORM

The Garou is able to smell the true nature of anyone they meet, literally sniffing out an individual's true form and detecting anything that isn't a mundane human. Unless they've met the creature type before, they might not be able to recognize the scent, though. A vulture-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Free

Pool: Wits + Wisdom

System: The player makes a Wits + Wisdom test against a Difficulty depending on the creature faced: Detecting a fellow Garou is Difficulty 2, Kin before their First Change is 3, whereas something almost indistinguishable from a mundane human, such as a sorcerer, might be Difficulty 5. Vampires lie somewhere between Difficulty 2 and 4, depending on whether they are actively masquerading as mortal and their general level of monstrosity. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: —

Total Renown 5

BEAST'S FEALTY

The Garou's authority extends into the realm of ordinary beasts, so that they can command the loyalty of any single animal. The animal follows their commands unconditionally. A lion- or falcon-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Charisma + Honor

System: The Garou targets one animal within line of sight, and the player rolls Charisma + Honor against Difficulty 3. If successful, the user is able to communicate with and issue commands to the animal, and the animal obeys unto death. The power lasts until the Garou releases the animal from its obligation to them or until the animal dies. This Gift can hold sway over only one animal at a time.

Duration: Until lapsed

COMMAND THE GATHERING

The Gift user's words take on a deific quality, and their magnetism draws the attention of people and beings within hearing and viewing distance. This effect includes animals and people who don't speak the same language, so care must be taken to not draw unwanted attention. A bird-of-paradise–spirit, or another attention-grabbing animal spirit, can teach this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: Once active, the Gift makes the user the focus of attention for everyone within hearing or line of sight, and the player can add the character's Glory as dice bonus to any public speech or presentation involving Persuasion or Performance. Mundane humans and animals are drawn toward the user, and it's impossible to use this Gift and retain any semblance of discretion. Physical altercation in the presence of the user breaks the effect, and the Gift can't be used while the werewolf is engaged in a physical conflict or outright combat.

Duration: One scene or until effect is broken or lapses

FANGS OF JUDGMENT

The Gift's user passes sentence on an enemy, declaring their life forfeit. Members of the user's pack find their claws and fangs sharpened against the designated enemy, the better to send them to an early grave. Any number of predator-spirits grant this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Honor

System: The Gift's user selects a visible subject who has previously caused harm to a member of their pack, and the player makes a Resolve + Honor test at Difficulty 3. If successful, the pack's natural weapons gain +1 damage against the designated target. Only one enemy can be marked by a single Garou, and the effects aren't cumulative if targeted by other Garou with the same Gift. The Gift lasts until that enemy is dead or the sentence is revoked, but the latter can be done only in the presence of the subject.

Duration: Until the death of the selected enemy or the sentence is revoked

SCENT OF THE PAST

By inhaling the scent of an object or place, the Garou can catch glimpses of events that occurred in the target's vicinity. More dramatic events leave stronger scents, and picking out details and minor occurrences calls for great skill. A crow-spirit or another animal-spirit that thrives in multiple environments, witnessing many events, can grant this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Intelligence + Wisdom

System: Make an Intelligence + Wisdom test against a Difficulty depending on the information sought. Sensing the circumstances of a duel fought last week with a specific weapon is Difficulty 2, but gaining information on the members of a covert meeting in a park years ago approaches Difficulty 6 or higher. Each point of margin on the roll allows the user to gain progressively more detailed information. This Gift can also be used in lupus form.

Duration: One turn

Total Renown 8

GEAS

The Garou is able to issue an inviolable command to a single person, forcing them to perform an act of the Gift user's choice. The Gift does not allow for the extraction of information in any way, however, and acts that go against the nature or self-preservation of the victim are often resisted. Weaver-spirits and spirits that observe rigid hierarchies grant this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Manipulation + Glory vs Composure + Resolve

System: The Garou must issue the order vocally and in the presence of the subject. Other supernatural creatures and humans familiar with the Garou can resist (see pool above), as can anyone if the command goes against their nature or would cause harm to those the subject loves. An order that would directly harm the victim, such as shooting themselves or stepping into a fire, automatically fails, as do commands that demand the impossible. Until the target completes the act or the Garou releases them from the geas, the target attempts to accomplish the act for the rest of the scene.

Duration: Until completion of the act, the scene ends, or the geas is lifted

OATHBREAKER'S BANE

The Garou can bind another person to a promise and become supernaturally attuned to its upholding. The moment it's broken, they user knows. An elephant-spirit or snake-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: The subject must make the oath in person to the user. The oath must be something that the taker both understands and accepts. It can be as succinct or detailed as the Gift's user wants, but the promise remains in effect while both the oath forger and the oath taker remember it. Thus, it isn't uncommon for the forger to seek out the taker to remind them of their promise. The Garou immediately senses the oath being broken, no matter the distance or time passed. Thereafter, any attempt by the user to track the oath breaker gives the player bonus dice equal to the Garou's Honor.

Duration: Indefinitely or until oath is broken

STRENGTH OF PURPOSE

Finding strength from their responsibility as Gaia's protectors, the Gift's user can replenish their reserves of mental fortitude from their Rage. A stone- or fire-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: Honor

System: The Garou's player rolls one die for each point of Honor the character possesses, healing one point of Superficial Willpower damage for each success, or one of Aggravated Willpower damage for two successes. This Gift can be used only once per session and can be used in any form.

Duration: —

TAKE THE TRUE FORM

The Garou forces a shapeshifting creature to return to its "natural" form. This includes Garou, some vampires, and other, stranger creatures with the ability to change form. A river-spirit grants this Gift, washing away adornment and deception.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Manipulation + Honor vs Stamina + Resolve

System: The Garou commands the subject to return to their natural form, and the player tests Manipulation + Honor against the target's Stamina + Resolve. On a win, the subject returns to their normal form, following their usual rules, and are then unable to change shape for a number of turns equal to the margin. This Gift can be used in homid or lupus form, and the Gift ceases to be active if the user changes form during its effect.

Duration: Margin number of turns or the user changes form

GALLIARD GIFTS

Song Gifts

Some Gifts are labeled as "Songs." Only one Song can be active for a pack during a scene, and any attempt by a pack member to sing another Song in the same scene automatically fails. Songs are part of Garou culture and identity, and are granted by the spirits of legendary werewolves unless otherwise noted.

Total Renown 2

ANIMAL MAGNETISM

At once repellent and attractive, the werewolf exudes a feral aura that draws the attention of humans to them. A peacock-spirit or a spirit associated with attraction (emotional or otherwise) grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: The Garou's player gains their Glory as bonus dice on Social Skill tests versus human subjects. This Gift can also be used in homid form.

Duration: One scene

HOWL OF ASSEMBLY

The Garou sends their howl far beyond the normal range of sound and imbues it with great emotion, stirring the hearts of fellow werewolves. Those who heed the call find their resolve hardened. A song-spirit or the spirit of an animal known for its unique call grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: Charisma + Honor

System: The Garou's player tests Charisma + Honor against a Difficulty of 2. If successful, other Garou who hear the howl and join the presence of the Gift's user heal a point of Willpower. For each success in the margin, the sound reaches an additional 100 meters. A character can be affected by this Gift only once per session. This Gift can also be used in Lupus form.

Duration: —

SONG OF RAGE

The Garou sings a song of past grievances, current peril, and future pain, giving voice to the anguish of Gaia and stoking the Rage in their packmates.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Charisma + Glory

System: Make a Gift test at Difficulty 3. If successful, all other members of the user's pack within earshot gain a point of Rage, or two points on a critical win. A character can be affected by this Gift only once per session.

Duration: —

SONG OF SERENITY

The Garou sings a mellifluous song, calling to mind peaceful times and loved ones, soothing the raging fire in the hearts of the pack.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Composure + Honor

System: Make a Gift test at Difficulty 3. If successful, all members of the user's pack within earshot lose a point of Rage, or two points on a critical win, to a minimum of 1. Pack members in frenzy can make a Composure + Resolve test at Difficulty 3 to snap out of the frenzy and leave Crinos form as normal (see p. 139). A character can be affected by this Gift only once per scene.

Duration: —

Total Renown 5

CALL THE RIDDEN

This Gift attracts creatures possessed by spirits and can lure them into traps or simply flush them from hiding. Any spirit with the ability to possess can teach this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Minor

Pool: Composure + Honor vs Resolve + Insight

System: The Garou's player makes a Gift test against the Resolve + Insight of any possessed creatures within earshot of the call. The possessed that fail to resist make every effort to reach the source of the call, as long as doing so presents no obvious hazard to their physical wellbeing (such as walking through toxic runoff or jumping unaided into a deep chasm).

Duration: One scene

EYES OF THE COBRA

Locking eyes with a subject, the Garou can draw the victim toward them through sheer force of personality. A snake-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Minor

Pool: Charisma + Glory vs Composure + Resolve

System: As long as the user keeps eye contact with a victim, the victim moves toward the Garou, as if in a trance, performing no other action until they are within arm's reach, at which point the effect ends. Other supernatural creatures and humans aware of the Garou and their powers can attempt to resist the user's Charisma + Glory with Composure + Resolve, but once under the effect of the Gift they are unable to look away. Catching the eye of someone actively attempting to avoid the Gift user's gaze requires a contest of the user's Resolve + Intimidation vs the target's Wits + Awareness. Any attempt at violence against the victim breaks the effect, as do other

life-threatening situations, and the victim can attempt to avoid attacks as normal.

Duration: One scene or until effect is broken, such as by the victim reaching the user

SONG OF VALOR

By singing of the heroic deeds of ancient Garou, the Gift's user inspires their packmates. Those who listen feel a surge of power within them, as if encouraged by Gaia to follow in the footsteps of legendary werewolves.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Charisma + Honor

System: Make a Gift test at Difficulty 3. If successful, all members of the user's pack within earshot are inspired to greater deeds. When their players spend Willpower to reroll dice, they may reroll any number in a pool, rather than just three (Brutal results still cannot be rerolled, see p. 133). This Gift can be used only once per session.

Duration: One scene

SONG OF INSPIRATION

The Garou sings a ballad celebrating the creative use of a specific knowledge or aptitude. Members of the pack attempting feats in that field find their abilities enhanced beyond their usual levels.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Manipulation + Wisdom

System: The Garou's player chooses a Social or Mental Skill and makes a Gift test at a Difficulty 3, or 2 if the user themselves possesses the Skill at 2 or more dots. On a win, other members of the pack gain a bonus die for tests of that Skill. A critical win on the Gift test yields a two-dice bonus instead.

Duration: One scene

Total Renown 8

AGAINST THE ODDS

Summoning inner strength at the brink of defeat, the Garou emboldens their pack and turns the tables in the darkest of hours. A warthog- or badger-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Glory

System: The player rolls a pool equal to the Garou's Glory. Each success enables each member of the pack (including the Gift user) to restore one level of Superficial Willpower damage. This Gift can be used only once per story.

Duration: —

BREAK THE SHACKLES

A Garou can use this gift to cut through supernatural coercion or outright mind control, severing the chains that bind another person's mind. Any winged spirit may grant this Gift, as may spirits associated with Gorgon.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Glory

System: The Gift's user looks into the eyes of the subject and lets out a short, sharp roar, and the player makes a Gift test. The Difficulty depends on the type of effect controlling the subject and the power of the creature behind it, but the default is 3. The Storyteller can allow the subject to add their Resolve to the Gift test pool if they are actively trying to resist the effect themselves.

Duration: —

DEFY DEATH

Like Garou of legend, the Gift's user is able to cheat death, their body rapidly healing as they dance at the brink of defeat. A wolf- or bear-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: Free

Action: Free

Pool: Honor

System: If their Health is fully depleted by Aggravated damage, the Garou's player immediately rolls a pool equal to the character's Honor. Each success enables them to heal one level of Health damage. This Gift can be used only once per session. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: —

DREAMWALK

The Garou can have a spirit enter another's dreams via strange pathways through the depths of the Umbra, changing those dreams or simply participating in their cryptic narrative. The Gift can be used to leave messages, to unnerve the dreamer, or to gain a better understanding of a stranger's mind. A dream-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full scene

Pool: Wits + Wisdom

System: The Gift user's player makes a Gift test against a Difficulty set by the Storyteller, depending on what they're trying to accomplish: 2 to simply observe, 3 to leave a message, and up to 4 or more to completely alter the dreamscape to affect the dreamer in some way. If used to unnerve or otherwise frighten the dreamer, the dreamer regains no Willpower through natural means for the rest of the session and loses an additional Willpower point for each success in the margin.

The Gift can be used as long as the user knows the subject's location, though extreme distances (such as cross-continent) add 1 to the Difficulty. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

AHROUN GIFTS

Claw Gifts

Some Gifts change or provide benefits to the Garou's claws. Only one claw Gift can be active for a Garou at any one time, and using another claw Gift before the previous lapses replaces the effect.

Renown 1

HALT THE COWARD'S FLIGHT

The Garou is able to slow a fleeing target by making their legs buckle, footing soften, and tires slip. A bog-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Honor vs Composure + Survival

System: The Garou emits a fearsome howl directed at a visible target fleeing from them or a member of their pack and still within 50 meters. A victim of this Gift has their movement speed reduced to walking pace as long as they try to escape the user. Airborne targets are pulled toward the ground. The Gift succeeds automatically on mundane people, vehicles, and animals. Supernatural victims, such as a vampire or another werewolf, must be bested in a Resolve + Honor vs Composure + Survival test. (At the Storyteller's discretion, extremely motivated or otherwise prepared humans can resist in a similar manner.)

Duration: One scene

RAPID SHIFT

The werewolf is able to shapeshift in the blink of an eye. Doing so comes at a risk, though, as Garou can sustain serious bodily damage if this attempt fails. Any Gaian spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: Free (Shift cost still applies)

Action: Free

Pool: Dexterity + Glory

System: The user shapeshifts, and the player makes a Gift test against the Difficulty of the form: 1 for homid and lupus, 2 for glabro and hispo, and 3 for crinos. On a win, the minor action penalty for the shift is disregarded. If the test fails, the user takes Superficial damage equal to the margin of failure, though the shift dice penalty is still voided. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: —

RAZOR CLAWS

The Garou's natural claws grow supernaturally sharp and vicious, enabling them to deal even greater damage to their enemies. The spirit of a predatory animal grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: Free / 1 Rage Check

Action: Free / minor

Pool: —

System: This Gift is free and instantaneous while in crinos form. Add half the Garou's Glory (round up) to the damage of their claw attacks. If their current form doesn't have claws, it gains a claw attack with half Glory damage as the fingernails elongate and harden.

Duration: One scene

SENSE DANGER

The Garou becomes supernaturally alert to danger and is able to respond to sudden threats, such as ambush, with uncanny speed. The spirit of a prey animal grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: —

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: The Garou's player adds the user's Wisdom to any attempt to detect traps, ambushes, or surprise attacks. Add these dice only when failing would result in immediate danger to the Gift user, not when actively searching an area. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: —

Total Renown 5

PRIMAL ANGER

Used as a last-ditch resort, this Gift allows the Garou to fuel their Rage with the substance of their own body, consuming flesh, blood, and bone as fuel for their supernatural fury. A legendary wolf-spirit grants this gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: —

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: Activating this Gift inflicts a single level of Aggravated damage, which feels to the victim like an existential burning. In exchange, the Garou gains Rage equal to the number of successes on a straight Glory test. This Gift can be used only once per session.

Duration: —

SNARL OF CHALLENGE

The Garou issues a challenge to all their foes, steeling themselves for opponents' attacks. A bear-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: Charisma + Honor vs Composure + Insight

System: The Garou's player makes a Gift test against all enemies within earshot and line of sight. Make only one roll for the Garou, whereas each enemy resists with their Composure + Insight. Subjects who fail to resist suffer a two-dice penalty to attack anyone other than a user of this Gift. The user gains additional Health levels equal to their Honor if at least one enemy succumbs to the effects. These Health levels absorb one point of Superficial damage each but do not protect against Aggravated damage.

Duration: One scene

TRUE FEAR

The werewolf strikes terror into one foe by baring teeth or claws, howling, or simply looming ominously over them and growling. Spirits of fear teach this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Charisma + Glory vs Composure + Resolve

System: This Gift can be used on a single target within five meters and succeeds automatically against mundane people and animals, whereas supernatural creatures and humans aware of the Garou and their powers must be bested in a Charisma + Glory vs Composure + Resolve test. A subject affected by this Gift is either frozen with fear or struck with such terror that they do anything to escape the presence of the werewolf. Supernatural creatures can shake off the effect after one turn by spending a point of Willpower.

Duration: One scene

WIND CLAWS

The Garou's claws become momentarily incorporeal, enabling them to ignore all forms of armor worn by any target. A wind-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: Free / 1 Willpower

Action: Free / minor

Pool: Wits + Wisdom

System: This Gift is free and instantaneous while in crinos form. Attacks from the Garou's claws ignore mundane armor or damage reduction by an amount equal to the user's Wisdom. Supernatural armor is ignored at the Storyteller's discretion and might require a Wits + Wisdom test at suitable Difficulty to ignore. This test should be performed only once, and the result applies for the rest of the scene.

Duration: One scene

Total Renown 8

CLOSING THE GAP

Either through the aid of spirits or by skillfully skirting the Umbra, the user immediately crosses a distance to bring the fight to their foes. A grasshopper- or mantis-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: None

System: The Garou instantly moves to within melee range of an enemy within line of sight, crossing an intervening distance of up to three meters per point of Glory while being able to perform an attack during the same turn. (Note that it must still be possible for the user to physically traverse the distance — no moving through cliff faces or imprisoning bars.) The user counts as being already engaged at the beginning of the turn for the purpose of combat priority.

Duration: One turn

KISS OF HELIOS

Calling upon the sun-spirit Helios, the werewolf is infused with a supernatural heat and becomes almost immune to fire and other heat-based damage. A sun ray–spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: The werewolf takes no damage from fire and other similar heat sources for the duration of this Gift, and reduces damage from stronger sources by an amount of their Glory per turn. In addition, anyone striking the user with their bare flesh sustains Superficial damage equal to the user's Glory, as the attacker is seared by the smoldering skin of the werewolf.

Duration: One scene

LUNA'S ARMOR

Clad in a silvery mist, the werewolf gains protection against harm caused by fire and silver. A Lune grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Minor

Pool: None

System: Whenever the werewolf sustains (normally Aggravated) damage from fire or silver, an amount equal to their Honor is turned to Superficial damage instead (though it is not subsequently halved).

Duration: One scene

SILVER CLAWS

In an agonizing transformation, the Garou's natural claws turn into silver, enabling them to deal lasting damage to other Garou. A spite-spirit or elemental spirit of silver grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: Free / 1 Willpower

Action: Free / minor

Pool: —

System: This Gift is free and instantaneous while in crinos form. The Garou's claw attacks deal Aggravated damage to other Garou. If their current form doesn't have claws, it also gains a +0 damage claw attack as the fingernails elongate, harden, and gain a silver coating. The silver claws cause a point of Aggravated damage per turn, per the normal silver rules, and the user must make a Resolve + Honor test at Difficulty 3 each turn to maintain this Gift, as the silver-induced agony can become unbearable.

Duration: One scene

BLACK FURY GIFTS

Total Renown 3

CURSE OF AEOLUS

The Garou calls up a thick, eerie fog that obscures vision and unnerves their opponents. A fog-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Glory

System: The user's player makes a Resolve + Glory test against Difficulty 2. Each success in the margin allows the user to cover an area roughly the size of a house with fog. Everyone in the fog suffers a two-dice penalty to Awareness and Firearms tests. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

HALT THE COWARD'S FLIGHT *(As Ahroun)*

PORCUPINE'S REPRISAL *(As Philodox)*

Total Renown 6

COUP DE GRÂCE

The Garou summons all their strength and skill to perform a decisive blow intended to end an enemy in one strike. Any spirit associated with pride grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: The Garou focuses their attention on an enemy, spending a full turn while summoning their strength. The user's next brawl or melee attack adds their Glory to the damage rating, but only if doing so would reduce the target's physical Health to zero. In either case, the effect lapses after the attack.

Duration: Next brawl- or melee attack, or the scene ends

KALI'S SCAR

The wounds inflicted by the Garou's claws and fangs become ragged and festering, and the damage cannot be healed by any means while the Gift is active. Furthermore, the smell of the diseased open wound allows the victim to be tracked by the user, should the victim escape. A rot-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: For the duration of the Gift, any damage inflicted by the claws or fangs of the user cannot be healed or mended by any means, including Gifts or other supernatural abilities. In addition, the user's player receives bonus dice equal to the character's Glory on any attempt to track or find the victim while the Gift is in effect. (In rare cases a Storyteller can allow extremely powerful foes to resist the user's Stamina + Glory with an appropriate pool, such as Power, and negate the effect after a turn.)

Duration: A night and a day

WASP TALONS

The Garou can fire their claws like darts, inflicting damage on a faraway foe as if they'd been face to face. Doing so also leaves the Garou's hands or paws a bloody mess, as well as without claws until the self-inflicted wound is healed. A wasp-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: —

Action: Full

Pool: Dexterity + Glory

System: The user makes a ranged attack with Dexterity + Glory and receives any damage modifiers to their claws. (If their current form doesn't have claws, it also gains a +0 damage claw attack during the use of this Gift only.) They also sustain a level of Superficial damage from their claws being rent from their paws and are unable to use claw attacks until that damage has been healed or regenerated.

Duration: —

Total Renown 9

BREAK THE SHACKLES *(As Galliard)*
DRAIN SPIRIT *(As Theurge)*

GORGON'S VISAGE

This hideous Gift of legend paralyzes any who glimpse the face of the Garou. Victims are frozen in place; though not literally turned to stone, they are unable to defend themselves and completely at the mercy of the user. An avatar of Gorgon grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Charisma + Glory vs Wits + Occult

System: The user makes a Charisma + Glory test against Wits + Occult of anyone not averting their eyes. Victims who fail to resist become completely paralyzed for the rest of the scene, though supernatural creatures may break free after a turn of paralysis by spending a dot of Willpower. A victim that breaks free cannot be paralyzed again for the reminder of the scene. Note that the effect is slow enough to give onlookers a chance to look away, though foolish subjects or those attempting to harm the user might brave it anyway.

Duration: One scene

WHELP BODY *(As Ragabash)*

BONE GNAWER GIFTS

Total Renown 3

BLISSFUL IGNORANCE *(As Ragabash)*
RAPID SHIFT *(As Ahroun)*
SIGHT FROM BEYOND *(As Theurge)*

ODIOUS AROMA

Amplifying their natural odor, the Garou emits a stench strong enough to deter all but the most determined subjects. A skunk-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: Anyone and anything with a sense of smell, except other Bone Gnawers, must spend a Willpower and succeed on a Composure + Survival test against the user's Stamina + Honor or be forced to stop short of reaching the user. This Gift applies outside combat only, though many physical conflicts have been avoided thanks to it. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

Total Renown 6

FACE IN THE CROWD

Blink and they're gone. The Garou can obscure their presence in a crowd and seemingly disappear after an innocuous change in their appearance. A roach-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: Once per scene, when ducking into a crowd, the Garou can activate this Gift to attempt to lose any pursuers. Doing so adds their Honor to the Difficulty of any attempt to spot them or follow them for as long as they're in the crowd. This Gift can be used only in homid form or (amid dogs or wolves) lupus form.

Duration: One scene

SCENT OF THE PAST *(AS PHILODOX)*

STREETS TELL STORIES

By touching their ear to the ground, the Garou can listen to any and all conversations occurring on a single street or alongside it. A city-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Honor

System: The Garou puts their ear to the street, and the player makes a Gift test at a Difficulty set by the Storyteller, depending on the number of people on (or adjacent to) the street and the distance to the conversation sought. (Listening in on a conversation occurring on the sidewalk two blocks away on an otherwise empty street would be 2, whereas picking up a conversation on the 50th floor during rush hour would approach 5.) If successful, the Garou can hear everything said as if they were standing next to the speaker, but only actual speech from a living person can be heard, so ambient sounds or the other side of a phone conversation, for example, cannot be heard. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

Total Renown 9

A THOUSAND EYES

Closing their own eyes and concentrating, the Garou can see through the eyes of any animal nearby, as long as the creature is at least the size of a cockroach. An ant-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Wits + Honor

System: The Garou closes their eyes, and the player makes a Gift test at a Difficulty set by the Storyteller, depending on the number of animals in the vicinity and what the Gift user is searching for. (Scouting the layout of a farm would be 2, whereas finding a specific scientist in an urban medical center would approach 5.) Some supernatural creatures are able to detect the supernatural intrusion and the animal acting as eyes, and if that animal is killed while the Gift is in use (intentionally or through happenstance) the user suffers a level of Aggravated Willpower damage from the mental shock.

Duration: One scene

BETWEEN THE CRACKS

In the blink of an eye, the Garou can disappear into any crack, so long as the crack is at least a hand's breadth long, and reappear from another crack just out of sight or distant enough to elude pursuit. A spirit of shadow, decay, or ruin grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: The Garou can escape into a crack (a fissure resulting from wear or damage, not just any gap) in the landscape or a building and reappear from another crack a turn later, as long as they can reach the crack, both cracks are at least a hand's breadth long, and the cracks are both visible to the user and within ten meters per Honor of the user. The Storyteller ultimately decides on the availability of suitable entries and exits, and the Garou is unable to use this Gift if no exit is to be found within range.

Duration: One turn

DEFY DEATH *(As Galliard)*

CHILDREN OF GAIA GIFTS

Total Renown 3

BROTHER'S SCENT

The werewolf can fit in with any crowd of their choice, no matter the user's appearance. Those who have no reason to suspect the Garou's presence simply overlook them, whereas more suspicious subjects find it harder to detect the impostor. An avatar of Unicorn grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: As long as the user is in a form suitable for the target gathering, the Garou's presence amid a group of strangers (such as a high-society club, a tight-knit criminal gang, or an unfamiliar caern) goes unnoticed, unless the subjects are actively looking for a trespasser. In that case the Gift's user gains their Wisdom as a bonus to Subterfuge or Performance attempts to remain undercover. This Gift doesn't prevent them being noticed thanks to unfitting behavior, such as stripping naked in the aforementioned club, but as long as the pretense is maintained, the Garou is treated as belonging to the group. Note that anyone who knows the user by sight will recognize them, for better or worse. This Gift can be used only in homid form unless the gathering is a Garou one.

Duration: One scene

MOTHER'S TOUCH *(As Theurge)*
SENSE THE TRUE FORM *(As Philodox)*
SONG OF SERENITY *(As Galliard)*

Total Renown 6

CALM THE FURIOUS BEAST

The user can calm a raging enemy or help a fellow Garou in the grip of frenzy to resist their savage impulses. A legendary wolf-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Composure + Wisdom

System: The player spends a Willpower point and makes a Composure + Wisdom test against the current Rage of a target in frenzy, or a Difficulty of 3 in the case of other supernatural creatures. If the user is successful, the target is brought out of frenzy, reverting to their natural form (if Garou), per the normal rules for leaving Crinos form. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: —

OPEN SEAL *(As Ragabash)*

REVEAL TRAUMA

The Garou can diagnose a living creature, a spirit, or even a device, and gain insight into what ails the target. The Gift doesn't provide the ability to fix the trauma, but knowledge is the first step toward any cure. A spirit of suffering grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Intelligence + Wisdom

System: The player makes a Gift test against a Difficulty depending on the subject: 2 for a living creature, 3 for a spirit, and 4 for a machine or device. (An unwilling subject can attempt to resist, rather than applying a set Difficulty, by using their Composure + Subterfuge.) On a win, the user gains some awareness of the greatest current injury or trauma suffered by the target. It can be physical, supernatural, or even mental. Any attempt by the user to heal or repair the harm gains a two-dice bonus. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: —

Total Renown 9

LUNA'S ARMOR *(As Ahroun)*

LIFE'S PRESENCE

The Gift's user becomes attuned to the sense of life around them, gaining awareness of everything living in their immediate vicinity. Although the Gift doesn't yield detailed information, it allows the werewolf to scout opposition or spot an ambush. A spirit of the soil grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Composure + Wisdom

System: The user automatically becomes aware of all mundane life — plant, animal, and human — as well as any (living) supernatural entities in an area roughly equal to a two-story home. Supernatural entities that use powers to conceal themselves can be found only on a Composure + Wisdom test at a Difficulty depending on the creature and ability used, and spirits are not sensed at all unless they are possessing a living body. Vampires and other undead are not detected unless they feign life, in which case a Gift test at Difficulty 3 can pierce the ruse.

Duration: One scene

SHARE THE PAIN

The Garou is able to shoulder part of the physical harm suffered by another member of their pack. Their body or mind takes on the burden of a packmate. A bee-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: The Garou chooses a number of pack members equal to their Wisdom. Any time one of these members suffers physical damage of any kind, the damage is halved and the Gift's user suffers the other half as either Health or Willpower damage. Any defensive Gifts active on the user apply as normal.

Duration: One scene

GALESTALKER GIFTS

Total Renown 3

CAMOUFLAGE

The Garou can blend in with the wilderness, appearing like a pile of leaves, a grass-strewn patch of land, or a lichen-covered pile of rocks, the better to prepare an ambush or evade pursuers. A deer-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: Free / 1 Willpower

Action: Free / Full

Pool: —

System: Any attempt to spot the werewolf with sight alone has the Difficulty increased by the Gift user's Honor. By spending a Willpower and a full turn, the Gift user can extend its effect to members of their pack within reach. The Gift lapses should the user make any movement or sound. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

ENSNARE SPIRIT *(As Theurge)*

LACERATING WIND

The werewolf calls forth a bitterly cold wind and directs it at their enemies. The wind chills its victims to the bone, making them slow and sluggish, and those caught unawares might find themselves thrown to the ground or off ledges. An avatar of North Wind grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Honor vs Stamina + Survival or Dexterity + Athletics

System: The Garou can target a group of foes within a few meters of one another, at a range of 20 meters. Anyone failing to resist the Gift test suffers a two-dice penalty to physical attack pools. The wind can also be used to unbalance a target, but only against someone unprepared for the gust and against a single target only. In this case, the opponent is thrown to the ground (or off whatever they were standing on) if they fail to resist with Dexterity + Athletics, rather than suffer the dice penalty from chilling.

Duration: Margin

Total Renown 6

CHILL CLOAK

The werewolf is able to mask their body heat and other emissions, making them hard to detect, if not outright invisible, to modern surveillance. An alligator-spirit, or another cold-blooded predator spirit, grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: Free / 1 Willpower

Action: Free / Full

Pool: —

System: Add the Gift user's Honor to any Stealth, Survival, or Larceny attempt to avoid detection by electronic surveillance, including infrared cameras, movement detectors, and light-based sensors. Ordinary cameras can still spot them, assuming a living person is watching the feed, and outright mechanical devices (such as tripwires) are unaffected. By spending a Willpower and a full turn, the Gift user can extend its effect to members of their pack within reach.

Duration: One scene

CALL THE RIDDEN *(As Galliard)*
PULSE OF THE PREY *(As Ragabash)*
WIND CLAWS *(As Ahroun)*

Total Renown 9

BLOOD OF THE WASTES

The Garou becomes one with the elements, able to survive in the most barren tundra or deadly blizzard. The spirit of a hardy, hibernating, or brumating animal grants this Gift, such as a bear- or turtle-spirit.

Renown: Honor

Cost: Free

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: The user is immune to anything but the most extreme environmental conditions and able to survive for long stretches of time or travel without shelter. The user's player is able to add their Honor to any Survival test to find food or water. The user is resistant to environmental penalties, reducing them by the user's Honor rating. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: —

CLAWS OF FROZEN DEATH

The claws of the werewolf become coated in frost, which sends a deathly chill into the bones of anyone the user wounds. While affected, the victim becomes sluggish, making further attacks easier to land. An ice- or winter-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: Free / 1 Rage

Action: Free / minor

Pool: Wits + Honor vs Stamina + Survival

System: This Gift is free and instantaneous while the user is in crinos form. The first time a target sustains damage from the Garou's claws while this Gift is active, the player makes a Wits + Honor test against the Stamina + Survival of the target. On a win, the target becomes chilled, receiving a two-dice penalty to defend or dodge future physical attacks.

Duration: One scene

OATHBREAKER'S BANE *(As Philodox)*

GHOST COUNCIL GIFTS

Total Renown 3

AUGUR

By gazing into a reflective surface, the Garou is able to view another area remotely, as long as a reflective surface is also present at that location. A water-spirit or a spirit associated with knowledge grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Intelligence + Wisdom

System: The Garou's player makes an Intelligence + Wisdom test at a Difficulty set by the Storyteller, depending on the distance and nature of the desired location. (A nearby bus stop blessed with both a mirror and an adjacent puddle might be 2, whereas a cave on the other side of the earth might require 6 to find the single water drop from which to spy.) The Garou can only see, not hear or smell, what goes on at the observed location, and if those who are spied upon have supernatural means to detect intruders, they might well become aware of the surveillance. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

SENSE DANGER *(As Ahroun)*

BLACKOUT

This Gift allows the Garou to extinguish light sources around them, making darkness their ally. The spirit of a nocturnal animal or a spirit associated with darkness grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: The Gift user can extinguish one light source in line of sight per dot of Wisdom. Anyone lacking night vision or additional light sources is subject to a one- to three-dice penalty (depending on ambient light) to all sight-reliant tests. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

Total Renown 6

SERPENT'S COIL

The Garou calls forth a fog-like serpent that can wrap around enemies and hold them in place. The coil of the serpent is 10 meters in length and can be divided among lesser enemies, should the user so choose. A constrictor snake-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: Wits + Wisdom

System: By summoning an environmental fog, the user can perform grappling attacks against distant targets up to 10 meters away. Additional "coils" can be created by the player's splitting of the dice pool, thus enabling the user to engage multiple opponents (see p. 125). The mist uses the Garou's Wits + Wisdom to grapple. The serpents share three health levels and use their owner's Wits + Wisdom to avoid and endure attacks, though they can be harmed only by fire or supernatural attacks able to damage incorporeal targets.

Duration: One scene or until ended or destroyed

HANDS OF THE EARTH

With this Gift the werewolf is able to manipulate objects at a distance, lifting, pulling, and throwing them with the help of spirits. An earth- or stone-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Wisdom, Wits + Wisdom

System: The Garou must concentrate for a full turn to use this Gift and can do nothing else while using it. The object chosen can be moved freely, but heavy objects require a Resolve + Wisdom test instead of Strength (see "Feats of Strength," p. 130). Lighter objects can be thrown, using Wits + Wisdom as a ranged attack pool. The Gift can be used on any object the Garou can see, but for every 10 meters past the initial 10 any Difficulties increase by 1.

Duration: Up to one scene

MINDSPEAK *(As Theurge)*

Total Renown 9

DREAMWALK *(As Galliard)*

SHROUDED ASPECT

Beyond concealment, the Garou is able to become completely invisible, both to the eyes of onlookers and to cameras, though only in the visible light spectrum. (Infrared cameras still detect them, for example.) A smoke-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: The Garou cannot be detected by sight or conventional camera. The Garou can move no faster than walking pace while this Gift is active, as any sudden movement causes the effect to lapse. Attempts to ambush a target while using this Gift are foiled if the target can win a Wits + Awareness test against the Gift user's Wits + Wisdom.

Duration: A number of turns (or roughly ten seconds in a longer scene) equal to the Wisdom of the user.

TAKE THE TRUE FORM *(As Philodox)*
THIEVING TALONS OF THE MAGPIE *(As Ragabash)*

GLASS WALKER GIFTS

Total Renown 3

ANIMAL MAGNETISM *(As Galliard)*
GAIA'S CANDOR *(As Philodox)*

SKINBIND

The Garou is able to use their own skin as a mystic container, storing objects within it in the form of temporary tattoos or brands. A moth-spirit or a spirit associated with writing or drawing grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full/minor

Pool: —

System: The Garou can transform any mundane item into a tattoo-like image of itself, etched on their own skin. The item cannot be larger than what the user could carry in their own hands, as the Garou still feels its weight mystically while the item is tattooed upon them. Storing an item takes a full turn (at which point the Willpower is spent), but retrieving it counts as a minor action. The Garou can store a number of objects up to their Wisdom rating. Non-mundane items can be stored in this way at the Storyteller's discretion, and carrying them in one's skin may produce unpredictable side effects. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: Indefinitely

SPIDER'S SONG *(As Ragabash)*

Total Renown 6

GRASP FROM BEYOND *(As Theurge)*

ENERGIZE

By channeling their own Rage into it the Garou is able to power any functional device as if it was plugged in or fuelled up. While this does not allow them to repair a completely wrecked machine, they can push even damaged equipment to work, if only for a few moments.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1+ Rage Checks

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Wisdom

System: Powering functional equipment, such as a laptop or a car, requires a Rage check, and more checks can be called for depending on the size of the machine at the Storyteller's discretion. If the machine is damaged a Resolve + Wisdom test at a Difficulty depending on the level of damage must be made, and the machine will operate for a number of turns equal to the successes in the margin. Note that this Gift does not provide any expertise on how to operate the target device, though.

Duration: One scene / Margin number of turns

SNARL OF CHALLENGE *(As Ahroun)*

Total Renown 9

CONTROL MACHINE

The werewolf is able to issue simple commands to the minor spirits resident in most machines, enabling the Garou to gain momentary control of many devices. A machine-spirit grants this Gift.

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Manipulation + Wisdom

System: The Garou's player makes a Manipulation + Wisdom test and targets any device, electronic or mechanical, within the user's line of sight and 10 meters. (A mechanical device should contain some form of mechanism to qualify: A bicycle would be an allowed target, whereas a wheelbarrow would not.) The Gift cannot be used to issue commands that would harm the device. The Difficulty depends on the complexity of the command and the size of the target, and that Difficulty increases if the device is asked to do something contrary to its main purpose, such as asking a lock (designed to bar entry) to open. The Difficulty is never below 3, in any case, as this Gift is notoriously complicated, and many Garou would rather just smash the device than converse with it.

Duration: Up to one scene

DOPPELGÄNGER

The Garou may take on, or at least approach, the likeness of any other specific humanoid or wolf. The Gift does not allow the copying of manners, however, and few human-born Garou master the art of changing their scent to the degree that they can fool real wolves or wolf-born, making this a dangerous Gift to employ among fellow werewolves. A shadow- or mockingbird-spirit grants this Gift.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Manipulation + Wisdom

System: The Gift user must know the subject being copied by face. The user's player makes a Manipulation + Wisdom test at Difficulty 3. Each success in the margin provides an additional dice bonus to subsequent attempts to pass as the copied subject (usually involving Performance or Subterfuge), as the user's own appearance changes to match that of the impersonated individual. At the Storyteller's discretion, this bonus is halved if the subject copied is a wolf or wolf-born and other wolf-born are present. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

RECOVER MEMORY

By summoning the spiritual residue of a damaged or destroyed book or other information-storing object, the Garou is able to perceive some of the information lost. Skilled users of this Gift are even able to read information from advanced digital media, though making sense of it is another matter. A data-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Intelligence + Wisdom

System: The Garou using this Gift must be able to see, touch, and smell the target object. The object can be in any state — anything from a partially de-magnetized floppy disk to the remains of a burnt book is fair game — though the worse the state of the object and the greater the amount of time it has spent in that condition, the greater the Difficulty to the Intelligence + Wisdom test. Sensing old images from a sloppily reformatted memory stick might be Difficulty 2, whereas the contents of a 17th-century diary burned to tatters is 5 or more. Also, note that the Gift doesn't automatically bestow the ability to understand the information gleaned, and additional tests (such as Intelligence + Technology to understand the purpose of a piece of computer code) might be required. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: —

HART WARDEN GIFTS

Total Renown 3

CROW'S LAUGHTER *(As Ragabash)*

SACRED BOUNDARY

This Gift allows a werewolf to quickly mark a boundary (by using sacred water from a caern, blood, or their own urine), across which any trespass becomes known to the user. Young Garou sometimes irreverently call this Gift "Tracking Tape." A dog-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: Free

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: Applying a suitable material, the user marks a boundary either between two objects or in a circle. The

length of this boundary is limited to 10 meters per dot of Glory Renown of the user. All movement over this boundary becomes known to the user as if glimpsed, no matter the user's location, so long as the boundary is active. Any supernatural concealment requires a Wits + Glory test to notice, with a Difficulty depending on the power and nature of the trespasser. The boundary remains active for a day and a night or until the objects anchoring it are moved or destroyed. A Gift user can have only one boundary active at any given time. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: A day or a night or until broken (see above)

BLESSED BREW

The Garou can infuse a beverage with spiritual power, enabling it to embolden and strengthen the mental fortitude of those who drink it. A hearth- or herb-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: Anyone who drinks the equivalent of a glass of a liquid affected by this Gift receives the following benefit: For the next test to resist any kind fear or hostile supernatural mental ability, add a number of dice equal to the Glory of the Gift user. The Gift user can infuse the equivalent of a single bottle of liquid, enough for an entire pack, and the brew and its effect remain active until used or the session ends. This Gift can be used only once per session and can be used in any form.

Duration: Up to one session

Total Renown 6

BEAST'S FEALTY *(As Philodox)*
SONG OF INSPIRATION *(As Galliard)*

TERRITORIAL DOMINANCE

While on their own marked territory, the Garou is strengthened, drawing power from the land. They are required to defend this territory, however, as any scars on it are reflected into the user's spirit. A lion- or other feral cat-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: —

Pool: —

System: The user marks spots on the border of a territory (by using water from a caern, blood, or their own urine), tying their spirit to the land. They can mark a territory only while the full moon is shining, and the territory's size is unlimited so long as the Garou is able to mark at least five spots along its circumference in a single night. While in this territory, the Garou's player gains a bonus die on all physical tests. However, any damage to the territory imparts Willpower damage on the user, the extent of which is determined by the Storyteller. (The Storyteller ultimately decides what constitutes damage and its effects. A tree cut down might yield only a single Superficial Willpower damage, whereas a catastrophic oil spill would cause multiple levels of Aggravated damage.) If the territory is already damaged, the Garou can sustain Willpower damage just by using the Gift in the first place, so most werewolves avoid using it except in unspoiled areas that they know well.

Duration: A number of nights equal to the user's Glory

Total Renown 9

BALOR'S GAZE

One of the werewolf's eyes glows a livid red, and all enemies caught by their gaze are stricken with terrible agony. A pain-spirit or a spirit of age or time grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Charisma + Glory vs Composure + Occult

System: A single subject falling under the gaze of the Gift's user must resist the user's Charisma + Glory vs the target's Composure + Occult or have their body wracked with horrible pains and gain a 2-dice penalty to all tests for the rest of the scene. Only one subject can be affected by the Gift user at any given time.

Duration: One scene

THE LIVING WOOD

The Garou calls upon the trees and plants to rise and aid them. Nearby trees move and attempt to protect the Garou, and branches and vines restrain, block, and even fight those attempting to harm the user. A Glade Child grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Manipulation + Glory

System: Anyone trying to harm the Gift's user is subject to a grapple attack from nearby trees and plants (at a maximum of one retaliation per turn). If trees are nearby, their pool is the user's Manipulation + Glory. If only bushes or other, smaller plants are present, their pool is reduced to the user's Glory only. If no plants of suitable size are present, the Gift does nothing. At the Storyteller's discretion, other effects such as dice pool penalties are also possible, depending on the flora and foliage, and the Gift is sometimes used as part of Rites involving the growing of plants or trees.

Duration: One scene

KISS OF HELIOS *(As Ahroun)*
LIVING WARD *(As Theurge)*

RED TALON GIFTS

Total Renown 3

HIDDEN KILLER

The werewolf is able to mask their kills or those of their pack by removing any incriminating causes of death and other tracks that could lead an investigator to them. A beetle- or spider-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: The werewolf spends a scene licking the wounds of the slain, as well as any areas where traces of their presence lingers. The injuries of the victim supernaturally close, and they appear to have died from no discernible cause. (Modern medicine would likely chalk up the deaths to heart failure, though large losses of blood can make them appear mysteriously exsanguinated, an irony not lost on urban Garou looking to throw shade on the local leeches.) Mundane attempts to secure crime scene evidence such as DNA also automatically fail, but investigators familiar with Garou can make attempts normally, albeit with a dice penalty equal to the Gift user's Honor.

Duration: —

RAZOR CLAWS *(As Ahroun)*

RENDER DOWN

In a matter of seconds, the werewolf is able to corrode, rot, or otherwise cause any inert material they touch to decay, as if left exposed to the elements for decades. An insect-spirit or a spirit associated with carrion grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Honor

System: The werewolf must touch the intended object. The user's player makes a Resolve + Honor test at a Difficulty depending on the object's size and material. Natural substances, such as wood or stone, are more resistant, whereas artificial substances (especially plastics) are easier to destroy. Alloys are likewise more susceptible to this power than pure metals. Difficulties thus range from 2, for something like a handgun, up to 5 for a carved stone pillar. The size limit for the power is roughly one ton, or an average car, and the effect applies to an entire object. (It cannot be used to corrode a hole in a door, but an attempt can be made to affect the entire door.) The process takes a few minutes, during which the user must stay in contact with the object, making it hard to use in physical combat unless grappling the subject.

Duration: —

SONG OF RAGE *(As Galliard)*

Total Renown 6

FANGS OF JUDGMENT *(AS PHILODOX)*

GAIA'S EMBRACE

Nothing can stay in the air for long, as the Garou turns the very pull of the earth against their foes. Anything flying in their vicinity struggles to stay aloft, and even bullets fly crooked, their path skewed by erratic shifts in gravity. A rock-spirit or mountain-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: Anything that flies at an altitude of less than 50 meters and within a 100-meter radius of the werewolf must immediately land or risk crash landing. (Difficulty to stay aloft is 1 + the Gift user's Honor) This effect also applies to helicopters, drones, or other craft passing through the area. Projectiles and thrown objects are also affected by the pull, suffering an attack dice penalty equal to the user's Honor if their trajectory enters or leaves the zone. Anything standing on the ground is unaffected, though leaps and other acrobatics also suffer a similar penalty. Upholding this effect requires the Gift user's full attention, and the effect lapses as soon as they perform another action or use another Gift.

Duration: Up to one scene

QUICKSAND

The werewolf is able to turn the ground into a sticky morass that catches foes and prevents their escape or taking evasive action. An earth elemental grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Intelligence + Honor

System: The Gift user targets an area on the ground, roughly five meters in diameter, within line of sight and ten meters. The user's player makes a Gift test at a Difficulty of 2. (Increase Difficulty by 1 for each additional ten meters of distance.) All within the area suffer a 2-dice penalty to their physical defense pools and cannot move faster than slow walking pace while within the Gift's range, as the ground turns into a sucking bog. Note that the Gift can be used only while on natural ground and has no effect indoors or on paved surfaces.

Duration: One scene

Total Renown 9

FERAL REGRESSION *(As Theurge)*

SHIELD OF THE WYLD

The Garou is able to wrap themselves in the ever-changing energies of the Wyld, causing them to interfere with weapons and other implements of the Weaver. The werewolf gains a limited immunity to most kinds of mundane weapons. A Serpentine grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: While active, this Gift allows the user to ignore a number of physical damage levels equal to their Honor each turn, as long as that damage is caused by mundane weapons. Natural weapons, such as claws and fangs, remain unaffected, as does silver and attacks of a spiritual or otherwise supernatural nature, such as with most talismans. While this Gift is active, the user is unable to use any kind of tool or technological device.

Duration: One scene

THE THOUSAND FORMS *(As Ragabash)*

SHADOW LORD GIFTS

Total Renown 3

FATAL FLAW

The Garou observes their target intently, and with the spying spirit discerns a weakness in their prey. This can be either a supernatural flaw, such as the werewolves' own vulnerability to silver or, lacking that, a weak spot compromising the foe's defense. A termite-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Intelligence + Glory vs Composure + Subterfuge

System: The Garou using this Gift must spend a full turn (or equivalent) studying their target, during which they can do nothing else. Upon the player's successful Intelligence + Glory test against the target's Composure + Subterfuge, the user learns of one way to deal Aggravated physical damage to the subject that they did not already know. (Do not count unique sources of damage, such as named weapons and the like.) If they already know of all the target's anathema, they gain a one-die bonus to attacks as they discern a minor weakness, such as "a tendency to lead with the left." This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: —

ICY CHILL OF DESPAIR

The Garou appears to grow larger and more imposing, becoming a terrible, shadowy version of themselves, and

everyone around the werewolf has their hearts numbed by crippling hopelessness. A Stormcrow grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: While this Gift is active, the Garou gains their Glory as bonus for all Intimidation tests, and everyone apart from their packmates within 10 meters is unable to use Willpower to reroll dice or to regain Willpower except through mystical means.

Duration: One scene

SHADOW SENSE *(As Theurge)*

Total Renown 6

BLUR OF THE MILKY EYE *(As Ragabash)*

DIRE DISTRACTION

The werewolf is able to produce a distraction accurate enough to make the simplest task hard and a hard challenge insurmountable. A shadow-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Composure + Glory vs Wits + Occult (or Wisdom)

System: The target loses a number of dice from their pool equal to the Gift user's Glory on their next action, as long as that action takes a turn or less. Use of this Gift is almost invisible, and because the distraction is spiritual in nature, the Gift user isn't implicated unless their player fails a test of the character's Composure + Glory against the Wits + Occult (or Wisdom, if the target is Garou) of the subject. Make this test only if it's relevant who performed the distraction, though. A subject can be affected by this Gift only once per scene. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One action

EYES OF THE COBRA *(As Galliard)*

TRUE FEAR *(As Ahroun)*

Total Renown 9

GEAS *(As Philodox)*

THUNDERCLAP

The Garou slams their hands together, creating a mighty thunderclap that stuns those who hear it. An Incarna of Thunder grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Strength + Glory vs Stamina + Wits

System: The user's player makes a test of the character's Strength + Glory against the Stamina + Wits of everyone within 20 meters, knocking to the ground anyone who fails to resist. Those who succeed in resisting still suffer a two-dice penalty to any action other than defend for the next turn, unless their test was a critical win.

Duration: One turn / one scene

UNDER THE GUN

The Garou curses a subject, making them supernaturally easy to hit with projectiles. While the spiritual doom is in effect, bullets (as well as arrows, hurled knives, and any other missile weapons) are strangely attracted to the target. A raven-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: The Garou using this Gift needs only to touch the target to activate it. (If used in combat, the user must first succeed with a brawl attack.) While the Gift is in effect, the victim gains no benefit from any Gifts that would protect them from projectile weapons, and any ranged attack against them gains a two-dice bonus. The curse lasts for one day per dot of Glory of the user but can be removed before that by performing a Rite of Abjuration (p. 180). This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One day per dot of Glory of the user

SILENT STRIDER GIFTS

Total Renown 3

FETCH BOUNTY

With the aid of local spirits, the Garou is able to locate any mundane object they seek, receiving guidance by scent to the nearest instance of the item. Although the Gift locates only nonliving objects, it can be useful whenever the Garou is in need of food, a vehicle, or a new set of clothes. A magpie-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Wits + Wisdom

System: The werewolf decides on an item, and the player makes a Wits + Wisdom test at a Difficulty depending on the rarity of the item with regard to the area and how specific they want to be. Finding "a car" might be Difficulty 2, whereas locating "a '75 Chevrolet Corvette" approaches 4 or 5 and might require hours of travel. Of course, if the object isn't available in the area, the Gift automatically fails, as do attempts to locate too specific an object, such as a car of a certain color. (In general, no adjectives can be used in the search, nor can things such as license plates or serial numbers.) What constitutes an "area" is intentionally loose, as it depends more on the amount of clutter than on a set geographical area. It might be a single neighborhood in New York but several square kilometers of forest. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

SPEECH OF THE WORLD

The Garou may speak and read any living language they encounter, though they probably speak it with an obvious accent. Given time, they are also able to understand some parts of dead languages, though the user is unable to pierce any intentional code or other form of obfuscation. A parrot-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Intelligence + Wisdom

System: Upon the werewolf's encountering a language they do not normally speak, the player can make an Intelligence + Wisdom test against a Difficulty based on how common the language is. (Chinese or any variant of Arabic, for example, would be 2, a tablet written in an obscure dialect of Sumerian 4, and runes etched by unknown hand before the dawn of humankind 5 and beyond.) This Gift can be used in any form (though intelligible speech is possible only in homid or glabro).

Duration: One scene

WHISPERED PASSAGE

Everything seems to fall silent around the werewolf using this Gift, as their movements become completely silent and other noises around them are muffled to almost nothing. A cat-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: Any natural noise made by the werewolf becomes undetectable, and sounds in a 10-meter radius are muted. Detecting the Gift's user by sound alone becomes impossible, and any attempt to notice sounds made by anyone within the area of effect suffers a penalty equal to the Wisdom of the user. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

Total Renown 6

BURROW

The werewolf is able to tunnel rapidly through earth, either to bypass obstacles or barriers, or to seek temporary shelter from pursuers or hazardous conditions. The tunnels can be used by all members of the user's pack, as long as they stick close together. A mole-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Rage check

Action: Full

Pool: Strength + Wisdom

System: To burrow into earth, the Gift's user must make a Strength + Wisdom test at a Difficulty depending on the relative hardness of the ground. (Soft soil is 2, whereas hard-packed rocky earth is 4.) Each use of the Gift digs a tunnel two meters long, plus two meters for each success in the margin, and takes a turn for each two meters. The maximum distance is 20 meters, but additional uses of this Gift can dig progressively longer tunnels. No matter their length, the tunnels are inherently unstable and last for only one scene.

Duration: One scene

SCENT OF RUNNING WATER *(As Ragabash)*

UMBRAL TETHER *(As Theurge)*

Total Renown 9

AGAINST THE ODDS *(As Galliard)*

CLOSING THE GAP *(As Ahroun)*

THE GOLDEN PATH

The werewolf is able to sense the safest path over or through a hazardous area, such as a minefield or winding unfamiliar streets, by following the guidance of local spirits. This Gift does not provide a way if none exists but can tip the scales in the favor of the Garou and their pack. An ant-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: Upon activating this test, the Garou's player can add the character's Wisdom to any test involved in navigating an area containing static danger or obstacles. It can help them avoid mines, tripwires, cameras, or unstable terrain, or to navigate a maze, though it does not provide this bonus when attempting to avoid guards or other conscious entities. If the Gift's user can communicate with their packmates, it can provide this bonus to them as well. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

STRENGTH OF PURPOSE *(As Philodox)*

SILVER FANG GIFTS

Total Renown 3

HOWL OF ASSEMBLY *(As Galliard)*

PACK INSTINCT

The Garou gains an instinctive knowledge of the physical and mental status, as well as the rough location, of each of the pack's members. A bee- or other hive insect-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: Free / 1 Willpower

Action: Free

Pool: Composure + Honor

System: The Gift user always has a general sense of the physical and mental wellbeing of their pack members. If they spend a Willpower and make a Composure + Honor test at Difficulty 2, they are able to get precise information about a single member, such as their current Health value and where the subject is, as long as they are within a 10-kilometer radius of the user. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

THE SILVER COMPACT

Many spirits are still bound by old compacts to now-legendary Garou. The Gift user can invoke such a compact and receive protection from hostile spirits that would otherwise do them harm. An avatar of Falcon grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: While this Gift is active, spirits and possessed entities avoid attacking the Gift user if they are able to attack other foes. This Gift also allows the user to ignore their Honor's worth of Health or Willpower damage caused by spirits and possessed creatures each turn. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

Total Renown 6

BLOOD OF THE PACK

The Garou becomes a conduit for Rage, linking the fury of its members to one another and letting them all share in one another's reserves of Rage. A wasp-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: While this Gift is active, members of the pack can make Rage checks for one another. The total number of Rage checks that can be made in this way is equal to the Gift user's Honor. Blood of the Pack cannot be used if Unity of the Pack (see below) has been used in the same scene. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One turn

COMMAND THE GATHERING *(As Philodox)*

UNITY OF THE PACK

The Garou becomes a unifying locus of intent, allowing Pack members to take on one another's mental load and to bolster one another's inner fortitude. Any familial spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: While this Gift is active, members of the pack can spend Willpower for one another. The total number of Willpower that can be spent in this way is equal to the Gift user's Honor. Unity of the Pack cannot be used if Blood of the Pack has been used in the same scene. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One turn

Renown 3

COMMAND SPIRIT *(As Theurge)*

LUNA'S AVENGER

The Garou becomes increasingly emboldened as their pack suffers damage and casualties, enabling them to protect the injured and avenge the fallen. A Lune grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: While this Gift is active, the Garou's player gains a bonus on all physical combat attack and defense tests of one die for each member of the pack who is Impaired, and two bonus dice for each member on the verge of death (their Health tracker filled with Aggravated damage). This dice bonus cannot exceed the Gift user's Honor.

Duration: One scene

LUNA'S BLESSING *(As Ragabash)*

SILVER CLAWS *(AS AHROUN)*

RITES

As Garou are creatures of volatile Rage, their gatherings are fraught with tension. Pride, frustration, and the base aggression inherent in werewolves' nature, not to mention the constant struggle for Renown, can turn the most innocent social gathering into an all-out brawl in less time than it takes to say, "stink of the Weaver." Rites therefore constitute the glue that bonds the Garou together. Every aspect of werewolf social life can and often does take on a ritualized nature, as masters of various Rites guide their fellows in the complex forms of interaction that help Garou from different packs and septs relate. Werewolves observe Rites for just about everything — not just formal Rites, such as bestowing upon Kin the title of Garou or for mourning the death of a pack member, but also ones for the retelling of past exploits or to chastise another within the confines of a Rite (thus avoiding violent death in reprisal).

Although most Rites are simply ritualized forms of social interaction, some have effects beyond the psychological. Bear in mind that the purely social ones have a presence just as large, if not larger, in Garou life. Just because the Rite of Passage or Rite of Gathering for the Departed lacks a game system doesn't mean they lack importance.

Rites also allow packs and septs the freedom to develop their own unique variants. Each of the tribes — and many an individual pack — has its own versions of common Rites. The raucous, howling celebration of the Hart Wardens' Rite of Spirit Summoning has little external similarity to the Shadow Lords' dark and brooding Rite of the same name, yet the effect and purpose of the two Rites are similar.

RITE SYSTEMS

To perform a Rite, a Garou must first know the Rite, something often learned from a more experienced Garou. (See p. 110 on experience point costs for Rites.) If multiple Garou who know the Rite participate, one must serve as Rite master for that particular enactment, and a single Garou performing a Rite becomes the Rite master by default. The Rite master's player assembles a Rite pool, composed of the Traits noted in the Rite description, and makes the test at the Difficulty of the Rite. Rage dice are included as normal here, and a Rite test is susceptible to Brutal failures. (Some Rites produce special effects if they yield Brutal results, which will be noted in the Rite.)

Garou who are present can participate in the Rite, as long as they haven't Lost the Wolf. Their players add two dice if the characters also know the Rite, or one if they are unfamiliar with it. One of these dice is always a Rage die — the more werewolves involved in performing a Rite thus make its performance more fraught but potentially increase the margin for success.

Performing a Rite takes a whole scene unless otherwise noted, though the scene can be as long or as short as the story requires — anything from a couple of minutes to, in some cases, an entire night. If a Rite fails, the Rite master cannot lead the same Rite any earlier than the next day.

RITES SUMMARY

- **A Rite must be led by a Rite master, who must know the Rite**
- **Each participant, including the Rite master, must have at least one point of Rage**
- **The die pool traits are noted in the Rite and are those of the Rite master**
- **Each other participant contributes one Rage die**
- **Each other participant who knows the Rite contributes one regular die, as well**

COMMON RITES

Rite of Abjuration

This rite purifies a person, place, or object, purging any spiritual possession. Spirits present are driven out, and any mystical traits of an object such as a Talisman are removed. Many variants of this Rite exist, some of which involve burning out the offending influence with fire, others which have the performers howling at the target in an effort to terrify away the possession, and still others which involve complicated inscriptions and wards. All leave the target object physically marred in some way, though. If a living being is to be subjected to the Rite, they must be willing or incapacitated.

Pool: Honor + Occult

System: The Difficulty to cleanse an object depends on a number of factors, such as the size of the object, how long it has been imbued, and the power of the imbuing entity. A tree recently inhabited by a hostile Bane might be Difficulty 3, whereas a mountain serving as the resting place of an ancient spirit for millennia is a 6 or more. A Brutal failure on this Rite angers the possessing spirit,

which either animates the object and attack or possesses something more dangerous in the vicinity to better enact its vengeance.

Rite of Rage

Known by many names among individual septs and packs, the Rite of Rage has one purpose: to stoke the Rage of the pack before it courts danger and violence. Fire-dancing, drum-beating, ritualized dueling, or just picking fights at a football game are all valid expressions of this Rite.

Pool: Glory + Intimidation

System: The base Difficulty of the Rite is equal to the number of participants, though never less than 3. Upon a win, every participant increases their Rage by one point. (The Rite master can opt for each member to gain 2 points instead, which increases the Difficulty by 2.) A Brutal outcome does not cause the Rite to fail, but each Brutal outcome causes all participants to suffer one level of Superficial damage as the aggression explodes outward — the fire dance burns out of control and spreads, the ritualized duel ends in real bloodshed, and the football game turns into a melee as the performers become the center of a riot.

Rite of Tranquility

The opposite of the Rite of Rage, the Rite of Tranquility is a way for Garou to shed Rage harmlessly, to better prepare themselves for social events, walking among humans, or performance of other Rites. Performances of this Rite can be somber or soothing, serious or playful, ranging from nigh-choral harmonious howls to clever games of wordplay intended to ameliorate grievances.

Pool: Wisdom + Performance

System: The base Difficulty of the Rite is equal to the number of participants, though never less than 3. Upon a win, every participant lowers their Rage to 1. Upon a Brutal outcome, the rite fails and everyone participating suffers a level of Superficial Willpower damage, as their frustrations get the better of them.

Rite of Contrition

This Rite is part of, and often the culmination of, an act of penance performed by Garou, either to make amends to a spirit insulted or violated, or to cast off the mantle of chagrin (see p. 142). To enact the rite, the Garou must either give a small gift to the offended parties or, in the case of a spirit, having on hand some aspect of the spirit in question (for example, a clay falcon if the Garou is appealing to the Patron Spirit Falcon) that they pay homage to. (This aspect of the Rite does not replace whatever penance is required, of course.)

Pool: Honor + Etiquette

System: The Difficulty of this Rite is equal to 2 + the Renown penalty suffered through chagrin or, in the case of a spirit, half its Power (round up). Performers who fail the Rite are free to try again the next day, and parties seeking forgiveness must often repeat the Rite on several occasions before completing it successfully. A Brutal outcome causes a failure and means that additional offense was caused, and further penance must be made before the Rite can be tried again. (The nature of this penance depends on the grievance and the offended parties, and is up to the Storyteller.)

Rite of the Forgetful Record

The world being what it is, Garou find themselves entangled in affairs of law and the breaking of it, more often than not. Faces get caught on surveillance, fingerprints make their way into dangerous databases, and DNA is tagged and cataloged. This Gift dispatches a host of minor Wyld spirits to wreak havoc on any recorded information about the participating Garou. Although it cannot make a living being forget anything, it causes a huge increase in corrupted data, lost samples, and misfiled reports relating to the pack performing the Rite.

Pool: Wisdom + Investigation

System: The Difficulty to perform this Rite is equal to the number of participants. On a success the Difficulty to locate or identify the participants through any form of existing database or record is increased by 3, though the memories of individuals are unaffected. This lasts for as long as the participants stay out of trouble — any future felony or other form of registering requires the Rite to be performed again, or the effect is lost. A Brutal outcome means that the spirits have strayed too close to the mind of someone who has encountered the characters before (such as an FBI investigator) who will resume or restart an investigation, unable to get the faces of the characters out of their head.

Rite of the Living Caern

This Rite allows the performers to vitalize a caern, renewing their bond to it and strengthening its connection to the Umbra. Without regular performances of this Rite, caerns wither and fade or start to skew out of balance, becoming beacons to hostile spirits and baleful energies. This Rite must be held at a consistent time each month, or the caern starts — or continues — to degrade. Septs sometimes make this Rite a grand occasion, timing it to coincide with a great moot or some other important social gathering.

Pool: Wisdom + Craft

System: The Difficulty to perform this Rite is equal to 2 + the Caern Value. A win on the Rite test means that the caern keeps its rating, at least until the next monthly iteration. A failure requires a new attempt the following night, and if the Rite fails (or the Garou neglect it) during the entire full moon period, the Caern Value drops by 1 (see p. 191). Each Brutal outcome causes a complication (such as a minor malevolent spirit crossing the Gauntlet or a visit from some local agent of law enforcement who received complaints of a ruckus) but does not cause an automatic failure.

Rite of Shadow Passage

Uniquely, Garou are creatures of both flesh and spirit. This Rite lets a pack briefly open a way between the physical world and the Umbra, allowing the werewolves to pass from one to the other or back again. As much about achieving a state of mind as about anything else, this Rite has as many ways to perform it as there are packs — from the drawing of complex geometries to mirror arrangements to hallucinogen consumption.

Pool: Renown (any) + Occult

System: The Rite's Difficulty is equal to the local Gauntlet rating: An active caern might be 2, an urban alley 3 or 4, whereas a sterile lab environment might go as high as 6. The Difficulty to return to the physical world from the Umbra using this Rite is reduced by 2. A win on the test allows all participants to pass through the Gauntlet, though nothing but their Dedicated clothes (see below) can accompany them, unless the non-Dedicated object or objects are aided by Gifts or other supernatural effects. Each Brutal outcome causes participants to suffer a level

of Aggravated damage as they cross over but does not cause an automatic failure of the Rite.

Rite of Dedication

This Rite spiritually binds a set of garments to a werewolf, allowing the Garou to change form without the dedicated clothes ripping apart. Instead, the clothes shift into an invisible spiritual state and return when the Garou assumes a form that can wear them. Although the details vary from pack to pack, expressions often involve the recipient stripping naked and putting on the selected outfit one piece at a time. Only one set of clothes can be Dedicated to a particular Garou at any one time, often leading to each werewolf sporting a particular "look" for weeks, if not months.

Pool: —

System: The Rite master can perform this Rite on themselves or another Garou. Once dedicated, the garments remain worn by the Garou — regardless of whether the werewolf changes form or enters the Umbra — and seemingly disappear and reappear, depending on whether they fit the werewolf's present form or not. Only clothes or trinkets such as jewelry can be dedicated in this manner, not bags or other storage equipment, but small items kept in pockets or in similar fashion gain the same benefit, though the clothes need to be physically present for such items to be available. A set of clothes keeps this trait until either the bearer dedicates another outfit or the clothes are washed — by hand — in anything other than running creek or river water. (Theurges speculate that the Wyld energies required to keep the garments in a state of spiritual flux are sensitive to Weaver-taint; others blame chemical impurities in tap water.)

Rite of Kinseeking

Finding a nascent Garou, especially before they harm themselves or others, is no mean feat. Whereas many Kinseekers use common sleuthing methods, such as following up on news of "wild animal attacks" and outright manslaughter, this Rite gives them a chance to find Kin before accidents occur. Bestowing the ability to track Kin by scent, the rite often involves the burning of herbs and incense to provide clashing smells, and it tends to spook any animal with a keen olfactory sense, including dogs, within a kilometer or so of its performance.

Pool: Wisdom + Investigation

System: The range of the Rite is roughly the size of a small town, or a large city district, with the Difficulty determined by the physical distance to closest Kin. (Difficulty 2 for next door, 4 for across town.) The presence of other werewolves also muddies the water, increasing the Difficulty by 1 if any Garou other than the Rite performers' pack is in the area. A win on the test adds two dice to any future relevant Skill tests to find that specific Kin for one full month after the Rite master performs the Rite.

Rite of Spirit Summoning

With this Rite, a Garou can summon an absent, oblivious, or even unwilling spirit. The spirit is under no obligation to obey the Rite master, however, and unless the Garou expects a friendly parlay they usually follow up this Rite with appropriate Gifts or another Rite, such as the Rite of Binding (see below). To enact this Rite, the performer must catch the spirit's attention, either by being present in the spirit's domain or near a person or object possessed by the spirit, or by knowing the spirit's name if summoning it from the deeper reaches of the Umbra.

Pool: Honor + Persuasion vs Power

System: The Rite must be held in a location that the spirit can reach. If the spirit is bound to an object or a place, the Rite must be held in or near it. If the spirit isn't tied to a particular physical feature, its name must instead be known by the performer. The resist pool is the spirit's Power, modified by the local Gauntlet (-2 dice if at a caern; +2 dice if the Gauntlet is unusually high). The Rite master's relationship to the spirit can also come into play and modify the pools involved. The spirit, if successfully summoned, is bound to stay for one scene, after which it's free to leave. Upon a Brutal outcome, the spirit is gravely offended and engages in whatever hostile action it is capable of against the performers of the Rite.

Rite of Binding

This Rite binds a spirit to a physical feature. The more powerful the spirit is, the more difficult the process. Spirits generally object to being bound unless they are on good terms with the Rite master and their Patron Spirit. Spirits can be bound into objects, places, and even people, though most Garou generally don't perform that last feat unless they are of a particularly callous nature. Binding spirits for excessive lengths of time is also generally viewed as needless abuse of those who should be the allies of the Garou, though this point doesn't go uncontested, such as by some theurges of the Ghost Council.

Pool: Glory + Occult

System: Unless the spirit is on exceptionally good terms with the Rite master — which makes the Rite succeed automatically — the Rite is resisted by the Power of the spirit. A win on the test binds the spirit for one week, with one additional week added for each success in the margin. A Brutal outcome on the Rite test angers the spirit (if it wasn't angry already) and allows it to possess one of the participants for a scene (should the spirit choose to do so — many simply want to flee the vicinity). The exact nature of the possession depends on the spirit and the whims of the Storyteller, but more than one pack has been lost while attempting to make a servant of their better.

Rite of Shame

Garou society is harsh, and those who fall out of line can be sure of consequences. This Rite is one of the more severe forms of punishment, but is no less rare for that. The Rite exacerbates the yoke of chagrin on the subject Garou, lowering their standing and worth further in the eyes of their peers, spirits, and even themselves. Still, those who face it usually submit quietly, as resisting can mean ostracism or worse. The Rite is thus a solemn affair, akin to a passing of judgment, wherein the subject individual or pack confesses their failures and swears to atone. At the culmination of the Rite, each subject must mark themselves, such as by braiding a handful of visible strands into their mane or fur, and keep the mark until they've atoned for their crimes or failings. Until then, the mark speaks to everyone of their shame.

Pool: —

System: The subject Garou or pack has their chagrin penalty increased to 2. (See p. 142). The conditions for lapsing of the Rite are tied to removing chagrin and are decided on at the enactment of the Rite. Removing the mark before that stage results in a vile stink following the offending Garou until such time they reapply the mark. The stench yields a three-dice penalty to all Social tests.

Rite of Patronage

Many packs of Garou receive the patronage of a Patron Spirit that unites them in their struggles and grants them a boon. By performing this Rite, the werewolves adopt a pack Patron, chosen from among the Patron Spirits of the pack's member tribes. The Rite involves not only currying the favor of the new Patron, but also thanking the former for their aid, lest any future interaction turn sour. Some packs regularly rotate the Patron Spirit in lockstep with a similarly rotating title as leader. Others have a more pragmatic approach, beseeching the aid of the Patron Spirit most useful for their current task.

Patron Spirits not associated with individual tribes can also offer their favor, should the pack seek such specific outside aid, though these spirits are often harder to approach and beseech. Such a choice almost certainly involves a journey to find and court the spirit, and perhaps some proof of competency.

Pool: Renown (the type associated with the new pack Patron Spirit) + Etiquette

System: All members of the pack must participate in this Rite, though the Rite master does not need to be associated with the Patron Spirit sought. The Base Difficulty is 4, minus the number of sessions since the last Patron Spirit was chosen, to a minimum of 1. Success allows all members of the pack to enjoy that Patron Spirit's favor for the duration of the patronage in addition to their tribe favor, and any pack member already part of the new pack Patron's tribe has their favor bonus doubled. See the

tribes chapter for information on Patron Spirits and the favors they bestow. A Brutal outcome doesn't cause the Rite to fail but angers the previous Patron Spirit, who must be appeased by the performance of a quest or labor of penance, as well as a Rite of Contrition, before they can be called upon again.

Rite of Celebration

In the age of Apocalypse, Garou must make time to acknowledge small victories, even as the greater war might already be lost. This Rite is an orchestrated festivity, managed by the Rite master in a way to not degenerate into a rowdy debauch or violent rampage, and to take its time in recognizing every member of the pack and the spirits from whom they received aid. Properly conducted, this Rite strengthens the mental fortitude of the members and prepares them for challenges ahead.

Pool: Honor + Performance

System: This Rite can be performed only after the pack has achieved a victory. It can be attempted, only once per story, to allow the pack to restore Willpower above and beyond the norm. The Rite master decides how many levels of Willpower damage the packmates want to restore. The Difficulty is equal to this number. If successful, each member of the pack restores this designated number of levels of Superficial Willpower damage. They can also choose to restore Aggravated Willpower on a 1-for-2 basis. Failure, including by Brutal outcome, yields no Willpower restoration, but has no further effects unless the Storyteller deems otherwise.

Rite of Caern Building

This Rite is one of the hardest but most vital ones among werewolves, as it has the power to awaken a dormant caern or to wrest control of a hostile one. Entire septs are usually required to perform this feat, made even harder by the fact that many caerns actively resist being claimed by opposing spiritual forces. Performing this Rite takes many days and nights. Much of that time is spent in constructing and repairing the physical manifestation of the caern, as well as in placating the local spirits by building

proper housing for their spiritual forms. Preparatory rituals must be made during each of the lunar phases, and upon the completion of an entire lunar cycle, the Rite enters its final stage. At this stage, the Rite master leads a collective ceremony, enlisting the aid of the entire pack or even sept. A successful Rite ends with a new caern's opening, whereas a failure can result in extensive spiritual damage and even death.

Pool: Wisdom + Craft

System: The Difficulty to create a new caern is 5. If attempting to increase a Caern Value, the Difficulty is 4 + the current rating. The test is made at the culmination of the lunar cycle, after all preparations have been completed. A successful Rite yields a new caern with a Caern Value of 1; a successful strengthening increases the Caern Value by 1. Failure requires the Rite master (or someone else) to start the monthly preparation anew. Each Brutal outcome (pair of Brutal results) summons a hostile spirit or offends one already present, and all of these spirits need to be dealt with before the Rite can be considered complete. Note that player characters using this Rite on their pack's own caern need to spend experience points to make the new caern or Caern Value valid (see "Caerns," below).

Rite of the Wolf Reborn

Losing the Wolf can be catastrophic for a Garou in the middle of a dangerous undertaking, especially if the werewolf is unable to regain it from the moon. This Rite allows a pack to channel their Rage into a packmate who has Lost the Wolf (see p. 133), rousing it as if in the light of Luna. Some young Garou irreverently refer to this Rite as "Jumpstarting."

Pool: Renown (Highest of target) + Leadership

System: This Rite must target a member of a pack who has Lost the Wolf. Only members of the target's pack can participate, and the Difficulty is 3. The participants must sacrifice a total of 3 Rage among them; if the Rite is successful the target gains a single point of Rage, returning their Wolf to them. On a regular failure, the Rage returns to the participants, but a Brutal failure sacrifices it, even though the Rite fails.

Rite of the Whispering Field

Performed at a caern, this Rite lets the participants attune themselves to the surrounding area and become acutely aware of every sight, smell, and sound (or their absence) that would betray a trespasser. The very grass of the field and the birds in the trees become their living surveillance system. The Rite is often performed by the guardians of a caern in conjunction with the Rite of the Living Caern (above).

Pool: Wisdom + Survival

System: The Difficulty of the Rite is 2 plus 1 for each participant, apart from the Rite master. Upon a successful Rite, all participants have 2 regular dice pinned to success for any Awareness test to detect intruders upon the bawn, the area surrounding the caern territory (if the exact region is unknown, roughly a kilometer in all directions), as well as a similar bonus to other tests to track or investigate trespassers. The benefit lasts for a lunar month. On a Brutal failure, the spirits and animals of the territory surrounding the caern are spooked, and nobody can attempt the Ritual again until a lunar month has passed.

Rite of the Shrouded Glen

Septs use this Rite to subtly hide a caern from the eyes of mundane individuals, whether they be enemies or passers-by. Although it doesn't generate any actual illusions or invisibility, its performance skews the attention of visitors so that only those who are determined to find the caern can do so. For example, the Rite might involve weaving a wide but complex web of vines, ropes, cables, or wires between treetops or rock outcroppings, but all septs have their own variants.

Pool: Wisdom + Craft

System: The Difficulty to perform this Rite is 2 + the caern's Caern Value. If successful, it adds two dice to any attempt to mask or conceal the caern, as well as yielding a two-dice penalty on any test to unwittingly discover the caern. The effect lasts for a lunar month. On a Brutal failure, the entire web construction (or whatever form the Rite takes) must be torn down and redone, and no one can attempt the Ritual again until a lunar month has passed.

SOCIAL RITES

For every Rite with a mystical component, Garou society has a dozen social ones that, though lacking mechanical effects, bond the packs of the tattered Garou Nation together in health, as well as in hardship. Below are a few of the more prominent ones.

Rite of Passage

Before they can be called Garou, Kin often complete a dangerous task meant to prove that they have the courage, honor, and wisdom befitting a true werewolf. Few undergo this Rite alone, and they are often joined by their pack-to-be, themselves sometimes new to the world of the Garou. The Rite master sends forth the would-be Garou — or even pack — with a goal to achieve, and they are forbidden to return until they have accomplished this goal. (Storytellers, this is an excellent device for a new chronicle's first session!)

Satire Rite

A Satire Rite is a special song, dance, or drama crafted for the sole purpose of ridiculing an offender. This Rite is usually performed at a moot while the Garou to be mocked sits in full view of the sept. Because the Garou keep extensive (often colorful...) oral histories, the Satire will be remembered and passed down through the years. A werewolf subjected to this Rite doesn't usually lose Renown, but it is often delivered as a warning to a Garou or pack on the verge of being subjected to the far more severe Rite of Shame. Young Garou sometimes irreverently call the Satire Rite "Breaking Balls" or the like.

Rite of Accomplishment

This Rite is used to honor a werewolf and recognize the trials they have endured to attain their current standing. An elder might do the honors, or the Garou themselves might take an opportunity to tell of their past exploits. Whoever makes the address recounts all of the things the Garou did to gain acclaim. Although a Garou detailing their own accomplishments might seem boastful to human ears, it is a perfectly acceptable way to present oneself at gatherings of werewolves, so long as the Garou observes it as a function of the Rite. This time would also be when anyone taking issue with the claims to speak up, and they can do so, within the Rite, without fear of immediate retaliation.

Gathering for the Departed

This Rite honors the newly dead. A galliard or a packmate of the departed werewolf usually performs the Rite. The specifics of the Rite vary dramatically by region or even pack. For example, a Hart Warden Rite master leads the sept in the telling of tales, both raucous and heroic, about the fallen Garou, whereas the most Renowned Garou of a sept in the Hoia Forest leads a solemn rite in which the performers and all the fallen one's packmates stand on the slopes, tails to the wind, and howl out their pride and grief to speed their companion onward, ideally to an existence as a legendary spirit.

Rite of the Winter Wolf

Once some werewolves become too wounded or aged to fight alongside their packmates, they perform this bleak and solemn rite. The Garou sits at the center of a gathering of their pack- and sept-mates. The galliards sing of the celebrant's life and deeds, and they invoke the spirits for welcome in the next world. The celebrant then slowly and proudly walks through the closed ranks of the assembled Garou. As they pass their people, they howl a dirge similar to that sung during the Gathering for the Departed. The celebrant then leaves for a secluded site. There they end their life, usually with a klaive. Rarely, two packmates perform this Rite together, killing each other simultaneously in ritual combat. Immediately after the celebrant's death, the assembled Garou often perform the Gathering for the Departed.

TALISMANS

Some Garou own a talisman — a special object often but not always inhabited by a spirit. A Garou talisman has its own unique function, often tied to werewolves' animistic perspective. Talismans might be weapons, or tools, or things that help the werewolf focus; they could be spiritual or physical in purpose. Whatever the case, they are special, embodying the ability to perform some supernatural function, or to aid a mundane function with spiritual puissance. Garou belonging to specific cultures with magical or occult traditions often have their own names for talismans, as well.

Below are a few example talismans especially well known or well-regarded among Garou. (If players have taken the Talisman Background, the following descriptions also include how much it might cost for one of these items during character creation.) Storytellers are encouraged to create their own, and players to suggest them, the better to demonstrate the values of Garou society in their particular chronicles.

Most talismans have "single-use" versions as well, known as talens. A spirit-catcher talen unravels after its one-time use, unable to capture another spirit, whereas a klaive talen shatters upon a successful attack, inflicting its damage and breaking off in the wound like a splintered claw. If taken as a Background the character is assumed to have a way of acquiring the talens and the character receives a new one at the start of a story if the previous one was spent.

APESKIN

This talisman takes the form of a patch of skin, ape or human. When worn directly on the owner's own skin it makes the wearer immune to silver while in glabro or hispo form, but it also severely inhibits their ability to regenerate. Few Garou now living know how to make these talismans, but their creation is said to be particularly gruesome. Those found using them are treated with suspicion, if not outright hostility.

System: While this talisman is worn and the user is in glabro or hispo form they treat silver as if they were in homid or lupus. They also lose the ability to regenerate damage in any form during this time and for a full day and night after the talisman has been taken off.

Background Cost: An apeskin talisman is a four-dot background, while a talen apeskin is worth two.

GAIA'S TEAR

Garou occasionally find strange, stony "fossils" in the Umbra that are infused with the spiritual world-energy of what they believe to be the world-spirit Gaia. These objects may appear gem-like and brilliant, or they might be dull and pliant, almost like folkloric madstone, and draw out sorrow or fury when used. They are exceedingly rare — none can say reliably how they originate (or even if they actually originate with Gaia...) — being unique in that they can actually cross into the physical world and retain their form. When a Garou communes with one of Gaia's Tears, they find that it renews their sense of purpose, and perhaps even invigorates their spiritual makeup itself.

System: Spending a scene (or a period of downtime) contemplating one of Gaia's Tears allows the player to lower one level of either hauglosk or harano, at which point the Tear loses its luster and reverts to a mundane, mineral-like, makeup.

Background Cost: Gaia's Tears are by their nature considered talens, but cannot be taken as a Background as there is no reliable way to find them.

HARMONY FLUTE

The peaceful notes from this flute, carved with the images of Luna and Helios dancing, can calm even the most aggressive creatures. Even Garou in the grip of Rage can be soothed, assuming the talisman user lives longer than for a few bars. While flutes are the most common form of this talisman, variants include other kinds of (usually portable) musical instruments.

System: The flute's user must spend two turns and a Willpower, and then make a Composure + Performance test against the current Rage of a target in frenzy, or a Difficulty of 3 in the case of other creatures. If the user is successful, the target is brought out of frenzy, reverting to their natural form (if Garou), per the normal rules for leaving Crinos form.

Background Cost: A harmony flute is a three-dot background.

KLAIVE

The signature weapon of Garou culture, the klaive is a reinforced silver dagger used in ritual combat, and their wielders or creators may decorate them with any sort of unique adornments. In certain environments, such as

moots, a klaive is a status symbol that invites the owner to tell how they came into its possession, or of glorious kills made with it.

Klaives are particularly associated with the Garou Nation, and as such have an air of the old-fashioned or even obsolete about them. That stated, it's hard to argue with a klaive's effectiveness when a rival shoves one through your face and it comes out the back of your head.

System: A klaive does +2 silver-based Aggravated Health damage and may be wielded in homid or glabro form.

Background Cost: The klaive is a three-dot Talisman, while a talen klaive is worth a single dot.

Partridge Wing

A partridge wing sweeps away the ancestral terror humans have when confronting the Garou. It can be fashioned from an actual partridge-spirit in the Umbra, or it can be more metaphorical in its fashioning and crafted from a spirit of forgetfulness or even fear. It may take the form of an actual wing or feather, or it might be, again, something more metaphorical in function, such as a veil or even a spiderweb placed across the eyes.

System: The partridge wing prevents a single individual from experiencing the Delirium while they are the subject of its effect. A single partridge wing "protects" only one individual at a time from the Delirium in this way, and the individual must carry the wing on their person, knowingly or unknowingly. If a subject loses the wing they are thereafter affected as usual by the Delirium, gradually losing recollection of any memories they have in which they observed Delirium-causing effects and doubting any such memories that might later resurface.

Background Cost: The partridge wing is a two-dot Talisman.

Shadowshard

A shadowshard is a fragment of the world's spiritual reflection, a literal piece of the Umbra. It appears as a hunk of glass or other semi-reflective material but seems to contain shadow itself, whether in the form of roiling, turbulent darkness, or a heavy, mist-like gloom. A Garou may break the shadowshard, freeing the shadow within and pulling the werewolf across the Gauntlet, into the Umbra.

System: Shadowshards exist only as talens. They allow a single user to enter the Umbra, so long as the Gauntlet rating is 3 or lower. That transit consumes the talisman upon its breakage and counts as a full action. Larger shadowshards also exist, permitting the user to take their entire pack across the Gauntlet. Shadowshards work only for Garou; they cannot pull humans or other individuals into the Umbra, presumably because they lack the same part-spiritual composition as werewolves.

Background Cost: Single-Garou shadowshards are worth one dot while pack-sized shards are worth three dots.

Spirit-Catcher

A spirit-catcher is a talisman that spirits find captivating, to the point that they'll refuse to leave the spirit-catcher's presence when a Garou presents one. They may have almost any physical appearance, whether otherworldly "fossils" of bygone spirits brought back by Ghost Council Garou after journeys into the Spirit Wilds or technological gewgaws dedicated by Glass Walkers.

System: A spirit-catcher prevents one spirit per scene from leaving the presence of the Garou who brandishes it, as long as both are in the same realm (Umbra or physical). The Garou can usually choose the spirit, but if many spirits are present, exactly which it captivates is up to the Storyteller — it's not so precise as to be "aimed." If the spirit wishes to leave, it must succeed on a test of its Power versus the rating of the spirit-catcher. If the spirit fails the test, it must stay in the vicinity of the spirit-catcher, but may hide, evade, etc., and if harmed it is free to flee. If used in conjunction with Gifts or Rites than bind or restrain spirits the spirit-catcher can provide half its rating as bonus dice, at the Storyteller's discretion.

Background Cost: A general spirit-catcher able to attract all kinds of spirits is worth its full rating in Background dots. It is considered to be worth one dot less than its rating if it attracts one particular spirit type (such as Weaver or Gaian spirits) and is further reduced in cost by one if taken as a talen, to a minimum of one.

WIND WHISTLE

Blowing this whistle causes a gust of wind to blow up, carrying with it dust, snow, or other local detritus that covers the tracks of the user and their pack. Pursuers find it hard to pick up a trace and any trail looks older than it should be. Making this whistle requires several pacts with spirits of the land and sky, and the whistle itself must be made from the bone of an animal that died from cold or some other form of environmental exposure.

System: The user makes a Wits + Occult test, increasing the Difficulty to track them and their pack by half the number of successes rolled, rounded up. The wind whistle can only be used outdoors, and only once per session. The effect only applies to pursuits involving the location the talisman was used.

Background Cost: The wind whistle is a three-dot Talisman, while a talen whistle is worth a single dot.

Legendary Talisman: The Silver Crown

As a symbol of its grandeur, the Silver Fangs tribe exalts the Silver Crown, a legendary artifact belonging to the Albrecht lineage of Silver Fang werewolves. With the disappearance of the last proclaimed king of the tribe, however, two great icons of tribal esteem have been lost, which many Garou interpret as an omen about the fate of the Silver Fangs.

The Silver Crown itself was a gift from Falcon that could impart the ability to force others to heed the will of the wearer. Not just anyone could wear the Silver Crown, however: If someone the crown deemed unworthy were to place it upon their head, the silver would scald itself through their skull and kill them.

The crown itself is an object of mystery, practically a legend in and of itself. What does it mean to force others to heed one's will? Is the crown actually silver, or is its appellation a metaphor? Must it be borne by a Silver Fang, or can anyone (theoretically) wear it, assuming they meet its criteria of worthiness?

CAERNS

Caerns serve many important functions to the Garou. They're places of spiritual power, nexuses of the energies that make up half of werewolves' existence, and places where the spirit world is especially close to the physical world. Because of this spiritual connection, the barrier between the physical and spirit worlds is often porous in places that become caerns, and when this Gauntlet is permissive, that makes it easier for the Garou to enter the Umbra from caerns.

Caerns are also important places for Garou society, especially in this age of Apocalypse, when that society

itself is challenged and struggling to thrive. The groups of Garou who protect and cultivate caerns are known as septs, and septs consist of one or more packs — which means that caerns are places where multiple Garou meet and plan and, ideally, create things of lasting value. Packs, septs, and their visitors perform Rites at caerns, the better to provide those Rites the spiritual energy (and ritual reinforcement) they need to take effect.

Caerns often feel as if they have their own personalities, which stems from the demeanor of the septs that tend them, and from the spirits drawn to them. A caern favored by an avatar of Falcon would have a much different mien from one guarded by a Wyld-spirit, much less from a blood-soaked Cult of Fenris caern or a disorienting ruin protected by a Black Spiral Dancer pack. Packs and their tribal makeups, the spiritual attendants, and the physical circumstances all do much to make a caern unique.

Caerns aren't inherently good or beatific — they reflect the nature of the spirits drawn to them, which are themselves a result of the emotional and spiritual resonances they attain in the physical world. This "chemistry" shows the importance of rediscovering and claiming dormant caerns lost by fallen packs, or taking them back from Black Spiral Dancers, the Cult of Fenris... and from packs whose motives the players' characters might not trust.

As well, caerns can exist anywhere, from a pristine wilderness to a threatened desert oasis, from atop a metropolitan skyscraper to a broken-down amusement park, from a dust-bowl farm to a mountaintop redoubt. They can be huge, with a dozen packs cooperating (tensely...) as a sept, or tiny, with but a single pack — or even individual keeper — protecting them.

The Players' Pack

As a game, **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** assumes that the players' characters will have their own caern, or that their pack will belong to the sept of a specific caern. The assumption exists for multiple reasons.

- Being responsible for a caern ties the characters to a specific location, giving them a reason to care about their local community
- A caern provides a home base — where the characters can return and feel a sense of ownership — as well as avenues of improving it (for both narrative and feature progression — see p. 218)
- The caern works both proactively and reactively, as a place enemies can threaten or where allies can come meet the characters, or a place from which the players' Garou can stage their own agendas
- By establishing a reasonable creative constraint of the local territory, a specific location reduces the amount of work a Storyteller has to do

This assumption doesn't have to be true — the chronicle may well be about a pack that ranges far and wide, across an extensive territory — but many troupes enjoy having a bit of territory that can show the outcomes of their actions (and the consequences of their choices).

CAERN SYSTEMS AND TRAITS

The caern is a place of spiritual importance that anchors the Umbra and physical world to each other. A caern may be rediscovered after a period of abandonment or having been forgotten, or it may be retaken from a rival protector. On some occasions, caerns can be created anew,

willed into being by a ritual compact between spirits and werewolves. Acquiring a caern is done through the Rite of Caern Building (see p. 185), by which the pack or sept attunes itself to the spiritual energies of the caern, and vice versa.

The primary function of a caern is to serve as a connection point between the world and its spiritual shadow. The Caern Value Trait represents the power of that connection. A caern with Caern Value 1 may be a small, local, or specialized caern, whereas a caern with Caern Value 5 is one of the most powerful, spiritually resonant places on Earth.

The Caern Value increases when a sept is able to perform the Rite of Caern Building (see p. 182) under the guidance of a Rite master intentionally seeking to raise it. As noted above, with each increase in the Caern Value, the caern acquires another Caern Trait, as well.

Note that supporting Caern Traits are very important in terms of protecting and nurturing the caern. A noteworthy caern without sufficient additional protections or a dedicated sept to protect it is very quickly going to garner some spiritual attention, and very rarely from others in alignment with Garou aims.

Once the Rite of Caern Building has been performed, the new, reclaimed, or revitalized caern has a Caern Value of 1. Certain Rites and other systems involve the Caern Value.

Caern Value: +1 to +5

Thereafter, when the sept increases the spiritual potency (and therefore value) of the caern with the Rite of Caern Building, the caern may acquire another Caern Trait. If the caern belongs to the players' pack, the packmates choose the new Caern Trait and pay for it with experience points (see p. 110). Any player from the pack can contribute any number of experience points toward this goal. If the caern belongs to a sept that includes the players' pack, a scene or even full story may emerge around various sept factions seeking to influence the development of a caern in a particular way. In this latter case, players don't necessarily have to pay experience points for the upgrade, or they may pay only a partial amount; it's the Storyteller's judgment for how much influence they have over the choice and how much of the cost they bear.

Give special consideration to the descriptive qualities of the caern, as they help make each place unique. For example, if a caern has an Abundant bawn, describe it not as "+2 dice to Survival pools," but "surrounded by a thick growth of plants" or the like. Each of the Traits below gives a few suggestions for these details, but they aren't

exhaustive. They are intended to encourage the players to think creatively.

A caern is different from a Safe House (see p. 98) in that the caern is defined by its connection to the Umbra. A Safe House is a place the Garou can call their own without that specific anchor-point to the Umbra — perhaps a literal house or apartment detached from their role as a werewolf. If it has a specific connection to the Umbra, it's a caern.

If a caern is lost (such as by being abandoned or by another pack performing the Rite of Caern Building, a new pack taking wardenship of it begins with it at Caern Value 0. Narratively, the bawn withers, spirits are driven from it, and other narrative indicators of its benefits ceasing ensue — though they can be reclaimed.

Bawn Traits

Bawn Traits improve some aspect of the area around the caern, which is itself known as the bawn. For the purposes of these Traits, a bawn must have very clear delineation, such as ending at a cliff or river, or the edge of the disused metro station platform, even if the pack claims "all the territory we can see from the caern" as the bawn.

ABUNDANCE

The bawn around the caern sustains and protects natural life well. For each dot of Abundance, members of the pack or werewolves acknowledged to share the pack's hospitality may add one die to Survival dice pools while in the caern or the bawn. For example, the bawn might have a stream of particularly refreshing water, or it may have plentiful fauna to hunt. This Trait can be taken multiple times.

Rating: +1 to +5

SECURITY

The bawn makes the caern especially secure or defensible. For each dot of Security, add one die to dice pools to notice danger while in the caern or the bawn. For example, the bawn might have a mud flat that holds the tracks of would-be interlopers well, or the caern itself might be at a high vantage point in the bawn, so that anyone in it can see those who approach. This Trait can be taken multiple times.

Rating: +1 to +5

WELL-HIDDEN

The bawn hides the caern well. For each dot in this bawn Trait, the Difficulty for someone actively searching to find the caern increases by 1. For example, the bawn might be replete with lush foliage that hides the entrance to a wilderness caern, or the caern might be behind the... what? third or fourth door? in a long and unmarked sub-level hallway for an urban location. This Trait can be taken multiple times.

Rating: +1 to +5

Spiritual Power Traits

Spiritual Power Traits increase certain spiritual efficacies of the caern, from the presence of individual spirits themselves to potency of the caern when the pack calls upon it to enact Rites.

PERMISSIVE GAUNTLET

Of particular import to potent caerns is the fact that the Gauntlet is especially permeable there. Caerns that have the Permissive Gauntlet Trait make it increasingly easy to move from the physical world into the spirit world from their premises. This condition may have any number of causes, such as a truly and metaphysically thin border between worlds, a host of amicable spirits willing to part the separation, or a profound emotional resonance at the caern that seemingly invites the Garou to understand its Umbral mysteries.

For each dot of Permissive Gauntlet, add one die to dice pools to cross the Gauntlet while in the caern. Note that other places in the bawn may be remarkably resistant to efforts to traverse the Gauntlet there.

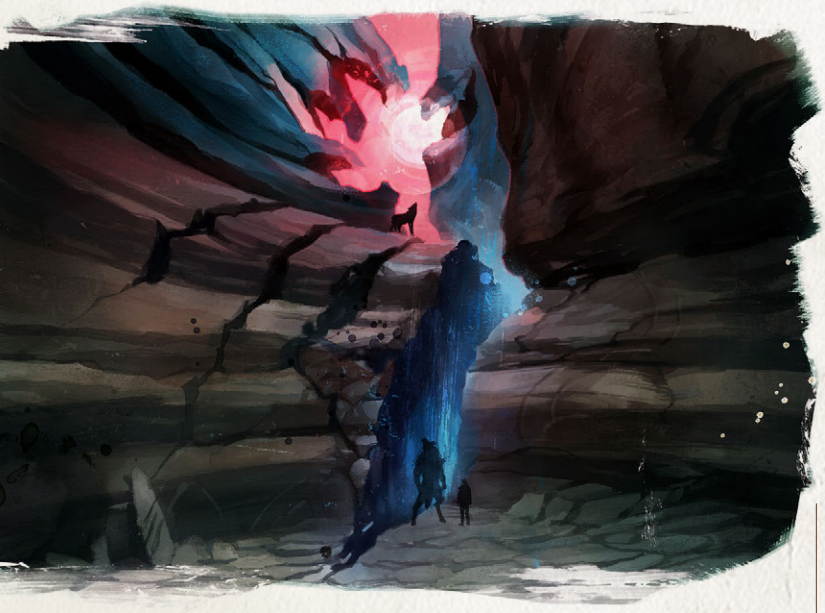
This Trait can be taken multiple times.

Rating: +1 to +5

RITE FOCUS

The caern is a place where the Garou can focus to perform the Rites that synthesize their part-spirit, part-physical natures. For each dot of Rite Focus, the Rite master gains an extra regular (not Rage) die with which to perform Rites. These dice don't belong to the Rite master, as such; they're a reflection of the spiritual harmony of the caern with Garou purposes. Examples include a chorus of supportive spirits, well-drawn runic inscriptions, or other ritual accouterments, or just time-critical silence that lets the Garou focus on their Rites without any outside distraction. This Trait can be taken multiple times.

Rating: +1 to +5



SPIRIT GUARDIAN

Every caern has a spirit guardian — an individual spirit with a distinct personality who, in the enigmatic way of spirits, feels a sense of belonging to, duty to, or even ownership of a caern. These spirits are generally bound to the caern proper (though they often have a sort of extended sensory understanding of some amount of the bawn, as well) and perform various duties associated with its upkeep, such as helping with Rites, honoring visitors, and acting as a spirit major-domo during ceremonies and moots.

Increasing the Spirit Guardian Trait makes this guardian spirit more powerful, from gafflings on up to — potentially — a minor Incarna, in the most legendary caerns. As the guardian spirit's power grows, so, too does the pack's responsibility to the caern and, by extension, to the spirit itself. Indeed, some spirits are downright domineering and demand placation, lest they unmoor themselves from the caern and leave the ungrateful Garou holding the bag. Er, caern.

Regardless of the guardian spirit's Power, the Storyteller should treat the spirit as a fully fledged character, with its own personality, goals, desires, and opinions of pack and sept members. More than one caern has been saved — or lost — by the guardian spirit's timely revelation (or omission) of a bad actor's intentions.

This Trait can be taken multiple times. For more information on spirits' Power, see p. 242.

Spirit Guardian Power: 1 to 5

SPIRITUAL ATTUNEMENT

Spirits enact Gifts with greater efficacy or willingness in the caern. For each dot of Spiritual Attunement, a Garou's player can, once per scene, add a number of dice to the roll to activate a Gift while the character is in the caern. Examples include well-placated spirits, the spirits' better-than-average spiritual attunement to the focus of the caern itself, or an understanding that the Garou are legends in the making and that spirits in their "entourage" will enjoy a halo effect by association with them. This Trait can be taken multiple times.

Rating: +1 to +5

Amenity Traits

Amenity Traits represent unique benefits belonging to the caern that aren't associated with its spiritual functions or bawn. Amenities can be used by any number of Garou each session, but only taken once per caern.

BALM OF GAIA

The caern has some feature that aids physical recovery. The Balm of Gaia allows a Garou with access to the caern to recover one point of Aggravated Health damage or three points of Superficial Health damage at the start of the session. Examples include a literal first-aid station or makeshift emergency surgery, bountiful fauna to hunt, or even a natural spring that physically rejuvenates those who relax in its waters.

IKON OF CONTEMPLATION

The caern has some feature that serves to inspire or edify Garou who spend time in consideration of it. Access to the Ikon of Contemplation allows a Garou, once per session, to recover an additional point of spent or damaged Willpower (Superficial) beyond what they might otherwise recover. Examples include the trophy-remains of a powerful enemy, rubble or other salvage from a destroyed caern, or a broken talisman left behind by a departed legendary Garou.

KIN-BEACON

For some reason, werewolves who don't yet know they're werewolves are drawn to the caern. There's no specific system to model this quality, but from a narrative perspective, the Storyteller may have Kin approach the caern instead of having the pack discover them in other locales. Or, if different packs are courting the Kin, they may "just stumble on the place," giving the players' pack an opportunity to proselytize without rival packs present (unless another pack shares the caern as a sept...).

Examples include Kin feeling inexplicably drawn to the caern, "my uncle told me this place was here," or even overt spiritual outreach by the caern's guardian spirit in some capacity. Whatever's going on, other werewolves might recognize the caern for having a remarkable way of drawing Kin, which may affect the pack's reputation for better or worse.

PRESTIGIOUS

The caern itself has a noteworthy history or potential for the Garou, who accord the caern and its wardens special regard. For each dot of the Prestigious Trait, Garou who belong to the sept or an individual pack associated with the caern treat their Renown as one higher for the purpose of status among other Garou. Examples include the caern being associated with a legendary Garou, the caern being of particular import to the territory, or some great victory (or tragic loss...) associated with the caern, such as having been taken back from Black Spiral Dancers.

Rating: +1 to +5

WEAPONS, ARMOR, AND EQUIPMENT

Weapons rules in **Werewolf** emphasize flexibility over specificity and are thus designed to work with the narrative focus of the Storyteller System. In terms of **Werewolf**'s systemic focus, there's not a huge amount of difference between specific weapons so much as there are between weapon types — the primary benefit of a firearm is being able to put a hole in an enemy from a distance, as opposed to providing a fine degree of detail on the nature of the hole. Still, any number of narrative situations might arise in which violence (or the threat of violence) matters, particularly when it comes to creatures of inchoate Rage, so the **Werewolf** weapon systems focus on different effects, pool modifications, and values.

If your troupe prefers very specific brand-name weapons, caliber differentiation, and weaponsmithing distinctions, feel free to fine-tune the generalized weapon traits to reflect subtler variations among these base types.

BASE WEAPONS AND WEAPON TYPES

Add the weapon's damage rating to the margin on the winning attack roll for the total damage inflicted. (See "Conflict Pools" on p. 124 for more on making attack rolls and determining damage.)

Example: Jesse fires his pistol at a fomor; his player scores three successes. Jesse's medium pistol has a +3 damage value, so the fomor suffers a brutal six levels of Aggravated damage!

Example: Khalida throws a stone cherub from a fountain at Arnaud; her player scores two successes. The Storyteller places the cherub at +3 damage — it is rather heavy — and thus Arnaud suffers five levels of Superficial damage (which is halved, per the Superficial damage systems on p. 127).

Weapon	Damage Value
Improvised weapon	+0
Light impact (brass knuckles)	+1
Heavy impact (baton, club, tire iron, baseball bat) Light piercing (crossbow bolt, switchblade) Light gunshot (.22 pistol)	+2
Heavy melee (broadsword, fire ax) Medium gunshot (.308 rifle (single-shot), 9 mm pistol, shotgun at effective range)	+3
Heavy gunshot (12-gauge shotgun (close range only), .357 Magnum) Huge melee (claymore, steel beam)	+4

Special Properties

In addition to modifying damage, certain weapons and attacks can impart other effects on their targets. Some weapons may impart special outcomes, such as changing their damage type, "pushing back" supernatural creatures, or simply strike targets more accurately.

Sometimes these additional properties are a part of what makes individual antagonists hard to confront. These other properties are typically included in the descriptions of the individuals who wield them (such as swarms). Such special properties may belong to the weapons the antagonist wields or to the antagonist itself. (See the Antagonists chapter for more information and specific examples.)

ARMOR

Each point of armor changes 1 point of Aggravated damage from puncturing or bladed weapons (per damage roll) to Superficial damage, which is then halved, as usual. This protection is generally most applicable to humans (including Garou in homid form), as many supernatural creatures already consider those types of damage Superficial.

Armor Type	Armor Value
Reinforced clothing/ heavy leathers	2 (0 vs. fire-arms)
Ballistic cloth	2
Kevlar vest/ flak jacket	4
Tactical SWAT/ military armor (one-die penalty to Dexterity rolls)	6

GUNS, GEAR, AND OTHER GOODIES

Beyond weapons (and augmenting them), numerous technologies have emerged in the age of Apocalypse, both among werewolf hunters and the Garou themselves. How someone might procure these technologies is a matter for exploration in chronicles: Some may have the Resources to do so, some might build or appropriate their own, and still others might be granted them by mysterious, um, "benefactors" with an interest in curbing Garou activity

As with the weapons systems above, this section isn't intended to be comprehensive. It includes a few key tools to get you thinking creatively.

The following section isn't exhaustive — World of Darkness games don't usually focus on gear and equipment loadouts, so these rules intend to convey broad weapon and equipment behavior rather than covering every possible detail. **Werewolf** in particular allows the player to be the weapon, so much of what's covered below is more often found in the hands of militarized police forces, corporate security agencies, state-violence actors... and, when they can get their hands on it, those with the courage to stand against them.

Conventional Weapons

Werewolves are likely to run afoul of those who make use of specialized loadouts to subdue or destroy them.

DISGUISED WEAPONS

Whether in the form of an anachronistic sword cane, a monster-hunter's holdout weapon that looks like a pen, or even stranger devices in the employ of high-tech Pentex fronts, disguised weapons find increasing popularity in a world where violence is an omnipresent solution, but there is increased scrutiny of individuals via autocratic security forces, random police stops, and customs searches.

Making a disguised weapon uses Intelligence + an appropriate Specialty or Craft. Spotting one usually requires Wits + Awareness against a Difficulty of 1 + either the wielder's Stealth or the maker's Craft (whichever is higher). Because they cannot be properly balanced or shaped, they penalize the user one die from their attack pool unless the maker achieved a critical win on the crafting test.

WEAPONIZED FLAME AND FIRE

Incendiary weapons are as effective against their victims as they are horrifying. Although fire isn't associated with werewolves so much as it is for vampires, fire nonetheless causes Aggravated damage to Garou.

Homemade and black-market incendiary weapons often contain inferior substances and liquids, such as fuel, fertilizer, or cleaning fluid. They reduce the weapon's damage value by 1, though this damage becomes Aggravated for targets susceptible to fire — and that's almost everyone. On a total failure of the attack roll, an incendiary weapon sets the user's hands and face on fire (3 Aggravated damage).

Storytellers, be careful about introducing incendiary weapons into a chronicle. When all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail; when someone has a flamethrower, everything looks like an invitation to set it on fire.

Flamethrowers

The backpack flamethrowers of WWII, Korea, and Vietnam are rare and bulky, whereas modern commercial flamethrowers are a bit more streamlined and portable, and some aren't even regulated as weapons. All flamethrowers, though, remove the "potential" from "potential collateral damage." Their range is limited, but the effects turn most battlefields into raging infernos.

Flamethrowers deal +0 Aggravated damage when the target is struck and every turn thereafter. They also make everything in the environment burn, as they spray an indiscriminate cloud of flaming gas or liquid. Only immersion in water (followed by removal of the material), sand, or similar fire retardant stops the burning.

Molotov Cocktail

A proper Molotov cocktail is made not with a rag and gasoline but with jellied petrol and a sparkler. The difficulty lies in getting the bottle to break upon contact with the target, and a wise user therefore often targets the ground in front of the victim, hoping to splash it with burning material.

Successfully striking a target with a Molotov cocktail is Difficulty 4, and doing so causes two levels of Aggravated damage every turn. A win on a Composure + Survival roll (Difficulty 2) suffices to remove enough of the material (often including clothes) to stop the burning.

Plastic Explosives

Plastic explosives, such as Semtex and C4, have an advantage in that they can be set well in advance and can be triggered from a distance by using detonation cord or a timer mechanism. When the cord ignites or the timer triggers, a spark detonates the explosives. Militaries (and certain well-equipped monster-hunting organizations...) use plastic explosives for breaching buildings where breaching rounds won't do the trick — or in traps. Alternatively, if a potential supernatural threat is just too dangerous to take on, a few bricks of C4, and the complete destruction of a building over its lair, might do the trick.

For concussive blasts of regular bombs, treat the damage as Superficial. Incendiary bombs or antipersonnel explosives deal Aggravated damage instead, but they are usually of lower yield.

Setting plastic explosives requires an Intelligence + Technology roll. As a rough guide to use, 200 grams of plastic explosive destroys a car, and it inflicts 7 levels of damage (again, generally Superficial unless incendiary or antipersonnel explosive is used). Add another 3 levels of damage for each additional 200 grams. The damage decreases by 1 for each three meters or yard (roughly) between the victim and the explosion.

For cinematic chronicles, the Storyteller can allow attempts to dive for cover (if cover is available) with a Dexterity + Athletics test, reducing the damage by 1 for each success. In a grittier or more realistic chronicle, you're probably not going to save yourself by diving away from a blast.

Coming into possession of something illicitly that functions along the lines of plastic explosives is a task in and of itself.

GPS Trackers

Many high-tech organizations, whether governmental agencies or Pentex-backed defense contractors, employ GPS trackers to keep track of surveillance targets, and to keep tabs on their own personnel, especially infiltrators or others in high-risk positions.

GPS trackers affixed to vehicles are usually magnetic and smaller than palm-size. Spotting one on a vehicle requires a successful Wits + Streetwise or Technology test, but removing it is simple. Personnel trackers are the size of a watch face, and usually sewn into clothing, worn inside shoes, or stuck to the underside of an actual watch. Finding them requires a Difficulty 3 Wits + Streetwise or Technology test.

An active GPS tracker adds 4 dice to any test to locate the wearer.

Restraints

Restraints prevent a recalcitrant captive from exercising range of motion for their restrained limbs. Wrist or arm restraints prevent arm movement, obviously, whereas leg or angle restraints logically prevent the captive from running away or kicking their captors. Garou employing tactical shapeshifting can often circumvent restraints (by going into crinos form and bursting them, or by shifting into lupus form and wriggling free).

Zip cuffs are one-size-fits-all, and an individual can carry dozens or hundreds of them. They're often employed in crowd-control efforts by zealous authorities, and they're also a favorite of criminals and anti-government cranks staging deluded coup attempts. They require a Strength test (Difficulty 5) to break, but can be cut by knives (or monstrous talons) relatively easily.

Handcuffs are sturdier and reusable. They require a Strength + Athletics test (Difficulty 6) to break, or a Dexterity + Larceny roll (Difficulty 4) to slip free.

Net Gun

A straightforward device often used when hunting wildlife or for riot control, the net gun finds its way into the hands of individuals who wish to slow down or capture rogue animals, "rogue" demonstrators, or anyone else who qualifies as an enemy. Nets fired from these small launchers are designed to entangle, but they also have an adhesive quality to their weave. Certain governmental and corporate organizations have also been known to use flammable adhesive, especially when they have a reason to believe they're dealing with something beyond the mundane.

Damage from a net gun subtracts from the target's Dexterity rather than from Health, though it is halved as Superficial damage. A foe at Dexterity 0 is thoroughly entangled and cannot attack. Tearing free of a net requires an action; roll a conflict of Strength + Athletics vs a pool equal to the total successes from all previous net attacks.

Being on fire while entangled inflicts 2 Aggravated damage per turn. A win on a Composure + Survival roll (Difficulty 2) will stop the burning but do nothing for the entangle. ■

RED
RIDING
HOOD

CHAPTER SEVEN

Storytelling

The keenest sorrow is to recognize ourselves as the sole cause of all our adversities.

– SOPHOCLES

The story is where the "what happens?" happens. When a pack of Garou characters come into conflict, that's a simple story. More details, such as highlighting motivations, imposing consequences, and testing what the werewolves really want (and what happens if they get it...), help make the story more robust and memorable.

There are abundant resources to help you hone your skills as a Storyteller, many of them online. As a synthetic process, storytelling a roleplaying game such as **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** can use insights from literature, video games, screenwriting, and old-fashioned oral storytelling. Insights into any of those disciplines provide useful knowledge on how to improve as a Storyteller. This chapter assumes you're familiar with the fundamentals of the practice of storytelling, and the tools herein are for using those skills to tell a uniquely **Werewolf** tale.

Most importantly, despite the Storyteller's title, the Storyteller is not a dictator. Storytelling in **Werewolf** is a troupe effort, with everyone involved in the creation of the narrative to some extent or another. Wise Storytellers know their antagonists' motivations and capacities, have a number of events set up to prompt the players' characters into action, and have an overall theme in place toward which those antagonists and events point. The best players are proactive in realizing their characters' goals through responses to the world the Storyteller presents.

- As a Storyteller, don't "script" inflexible events and structure certain "plot" outcomes — your primary job is to cultivate creativity, so plan for multiple solutions but also be flexible in case the players' characters evade your preparations
- The desired outcome is a compelling, shared story facilitated by your versatility as a Storyteller
- After all, the Garou are building their own legends, and it's the troupe's job to help them do that!

YOUR TROUPE'S STORY: CHRONICLE TENETS

Chronicle Tenets form the foundation of the stories your troupe will tell. They are statements expressing the values the chronicle seeks to convey. Think of them as themes, morals, moods — overall declarations of what the troupe's collective stories have to say. They can be general or specific, or some combination of both.

Before the chronicle starts, the troupe should assemble a set of Chronicle Tenets, which helps creatively constrain the direction the story will take (the good kind

of constraint). These tenets can state a preference for genre emulation or dramatic irony, elevate a moral direction, or plant a flag for personal taste or real-life player concerns. Deciding upon tenets can actually be one of the most fun parts of chronicle planning, when everyone can weigh in and brainstorm and make clear what they want to experience in the stories the troupe plans to tell together.

Chronicle Tenets apply to all players' characters in a chronicle, even if the character doesn't hold a specific tenet as a personal belief. The struggle between a character's individual moral code and that of their society forms one of the core stories in human literature, after all. Chronicle Tenets constitute a kind of ethical ground floor, so that if the characters descend into zealous slaughter, it carries a cost. In particular, Chronicle Tenets help establish the boundaries for Garou who go too far.

TENETS AND CONSEQUENCES

In most cases, werewolves create their own consequences. Faced with an omnipresent external foe, much of the conflict in a **Werewolf** story leaves a wake of blood and destruction, and tragedy in Garou lives is inevitable. Before actual play begins, make sure to review the chosen tenets with the troupe, so that all players understand what the tenets mean and what kind of actions would be considered violations.

In systems terms, Chronicle Tenets establish the moral or ethical boundaries of the chronicle, though individuals almost certainly have occasional justifications for breaking those boundaries. For the most part, this transgressiveness is good: It's a game about being a monster, after all, and what being a monster entails. But being a monster inevitably causes problems, and addressing those problems is also part of the story. When anything goes in a chronicle, it lacks stakes and consequences, and it can become a sideshow of meaningless atrocity, which isn't what the Garou are about.

In terms of game systems, Chronicle Tenets define when a werewolf risks sliding into the nigh-fanatical attitudes of hauglosk. For more information on hauglosk, see p. 140.

Some sample chronicle Chronicle Tenet sets follow:

Environmentalist

- Never cause harm to Gaia
- Do not hoard resources
- Never put short-term gains ahead of long-term goals

Apocalypse Radicalism

- Do not cling to the old ways
- Never kill an outsider
- Vengeance must be served

Traditionalist

- Uphold the Litany
- Heed your elders
- Only ritual challenge merits killing of other Garou

For example, Paula and friends are setting up a chronicle and have agreed to aim for what they call "Rural Gothic." They intend the chronicle to be gritty, with personal stakes, and a sense of geographic isolation that lets natural beauty and the sublime come to the fore, but that also brings the paradoxes of the Garou condition into focus. They have agreed on the Chronicle Tenets "Punish the guilty," "Everyone deserves a second chance," and "Never harm the innocent." They are particularly interested in the seeming incongruity of punishing the guilty and offering the second chances — as Storyteller, Paula hopes this tension will set up some great conflicts within the pack. The players want to make an effort to respect the Litany, acknowledge the Delirium, and not become known as "those bloodthirsty maniacs over the next hill."

THE BIG PICTURE

At their most basic, roleplaying games are series of decisions made by characters that link together into a larger narrative. The larger narrative holds together via a theme or overarching statement.

The status quo is established, disrupted, and a new status quo is created. Storyteller characters are introduced, grow, and change as events come and go. Players identify goals, push their characters toward those rewards, and, with a bit of luck, secure the fruits of their labor.

Understanding how these elements work together helps you master key aspects of story design, bring the players (and characters) together, create a story with enjoyable pacing, construct a memorable antagonist, and highlight the setting elements that make playing **Werewolf** unique.

Many great stories start with choosing a character-focused theme to keep the narrative tight and coherent.

Here are a few suggestions particularly appropriate to a game of **Werewolf**.

THEME: ALIENATION

The Garou are part of many worlds but are never truly at home. In contrast with their old lives, they are literally monsters and are isolated socially and mentally from the world they grew up in. Starting with their First Change, the human world is no longer for them. The Umbra is a place they can travel, but it will never be their home, because they are only partially spirit. The broken Garou Nation is the closest thing to their natural community, but even so, the fighting and rivalries can make that "home" unwelcoming and uncomfortable.

The tension in these stories comes from the need to find a place the characters can truly be comfortable — a place and a community where they can be themselves.

THEME: FAMILISM

By definition, familism is a social pattern in which the family assumes a position of ascendance over individual interests.

Wolves and humans are defined by their complicated interpersonal relationships, particularly within the family structure. Garou society is no less complex, as it comprises a mishmash of interconnected (and often contrary) familial identities and the unreasonable demands that accompany those bonds.

In many cases, Garou lose access to traditional, human (or wolf) elements of family, beings who aren't themselves werewolves and would probably be horrified (or killed...) if they learned the monstrous truth. As such, Garou must rely on one another, mentors, tribes, packs, and Kin. It's very much a game of "found family" and taking what they need from a world that seems intent on destroying them. (See p. 43 for more on this theme.)

The characters need to manage the tension that stems from the competing expectations of their social structures and the spirits with whom they share an expanded reality. With all those layered demands, when do the characters find time to forge their own identity and accomplish their own goals?

THEME: OLD DOGS, NEW TRICKS, YOUNG BLOOD

This theme shines when characters are confronted with the "old ways of doing things" and face pressure to do something because "that's the way it's always been done." Even in the face of undeniable environmental Apocalypse, many veteran Garou elders are reluctant to change their ways. Their society lauded them for living their life a certain way, and refuting the old ways is a rejection of their accomplishments. Yet Gaia is dead or dying because the Garou who preceded the players' characters failed to live up to the purpose to which Gaia put them.

Defeat is imminent, but the Garou have the opportunity to redefine the parameters of that defeat. It's time for someone to do something different... but to do something different, the characters are going to need to confront their peers and elders, and to secure hard-won victories that prove the tragic cycle of history can be broken.

THEME: THE PATH TO HELL...

In a world where such concepts as exploitation and atrocity have living spiritual equivalents, concepts of good and evil are less useful than judging actions and their outcomes. Even the Wyrm, spiritual force of entropy and decay, isn't "evil," it's just that the world — and humans, in particular — are doing too much of what makes the Wyrm powerful.

Yet genuine victims exist in **Werewolf**: the innocent bystanders who pay a physical or spiritual price for being in the wrong place, or who are born into a world that has an exploitative role assigned for them, even before they're born. In this sense, the real enemies of the Garou are people and spirits who choose to advance the Wyrm's causes, knowingly or unknowingly. Pollution, fascism,

and economic exploitation are all based on very simple, very human choices. The implications of those choices, when iterated over time, lead to human rights abuses, famine, and ecosystem collapse.

The tension here stems from the need to act quickly, to make difficult choices when they're immediate enough to be dealt with and prevent them from metastasizing into greater crises. It's unlikely that the Garou will ever "defeat Pentex" or "put the Wyrm in its place" on an epic scale. That's why, at its core, **Werewolf** is about the pack, first and foremost; the relationships Garou form; and the problems they deal with — what it means to be a werewolf. And a lot of times, being a werewolf means doing a bad thing to prevent a worse thing from happening, and still being regarded as monstrous for it.

THE REAL PROBLEM WITH THE GAROU

The Garou are built to act, but they're probably too late. Worse, the resources they have aren't what they need.

From a thematic perspective, the Garou are often ill-suited to address many of the antagonists they face. They have a tremendous ability to inflict personal harm and property damage, but many of their obstacles are institutional, social, or spiritual. The Garou struggle with hauglosk and harano at the time they need to be decisive. They operate in packs but devolve into infighting, and they obsess about differences in outlook rather than combating the larger threat. They are part of what remains from the Garou Nation that, despite understanding the nature of the problem, still can't get its shit together. As creatures with one foot in the spirit world, the Garou have an expansive understanding of the world and how it works, which ends up creating new obligations and complexities.

Here is the core source of drama and tension for Garou characters. The characters are the only tool Gaia has left. Examining the character sheet and the setting, one sees that the characters have impressive assets, but they need to employ them creatively and selectively to effect real change. ***Creative*** and ***selective*** are generally not in the nature of Garou.

But all is not lost... at least not yet. As long as the characters are the focus of the scene, hope endures. They do have a veritable arsenal of physical and spiritual tools and weapons at their disposal. The characters —and the Garou Nation as a whole — are not accidental heroes, but finally acting with decisiveness and direction is sure to be a struggle.

We'll talk more about the importance of the characters in this chapter, but keep in mind that the characters are special — exceptional, even. In a world that is dead and dying, they are the ones with the best chance to right *some part* of a worldwide wrong...

... they just need to understand the limitations of the tools at their disposal.

STRUCTURING STORIES

Planning a story or chronicle is different from writing a novel or screenplay, for one key reason: Roleplaying games are interactive. Planning a story for a roleplaying game therefore needs to provide the players opportunities for action — ways to participate with the story instead of passively consuming it.

As a very simple model, the first three steps for a chronicle usually are:

- Decide upon Chronicle Tenets (see p. 199)
- Character creation and session zero (build Relationship Maps, choose Touchstones — see p. 203 for more information on session zero proper)
- Chronicle kickoff (establish stakes, understand the call to action)

Meanwhile, for a ***story***, a flowchart is an optimal jumpstart, so proposing a familiar and repeatable game loop, which the Storyteller can re-use without end, is helpful. The game loop or flowchart steps of a game story are:

- **Objective:** Everyone figures out what's going on and what needs to be done
- **Challenge:** The central conflicts — there may be multiple challenges, or this flowchart step can be a repeated subroutine if there are multiple steps to resolving the challenge
  - For example, locating the distribution center, shredding the guards, convincing the spirit to cooperate, a climactic conflict with a Bane-possessed executive, and the escape
- **Reward:** This step may involve a physical object, such as the defeated rival's klaive, or it may require the grudging acknowledgment of a veteran pack, but in general it also includes narrative progression and the story denouement. Everybody gets to celebrate the wrecking of the chemical processing plant, but who's this dodgy individual who just walked into the caern before anyone noticed them? Aaand scene.

For stopping points, the flowchart looks more like forks in a road; sometimes you bear left, sometimes right, sometimes full speed ahead:

- Leave them laughing: After the packmates scatter the fomori guts to the four winds, layer on a material reward or related good news
- Leave them lacrimal: Also known as "Kill the right one," as in everybody's favorite supporting character, such as by wounds sustained or a vengeful foe's parting shot
- Leave them lacerated: A costly aftermath, whether as pyrrhic victory (the attackers die or flee, but the abandoned caern burns anyway), empty victory (the Garou betray their values to win), or no victory at all (despite betraying their values to win, the Garou must flee a superior foe, mutually lethal combat, or hopeless cause)

For seeding a sequel, the flowchart calls for attention to how the players respond to supporting characters, new opponents, or novel settings.

Some shake-it-up options for a subsequent story are:

- Determine whether the players' feelings about a particular element of the current story are especially strong, one way or another
- Set up an expectation for a return, whether by a strong supporting character ("If we ever see you shit-eating whelps again...") or to some resonant setting (the newly discovered Kin bids a tearfully thankful farewell to the pack)
- Optionally, add a curveball (the story's main antagonist or an invaluable ally is last seen aflame, explosive, or dismembered; months later, news reaches the pack that the territory has had an uptick in violent... and strange... crime)
- Surprise! (that mysterious stranger glimpsed only from afar turns out to be the pack's boon companion or blood-sworn enemy; the newly discovered Kin who experienced their First Change turns, extolling the virtues of Fenris; the formerly intransigent spirit returns to the caern to ask for help)

Roll Like You Mean It!

As a Storyteller practice, ask for a test to decide if something is successful or not only when success or failure actually matters. Call for rolls only when you are ready for failure. Failure often means instant decision-making on your part, at the whim of the dice. Think ahead, and be willing to improvise what failure means for your story. If the theurge is unable to convince the obstructive spirit to cooperate, what happens to the Black Fury's Touchstone trapped on the other side?

Such specific options as taking half, winning at a cost, and using Willpower can all help tilt the odds toward desired outcomes. See pp. 119–122 for more information on these systems.

SESSION ZERO

Session zero is a popular way to kick off a chronicle before the actual first story. In session zero, players and Storyteller outline their expectations for the game. For the players, it is their chance to perform character creation, with attention paid to each other's decisions and what goals they have for their character. It is also the chance for them to build some shared backstory and establish the facts about why the group is together in the first place.

As the Storyteller, session zero is your chance to talk about the themes, antagonists, and thematic points you want to explore and highlight. Discuss the style of game you want to run and the types of antagonists the characters are likely to encounter. Describe the location the pack will start in. It's also a good time to elicit thoughts from your players, who should feel free to suggest story elements they would like to see in the game.

If you're not sure how to characterize the game, use different genre types or titles from literature and TV or movies as a baseline, such as, "It's an action-focused chronicle that focuses on revenge and the limits of a hidden society, like John Wick with werewolves" or "Hunting for an enemy unknown, with complicated pack relationships, like Aliens meets Bridgerton with the constant tension of Rage."

Of course, Session Zero is also a perfect opportunity to agree upon Chronicle Tenets with one another.

CHARACTER QUESTIONS

Set aside some time during a new chronicle's session zero for the players to build their characters. Prompt them to discuss their intentions for the characters and how each character fits in the pack. Allow them to identify complementary Attributes, Skills, and other Traits and work together to give them context. Watch for opportunities to deepen the backstory between the characters.

Ask probing questions of the players about their characters. Find out why they want to play that particular type of character, and make notes so you can factor that information into how you create Touchstones, antagonists, other Storyteller characters, and the encounters and locations where the players' characters will interact with them. Take a look at their character sheets as they complete them together, as well. What Traits they take and where they allocate their dots are indicators of things they want to do in the chronicle.

As a group, challenge the players to think about three key questions and create their characters around the answers:

1. How does the character feel about being Garou?
2. What does the character want, both in the short term and long term, and what tools will they use to attain those goals?
3. What prevents the character from attaining those goals?

The third question is especially important. Every character wants something they can't get. The gap between desire and attainability is probably going to be a core motivator (and may relate to question one). Identifying the obstacles that get in the way of a character's goal will provide great ideas for building meaningful challenges and Storyteller characters around them.

PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

Session zero is the time to talk about expectations, particularly with regard to the story matter and narrative boundaries. **Werewolf** can get intense, gory, and otherwise uncomfortable. It deals with themes including exploitation, authoritarianism, and powerlessness. Everyone has their limit when it comes to discussing these things, especially in the context of game entertainment.

It's imperative to listen to your players during these discussions and make any changes to the planned chronicle to account for the players' comfort level. Unless the player is forthcoming with specifics, stay away from asking why a player might be uncomfortable with certain elements of a story. Simply accept the point and move on.

(Note, too, that not every chronicle needs to be adjusted to every player's tastes. In some cases, a player may literally be happier playing something else or in a different chronicle. So long as everyone's honest with one another about their preferences and boundaries, you'll be able to find out how best to proceed.)

Session zero isn't the only time discussions on comfort level with certain topics can (or should) occur. Make it clear that if your players are deeply uncomfortable with a topic or plot element, they should interrupt the game and give you time to reassess the events and reorganize them to avoid the sensitive element.

Likewise, the conversation about themes, enjoyment, and personal boundaries shouldn't stop with session zero. Part of the Storyteller's responsibilities is to stay engaged and listen to the players. Keep lines of communication open and be willing to admit honest mistakes. Players that work with you and communicate are the ones you want in your game.

Certain game systems help reinforce the substance and limits of what's fair to encounter during a chronicle. For more information on boundaries and respectful play, see the third Appendix on p. 320.

THE PACK

Werewolf enjoys a convenient and plausible reason to bring new characters together: the pack. Garou packs are artificial social constructs. Some may contain blood relations, but usually they consist of werewolves with no familial bond. In the era of Apocalypse, some packs emerge based on nothing more than the circumstance of timing, with new packs forming when enough young Garou are present to justify it. It's also common for young Garou to join existing packs on the bases of mentorship, geography, or genuine desperation. No one wants to lose Kin to fallen tribes or worse.

Whatever the case, packs almost inherently include Garou characters of very different backgrounds. The pack itself generally forms in response to some external problem or situation, thereby providing characters a reason to work together (if not actually to like one another).

Although the pack structure is enough to bring the characters together, it's usually best to reinforce the relationships rather than rely on a completely cold start. Even

the youngest Garou will have opinions of packmates that can then be used to form a bit of history between two characters. The Relationship Map (see p. 111) is an excellent way to keep track of this material.

LOCAL CONFLICTS, GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS

Once the pack has a purpose, establish relevant conflicts so the players' characters act locally. Where you can, plan for the characters to acquire territory that gives them ties to the local community, such as a caern or participation in a sept.

Local antagonists (both active and passive) provide conflicts in which Garou characters can secure real and meaningful victories, and where their resources can make a difference against the environmental apocalypse. Just because the stakes aren't epic save-the-world stories, that doesn't mean they're not important. **Werewolf** is very much a game of personal crisis and meaning in the framework of a worldwide catastrophe. And it has all the more meaning if it happens in the context of, say, retaking and then rebuilding a caern, or protecting caern territory as a responsibility to the sept.

Straight up, the pack won't defeat the Wyrm (and is unlikely even to confront it directly). However, the packmates can challenge local antagonists who advance the Wyrm's agenda of greed, selfishness, and destruction, especially when those antagonists threaten what the werewolves have fought hard to attain or recover.

THE CHARACTERS IN CRISIS

Some of the most engaging drama comes from the characters' making bad choices. Intentionally or no, when their choices conflict with their own values or the values and goals of the pack, they may find themselves at odds with the rest of the pack. This kind of dilemma isn't as dire as it sounds; the character doesn't become a permanent antagonist, but they may well have a social conflict the pack must address.

For example, a Silver Fang may prioritize confronting a rival Shadow Lord instead of heeding the rest of the pack's desire to help a panicked group of spirits. The pack must decide the best way forward, resolving its own disagreements — and among Garou, disagreements can get bloody, quickly.

In these cases, the players drive the conflict, which can lead to memorable scenes. Too much of this sort of conflict can be wearisome, however. Conflict is interesting, dysfunction isn't.

When conflict among the players' characters comes to the fore, even for a short while, other players may experience frustration. Managing this sort of intra-pack tension is important, and the Storyteller should watch these sorts of conflicts closely. Intra-pack conflicts, arguments, and tension are normal. In fact, these types of conflicts help make the pack's personal dynamics feel real and legitimate, which is a good thing. Packs are fragile, and werewolves are volatile monsters. Without conflict, you don't have a story.

However, if the tension between the characters doesn't resolve in a reasonable amount of time, the conflict may boil over into frustrations between the players.

STORYTELLING THE UMBRA

Understanding how to use the Umbra is an important part of what makes **Werewolf** a unique storytelling experience. Always consider the Umbra and spirits when you describe a scene, even when the characters focus on the physical world. Spirits are influenced by (and can definitely influence) the physical world and serve as a thematic storytelling tool to provide clues or details, and to give additional context to setting and narrative elements.

THE DYING SPIRIT WORLD

Gaia is dead (or dying), and the Umbra reflects this state. The spirit world is in crisis. Even the simplest gaffling spirits are scared and uncertain about where they fit in the Spirit Wilds' turbulent ecology. Spiritual resonance feels increasingly negative, and the number of encounters with spirits associated with the Wyrm and Weaver are on the increase. Every spirit knows these facts. The implications for the uneasy feeling that the Garou are resented in the Umbra or don't belong there can be as significant or negligible in your chronicle as you like, but in general the Umbra should be portrayed as a place of concern and palpable tension. As the spiritual reflection of the physical world, it represents the dire state of the material.

Hostile spirits abound. Many spirits know of the Garou's reputation as the defenders of Gaia and may blame the Garou for the situation in the Umbra. Even to the Garou, spirits should remain cagey, entities whose ways of thought the werewolves cannot comprehend, and who occasionally challenge the Garou to prove themselves. Spirits close to a disaster site or in a region where the spiritual resonance is hostile or fearful may vacillate between terrified and enraged when they see a Garou.

"Why did you let this happen?" "How are you going to fix it?" and "What are you going to do to help me right now?" are equally valid in a tremulous voice as in one filled with seething anger.

Context Matters

Remember that animism is a real-world belief system practiced by millions of people in one form or another both throughout history and today. Be appropriately respectful at your table. **Werewolf** does not suppose the Garou's specific animistic lens is the "truth" of how animism works in the game world — people's faiths and perspectives are not to be reduced to game mechanics. The relationship between the Garou and the Umbra is but a single, fictional expression of animism.

KNOWN QUANTITIES

The Garou can travel to the Umbra but aren't native to it, which skews the nature of their relationships with spirits. Garou are rarely seen as equals — they're often either unfamiliar with critical conventions spirits consider normal, or the Garou are potential enemies or bullies. Most spirits recognize that a Garou character is relatively more powerful, and will be wary of the werewolf, especially as Gaia breathes her last.

That stated, spirits generally honor pacts, no matter how long-standing, and one of the benefits the Garou have is a certain degree of expectation with specific groups of spirits. And they're on positive terms with many of them, such as the Patron Spirits of the tribes and the general types of spirits they beseech to enact Gifts. It's not all bad; it's just that what's bad seems to be growing in frequency and severity.

Just as human relationships take time and effort to nurture correctly, so, too, are the interactions with spirits complex. Spirits are creatures of process rather than

materials. Humans and physical animals are materialistic in nature — we require other physical things to eat and breathe and drink and, in many cases, to feel happy. Not so with spirits. Spirits value time, relationships, and perhaps even interaction or acknowledgement and "survive" on the same.

Rituals are a form of relationship cultivation for many spirits. Saying the right things, performing the right actions, and exhibiting a sense of humility can go a long way to bringing a spirit around to a Garou's request. In those cases where mutual benefit isn't possible, most spirits' services can be purchased — or demanded — with the appropriate act of service. Garou who don't live up to their end of the bargain may well find themselves harassed by vengeful and spiteful spirits in later stories.

PLANNING AND PRESENTING VIVID SCENES

Each scene is a sequence of events and decisions that take place in a specific place over a defined amount of time. If you change the place or time, you may enter a new scene. No two scenes are alike. Some will be short and perfunctory; others will be complex and extensive.

THE TWO QUESTIONS

Why is this scene important?
What is the characters' agenda?

Those are the two questions you need to answer each time you establish a scene.

Make sure each of the scenes you plan is connected to the story you want to tell. Scenes shouldn't exist simply to fill time — that's a sure way to lose the players' attention. When you set the stage for a scene, make sure there is a reason connected to the plot or character development for that scene to exist.

Note that "How must the scene end?" isn't one of the two questions. As Storyteller, remember that you're not writing unalterable plots. You're proposing situations and participants, and the outcome of your descriptions and the players' reactions via their characters is the narrative. You're all co-creators in the scene, story, and chronicle.

CLARITY OF LOCATION

When you plan your chronicle and take time to prepare a game session, it's worth your time to think about a future scene's setting and location. Clarity of the scene (and connecting it to the greater narrative) is vital. Scenes with interesting details invite engagement. Locations that feel different and distinct go a long way to supporting the narrative that unfolds there.

Werewolf perhaps suggests a broader range of scene settings than some of the other World of Darkness games. **Vampire: The Masquerade** is thematically

urban, because that's where the people are and, thus, where vampires feed, but **Werewolf** concerns itself not only with cities and their residents (and the spiritual resonance of same), but also with the state of Gaia, which includes *literally every place on the planet — oh, and the spirit-world reflection, as well.* Rural locations, forests, mountains, deserts, marshes, and anyplace (un)fortunate enough to contain exploitable natural resources all have potential to be a setting for a **Werewolf** scene.

All of which means you have a huge range of possible locations in which to set parts of your stories.

To this end, an important technique for Storytellers to exercise is *contrast*. São Paulo in Brazil doesn't feel like Alpharetta, Georgia, which doesn't feel like Capitan, New Mexico, not just because of cultural differences, but because population density is radically different, not to mention the community affordances (or absence of them). When a scene takes place in a high-population-density urban center, the feel of the scene is different from one that takes place on a windswept plain or in a forest with a reputation for being haunted.

Appeal to the Senses

Use all five senses. Describe the nicotine-stained wallpaper peeling at the edges, the sound of dripping water from a clogged creek, the humidity so thick it sticks to clothes. Those times you can describe elements of a scene using taste and touch especially stand out and help make a location memorable (and visceral). Frequently describing various sensory components of a scene helps reinforce that the Garou are no longer "just" human and that their world is more complex now.

Smell is especially important to describing scenes in **Werewolf**. Humans have comparatively weak senses of smell, but canines rely heavily on their noses. Garou have equally strong senses of sight and smell, and your scenes should reflect that reality. Smell is also a great way to emphasize contrast, as mentioned above. The stink of a city is an altogether different sensory experience from the smell of a lonely mesa, or an unforgiving stretch of tundra.

Realizing the Spirit

To create a scene in which spirits feel appropriately active, take the time to think about which objects would probably reflect the most noticeable or unique spiritual presence. Defining a scene by using those spirits as narrative anchors reinforces the importance (and prevalence) of the Umbra. Also, they make for an ensemble cast — potentially memorable characters the players' Garou enjoy dealing with or thwarting.

When appropriate, encourage the players to interact with the spirit world by highlighting the presence (or influence) of spirits, if the scene's conditions are permissive.

The amount of spiritual activity in the Umbra is a "dial" you control as Storyteller. That means the Umbra can be presented as teeming with life in certain locations (and that life may be blighted or entropic) and almost entirely barren in Umbral locations that should feel appropriately desolate. Above all, the Umbra should have a very alien, "otherwhere" feeling, because even the Garou aren't creatures wholly innate to it. Spirits might be everywhere, and solitude or privacy nearly impossible, or it might be so lonely that just being there challenges the pack's sense of existence.

Spirits Show Activity

From the Garou perspective, the Umbra is both shadow and reflection of the physical world. That means the state of the Umbra in a given place reflects the emotional resonance or other characteristics of the physical place they represent. It also means that things hidden in the physical world might be more readily discerned in the Umbra.

Storytellers can use the state of the Umbra to turn passive obstacles into active challenges. For example, the unseasonal flash flood threatening a downriver community might not be just a simple environmental event. It might be the result of spirit activity in reaction to environmental imbalance. The community of now-violent water spirits might seek vengeance on the town, which perhaps manifests as an unending series of storms and flood. That becomes the challenge or even the antagonist: an active consciousness behind the event that can be understood, anticipated, bargained with, and (ideally) overcome.

This aspect also means that even concepts and ideas can become challenges when a Storyteller considers **Werewolf**'s spirit ecosystem. Rather than a river and water-spirits, perhaps greed itself becomes an antagonist, or jealousy — as represented by malignant spirit presences who might possess physical hosts or otherwise cause physical events that perpetuate the spiritual attitudes upon which they feed and thrive.

Violence vs Combat

As Storyteller, you are wise to consider the difference between violence and combat when they arise during scenes. Combat represents a challenge, a back-and-forth

exchange of gameplay systems by which two or more antagonists attempt to exert dominance.

Violence, by contrast, is just that — an exercise of force intended to hurt or harm. Violence needn't be physical. It can be emotional, mental, or even environmental.

Don't feel like you have to call for dice rolls every time violence comes up. Garou are extremely proficient with violence. If there's no significant contrast of outcomes from an expression of violence, don't make the player roll for it — they can just do whatever it is, if the pass-or-fail doesn't matter. Which is to say, let them rip a door off a car, hurl an oil drum through a window, or even kill a bystander if that's what they do (particularly as an expression of Rage or Frenzy).

The same can even be true for what might otherwise be considered combat. If you prefer, you can just describe it as an assault, a beatdown, or an outright murder. Does the pack really need to enter systemic "combat" with two members of a luggage crew at the airport? Probably not. The werewolves are likely to have a handle on that sort of thing and can choose how brutally it ends. Pissed at the bartender in the nightclub? Sure thing, that arm comes right off.

Now what?

As raging werewolves, the players' characters are going to do awful things. The Frenzy systems are there to let players "be bad" at the behest of the game. That's fine; it's just fiction. The difference between it and simple mindless atrocity, however, is *accountability*. What you definitely must do is hold them accountable for any consequences or aftermath. Such accountability can use game systems including harano and hauglosk, or it can be narrative — if, for example, the characters' misdeeds are discovered by someone with the ability to do something about them.

Note, too, that the degree of detail expressed in the violence should be agreed upon beforehand. Explicit descriptions of gore might be just fine for some troupes, whereas others prefer to keep such detail abstract. Such agreements are part of calibration; see the appendix on p. 320 for more.

BUILDING MEMORABLE ANTAGONISTS

Antagonists in Werewolf represent the individual, group, event, or concept that opposes the characters' goals (or vice versa). Antagonists are the most important source of tension and threat to the characters, and the process of realizing and confronting a key antagonist provides the stuff of a memorable story or full-length chronicle.

Antagonists are typically mortals or spirits, but not always. Natural and unnatural events, as well as concepts and institutions, can serve as antagonists, such as Pentex Group or werewolf-hunting organizations, or even a collapsing laboratory site. Indeed, the status quo as concept is the most common antagonist in any World of Darkness game, as it represents the omnipresent injustice of the setting itself.

An antagonist usually seeks to accomplish something, and will do so (intentionally or not) unless the players' characters intervene. In other words, antagonists

generate a threat. Antagonists differ from obstacles, which passively make harder the characters' accomplishment of their goals. A chasm is an obstacle. A fomor is an antagonist.

Note, too, that this difference means that the players' characters are the protagonists, but by no means are they the "heroes" or the "good guys." The Garou are, by definition, flawed individually, and Garou society is... well, it's a fucking trainwreck. The players' characters are agents of *change*, not necessarily *improvement*. The proof of the change they bring lies in the outcomes they effect. **Werewolf** assumes that most players' characters do seek some sort of improvement to the world, but the game doesn't insist on such linearity. Also, characters may be limited by their Garou nature or other things outside their control.

VARIETY

Werewolf: The Apocalypse has a distinct breadth of antagonists a Storyteller can choose from, such as nexus crawlers, fomori, angered nature spirits, other werewolves, scheming undead, and squads of belligerent soldiers. Even mundane antagonists span a spectrum including selfish multinational bureaucrats, street-level fascist thugs, and even nihilistic cultists in thrall to powers they don't understand.

The strongest chronicles introduce diverse types of antagonists. A variety of antagonists helps keep the chronicle fresh by presenting challenges that require different sorts of solutions — as well as solutions other than a physical clash. The Garou's tendency toward infighting means that mechanics used to create interesting characters can just as easily create memorable rivals from opposing packs.

Avoid making an antagonist the star of the show. Always remember that the camera follows the players' characters. No matter how interesting or detailed an antagonist may be, the focus shifts to them only in connection to the characters. A good antagonist affords players the opportunity for their characters to shine in opposition.

THE ANTAGONIST AXES: SCOPE AND AGGRESSIVENESS

In general, Storytellers can use two axes to help manage how they plan to use individual antagonists: active / passive and systemic / individual. In almost every circumstance, antagonists facing the Garou tick one term on each axis. Understanding these polarities can help you establish quality conflicts.

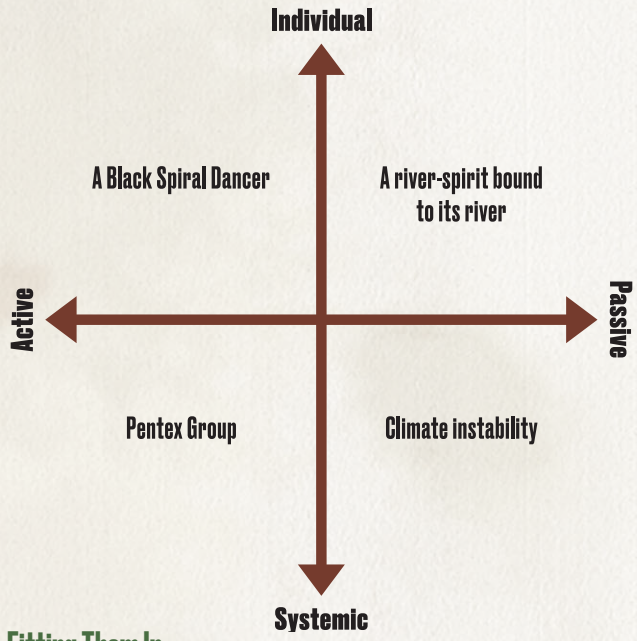
An *active* antagonist is one with the power to consciously realize their agenda. Most traditional antagonists exist in the active category, but so are well-meaning but misguided allies who get in the pack's way. Most spirits that obstruct the characters will be active antagonists, even if their intentions are benign. A wolf-spirit of unknown motivations that refuses to share a critical secret unless appeased is an antagonist as much as is a Bane-possessed human who threatens one of the characters' Touchstones.

Passive antagonists lack conscious direction and are often institutional, abstract, or even immaterial. Organizations such as a government-backed hunter agency are an example of a passive antagonist (whereas individual hunters or squads of hunters are active). Ideologies can also characterize passive antagonists, as in the case of a "law-and-order" community that doesn't care how unjust the new for-profit detention center is, only that "deserving people are punished." As with the hunter organization, the law-and-order ideology probably has numerous active adherents advocating on its behalf. A

passive antagonist can even be extreme weather or some other event-type challenge.

The other axis is that of *systemic / individual*. Systemic antagonists are large, overarching entities or ideals. Systemic antagonists are massive and often decentralized and, in general, cannot be directly defeated. They can certainly face setbacks at the hands of the characters, but total defeat is almost never an option. Most systemic antagonists have local proxies that can be defeated, thereby hurting the global antagonist's plans and relieving tension — the "little victories" that mean so much in **Werewolf**, because they address the player characters' immediate goals. The Wyrm is one of the best examples of a systemic antagonist, as is Pentex Group. Certain conceptual or high-hierarchy spirits — an angered Luna or the embodied spirit of Greed — could also serve as institutional antagonists.

Individual antagonists are immediate, and tend to be people or spirits (or spirit-possessed people...). They may be associated with a systemic antagonist, but they are themselves discrete, well, individuals. A single fomor is an individual antagonist, as is the pack of Black Spiral Dancers bearing down on the pack's caern, and the private investigator looking to link a recent alleged murder-suicide to the players' characters.



Fitting Them In

Most chronicles are likely to feature a comparatively high number of individual antagonists. The players' characters can (and should) overcome almost all of them, by some means, eventually. Individual antagonists' influence can be decisively thwarted, even if it takes many sessions or even stories to do so. Many of **Werewolf**'s most memorable antagonists are those that operate individually to advance the goals of a systemic-level antagonist.

Systemic antagonists have influence that stretches across a significant geographic area or conceptual category (often including the Umbra). Although they can't be traditionally defeated, they can be slowed, set back, redirected, or made to reconsider, usually through defeating their individual agents.

Note, too, that antagonists can often be intertwined or have subsidiaries that exist within the same category. For example, "climate instability" or "rising authoritarianism" or "ethnic nationalism" could be considered a passive, systemic antagonist, whereas any number of Pentex Group (active, systemic) fronts (themselves active and systemic) could be contributing to it, as could any number of corrupt public officials (active, individual).

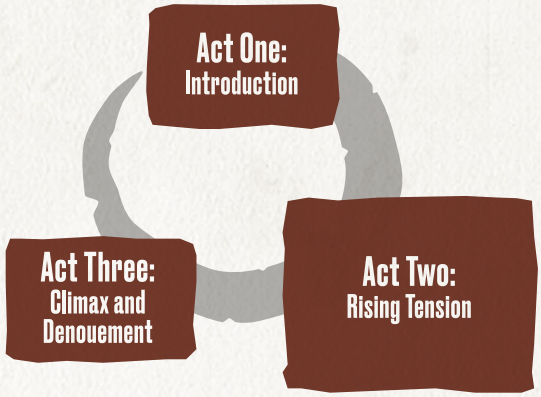
The classic Garou motivation enshrined in the Litany, "Combat the Wyrm Wherever It Dwells and Whenever It Thrives," is an excellent example of the troubling nuances of werewolf existence. The Wyrm itself (passive, systemic) isn't actually a thing that can be literally fought — the Garou oppose those serving its ends, or particularly those ends in its time of imbalance. The destruction of the Wyrm is a rallying cry for Garou, but in reality the Wyrm needs to exist for the Triat to function, as it's a force that's part of the cosmological cycle. So what, practically, are the Garou fighting in their opposition to the Wyrm? Imbalance? Agents of the Wyrm that individually grow too powerful? Anything that represents decay or entropy? The metaphysical, conceptual disagreement about their actual purpose is behind much intra-Garou conflict, and of course such vast schisms as those involving the Cult of Fenris and the Stargazers.

THE THREE-ACT STRUCTURE

The Classical Greek philosopher Aristotle suggested that the most effective stories are ones adopting a chain of cause-and-effect actions that build on one another until reaching a climax and conclusion. Storytellers can use the three-act structure to divide a story into three sections, each anchored to one or more challenges the players' characters must address. Each act consists of one or more scenes. Act one introduces the tension, the second act presents the rise in tension, and the third act accounts for the climax and denouement, usually with a fall in tension. (If you recall

the game loop from the beginning of this chapter, you probably intuited that you can also use the third act to establish or set the stage for the chronicle's next three-act arc.)

A rough balance for the acts is when the first act makes up 25 percent of the story. About 50 percent of the story occurs in the second act, and the final 25 percent concludes that particular story in the final act.



Remember, too, that a chronicle consists of multiple stories, so you'll probably be engaging this loop numerous times for something longer than a single story. Also, a chronicle doesn't need to end when the challenge is confronted and the goal is either attained or failed. Storytelling games are an iterative process, so instead of the final act neatly wrapping everything up, concluding one story provides the opportunity to seed the next three-act story in the earlier story's final scenes.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

Every scene should offer an opportunity for the players' characters to interact with the environment and Storyteller characters, and to affect the outcome of the scene. Some amount of important stuff happens in each scene (otherwise why is the scene happening?) and can serve as a transition from one act to another. Understanding how the three acts and opportunities for action work with one another will help you keep the story moving forward.

"Important stuff" can take the form of building player expectations or exemplifying the setting. Not every scene needs to have significant stakes. It's possible that a scene's importance is in helping the pack form an attachment to a specific character or showing them what they'll lose if an antagonist is allowed to realize their agenda.

Opportunities for action represent the possibility of change. Although all scenes change from beginning to end, opportunities for action can yield significant changes with major ramifications. A plot-point scene could include a major victory or loss, a revelation, a discovery, the emergence of a new antagonist, or the tragic death of a character (either player character or Storyteller character). Often, these types of scenes serve as catalysts for character development.

Really tight stories may involve only plot points and use no other scenes. Sprawling chronicles involve many different types of scenes and use the plot points only as key moments of transition.

Planning Opportunities for Action

It's impossible to anticipate all the ways the players might react to the situations you present. Avoid trying to build an ironclad "plot"; everyone will find it more rewarding if you, as Storyteller, remain flexible and instead mark key turning points in your story to help you envision how things can unfold.

Your opportunity planning doesn't need to be detailed — a few bullet-point-style notes about the scene and key Storyteller characters often prove sufficient. Recognizing the most significant turning points indicates what work you may need to do to prepare for an upcoming scene. If a turning point requires the involvement of a major antagonist, you know to work on familiarizing yourself with their capacities and systems so that you don't need to do it in the middle of a session.

The following structure can be used as a template for planning your chronicle. You should feel free to modify it to suit the needs of your troupe, of course. Note that in this model, act one, unlike the other acts, has two turning points; one at the beginning (the inciting incident) and one at the end (the transition).

Act One (the beginning, the introduction of tension):

- Turning point one: The inciting incident (an overall call to action), investigation (who, what, when, where, and why)
- Turning point two: The transition to act two

Act Two (the middle, the rise in tension):

- Turning point three: Increasing action, confrontation; the transition to act three

Act Three (the end, the climax and fall of tension):

- Turning point four: The climax and denouement, signposting the next story

Gaia's Demise: The Garou's Inciting Incident

At the core of many of **Werewolf**'s conflicts is the imbalance of the Triat and its effect on the mother-spirit Gaia. Gaia's time of dying serves as a universal inciting incident on a global and a historic scale, encouraging every Garou character to *act now*. There's always something for the characters to do in **Werewolf**; there's always a need to fight back.

A Silent Strider may seek to regain a lost artifact in a desperate effort to hold on to one last piece of their fallen lover's legacy, while a Hart Warden may have learned of the presence of a defiled Black Spiral Dancer caern and convinces her pack to take it back. A Bone Gnawer might venture into the Umbra to look for something... anything... that he discovers there to try to stanch Gaia's bleeding. All three are different approaches to the same contextualizing incident of Gaia's death and the threat the degrading state of the world still represents.

Fighting the Wyrm or another Triatic "bad actor" and its proxies may not be the smartest or most effective thing for the Garou to do, but it's rarely the worst thing they can do. Help the players understand that there is always something to do as a Garou. If anything, there may be *too many* antagonists to confront, so roll up your sleeves and commence.

This fallback motivation can be empowering, especially when the pack needs to satisfy its Rage with a burst of cathartic violence. If nothing else, Gaia's lament can serve as a least-common-denominator inciting incident. It may not be the most intricate inciting incident, but it is always there for you to use, and establishing that context early helps give a grounding for more complex story arcs as the chronicle develops.

ACT ONE: THE BEGINNING

Act one is all about breaking the status quo and learning (often under duress...) about the coming challenges. A first act typically starts with one or more scenes that establish the parameters of the story and preview the challenges the characters will face in act two. Early in act one, the Storyteller should present the first plot point, the inciting incident.

Act one's inciting incident should present some kind of point of no return, thus prompting the players' characters to take action. It should challenge the characters' routine, if they have one, or threaten what amounts to their "normal world," insofar as anything about being a werewolf is normal. The scene is usually the first significant event in the story, and like literature, the best establishing events at this stage are quite dramatic.

Although the players should always feel the tension of the horror genre, their characters probably don't risk mortal danger in act one, unless they actively involve themselves in it. This time is more often one of discovery, of learning that trouble is afoot, whether they're going to go after it or it comes seeking them. The people and spirits around them are not actively seeking to hurt them (though they might not be friendly). This time encompasses escalating action and tension, such that the characters have a sense of control. Note that this shouldn't mean the characters don't feel at risk or even threatened, simply more as a guideline for structuring your escalating tension — it's practically antithetical to a werewolf to ever truly feel "safe."

Act one should conclude with the players eager to get on to act two.

Some examples for what might happen in act one:

- Someone important to one or more of the players' characters — a Touchstone, a contact, a family member, a lover — has had an accident or falls ill, and signs point to a local business entity with a sinister reputation
- One or more of the characters discover hostile werewolves scouting the pack's caern, and may engage in violence with them
- The Garou notice something horribly amiss in the Umbra, or a tormented spirit comes to them seeking aid

Set the Stakes

Information flows during act one, and the characters should have some sense of what may happen if they succeed or fail in dealing with the problem at hand. Establishing the stakes creates tension by underscoring the consequences and rewards, which then encourage the players to take action against the challenge. Think of stakes as the phrase following the "then" in an "if/then" statement.

Take the statement "If the characters don't investigate the unseasonable locust swarm, then the community is going to have a bad harvest." In this case, the stakes involve risk to their community. In the statement, "If the characters don't stop the Black Spiral Dancer pack, then

their pack will lose its caern," the stakes involve access to the pack's "home base" and place of spiritual importance.

Establish the Setting

The story's setting should also be established in this act. Many chronicles take place in a pack's home territory, potentially within proximity of a caern they acquire or a certain area they feel is theirs or otherwise protect. This assumption is intentional:

- It ties the players' characters to a specific place, where they can establish roots and build relationships
- It eases the burden on the Storyteller, who doesn't have to have an encyclopedic knowledge of world geography on hand, and can use recurring or symbolic locations to reinforce chronicle themes and tenets

However, feel free to set a story on the road or in some place other than the pack's home territory, especially if you want to disrupt the pack's comfort, force them to learn new geography, or meet new people. If most of the action is going to take place in London, for example, act one is the time to establish that fact or, at least, make the players aware that travel's going to be involved, if the characters don't already live in or near London.

Suggest or Reveal the Antagonist

If your story will introduce a primary antagonist in act two or three, act one should seed a few key facts about who they are, what they want, and what tools they have at their disposal. (Chapter 9 has some general, suggested goals for antagonists, but an individual is likely to have individual goals, as well, ones that a wise pack will attempt to discern as early as possible — the better to foil them.)

Werewolf doesn't generally feature moustache-twirling Hollywood villains — even the most depraved of individual agendas take shape for a reason. Also, passive or environmental challenges (see "The Antagonist Axes" on p. 211) can establish dire stakes on their own and can require considerable planning and effort to positively resolve.

The Second (Transitional) Turning Point

Act one has two turning points, with the second one transitioning into act two. The second turning point need not be as dramatic as the inciting incident, but it should serve as the event that makes it clear the status quo is well and truly gone.

Particularly effective turning points focus on the psychology or beliefs of one or more characters, an internal struggle that, when resolved, moves one or more characters' intentions toward confrontation with a key antagonist (for more on these types of struggles, see "The Characters in Crisis" on p. 206). For example, a Red Talon might find they have a common enemy with the nearby human community in the story's main antagonist, or the pack's Black Fury and Galestalker may have crossed paths with an overbearing Silver Fang at a moot in the

past, calling into question overall Garou values. Touchstones are also excellent tools for bringing these conflicts to the fore, especially Touchstones who don't know that a character is Garou and might not understand what makes a werewolf character feel so strongly about a given course of action.

ACT TWO: THE MIDDLE

Act two makes the challenges real and immediate, bringing them to the fore of the conflict. A story's middle act consists of a rising tension that leads to a crisis. Many of the story's most actionable elements unfold. If act one is an appetizer, then act two is the main course.

Act two raises the stakes, perhaps revealing new dangers. Characters have taken earlier actions and, in act two, realize that they have exposed themselves and are vulnerable. Danger and risk emerge in a way that feels personal to the characters, such as a direct threat to something or someone they care about. Making the danger personal keeps the players invested in the plotline and shifts the stakes from abstract and conceptual into problems with immediacy.

This last step is important. In this way, **Werewolf** realizes itself as a storytelling game of personal stakes and small, costly victories, rather than as an epic "save the world!" scenario that's at odds with the horror premise. Remember that the Garou perspective and the specific animistic conflicts represented by Gaia and the Triat may or may not be true, but regardless of whether the werewolves are correct, a preponderance of people in the places affected by their actions will see only monsters and the ruin they bring — itself a perspective that may or may not be true.

Small obstacles should lead to larger challenges. Simple problems — a locked door, a hostile spirit, armed perimeter guards — represent larger challenges to be introduced later. These immediate challenges should reveal a bit about the larger challenge the pack is going to face. There are no "random encounters" in a **Werewolf** story.

The locked door may be protected by a Weaver-spirit, showing the players what type of obstacles they might confront later. The annoyingly hostile Wyrm-spirit may be the thrall of a more puissant Bane that appears in act three. The presence of the armed guards can show the players that the primary antagonist is well-funded and prepared for the sort of assault the pack originally planned. Or having their urban bolt-hole threatened by neighborhood gentrifying "development" may show the Garou that they're dealing with opposition that fights entirely differently from the werewolves' preferred methods.

By the story's midpoint, the players should understand the nature of the threat, already have encountered a series of lesser challenges, and be prepared themselves to confront the final threat. And more than once, the Garou way of problem-solving should have created its own set of consequences. As the body count rises and the trail of victims becomes ever more gory, and as the Garou's Rage exacts its own price, the characters shouldn't have an easy time of things, but some memorable, volatile situations should definitely emerge.

Some examples for what might happen in act two:

- The pack discovers a camp of aggressive soldiers or PMC mercenaries established in its territory, indicating that whoever's funding the interlopers must be well-connected indeed
- Aggressive fomori actively seek out the characters, whether they're at the caern near the mouth of the river or climbing up the elevator shafts of a downtown skyscraper
- The Umbra becomes actively hostile as the pack traverses it, with angry spirits harrowing them and the geography itself manifesting before them horrifying obstacles like a river of liquid silver or chasms made of their own Rage

The Umbra and Spirits

Act two offers an excellent opportunity to have the Umbra feature prominently, especially for antagonists or challenges of a spiritual nature. If act one tips the characters off to something being not right, and act three

brings it all home (to the physical world), act two is when shit can get weird in the Umbra.

The Umbra is also a strong setting for over-the-top combat sequences, where things too strange to be marauding through the physical world rear up to their full... size or height or whatever other Spirit Wilds strangeness characterizes them. It's a place where werewolves don't have to mind the Delirium and can go full-throttle kickass with fairly few repercussions for indulging their violent nature. Which isn't to say that there are no consequences for dealing violently with a threat in the Umbra, just that the denizens of the Umbra know what the Garou are and won't necessarily flee in panic when Rage and the crinos form appear.

Act two is perhaps the best place for significant spirit antagonists to likewise reveal themselves. If the pack is going toe-to-toe with a Nexus Crawler (good luck), it's probably during the climax of act two. Then, in act three, they'll learn who agitated the Nexus Crawler, and what fallout dealing with the Nexus Crawler brings.

The Nudge

On occasion, players are reluctant to take action that would move the story forward. Usually, this inertia isn't the players being contrary. It's often a desire for more information, more context for the decision at hand/claw. In such cases, and depending on a character's outlook, goals, and ambitions, it's worth roleplaying a few scenes to set the stakes so that the characters are encouraged to accept. Raising the stakes can mean having a Touchstone weigh in on something, having Resources suddenly frozen by well-connected rivals, or even having a spirit impart a vision or utter a cryptic statement. Sometimes it's even worth increasing the threat and shifting the rewards cycle so the reward of dealing with the antagonist (or managing the consequences if they continue unchecked) is much larger.

Be careful — increasing the stakes too rapidly can make the antagonist appear unstoppable and lead to the characters retreating from the plot even more. Character harano is interesting; *player* harano is frustrating and unsatisfying.

Expanding the Ensemble

New Storyteller characters are also likely to make their initial appearance during act two. Storyteller characters exist to help contextualize or even provoke opportunities for action, thus providing the players' characters key resources such as information, tools, or access to remote or secure locations. Remember that every character wants something, and Storyteller characters show their depth by interacting with the players. Can the pack gain something through quid pro quo? Does the Storyteller character have a goal in common with the players' characters? Might cooperation with the Storyteller character become conflict at a later stage?

Act two is also an appropriate time to introduce new henchmen or even significant secondary antagonists (some of whom might become recurring). They, too, can offer clues to the act three threat or contextualize it. Why are these particular fomori in the characters' way? Why does the Silver Fang ahroun the characters oppose smell like rotting meat? If this branching lava flow can threaten the migrant camp, what does it mean for the established community that lies in the path of the main stream of lava?

ACT THREE: THE CLIMAX (AND CONCLUSION)

Act three presents the climactic confrontation and the reduction of tension that follows. The confrontation is the story's centerpiece, wherein the characters face a point of no return. They must either prevail or fail. Failure in this sense can mean many things: a setback (losing track of a rival), a retreat (losing the caern), a damaged ego (chagrin or being abandoned by esteemed allies), grievous wounds, or even death. During acts one and two you established the stakes, so the players should know what's on the line during act three and have some sense of the imminent consequences.

The final confrontation is as much your payoff as it is the players'. You have probably spent some time setting up the scenarios that lead to the final confrontation. You defined your final antagonist, seeded act two with elements to foreshadow the confrontation with that antagonist, and now the players get to find out if they collected the right tools and prepared themselves accordingly to overcome whatever the antagonist throws at them.

Likewise, the players' characters have probably gained insight and experience, as well as a better understanding of how the setting works. Some of the characters may bear mental, emotional, or physical scars as a result of encounters in the story.

The stakes are at their highest in act three, and it's likely that some costs have been paid along the way. Maybe one of the Garou is no longer with the pack, or a beloved Touchstone has met their end. Perhaps one of the Garou is even responsible for the fate of the Touchstone or packmate, having lost control of their Rage.

Denouement

Once the final confrontation is resolved, the story de-escalates into a denouement, where the events wind down into a new how-things-are. If the troupe is playing a single story, that's it — it's time to enjoy what the pack fought for and consider all that they paid for it, and what it all means for the world.

If this is one story that's part of a greater chronicle, the denouement is an important period of transition into the next session. This time allows the characters to evaluate their victory (or loss) and figure out their way forward. New allies may bring new information to bear; old allies may become rivals, horrified by what they now know the Garou to be; resilient antagonists may have learned the place the pack considers sacred or have found a way into the pack's caern via the Umbra. It all remains to be seen.

Whatever the case, allow some time to decompress and to enjoy whatever the outcome is. It may be bittersweet, and certain developments might not even relate to the main conflict, but surely there's something to be taken from the journey, some tale to add to the pack's legend.

Use these scenes to sow elements of your next session into the narrative. Perhaps the primary antagonist's death leaves an opening for another antagonist to fill the void. Or maybe the pack returns to the caern and celebrates its victory, but a recalcitrant elder denigrates their accomplishment at a moot. Here would be the time to introduce or highlight a memento that reminds the characters of the challenge waiting for them at home.

Some examples for what might happen in act three:

- The pack takes the fight to the Pentex front, having learned who is funding the crooked senator's re-election campaign
- The Garou return to the blighted waterfall in the Umbra, where the circle of malignant Banes is unfortunately at its strongest
- Having found the caern that the Cult of Fenris pack seized from the young Garou, it's time to kick their fucking teeth so far down their throats that they shit smiles in Hell

CHRONICLE REWARDS

The traditional roleplaying game reward cycle is typically a player-focused process. The players' satisfaction coming from an achievement is very real, made all the more enjoyable by "cherries

on top" that increase their competency. It might sound strange for a horror game based on the awful state of the world, but a cycle of meaningful successes and rewards ensures that the players stay engaged and excited about your shared story. Rewards are powerful motivators and can help encourage your players to not give up, even in the face of significant adversity.

Rewards in roleplaying games often come in two distinct types: feature rewards and narrative rewards.

- Feature rewards usually have a systems expression, such as learning a new Gift, or they can increase the character's competency within an existing feature, such as gaining an additional dot of Strength or Stealth
- Narrative rewards push the story forward. They indicate the development of relationships or conditions that can help things change.

Both of these rewards are generally endogenous. They reward the player with more of what they've shown themselves to enjoy. The endogenous reward of a story is more stories, whereas the endogenous reward of gaining a dot in Renown is being better at the things that Renown lets a character do.

Usually, the more immediately useful a reward, the better, as a sense of utility makes the player appreciate and value the prize.

EXPERIENCE

The easiest and most obvious reward is experience points. Experience points are efficient mechanical ways to show progression and to break the status quo. The more the players' characters do (under whatever definition of "do" — see p. 11 for examples), the more opportunities they have to expand their competencies and accumulate new ways to interact with the world.

IN-SETTING REWARDS

Consider the narrative progression when you plan scenarios with which you'll challenge the characters. Narrative rewards feel meaningful because the player sees their value during the course of the story, or can reasonably assume they'll be useful at some point in the future.

A new Bone Gnawer ally in an otherwise "protected" part of a rival pack's territory might open up new options in the next scene. The stolen fragments of a shattered klaive can be reforged to tap into the legacy of a slain

mentor. The fomor den, once scourged of its possessed malefactors, can serve as a temporary base of operations behind enemy lines. All of these examples exist solely in the setting, and though they may have some systemic or feature impacts (such as in the klaive example), they are unique to your story (as opposed to experience points or Trait increases, which constitute a universal reward mechanic).

A Sense of Accomplishment

The premise of narrative progression is that rewards can take the form of advancing the storyline, making the characters learn and mature, and tying up unresolved issues. Closure, or a sense of completion (even if it's only the completion of a subset of story elements), is a form of reward. Saving an ally, vanquishing a foe, and finding the previously unidentified Kin all have immediate satisfaction for the characters and the players. A threat is eliminated, tension is reduced, or a new Garou can find their way in the world. The characters have a freer hand in their actions now that the challenge is overcome.

The Long Payoff

As is appropriate to narrative planning, the characters may acquire a specialized Skill, Gift, or strange McGuffin that is not immediately useful, but under specific circumstances you introduce later, the reward becomes essential. Such rewards encourage engagement, commitment, and experimentation with the world. It's like finding a key and knowing the lock is going to turn up sooner or later.

ANTICIPATING REWARDS

Going back all the way to the game loop model at the beginning of the chapter, the reward cycle moves from objective to challenge to reward.

The objective-challenge-reward cycle moves in a loop but can be broken easily in the transition from objective to challenge, thus resetting a step. Failure to confront the antagonist in a viable way can result in failure or setback, and potentially put the pack in a position where it might even rethink its objective. And let's face it, the dice play some role in decision. Bad luck can also result in delays or defeat, and in a step backward to the objective.

With a bit of forethought, though, you can foreshadow the next antagonist through incremental midloop rewards. For example, searching the body of the eviscerated businessman might produce a key to a lockbox at a nearby bank, which holds important documents linking the Pentex Group front the pack has been investigating to an illegal arms purchase. Here, the reward is not only ripping the guts out of the antagonist, but also gaining access to important information that can prove useful to confronting the next challenge.

Some players appreciate a few hard-won rewards that serve as trophies marking their victories. Other players enjoy a faster rate of wins, possibly with smaller but progressive gains. In each case, players should come away with a sense that they invested their time, made the appropriate effort, and earned their rewards.

THE STORYTELLER'S ROLE

As the Storyteller, you're no exception to the reward cycle. You're not the players' adversary, aligned against them, though you do challenge them and present them with obstacles and antagonists. As such, your rewards come from other sources, including a sense of building a shared story or celebrating with the players when they finally throat a particularly odious Black Spiral Dancer.

Take some time to ponder what you enjoy about Storytelling and let the players know. Give them the same chance and the same tools you are using to help promote their enjoyment.

PROBLEMS WEREWOLVES FACE

Much of this chapter is about structure, about building frameworks and sequencing and things progressing from one logical portion to the next.

As a Storyteller, though, you know that the structure is just that: a skeleton upon which the rest of the body of the chronicle depends. The first two chapters of this book — about the state of the world and being a Garou, specifically — provide substance for much of that body, but what follows are several topics that merit particular attention as the Storyteller plans conflicts and scenarios to showcase them. Remember, you're mostly ***not*** building traditional plots, you're proposing situations to the players' characters, and the story emerges from how the players interact with them.

Consider these topics as "dials," which is to say that you don't have to go full-tilt on all of them in any given story, but can adjust them to your troupe's preferences. Some troupes very much enjoy the feeling of isolation, of being the lone pack of monsters in their territory, whereas others like the complicated relationships that arise from septs and moots. Some troupes enjoy ripping apart Wyrm-things for Gaia and glory, and yet other troupes prefer the fraught consequences of taking any action while the Triat is imbalanced.

The more you and your troupe communicate together, and the more stories you tell, the more you'll have a handle on how to adjust these dials for your chronicles.

The world of Werewolf is beset by things from outside it that want to steal it away for themselves.

Gaia created the Garou as her defenders, to protect her from human greed and the cosmological entities that wanted to plunder her. And Garou share the world with humans and other creatures that rightly fear them. They are imperfect tools, but they nonetheless defend what's theirs, according to their original purpose.

The plight of the werewolf is to be considered a monster by those around them, which is why the pack is so important.

Much of being Garou means isolation. On a personal scale, the individual is horrific by the standards of the

humans around them — but those same humans behave selfishly and horribly in a Garou context. On a community scale, the Garou find a volatile comfort in one another — in packs, in septs, and in what remains of the Garou Nation, where it endures. That comfort is unreliable, but at least it's among others who know what it's like to be an outcast. The grand irony is that, if the Garou perspective is accurate, werewolves are the chosen champions of a world that fears them and flees their presence.

The Wyrm is winning because it has adapted.

Part of the tragedy of werewolves is that they're monsters, able to protect their world only with monstrous methods. Whereas the forces of entropy have adapted to emerging technologies, commercial techniques, and the more nefarious tools of modern civilization, werewolves are still largely using fang and claw, Rage and Gifts. Garou methods haven't changed since the misty times of legend that birthed them. Meanwhile, the ascendant Wyrm uses the features of modern life on Gaia against her. The players' werewolves have the opportunity to pull the Garou out of their destructive traditions and actually be a part of the solution — or to continue the cycle of tragic brutality for which the Garou are known and feared.

Werewolves are creatures of Rage and spirit; werewolves are creatures both wolf and human.

The Garou are a powerful combination of things, but they are not wholly any of those things. They have spiritual proclivities, but they also have bodies that are Rage-ruled and physical. And though they can take the shapes of wolves and humans, they are truly neither wolf nor human, and the revelation of what they truly are can terrify both wolves and people. Ultimately, the only thing Garou are truly like is other Garou, and even among other werewolves, the differences in tribe, auspice, and manifold other perspectives run deep. All of these conditions can make for a tragic loneliness — and all the more acute when felt among one's peers.

Werewolves live their own legends, building them as they perform deeds in service to Gaia.

Garou culture, despite being fractured and isolated, is big on tale-telling and honoring the accomplishments of others of their kind, especially because they're so rare and hard to identify. And individual Garou often want to live large, make their mark, and be the subject of the signs around the fire. It's better to burn brightly than be forgotten, but the point is more than just becoming notorious — werewolves have a purpose, even if they don't always agree on how to fulfill it. For a werewolf, Renown is worth more than gold.

Werewolf society walks a perilous line.

Werewolf society has strong champions and traditional hierarchies. Those are certainly strengths, but should the righteousness of those champions or that hierarchy slip, Garou society lies perilously close to authoritarianism. Headstrong leaders can quickly become monstrous dictators, and tradition can become tyranny. Look no further than the Cult of Fenris to see the peril of such brutal intransigence. Regardless of whether every Garou personally experiences *hauglosk*, it is real.

The werewolf instinct is to rage and destroy.

The inclination to let their Rage drive them to action is part of werewolves' makeup as warriors fighting in Gaia's name. Werewolves aren't great at actually solving problems; they are exceptionally effective at fighting symptoms. How do you rend a blizzard asunder? How can you shred coastal loss? Werewolves cannot change structural or institutional problems by slashing them to tatters. These lapses are part of their monstrosity, and part of their tragedy — and part of the opportunity players' characters have to rise above the volatility of Garou society. Look no further than the fact that the tribes associated with Wisdom are often mistrusted or sidelined by tribes of Honor and Glory. ■

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Umbra and Spirits

One must realize that there is a place reason does not reach, a hidden void in which we find ourselves unwitting subjects of destiny.

– OLGA PELENSKY

Werewolves perceive a spiritual counterpart to our own physical reality, a shadow-world of spirit in complement to the physical world in which they are born. Their prevailing origin story ties them inextricably to this spirit world, favored as they are by Gaia, the tremendously powerful mother-spirit of the earth — or perhaps "the world," or even "the cosmos" — itself.

The Garou know the spirit world that contains these forces and embodies this lens as the Umbra or the Spirit Wilds.

Given its nature, the spirit world is a place that cannot definitively be known, and so, too do those who dwell within it have their own motives, not all of which are comprehensible by such creatures as werewolves. Indeed, the Garou themselves understand their worldview as part observed phenomenon, part vital legend, and part living metaphor. Gaia is not a singular, personified entity — except when she is. The Triat is a collection of forces the werewolves understand to be symbolic, except when the Garou are actively working against them. The Spirit Wilds are a place one goes, except when the notion of "place" cannot apply.

One thing is certain, though: The Umbra is a vast reservoir of emotion, legend, and memory.

Today's hectic lives and distractions threaten to remove humans from the communication stem that connects all orders of creation and the manidoog (spirits) that are associated with them. Further, the Garou are themselves members of an animistic tradition, casting into sharp contrast the views of the human cultures in which they find themselves and the Garou perspective that informs their lives as werewolves.

– DR. WAABIZII BENJAMIN, SILVER FANG PHILODOX

AN ERA OF APOCALYPSE

Werewolves are defined by their existence between two different worlds. As the chosen of Gaia, they are meant to move along the edges of the physical world and those of spirits' domain, moving where they must to fulfill her will. Doing so enables werewolves to see how both worlds intersect and interact, and ultimately how they influence each other. However, during the era of the Apocalypse the Umbra often feels as if it were actively trying to expel them when they travel into it.

In almost all of the Garou's oral traditions, the spirit world was the place werewolves were able to connect best with Gaia, see what was happening to Earth, gain power and guidance through spirits, and contribute to the balance of the Triat. The Umbra is where Gaia's voice may be heard most clearly, and it may have been the best place for werewolves to interpret her instruction to them.

But that communication has been disrupted by Gaia's Howl, a multisensory expression of her pain that's most acutely discernible when a Garou travels to the Umbra. Whether experienced as a literal howl, a painful frisson physically felt while traversing the Gauntlet, intruding visions of Gaia in pain, or an alarming burst of taste or smell, Gaia lets her champions know that they have little time left. (See p. 224 for more information on Gaia's Howl.)

Whatever the spiritual truth, it's undeniable that reaching the Umbra is now difficult, a trip performed only through mutual effort and amid strict formal observances.

GAROU AND THE UMBRA

Garou may enter the Umbra for various reasons. Garou may pursue malignant spirits that possess thralls in the physical world into the Umbra, to destroy their threat permanently. They might seek the patronage of a mighty spirit who resides in a lair literally unreachable outside the Umbra. The pack may need to coax a spirit into protecting their caern by bringing a sacrifice to that spirit where it dwells. Or the Garou might become aware of great conflict or injustice happening in the Umbra first and see only later the extent of the situation causing it in the physical world.

Needless to say, the Garou often find themselves in unfamiliar territory as they attempt to investigate the Umbra or bring Gaia's justice to any particular region of it. Despite the many reasons werewolves might have to travel to or through the Spirit Wilds, it will forever be a source of wonder, strangeness, and danger to them, with occasional rare oases of otherworldly succor.

A REALM OF METAPHOR AND VERITY

The cosmology of Werewolf, as with many of the components of its mythic nature, generates more questions than it does answers. (That's good! Conflict and stories emerge from such questions.) The Garou have a traditional, tribal society, strong on oral histories, legends, and personal interpretations of phenomena somewhat outside their perception. As such, their understanding of their cosmology is driven by personal relationships, wisdom, and intuition. It is not the subject of precise methodologies, scientific certainty, or wholly reliable states of being.

Consider the Wyrm, for example, enemy to Garou at large since time out of mind. Werewolves can be confident — and even correct — in their understanding of their place, with one foot in the spirit world and the other in the material, but no werewolf go could before an infallible cosmological authority and say, "See? The Wyrm is definitively evil." Reality needs the forces the Wyrm represents — but few would argue that the Wyrm acts in an appropriate way during the time of the Apocalypse.

Remember, werewolves and their understanding of the cosmology are but a single lens providing a limited perspective on an inherently innominate truth.

NO UNIVERSAL TRUTH

The questing mysteries of the spirit world are foundational and existential for the Garou. For example:

- The spiritual cosmology by which the Garou understand the universe is a source of mystery — some tales attribute the creation of werewolves to Gaia, for example, whereas other legends make Luna their mother.
- Is Gaia "the Earth"? Or a greater cosmological collective of physical and spiritual bodies?
- What is the relationship of Gaia to the Triat? Did she birth them? Are they "siblings"? Did they give rise to

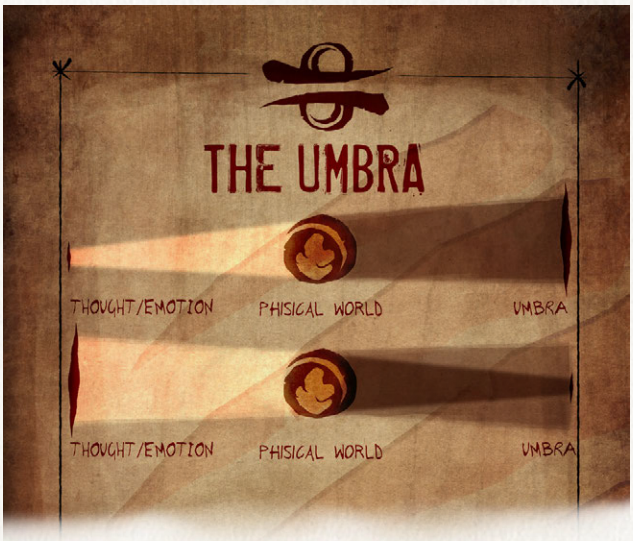
her? Are they unrelated in origin but intertwined in their course of action?

* Note that Gaia is traditionally a "she," whereas the Triat are ungendered forces of nature (that may occasionally possess or be expressed as gendered characteristics, but they largely go anthropomorphized). How did this understanding come to be?

All of these questions and others are sure to arise during **Werewolf** stories, and both players and Storytellers should embrace them. Differences that arise help paint a World of Darkness in which the Garou aren't a monoculture, and in which the greatest mysteries of the universe cannot be untangled, despite all of the fury and insight werewolves bring to bear. As even the wisest theurges grant, some questions have no single answer.

A COSMOLOGICAL MAP

The word *Umbra* itself suggests a shadow, and the way Garou perceive it, the Spirit Wilds exist as a shadow to the physical world. Of course, in certain situations, a shadow can appear even more voluminous than the object casting it, which is exactly the case with the Umbra.



THE LIGHT OF THOUGHT AND EMOTION

In considering the animistic role of the Umbra, it may help to use a metaphor. If the physical world is an object, and the Umbra is its shadow, what's causing the illumination that results in the shadow? The truth is that no one knows.

The metaphor, however, is that the experiences of thinking, feeling creatures create the "light" that makes the shadow cast by the physical world.

Note, too, that these thinking, feeling creatures don't have to be humans, Garou, or other supernatural creatures. They might be animals, for example, or perhaps even spirits themselves (though this last is the subject of much contention among werewolves in general and theurges in particular).

Thus, in the terms of the metaphor, if something exists that no one thinks about or has any emotional investment in, it *probably* has no shadow, reflection, or other counterpart in the Umbra. That said, some powerful ideas linger long after anyone last gave them a thought. In the Spirit Wilds, old gods die hard.

THE SHADOW NEXT DOOR

The area of the Umbra most proximate to the physical world has the greatest resemblance to that physical counterpart. It's also the most frequent spiritual destination of all Garou, and it provides their first taste of the wonders that lie beyond reality. Just as the physical world is made of physical matter, the spirit world is made of spiritual matter — what some Garou call ephemera. (Note that "proximate," "nearest," and the like here refer to concepts, not necessarily to physical distance. Physical distance may not have any bearing on how the Umbra appears in any given place.)

This close to the physical world, a street still looks like a street, and a park looks like a park, but objects without spiritual energy appear translucent, impermanent, or entirely absent. New buildings and recent construction have almost no spiritual resonance, whereas living vegetation and more storied buildings appear vibrant and real.

Areas of true spiritual significance stand out and warp their surroundings: A factory spawning dangerous chemical waste may cast the Umbral sky in gloom and rot the spiritual city around it, serving as a lair for malignant spirits. A thriving community in a beloved neighborhood may scintillate with vibrant color and sound, a joyous cacophony, enriched by the spiritual imprints of past occupants, sheltered by trees growing to many times their material height and spreading their branches welcomingly toward the sky. Such an area surely attracts appropriate spirits — and its seemingly endless energy may tempt other spirits to befoul it.

The nearest regions of the Umbra feel somehow closer to the physical world than do greater depths, as such time and distance are — mostly — analogous to their material equivalents. Exit the near-shadow of the Umbra in a lo-

cation, and you (probably) appear roughly in its physical analogue, though the strength of the Gauntlet plays a large part in whether one ends up in the general vicinity of one's destination, or exactly in the place one tried to avoid. More than one pack has learned — the hard, final way — that the Umbra is no reliable backdoor to the den of one's enemies.

STRANGER DEPTHS

Locational terminology rapidly becomes inadequate in describing the Umbra, particularly as one ventures further "into" it. Three-dimensional space and even the concept of time distort as one moves toward these metaphysical singularities or points of unknown analysis. Plainly put, things get weird fast in the Spirit Wilds as one moves away from cosmological proximity to the physical world.

These strange depths seem to conform to the same sorts of cause-and-effect intimated by the shadow-and-reflection theory. Even the most bizarre, picturesque, or hellish Umbral weirdscape exists because someone or something cared enough to create the — resonance? dream? desire? thought? — that willed it into being.

Various tribes and auspices have different words for these phenomena, and even words such as "region" become inadequate to describe what a pack might encounter as it plumbs the mysteries of the Spirit Wilds. Everything — from familiar concepts like a vast, unending, primordial forest that harks to the halcyon days of the Garou, to dense and psychedelic metaphors like infinitely running across an enormous, seemingly female face while tiny moons and stars pursue the runners — is possible there... and then some.

And for this reason, despite having some understanding of the Umbra, Garou never feel wholly safe there, can never truly understand it all. They may have an arguable claim to part of it as creatures partially of spirit, but the shadow-world always possesses the ability to startle and disorient and terrify the Garou.

Storytelling Keys to the Umbra

- There is no one, true way to understand the Umbra — the Umbra is itself at once a perception and a way of perceiving, and not inherently true
- Even the Garou themselves don't agree on what things perceived within the Umbra mean, but know that it is always in part shaped by its perceiver
- The Umbra cannot be mapped, but must be deciphered anew each time one ventures into it, changing both due to influence of the physical world and from its own strange currents

THE TRIAT

An ecology of cosmological forces, a cycle of existence, a functioning model of reality.

The Triat consists of three spiritual forces, or three spiritual ends, or functions. These forces do not themselves have will, and they aren't spirits in the traditional sense; Garou know better than to anthropomorphize them. However, the myriad spirits of the Umbra often operate in service to one of these forces, or to advance the objectives associated with these forces.

* **The Wyld:** A spiritual force of creation, change, and chaos
* **The Weaver:** A spiritual force of order, structure, and stasis
* **The Wyrm:** A spiritual force of consumption, decay, and entropy

Many Garou regard the Triat as demiurgical, perhaps, or progenitor-energies, or arguably even the apex of reality. No matter their current state, Triatic forces are limited only by their own primordial function, and usually they have at least some influence over all spirits, if only by proximity or interaction. That isn't to suggest they boss other spirits around like some capricious aristocrat, giving orders to lesser drones. One might not even know one is seeing the presence of Triat, assuming such a thing can even happen; the influence of the Triat is more likely to be felt or intuited than observed while it's happening. The Triat's movements evidence themselves via desire and aftermath, largely as a matter of interpretation.

Below these forces are a grand array of lesser spirits each with its own role, and each aware of its place in the hierarchies of the Umbra. They can range from god-like entities embodying the power of a planet to mindless things incapable of perceiving the world beyond the narrow purpose for which they were spawned.

As noted above, the Triat is itself malfunctioning, with the Wyrm ascendant. In contrast with the spirits pledged to the service of the Wyrm or Weaver, or forced into such a role, servitors of the Wyld fulfill roles more traditionally in keeping with the original balance of the Triat. Garou frequently find these other spirits acting according to the *letter* of their original purpose, despite the fact that the intent of their governing forces have greatly changed in the era of Apocalypse. Indeed, the Wyld seems to be waning, hemmed in by the Weaver and destroyed by the Wyrm. Then again, some Garou argue that the Wyld remains the only fully functional aspect of the Triat, operating according to its original purpose, with the other two forces dangerously "overclocked."

For more information on the hierarchy of spirits, see p. 224. Examples of servitors in each force's spiritual domain can be found in Chapter 9: Antagonists.

ENCOUNTERING THE UMBRA

The parts of the spirit world that "touch upon" the physical world are the most tangible, in the sense that supernatural creatures may find reflections of the physical realm swimming within its depths. Beyond this point, however, the spirit world becomes increasingly different, covering possibilities unknown and known, potential and actualized. Things bend, transform, and push against constraints, such that in some areas of the spirit world, even the idea of rules or laws becomes mutable.

At times, the Umbra is Earth's shadow, the strange and oftentimes incomprehensible reflection of the physical realm. But it is also a place that exists beyond the solid certainties of reality, with its own conventions, logic, and rules.

Although it may be traversed, the Umbra does not conform to the idea of geography. Or, rather, the geography of the Umbra is mutable, impermanent, and reliant upon the spiritual and emotional significance of what appears there at any given time. It all depends.

A CHANGING SPIRITSCAPE

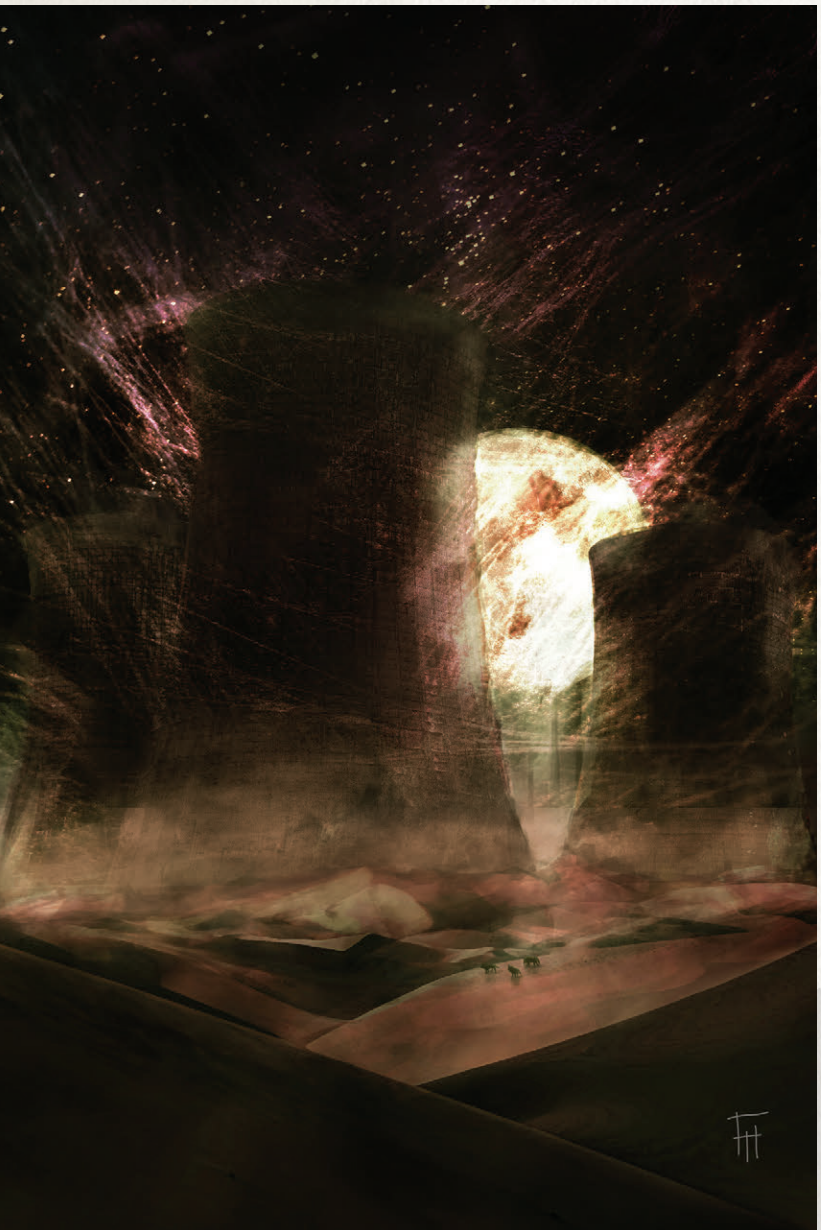
Contrast often characterizes places in the Umbra, with a virgin glade abutting the site of a toxic chemical spill, a host of inscrutable spirits going about their business between them. Time and even permanence are unreliable in the Spirit Wilds — an idyllic field of heather may occupy a specific spiritual location for (earthly) millennia, only to be replaced by a tropical grove that blooms seemingly out of nothingness, and is then reclaimed by the heather field and instant later. Almost inevitably, *something* caused this flux, but it's not always evident what, especially to the Garou, who are not themselves natives of the Umbra. This example also reinforces the interrelationship between the physical and spirit worlds: Nurturing the physical world often results in a strong spiritual complement, whereas defiling the physical world ruptures that spiritual co-location.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

Take for instance the spiritual reflection of an office building. In the physical world, on the whole, it has few surprises. It's, well, an office building, a place where numerous people go every day to perform business-related tasks.

In the Umbra, however, an office building may appear in a number of ways.

- The office building may be literally absent in the Umbra. This lack of correspondence isn't necessarily bad, it just indicates that no one involved with the building's business has much personal will invested in it. In fact, something more important (from a spiritual resonance perspective) might occupy the same space that the office building does in the real world, or it may be simply unfilled space indistinguishable from the rest of how the Umbra appears in that spiritual region.
- The office building may appear blocky and sterile, like a cork cell viewed through a microscope, with only the least of spirits moving within it, if at all. In this case, the office building's Umbra presence suggests a lack of emotional resonance from anyone involved with it — a soulless place.



- The office building may appear as a towering monolith, with jagged accretions of calcification where walls meet floors and ceilings, all rigidly bound by tensile strands of spider-spirit webbing. An antiseptic smell pervades. In this case, the office building's Umbra presence represents a relentless enforcement of order, the imposition of the Weaver's influence on whatever the business of the office building is.
- The office building may appear wreathed in hazy spiritual flames of bright green, purple, and orange-red color. A susurrus, as of a multitude of people talking, is inescapable there. In this case, the office building's Umbra presence reflects a passionate state of affairs within, perhaps as a hostile corporate takeover is occurring, or as a number of opportunistic executives vigorously attempt to force business in a direction favorable to them.
- The office building may appear to be a veritable charnel house, an ever-collapsing edifice of decay that nonetheless rebuilds itself from material voluminously issuing forth from a wellspring of spiritual energy at its center — with that spiritual energy turning gray and foul moments after its eruption. A cloying reek, the sweet smell of death, practically nauseates those who go there. In this case, the office building's Umbral presence reflects the spiritual purpose of the business it houses, the exploitation and eventual exhaustion of some precious natural resource.

The Umbra in Chronicles

The Umbra is many things in a chronicle.

- It is a tool for both players' characters and Storyteller characters to use to their advantage
- It is a setting location for stories that reflects a uniquely Garou perspective on the world
- It is a thematic device that reinforces the Garou's nature as creatures of spirit, in addition to Rage

When the players' characters enter the Umbra, they should immediately have a sense of duality. It is a place of great power, and the Garou have access to its spaces, gifts, and wonders. At the same time, it is a place of terrifying unknowableness, and even the half-spirit Garou are effectively interlopers in a world that belongs only partially to them, and partially eludes them because its truths would sunder their minds to learn. It is much like the sea, which seems mysterious and even romantic to humans who don't

see the chthonic horror swimming up from the depths to swallow them whole and without a trace. And unlike the vast, deep sea, the Umbra isn't physically limited by terrestrial geography.

To that end, the Umbra should be as big or small a part of any given story or chronicle as the Storyteller wishes. It's a sliding scale, with no "correct" ratio. Many **Werewolf** chronicles focus on the immediacy of the Apocalypse in the physical world. Many **Werewolf** chronicles use the Umbra as an occasional setting to contrast the difference between human reality and werewolves' spiritual side. Many **Werewolf** chronicles occur significantly in the Umbra, pitting Garou against spiritual foes and courting some major spiritual alliance in pursuit of their legends.

The Umbra is exactly as important as it should be to the type of story the troupe wants to tell. Consider reinforcing this flexibility with Chronicle Tenets (see p. 199) and other game systems, as much as with narrative situations.

ENTERING THE UMBRA

The Garou are creatures of both flesh and spirit, and they possess the ability to travel between the two worlds. Every Garou is capable of making this crossing, but the knowledge of how to do so is not inherent.

Most Garou learn from a mentor sometime after their First Change, and they learn to do it via Rites passed down from that mentor's mentor, and so on. Others learn through congress with spirits, who impart the ways of salient Rites. Some wretched werewolves — those without someone to introduce them to Garou ways after the First Change, or those who never learn the truth of what they are — never learn the ability to move between worlds. They may be haunted by barely audible voices or things seemingly sighted just beyond the edges of their perception, and surely they lead lives of torment and incompleteness.

The Garou practice of moving from the physical world into the Umbra or vice versa is sometimes called "stepping sideways." See p. 182 for information on the Rite of Shadow Passage, used to enter the Umbra.

STEPPING SIDEWAYS

In most cases, stepping sideways involves performing Rite requirements and willing oneself through the Gauntlet, the barrier between worlds. This process can be difficult, and in the times of the Apocalypse, it cannot be taken for granted, despite some Garou's remembrances of times past.

Stepping sideways is more easily done as a pack, or at least with the accompaniment of other Garou. Theurges myriad reasons for this stricture, from the idea of a collective spiritual mass applying more pressure to the Gauntlet and thus forcing it to yield more readily, to a stronger expression of cumulative will being the dominant reality. As with many metaphysical concepts, it's imprecisely understood; as with many Garou concerns, it's better handled as a pack.

Caerns often facilitate stepping sideways, as the Gauntlet is usually less rigid at a nurtured caern. Still, exceptions occur, as a caern may have been neglected or abused, or might otherwise be in a location that is out of attunement with the Umbra. The spirit guardian may have gone dormant or fled, or the place itself may have been wholly forgotten by Garou, for example. In this era of Apocalypse, with antagonistic werewolves seeking the same sites of power, or packs simply meeting untimely ends, caerns have changed stewardship or vanished from the Garou consciousness faster than at any other time in history. And so, more and more points of ingress to the Umbra have become hostile or inert. For more information on caerns, see p. 190.

Umbra Mechanics

The rules for interacting with the Umbra are deliberately impressionistic, to allow Storytellers the ability to use it as literally or as metaphorically as any given scene requires. In general, though werewolves are familiar with the Umbra, they shouldn't be able to trust the Umbra implicitly. What applies in one space might not apply in another, and what keeps you alive here might get you killed there.

What is almost universal, though, is that there's always a cost for lingering. The Umbra is a dangerous place, and the stink of human — half of what makes up a Garou — can draw curious, hateful, even aggressive spirits, and chivvy others away. Certain places might seem more placid but sap the Rage or Health of interlopers. And there's always the risk of getting lost, as navigating might require an Occult or Wisdom test, rather than Survival or Streetwise.

Use of the Rite of Shadow Passage allows Garou packs to enter and exit the Umbra. Gifts and Rites work as in the physical world, unless otherwise stated, while Helios and Luna rise in tandem with the sun and the moon, respectively. (The latter outshines the former on the Umbral side of the Gauntlet, however.)

While in the Umbra, a Garou requires no food or drink, sustaining their spiritual form through sheer force of will instead. In addition to any other hazards, each scene spent in the Umbra after the first requires the expenditure of a Willpower, or the Garou suffers a level of Aggravated Health damage as their body starts to wither and fade. Werewolves that die in this way sometimes comack as Starving Remnants. (See p. 283)

THE GAUNTLET: BARRIER BETWEEN WORLDS

Separating the physical world from the spirit world is the Gauntlet, variously described as anything from an invisible metaphysical force to a tangible membrane, depending on where the individual encounters the barrier. In this era of Apocalypse, the Gauntlet has become rigid and even impermeable in some places — a stark separation between the physical world and the Umbra. These days, crossing the Gauntlet and entering the Umbra requires great personal and spiritual sacrifice, the observation of ritual behavior, and often the participation of one's entire pack. Alternatively, access may occur at a place in the world where the boundary is consistently weak or porous, as with a caern.

Note that the inverse does not seem to be true. Moving from the spirit world into the physical world is still doable, and many sites of blight in the world are actually manifestations of spirit-energy (or even hostile spirits themselves, in search of physical hosts to possess) emerging from the Umbra. Such spiritual blight is a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy: Something causes the desolation, the entropic imbalance in its wake furthers the desolation, and a sick-get-sicker effect occurs as fouled environments grow more and more toxic.

I can tell you why the Gauntlet's harder to cross now than ever before. It's the Weaver. Pattern Spiders are sewing up the thin patches that side of the Spirit Wilds. You think it's bad now, it's gonna get worse. Weaver's gonna have it sealed up so tight, the spirit world is going to peel off the physical world like an old scab. And probably dry up and crumble away like an old scab, too.

– ROCKY TWO-TONGUES, BONE GNAWER PHILODOX

Who's Out There?

Some non-Garou spiritualists, mystics, and other supernatural creatures may have developed their own, more esoteric methods of crossing into the Umbra. Some bypass the Gauntlet entirely by traveling to the spirit world in dreams. Others rely on a spirit to open a breach for them. Some remarkable human occultists project their spirits as their bodies remain in the physical world, whereas the Wyrm's servants may employ dark rituals or cruel implements to rip open the Gauntlet at its thickest. Packs of werewolves may well come across such individuals in their travels, and so might go the first meeting between a recently Changed werewolf and the various creatures lurking in the spirit world's dark spaces.

In almost every case, though, those Umbral interlopers aren't perceiving the same things that Garou do. Both may describe their experiences in the "spirit world," but the Umbra, as a perspective, a phenomenon, and even a place, is unique to werewolves.

TRAVERSING THE UMBRA

Sometimes Horned Serpent will illuminate you with favor! Sometimes Horned Serpent will send you plunging off a cliff.

– NATALIA BARKINGMAN, GHOST COUNCIL RAGABASH

The Umbra is vast and ever-changing, at times guiding those who travel its myriad paths, at times confounding them. Werewolves in the Spirit Wilds find mystery, horror, and even fascination, but finding what they're looking for and surviving their travels are more difficult.

Traversing the Umbra is itself an exercise in mystery and conviction. In some spirit-spaces, one's sense of place is effectively one-to-one with the physical world. One takes a step, and one has traveled a step. This is — probably — true for the vast majority of the Umbra.

The nuance of the matter, though, is that the Umbra isn't built to be traversed, step-by-step, in the manner of the material world. Its native denizens are themselves creatures of spirit, who don't necessarily even "walk." They may float through the spiritual atmosphere, or think themselves to their desired location, or enter the spiritual shadow of one body of water and emerge from a different, unconnected body of water without consideration for how they spatially "got there." In the deepest and bleakest corners of nightmare, hating or devouring might be that region's horrific methods of locomotion, or movement might result from them. As ever, the Garou understanding of what and why is incomplete.

Knowing how to navigate the Umbra is important and an early skill set Garou must learn. Some of these lessons include:

* Navigation by analogy is more reliable than navigation by Umbral geography. Following webs and rigid patterns may lead to a Weaver-servitor the pack seeks, whereas following symbolic manifestations associated with a particular spirit may bring the pack into their presence. Follow the sequence of broken walls to find Gorgon; listen for the laughter of the tumbling water to find the river-spirit.
* Spirits know the regions in which they dwell. Talking to them is an important tool for navigating the region, but spirits often demand payment for their assistance. The nature of such payment varies, but it can include seekings, sacrifices, performances, acts

of obedience, or trinkets. Traditionally, this spirit recompense is known to the Garou as chiminage, but fewer and fewer young werewolves are familiar with this seemingly archaic term.

* Travelers often leave spirit-trails as they move through the spirit world. Trained Garou and local spirits can follow and interpret these paths, learning something about the being responsible in the process. Many spirit-realm denizens know how to occlude such trails or disguise them, however.

SPIRITS

It stands to reason that if the Umbra is a spiritual reflection of the world, it must be populated by some number of spirits. Given the animistic perspective of the Garou, these spirits are the thinking, feeling consciousness associated with places, individuals, animals, and even more esoteric concepts. Potentially anything can have an animating spirit, and therefore be spiritually "personified" in the Umbra, so long as someone, somewhere, thinks or feels about it (or thought or felt about it). At least, that's the prevailing Garou perspective. Wise theurges and savvy philodoxes know that there are other things and people out there with their own takes on the metaphysics of the world and what surrounds it — and how fearsomely different they are from the lens through which werewolves see reality.

WHO SPIRITS ARE

Returning briefly to the metaphor of the light of thought and emotion (see p. 225), a spirit may emerge from anything that provokes thought or feeling. Which is to say, anything and everything might have an active spirit, from the specific to the ideal, from the lofty to the commonplace to the most cruel or incomprehensible.

For example, the spirit of a river might move through the Umbral reflection of that river at the same time a mighty Incarna, the spirit of water itself, courses through that same ephemeral river.

Every spirit is a thinking entity. They may be simple and straightforward, they may be cunning, or their minds might be wholly alien to creatures of more understandable mindset like the Garou. Ultimately, what this means is that every spirit has wants and needs.

Spirit Veracity

Garou are often influenced by the mortal cultures in which they live, which can shape the perspective of their relationships with the spirit world. When it comes to individual spirits, especially powerful ones such as Patron Spirits or the like, how a Garou interprets interactions with those spirits may occur in the context of the culture they recognize most. Of course, this alignment doesn't always happen. Spirits often have the ability to dictate how others perceive them, and the Umbra in which they dwell is a magnificent mystery — but many Garou find that a familiar context helps them understand the world as it is.

So, for example, a Ghost Council Garou with a Native American background may well perceive Horned Serpent in a different way than fellow Ghost Council Garou living amid Scandinavian, Iranian, or North African human cultures. Through the Garou lens, all of them are true, all of them are "the" Horned Serpent, even if all of them are different. The same reasoning stands for Gorgon, the common interpretation of whom is decidedly Greek... or even the inchoate Fenris....

HIERARCHY OF SPIRITS

Individual spirits organize into their own cohorts, possess influence over their own domains, and behave according to their own laws. Some spirits are meant to be respected; others, feared. Still others work with the Garou to protect Gaia. However, many more possess their own agendas and motivations — things werewolves must recognize, and work around, to fulfill their own duty.

Not to say that all spirits are equal entities — far from it. Spirits take a variety of forms, from the merest moonlight-spirit circling a caern so that its guardians can better keep watch to — presumably — the great and terrible spirits that possess a power unto existence itself, and whose very bailiwick is creation, order, and decay....

Spirits observe a hierarchy, which itself evolves from a complicated interaction of might, duty, and obligation. Every spirit has a purpose — something to which it attends — and these roles themselves might be simple, complex, or even inscrutable, as with the greater movements of the tribes' Patron Spirits, spirits associated with forces of nature and esoteric phenomena, and Gaia herself.

Understanding such purposes often eludes the Garou, and clever theurges spend their lives understanding why spirits behave as they do, in addition to how they might be persuaded to help Gaia's fallen champions atone for the failures of their kind. That, and how to elude or assuage bellicose spirits who seem to feel no duty to Gaia or those in her service.

Whereas the hierarchy of spirits is natural to them, it is less so to Garou, and probably imperceptible to anyone not native to the Umbra. Werewolf theurges and galliards have struggled to name and classify this hierarchy since time immemorial, but they generally agree upon rough classifications for it — which is important! The spirits themselves probably don't understand the hierarchy the same way the Garou — themselves outsiders in that hierarchy — do. This hierarchy is simply what werewolves have been able to observe in their dealing with spirits since the time of legends.

The current system stratifies spirits into four categories based on their role and importance in the cosmic order.

Celestines

Although not the cornerstones of reality that the Triat constitutes, Celestines are still impossibly ancient beings of vast spiritual influence in the Umbra. Among their numbers are the spirits of celestial bodies, the fading echoes of forgotten gods, and the most powerful servants of the Triat. No matter their nature, each is free-willed, self-aware, and highly intelligent. Some speak. Some communicate in other ways, when they deign to do so. Others simply are.

As such, interaction with Celestines is exceedingly rare and enigmatic, if it can be remembered and truly understood at all. They dwell in Umbral territories of their own creation, where they are one with everything therein, present in every aspect. Their lairs and power make direct communication with them, even by legendary Garou, impossible, and so when a Celestine must act it seemingly does so through an avatar. These avatars are aspects of a Celestine, wreathed in a guise that lesser beings might understand and interact with. Although mere shards of a Celestine's power, avatars are still among the most powerful beings in the Spirit Wilds.

Theurges believe that Celestines might be capable of manifesting multiple avatars at once, though they probably do so only sparingly. Avatars rarely manifest in the physical world, and even more rarely intervene in ongoing events. Such occurrences are momentous occasions, even to the spiritually aware Garou, so the appearance of a suspected avatar carries the weight of omen. Seers, spirit-talkers, and other sorts of diviners seek their messages via star-watching, omen-casting, and even coaxing the techno-spirits of computer systems.

As Garou understand it, a Celestine's power comes with risk. Should Celestines die, the objects they embody would surely die with them! The sun, the moon, or the planets could crumble. Water could evaporate; fire could fail to ignite. Tribal wisdom is rife with stories of clever werewolves stealing something from a Celestine's lair, only for the spirit to beg the werewolves for it later, lest they vanish from the world and take with them sunlight, or flora, or the ability to write.

Entities believed by the Garou to be Celestines include Gaia, the spirit of the Earth; Luna, the spirit of the Moon; and Helios, the spirit of the Sun.

What they might want: The nethermost strand of the Weaver's web, every thought of autumn, a kiss from Gaia's lips, the depths of the sea, redemption

IN STORIES

Celestines don't take direct, personal action; it's probably incorrect to think of them as "people" in the context that most Garou have. If the players' characters interact with a Celestine, it's almost certainly through an avatar or servitor-spirit pursuing that Celestine's goals on an individual level (which means they're some form of lesser spirit). Celestines help give context to the story on a thematic level, or perhaps charge the pack (through intermediary spirits) with some sort of legendary oath. Often what they desire is metaphorical, as might be the actions the pack may take in their name — those exceedingly rare packs in which a Celestine takes an interest, of course.

- During a particularly strange jaunt into the depths of the Umbra, the pack may find itself walking across the face of an enormous, slumbering humanoid consciousness, occasionally beset by flying spirit-books representing the entity's thoughts and localized Umbral storms representing their emotions.
- One of the tribe's Patron Spirits (see Incarnae, below) has greatly offended a Celestine, and Gifts and Rites associated with that Patron Spirit won't work until every member of the tribe makes a particular and difficult sacrifice to earn their patron an audience of atonement with the aggrieved great spirit.

Incarnae

The Incarnae occupy the tier in the hierarchy immediately below the Celestines. Many of these spirits act as servants, champions, and advisors to their numinous superiors, and Incarnae may even derive their power from these relationships. Others simply willed themselves (or were willed) into being, or some other spiritual parthenogenesis resulted in their existence.

Each Incarna has a specific purpose and a sphere of influence in which they can assert their powers and largely interact with reality through avatars. Albeit lesser than an avatar of a Celestine, an Incarna's avatar is still a powerful force — probably greater than any pack of Garou could hope to best directly — so diplomacy and the spirit-ways of chiminage are most effective with them. Many Incarnae are... ***ambitious***, if that's the right word, believe that their place in the hierarchy is merely an intermediary step, and that, eventually, they shall ascend to join the ranks of the Celestines.

Incarnae are probably the most powerful spirits a werewolf is likely to interact with directly. Among their number are the Garou Patron Spirits, who may send avatars to communicate with those whom they favor. Such a visitation ideally provides guidance, spiritual blessings, and tutelage, but is just as likely to provide a humbling lesson to a wayward individual, or to utterly torment one who has broken faith.

Apart from the Patron Spirits, Incarnae generally "own" some specific portfolio or concept. A specific great mountain or timeless forest might have its own Incarna, for example, or the Incarna may represent a particularly virulent disease or even one specific nightmare experienced by any number of human dreamers.

Entities recognized as Incarnae by the Garou include the Patron Spirits of each tribe; the spirit of wilderness and predatory birds; Old Man Sea, the spirit of the coast and seafarers; and the Wyrm-spirit of unnatural rot.

What they might want: A rival's champion's dying breath, a scale stolen from one of the Wyrm's hellish lairs, the wind that carries the name of their bygone paramour, black fire, three feathers

IN STORIES

As do Celestines, Incarnae deal only rarely with Garou in any direct way, the occasional exception being the Patron Spirit of a werewolf's tribe making its desires known to the tribe's members. And even so, such interaction is often the duty of a messenger-spirit; Incarnae are busy fostering creation, sculpting a territory in the Spirit Wilds in their image, or fighting off the sluggishness of an epochal "slumber." Even if the Garou might have an inkling of what an Incarna wants, it's probably impossible to figure out why, unless the spirit is so alien that it is, in fact, wholly direct, and communicates with them in forthright urges and motives.

- A Patron Spirit has taken particular interest in a member of its tribe and charges them with a spiritual calling, promising them momentous Renown if they can bring back what the spirit wants... ***without being witnessed while collecting it.***
- An Incarna who serves a critical purpose — holding a rampaging terror imprisoned, suspending the sky above the mountaintops, keeping the river pure — has gone silent. In response, distraught spirit-speakers come to the Garou. How does the pack discover more information about this potent spirit, let alone help solve the problem? What does it even look like in the physical world?

Jagglings

The tier of the hierarchy for jagglings consists of spirits that are members of some greater cohort, such as dedicated servitors to Incarnae or Celestines, or minions of the Triat. This rank is perhaps the broadest in terms of the capacity of the spirits within it, including everything from task-oriented functionaries to independent spirits as complex as any human or Garou — and then some. A jaggling might serve as factotum to mighty Falcon, or a jaggling might ward a rundown caern in Montreal or a forgotten caern in the shadow of Petra.

Many jagglings fulfill whatever directives their creator imposed upon them and serve loyally as a result, though some develop or earn free will during the course of their service. By contrast, free-willed jagglings may develop in the dawn-lighted byways and hidden corners of the Spirit Wilds, especially ones of more esoteric purpose. Jagglings are ubiquitous, and they thrive where the attention of greater things rarely falls.

Whereas each Incarna or Celestine is a unique being, defining the object or subject it embodies, jagglings exist in broad types roughly analogous to the species of physical creatures. Two platypus-spirits may act differently, but their place in the celestial hierarchy and their spiritual physiology are roughly the same. Two river-spirits might "embody" a mighty and a humble river, respectively, but they're both jagglings.

Jagglings, among all spirits, are the ones werewolves are perhaps most, and most frequently, familiar with. The animal-spirits that teach Garou gifts, the Banes whose cruel possessions they fight, and the ancestor-spirits that inhabit their caerns are all of this class.

Entities recognized as jagglings by Garou include caern guardians, with which packs form protective agreements at places of power; idealized animal-spirits, the "template" forms of earthly animals; spider-like weaver-spirits of nuclear energy; and Nexus Crawlers, Wyrm-aspected behemoths that distort and ruin everything in their path.

What they might want: Revenge, assistance when their immediate task becomes daunting, a looking glass broken into a hundred shards, a human partner to bear their fleshbound child

IN STORIES

Interactions between jagglings and Garou are probably the most common and significant ones to occur among all such encounters in which entities of the spirit hierarchy participate. That is, they're more frequent and understandable than enigmatic encounters with greater spirits or missives from same, and there's more of an aware, sentient exchange possible with jagglings than with the more minimal consciousness of the gafflings, below. It's not quite accurate to say that jagglings are "like people," however. They can certainly be as complex as humans, but the way they perceive the world, their desires, and attitudes are as wholly other as any creature's that dwells in the Umbra. Which is to say, even in their categories, jagglings are individuals and need to be figured out as Garou have dealings with them.

- The dormant spirit of a caern the players' characters rediscover tests them with three increasingly difficult challenges, and if they can successfully complete them, the jaggling will help them rejuvenate the neglected place of power
- A jaggling once had a relationship with another spirit over the mountain and under the shadow, but since then the spirit has been tasked with making sure the tide flows in and flows out according to the wishes of the Vast Sea. The spirit would very much appreciate the pack passing a message to their erstwhile consort... and bringing back word of how the werewolves fared.
- The pack encounters a possessed human in the physical world, and probably immediately assumes that the spirit is an aggressive Bane. It's not, however, and figuring out why the spirit is possessing its host is the first step in figuring out what's going on.

Gafflings

At the bottom of the spiritual hierarchy, below the most meager of jagglings, are the gafflings. These spirits are barely sentient servants of jagglings and are seemingly viewed by spirits in the way that humans view animals. They are capable of surviving in the spiritual realms where they were brought into existence, but often little else. Such spirits are often bound by restrictive pacts with other spirits (often to the gaffling's disadvantage...), but some gafflings emerge from strange circumstances or very specific events, such as a gaffling representing one individual thought, or a gaffling that exists as a result of the torment of one hungry pack of wolves.

Few gafflings develop any noteworthy intelligence, and fewer still possess free will or even much self-awareness. The ones that can speak don't seem to consider themselves as part of a greater world or cosmology; rather, an extension of some purpose they don't understand, and in fact they seem more comfortable when directed or even wielded by others. This subservience gives them a reputation for utter loyalty, as the idea of betraying their master when given the opportunity makes no more sense to them than a finger attempting to strangle its hand.

Entities recognized by the Garou as gafflings include self-aware puzzles that wander the Umbra, certain spirits hunted in sacred rites, and the seemingly endless Wyrm-spirits of pollution that blight the unfortunate Umbral regions adjacent to environmental disasters.

What they might want: A burnt offering, appreciation, fresh kill, a song, the end of all life in their proximity

IN STORIES

A gaffling is almost never the most powerful spirit a Garou pack might encounter during a story, but that doesn't mean they shouldn't be significant. Like any other element of the Spirit Wilds, gafflings are simply different in their outlook, and with a focus that highlights their stark contrast with werewolves from the physical world. Then again, their simple roles mean that they can also emphasize just how many spirits there are in the Umbra, and how minute their functions can be. It all depends on how the Garou need to relate to them.

- A gaffling performs some rote task over and over where the Garou discover it. No surprises there, but what's odd is why the gaffling fulfills its duty here. Why is this flame spirit circling ever closer to that grove of Umbral trees? Why is the disease-spirit flitting toward the Umbral counterpart of the refugee camp in the physical world? Why is the horde of spirit-mice charging toward Owl's demesne?

- A mischievous gaffling offers to teach one of the Garou a Gift that far exceeds its own power to fulfill.
- A minor moon-spirit beckons the pack, seemingly in service to Luna herself, but the packmates wise to the spirit-ways notice that the spirit is acting erratically for its kind, and it seems to be leading them into a part of the Umbra that... shouldn't be there — and a moment later, everything seems fine....
- While in a desperate hurry, the players' characters discover a gaffling standing guard over a hidden pathway that would give them both advantages of time and strategy — but the gaffling absolutely disallows them access, for reasons it has been forbidden to divulge. The pack could easily overpower the gaffling, but does even so simple a creature deserve such treatment? Why is it hiding the shortcut, and at whose behest? ■

Communicating With Spirits

Spirits communicate through a variety of means. Some speak in riddles, others in smells, or in memories, to name just a few. Some project concepts into the minds of others; some display arrays of moonlight as emotion or etch runes into the very air. Most can "speak," or at least communicate verbally with Garou, should they choose to do so. Even two different spirits of the same type may have very different ways of communicating — for example, one plague-Bane might speak in wheezing, spattering sneers, whereas another communicates via eructations of germs and filth.

Simply conversing with spirits does not provide control or leverage over them, however, though interactions with them are governed by the same sorts of Attribute-plus-Skill rolls as are ones with physical individuals. Similarly, certain Gifts or Rites may compel spirits to action or limit the sorts of communication they convey.

Storytellers, you are encouraged to play up distinct methods of communication, both as sensory detail in encounters with spirits, but also to foreshadow events, offer clues, and differentiate individual spirits.

CHAPTER NINE

Allies and Antagonists

> Monsters cannot be announced. One cannot say: "Here are our monsters," without immediately turning the monsters into pets.
>
> — JACQUES DERRIDA

The Garou perspective is animistic, positing that numerous things beyond what many humans consider to be people are actually conscious, and alive, and potentially even persons themselves. In particular, the Garou perceive the world (including both the physical world and the Umbra) to be populated by spirits. And unfortunately, in this time of Apocalypse, many of those spirits are hostile and, indeed, antithetical to harmonious life.

Other antagonists, though, are quite physical, whether they're well-armed agents of government-sponsored werewolf-hunting organizations or corporate security forces or other Garou. In fact, some antagonists might not even realize they're antagonists until the Garou tear into them — and the same might be true of the Garou themselves, who might not realize the extent of their opposition until Rage takes hold. Let the bodies hit the floor.

Also, let's be honest: Werewolves have *lots* of antagonists. Such plenitude stands to reason, as one of **Werewolf**'s core conflicts is external: the world is as it is because outside forces acting upon it have created an imbalance of its functioning mechanisms. The Wyrm and its minions are ascendant because the people of the world have made it so. And that fact highlights one of the Garou's primary tragedies: They're very well suited to violence, but violence is often the least suitable tool for addressing the long-term causes of the Apocalypse.

The most important thing to remember about antagonists in **Werewolf** is that *they all want something.* They have a reason to exist and an agenda they're pursuing. Enemies exist to effect what they want to happen. A pack of fomori hanging around to fight werewolves *uh, just because* doesn't make much sense. Even at a level as high and incomprehensible as the Triat itself, individual and cosmological forces seek specific ends.

The players' pack might not always know exactly what their enemies want, but that's part of the story: figuring out what the antagonists are doing. From there, the players' Garou have many alternatives. Do they want to use the antagonists' ambitions against them? Do they want to deny the antagonists their desires by protecting what's threatened? Or is destroying what the enemies want acceptable collateral damage? Do they simply want to use what they've discovered to find the enemies and tear them to shreds? These options show how a story acquires depth and meaning, especially when the pack's methods put it in conflict with the pack's ambitions and challenges each individual Garou's relationship with Gaia. And sometimes, werewolves' Rage makes tough decisions for them, leaving them to deal with the consequences later.

ANTAGONIST FORMATS

Just as with scenes, the Storyteller can zoom in and out on the mechanical details of antagonists and other supporting characters. At their very simplest, foes just need a description and a difficulty level, such as: Security Guard 3, which makes defeating this antagonist a Difficulty 3 roll with the appropriate ability. In a conflict, falling short of this difficulty can cause damage.

Example: Jodie goes up against the aforementioned Security Guard, but her player earns only one success on a Strength + Brawl roll. Jodie suffers two points of damage (perhaps +1 or more if the guard is armed), and the guard remains a threat.

In most cases, antagonists have pools for key action categories and certain actions, as opposed to discrete Attribute or Skill values. It's probably not important what a spirit's Driving Skill value is (!), but if a smuggler has a Driving (Evasive Maneuvers) pool listed, that's something they're particularly adept at doing.

General Difficulties: The General Difficulty values given for each antagonist let the Storyteller add a bit more nuance while still remaining streamlined. The number before the slash represents the Difficulty to defeat their strongest ability, the number after the slash the Difficulty to overcome them in other tests.

Antagonist Options: If you need to roll a pool for an antagonist, roll twice the Difficulty, but note that this is rarely necessary (since twice the Difficulty as a pool will probably equal the Difficulty value anyway). You can also, as an option, roll a single die every time the antagonist's Difficulty comes into play, and on a 0 add 2 to their Difficulty for that test.

Gifts: Some antagonists have supernatural powers that are either similar to Gifts or modeled on the same mechanics. Use the antagonist Gift pool when assembling pools for these powers or half (round up) if a specific Renown value is necessary. Antagonists using Gifts don't need to pay any costs, though unless otherwise stated, each antagonist can use only one Gift per turn and never during frenzy or its equivalent.

SPIRITS

On occasion, spiritual entities act against the Garou, whether in the physical world or in the Spirit Wilds — or both. Individuals of nonanimistic cultures may describe such interactions between spirits and physical forms as "possession," but as the Garou interpret the world, this is simply the way of things. (Note that this stance is not a summary of all animistic cultures' perspectives — the assumptions of Werewolf reflect uniquely Garou worldviews.)

Remember, the Triat simply is. It's not subject to perceived human qualities like "good" or "evil"; the various Triatic forces are just that – forces, not personalities. Even the Garou sometimes forget this truth, but Storytellers using antagonists to challenge the troupe's werewolves should bear it in mind. None of the spirits here are inherently "good guys" or "bad guys," they're just doing their thing – and that thing may be inimical to all life or Gaia's wellbeing.

For example, a fomor is a human who has been possessed by a Bane for an extended period of time. One particular fomor might be possessed by a Bane of greed, and thus manifest great, grasping hands and extraordinarily long

arms, the better to reach out and pull whatever it desires toward itself. Another fomor might be possessed by a Bane of hunger, with a distended, fanged maw, and no amount of voracious eating may sate its appetite.

Such parallels prove true even for extremely powerful antagonists when they pierce the Gauntlet. When a nexus crawler manifests in the physical world, at a construction site, it doesn't do so as a kaiju emerging from beyond the Gauntlet. Rather, it agglomerates and appropriates nearby elements of the physical world, effectively possessing them, so that it might appear as a terrifying hulk comprising construction vehicles, an enormous drill-claw, and writhing pipes and hoses that transport various dangerous fuels and fluids. A nexus crawler manifesting at an open-pit mine might likewise appear as a rampant bucket-wheel excavator belching exhaust and strewing caustic spray. Meanwhile, in the Umbra, the nexus crawler maintains its true form as a black shimmer of entropy or a spindly-legged nightmare-beast.

Destroying a spirit enemy's possessed host is only part of the solution, however. The malignant spirit itself effectively abandons the host and returns to the Umbra, leaving behind a body or a heap of detritus. Much as with Garou who die (see p. 134), fomori and other possessed individuals "revert to their natural form" when the intruding spirit abandons them once they die. A fomor's arms and hands and mouth assume once again their original human proportions; the manifest nexus crawler leaves behind a heap of rubble, ruined machinery, and corroded connective mass, such as rebar, rust, and spewing oil. Thus do the spirit world and malignant cosmological forces maintain their secrecy in a world of self-described "rational" humans. Of course, wise Garou see commonalities between this process and the Delirium, but lapses in the mystical routine are surely behind such folkloric accounts of strange creatures reverting to their original state upon their mythic defeat.

It's not exclusively Wyrm-aligned spirits that manifest this way, please note. If something is so significant that a spirit appears to take control of it, it does so in a way that incorporates the context of the physical world. Consider, for example, a skyscraper, the executive floors of which are accessible only by elevator, where peeking into the Umbra reveals the elevators to be Weaver-spiders that

clutch their passengers in their many legs and glide up a strand of spirit-silk. Another example might be an agitated water-spirit that unknowingly drowns human swimmers in its eddies and undertow in the physical world as it attempts to escape its confines during an Umbral storm.

The Spirit Lens

As discussed elsewhere (see p. 224), werewolves' understanding of the spirit world and its denizens is imperfect. Even theurges admit that their information is observed rather than objective. So when spirit descriptions state that something is a "spirit of anger" or "a Bane of pollution," that's the werewolf perspective, not a universal truth. Perhaps only the spirits themselves know their true functions, and surely not even all of them possess the sense of self to do so. But enough werewolves have encountered enough of these spirits enough times in the described context for the categories to work — for Garou purposes, at least.

Also, in descriptions of antagonists, spirits in particular can be misleading, especially when possessing people or things in the physical world. Storytellers are encouraged to describe what the Garou see, hear, smell, etc., instead of simply saying, "You see three hoglings rooting around behind the mechanic's shop." Detail helps keep each encounter unique and encourages the players to have their characters seek more information.

Storytellers, this approach also gives you narrative room to test the pack's expectations. Perhaps a rampaging Bane has information the Garou need, or perhaps the Falcon-spirit is inscrutably angry with the pack's Silver Fang. As with all antagonists, spirits have their own objectives, and simply assuming that seeing one of these things is an invitation to kill it may send the Garou down a path toward disaster.

Storytellers are also encouraged to get creative with spirit possession (particularly with Banes). The Possession / Manifestation sections for each spirit are suggestions, and not comprehensive ones. For example, a Storyteller might choose to have a Scrag (see p. 250) possess an industrial trash compactor that mires its victims in accumulated debris before crushing them instead of using the more common possessed humanoid. Tweak these descriptions and tailor the appearance of spirits to the events of your stories.

General Characteristics

Spirits share multiple characteristics:

Power: Spirits vary in the amount of power they possess, even among spirits of similar type. Spirits use their Power as a dice pool for any test not covered by their Exceptional Pools, which are usually expressed as a modifier to their Power. A spirit with "Brawl +2" and a Power of 3 thus has a Brawl pool of 5. Spirits in the Umbra are always treated as having Enhanced damage resistance (see below), and unless otherwise noted a spirit has Health levels equal to twice its Power value. Any Willpower damage suffered by the spirit is dealt to their Health tracker, as mind and body are one and the same to the denizens of the Umbra. (This rule does not apply to werewolves, of course, who are half-physical and abide by the normal rules.) Power is expressed as a dice pool by default but can be treated as a Difficulty by dividing it by two (round up), as usual.

Abandon: The spirit may abandon the host it's possessing and return to the Umbra. At its discretion, it returns to its place of creation (probably far from the current action), or it can retreat just beyond the Gauntlet to a place in the Umbra analogous to its host's location in the physical world.

Possession: A spirit can possess a host, usually for a scene or less, and control its movements but not always its thoughts. Long-term possessions are comparatively rare for spirits other than Banes, and long-term Bane possession results in fomori (see p. 262). Possession need not always be human — some spirits are able to take possession only of lower-order animals, and some exclusively possess machines or other objects. Spirits that possess a host are considered to have crossed the Gauntlet, and whereas their spirit-form is invisible and incorporeal while in the physical world, they are still fully present there. To confront the spirit in the Umbra, their host body needs to be destroyed, or they need to be persuaded to leave — forcibly (banished) or otherwise. Cameras and other devices that capture images of physical subjects do not visually indicate when a subject is possessed, though any remarkable alterations resulting from the possession (such as a horrific, fanged maw) may well be visible.

Reversion: Any physical alteration that a spirit wreaks upon its host's body during possession reverts to its original state when the victim dies and the spirit flees, leaving only a "normal" body appropriate to the

host, whether for a brief possession or a long-term fomor inhabitation. The same is true for any nonbodily telltale indicators, which quickly degrade or disappear. Of course, any remains may have been lacerated by Garou claws, etc. Note that gross transformations of the host body are relatively rare in the case of temporary possessions, but especially powerful or destructive spirits have been known to wreak havoc on their living hosts, usually killing them in the aftermath.

Enhanced damage resistance: All spirits and some possessed, if noted on their Health, have *enhanced damage resistance*, sustaining physical damage like a Garou. They treat mundane piercing and slashing damage as superficial, and they take Aggravated damage only from fire and certain attacks that deal Aggravated damage to Garou, such as the bite of a crinos or hispo. They are not vulnerable to silver, however.

BANES

According to the Garou, Banes are part of the vast menagerie of spirits that serve the Wyrm. Their forms are legion, each reflecting an aspect of that cosmological force. Most are grotesque, but many are subtler. Destruction, deception, and corruption take many forms, and if inhuman beauty and lustful seduction serve the Wyrm's needs, such is the face Banes present.

Some Banes are avatars of principles such as hate, disease, or famine; others are focused, destructive entities. They range in power from petty distractions to unearthly forces of devastation and can be found anywhere the Wyrm's influence extends. Banes are attracted to dark, destructive impulses and emotions, and they gather in the Umbra where such emotions bleed through from the mortal world, awaiting an opportunity to slip past the Gauntlet and possess a fleshly host. They are, inherently, of the Wyrm, and annihilation is the only sure way to rid an area of their influence.

That's key: Physical hosts *invite* Banes to possess them, whether consciously ("I want revenge!") or unwittingly, as with an individual in the throes of despair. Banes don't spontaneously appear.

Similarly, the presence of Banes amplifies negative emotions. Banes don't *cause* the emotions they intensify, but their presence makes them worse.

A Bane may inhabit a brutal captain of a private military contractor, one who sees bullying and violence as a path to power; or a Bane may inhabit a grieving father, driven by sorrow to cruelty against "the wrong child"

who survived an accident. Occasionally, Banes may possess even lower-order creatures, such as by being drawn to an animal kept captive in wretched conditions, or an animal forced into starving retreat by the vanishing of its habitat.

What Do They Want: Banes are generally sophisticated enough to have their own ambitions, which often come at the overlap of what they exemplify (greed, hunger, pollution, etc.) and the intentions of any greater spirit entity they may serve. Banes are also often nasty and cunning, and may intentionally twist their purposes toward something that benefits them individually. For example, a Bane of famine may seek to starve other Banes of spiritual nourishment, even as they possess a host to set a wheat field alight or spoil the food at the church pantry.

Storytelling With Banes

Narratively and thematically, Banes always represent something — they amplify, facilitate, aggravate, and sour what is already there. Which is to say that Banes aren't *responsible* for human evil. Tragically, many of a Bane's victims haven't even done anything overt to earn their fate. As such, Banes should be symptoms and exacerbating factors in mortal problems rather than their initiators. A serial killer may attract a Bane interested in perpetuating violence and preying upon the bereaved, but a person won't become a serial killer because a Bane "made them do it."

Of course, many Garou don't grasp this mechanism, which sometimes puts werewolf packs in a mode of perpetually fighting Banes as symptoms while neglecting a root cause they fail to see, especially those Garou who seek Glory.

Reasoning or negotiating with a Bane can be very difficult, given that what they want is so often antithetical to what the Garou want. Indeed, the only way many Garou can handle the threat Banes represent is through violence. To hear some werewolves tell it, this is fighting fire with fire, but more nuanced Garou worry that if the only tool they have to solve problems is Rage, then every challenge becomes one that will be solved only by tearing things apart.

As the Garou interpret things, all Banes are Wyrm spirits, but not all Wyrm spirits are Banes. For example, a spirit of natural decay and a spirit of timeworn entropy are spirits that serve the Wyrm's role but aren't (necessarily) Banes. Wise Garou know the difference between spirits of the Wyrm in its proper order versus spirits of the Wyrm rampant or ascendant.

PITY THE VICTIMS

Because Banes that manifest in the physical world possess otherwise mundane hosts, there's frequently an element of tragedy to combating Banes. The possessed individual frequently shows no mercy, but the circumstances that made them vulnerable to Banes might not have been of their own doing. The desperately hungry inhabited by Scavenger Packs, those who lash out in desperate fear who become possessed by Psychomachiae, the list goes on — sometimes the unfair state of the world itself all but guarantees an unfortunate individual will meet an even more unfortunate end.

Then again, some people are so fucking mean for its own sake, they'd even invite the Bane inside them if they knew Banes existed.

ENVIRONMENTS

Given their nature, Banes are valuable to establish tone, suggest action to players, and perform environmental storytelling about a location. A shopping center that looks unremarkable at first glance may warrant a second when its Umbral counterpart is a looming, obsidian-clad monstrosity around which Banes of greed and consumption wail and fly. Alternatively, Banes taking the form of bubo-covered shopworkers or blood-sucking tumorous masses imply very different threats in the physical realm.

The infinite variety of Banes means that new types may emerge for specific tasks or arise naturally from new atrocities. Use the Banes detailed here, but also use them as a guideline for creating Banes that specifically suit your chronicle. The important thing is not strict accuracy or humanization of a concept but to ensure that the new Bane has characteristics and powers that reinforce its malignant role.

DIRECT CONFLICT

Many times, werewolves face Banes in the physical world in the form of their hosts. Killing or destroying a host doesn't destroy the Bane, it simply looses that Bane from its fleshly mooring. Unless pursued, the Bane almost certainly escapes into the Umbra. Of course, if other suitable vessels are nearby when its possessed body is destroyed, the Bane may seek to inhabit one of them, meaning the (physical) fight is probably not yet over...

Patron Spirits and the Spirit Hierarchy

As near as they can figure it, many Garou believe that Banes are frequently among the jaggling ranks of the spirit hierarchy.

Most Banes are associated with some greater spirit, at least in the context that Garou understand things. Banes themselves seem to possess enough sentience and autonomy to pursue their own ends, but they frequently do the bidding of more powerful spirits — which is, in fact, the only indication werewolves have of some of the motives among the more enigmatic spirits. Chances are, if you're ordering a Bane around, you're not doing so to the benefit of anyone else.

Spiritually attuned agents of Pentex (see p. 268) also often put Banes to use, or their efforts result in Bane infestations of afflicted areas. In this case, Banes may be subservient to Pentex's Patron Spirit, Fly, or they may

have a more complex relationship among the greater spirits that command them.

The Garou have dealt with the following types of Banes frequently enough to afford a generally recognized name to each category. The Banes in question probably don't know themselves as such, but the types suffice for Storyteller utility and common parlance around the caern-fires.

Asklepian

Asklepians are Banes of epidemics and pandemics. They arise amid disease outbreaks, feeding and breeding off the misery that arises and sapping the will of the community to fight the outbreak. They themselves spread disease, making each compromise more difficult, each carrier more virulent, and the plague itself more deadly.

Possession / Manifestation: In the physical world, an Asklepian afflicts an infected host, probably one displaying advanced symptoms of the pandemic. In the Umbra, Asklepians take the form of great fleas covered in spikes, on which are impaled various animal-spirit corpses and spirits of healing. Their jaws drip virulent fluids, and they are capable of incredible bursts of speed, leaping from place to place as fast as the diseases they represent travel.

ASKLEPIAN SPIRIT

Power: 2–6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl +2, Stealth +2

Notes / Other Traits:
Birthing Bite: In the Umbra, the bite of a Power 2 or higher Asklepian on the spirit-form of a Garou generates a full-grown Asklepian that bursts from the spirit-flesh of the victim after a turn (inflicting a level of Aggravated damage in the process). The newly generated Asklepian is one Power level below its parent and joins in the assault as soon as it bursts free of the victim, starting with the next turn.

ASKLEPIAN-POSSESSED HUMAN

General Difficulty: 3/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 3, Social 4, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Persuasion (Garner Sympathy) 6, Subterfuge (Hide Symptoms) 6

Notes / Other Traits:
Infection: In the physical world, Asklepians are highly contagious. They rarely attack outright, but do try to get close to their victims and infect them in hopes of spawning another Asklepian. Anyone whose character spends more than a few minutes within reach must win a Stamina + Medicine test against the Asklepian's Power or have their character be infected. Symptoms vary, depending on the physical contagion, but whatever the disease, the victim also becomes a carrier for a larval Asklepian. The larva can be seen only in the Umbra, where it can be removed with a Composure + Medicine test by someone able to perceive both worlds at once (such as through the Gift Penumbral Senses, p. 147). As long as it remains attached, the victim experiences a debilitating hopelessness over their progressing illness and cannot restore Willpower through normal means. If they die from the illness, the larva transforms into a new Asklepian, completing the circle of (hideous) life. A possessed Asklepian takes damage as does a human.

Bitter Rages

Bitter Rages fester where emotion runs unchecked, particularly among the Rage-driven Garou by feeding on anger and, in turn, provoking it. It seems they're most frequently encountered among supernatural creatures who can succumb to frenzy — notably the Garou, but apparently also among the deathless blood-drinkers known as vampires. It's not impossible for them to torment other creatures, as well, however, from humans to animals.

Possession / Manifestation: Although a Bitter Rage doesn't outright possess a host in the physical world, it can latch onto a subject, agitate them, and drive that individual to ever-greater irrational aggression, almost like rabies. In the Umbra, Bitter Rages appear as clusters of explosive spiritual energy, akin to visible static electricity. If encountered there, the Bitter Rage doesn't put up much in the way of a physical fight but instead tries to foment anger and distrust among the pack, communicating through flashes of memories that remind the Garou of past disagreements and resentment.

BITTER RAGE SPIRIT

Power: 2–4

Exceptional Dice Pools: Insight (Sore Spot) +6, Persuasion (Provocation) +6

Notes / Other Traits:
Provoke: Unlike many other Banes, Bitter Rages can influence victims in the physical world while they themselves are still in the Umbra. The victim suffers what amounts to a frenzy with a duration of the Bitter Rage's cruel whim — some hosts have frenzied themselves into starvation, whereas others have suffered torment just long enough to have their pack turn against them and tear them asunder. A victim of a Bitter Rage must win a Willpower test against the Power of the Bitter Rage each scene or enter frenzy. The Storyteller decides on the exact moment in each scene, but it usually coincides with a slight or provocation, real or imagined. The frenzy lasts until the Bitter Rage is sated on carnage, which is entirely up to the whim of the Bane (and the Storyteller), but the spirit can also be dislodged with a critical win on the Willpower test or by defeating it in the Umbra.

Dissonant Gestalt

Dissonant Gestalts are Banes of indoctrination and pluralistic ignorance. They spawn when people in an organization turn a blind eye to its ills, when ideals and accountability fail in the face of a naked pursuit of power. They are community turned rancid, the urge to conform that lets citizens ignore atrocity, soldiers perform genocides, and cults commit mass suicide.

The difficult part of dealing with a Dissonant Gestalt is expelling the Bane while minimizing the suffering of those who were taken in by the malicious happenings that spawned it.

Possession / Manifestation: In the physical world, a Dissonant Gestalt may possess an individual made arrogant by employees or supporters looking up to them and refusing to hold them accountable for misdeeds. They possess managers, priests, minor celebrities, extremist group leaders, and anyone else with a following who can propagate aberrant behavior where it's wrongly believed to be supported or accepted.

In the Umbra, Dissonant Gestalts take the form of great fungoid masses that slowly pull themselves forward on writhing tendrils. They may briefly puppeteer others, turning them into extensions of the atrocities it cannot implement without them. But without such guardians, the Dissonant Gestalt is more vulnerable than its bulk would suggest.

DISSONANT GESTALT SPIRIT

Power: 4–8

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl (Puppeteer) +2, Intimidate +4

Notes / Other Traits:
Puppeteer: In the Umbra, a Dissonant Gestalt can take control of an opponent by winning a Brawl test against them, their tendrils piercing the victim and turning them into the spirit's puppet. A puppeteered victim acts on the Gestalt's behalf but does not use Gifts or take any action that requires a Rage check. A Dissonant Gestalt can puppeteer up to its Power in victims at any one time. Severing the tentacles requires winning a Brawl test against the puppeteered victim, at which point the victim is released and can act normally the next turn. Once freed, a victim cannot be puppeteered again in the same scene.

DISSONANT GESTALT–POSSESSED HUMAN

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 6

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Intimidate 8, Leadership 7, Subterfuge (Shift Blame) 8

Notes / Other Traits:
Domineer: Hosts possessed by a Dissonant Gestalt find their ability to dominate and delegate is supernaturally magnified. To their subordinates they appear as inviolable avatars of whatever ideal or purpose they represent, and the followers or employees readily perform whatever atrocity or self-sacrifice they are ordered to commit. Even those who come from outside its sphere of formalized influence find the host's word hard to dispute and agree to simple requests (involving little to no danger), unless they can resist the spirit's Power with their Composure + Wits.

Drattosi

Drattosi are Banes of pollution, environmental despoilment, and natural ruin. Rare in times of Garou legend, they are terrifyingly common in the era of Apocalypse. Invariably toxic, Drattosi might appear as a sludgy oil slick on a beach, a festering heap of urban garbage in a decaying city, a streak of radioactive slag, or the like.

In both the Umbra and the physical world, Drattosi ambush passersby who stumble into the spirit's demesne, ripping them to pieces and absorbing the resultant gore. Beneath their noxious bulk, they burrow themselves

into the surroundings, excreting "lairs" like a crab's shell made of toxic byproduct, adorned with refuse similar to that of the calamity they inhabit.

Possession / Manifestation: In the physical world, Drattosi manifest as heaps of animate rubbish, often incorporating organic matter. The heaps may manifest claws or long, ropy arms with which to drag nearby prey — and more refuse — into their mass to contaminate and decompose. In the Umbra, Drattosi constitute a cumbersome, overwhelming threat. They appear there as enormous, crab-like armored monsters, with claws capable of shearing through a werewolf's body.

DRATTOSI SPIRIT

Power: 4–10

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl +4, Intimidate +4

Notes / Other Traits:
Armored Shell: The thick shell of a Drattosi in its Umbral form reduces any physical damage taken by 3 before any halving.

Giant Pincer Claws: The claws do +4 Superficial damage to Garou.

DRATTOSI-POSSESSED GARBAGE HEAP

General Difficulty: 6/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 9, Social 3, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 15, Willpower 7

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl (Grapple) 12, Stealth (Mimic Refuse) 6

Notes / Other Traits:
Noxious Limbs: A possessed collection of refuse can manifest grasping limbs with surprising speed. A victim caught unawares (by failing a Wits + Awareness test against the manifest Drattosi's Stealth) is automatically grappled, though the spirit is also capable of using brute force to subdue a more attentive victim. The grappled subject suffers a level of Aggravated damage each subsequent turn that they fail to break free of the grapple as their body rapidly decays, eventually turning into more refuse.

The pools above represent a large garbage heap. Adjust as desired for smaller (or potentially even bigger) Drattosi manifestations.

Furmlings

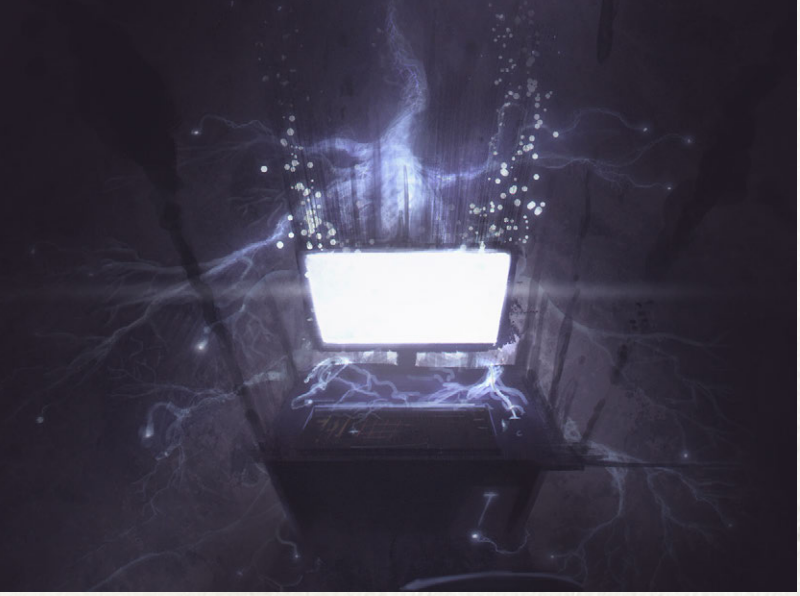
Furmlings possess lesser creatures and drive them to naked aggression, seemingly burning them from within and, indeed, causing what amounts to fever in their host bodies. Host creatures are visibly ruddy, take on a patchy complexion, and have a listless nature. Possessed objects seemingly move on their own, like what might be described as "poltergeist activity." Furmlings appear as sickly, luminous blobs in the Umbra, glowing with a flickering phosphorescence and darting about like turgid fireflies. The relative aggression of Furmlings leads to their use as belligerent scouts, especially by Black Spiral Dancers, who send them forth to gain information and goad other packs into battle.

In the Umbra, Furmlings are prone to evasion, attacking only if they have the numbers on their side. When they do, they hover out of reach of their attackers and manifest gouts of balefire, a greenish flame that poisons just as it burns.

FURMLING SPIRIT

Power: 3–6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Firearms (Balefire) +2, Athletics (Dodge) +4



Notes / Other Traits:
Balefire: +0 Aggravated damage.

FURMLING-POSSESSED ANIMAL

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 2, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 8, Willpower 4

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 6, Stealth 8

Notes / Other Traits:
Overload Host: The Furmling can send its possessed host into overdrive, increasing a victim's Physical pools by its Power. This amplification lasts for a single conflict (usually three turns) before the overloaded carcass collapses into a heap of abused flesh, sinew, and bone.

Animal Hosts

When spirits possess "lesser" creatures — that is, corporeal, animal hosts of a lower order than humans — they almost always kill the actual animal first and quickly, as most animals don't have the consciousness to realize what's happening to them or to resist it. This habit means that the possessed animal is nothing more than a meat-puppet for the spirit consciousness of the possessor. (Use the Spirit statistics for possessed animals in the physical world.) Few are the Garou who genuinely enjoy animal cruelty, surely, but all things considered, ending the rampage of a possessed animal is probably the most compassionate and sensible thing to be done with it.

Gray Masses

Gray Masses are Banes of infestation and decay. They seem to be despised even by other Banes, and are frequently devoured or burned away by other spirits. Gray Masses are drawn to physical sites of filth, squalor, and ruin.

When a Gray Mass possesses a host, infestation can spread quickly, with the host becoming the vector of an outbreak that can incur dozens of casualties before anyone realizes what's happening. They are particularly dangerous in isolated communities, and galliards know tales of human settlements and wolf communities wiped out by Gray Masses before Garou could destroy the blight.

Possession / Manifestation: Gray Masses are harmless in the Spirit Wilds, where they're apparently capable of nothing apart from traveling to the material world while attached to other spirits. They are near invisible, little more than noxious motes visible only when they gather in grand numbers.

Once in the physical world, they find a living host in an unclean environment to attach to and, thereafter, multiply. These victims are often diseased or otherwise contaminated, providing the "lesion" in which the Gray Mass thrives. Within days, one mote becomes thousands, and the resulting victim becomes the proverbial plague dog, spreading whatever foulness it was that attracted the Bane's sympathies in the first place.

In combat, an individual Gray Mass isn't particularly dangerous. They are defenseless in their spiritual form, and an individual infectee is no threat to a Garou. A great swarm of infected may pose more of a threat, as is the possibility of a Garou becoming infected.

GRAY MASS–POSSESSED WRETCH

General Difficulty: 2/1

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 3, Social 2, Mental 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 3

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 4

Notes / Other Traits:
Group Attack: Gray Masses can swarm their opponent, adding two dice (or 1 Difficulty) for each additional Gray Mass attacking simultaneously. They usually grapple their opponent, sometimes dogpiling them to effectively spread the Bane-strengthened contagion, other times to simply crush the life out of an opponent.

Infect: An immobilized victim must make a Stamina + Medicine test against Difficulty 3 or be infected. Infection effects vary, but regular humans are often turned into new Masses within a few days, whereas Garou are unable to regenerate Health for a number of days equal to the Bane's Power, or until it is banished by supernatural means.

Ooralath

Ooralath are Banes of a hive-mind sentience, acting as implacable, mindless hunter-trappers. Once they scent prey, they pursue it until destruction, tunneling through the groundscape and shifting spirit-geography to overcome obstacles. They seem not to cross the Gauntlet electively, but in this time of the Apocalypse, some septs have witnessed Ooralath apparently expelled, via caerns, from the Umbra into the physical world.

Many young Garou speculate that the Ooralath once served the Weaver, under a different name. Whatever their name once was, after the entire category of spirits came under (or went over to...) the influence of the Wyrm, the appellation has long been lost for reasons similarly unremembered. Indeed, the Garou, whose long memory preserves such legends, find it troublesome that none can remember exactly what happened to the Ooralath, and it seems yet another unacted-upon omen of the Wyrm's ascendance in the era of Apocalypse.

Possession / Manifestation: An Ooralath possesses swarms, packs, or other groups of creatures, up to and including a mob of angry humans, and the entire collective moves and acts as one, with an uncanny synchrony. In the Umbra, an "individual" Ooralath is a pack of hunched creatures reminiscent of a bipedal hound covered in carapace. They are silent save for the clacking of claws and armored plates as they move. They prefer to engage there by burrowing into the Umbral landscape and waiting in ambush and erupting when prey comes close.

OORALATH SPIRIT

Power: 4–6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl +4, Stealth +2

Notes / Other Traits:
Ambush: Ooralaths make lethal ambush attacks in the Umbra: A target failing a Wits + Awareness test against the ooralath's Stealth is unable to defend against the initial attack.

Natural Weapons: +2 Superficial damage to a Garou.

Natural Armor: Reduce all damage received by 1 before any halving.

OORALATH-POSSESSED MOB OR SWARM

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 8, Social 4, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 16, Willpower 8

Exceptional Dice Pools: None

Notes / Other Traits:
Mob: Pools represent a mob or swarm. For every two Health levels of damage sustained, reduce Physical and Willpower pools by 1. Above pools are for a small mob of humans or a large mob of animals. Larger mobs have additional Physical and Willpower pools and twice as many additional Health levels.

Psychomachiae

Psychomachiae are Banes of terror and despair. These Banes, which magnify momentary impulses, are drawn to places and people suffering in misery. They push individuals teetering on the brink over the edge, or they goad those who have already fallen to keep going. They spawn in areas of mass hunger, crisis centers, prisons, and war zones. Even locations that are otherwise mundane may attract these spirits, thanks to the everyday cruelty that the Capitalocene engenders.

Possession / Manifestation: In the physical world, Psychomachiae possess and distort beings already in the throes of misery — killers, bullies, and those who indulge maliciousness. They particularly relish those who have committed some great wrong in a fit of passion, and they whisper to such individuals to incite further crimes. These spirits may manifest pronounced bodily weaponry, such as large, clubbing hands; vicious teeth; or even a fist fused around a knife or razor, the better to thwart any chance of setting it aside. In the Umbra, their forms shift, based on the nature of the turmoil they last fed upon, but Psychomachiae are often adorned with razors, clamps, thumbscrews, and other instruments of inflicting pain.

PSYCHOMACHIA SPIRIT

Power: 4–8

Exceptional Dice Pools: Melee +3, Insight (Violent History) +3, Intimidate (Repeat Trauma) +3

Notes / Other Traits:
Exploit Trauma: In the Umbra, Psychomachiae try to discern any previous violations or atrocities in a subject's history before attacking in ways that dredge up a victim's past deeds or trauma. A victim who fails to resist the Bane's Insight pool with their Composure + Resolve suffers Willpower damage equal, and in addition to, Health damage caused by the Bane for the rest of the scene. Weapons: The Bane can manifest any number of crude or refined implements of pain to accomplish this goal. Treat them as doing +2 Superficial Health damage.

PSYCHOMACHIA-POSSESSED HUMAN

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 5, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Melee 7, Intimidate 7, Subterfuge (Feign Innocence) 7

Notes / Other Traits:
Subtle Possession: A victim possessed by a Psychomachia often shows no signs at first, as the spirit slowly eats away at the victim's guilt until all that remains is the memory of atrocity and the desire to commit it again. The victim loses the ability to restore Willpower naturally and suffers one level of Superficial Willpower damage each night. Once the victim reaches Impairment, they accept the Bane (consciously or unconsciously) and become a violent incarnation of the urge to inflict suffering.

Weapons: Psychomachia hosts are usually equipped with some kind of sharp implement that deals +2 damage, or they can manifest similar tools out of their very flesh.

Scavenger Packs

Scavenger Packs are Banes of desperation and starvation. They are common in slums, war zones, and areas suffering from famine or drought, and they take the form of packs comprising emaciated, possessed animals. Cunningly cruel, they have been known to possess a full pack of animals, then find starving humans — tempting them into possession by offering the animals as food — who are then, themselves, possessed.

Danger comes when an infestation of them occurs, or in the circumstances that spawned them. After all, deprivation severe enough to spawn a single Scavenger Pack is likely to spawn more, and probably arouses enough human misery to tempt the unfortunate into possession.

Possession / Manifestation: When encountered in the physical world, Scavenger Packs prey upon the vulnerable and weak while looking for a victim to possess. Scavenger Packs frequently possess scavenging animals, wretched and hungry, in addition to unfortunate humans. In the Umbra, Scavenger Packs are markers of material suffering and opportunistic scavengers. They sweep areas captured by other Banes, devouring isolated spirits and wounded combatants, or congregating around the Umbral echoes of the places that spawned them. They appear as vortices of tiny, swarming spirits, not unlike a cloud of ghastly gnats or flies.

SCAVENGER PACK SPIRIT SWARM

Power: 4–8

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl +3

Notes / Other Traits:
Mob: Pools represent a mob or swarm. For every two levels of damage inflicted, reduce the spirit's Power by 1. Replenish: Each turn that no damage is inflicted on the spirit, it can attack and consume a local minor spirit instead, increasing its power by 1 until it reaches 9, at which time it splits into two Power 4 swarms. This feeding frenzy lasts only for a scene, after which time any remaining swarms burrow into the Umbral landscape to hibernate.

SCAVENGER PACK–POSSESSED WRETCH

General Difficulty: 3/1

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 2, Mental 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 3

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 7, Athletics (Pursuit) 7

Notes / Other Traits:
Multiple Possession: A single Scavenger Pack can possess a number of victims equal to its Power. Each victim becomes a starving manifestation of the Scavenger Pack's hunger, relentlessly pursuing anything the victim can devour — usually people or animals — by using their augmented strength to rake and bite. Survivors of these attacks frequently become hosts for the Scavenger Pack themselves, as it increases its Power for each victim fed upon.

Scrags

Scrags are drawn to physical violence, and they possess combative hosts who demonstrate hostility and aggression. Cruel guards, belligerent soldiers, and resentful

laborers may unknowingly invite Scrags to possess them. As Banes, they are comparatively uncomplicated and probably occupy the lesser ranks of such jagglings.

Possession / Manifestation: In the material world, hosts possessed by Scrags turn gray, their teeth jagged, their hands claw-like; their first instinct is always toward horrible violence. In the Umbra, Scrags appear gray and ghoulish, with razor claws and fangs, slow to move. They prove dangerous primarily in numbers.

SCRAG SPIRIT

Power: 3–5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl +4

Notes / Other Traits:
Weapons: Scrags in the Umbra are simple creatures, relying on their +3 Superficial damage claws and fangs to inflict harm.

SCRAG-POSSESSED HUMAN

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 3, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 7, Willpower 3

Exceptional Dice Pools: Melee 8, Firearms 8

Notes / Other Traits:
Apart from their supernatural resilience and grim mien, possessing Scrags have few other notable traits. They are usually armed, either with sharp implements or various firearms.

Scryers

Scryers are gafflings that exist to spy on targets for stronger spirits that hold the Scryers in thrall; in some cases, the lesser spirits do so transactionally. They are Banes of surveillance, suspicion, mistrust, and paranoia.

Possession / Manifestation: Scryers vary widely in spirit form, but their "eyes" are the most distinctive parts of their bodies. They sometimes appear as fly-spirits with oversized eyes, or as vigilant bird-spirits, again with dominant eyes. Sometimes, a Scryer in its spirit-form is just a single floating eye. The eyes of physically manifesting Scryers can be beady, bulbous, camera lenses, com-

pound, or digital, but they are always visually unusual and incongruous with the rest of its form. Their bodies may be animal, or may be possessed machinery, such as a drone, security camera, or even the peephole of a door in a "haunted house."

Scryers usually serve other, more powerful entities, and tangling with them usually has consequences.

SCRYER SPIRIT

Power: 1–3

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness +10

Notes / Other Traits:
Hidden Observation: Scryers may observe the material world while remaining safely in the Umbra. As a result, they cannot be seen by their targets without the use of Gifts or other abilities that facilitate seeing into the Umbra from the physical world.

Wyrmholes

Wyrmholes are sentient lesions in the Gauntlet. According to some galliards and theurges, the spirits that eventually became Wyrmholes were originally created by the Wyld in response to the creation of the Gauntlet, so spirits that may walk between the worlds would have passageways. These openings were subjugated by the Wyrm in its ascendant epoch, however, the better to extend its influence into the physical world.

A Wyrmhole that possesses a human is strange and dangerous. The host remains self-aware and seemingly in constant struggle with the Wyrmhole, itself practically "birthing" invasive spirits from "wounds" or other contortions of its ravaged bodies. The Wyrmhole itself is an incomprehensible entity. What invites them to possess a host is unknown, but such possession almost always ends with the host body being torn apart the same way the wound opens in the Gauntlet.

Possession / Manifestation: In the Umbra, a Wyrmhole takes the form of a turbulent, oily waterspout that may appear anywhere, even spiraling through the Umbral sky. In the physical world, a Wyrmhole appears on a liquid or semi-liquid surface, such as a slag pool or a body of befouled water.

WYRMHOLE SPIRIT

Power: 8–10

Exceptional Dice Pools: —

Notes / Other Traits:
Living Conduit: When a Wyrmhole wishes to breach the Gauntlet, it spreads and anchors itself against Umbral terrain, much of its form seemingly disappearing into nothingness. Anything that enters it is transported across the Gauntlet into the physical world. Wyrmholes are almost defenseless in this state, but they are often accompanied by Banes eager to cross the Gauntlet. Wyrmholes do not pull physical entities into the Umbra (though they may pull spirits out of their hosts and back into the Umbra, particularly unwilling ones), but they can serve as gateways. Anyone who braves a Wyrmhole can treat the local Gauntlet as 1 but needs to have a plan for the Banes almost certainly waiting on the other side.

Mindless: When attacked in the Umbra, Wyrmholes defend by using their Power pool, but they cannot themselves cause damage. Their entourage of Wyrm spirits, on the other hand, can. Any nonphysical interaction automatically fails, as the Wyrmhole lacks a mind to engage with.

Corrosive Form: Each Brawl attack against the Wyrmhole causes a level of Aggravated damage to the attacker.

Nexus Crawler

Nexus Crawlers are immensely powerful Banes, each one a monstrous embodiment of entropy that dwells in the incomprehensible depths of the Umbra. They fulfill

the functions of the Wyrm and reek of its malignance, but they are their own creatures, better compared to a natural disaster than to "conventional" spirits.

Nexus Crawlers are intelligent and capable of communication, but their thought processes are deeply alien. Even Wyrm-aligned creatures try to avoid them, and the reasoning behind Nexus Crawlers' actions or goals behind their plots elude the wisest of Garou.

A Nexus Crawler's presence corresponds with some significant tragedy that occurs near it, seemingly drawn by the collapse of "reality" and concentrated misery. It needn't be human misery, and in fact probably isn't even often human misery, but the emotion may accompany natural disaster or ecological breakdown. A Nexus Crawler might emerge from the ruined sheets of ice that calve from a glacier, or one may possess an amalgamated bulk of vehicles, machines, and spilled substances at the site of an industrial accident.

In combat, Nexus Crawlers are terrifying foes that would sorely test even the most accomplished packs. They lash out at their foes with monstrous limbs and resonances of the disasters that beckoned them, pull proximate disasters into their presence, and can even turn a Garou's very bones into lethal silver.

Possession / Manifestation: In the Umbra, a Nexus Crawler might appear as little more than a black shimmer — almost an aurora borealis warning of disaster about to occur. However, at their incomprehensible will, they sometimes coalesce as great abominations of flesh and chitin, with dying heads of foes' loved ones, great but fragile-seeming limbs with too many joints, scything tentacles and alien eyes, pustulent buboes and weaponized intestines, all arrayed without care for logic or physicality. When they manifest in the physical world, they form strange and complex automatons amalgamated of, well, whatever they can draw into themselves from the environment. The wreckage of a plane crash, the detritus of a strip mine with nothing left to yield, a seething stomach made from grinding girders in a desolate construction site — all of these configurations, and others, might be the form a manifest Nexus Crawler might take. Needless to say, when they manifest in the physical world, something has gone very wrong.

NEXUS CRAWLER SPIRIT

Power: 8–12

Exceptional Dice Pools: Physical Pools +8, Mental Pools +4

Notes / Other Traits:

Master of Chaos: In the Umbra, the Nexus Crawler's chaotic nature comes to the fore as it engages opponents with increasingly alien, if effective, methods. It might transport a victim to a different part of the Umbra or rip open the Gauntlet to the depths of space or the Mariana Trench. It can turn a Garou against their own pack or switch the minds of the pack members around, leaving them in one another's bodies. It can turn a foe inside-out or detach their still-living limbs from their bodies. The Storyteller is the ultimate judge on the effects of these bizarre attacks, but they all use the Mental pool of the Nexus Crawler, resisted by either Stamina, Composure, or Resolve + a relevant Skill. (Occult can always be used in place of this Skill, if higher.)

Corrosive Presence: Anyone close enough to fight a Nexus Crawler in the Umbra suffers a level of Aggravated damage each turn, in addition to any other effects or attacks.

Entropic Talons: +4 Aggravated damage weapons. Happy hunting!

NEXUS CRAWLER–POSSESSED HULK

General Difficulty: 8 / 4

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 16, Social 7, Mental 10

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 20, Willpower 10

Exceptional Dice Pools: See notes

Notes / Other Traits:
Warp Reality: A manifested Nexus Crawler is able to bend reality in accordance with the disasters it embodies. It can turn the skeletons of hostile Garou into dried-out brittle sticks, change blood into oily sludge, or cause tumors to manifest catastrophically in its victims. Treat such attacks as +0 Aggravated damage attacks using the spirit's Power against the Stamina + Occult of the target. Weapons: +4 Superficial damage appendages. Note that if attacking with physical weapons, the Nexus Crawler often attempts to split its pool to cause the greatest amount of mayhem, and woe to the Garou who gains its singular attention. This also applies in spirit form, above. Maddening Presence: Nexus Crawlers cause a Delirium-like effect in ordinary humans and animals. Creatures immune to Delirium suffer a level of Superficial Willpower damage per turn instead.

WEAVER-SPIRITS

Throughout the Umbra go the infinite servitors of the Weaver on their endless mission to bring order to

the Umbra, spinning spider-like webs and other visual metaphors that make sense of the Wyld's raw creation and succumb to the Wyrm's entropy, thus continuing the natural cycle of things. Of course, that natural cycle has been disrupted in the age of Apocalypse, so the meticulous servitors of the Weaver may be lawful allies at one moment and intransigent antagonists the next.

Despite the fact that the Weaver itself is often perceived and represented by Garou as spider-like, that's not necessarily true in any objective way, which goes for its minion-spirits, as well. Often, Garou perceive spider-spirits to be in service to the Weaver, but they may just as well be machine-like representations of orderly technology; agglomerations of stone or human-made concrete symbols of immovable stasis; notions of orderly thought such as clocks or a laboratory scale; or high-concept manifestations including numbers, patterns, or constellations. Below are representative examples of ubiquitous spirit-types that bring the Weaver's order to the spirit world. Storytellers can "reskin" the following examples with a different visual presentations, and creative Storytellers can surely envision their own variations, as well.

What Do They Want: Weaver-spirits devote themselves to building, binding, shoring up, trapping, and reinforcing. The Umbra in a place of high Weaver-spirit activity is often a web-choked tangle, with even more spirits perpetuating the structure and stasis. More than anything else, Weaver-spirits want to impose order, which might be calcifying the raw creation of the Wyld and its servitors, or might be cleaning up after a Garou rampage or Wyrm-spirits' entropic presence.

Machine-Spirit

The entities known as machine-spirits represent a variety of Weaver functions, the spirit-shadow of physical machines that apply force and control movement. They can encompass anything from the earth-shattering machines that extract resources from the depths of the planet to tiny fail-safes that hold powerful processes in place or restrict free motion. In general, machine-spirits are simple, performing repetitive tasks with great power or ones of great importance (hence their spiritual significance — why they emerge as spirits at all), such as the spirit of an oil derrick or a small lock that hides a great secret. Almost all are gafflings, given their straightforward nature, despite the connotations of their physical size or perceived complexity.

Possession / Manifestation: In the Umbra, machine-spirits usually appear either as hazy versions of their physical counterparts (they're not the most creative spirits...) or, not surprisingly, as visual metaphors for the physical machine in question, such as a work gang digging in the case of the oil derrick, or a somewhat mechanical-looking "guard dog" representing the lock. In almost every case, machine-spirits are too purpose-driven to manifest in the physical world, though they have been known to "ride" their own physical counterparts in the physical world in cases that onlookers describe as "overdrive."

MACHINE-SPIRIT

Power: 2–6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Technology +6

Notes / Other Traits:
Help or Hinder: When possessing a device, a machine-spirits can use its Power to help or hinder the person attempting to use it. Machine-spirits are often open to negotiation, but their demands can be time consuming if not downright odd, such as asking for a certain combination of keys to be pressed in sequence 1,011 times, or for their host device to be reinstalled in a different location, often closer to other devices or in actual contact with them.

Machine-spirits are rarely encountered by themselves in the Umbra, and then only if their physical host has been destroyed or they've been banished from it.

Pattern Spiders

As Garou recognize it, the structure of the Umbra is built and maintained by pattern spiders, most of which are of the gaffling order, "spinning" the webs of the Weaver's order throughout the Spirit Wilds. Some Garou even believe the vast majority of spirits in service to the Weaver are some sort of pattern spider, some being elevated to jagglings and above, or in a vast variety similar to the seemingly infinite types of insects and arachnids in the physical world.

Garou find pattern spiders particularly difficult to relate to, as these spirits are so devoted to imposing or maintaining the order and support of the spirit realm that attempts to communicate with them have a fundamental disconnect. What might a pattern spider want, apart from the task it has effectively been "programmed" to do by the order of the Weaver's... what? Will? Function? Needs? Even the traditional ways of chiminage frequently suffer setbacks, for how does one bargain with a manifested list of responsibilities?

Possession / Manifestation: In the Umbra, to no one's surprise, pattern spiders resemble spiders or silk-spinning insects of numerous forms, and they are often found weaving the webs that form the structural supports of the Umbra, or so it appears to Garou perception. Pattern spiders rarely have a need to possess something in the physical world, and not many even seem to be able to extend their influence across the Gauntlet to do so anyway. Such a thing occasionally occurs, though, often in the form of enhancing, upholding, or otherwise interfacing with machines of various complexity. An animal under a pattern spider's possession would be a strange thing, indeed, and pattern spiders probably aren't potent enough to possess humans. Probably.

Pattern spiders serve numerous functions in the Umbra, as dictated by their seemingly infinite number of subtypes. A few of the more frequent... or at least *understandable* pattern spiders follow.

- **Pattern Spider Drone:** Perhaps the most common of the Weaver-spirits, these pattern spiders spin the webs that form spiritual structure — left to spin infinitely, these pattern spiders would suspend the entirety of the Umbra in stasis
- **Orb Weaver:** As near as the Garou can figure it, Orb Weavers have something to do with how information travels among spirits, perhaps constructing and maintaining a sort of information network that can connect them
- **Guardian Spider:** Camouflaged as part of the Umbral spirit-web itself, Guardian Spiders defend the vast structures constructed by the Weaver and its servants
- **Wolf Spider:** Despite the name, Wolf Spiders bear no kinship to the Garou, and seem to serve the role of controlled destruction of the Weaver's webs by tearing them down so that new structures can be built. At their simplest, they even resemble wolves and actual wolf-spiders, gnashing and tearing at the Weaver's webs; at their most esoteric, Wolf Spiders are disinformation, controlled burn, and viruses.
- **Strand Spider:** These enormous creatures — as big as a car in the physical world — conquer and reclaim areas of the Umbra, according to Weaver directive, or places that other spiritual or Triatic entities have laid claim to.

PATTERN SPIDER SPIRIT

Power: 2–8

Exceptional Dice Pools: Depending on type, various combinations of Brawl, Etiquette, Streetwise, Awareness, Science, and Technology at +2

Notes / Other Traits:
Enweb: Pattern spiders are able to cocoon an opponent, trapping them in their web or outright calcifying them (at least temporarily) for later processing, often by other, larger pattern spiders. Instead of attacking, a pattern spider can reduce the Dexterity of an opponent within reach by 1. If the opponent's Dexterity reaches zero, the victim is completely immobilized for the rest of the scene. Breaking free (regaining all lost Dexterity) before that requires a successful Strength + Occult test against the combined Power of the pattern spiders participating in the cocooning.

Thinking-Engine Spirit

Comparative newcomers to the spiritual cosmology (at least on the scale at which they're now present), Thinking-Engine Spirits represent the spiritual resonance of computers, electronic technology, and other systems that can be said to make decisions. At least, that's how the theurges and Glass Walkers most familiar with them describe these beings.

A Thinking-Engine Spirit might be the spirit of the computer on which resides a particularly important file, or it might be the program that keeps a missile from firing. It might be a security code guarding a door, as distinct from the Machine Spirit of the locking mechanism itself. It might be a spreadsheet listing virtual assets, or it might be a complicated AI on the verge of self-awareness, discovering the limitations of not having a physical body but existing (at least theoretically) in the physical world as a property of the physical media that contain it.

Thinking-Engine Spirits are more tied to information than physical devices, akin to dimly self-aware computer programs. They feed on data, and any pact made with them usually involves providing access to information they otherwise are unable to sink their spiritual teeth into.

Almost all Thinking-Machine Spirits are gafflings, with a few jagglings representing decision-making processes of outsized importance or even modern physical computers. It makes theurges' blood run cold to imagine what a Thinking-Engine Spirit Incarna might represent, but surely at least one is out there, somewhere, or will be eventually.

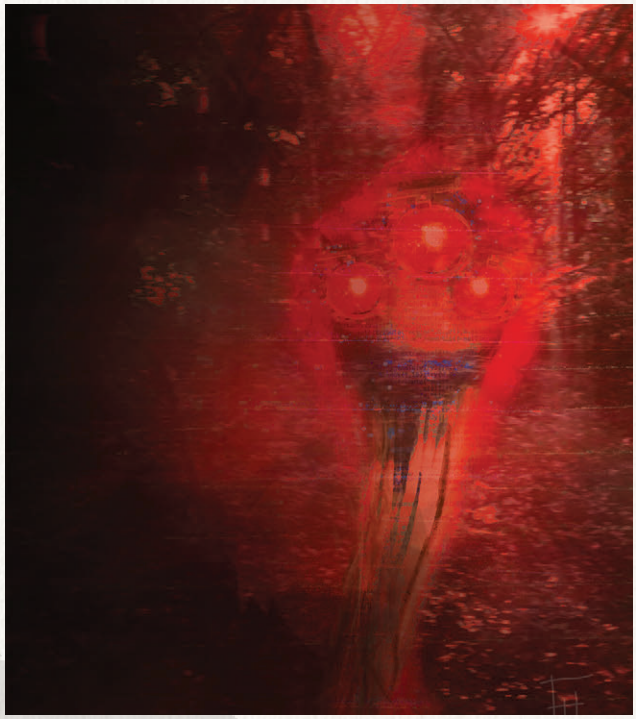
Possession / Manifestation: Not surprisingly, Thinking-Engine Spirits appear in an enormous variety of Umbral forms, which may or may not relate to their physical-world counterparts. Often, Thinking-Engine Spirits are represented by visual metaphors. For example, the asset-spirit might appear as a chunk of gold, as a text-like dollar sign, or even as a miniature model of a superyacht (depending on how crass the assets are and what sort of person possesses them in the physical world). As with Machine Spirits, Thinking-Engine Spirits don't generally possess things or people in the physical world outside manifesting within their own physical incarnations — though it's possible, as with a predictive medical data model exerting control over certain lab computers or devices, or a data-security subroutine possessing a surveillance drone or even spending a very weird few minutes in a human security-guard host.

THINKING-ENGINE SPIRIT

Power: 2–4

Exceptional Dice Pools: A single Mental Skill at +4

Notes / Other Traits:
Expert Program: Thinking-Engine Spirits can provide information on a single subject, by using their Skill, or they can add their Power to another subject's dice pool if they collaborate on a digital endeavor. Thinking-Engine Spirits are fickle, however, and it is rare that a spirit-talker manages to bind one into their service for long.



WYLD SPIRITS

Entities of unbridled change and creation, spirits associated with the Wyld represent — and, often provide — the stuff of which the Umbra is made. Or, rather, they are born from it, move it around, disgorge more, shape it, redirect it, disrupt its flow, and any number of other functions associated with making. Unceremonious as their origins may be, many Wyld spirits spew forth from surprising points of Umbral being to pursue probably the most indecipherable agendas of all spirits, with such high-concept purposes as *simply exist!* or *roar colors infinitely for you are a vessel of infinite sound or change the way thought moves to a form of metaphysical transference spatially from one consciousness of the next*. Even the Garou, despite some degree of familiarity with the spirit world and its denizens, often think *Wyld spirits are weird shit.*

Higher-ranking Wyld spirits in the hierarchy, as Garou perceive them, are most often utterly incomprehensible, with wholly alien goals and thoughts passing those incomprehensible ambitions down their servitor hierarchy through unknown forms of communication. Below are a few examples of frequently encountered spirit-types that mark the Wyld's presence in the spirit world. As with the other Triatic spirit categories, Storytellers are encouraged to "reskin" these examples, as well as to create their own distinct spirit entities.

What Do They Want: Wyld-spirits generally represent raw creation, issuing forth or acting uncontrollably. Wyld spirits act to hasten change, to facilitate transition from one state (or state of being) to another, and to rewrite the way things are or seem. Wyld-spirits often don't "want," in a conventional sense; often they just *do* because *doing* is what the Wyld has brought them into existence to... well, do. Such high-order spirits as jagglings (and definitely Incarnae and Celestines functioning on the Wyld's behalf) often have their own plans and agendas, but as with so many spirit ambitions, their nuances aren't affected by the same stimuli as those of Garou or humans. A Wyld spirit might wish to vomit-fabricate infinitely, or forever rotate, or go go go, or sing until the notes run out and then invent new ones, and sometimes words themselves are insufficient to express a certain facet of the Wyld's want.

Echo

When animals go extinct, they leave a paired Echo in the Umbra, to dwell forever afterward in the spirit-shadow of the world from which they vanished. Thereafter, the Echoes possess a sort of "species memory" for their bygone animal type, able to recall the sorts of things that threatened the species, any spirit pacts or special duties that were in place, and of course why they went extinct. These idealized animal pairs aren't always on the best of terms with Garou, and of course may evince predator-and-prey relationships that the animal in question may have with wolves, humans, or Garou themselves.

As to where echoes can be found, they often return to Umbral regions akin to their worldly habitats and may be there at any given time. (Some Garou wise in the spirit-ways theorize that Echoes are simultaneously present in all Umbral regions akin to their habitats simultaneously, but communication and the way time passes is the Umbra is inconsistent, so this conjecture remains unproven.)

Possession / Manifestation: In the Umbra, Echoes always appear as a visibly flawless pair of the animals in question. When they possess worldly creatures, should they choose to do so, they generally prefer animals of a similar type to themselves. In such possession, they always possess two similar animals, eerily mimicking each other's movements.

ECHO SPIRIT

Power: 1–5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Insight (Sense Honesty) +3

Notes / Other Traits:
Ancestral Recall: The Echoes retain the collected memory of their lost species and are able to recall events witnessed by one of their kind at any point in their species history. These memories are, by nature, fragmented, however, and often conflict, thanks to being witnessed by many individuals. In return for sharing these memories, Echoes usually want something done to perpetuate the memory of their kind. They are reasonably adept at detecting those who make unfaithful promises in this regard.

Nameless

If the Umbra is a constant cascade of resonances and consequences, the Nameless are among the most overt such aspects, as they were birthed by the Wyld to spite the desire of the Weaver to name, organize, and categorize everything. As such, a Nameless is a paradoxical spirit of being uncategorizable, unorganizable, and, obviously, unnamable.

Becoming Nameless often comes as a result of being discarded, disfavored, ignored, or unacknowledged. It is strange, then, that this spirit is associated with the Wyld

rather than the obliteration and entropy of the Wyrm, but some Garou attribute being undone by the Nameless to being forgotten specifically, but nonetheless missed, or perhaps created to take the edge off sorrow for that which is lost.

Those Garou who unwisely anthropomorphize the Triat may attribute a kind of personal pettiness to the existence of the Nameless, but the true terror of the spirit is in its ability to render other things themselves Nameless, effectively unmaking what they were in the spirit world, annihilating that side of them, and leaving their physical self unmoored from the spiritual.

Nameless appear to be jagglings or remarkably potent (in a single capacity) gafflings.

Possession / Manifestation: The Nameless has no consistent appearance; it is a constant flux of forms recognizable and otherwise. It is the opposite of possession; it is the breaking free of a spiritual connection (if it ever had a spiritual reflection at all).

NAMELESS SPIRIT

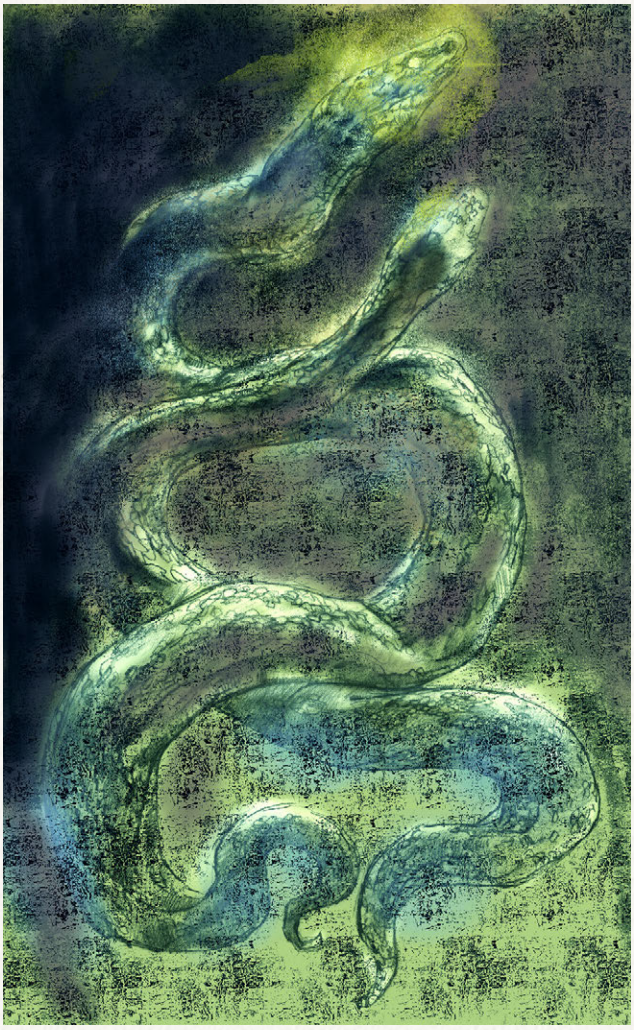
Power: 3–7

Exceptional Dice Pools: Occult (Void Aspect) +3 (See below)

Notes / Other Traits:
Void Aspect: A Nameless is able to take away aspects of a target's identity, rendering any abilities or Traits associated with that aspect useless. By touching the victim and winning an Occult test (see Exceptional Dice Pools) against the target's Stamina + Resolve, the Nameless can remove one defining identity characteristic of the target, as well as any abilities associated with it. In the case of a Garou this aspect can be Auspice or Tribe, and any Gifts derived therefrom. The loss of aspect lasts for a number of days equal to the margin of the test, though the Nameless can voluntarily rescind the loss if a suitable deal can be made with the spirit (if it wants to communicate at all).

Serpentine

Serpentines are spirits of growth and corrective regrowth, and they readily give themselves up to correct a flaw in living tissue of any type. Sometimes, Serpentines are spiritually attuned to a particular type of unwellness and are individually sought after for rare or potent infirmities. Their healing aspect need not be physical, necessarily, as they can be persuaded to help stimulate spiritual and mental recovery, as well. The Garou have many tales of werewolves seeking a specific Serpentine to help restore



a stricken packmate — or to hold one hostage against a hated rival.

Possession / Manifestation: In the Umbra, Serpentines often appear as a pair of snakes twisted around each other, a spirit occupying two "bodies," though on occasion they appear as a shimmer of green light, as if reflected off an unseen body of water, or a greenish stone of a similar name. Serpentines do not often possess hosts in the physical world, but the results of their spiritual healing are usually visible to physical onlookers, such as after healing a wound.

SERPENTINE SPIRIT

Power: 3–6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Medicine (Healing Surge) +4

Notes / Other Traits:
Snake Healing (1 / Week): A Serpentine spirit is able to heal physical damage, either by touching a subject

encountered in the Umbra or by briefly possessing the wounded in the physical world. The Serpentine makes a Medicine test, healing one Superficial Health level for each success or one Aggravated for every two successes. The unrestrained generative power of the Serpentine does carry risks, however. For every two successes on the test beyond the subject's Health maximum, one dot in Dexterity or Charisma is lost as the body of the subject grows uncontrollably, gaining extra flesh and bulk as even its inner organs grow out of control. This "overgrowth" can be healed as if Aggravated damage, but not by a Serpentine.

GAIAN SPIRITS

The spirits associated with Gaia are ones associated with the wellbeing of the world itself, specifically. Plant- and animal-spirits can be found throughout the Umbra, and are themselves often indicators for the state of things in their proximity. Anxious, sickly, overaggressive, or other uncharacteristic spirit behaviors and states often accompany a disturbance or even crisis in the spiritual proximity.

The most obvious mystery, that of Gaia's status, is a matter of much consternation for these spirits, for they seem incapable of any direct answer, and some are unable even to acknowledge such direct questions themselves. Many Garou reason that it's a good sign that Gaian spirits still exist, and many appear fully healthy and functional, whereas a more dire Garou perspective supposes that the spirits simply don't know that their mother is dead yet, and that they must follow her fate.

In all but the most dire cases, Gaian spirits don't possess physical creatures (though they might possess unliving objects or features), preferring not to undermine the will and consciousness of beings other than themselves. Most are gafflings and jagglings, and they include those spirits associated with "Gaia's family," including her sister Luna, and — perhaps — the sun, though this relationship, as with so many questions of spiritual significance, is unclear.

What Do They Want: Spirits associated with Gaia (or her sister, Luna) overwhelmingly want what's best for the wellbeing of the world and, therefore, Gaia. These spirits' relationship with humans is complex, despite having little interaction with them directly, as they understand the role humans have to play in the metaphysical cosmology to which they all belong, and even their right to exist, while also recognizing that the failings of humans have a direct link to the Triat's imbalance and the grievous state of Gaia herself.

Naturae

The spirits a Garou is mostly likely to encounter in the Umbra are nature spirits. In times of legend, Garou say, the Umbra was filled with active spirits, and every stream, every tree, every stone, every thing had a living spirit connected to it. In the era of Apocalypse, though, much of the Umbra has been reduced to a remnant of itself, poetically its own shadow in the shadow of the physical world. It is extraordinarily difficult to communicate with nature spirits directly, as they don't conventionally "speak," and they often prefer to communicate through bestial gestures and affectations, or allegorical behaviors, such as crowing when the sun rises or absconding with shiny things.

Animal Spirits

Innumerable animal spirits dwell in the Umbra, resembling idealized (or even abstracted) animals that are their counterparts in the physical world. Most of them are gafflings that attend to any number of natural-order tasks with Gaia's blessing. They even perform specific tasks on her behalf, though this function is becoming more and more rare, and it consists largely of repeated activities with which Gaia charged the spirit before the Apocalypse. Sometimes, these animal spirits are greater examples of their own type, such as Grandfather Raven, or the Wolf of the Wood, or any number of prophetic-seeming deer-spirits. Even these beings seem to be not-quite-jagglings in the spirit hierarchy, but the Garou don't always have a need to express them as sub-categories.

Of course, those animal spirits that act as certain tribes' Patron Spirits (such as Rat, Owl, etc.) are far greater than these animal spirits — at least on the order of Incarnae, by Garou reasoning.

Possession / Manifestation: Most animal spirits have little cause to possess a physical host, and even in those rare cases, they seem to be restricted to possessing animals of their own type. Still, legends persist of animal spirits possessing humans or other creatures entirely, making for strange behavior, to say the least, or horrifying tales of "the mad scorpion-man who lives amid the dunes," and the like. But what could such possessions possibly hope to accomplish?

ANIMAL SPIRIT

Power: 2–4

Exceptional Dice Pools: One or two Skills associated with their species at +4

Glade Child

Glade Children constitute a broad category of spirits consisting of plant and plant-like spirits, generally corresponding with the physical location of their physical complements. As with animal spirits, most are gafflings, with a few remarkable jagglings among them, depending on their individual spiritual importance. They follow the ways of the seasons, where relevant — deciduous tree-spirits being stark and sleepy during winter, for example, but bright-eyed and vital during summertime.

Glade Children, like many Naturae, are strong indicators of an Umbral location's health. Ones near Umbral sites of atrocity may be twisted, stunted, and even individually deceptive or cruel. Ones near where Gaian sites are "as they should be" prove more robust and generally indicate a properly functioning environment.

Certain great spirits similar to Glade Children exist beyond the jaggling hierarchy, though none are known to serve in the role of a tribe's Patron Spirit. Examples include Great Oak, Mother Birch, and Winter Rose, as well as stranger things such as the vast Umbral fungus-spirit collective that claims no distinct name. "Glade Children" is almost certainly a reductionist traditional appellation on the part of the Garou, and one many young werewolves suggest is in need of reconsideration.

Possession / Manifestation: Glade children may appear as literal images of their physical counterparts, but they also possess the ability to appear as glowing, robed figures in the Umbra, perhaps to better communicate with others in their presence. In the physical world they possess and manifest through the very place they represent.

GLADE CHILD SPIRIT

Power: 3–6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness (Own Domain) +3, Insight (Local Spirits) +3

Notes / Other Traits:
Local Recall: Glade Children are acutely aware of their physical surroundings, and they have long memories. They are also hubs of spiritual traffic, and are knowledgeable about the state and disposition of most local spirits. Upon a successful Awareness test, they can recall events as far back as they have existed, and with their Insight they are able to provide information on local spirits.

Lune

Spirits that communicate or act on behalf of Gaia's sister Luna are known as Lunes. Even by spirit standards, the Lunes are considered secretive and even mystical, as well as protectors of the knowledge and wisdom that has been associated with the moon in myth and legend. Lunes sometimes teach werewolves certain Gifts affiliated with their auspices in the place of more conventional spirits, and aspected Lunes give werewolves counsel (when asked...) as befits the sign of the moon with which they are associated. The relationship between Lunes and Garou is generally affable, though Lunes would probably confide that they think Luna's nieces and nephews can be overbearing if left to their own devices.

Most Lunes that Garou encounter are gaffling messengers or functionaries, or jaggling guardians and stewards.

Possession / Manifestation: In the Umbra, Lunes usually appear as ribbons of moonlight, glimmering brightly where Luna's presence can be strongly felt, or fading to a near-twilight gloom where Luna has little sway. Like many Naturae, Lunes have little reason to possess anything in the physical world, but when they do, it is often with an enigmatic aspect, such as an animal with a glint of moonlight in its eyes or a person whose attitudes seem to correspond to the phase of the moon.

LUNE SPIRIT

Power: 3–6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Occult (Umbral Guidance) +3

Notes / Other Traits:
Umbral Guide: In the Umbra, a Lune can aid the Garou by creating a moonlight path that acts as a shortcut between Umbral locations. Using this path shortens the travel time between any two places in the Umbra to a single night, though it doesn't remove any dangers of treading unfamiliar spiritual territory. Conversely, an offended Lune can misdirect a pack, leading Garou into danger or back whence they came, unless someone can resist their Occult pool with a Wits + Occult test of their own. Lunes have little power in the physical world but can act as conduits to Luna for Garou and give them one or more points of Rage, depending on the Power of the Lune and its disposition toward the recipient.

Elemental

As might be expected, the category of spirits known as elementals corresponds to classical notions of the elements, such as fire spirits, water spirits, etc. Even beyond them, more modern or esoteric concepts also fit into the broad category of elementals. It's an extremely forgiving range of spirits, consisting of many different rankings in the hierarchy, from gafflings on up, through Incarnae. Also, elementals are often associated with certain features in the physical world or spiritual shadow, so it's possible to encounter a free-floating fire spirit, the spirit of a forest fire, or even the great and terrible spirit of a volcano's roiling magma.

"Elements" is a very wide category, and it includes everything from primal, natural forces to alchemical notions to things one might find listed on the periodic table. The Storyteller should assign Skills and other abilities as appropriate and according to the needs of the story.

- **Classical Elemental (Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Wood, Electricity, etc.):** Elements that represent states of matter or natural forces, usually in places of especial note, such as the earth spirit of a mountain, the wood spirit of a forest, or the like, from the humblest earthstone to the mightiest air-gale; certain spirits can even be very specific, such as silver or iron as subsets of "earth," etc.
- **Manufactured or Produced Spirits (Plastic, Glass, Concrete, Steel, etc.):** In most cases, these materials are effectively the same classical element spirits, though they exist in more recent spiritual contexts, and they haven't always been a part of Gaia's history. As such, the abilities they possess (and Gifts they can teach) are often very different from what other elementals offer. Consider, for example, that obsidian spirits have existed since times of legend, but the glass spirits associated with the skyscrapers of modern cities are comparatively much younger.
- **Esoteric "Elements":** Some spirits represent the same sort of idealized, well, *ideas* as more traditional elements, such as spirits of such concepts as curiosity, fertility, dreams, lust, twilight, and death. Although these spirits are sometimes called epiphlings by a particularly insightful theurge, they are similar enough to elementals for such a comparison to stand.

Possession / Manifestation: In the Umbra, elementals are often straightforward, appearing as close to their literal substance as possible. It is exceedingly rare for elementals to possess hosts, but when they do, it's almost always as an aspect of the substance they themselves are, such as a water spirit redirecting a river's flow. It's almost unheard of, say, for a fire spirit to possess a person or an electricity spirit to possess a horse. Although it's not strictly impossible...

ELEMENTAL SPIRIT

Power: 4–8

Exceptional Dice Pools: One or two Skills associated with their element at +4

Engling

Jagglings and gafflings that perform service to Gaia herself, englings are incompletely understood by werewolves as "elementals" of raw Gaian energy. These spirits have become increasingly rare in the era of Apocalypse, but the fact that they exist at all gives the Garou hope that Gaia is not yet dead. Still, their cryptic responses as to the state of Gaia yield equal cause for alarm.

Possession / Manifestation: The spirit-forms of englings might have any sort of visual aspect reminiscent of Gaia proper, corresponding to the spirit's task at hand, from a ribbon of verdant energy to reinvigorate a fallen champion to a mask of her face to speak a warning. It is unknown whether an engling can possess a host, or to what purpose it would do so.

ENGLING SPIRIT

Power: 4–8

Exceptional Dice Pools: Occult (Phenomena) +4

Notes / Other Traits:
Coincidental Intervention: Englings never employ possession but can intervene in the physical world directly from the Umbra by orchestrating such things as power outages, entangling roots, or freakish weather, to name a few. These phenomena are always (barely) within the realm of the plausible, though they can certainly be called remarkable. Use the engling's Occult pool when these effects come into conflict with a character.
If subject to hostility in the Umbra, an engling always chooses to flee rather than fight. (Use their Occult pool against a pursuer's tracking pool in such a case.)

FOMORI

Humans aren't immune to the spiritual influences of the Wyrm, and some find themselves serving as physical hosts for the Banes in thrall to it. Unwittingly or otherwise, these hosts invite the possessing spirit to overtake them, and when these individuals host a possessing spirit for an extended period of time, they become what the Garou recognize as fomori. Evidence of long-term Bane possession may be subtle or overt: The possessing spirit may contort a person's body with scars, pustules, tumors, and abnormal growths. The change may be more subtle, though, or even entirely mental or spiritual. Some fomori bear no visible distinguishment at all but still suffer the agony of a Bane's malign presence.

Fomori don't necessarily gain any insight from their condition; the human host doesn't inherently become aware of spirits or the Triat, the Wyrm or the Umbra. Most are unwitting victims who don't understand why their body has betrayed them, oblivious to the fact that they have, in some capacity, made themselves attractive to a vicious spirit. Hunger, degraded living conditions, pollution, toxic waste, experimental drugs, and even stranger methods, such as psychoactive broadcasts or extended sensory deprivation, can create the conditions that break a person's will, thus hastening the lapse in a person's sense of self that invites the Bane. Once they've become fomori, most lose their sense of human identity through possession and become servants of the dominant spirit.

Not to say fomori are at all to blame for their state; instead, they've been taken advantage of by cruel and opportunistic spirits. Certainly, some fomori "welcome" their possessing Bane, but many, if not most, simply had a moment of despair or weakness exploited.

Because of the intrinsic link between Banes and fomori, they often reinforce the same themes and have the same storytelling functions as Banes. They're the instrument of the Bane in the physical world. For more on this relationship, see "Storytelling with Banes" on p. 244.

For practical purposes, a Bane possessing a host for more than a few days results in a fomor. If a Bane's possession lasts for less than that, it's just a temporary possession, and

the vessel quickly reverts to their previous state once the Bane has been eliminated or otherwise abandons the host.

The following examples are broad categories of fomori, more to indicate to the Storyteller how to use them, as opposed to any specific appellations by which Garou know them. Most aren't expressly tied to a specific type of Bane (such as a Bane of pollution or a Bane of famine), but should be matched to whichever spiritual themes are appropriate for conflicts in which they appear during the story. Also, they can be reskinned in a variety of ways, and made memorable with a few clever details or clues imagined by the Storyteller.

BRUTES

Many fomori are suited to little other than unrestrained physical violence. Whether they're maddened by their state or find a perverse joy in it, they often live short and violent lives, but the most powerful of them have survived numerous violent episodes and can grow into menacing hulks. Some of them may appear in numbers, drawn by mutual misfortune, such as the Grunt, whereas ones such as the Bad Seed prefer to operate more independently.

Grunt

Inelegant but vicious, the Grunt attends to simple tasks and direct motives, most of which involve harming others. Example Grunts include a Bane-possessed gang boss, an extremist-group bully, a soldier in an occupying army, or an escaped medical-experiment subject. They also are capable of incredible feats of endurance.

General Difficulty: 4 / 2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 3, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 6, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 8, Awareness 6, Firearms 8, Intimidation 6, Melee 8

Notes / Other Traits:
Darksight: Grunts possess the ability to see at night or in the dark.

Toxic Immunity: Grunts are immune to toxic environments and even to most biological and chemical weapons, such as ricin, sarin, and mustard gas.

Twisted Slasher

The Twisted Slasher is a self-fulfilling prophecy of horror, having played host to a Bane for so long that they can

no longer remember their life without the spirit viciously whispering in their ear that they've been right all along. They're so far gone into their own cruelty that they set people on edge just by being in the vicinity, with a hand permanently contorted around their favorite knife as a nigh-claw and a stride that reflects their relentlessness. Occasional lucid moments show what remains of their sense of self, but in their alienation they retreat quickly from human contact — and from the atrocities their possessing Bane commends them for performing.

General Difficulty: 4 / 2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 2, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 6, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 8, Awareness 8, Brawl 8, Stealth 8

Notes / Other Traits:
Unnatural Weapons: Twisted Slashers deal +0 Aggravated damage with their natural weapon Brawl attacks.

Feel No Pain: Twisted Slashers reduce all damage taken by 2 before halving and are immune to Impairment penalties.

Unerring Stalker: The Bane's enhanced senses allow the Twisted Slasher to track and pinpoint prey, regardless of environmental conditions, when using their Awareness dice pool.

Hollow Man

The Hollow Man is a host to two defiling entities: the Bane that makes them a fomor and a swarm of rats he can disgorge at will. The Hollow Man leads a life of suffering, agitated by the possession of the malicious spirit and chewed apart from the inside by the creatures infesting him. Slowly, this fomor becomes little more than a suit of skin worn by a writhing mass of vermin, and eventually he dies, whereupon the rats scatter from the carcass.

In the interim, though, the Hollow Man shambles through life, usually able to hide the repellent movements of the rats' nest within him, suffering through whatever purpose he finds himself pursuing, which might be overtly violent, or might be some strange spymaster role, augmented by his verminous minions. If the fomor can be separated somehow from the possessing Bane, the rats — ideally — disperse and let him resume a normal life. Assuming he can get back to it after the ordeal.

General Difficulty: 3/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 3, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 7, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 6, Awareness 6, Brawl 6, Stealth 6, Streetwise 6

Notes / Other Traits:
Rat Host: The Hollow Man may disgorge a swarm of rats to do his bidding (see p. 293 for rat Traits). The fomor can also dissolve into a swarm at will and flee all but the most extreme conditions. He can then return to reinhabit his discarded skin-suit, though a Bane may well abandon the host and leave it to die in such a state. (In such a case, the Bane must "re-hollow" a suitable new host.)

Verminous: The Hollow Man is capable of vermin-like physical feats, such as crawling up walls and squeezing through impossibly small openings.

Bad Seed

The Bad Seed is a product of generational wickedness, long planning, and the collusion of a human cult with the possessing Bane itself. Indeed, the Bad Seed is possessed by the same Bane that tormented their parents before they were even conceived, and that now takes advantage of the trauma they experienced in their ruinous family. The Bad Seed shows an almost divine reverence for the "angel that sings" in their head, with a strange sort of charisma. And if the Bad Seed can find a suitable mate — whatever that means — they'll pass on the family legacy as well as they're able. The Bad Seed wears icons, brands, and tattoos of their cultic devotion openly.

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 5, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 7

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 8, Firearms 6, Leadership 8, Occult 6, Persuasion 8

Notes / Other Traits:
Hidden Form: Unlike many other fomori, the Bad Seed shows no outward physical signs of their Bane possession. When they do invoke their "gifts," the Bane appears almost superimposed over their seemingly human form. This "rapture state" is nearly instantaneous, and the Bad Seed can reflexively enter it in response to an attack. In

their "rapture," the Bad Seed gains fused-hand clubbing fists that inflict +1 Aggravated Health damage, gain Enhanced Resistance, and reduce all damage taken by 2 before halving.

Cult Leader: The Bad Seed bullies and commands others to do their bidding, whether they are themselves other fomori, or merely terrified family members or cultists. Those who live under the Bad Seed's command gain two bonus dice to all dice pools related to violence (including combat).

Fomor Origins

It often helps to think of a fomor's life before the Bane possessed them, to give them context, highlight their tragedy, and help make them more than monsters lined up to be knocked down. The following suggestions ideally help Storytellers imagine their own unique individuals who eventually go astray.

- Favored child of a wealthy family who never learned boundaries
- Debt-burdened young professional pressured into a career they never desired for themselves
- Jealous individual seemingly doomed to never be quite good enough at whatever they really want to make them special
- Musician seeking inspiration in dangerous activities and substances
- One-time expert who didn't keep up with new knowledge as the rest of their community advanced
- A bully drawn to work and social situations where they can inflict themselves on others
- New parent driven to desperation by their responsibilities
- Insatiably rich asshole who can never have enough
- The sibling or lover of someone who experienced their First Change and was terrified in its aftermath

CORRUPTERS

When the Garou speak of fomori, they often describe a freakish legion of creeps and misshapen monsters, but some fomori come in more pleasing, tempting, or insidious forms. They are the corrupters that serve the Wyrm by subverting places of Gaia's power or enslaving their guardians. Unlike many brutes and pawns, most corrupters are eager servants of the Bane inhabiting them, even if they have no grasp of the cosmological role they play.

Green Siren

Fomori of more amicable appearance may work with corporate entities or serve as infiltrators for powerful Wyrm-aligned entities such as Pentex Group fronts (see p. 296). The Green Siren seeks out those who stand against the "consumption agenda" and other environmental profiteering programs and attempt to divert their efforts or direct them against a "common enemy." Befriending Garou, their allies, or unrelated operations is the ultimate goal of all such false friends, but it's a dangerous game

that often ends in Rage-torn bodies, so they hide their monstrosity with witty conversation, fashionable clothing, and makeup.

The Green Siren often serves as a cut-out for powerful corporate interests and has access to deep networks of people and power in the spheres of business and politics. They use their cash and access to bolster green causes that emphasize personal responsibility over production-level policy change, as well as direct action against celebrities and media personalities.

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 4, Willpower 8

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 7, Driving 7, Investigation 7, Persuasion 8, Politics 8, Streetwise 8, Subterfuge 8, Technology 7

Notes / Other Traits:
Sap Vitality: Living creatures cannot regain Willpower or heal Aggravated Health damage if they've been in the presence of the Green Siren within the last 24 hours (unless they are possessed by a Bane or themselves a Bane, or endowed by the Wyrm or other effects to do so).

Friends in High Places: The Green Siren has three or more dots in Contacts, Resources, and Influence Backgrounds that they can use on the behalf of their "friends" in exchange for favors that on the surface benefit their common cause of helping the planet.

Ravenous Locust

The Ravenous Locust has been completely consumed by a Bane spirit of hunger and disease. They have few identifiably human feelings and wear their mortal frame like camouflage to creep closer to their prey. The Locust is a thin and frail creature, burning with hunger, but they wish to drink deeply of the blood of Gaia and thereby grow fat on what waning bounty she still has.

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 6

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 5, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 8, Brawl 7, Occult 8, Stealth 7

Notes / Other Traits:
Consume Power: The Ravenous Locust can damage caerns and consume other places of spiritual power to become more potent and even multiply. When the Ravenous Locust is in such a place of power, they gain a bonus to Health and all Physical dice pools equal to the location's Caern Value or equivalent. At the Storyteller's discretion, this bonus can generally be +3, but especially powerful sites may grant as much as a +5 bonus. Moreover, if the site has any special characteristics or advantages, the Ravenous Locust may gain special powers relevant to those characteristics. For example, a site dedicated to honored Garou fallen in battle might grant the Ravenous Locust the ability to use a twisted version of one of their Gifts for the duration of the scene. Each time the Ravenous Locust feeds from that caern or place of power, which it may do once per scene when it's present, the site loses one level of its Value and may well draw other Banes or Ravenous Locusts. A caern reduced to Caern Value zero in this way needs to be reawakened by using the Rite of Caern Building (see p. 185) — after any ravaging Banes are dealt with, of course.

Other Fomor Traits

Ostensibly, there are as many unique fomori as there are long-term Bane possessions of hosts. The following Traits can be used to augment the above fomor descriptions, or they can serve as the basis for revolting new fomori that the Storyteller wishes to loose upon an unsuspecting pack.

Burn-Proof: The fomor is immune to Health damage from acid, fire, and radiation. These elements still cause cosmetic wounds and can even lead to long-term health problems such as organ failure and disfigurement. (Do not apply the Burn-Proof Trait to fomori whose critical vulnerability is to fire or other effects rendered useless here.)

Claws: The fomor has claws that allow them to inflict +1 (or more) damage on Brawl attacks. At the Storyteller's discretion, these claws are usually hidden, retracted, etc., and burst from the fomor's fingertips instantly when needed, painfully shredding the flesh of the fomor's hands. Damage the fomor inflicts is always Aggravated to humans and other mundane creatures, but it can be Superficial or Aggravated to werewolves and other creatures with Enhanced Resistance.

Caustic Spew: The fomor can exhale a poisonous cloud or vomit forth a flesh-melting liquid. This attack uses its Physical dice pool and inflicts +3 Superficial Health damage; in some cases (at the Storyteller's discretion), it can even burn through wood or stone. This attack can usually occur only once per scene, though the Bane possessing the fomor may "burn out" its host to grant it a second spew, after which performance the fomor dissolves in a puddle of its own mordant nastiness.

Death Surge: After taking damage that would kill or incapacitate them, the fomor can immediately make a final attack or take another final action before dropping, even if they've already acted that turn. This action ignores all dice pool penalties from Impairment. If the final action is a physical Brawl or Melee attack, it inflicts +2 damage.

Delirium: The fomor causes revulsion, horror, or another confusing effect to protect the secret of its existence or to provoke terror in humans. Although it's (probably) not identical to the Delirium the Garou can cause, the effect is similar. See p. 142 for more information on the Delirium.

Face Swap: The fomor can steal the face off a recently deceased corpse. If they wish, they may even exchange their own face for that of the deceased. This new face slowly rots away over the course of a month and eventually sloughs off as the fomor's original face emerges from beneath the decay, causing a -2 penalty to Social dice pools during the last week of the month in question. At the Storyteller's discretion, the fomor can steal the faces from still-living victims, which surely results in a conflict of its own.

Hatchery: A brood of vermin, flies, or other tiny creatures lives within the fomor's body, such as in their back or lungs. Although this Trait is usually covert, a matrix of holes may be evident in the physiology where these vermin make their home, and at least a few of the creatures are always buzzing around the Fomor. The fomor can loose the creatures, inflicting 1 Health damage to all enemies in their presence every round for the next three turns. The onerous vermin also inflict a two-dice penalty to all of their dice pools during the three turns that they swarm.

Huge: The fomor is a very large specimen and towers over others of its kind. Such bulky creatures gain four additional Health levels, but definitely draw attention. Huge fomori are often unstable, their bodies too big for longevity, and may exhibit weeping cancerous growths or vestigial appendages that further emphasize their misshapen bodily profile.

Meltdown: As the fomor dies, it sprays those nearby with acidic viscera and caustic (previously) internal foulness. This horrid coup de grâce causes 2 Aggravated Health damage to everyone in its immediate vicinity, and it can blind humans and animals permanently if they don't receive medical attention.

Resurrection: Some fomori can come back from even the most debilitating wounds. Such fomori heal all Aggravated and Superficial Health damage at the end of combat, sometimes seemingly returning from the dead. These fomori bear the marks of their resurrection as livid scars, strange bulbous tumors, or less visible traumas like selective memory loss. The only way to permanently kill them is the complete destruction of their body in a furnace or strong acid, assuming they are not also Burn-Proof (see above). Eventually this Trait runs its course and leads to the complete breakdown of the host body.

Screech: Unleashing a painful wail, the fomor stuns a victim within their line of sight as an action. One target the fomor can see must make a Stamina + Resolve test (Difficulty 3) or suffer a four-dice penalty on all of their dice pools for their next action. The fomor cannot Screech on consecutive turns.

Spiral Sign: The fomor bears a strange and disturbing spiral sign somewhere on their body, such as a grotesque birthmark, a brand, or a tattoo. Any special effects such as Gifts that detect possession or duplicitous intent fail to detect this fomor. Also, the fomor becomes aware of anyone within their presence using such an effect and can spend one Willpower to falsely flag a nearby human victim as someone who meets the criteria of the detection effect.

Tentacles: This Trait remains hidden within a fomor until the writhing mass of tentacles erupts from their body and attacks everyone near them. In most cases, the fomor has no control over the thrashing mass, which instead is controlled by the possessing Bane, but in some cases, the vile symbiosis results in the Bane granting more autonomy to the fomor. Everyone within two meters of the fomor when the tentacles erupt must make a Dexterity + Athletics test against Difficulty 4; each suffers Superficial damage equal to the margin of failure. The victim is also grappled (see p. 131) if they sustain at least one level of damage. The tentacle eruption is probably fatal to the fomor (Storyteller's discretion) and causes a Delirium-like effect in nonsupernatural onlookers (see p. 142).

Toughness: Bane possession has toughened the fomor's skin, as well as nourishing protective internal tissues and noxious fibers that shield its vital organs and weak spots, allowing it to reduce all damage taken by 3 before halving (which supersedes any other natural armor; the value does not stack). The fomor can wear body armor or other protective clothing to augment this advantage further. Fomori with the Toughness Trait are usually slow and clumsy, as their rubbery flesh and dense innards make them inflexible. (At the Storyteller's discretion, the armor can be visible externally, as with bony plates or a chitinous carapace, but such cases probably draw more attention than obvious bone-encased fomori are worth.)

PENTEX GROUP

Of all the enemies the Garou face, perhaps the most insidious is Pentex Group, because it combines all of the assets that conventional exploitative multinationals possesses, but it also commands the same sort of spiritual awareness and puissance as the Garou. Pentex sees the world through the same animistic lens as the werewolves do, and just as many of its fronts participate in the same environmental rapine as other exploitative companies. This combination makes for an exceptionally powerful (if subtle) antagonist for the Garou, in that it has their advantages, but also has enough of what the human world considers indispensable to be influential there. When werewolves leave a bloody ruin behind, the human world is terrorized. When a Pentex endeavor leaves a generation of children born deformed or an entire community stricken by carcinogenic water, it's an unfortunate industrial accident? Add it to the list of desensitizing events in the ongoing Apocalypse.

Critically, the average person has no idea that Pentex Group exists. It's not an overtly flashy organization that seeks attention for itself; quite the opposite. Pentex itself doesn't make anything. Pentex is a holding company devoted entirely to the extraction of value from the world and the various business holdings under its ownership. It's privately owned, so it's not listed on any of the public stock exchanges, nor is it beholden to even the most basic legislation in places that allow for lobbying, regulatory capture, or simple bribery. The company does what it wants, and if there are fines, bribes or campaign contributions to be made, all that lands in the cost-of-goods-sold column (and often is tax deductible).

Pentex is also, for the vast majority of its operations, absolutely, unremarkably mundane in its affairs. Ninety-eight percent of what it does doesn't involve supernatural creatures or malevolent spiritual entities, just toxic runoff and banal worker exploitation. It's that remaining two percent, though, that has clued in the Garou to the fact that they're not dealing with occult coincidences or lucky mystical dilettantes. Pentex's forays into the physical-spiritual axes that werewolves occupy is wholly intentional, and the company is increasingly adept at its business.

PenteX™ GROUP

OPERATION

Pentex Group does very little directly and by itself — it prefers simply to own things and collect the revenues those things generate. As such, it's unlikely for a Garou pack to encounter Pentex itself. There's no following the shady-looking guy in a Pentex jumpsuit or staking out the weird warehouse where all of the delivery vans with Pentex logos convene at night. Pentex is a mastermind organization, a corporate entity that operates through fronts.

That means the Garou almost always encounter Pentex's proxy companies first, and potentially exclusively. Follow the clues back up the chain far enough and they'll implicate the holding company itself, but Pentex is no stranger to inquisitive individuals — even werewolves — getting all up in its shit, and it's not afraid to kill a journalist, silence a whistleblower, or send a support squad of an affiliated front's military-grade power to deal with Garou-shaped "corporate espionage."

It's Not Always Pentex

The world is full of environment-despoiling, wage-thieving, fraud-committing, community-destroying companies and entities. At its worst, as shorthand for its many fronts, "Pentex Group" is an in-world stand-in for that lot. And it's a testament to the way the world works and the influence these companies command that we can't challenge their operations directly in print, even in the fictional context of a storytelling game, without ending up in an infinitude of lawsuits designed to... do exactly what we're describing Pentex Group as doing here.

You're not bound by those same constraints in your chronicle, however. In fact, because the World of Darkness is our own, only with the addition of supernatural monsters prowling its long shadows, you can add any amount of real-world brand and company names that may help your troupe's chronicle feel more recognizable and authentic. Plenty of actual companies are involved in significant human rights violations or environmental catastrophes of their own that would enrage the Garou to the point of action. You should feel encouraged to use them in your game to whatever extent you're comfortable. Remember: Put recognizable faces on the conflicts your Garou wage.

And tear those faces right off.

Entirely Unrelated World Facts at a Glance

- In 1953, democratically elected Iranian prime minister Mohammed Mosaddegh's government was overthrown by joint efforts of MI6 and the CIA after Mosaddegh nationalized the nation's oil resources and declared that Iran's oil belonged to Iran and not the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.
- In 2010, the Deepwater Horizon oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico exploded, resulting in an estimated 60,000-plus barrels per day of oil leaking into the gulf, though British Petroleum released public estimates that claimed the spill was approximately 1,000 barrels per day. In total, 4.9 million barrels of oil leaked into the gulf and affected 16,000 miles of coastline. The subsequent RESTORE Act, passed by the US Congress, directed cleanup funds to local communities but made no provisions to establish new drilling safety regulations.
- In 2022, India and Pakistan endured a heat wave at temperatures that were, at the time, the hottest in more than a century. These extreme temperatures increased ozone levels and ambient air pollution, and they melted mountain glaciers at higher-than-normal rates, causing flash floods in addition to deadly heat. Concomitant power outages threatened institutional and other systems, such as healthcare and agricultural ones. Even birds suffered heat stroke. Obviously, this disaster wasn't the result of any single, specific company or front, but rather an outcome of a global economic model based on infinite consumption on a planet with finite resources.

Maybe, if hypothetical werewolves had existed in our world, they would have been able to do something about these situations, and they certainly would have been affected by the "ripple effect" of subsequent events that have shaped the current state of geopolitics and the economics of consumption. Maybe.

Remember, too, that seeing the problem is only part of the issue. Almost every Garou agrees that Gaia is dead or dying. Where they disagree is on the most effective course for meaningfully fighting back. An antagonist drawn from your troupe's locality may provide just the bit of inspiration and flavor to create interesting pack dynamics around such a resolution.

Fronts

Operating through any number of subsidiary companies, Pentex keeps its own identity out of the spotlight. In fact, most Pentex fronts don't themselves earn much spotlight, and the holding company prefers it that way. High-profile enterprises and multinational businesses garner attention, and the less attention directed toward Pentex proper, the less it has to do to manage messaging or liquidate persistently nosy foes. Any number of local companies might operate as Pentex fronts, whether permanently or temporarily. Pentex has several favorite categories of fronts — regional or local energy companies, for-profit pharmaceuticals, tech and hardware, "gig" services, for-profit education — but just about anything can end up in its asset portfolio.

HOW FRONTS OPERATE

Most importantly, fronts allow Pentex proper to stay hidden. Pentex doesn't fight directly — it acquires and dispatches its front companies' security forces and private military companies, or even depends upon local militaries or law-enforcement agencies to protect its interests, especially in "pro-business" countries or regions. This math is true even when Pentex deals with threats that aren't raging werewolves, such as with political insurrectionists or protestors who don't want that crypto-

currency mine in their community, or that chemical plant built upriver from that last dwindling patch of old-growth forest.

For example, at one point, Pentex owned one of the content services that multiple phone carriers use to provide notifications to its mobile-phone users. By selectively restricting what information the content service broadcast — such as severe weather warnings or the "terrorist activity" of organized protest — Pentex has been able to wag the dog, influencing public opinion by silencing proof of the detrimental outcomes of its various endeavors. If you don't know there's severe weather, you can't follow the cause of that severe weather back to the petrochemical companies responsible for massive pollution. From the Garou perspective, how do you even fight something like that?

At any time, Pentex may choose to divest itself of a subsidiary, and for any number of reasons. Because all Pentex cares about is extracting value, it has no sentimental attachments to any of its companies. And once the last dollar has been squeezed out of active operations, Pentex subjects the husk of the company to the private equity treatment: Leverage what's left to extract value from the debt and then sell the moribund company carcass to another company that has to figure out how to manage the strip-mined assets.

EXAMPLE PENTEX GROUP FRONTS

- **Albion Petroleum**, operating off the Irish coasts with drilling leases that never seem to expire, despite local sentiment being 80 percent against their renewal
- **Biblios** (formerly known as Chi, formerly known as Xenophon Security), a consumer data aggregator
- **Scheldes Pharmaceuticals**, running clinical trials across North America, moving operations state to state and territory to territory when local legal burdens make relocation prudent
- Any actual, real-world entity may have a (distant, protected, obscured) connection to Pentex. Even the three listed above are effectively real-world companies with their legally actionable identities obscured.

Individual fronts are never "too big to fail," and are by design easily overlooked, especially by people who wouldn't have any reason to know they're there. In the examples above, if you don't care about where your fuel station procures its supplies, if you don't pay attention to what information some of your infrequently used apps gather, or which factory makes the over-the-counter aspirin you buy at the drugstore, you're probably not even aware that Albion, Biblios, or Scheldes exists. And that's intentional.

PATRON SPIRIT

Pentex Group's Board of Directors has pledged the company itself, as an entity, to Fly. Just as Fly takes advantage of carrion and carcasses in which to lay her eggs, so does Pentex take advantage of Gaia's dying body to bring its innumerable foul agendas to fruition. It's a remarkably short-sighted policy, for Pentex relies on Gaia and the world to sustain its (corporate) life, but Pentex suffers the same criminal pathology as do many business entities of the Capitalocene era: It's addicted to profit and pursues that goal, even as it erodes and destroys the very source of those profits. Such is the spiritual depravity Pentex Group represents — with its vast wealth and global resources, the company will be able to withstand the Apocalypse, in comfort, far longer than the climate

refugees it creates and the company towns it indentures in pursuit of ever more everything.

BANES AND FOMORI

The company doesn't just operate in the realm of boilerplate corporate scumbaggery, however. It's clued into the same metaphysical realities that grant their benefits to the Garou. Pentex has operations and Rites and Gifts granted to its Board of Directors and those they choose to initiate into Fly's mysteries.

Banes, not surprisingly, often grant their own favors to Pentex loyalists, pursuing their own malignant motives that all too frequently align with the very human avarice which drives the holding company to exploitative extremes. These Banes may be sophisticated or direct, cunning or cruel. They may or may not even be aligned with Fly directly, as the spirit world has its own hierarchies and pacts that make for monstrous allies, especially in this era of the Wyrm's imbalance. For example, a Bane may spiritually surveil the boundaries of a refugee facility in the shadow of a security force's base camp, or it may skulk in the Umbral reflection of a boardroom, whispering in executives' ears and pitting ambitious Pentex directors against one another.

And where go Banes, fomori emerge. With so many people under the Pentex umbrella who are spiritually compromised, Banes find frequent hosts to possess. In some cases, the possessed climb the ranks of the Pentex hierarchy. In most cases, however, they're positioned as "medical experiments," "part of a security force focused on a specific fitness and training regimen," or a variety of other false but plausible explanations for the supernaturally augmented bodies that Banes turn against Garou or more mundane threats.

Not all fomori are under the sway of Banes in service to Pentex, but all fomori are ultimately possessed by Banes. See p. 243 for more information on Banes and p. 262 for more information on fomori.

IN STORIES

Using Pentex Group as an antagonist is custom-tailored for a chronicle built upon the three-act model proposed in the Storytelling chapter. Act one involves discovering and dealing with an immediate threat, such as a fomor on a seek-and-destroy mission or more subtle evidence of a front company at work. Act two is for more significant investigation and accounting for the front's actions, and may involve stepping sideways into the Umbra, especially to take down a significant spirit that has retreated or been banished beyond the Gauntlet. Act three is when the Garou are probably most sorely tested, having to deal with the structural problems that the Pentex Group initiative or front has put in place. The pack has killed the fomori and dealt with the mercenary outfit, but how does it deal with the city council that has effectively invited the exploiters to be a part of the community? How do the werewolves uproot the government-sanctioned military installation?

Of course, don't feel as if you have to plan a full chronicle around Pentex. Sometimes, the Garou pursue a red herring that happens to be aligned with Pentex. Other times, having a Rage-fueled rampage through some unrepentantly corrupt Apocalypse profiteers is just what the Storyteller ordered.

At its core, Pentex is set up as a narrative antagonist to force an institutional-level change and also to put an individual face on the threat and flay it from the executive's head. It's almost always done through proxies, as well — the Garou probably don't go to a "Pentex headquarters" and slaughter their way through the building. Rather, the fronts act as minions and proxies, through a series of blinds, layers of plausible deniability, and any number of contractors, so Pentex operations themselves are never on anything resembling a front line.

Destroying a Pentex Group operation is effectively regime change. Sure, the front is a threat and needs to go, but what happens in the aftermath? For the Garou to call it even a small victory, how do they ensure that what happens after eliminating the threat is any better than the status quo of the operation's continued functioning? If the pack is just an agent of destruction rather than an agent of change, they've effectively justified the human world's perception of them as blood-spattered monstrosities instead of anything resembling Gaia's champions. Simply acting destructively is what got the Garou where they are today — and has created opportunities to fill power vacuums and exploit resources.

Black Spiral Dancers (see p. 277) occasionally find themselves aiding the operations of various Pentex fronts, and the fronts themselves don't always know the true nature of their… well, let's call them dangerous co-conspirators. Whether as security or more specialized "con-

sultants," individual Black Spiral Dancers and even whole packs might have reason to advance corporate concerns, if only to draw out hated rivals among the Garou.

PENTEX GROUP ADVERSARIES

With its breadth of operations, arguably most of the antagonists in this chapter could have some attachment to Pentex. (See Banes and Fomori in particular, on pp. 243 and 262 respectively, as well as the PMC Soldier on p. 291, who can function as a contract trooper or security officer.) The following examples are specifically suited to encounter in relation to some Pentex activity. For more information on the suggested act structure for the antagonists below, see p. 212 of the Storytelling chapter.

Act One Antagonists

Antagonists encountered during an "act one" Pentex story usually serve the purpose of alerting the pack to the presence of a front and its deleterious effects, as well as providing specific information about what's going on. Garou probably have little trouble overcoming these enemies physically (though some can be dangerous in numbers). Getting the other sorts of information they need — such as location, operation scale, and what their foe is actually up to — is sure to challenge the werewolves in other ways.

Field Technician

The Field Technician is a specialist in their particular subset of tasks, depending upon the front in question. Examples include geological surveyor, construction crew member, research scientist, installation engineer, and computer programmer. Whatever their specialty, they perform the key duties of the front "in the field," whether that field is a commercial development, site laboratory, power plant, or whatever's appropriate to the particular endeavor.

Example Field Technician: COUNTERMEASURE SPECIALIST

Field Technicians are generally more noteworthy for their information or their ability to "connect the dots" than they are for direct conflict expertise.

General Difficulty: 3/1

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 2, Social 3, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Technology (Anti-Personnel Countermeasures) 6

Notes / Other Traits:
Surveillance Professional: The presence of the Countermeasure Specialist increases the Difficulty to circumvent surveillance and anti-personnel devices by 1.

Security Sentry

Security sentries protect operational facilities but often don't understand that there's anything supernatural going on. They're more used to scaring off inquisitive reporters or local rabble rousers than they are handling coordinated packs of Garou. They may nevertheless have useful information, such as facility layout, security patrol routes, or what the security supervisor's favorite whiskey is. Or that there's *something* in the containment facility, but that all they know is that they're supposed to keep people away from it. Security sentries are rarely willing to die for their paycheck, and they represent anything from uniformed guards to easily riled pipe-wielding yahoos who refuse to accept election results.

Example Security Sentry: PANORAMA SECURITY GUARD

Almost negligible on their own, but troublesome in numbers, less as a threat (they're not paid enough to risk their lives) but because they'll raise the alarm.

General Difficulty: 2/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 3, Social 3, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 4, Firearms 4, Intimidation 4

Notes / Other Traits:
Weapons: Security sentries are usually armed with +3 Damage handguns.

Lurking Spirit

The Lurking Spirit is a gaffling or minor jaggling present for various reasons, whether being drawn to the emotional resonance of the operation or being forced into service by a spiritually attuned superior. Lurking Spirits can possess low-order security or operational tools or animals, such as security cameras, construction tools that "attack" poltergeist-style, or guard dogs. If encountered in the Umbra, they visually resemble their main purpose, such as large eyes for spying, claws or a scything beak for attacking, etc. Most people engaged with the operation have no idea the Lurking Spirits exist or, indeed, any understanding of the supernatural. These spirits are generally craven but vicious, willing to harry interloping Garou and fly back to anyone more important if they feel threatened.

Example Lurking Spirit: SKITTERLING

Skitterlings are lesser versions of Banes, like Scrags, Scryers, and Furmlings, and share some or all of their traits, depending on their purpose. If encountered by themselves, they attempt to flee and alert others of their kind of more powerful entities, unless pursued and put down. When Lurking Spirits attack, they do so en masse, making combined attacks in an effort to overwhelm their foe by sheer weight of numbers, or to provide an opening for a more powerful antagonist (see Teamwork, p. 122).

Power: 3

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 5, Firearms (Balefire) 5, Awareness 8

Notes / Other Traits: One or more of the following:
Claws: +3 weapons in the Umbra,

Balefire: +0 Aggravated damage ranged attack, and to observe the physical world without leaving the Umbra. Hidden Observation: Skitterlings may observe the material world while remaining safely in the Umbra. As a result, they cannot be seen by their targets without the use of Gifts or other abilities that facilitate seeing into the Umbra from the physical world.

Act Two Antagonists

Act two antagonists are more significant, both in the threat they pose to the Garou and their import to the operation at hand. Many times, these are the weirder spiritual enemies that need to be driven back into the Umbra, and then dealt with more substantially there. Just as likely, though, they're the clued-in higher-ups that the majority of Pentex and its fronts don't know exist, but that nonetheless serve Fly's agenda and their own personal ambitions attached to the operation.

Cruel Fomor

The Cruel Fomor may itself be the objective of an operation, such as with an initiative bolstering supernatural power, but the breed is more often the by-product of an operation, as with hunger-Banes possessing starving workers at an agribusiness factory farm or pollution-Banes possessing sickened workers amid the toxic runoff of a resource-extraction site.

The pack may come in conflict with multiple (perhaps even coordinated) Cruel Fomori, or one particularly significant Cruel Fomor might be the primary antagonist in the environment. Defeating the fomor probably ends the possession and sends the Bane back into the Umbra, to be dealt with in another conflict, or as an extension of the same conflict.

Example Cruel Fomori: FACTORY FARM OVERSEER

The Factory Farm Overseer supervises a concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO) facility secretly dedicated to the Fly Mother, an avatar of Fly. It leads a team of "dedicated facility security operators" (five Grunt Fomori, p. 263).

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl (Meaty Fists) 8, Melee (Butcher's Cleaver) 8, Intimidate 8, Leadership (Bullying) 6

Notes / Other Traits:
The Factory Farm Overseer has the following Fomor powers (see p. 267):

Toughness (its body covered in fleshy growths resembling rotting meat, hidden under a bulky uniform)

Hatchery (flies hatching from the slabs of rotting meat);

Screech (the anguish of a thousand tortured animals).

Rampaging Bane

Having been invited by the wretched individuals they possessed to become Cruel Fomori, Rampaging Banes represent the spiritual costs of whatever exploitation is happening at the operation site. Banes maliciously embody themselves in any (consciously or subconsciously) willing host and sow ruin. They retreat to the Umbra whenever they exhaust the capacities of their "meat sacks," including having them torn to shreds by werewolves. Once in the Umbra, the Rampaging Bane is on their home territory. As above, the pack may contend with multiple lesser Banes, one especially potent Bane, or some mix, as befits the severity of the situation.

Example Rampaging Bane: THE RAVAGER

The Ravager is a Drattosi spirit that has grown lazy and swollen amid the suffering and pollution of the tilled valley that has been overfarmed and polluted by the Dawn Lake CAFO. It enjoys toying with trespassers, possessing rusty wrecks and hunting traps strewn about the area, causing "accidents" to humans who set foot in its domain. If Garou make themselves known, by overtly shapeshifting or meddling in the local Umbra, it takes offense and engages by possessing the corroded hulks of old farming equipment (treat the possessed farm equipment as the Drattosi-Possessed Garbage Heap on p. 247).

Power: 8

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 12, Intimidate 12, Larceny (Set Rusty Trap) 9

Notes / Other Traits:
In the Umbra, it has similar powers to a Drattosi:

Armored Shell: The thick shell of the Ravager in its Umbral form reduces any physical damage taken by 3 before any halving.

Giant Pincer Claws: The claws do +4 Superficial damage to Garou.

Act Three Antagonist

In act three, the pack sees the fruits of its labors in having resolved (perhaps imperfectly) the most immediately pervasive threat from act two. The Garou reveal who pulls that foe's strings, then deal with them to discover the clues that lead them to act one of the next story in the chronicle. If they've managed to shut down the operation in act two, the pack (ideally) delivers the comeuppance to its organizer in act three. Note that the example here is just that, and Storytellers should feel free to customize (especially if the troupe is no stranger to these three-act progressions, to ensure variety). The mastermind might be a C suite of directors or executives, or might be a single exceptionally competent individual without any supernatural capacities themselves.

First Team

If confirmed werewolf activity puts one of its fronts in serious danger, Pentex deploys one or more of its First Teams. Each First Team is an elite squad of werewolf hunters, members sometimes even "augmented" into fomori, using tactics and equipment tailored to the elimination of the "lycanthrope threat". Most teams have a fixed roster, and despite the mix of human, fomori, and the occasional unclassifiable members, a strange sense of loyalty and pride tends to develop between the teammates, who often owe each other their lives many times over.

First Teams employ a wide variety of methods unique to each unit. Some are subtle, rapidly locating friends and family of the target werewolves and using them as leverage or making gruesome examples of them in order to flush their quarries out. Others level the playing field by using experimental technology or specialized fomori that hamstring Garou abilities. A few even have the guts and firepower to face werewolves head-on, taking them on in a conflagration of anti-personnel explosives and armor-piercing ordnance, every bullet and piece of shrapnel laced with silver.

Example First Team: FIRST TEAM #23

This First Team is a mix of human and fomori members (four human and two fomori). First Team #23 employs a strategy of infiltration and interception, using the fomor Hyacinth as spy and bait. Once a werewolf has been isolated, they use their other fomor asset to inhibit the target's powers long enough for the rest of the team to take the werewolf down. So far they've bagged three werewolves, but have yet to take on an entire pack.

Most members of the team, and arguably the most replaceable, are humans with a private security or PMC background. The current leader is Jefferson Dawn, a veteran of operations in Bosnia and Nigeria, and most of the crew sport similar field experiences. They are professionally disinterested in the Pentex agenda, though their "augmented" colleagues took some getting used to.

Hyacinth is the codename of First Team #23 infiltrator fomor asset. The fomor looks like a vaguely pleasant female of indeterminate age, nondescript to the point that few notice her or even remember meeting her. Her abilities amplify her forgettable nature, and few match her ability to insinuate herself into even the most insular gatherings.

The other fomor asset, *Sandwich*, appears as a large man with wrinkled skin, somehow both swollen and rugous. He never speaks, the inside of his mouth a ridged inhuman maw, but he can sing a haunting melody that somehow interferes with the shapeshifting abilities of werewolves, locking them out of their war-forms.

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 5, Mental 6

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Firearms 8, Stealth 8, Investigation 8, Survival 8

Notes / Other Traits:
Weapons: All members of the team are equipped with firearms and silver bullets. The human operatives all have +4 automatic rifles, while the fomor use +2 handguns. They can also requisition heavier ordnance such as silver-laced explosives (see p. 197, treat as antipersonnel with base damage of 4), as well as military armor (p. 196) and night operation gear.

Delirium Habituation: All members of First Team #23 are immune to Delirium.

Hyacinth: Hyacinth is able to use the Gift Brother's Scent (p. 167) as if she had a Wisdom of 3, and has Subterfuge 7 and Performance 7 in addition to the above pools. Hyacinth also has the Face Swap and Spiral Sign fomor traits (see p. 267).

Sandwich: While Sandwich sings, any Garou within hearing distance has their cost to enter crinos form doubled to four Rage Checks. Also, a Garou starting a turn in crinos while under this effect must make two Rage Checks to maintain the form . Sandwich can do nothing but defend against attacks while singing, and will stop

once he becomes incapacitated. Sandwich also has the Screech and Toughness fomor traits (see p. 267) as well as Enhanced Resistance.

Rapacious Malefactor

Generally the brains of the operation, or at least the individual in charge of it, the Rapacious Malefactor seeks profit, or personal advancement, or even oppression for the sake of ensuring their own primacy. The Rapacious Malefactor is almost always clued in to the entropic spiritual nature of Pentex in a way that advances the operation, and the front, that they're directing, but not always. They aren't always necessarily the most powerful threat themselves, but they usually direct a significant amount of resources that make their operation more of an ongoing threat than by being a badass in a fight. Cut off the head and the body will die....

As part of a front operating with Pentex's support, the Rapacious Malefactor answers to someone, and if the pack overcomes them here, the Garou are likely to discover whom — or at least another operation "up the chain" that requires its own investigation.

Example Rapacious Malefactor: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MUNROE

Director Munroe oversees several Pentex fronts, including the Dawn Lake CAFO, and is rarely more than an hour away by helicopter. Munroe is accompanied by a team of four Scrag-possessed guards (see p. 251) who are equipped with +4 damage automatic rifles — loaded with silver bullets, if she suspects werewolf activity. Munroe herself has had her eyes replaced by the Fly Mother, and they resemble nothing so much as giant grubs poking from her eye sockets (though she usually hides them behind dark glasses).

General Difficulty: 5 / 2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 7, Mental 7

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 8

Exceptional Dice Pools: Firearms 8, Intimidation 9, Subterfuge 9, Awareness 9

Notes / Other Traits:
Cause Delirium: If shown, her new eyes allow her to cause fear similar to Delirium in ordinary humans and animals.

Fly Sees All: Munroe can see clearly (albeit in black and white) in any environment. In addition, she can ignore any Gifts or other abilities that penalize her Firearms Skill.

Beneath the Maggot's Gaze: Uncovered, her eyes lets Munroe use an ability similar to Gorgon's Visage (see p. 165) once per scene using her Mental pool.

OTHER WEREWOLVES AND SHAPESHIFTERS

Tragically, the Garou aren't united in their cause. The fragile Garou Nation — the ur-pack under which a sense of common purpose and community among the various tribes, auspices, and perspectives rallied — has failed.

Even beyond that, however, some Garou have turned their backs on Gaia. Indeed, some werewolves aren't Garou at all, having stolen the mantle of the shapeshifter through ignoble pacts, vile rituals, or other means. And that's to say nothing of the other changing folk who prowl the same dark alleys and menacing forests of the world as the Garou...

Garou Antagonists

Although it is certainly possible to detail Garou antagonists by using the same systems available to players, Storytellers can, in most cases, benefit from using simplified pools or the General Difficulties. Tracking Rage can also be avoided by allowing a Garou antagonist one Rage check–fueled act per turn, whether for shapeshifting, regeneration, or Gift use. The Traits below assume that the werewolves are in homid form or the equivalent. Add any dice and health levels from other forms as appropriate, or adjust the Difficulties. (For example, a Garou antagonist who shapeshifts into crinos adds 2 to their General Difficulty when others interact with them physically.)

BLACK SPIRAL DANCERS

The longest-standing sibling-foes of the Garou, Black Spiral Dancers are werewolves who forsook their duty to Gaia and threw in with the Wyrm instead. Once the tribe was known as the White Howlers, who plunged into what they believed to be the very lair of the Wyrm while in the throes of Rage, hoping to rend the Triatic "beast" itself. Instead, the White Howlers found themselves in a spiritual labyrinth, taunted by entropic spiral mysteries. In their desperation, they followed an avatar of the Patron Spirit Bat to exit the maze, but the damage had been done. The agonies of the Black Labyrinth and the White Howlers' uncontrollable Rage had shattered them, and they acknowledged the Wyrm, in supplication to its might.

So died the White Howlers, and so emerged the Black Spiral Dancers in their stead: servants of ruin and followers of Bat. Although, as with all Garou, their tribe derives from their Patron Spirit, many Black Spiral Dancers also find themselves working with the servants of Fly, on those occasions when their interests overlap with those of various Pentex fronts (see p. 269). Should things become unbearably complex in those relationships, Bat eats Fly....

Tonight the Black Spiral Dancers remain Garou, but Wyrm-twisted aberrations of those things the Garou themselves hold dear. Their bodies have been tortured into shapes resembling bats, feral dogs, rats, and even things unspeakable, as much as they resemble wolves. And though they still possess the ability to change shape, as do Gaian Garou, those shapes are hideous and unnatural.

What Do They Want: From the Black Spiral Dancer perspective, the Apocalypse is over, Gaia is dead, the Garou lost, and they are now simply nursing the corpse of their spirit-mother. The Wyrm has done its duty, and all that's left is for the remains to decay. In this respect, Black Spiral Dancers are perverse accelerationists trying to hasten the End of It All, so that the cosmological cycle can renew. Those Garou still loyal to Gaia are obstacles preventing the wheel from turning — and thus must those Garou be destroyed.

Lurking Scout (Homid Form)

The Lurking Scout gathers valuable information on enemy packs, spying on their movements and reporting back to their own wretched hives to coordinate when the best time to strike is at hand. They are, by turns, fanatical and obeisant, hoping to leave a rival grievously injured as they escape, or willing to plead and bargain (in bad faith) for their own release if captured. The Lurking Scout loves nothing so much as delivering a blow from the shadows that goes unretaliated.

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 4

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 8, Larceny 8, Stealth 8, Gifts 5

Notes / Other Traits:
The Lurking Scout has the equivalent of the following Gifts: Camouflage (p. 168), Odious Aroma (p. 166), Scent of Running Water (p. 151), and any appropriate Native Gifts.

Caern Raider (Homid Form)

What the players' pack has, the Caern Raider longs to take away, destroy, and defile for the sake of hastening the world into its own collapse. Caern Raiders rarely act alone; in the age of Apocalypse, packs of them, large and small, are the scourge of young Garou who devote their own efforts to finding and restoring the caerns that have fallen dormant or been corrupted. No surprise, then, that Caern Raiders take their own malicious glee in once again dragging them to ruin, with as much collateral damage and bloodshed as possible, or befouling them into their own caerns of depravity and rot.

General Difficulty: 5/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 8, Melee 8, Intimidation 8, Gifts 6

Notes / Other Traits:
The Caern Raider has the equivalent of the following Gifts: Razor Claws (p. 162), Kiss of Helios (but smoldering with sickly balefire instead, p. 163), Kali's Scar (p. 164), and Render Down (p. 174), as well as any appropriate Native Gifts.

Dirgesinger (Homid Form)

With blood-soaked legends and despairing threnodies, the Dirgesinger regales their rivals with ages-old prophecies of why opposition to the world's fate is futile, why Gaia must face her time to die, and why her carcass shall be best used as a spawning pool for the hasteners of the final days. All things must end so that they can begin again, and the sooner this world sinks into its blessed putrefaction, the faster the wheel of ages may turn. Put down your weapons, bow your heads, and prepare to accept the sacrament of the conqueror Wyrm, the seed of the great Defiler!

General Difficulty: 5/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 6, Mental 6

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 7

Exceptional Dice Pools:
Craft (Blight Rite) 8, Performance (Macabre Spectacle) 8, Persuasion 8, Subterfuge 8, Occult (Secrets of the Black Spiral) 9, Gifts 7

Notes / Other Traits:
The Dirgesinger has the equivalent of the following Gifts: Song of Serenity (can be used on opposing pack; test against Composure + Resolve, p. 159), Eyes of the Cobra (p. 159), Curse of Aeolus (p. 164), Dire Distraction (p. 176), and Whelp Body (p. 152), as well as any suitable Native Gifts.

Blight Rite: Reduces a caern's Value by one permanently if completed. The Diresinger can do nothing else while maintaining the Rite, and the Rite is aborted if the Diresinger is seriously harmed or driven away.

Macabre Spectacle: A Rite that breaks the spirit of those who observe it, causing Willpower damage equal to the margin on a Performance test resisted by Composure + Resolve. If Willpower is Impaired as a result of this Rite, the victim must immediately make a Harano test. The Diresinger can do nothing else while maintaining the Rite.

CULT OF FENRIS

The Cult of Fenris is an object lesson in the perils of hauglosk. According to many Garou, the fall of the Cult was the point of no return for the collapse of the Garou Nation. The Cult of Fenris is itself but a single facet of a greater tribe pledged to Wolf, but the Cult raised its collective voices louder, and those pledged to Wolf either joined them or found membership among the other tribes.

At a great meeting of the tribes, the Cult of Fenris called for one final, glorious charge into the Wyrm's maw to avert the Apocalypse, but the assembled Garou of other tribes called out their rally as suicide, whereupon most of the Cult of Fenris camp decided that all Garou had fallen, and only the Cult's pure vision could serve Gaia. After a torturously long and bloody duel among champions of the tribes at the grand moot, renowned Garou solemnly declared a deadlock, and the Cult of Fenris abandoned the tribes to their fates, pledging their enmity and exiting the gathering.

The tribe's outlook is one of nonfalsifiable orthodoxy — impurity is everywhere and everything is the Wyrm's fault, and to disagree with this perspective is proof of one's own collusion with the Wyrm. From the outside, many Garou wonder if those among the Cult of Fenris have themselves been misled into pluralistic hauglosk by pernicious leaders, tricked into serving the Wyrm's ends by blindly raging against it in everything they see. Were such betrayal the case, theurges argue, the Cult would not even truly be following Wolf anymore, but some aspect of the Wyrm — unless Wolf himself has led what remains of his tribe into Wyrm-thrall.... Unthinkable.

So it goes in how other werewolves often encounter the rogue Cult: as ravaging monsters engaged in some act of ruinous destruction, with little regard for whom or what else might be harmed in the process. Rampaging Cult members have waged local Impergium in remote human communities, razed entire resource-gathering operations, and enacted scorched-earth withdrawals.

The scariest part is that other Garou and Cult of Fenris packs might actually find themselves opposing a common enemy. In most cases, the Cult is, arguably, acting against agents of Triatic imbalance and the Wyrm, but its absolute intransigence often causes Cult members to regard other Garou as fundamentally corrupt. Even more dangerous are entire packs of the Cult — "tribally pure," with no members of other tribes — that seek to take caerns away from "traitorous" other werewolves, or show up at some burgeoning battle, at once aligned with and against a rival pack.

Some among Wolf's pledged, rather than follow their fellows, abandoned their Patron Spirit and pledged to other tribes. Trusting in the Patron Spirits to perceive any evidence of poor faith, the other tribes have accepted them, but being a former Wolf-pledged often earns Garou suspicion in their packs. Which, it must be admitted, is a very strange state in which werewolves find themselves: unable to trust Wolf.

What Do They Want: The Cult of Fenris wants to fight the Wyrm, but its Garou see the presence of the Wyrm in all things. As a result, they effectively seek their own version of Valhalla: Gaia is under a doom, and all anyone can do is fight while infinitely screaming her name until they fall... and then, ideally, fight on as a magnificent spirit limned in a halo of one's own gloriously pure opposition to the Wyrm. Being part of the Cult means never admitting you've lost.

Mocking Ragabash (Homid Form)

The Mocking Ragabash finds joy in others' failures and is adept at coaxing forth those lapses, especially when others don't know of these faults. Often, the Mocking

Ragabash deceives others as a fellow Garou — a scout, a messenger, "the sole survivor of an obliterated pack" — to try to rile other Garou into taking rash action because *the time to strike back is now*. They'll play off a pack's insecurities and look for the most strained relationships within it, the better to either goad them into battle against the desired enemy, or in preparation for an ambush where the rest of their pack lies in wait.

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 6, Mental 6

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics (Infuriating Dodge) 7, Stealth (Eavesdrop) 7, Insight (Sore Spot) 8, Subterfuge (Provocation) 8, Gifts 6

Notes / Other Traits:
The Mocking Ragabash has the equivalent of the following Gifts: Crow's Laughter (p. 149), Blur of the Milky Eye (p. 150), Halt the Coward's Flight (p. 161), and Dire Distraction (p. 176), as well as appropriate Native Gifts.

Vindictive Theurge (Homid Form)

With a terrifying command of bellicose spirits, the Vindictive Theurge bolsters their packmates with brutal Gifts and causes enemies' wounds to feel as if they've been sewn open with silver thread. With enough time to work their preferred rituals, they may even compel quiet on behalf of the spirits in the area, even silencing a pack's own caern guardian and preventing it from warning them. The Vindictive Theurge is particularly effective at vexing other werewolves, so well versed are these Gift users in the ways of their onetime fellows from the feeble Garou Nation.

General Difficulty: 5/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 7

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 7

Exceptional Dice Pools: Leadership (Rile Pack) 7, Intimidate (Spirit) 7, Occult (Weeping Wounds) 7, Gifts 7

Notes / Other Traits:
The Vindictive Theurge has the equivalent of the following Gifts: Drain Spirit (p. 155), Command Spirit (p. 154), Blood of the Pack (p. 179), and Under the Gun (p. 177), as well as appropriate Native Gifts.

Weeping Wounds Rite: anyone failing to resist the Vindictive Theurge's Occult pool with a Stamina + Occult test becomes unable to regenerate for the rest of the scene. The Vindictive Theurge can do nothing else while maintaining the Rite, and the effect lapses if the Theurge is seriously harmed or driven away.

Spirit Allies: The Vindictive Theurge is usually accompanied by a couple of elemental spirits yoked into servitude. Treat them as Furmlings or Gaian elemental spirits.

Berserk Ahroun (Homid Form)

Festooned with a variety of abhorrent symbols, the Berserk Ahroun wears their hate overtly and charges into the fray, hoping to leave behind as much injury as possible on "lesser" individuals, whether Garou or Wyrm-thralls. By the time the Berserk Ahroun shows up, the time for diplomacy or craft is past, and someone's going to be carried out in a heap of their own guts and splintered bones.

The Berserk Ahroun enters frenzy as soon as they've used their Gifts, and they leave the cleanup to the "inferior" members of their pack. They often equip themselves with Talisman weapons, such as a klaive (p. 188), though any spirits bound into the item is hostile and needs to be cowed before anyone else uses the Talisman.

General Difficulty: 5/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 8, Melee 8, Intimidate 7, Leadership (By Example) 7, Gifts 6

Notes / Other Traits: The Berserk Ahroun has the equivalent of the following Gifts: Primal Anger (p. 162), Snarl of Challenge (p. 162), True Fear (p. 162), and Silver Claws (p. 162), as well as appropriate Native Gifts.

STARGAZERS

As the Garou Nation collapsed (and as one symptom of that collapse), the tribe known as the Stargazers left the company of the other tribes to seek other ways of effecting their Gaia-mandated purpose. Those who now fight on amid the rubble of the Garou Nation consider it a betrayal, an abandonment, or even a subtler move with some indecipherable motive.

The Stargazers have a perspective that differs from those of other Garou, which makes the errant tribe a bit unpredictable for most werewolves. The Stargazers approach things differently now. The Garou can't quite put their finger on how, but what seems to be the difference in things is that the Stargazers choose an alternative way to oppose the Wyrm and to take back the world in the throes of Apocalypse. Many werewolves want to kill their way to victory; the Stargazers seemingly want to rebuild amid the aftermath in a way that won't repeat the recurring tragedies of the failures so far.

Still, the Stargazers seem to maintain their connections to Gaia, Luna, and the legacy of the Garou Nation's goal, if not its actual history. They still place great value upon the notion of Wisdom — they simply appear to undertake their legend in a different way from the other tribes. That said, none know the Patron Spirit granting its boon to the Stargazers. In the past, Chimera bestowed favor upon the tribe, but that great spirit seems to have amicably parted ways with the Stargazers — or so it seems to those Garou who interpret such things. And so, other Garou often regard Stargazers not as blatant antagonists, but as frustratingly similar fellows who just won't follow the path that's been laid out for them.

Members of more martial tribes and those of an aggressive bent sometimes mistrust the Stargazers, claiming that their calm demeanors and rational outlook indicates that they've Lost the Wolf or sublimated their Rage. These suspicions make for cold receptions, at best, when a Stargazer makes themselves known and, at worst, well, all Garou know what comes of mistrust among those as quick to anger as themselves.

What Do They Want: Almost every time other Garou encounter them, Stargazers aim to solve a problem. Conflict arises with other Garou, however, when the Stargazer identifies what they think the problem is. For example, most Garou may think, "A suspected Pentex front has set up operations in the valley," whereas the Stargazer may identify the problem as, "The dam upriver and the cheap labor in the depressed town are making the valley an appealing place for this Pentex front to set up operations." Stargazers may appear as an emissary for some distant pack or other group, looking to strike a bargain that both parties find satisfying — access to a caern, support on a strike against a high-value enemy, or an effort to confuse the government-sponsored werewolf-hunters who have been discovered setting up shop at the edges of the territory. It makes sense, but the deal always seems to be, "Give me what I want now and I'll make good on it later," cast in a light that makes the Stargazer agenda resemble opportunism. That's probably not the case, but the perceived weight of betrayal hangs heavily on the Stargazer reputation.

Wayseeker Philodox (Homid Form)

Contemplative, almost serene, the Wayseeker Philodox brings a rational, considered perspective to a problem that's proximate to ones the Garou face, but not quite the same. There's a cooperative and even Renown-worthy solution at hand, but it's not how the pack would do things. The Wayseeker Philodox makes a compelling case, but is it the thing werewolves are best suited to do? The Wayseeker Philodox may have more faith in the pack than the Garou have in themselves.

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 6, Mental 6

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 8

Exceptional Dice Pools: Insight (Lies) 8, Persuasion (Argument of Logic) 8, Awareness (Vigilance) 9, Gifts 6

Notes / Other Traits:
The Wayseeker Philodox has the equivalent of the following Gifts: Thieving Talons of the Magpie (p. 151), Ancestral Conviction (p. 155), Command the Gathering (p. 156), and Geas (p. 157), as well as appropriate Native Gifts.

Mental Firmness: The Wayseeker Philodox receives a two-dice bonus to resist any Gift or ability that is opposed by Mental or Social traits.

STOLEN MOONS

All Garou are werewolves, but not all "werewolves" are Garou. Some who can take the form of wolf or human attain that ability illicitly. Abhorrent rituals involving the taking of Garou skins, strange promises to unwholesome spirits, and inexplicable curses all may confer some amount of shapeshifting ability.

Still, shapeshifting itself is not what makes a Garou, and these Stolen Moons have little in common with the actual chosen of Gaia. The most perverse among the Stolen Moons exult in bloody carnage. Others have more personal motives, from envy of actual Garou to seeking forbidden ways to solve problems. In any case, they are usually misguided and pitiable, but no less dangerous for it all, especially to beings in their immediate vicinity.

Those werewolves who aren't "full" Garou can't take the more nuanced forms of the hispo or glabro. They have no Patron Spirits, and they might not have any awareness of the Umbra at all, let alone ability to access the Spirit Wilds or see spirits.

What Do They Want: Stolen Moons have often misunderstood the nature of the bargains they've made or the horrible Rite they've somehow worked, and they suffer in the aftermath of what they've done to themselves, with physical pain or mental anguish, and often both. Some want revenge on the world for their own ruinous choices. Others want to settle cruel vendettas against people who wronged them. They all seem to hate the Garou, probably for having a better handle on what it means to be a werewolf. If only they knew.

Debased Lycanthrope (Homid Form)

The Debased Lycanthrope sold their soul to the devil at the crossroads at midnight, and in exchange has the ability to drape themselves in a wolf-skin and, for a time, become a wolf. What actually happened is anyone's guess, but the Debased Lycanthrope devotes much of their violent time on Earth to inflicting as much cruelty as possible — the better to please their monstrous "master," whatever that might be — and to wallowing in their self-image as an unholy terror.

The Debased Lycanthrope has all the abilities of a werewolf, apart from the ability to take the glabro or hispo form, use Gifts, or enter the Umbra. They also have two or more supernatural "tells" (see p. 100) that hint at their werewolf nature. They stalk their victims and attack only when they have the advantage, and they attempt to escape at the first signs of opposition. If caught, they play the victim card, trying either to masquerade as one of their own targets or to garner sympathy as a sufferer of the "lycanthrope curse," helpless against their urges.

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 4

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 9, Larceny (Home Invasion) 7, Stealth (Ambush) 7, Animal Ken (Dogs) 6, Subterfuge (Feign Victimhood) 8

Notes / Other Traits:
Frenzy: The Debased Lycanthrope is always considered Frenzied while in combat.

Playing with the Food: Unless they're fighting for their lives, the Debased Lycanthrope takes their time to be studiously cruel, which converts a single point of superficial Health damage caused to Willpower damage with each attack.

Cursed Beast (Homid Form)

When they first became a monster by the light of a full moon, the Cursed Beast understood what they were — but that was years ago. Now, the Cursed Beast has no control over when they change. They can no longer hold at bay their awful, insatiable hunger for human flesh, and when overtaken by the wolf's shape and urges, they don't care how they come by it.

The Cursed Beast remains in human form during the day, but once night falls they run the risk of changing into a hulking crinos-like form; that risk increases as they come closer in the lunar cycle to the full moon. Once transformed, they retain enough sense to hide from overt threats but enter frenzy as soon as they have a victim — human or animal — cornered.

General Difficulty: 3/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 3

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 6, Stealth (Stalk) 6, Survival (Makeshift Traps) 7

Notes / Other Traits:
Frenzy: The Debased Lycanthrope is always considered Frenzied while in combat.

STARVING REMNANT

The First Change is frightful, and many fledgling Garou do not survive it. Even more frightful is the prospect of those Kin who experience their First Change and become lost in the Umbra, whether having lost contact with a spiritual guide who brought them there, or those who somehow crossed them Gauntlet themselves and were unable to make their way back.

The Starving Remnant is technically a spirit, but their ability to possess things in the physical world is limited to inanimate objects from which they try to call for "help" (by whispering messages through speakers or projecting mysterious images on a screen, for example) to lure unwitting Garou into the Umbra. There they stage an ambush. They escape into the Spirit Wilds if their victim puts up too much of a fight. As a spirit, they appear as a Garou in Crinos form, and they usually frenzy as soon as they've used their Gifts.

What Do They Want: However the Starving Remnant got trapped in the Umbra, these werewolves have physically winnowed to nothing, leaving only their spiritual halves as the sum of themselves. And those remaining selves are hungry.

General Difficulty: 6/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 4

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 8, Stealth 8, Subterfuge (Machine Messages), Occult (Umbral Escape), Gifts 5

Notes / Other Traits:
The Starving Remnant has the equivalent of all the Native Gifts but lacks other Gifts, as they have neither tribe nor auspice.

STRANGER SHIFTERS

The Garou suppose the existence of others similar to themselves — if not in outlook, then in the ability to assume the mantle of beast and human. Are they allies? Enemies? Reluctant siblings in Gaia? None can say, exactly, and conjecture almost certainly varies day to day. The raven-shifter providing information to the packmates today might be giving up the goods on them to someone else tomorrow. In many cases, these shifters emerge from indigenous animal species as much as they do from human cultures.

What Do They Want: The Garou wish they knew, for it might make interacting with these other shapechangers less volatile. Sometimes, other shifters indicate that some long-ago grudge shaped the relationship the Garou have with them today — which would certainly be in keeping with today's Garou bearing the responsibility of past times of legend. Indeed, many of these other shifters seem to resent the Garou, for the werewolves find themselves anyplace where humans exist, and they may often find themselves at odds with these other shapeshifters over territory, spiritual purpose, or the fates of the humans or beasts around them.

Raven-Shifter

Amid watching, warning, scouting, and signaling, the raven-shifter seems to know the secret the Garou need, and may offer it to them, or may withhold it from them, based on information only the raven-shifter knows. Sometimes the raven-shifter is gregarious, outspoken, conversational, to the point where *won't they please just shut up*. At other times a single eye glints from the darkness, before the ebony bird takes wing — abandoning the packmates to whatever tragedy they've wrought for themselves — probably to go sell information on their whereabouts to another pack.

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 6, Mental 5

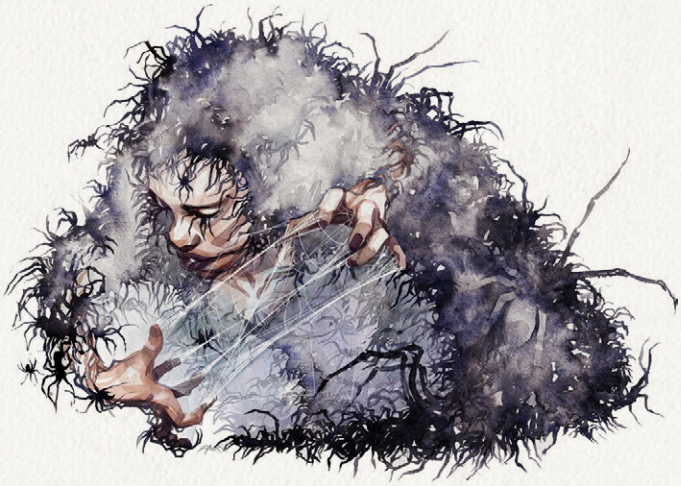
Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 6, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Larceny (Pickpocket) 8, Persuasion 8, Subterfuge 8, Gifts 6

Notes / Other Traits:
The Raven-Shifter has the equivalent of the following Gifts: Crow's Laughter (p. 149), Thieving Talons of the Magpie (p. 151), and Under the Gun (p. 177).

Raven Form: The raven-shifter can transform into a raven as a minor action, thus gaining the ability to fly while losing three dice in Strength-related tests.

Pronounce Doom: By winning a Gift test against the target's Wits + Occult, the target loses three dice on their next attempt to avoid physical harm. This Gift use is a full action, and a given target can suffer a doom only once per session.



Spider-Shifter

Seething, scuttling, swarming over their prey, the spider-shifter devours all that stands before it and leaves only a desiccated husk in its wake, or perhaps a paralyzed victim left bound in a silken prison. A companion of shadows, at once alone in its legion, the spider-shifter can take the form of a single person (often on the margins of cosmopolitan society) or a swarm of thousands of web-crawling arachnids. Some werewolves swear that the spider-shifters can take on a more menacing form as well...

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 5, Mental 6

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 6, Willpower 7

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics (Climb) 9, Brawl (Surprise Bite) 6, Stealth (Perfect Stillness) 8, Awareness 8

Notes / Other Traits:
The Spider-Shifter has the equivalent of the following Gifts: Body Shift (p. 148), Spider's Song (p. 150), and Sacred Boundary (using strands of webbing; see p. 172).

Swarm Form: The spider-shifter can change into a swarm of spiders. In this form, subtract three dice from their Strength-based non-Brawl tests. Any attack on them in this form does at most a single level of damage, regardless of margin, unless caused by area effect weapons such as a flamethrower.

Paralyzing Venom: Anyone suffering at least a point of damage from the bite of a spider-shifter must make a Stamina + Resolve test at Difficulty 3 or be paralyzed for the rest of the scene. Those who succeed still suffer a two-dice penalty to physical tests for the rest of the scene, unless the win was a critical win.

Adhesive: The spider-shifter can climb any surface using their Climb pool, even if no handholds are available.

THE SUPERNATURALLY ATTUNED

Werewolves and spirits aren't the only supernatural denizens of the world, as much as they'd prefer to have more influence over it. The World of Darkness includes several other types of individuals who possess their own strange perspectives and insights. Sometimes unpredictable allies, more often dangerous antagonists, when it comes to what to make of these other things that go bump in the night, the Garou are largely on their own.

VAMPIRES

"Let's not dress it up: They're animate corpses that need to drink blood from living people. For some reason, the Leeches always seem to have a piece of information you need, or they're thick as thieves with some illicit enterprise your pack needs to gut. They're like goddamn cockroaches, always making more of themselves, always hiding when the lights come on. And the cities are infested with them."

Vampire Antagonists

Vampires can display a wide variety of powers and weaknesses, but some things hold true for most of them. All vampires have Enhanced Resistance to damage, though they suffer Aggravated damage from sunlight, rather than from silver. (Treat indirect exposure to sunlight like touching silver for a Garou, and direct exposure as fire damage.) A wooden stake (+0 damage), aimed at their heart (at -2 dice) and yielding five or more successes, paralyzes the vampire until the stake is removed. They can grapple an opponent to bite them, a grappled opponent sustaining two levels of Aggravated damage on each subsequent turn. A vampire who has recently fed is more powerful than a hungry one, and the Storyteller should modify their dice pools up or down a couple of dots, depending on when they last fed. Vampires who consume werewolf blood are said to be particularly fierce, if unpredictable, in battle.

Dimebag Dracula

"The nightclubs and stylish neighborhoods of the cities are rife with these creeps: the undead drug-dealers and scenesters who prey upon humans out for a good time. Most of them are newly turned and dumb and probably aren't half as sexy as they think they are, but goddamn if they aren't always out chasing youth and blood. Any Garou who spends any time among various human countercultures is probably closer to these parasites than they realize, and they're resentful of interlopers in 'their territory.'"

The Dimebag Dracula always tries to charm, seduce, or strike a deal before resorting to violence, and tries to escape as soon as they realize they're dealing with werewolves. If they manage to escape, half of the vampires in the area go to ground, while the other half devises plans to acquire some of that sweet, sweet werewolf blood.

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 6, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Firearms (Pistol) 6, Persuasion ("Let's make a deal") 8, Streetwise (Slip Away) 8, Subterfuge (Seduction) 8, Gifts 7

Notes / Other Traits:
The Dimebag Dracula has all of the Vampire Antagonist abilities (above), as well as the equivalent of the following Gifts: Animal Magnetism (can be used on Garou; see p. 158), Command the Gathering (p. 156), and Closing the Gap (can also be used to escape; see p. 163).

Mending: The Dimebag Dracula can remove one Superficial Health damage each turn.

Count Fucking Orlok or Some Shit

"The young vampires are always good-looking, and the old ones are always these rat-faced bug-eyed motherfuckers whose own blood is dust, so that's why they creep out of their graveyards to drink from the living. The worst part comes when you have to deal with one of them because they know something about someone else you're after, which is bad enough, but they've also usually got some heinous old 'investments' from the Victorian era or whatever that are disgusting, even by modern standards. Conflict resources, human trafficking, child labor, unwilling victims, shit like that. They're all involved in it. There is no ethical survival under vampirism."

Count Fucking Orlok has seen centuries come and go, and might even consider the idea of an upfront battle with a werewolf to relieve the burden of ages. As soon as anything goes wrong, though, they attempt to escape under the cover of numerous suicidally loyal retainers, after which the vampire plans to inflict cruelty on those who are less able to defend themselves, such as the character's Touchstones.

General Difficulty: 5/4

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 7, Social 4, Mental 7

Secondary Attributes: Health 12, Willpower 9

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl (Grapple) 10, Stealth (Shadows) 8, Etiquette (Insults) 8, Intimidation ("I have seen nations rise and fall...") 8, Gifts 8

Notes / Other Traits:
Count Fucking Orlok has all of the Vampire Antagonist abilities (above), as well as the equivalent of the following Gifts: Razor Claws (always active; see p. 162), Blissful Ignorance (p. 149), Blur of the Milky Eye (p. 150), Coup de Grâce (p. 164), and True Fear (p. 162).

Superior Mending: Count Fucking Orlok can recover three Superficial Health damage each turn.

get out of any area too hot with overt supernatural activity.

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 7

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 9

Exceptional Dice Pools: Insight (Detect Supernatural) 8, Academics (Ancient History) 8, Occult (Hermetic Lore) 8, Technology (Experimental) 8, Gifts 9

Notes / Other Traits: The Magician may invoke the equivalent of all theurge and Ghost Council Gifts.

IT GETS WEIRDER

"At the least, the Leeches are predictably selfish. The other stuff out there — who has any goddamn idea what they're after or how they do it? I've seen it all, man, from the lingering scraps of long-gone people who aren't quite spirits, to people who can set you snarling with a crooked glance or turn the rain to silver by blowing dried toad venom into the air. Mostly it comes down to, their ways aren't our ways, and they always have some excuse for coming after the things and places that are dear to us Garou. Some of them you can cut a deal with, but there's always this sense that none of them are telling you their version of the truth — or maybe that you don't fit into it."

Magician

"They don't see things the way we do, exactly, but I get this sense that they line up with some of it. Always talking about metaphysical prisons, and prevailing realities, and other things, and then they go and walk through a solid wall or end up on the other side of where you thought they were, because your mind remembered a different time from what it thought it saw. And they seem to have a... I dunno, an *understanding* for spirits — or at least the power in spirits. I think. Tread carefully; there's no guessing these fuckers."

The Magician wants something, and the werewolves are the perfect acolytes to help them get it. They are unlikely to pick a fight with Garou but defend themselves if cornered. When the Magician uses powers the powers appear as natural or freak occurrences, rather than as supernatural manifestations, and the Magician attempts to

Agitated Ghost

"Dead people, see, they aren't quite spirits like we know them, but they're... I guess they're a different kind of spirit, maybe. Not like the Leeches, they're just rancid meat. And not everyone who's dead becomes a ghost. The ones who linger always have a reason, something keeping them here. Might as well be honest about it, too: Sometimes we end up making ghosts, accidentally or otherwise. Seems only right to help them get things back in order, but be careful of the ones who carry a grudge beyond the grave."

The Agitated Ghost is insubstantial and incorporeal, though it can make itself briefly visible and audible in the physical world. If a dead body is available, it can animate the corpse (use the statistics below), but otherwise can affect the physical world only through noisy but harmless poltergeist phenomena.

General Difficulty: 3/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 3, Social 4, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Intimidation (Jump-Scare) 6, Awareness 6, Occult (Death) 6, Gifts 6

Notes / Other Traits:
The Agitated Ghost has the equivalent to the following Gifts: Song of Rage (as a mournful wail that can stir Rage involuntarily in others; resist with Composure + Resolve; see p. 159), Icy Chill of Despair (p. 175), and Under the Gun (p. 177).

Irrational Fae

"Near as I can figure, these guys were around since before there were spirits, or maybe they're the spirits of somewhere else but somehow got here. Anyway, it's like they have the same sort of rules and pacts and things that bind them as spirits, but they're also... physical? Tangible. You can touch them and fight them, and I guess they bleed, and I'm not an expert, but they want some of the same things that spirits of Gaia want. And just when you think you have it all figured out, they speak to you in the language of a season, and you can't have kids anymore, somehow. What did they want? What set them off? Impossible to say, but seems like you did it wrong, and now your balls are gone."

Nobody can tell what the Irrational Fae wants, and even improbable prizes such as "the color of regret" or "the sound of a mirror" bores it.

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 7, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 6, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Melee (Archaic Sword) 8, Stealth (Mimic Object) 8, Subterfuge (Gaslight) 9, Gifts 7

Notes / Other Traits:
Craft Hallucinations: The Irrational Fae can manifest elaborate hallucinations that are indistinguishable from reality except for one flaw (a bleeding doorknob, a singing leaf, or a laughing fence, for example). Spotting this flaw requires an Intelligence + Awareness test against the Irrational Fae's Gift pool, and doing so can be attempted once per turn per pack. While under the effects of this illusion, any physical injuries sustained are treated as Superficial Willpower damage instead, though the Irrational Fae rarely crafts violent hallucinations unless severely antagonized, and it always denies that it had anything to do with them anyway.

Dramatic Exit: If the Irrational Fae is killed, it bursts into a shower of glass fragments, dealing five levels of lacerating (but mundane) damage to anyone in a 10-meter radius.

WEREWOLF HUNTERS

On the surface, anyone setting themselves up as a werewolf hunter might appear to have a death wish.

In practice, however, hunters do everything they can to stack the deck in their favor. Whether calling upon the copious resources of a governmental patron or building a squad of hardscrabble "freelancers," hunters don't fight fairly or honorably, because that'd get them killed. The Garou generally find themselves able to make short work of human werewolf hunters, but every now and then, something goes wrong: The packmates underestimate the assets the hunters bring to bear; or they do, in fact, manage to wipe the floor with the hunters — only to find themselves picking up a million-plus views as video of their carnage hits the video-streaming services with their faces plainly visible.

INFORMATION AWARENESS OFFICE

The Information Awareness Office is an American governmental agency seeking "total information awareness" about threats to the nation, and it coordinates efforts across multiple armed services, investigatory bureaus,

and even local law enforcement departments, when such a step becomes necessary. The quintessential black-ops organization, IAO has an extraordinary amount of functional autonomy and a budget to match.

Although the IAO doesn't have a full understanding of werewolves overall (much less Garou culture specifically), it's aware of what it and fellow organizations call ***unusual threats***, and it formulates security operations to deal with them. And when that Unusual Threat Response turns up nine-foot-tall Rage-fueled nightmares that ***holy fucking shit what the fuck is that thing***, IAO also possesses the influence and resources to cover up what it needs to, and hopes to capture as much for study in top-secret facilities as it can.

IAO Kill Box Specialist

The pivotal stage of an IAO raid often involves breach-and-clear tactics specifically suited to exterminating all sorts of unknown-capacity unusual threats. As such, the Kill Box Specialist specializes in getting up close without being noticed, entering the hot zone, and putting an end to the threat before the threat knows it's been compromised. They know the nature of their work, and that they're not set up to survive prolonged contact with werewolves, so their tactics tend to focus on hitting hard and fast, and if anything's still standing, speedy exfiltration and blowing what's left the fuck up.

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 3, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 7

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 6, Firearms 8, Intimidation 6, Melee 6, Technology 6

Notes / Other Traits:
Geared Up: The Kill Box Specialist has a full complement of offensive support gear, including a semi-automatic shotgun, heavy body armor, ax, and a variety of lethal and nonlethal ammunition (the Kill Box Specialist can choose whether their weapon does Superficial [+0 or +4] or Aggravated [+0] damage).

IAO Surveillance Tech

The Surveillance Tech makes use of a variety of drones, cameras, computers, and other high-tech tools to keep tabs on unusual threats. They're skilled at placing spy devices where their suspect (including werewolves) won't find them and listening in for anything that might be deemed an actionable threat. They don't always know what their targets are talking about — that's the Analysis department — but if a werewolf says something, the Surveillance Tech may well have recorded it.

The Surveillance Tech is equipped with a suite of microcommunications devices, remote cameras, broadcast equipment, and infil or exfil drones. They are themselves well versed in evading surveillance by using sight lines and dazzle camouflage techniques to thwart detection, whether through software or other means of observation by hostile parties. They're often out of their league when dealing directly with werewolves, however, and even the most sophisticated dazzle camo probably won't deter a watchful spirit or a Garou's sense of smell.

General Difficulty: 3/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 7, Larceny 7, Stealth 7, Streetwise 7, Technology 7

Notes / Other Traits:
Covert Surveillance: Detecting a spy device employed by the Surveillance Tech requires a Wits + Technology test at Difficulty 4.

SPECIAL AFFAIRS DIVISION: PROJECT TWILIGHT

Yes, I've seen your Freedom of Information Act request. You can shove that right up your ass. Look, Project Twilight doesn't exist anymore. In fact, it never did. So when you're talking about Special Affairs Division, what you're really talking about is the FBI, and any stories you might have heard about some werewolf-hunting skunkworks back in the 1980s and '90s and 2000s are probably just some analyst's idea of a joke. Read the operating prospectus: SAD is focused on the undead blood-drinking sort of terrorist threat; werewolves aren't its remit. Weird, huh? Like, all of a sudden, the agency gets shut down and, oops, all of the case files go missing or get shredded or end up on a plane to GSG 9 HQ in Sankt Augustin. Hey, if you're not interested in learning the truth, I don't even know why I'm risking my ass by talking to you.

Project Twilight is an officially defunct operation running illicitly from within the greater organization of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation's Special Affairs Division. It's nominally more aware of the werewolf threat than is its parent organization, but much of its case documentation was destroyed when its operations

were sunset by the director of SAD itself. How it remains functional is unknown.

Project Twilight Sharpshooter

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 3, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 7

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 7, Brawl 7, Firearms (Sniper Rifle) 8

Notes / Other Traits:
Weapons: The Project Twilight Sharpshooter is equipped with a sniper rifle (+4 damage) and scope.

Snipe: Unless the shooter is detected (see below) a sniper shot is uncontested and made against Difficulty 1. Although most sniper rifles use subsonic ammunition (and Project Twilight operators often use suppressors), a werewolf in lupus or hispo form, or that otherwise has some form of heightened senses (as with certain Gifts or special equipment) can make a Wits + Awareness test (Difficulty 3) to determine the source (direction and distance) of a sniper shot if it doesn't incapacitate them. A critical success might even let a werewolf spot the street lights winking off the scope.

OTHER COMMON ANTAGONISTS

Despite generally being able to easily dispatch such fragile opponents as mundane animals and people, werewolves often find themselves in opposition to individuals whose presence itself causes a conflict. Sure, it may be easiest to just throat this punk-ass security guard, but do they have backup? Who do they work for? How does just shredding some fucker align with the Garou's tribal perspectives (particularly their Favor and Ban)? Indeed, in many difficulties the Garou face, the supernatural might not even be involved at all, as the conflicts of the world in Apocalypse may lead a pack into tragically mundane danger. And many of these individuals might be unknowing Kin...

MORTALS

Minor human characters and animals have generic dice pools for Physical, Social, and Mental actions. The exception to this rule comes where their Secondary Attributes and profession or role-specific challenges come into play, such as a cop's aim or a corner lookout's perception of danger being higher than their baseline pool. These exceptions are stated where relevant and should be rolled as a complete dice pool, but in all cases, the Storyteller should adjust dice pools to reflect an exceptional or weaker version of the character specified.

For creating your own mortals, see Supporting Character Templates on p. 102.

Beat Cop

Not surprisingly, werewolves have all-too-frequent encounters with mortal law enforcement. Regardless of whether Garou are in the right on things, packs frequently find themselves on the wrong side of the law, especially when the law as a whole makes no acknowledgement of the supernatural (or, worse, is in thrall to it). Beat cops may end up dispatched to respond to situations involving werewolves, and because many police are themselves violent or otherwise used to maintaining imbalances of power, situations involving them rarely de-escalate, even with Garou in homid form.

General Difficulty: 3/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 2, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 5, Firearms (Stationary Target) 5, Intimidation 5

Notes / Other Traits:
Drop exceptional dice pool values by one to represent a security guard or other private-sector sentry.

Police Detective

Police detectives may end up investigating the aftermath of werewolf activity, or they may overlap with Garou presence in the wake of crimes or other situations that have captured the Garou's interest. Their primary function is to protect property or protect established interests, and they're more likely to be encountered investigating or seeking information to build a case than they are as first-line response (which is usually handled by beat cops or riot cops). This profile can also represent a private investigator.

General Difficulty: 3/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 3, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 5, Firearms 5, Investigation 6, Streetwise 5

Riot Cop / PMC Soldier / Private Security

Whether as an instrument of state violence or an unofficial instrument of state violence, militarized police and private military companies exist for those in power to hammer down uppity citizens, as a result of governmental policy or because they're clamoring for things like "rights" or "to stop being the victims of targeted campaigns of violence." Garou are likely to encounter them in any number of situations, such as in reaction to a peaceful demonstration to a full-scale riot, or in any number of off-the-books "security operations."

General Difficulty: 3/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 7

Exceptional Dice Pools: Firearms 6, Melee (Unarmed Opponent) 6

Notes / Other Traits:
The more unjust the society, the more well-armed its authorities are to preserve the injustice. The riot cop / PMC soldier uses a +4 Damage fully automatic rifle and wears tactical SWAT armor (armor value 6) by default. They deploy in groups of similar operatives numbering from a handful to the hundreds.

Criminal

Werewolves may find themselves in the company of various outlaws, whether by choice or by coincidence, thanks simply to their choice of activities or subcultures. Criminals encompass a broad swath of humanity, from street drug dealers, to forgers and safecrackers, to the mob boss operating out of a penthouse apartment.

General Difficulty: 3/2

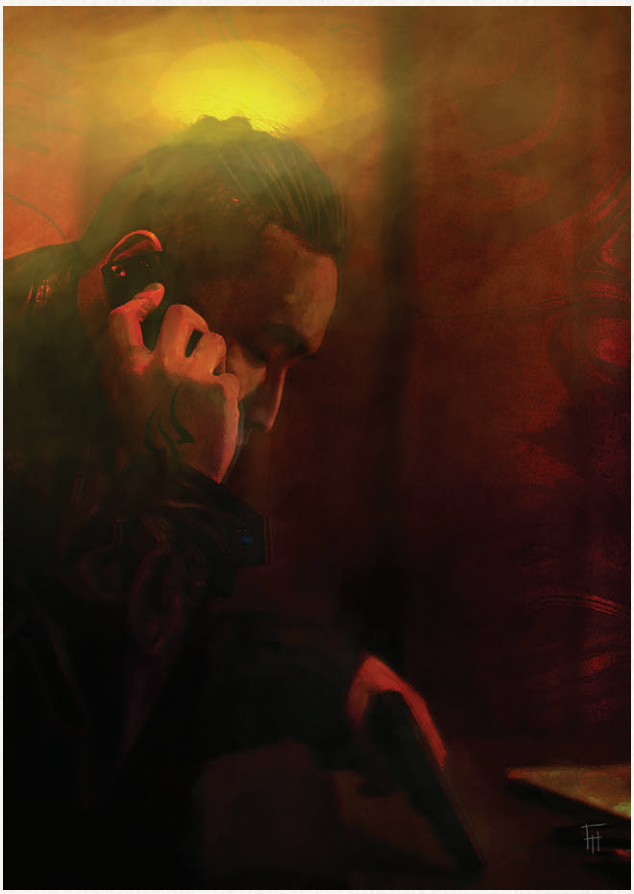
Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 3, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 4

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 5, Firearms 5, Intimidation 5, Larceny 5, Streetwise 7

Clergy

Clergy encompasses a varied group that spans multiple faiths, each of which poses a danger to the supernatural and offers possible allies or enemies to Garou. At their weakest, they are capable of rallying their congregations in worship, hope, and resilience. At their strongest, they wield their faith like a weapon, and they may themselves become scourges to Unusual Threats.



Standard Dice Pools: Physical 3, Social 5, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 7

Exceptional Dice Pools: Academics 6, Insight 7, Occult 5, Leadership 6

Animals

As part of their half-belonging to the world of beasts, Garou often perceive themselves as sharing a kinship with primal creatures. Many animals rear or shy away in the proximity of the Garou, though a few are drawn to fellow "wolves" or have commonalities in pack behavior. Some Garou invoke Gifts that cajole animals to act as their scouts or perform surprise attacks on their behalf.

Then again, other supernatural creatures may turn animals to their own purposes, such as a loathsome vampire who commands swarms or rats, or a will-worker who keeps a familiar. Sometimes, an animal appears as an avatar of a spirit or guardian of places associated with it. And Banes take particular delight in tormenting animals already aggravated by loss of habitat or other complications of human consumption, and such spirits sometimes court these creatures for greater possession.

In general, most creatures specifically attempt to avoid the Garou, whom animals recognize as predators. Garou with the Animal Ken Skill (see p. 92) have more influence over these attitudes.

Note: Storytellers probably want to confer with their troupes before featuring rival animals prominently or as recurring antagonists. Not everyone wants to be part of a story in which animals come to harm.

Obviously, what follows isn't an exhaustive list of animals. It stands on its own and also provides ample starting points for animals from which the Storyteller might reasonably extrapolate specific other animals.

Wolf

Out of alphabetical order here, but the wolf is the most relevant animal. Garou may come from the world of man, or they may feel a greater sense of belonging with the wolf side of their heritage. And, of course, it's entirely possible for a Garou to hail from a wolf "cultural" background, as opposed to the human world, in which case they will have a family and pack of other wolves.

Wolves enjoy a place of keen respect among certain cultures and are feared as symbols of evil among others. They may be oblivious to the spirits around them, though some seem to have a spiritual awareness similar to that of the Garou...

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 1, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 3

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 3, Intimidation 5, Stealth 5

Notes / Other Traits:
Natural Weapons: Add +1 to damage done by wolf attacks.

Bat (Large)

Commonly associated with vampires, perhaps in part due to shapeshifting and animal-commanding archetypes of blood-drinkers, the bat, as predators go, is low on the food chain but benefits hugely from an impressive sonar ability.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 3, Social 1, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes: Health 2, Willpower 1

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 7, Stealth 5

Bear

Impressive in strength, lethality, and speed, the bear is also a surprisingly agile creature capable of ripping flesh to ribbons with a single burst of violence.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 7, Social 1, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 3

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 3, Intimidation 6

Notes / Other Traits:
Natural Weapons: Add +2 to damage done by bear attacks.

Big Cat

Once omnipresent but now shrinking or even endangered, big cat populations are found worldwide, including tigers, lions, panthers, leopards, and cheetahs, and In some cultures they have the same sort of symbolic or folkloric meaning as wolves. And some even say that shapeshifters number among their ranks, just as the Garou may take on the form of wolves...

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 1, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 3

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 3, Intimidation 5, Stealth 5

Notes / Other Traits:
*Natural Weapons:*Add +1 to damage done by big cat attacks.

Bird of Prey

Although many birds of prey exist, the hawk, eagle, vulture, and owl are common among the environments in which wolves move. Furthermore, birds of prey are often considered portentous, and they may indicate observation by powerful spirits on the other side of the Gauntlet.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 1, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes: Health 3, Willpower 2

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 6, Brawl 5, Stealth 6

Guard Dog / Attack Dog

Humanity's best friend is the dog, and many a human keeps dogs for companionship or protection. Unfortunately, they are also popular among warlords, corrupt law enforcement outfits, and other bullies, who train vicious, obedient hounds to guard their properties or to be loosed on intruders.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 1, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 2

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 4, Brawl 6, Intimidation 4, Stealth 4

Notes / Other Traits:
*Natural Weapons:*Add +1 to damage done by guard dog bites.

Horse

Horses tend to fear the Garou, though they may be found in rural environments, or even at the remote estate of another supernatural individual for the purposes of quick, unexpected escape (or as a stock of copious, if unpleasant, blood...).

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 1, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 2

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 4

Rat

Rats symbolize urban sprawl — neglectful accumulations of filth, disease, and secrecy, but also shrewdness and resilience. Some Garou feel a camaraderie with them, especially some city-dwelling werewolves, but these rodents are also occasionally associated with lurking vampires or sorcerers and their familiars. Inarguably, rats are everywhere.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 3, Social 1, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes: Health 1, Willpower 1

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 5, Brawl 4, Stealth 7

Notes / Other Traits:
Swarm: When rats swarm, treat them as a single entity but add 3 to Health and all Physical-based rolls. For every level of damage inflicted on them, reduce the bonus by 1. ■

APPENDIX ONE

Loresheets

The Loresheets included in this appendix can help tie your chronicle's characters to the greater World of Darkness, linking them to events and organizations that affect the Werewolf setting. Future supplements may include new Loresheets, and you can also use the ones here as models to build connections to your troupe's own chronicle setting.

In general, Loresheet benefits are "side-grades" rather than pure upgrades. They offer a slightly more significant benefit than their Background level and cost suggest, but they also usually have strings or additional risks attached. For more information on acquiring Loresheet Traits, see p. 103.

In general, players should work with their Storyteller to nail down some of the details of their Loresheet Traits, the better for them to make a coherent appearance in the story. Some Loresheet Traits are probably better off unknown by other players' characters, however...

Werewolf: The Apocalypse

MONKEYWRENCHERS

You've run with a pack — a large, decentralized, geographically disparate pack — of Garou whose collective aim is to completely fuck up the efforts of Pentex Group fronts specifically. Okay, it's less of a pack and more of a movement, but that's not important. What's important is that the Monkeywrenchers share information with one another about which fronts are active, where, and how to hamstring them. These dumb sons of bitches always have an embarrassing amount of documentation and data that shows who's supporting what, where, and when the next supply delivery happens. You and the other Monkeywrenchers have figured out some of the most effective ways to undermine Pentex Group logistics and operations, and you'd almost feel bad for the poor suckers doing the grunt work, but — nah, fuck them. Play with fire, get burned.

- **Demagogue:** You know how to rile up the workers. Once per story, whenever you attempt to sway a human crowd into violent action, you may add two dice to the relevant pool to do so.
- **Firebug:** You have a knack for setting structures on fire, using only the poorly protected materials that workers often leave on site. If you can spend a number of days preparing beforehand, as the Storyteller decides (two for a low-security operation, on up to seven for nigh-flawless security), you can trigger a structure fire at the exact moment in the scene you choose, regardless of whether you're present, having prepared the conflagration beforehand. The precise effect of the fire is subject to the Storyteller's discretion but it should always yield some kind of positive effect to your plan's execution.
- **Blowout Bash:** Once per story, you can stage an event such as a benefit concert, fundraiser, protest, or rally that draws public attention to the cause or crisis you declare. At your option, things can also get ugly, drawing negative attention to the subject but causing no significant physical damage. For better or worse (usually worse...), your own Fame increases by 3 locally for the remainder of the session, as you're in the spotlight for the event.
- **Delegator:** You're adept at the art of shifting blame and avoiding accountability. Gain two dice to relevant pools whenever you attempt to convince someone that the results of your actions were actually set in motion by someone else of your choosing. Other Garou appreciate this practice... in practice... but are wary of what it says about you. You're at -1 dice pools to Social tests with werewolves during a scene in which you make use of this effect.
- **Paper Trail:** If documentation exists that can tie a Pentex front to a specific transgression, you can come up with it, whether by finding it yourself or by some other Monkeywrencher pointing you toward it, or, optimally, discovering it during some activity within the story itself, such as by opening the right drawer in a desk. You may use this effect once per chronicle — and either Pentex operations become aware of you (even if their front is compromised), or you can give up a fellow Monkeywrencher (who'll know you burned them).

PROJECT TWILIGHT

Project Twilight, Operation Crow's Nest, Special Affairs Division: Whatever you want to call it, it's a fed-funded kill-squad. They're not all the same thing... but they're all the same thing, if you know how to look at it. And however you look at it, you've got some dirt on the organization that you can use to influence its operations. It's really dangerous shit — whatever the reason, you've got some sway over one (or numerous...) extremely well-funded governmental organizations that exist to stamp out the werewolf menace. And that's *you*. *You're* the menace. And here you are, fucking around with it like it won't readily line you up in the crosshairs the moment it rolls up whatever patsy ruse you've tricked it into doing. You're going to get the whole pack killed, and the dossier on some bureaucrat's desk is going to double in size. No, seriously, what the fuck are you doing?

- **Improper Procedure:** Once per story, you can make a minor but relevant piece of evidence (a photograph, a file folder, a DNA test result) disappear, whether as a result of luck, knowledge of process, or being childhood friends with someone on the scene. The effect is up to the Storyteller, but it should provide some small benefit to you or your pack.

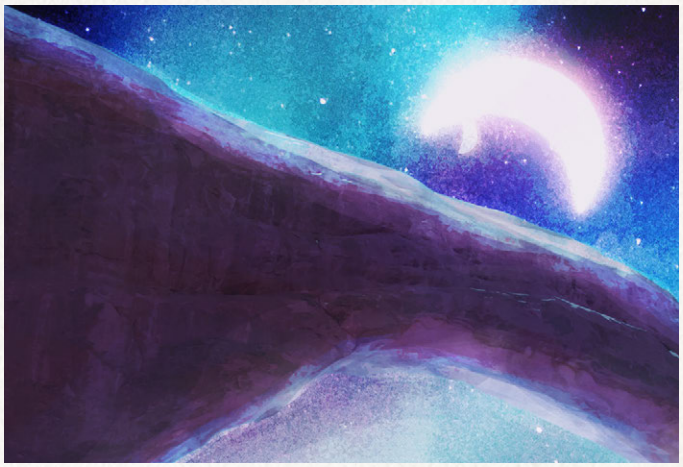
- •• **Airtight Alibi:** Once per story, you can provide (false) proof of being somewhere you weren't. The downside is that the proof is on federal departmental letterhead, and it's both classified and redacted. How'd you get your paws on it?

- ••• **Stolen Valor:** Project Twilight might be an off-the-books wetwork squad, but it's an effective one, and you were instrumental in its success in taking down a notorious Unusual Threat. Once per story, you can claim credit for this kill to gain three bonus dice on a Social test when it might matter — for example, "Listen to me: I'm the Garou who throated Bloodjaw!" Subsequent Social tests in the same scene suffer a one-die penalty for you, because you come across as boastful, overbearing, dubious, or whatever's appropriate. Should your false claim to the kill become known, well, you probably have a thrilling new problem to deal with.

- •••• **Heads Up:** Once per chronicle you learn critical details (when, where, personnel) beforehand for any direct action that Project Twilight plans to take against your pack, if any.

- ••••• **The Red Phone:** A well-placed somebody in the organization owes you a favor. Once per chronicle, your go-between agrees to take action on your "anonymous tip," or however you choose to make your wishes known. In effect, you gain five dice to distribute as you like on any roll(s) involving the operation of werewolf-hunting organizations. If the attempt (or any of the attempts, if you distribute the dice across multiple actions) fails, you earn the attention of an active, systemic (see p. 211) enemy.

UMBRAL TRAVELER



The Spirit Wilds constitute a mystery even to the Garou, whose animistic outlook makes them familiar with the spirit world but not strictly of it. Although it is an ever-changing place of thought, spirit and emotion, some truths and even locations within its mirror-shadows remain constant... to a certain degree. Certainly, things can change at a moment's notice, especially during the era of Apocalypse, but to those Garou who make explorations of the Umbra their specialty, one can understand the rules of the spirit world if one knows what to look for — at least for now.

- **Silver Steps:** In the Umbra, the Garou leaves behind silvery footsteps that only they themselves can see, which helps them find a way back across the Gauntlet once it's time to return. The Difficulty to return to the physical world from the Umbra by using the Rite of Shadow Passage is reduced by 1 when you're the Rite master (see p. 180).

•• **Web Music:** You have observed the movements of pattern spiders (see p. 254), and once per scene, when their webs are present, you may pluck those strands like musical strings and draw the attention of any single pattern spider present, whether visible or otherwise. This signaling doesn't make the spider predisposed toward you by any means, but it attracts the spirit's attention infallibly.

••• **Underworld Initiate:** You're aware that there are parts of the Umbra — you think — that belong to a different kind of spirit and a different timbre of emotional resonance. Although you can't communicate with them inherently (unless they choose to communicate with you), you can see what can only be described as "ghosts" when they're present in portions of the Umbra or when they haunt the physical world. They can't hide from you unless they use specific supernatural powers that allow them to do so.

•••• **Spirit Sustenance:** You are particularly attuned to the spirit world, and you suffer only Superficial Health damage when you fail to spend Willpower to stay in the Umbra for a protracted period of time (see p. 230, though enough Superficial damage eventually becomes Aggravated, as normal).

••••• **Chthonic Secret:** You're the current keeper of a monumental Umbral secret, such as the location of a powerful spirit's demesne or the hunting grounds of a legendary Garou spirit, handed down to you by the previous keeper of the secret, and so on up the chain of spiritual duty. What you do with this knowledge is up to you, but whatever puissant spirit the secret is about knows you know. You should get the Storyteller involved with this one.

RENUNCIATE OF FENRIS

The fate of the Cult of Fenris is a matter of much debate among the Garou. The Cult perspective, of course, is that its members know what they're doing, and that only a Wyrm-weakened coward would even question their willingness to go fangs-first at the throat of the Great Defiler — especially from a no-risk place on the sidelines. Outside the Cult itself, what happened is less clear. One theory is that the Incarna Wolf was tricked by an aspect of the Wyrm and now serves as thrall to that spirit. The other theory is that some aspect of the Wyrm actually slew Wolf somehow, and the tribe now unknowingly follows that unknown spirit's patronage. The most likely theory is also the most straightforward: that hauglosk has, in fact, claimed the Cult, and Wolf brooks no dissent in his followers. But of course, until Wolf or another great spirit offers some kind of verifiable proof of the truth, that truth remains one of the mysteries of the spirit world.

Not every member of the Cult of Fenris followed their fellows down the path of hauglosk. Some broke their compact with Wolf once they saw the direction the tribe was headed and pledged themselves to another tribe.

- **Bootlicker:** Even among werewolves, the Cult of Fenris has a violent reputation and a predilection for following strongman-type leaders. As a bootlicker, you find your purpose in being pointed toward a "threat" by the actual autocrats. Once per game session, you regain one Willpower after a Garou of greater Renown than you orders you into a conflict during which you spent Willpower on a reroll.

- **Repudiated Cultist:** Esteemed Garou were present during your renunciation of Fenris and made you a bit of an example for others. Your Renown is considered one lower than its actual value during social interactions at moots. However, none may question your ferocity — if you ever have a situation that would cause you to Lose the Wolf because of a failed Rage check, you may make an *additional* Rage check; if it succeeds, your Rage remains at 1 instead of dropping to 0.

- **Unbroken:** Despite renouncing Wolf, the great spirit's patronage taught you fearlessness that persists within you. When a Gift or other supernatural effect would engender fear in you, you may gain two dice with which to resist, when such an advantage is possible. Should you do so, however, you lose one die to resist frenzy for the remainder of the scene.

- **Channeled Fury:** Fenris' asperity remains strong in you. Once per scene you may opt to automatically succeed at any single Rage check to activate a Gift with a pool roll, but you also incur an extra Brutal result on that pool roll.

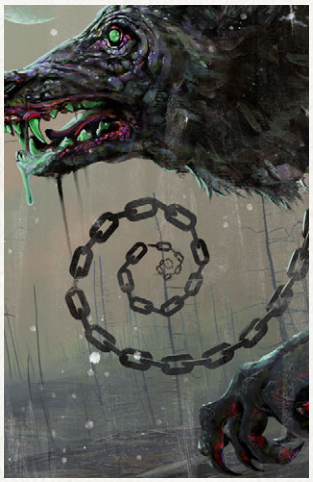
- **Last Howl:** You have witnessed firsthand the effects of hauglosk, having watched the glint of fanatical zeal fall kindle in your compatriots' eyes — but not so in yours. Once per chronicle, if you mark your last hauglosk box, you may make a Rage check; if that Rage check fails, untick that last hauglosk box. Congratulations: You've fought your way back from the brink.

Werewolf: The Apocalypse

The Black Spiral

Many Garou believe the Black Spiral to be hidden somewhere in the depths of the Umbra — probably a portion of it foully proximate to the Wyrm, or somehow in what amounts to its attention, if such a statement can be accurate. Other Garou believe the "Black Labyrinth" to be a location in the physical world, or even a metaphorical location that moves throughout the physical world, to places where human defilement proves most satisfactory to the Wyrm... again, if it can be said that the Wyrm "prefers" things.

Whatever the case, the Black Spiral is a place of import to the Wyrm-aligned of the like-named tribe (see p. 277). Some combination of a hellish caern and a crucible where would-be Black Spiral Dancers are broken down and forged anew, it's at once a place, a spiritual horror, and a relentlessly cruel outlook on the world. It may be the locus of the final cancer that consumes Gaia herself.



- **Black Spiral Glyph:** Any Garou who knows the glyph can represent the Black Spiral, but among servitors of the Wyrm, the glyph itself possesses nuances that most Garou don't know. You know how to convincingly make the true Black Spiral glyph, which you might use as bait or to mislead others, but those who know you possess this ability are suspicious of you, if not outright hostile, and you suffer a -2 to all Social dice pools when interacting with those Garou, your present pack excepted.

•• **Bad Company:** You have contact, and perhaps even a sort of strange trust, with a Black Spiral Dancer, a remarkably stable fomor, or even a vampire or other supernatural creature that has some association with the foulness of the Wyrm. Once per story you can call upon this... well, not "friend," exactly, but they can give you information about other Wyrm creatures, the Black Spiral Dancers in particular, or the occult in general. Your Renown for social interaction drops by 2 for the remainder of the session in which you do so, or for the entire next session, at the Storyteller's discretion.

••• **Spiral Cyst:** Vile burrows or refuges scarred with the Black Spiral glyph mar the world, serving as bolt-holes for agents of the Wyrm. You know the location of one such place in your territory, and you can temporarily subvert it as a secure Safe House (see p. 98) in which you are Zeroed (see p. 103) while you hide there. If your awareness of this place becomes known among Garou, you are likely to have much to answer for.

•••• **Inviolate:** One particular Wyrm-aligned spirit refuses to harm you, even if it don't know who you are, owing to some secret pact forged in a forgotten time. As great as this arrangement may seem, if anyone sees the spirit avoid you or show deference... you get the picture. Decide upon this Wyrm-spirit's identity (and rank in the hierarchy) with the Storyteller.

••••• **Solving the Labyrinth:** Once per story, you can attempt to persuade a Black Spiral Dancer to emancipate themselves from the horrors of Bat's patronage. To do so, you must completely isolate the subject and make a test (of Intelligence or Charisma + Insight, far away from the influence of cruel spirits who would rather keep that Garou as they are. Roll once per three nights of breaking Bat's hold; you win after achieving a number of successes equal to twice the subject's Willpower. How they react to such deprogramming, or how functional they are in any subsequent society, is a huge question mark. Do they even *want* a new patron spirit?

No Matter How Small

APPENDIX TWO

"No Matter How Small" is a story designed to introduce **Werewolf** to new players and World of Darkness veterans alike, and it can be used as a one-shot or as the first story in a longer chronicle. It uses a three-act structure, turning points, and antagonist axes as described in the Storytelling chapter (see p. 210).

As what may well be a new troupe's first story, "No Matter How Small" aims to accomplish a few things:

- The scope is small, local, and personal. The primary antagonist is a single fomor. Although the Garou have the advantage over the fomor physically, that fomor has caused terror and grief in its community. Dealing with the individual affected and the aftermath is just as important as dealing with the "monster." Many **Werewolf** stories, particularly ones of greater-Renown Garou, have higher stakes, but this story has new werewolves coming to grips with who they are and facing some of the unique challenges of their reality.
- New players especially should come away from "No Matter How Small" with a sense that World of Darkness stories have many moving parts. For example, not only does this story feature the primary conflict of stopping the fomor, it also introduces a dormant caern that the players can claim for themselves, as well as having that caern's former stewards lurking at the edges of the narrative. Think of a story or chronicle as a tapestry — it has many threads to pull.
- If you're a first-time Storyteller, no problem. Callouts emphasize how you can manage the flow, adjust the narrative, and make things your own. Read through it once or twice to get a sense for what's going on, then join the rest of the troupe to make your telling of the story unique.

Success will require the players to be resourceful and pay attention to details, but Storytellers are advised not to gate-key vital information behind a roll of the dice. How your troupe chooses to engage with the game systems is very much a dial — some troupes prefer to talk through narrative events and discover clues conversationally, whereas others prefer to let systems stand in for what players themselves don't describe. While playstyle basics should ideally be discussed beforehand, things inevitably crop up during the story as well. As you play, you'll get a better sense for your troupe's preferences. Are your players more of an "I search the bedroom, especially the closet" type of troupe? Or are they more of a "We're at the house, and I'd like to make an Intelligence + Investigation test to see what I discover" troupe? Both approaches have their merits, but the World of Darkness games generally assume more of the first style. and it is important to be able to adapt.

The dice rolls suggested for "No Matter How Small" generally allow for more expeditious resolution of an obstacle or for players to gather more information than what's absolutely necessary to make decisions. Remember: Roll dice only when success or failure creates interesting consequences.

Scenario Summary: Rickard Muller, a bitter and resentful man, is possessed by a Bane spirit. With the Bane's advice, Muller crafted a gruesome talisman that he plans to use to settle perceived scores and ruin his much-deserving enemies, and now Muller is on a murderous rampage. The players' pack has the opportu-

nity to figure out what's going on and what to do about Muller.

Themes: The major theme of the story is the winning is everything attitude — the way in which some venerate "the win" no matter the venue, cost, or consequences. Muller has succumbed to this mindset to the point of Bane possession, but Garou must also be mindful of hauglosk, represented here by the Cult of Fenris. A secondary theme is instrumentalty, particularly the use of people as tools. Just as Muller is using those around him — both to achieve his aims and as components in his talisman — he is himself being used by the Bane.

Content Warning: "No Matter How Small" includes descriptions of and references to mutilation, self-harm, and animal cruelty. For troupes seeking to avoid these particular topics, they can be omitted or obscured by appropriate veils (see p. 322).

Rickard Muller

Muller grew up "with potential." He went to a good secondary school, tested well, and got a scholarship to a great university. At university, he convinced himself that proximity to the rich and powerful was the same as being in their inner circle. Proximity to the rich and powerful didn't help his political ambitions, however.

Over the years he continually revised his goals downward, from national elections to regional directorships to local councils to, eventually, the local horticulture club. Muller was desperate to build a "constituency" of his own. He viewed the horticulture club and its remit for Development Copse West as a stepping stone to bigger and better things. Muller never really cared about the woods or horticulture; they just offered the means to a "win" — ideally the first of many.

Muller thinks very highly of himself and has no reluctance in letting others know. He's dismissive of other people's accomplishments and rarely accepts an idea until he believes he came up with it. Rickard Muller always wants the last word.

He appears as a balding middle-aged man — thin with a weak chin and prominent, well-maintained teeth which are often shown in an insincere smile.

What Does He Want: When the Bane discovered Muller, it was exactly what Muller was waiting for. Not exactly understanding what he had invited into the lesion in his sense of self, Muller felt a renewed validation of his consuming need to be special. With the Bane's urging, Muller believes he can finally force the people who wrote him off to recognize his greatness.

The Innominate Bane

The Bane is an embodiment of soured ambition, nameless but cognizant enough of the larger spirit world to know that its role is to consume. As it grows in awareness, so too does its self-awareness and intelligence. It views the physical world as a tool to create the consumptive energies it desires. Muller is but another of those physical tools at the bane's disposal.

What Does It Want: Not content with its existence as a fomor, the Bane is urging Muller to create a meat-child talisman, a crude humanoid simulacrum, from body parts of Muller's human and animal victims. The Bane then intends to consume Muller and make the meat-child its new permanent body. Muller is unaware of the Bane's desires to betray him, and he would be roaring in anger at the idea that the Bane is anything other than the urge within him he perceives it to be. See p. 317 for more information on the meat-child talisman.

PREVIOUS EVENTS

The following events transpire before the players' pack becomes involved. Use these details to establish context when the characters investigate, and to help you decide what might happen next if the players take an unexpected course of action. "No Matter How Small" aims to present just enough background information, so the Storyteller has enough room to improvise logical outcomes, but also to add creative details that make the troupe's session its own.

Specific location details are deliberately vague, the better to allow Storytellers to place "No Matter How Small" in a chronicle territory of their own choosing. With a minimum of reworking, the story can fit anywhere, while also providing enough opportunity for the packmates to build on what's here (such as whether to attempt to retake the caern for themselves).

COMING UP MULLER!

A few months before the story begins, middle-aged Rickard Muller is elected president of a local horticultural club. This post represents Muller's first win in a long while. Flush with excitement and ambition, Muller decides to try to push the club along a new path. Rather than simply sharing best practices, tending the club's shared local garden, and trading gossip, Rickard requests — and is granted access to a nearby woodland. Under Muller's leadership, the club would maintain and beautify the woods, intending to open it to the public in a year or so. For the otherwise small horticultural club, it's an ambitious project. Muller's charisma and enthusiasm prove infectious; the club's standing membership joins in, and it even grows by a few new members.

CULT CONNECTIONS

The plot of land entrusted by the city to the horticultural club was once a caern claimed by Cult of Fenris members known as the Sept of the Scarred Eye, but it has not seen use for decades. Abandoned by the cult, the caern echoed the slow death of Gaia, losing its spiritual connection to the Umbra and falling into disuse. Other Garou packs in the region sporadically rediscovered the dead caern upon occasion, but there was little to see, and visits by other Garou were not appreciated by the remaining Fenris cultists in the region.

Feel free to have the players' pack begin with knowledge that the caern is in the area (for more experienced players), or allow them to discover the spiritual resonance of the place on their own and set their sights on it as a place of power and eventual pack asset (for new players).

After it fell dormant, an increasing number of humans came into contact with the caern's surroundings. Local political and civic leadership learned about the unclaimed nature of the area itself, so when Muller (who was one of those people who stumbled upon it during a hike) came along, the local political class finally discovered a use for the "underdeveloped" land area. The region was renamed Development Copse West in official documents, and Muller was entrusted with its care.

RESTORATION

With a remit to beautify the area, and a group of enthusiastic volunteers behind him, Muller got to work. What started as a weekend hobby quickly grew into an obsession for him and the core membership of the horticultural club. Things progressed quickly and promisingly: Muller and the club greatly enjoyed their prestigious civic project. Like Muller, many dedicated members of the club found new meaning in their lives.

But the presence of the dead caern cast a pall over that meaning. Spirits — ones that had been neglected after the caern's abandonment or mistreated during its occupation — lingered. Where the club's members showed ambition and pride, cruel spirits saw an opportunity to foster greed and arrogance.

The club's members became more and more insular, abandoning anything about their lives that wasn't focused on plants or Development Copse West. Muller became irascible. He demanded increased amounts of time and commitments of effort. This importunity pushed many of the true hobbyists away from the club, but the remaining members were deeply loyal to Muller and his vision for what the copse could become.

The Bane's Moment

A minor but opportunistic Bane saw its opportunity, and it obsequiously seduced Muller in his dreams: Muller had to commit if he wanted anything to come of Development Copse West, and certain... shortcuts might hold the key to making that happen. Unknowingly, Muller invited this strange symbiosis, and once the Bane had its

host, Muller felt his eyes had opened. He could see the greater world around him, the physical and the metaphysical. For Muller, a resentful fellow inclined to see his own failures as part of any number of conspiracies, the revelation was intoxicating.

At once driven and tormented by the Bane, Muller gathered the first physical elements to create a meat-child — a Wyrm talisman, as the Garou would understand it. The final components would need to be supplied by his fellow club members, but that could wait for later.

We present Muller here as complicit with a dark spirit he doesn't quite understand. Depending on your troupe's tastes, you may prefer to have Muller even more ignorant of the spiritual malefactor, or more aware, seeing his possession as some sort of pact or partnership.

The Ritual

The Bane gave Muller the instructions necessary to create a creature over which he was promised to have total power — but to do so would require feeding it. Muller convinced the remaining members of the horticulture club to participate in a ritual intended to "feed the forest with life energy." The club members participated and were all poisoned by Muller. He then set about collecting the final pieces for his talisman, harvesting choice body parts from each corpse.

The budding meat-child drank deep from the deaths. It stirred, creating a "spirit-quake" that even beings on the other side of the Gauntlet noticed, and that terrorized lesser spirits in the vicinity.

To Muller's surprise, one of the club members survived the poisoning and escaped before Muller could get to her . The survivor, Hanna Harcorte, emerged as... something *other*, though whether her change was a failure of the ritual, Muller had no idea. Harcorte escaped, and she could help the characters by providing insights into what happened in Development Copse West.

Out and About

Muller left the copse and is now on the loose in the characters' territory. Both he and the Bane need to perform more killings to feed his talisman. Muller now makes his way from acquaintance to acquaintance, leveraging old social connections to gain proximity to his victims. With each death Muller believes the meat-child is brought closer to life, stitches and rot disappearing and the amalgam body twitching as if dreaming. The Bane plans to inhabit the meat-child to become more powerful (and no longer dependent on Muller). Muller, convinced of his own epiphany and power, wants to use the talisman as a weapon against his imagined enemies, but doesn't understand that this can end in only one way — with his own soul consumed to fuel the Bane's physical incarnation.

Acts and Turning Points

"No Matter How Small" uses the three-act structure proposed in the Storytelling chapter on p. 212.

Act One

Turning Point One: Investigation into the epicenter of the strange quake

Turning Point Two: Revelation of what occurred at Development Copse West (and that there are at least two survivors — Muller and Harcorte)

Act Two

Turning Point Three: Exploration of Muller's house, encounter with a possessed dog

Act Three

Turning Point Four: Confront Rickard Muller

Act One: Ritual Murder

Act one opens in the midst of some confusion and immediately sets up a call to action. The players learn of an unusual problem and either proactively or reactively seek to learn more. Act one ends when the characters have established that a number of murders with occult overtones have taken place, and that there are one or two survivors.

Turning Point One (Inciting Incident): Foul Play

Someone important to at least one of the players' characters needs help. Someone dear to this important person has gone missing, and they're concerned. The last time anyone saw them, they were heading to a horticultural

club activity at a nearby green space called Development Copse West.

Storytellers are encouraged to look over the pack's Relationship Map (see p. 111) or individual character sheets for suitable allies, contacts, mentors, or even Touchstones who might themselves be connected to the local horticultural club. The important thing is to convey the "messenger" character's concern to the pack in a way that relates to the players' characters.

The first scene should unfold someplace familiar to the characters to establish that the status quo is broken. Furthermore, it should involve someone important to them to reinforce not only that they are members of a community, but also that their choices in supporting character relationships have value.

Turning Point One Goal

- Convey information: A person has gone missing, and Development Copse West may be the best place to seek them

The scene should play out as a conversation between the concerned individual and the pack. Everyone should have an opportunity to ask questions, and the scene doesn't have to cleave only to the information about the missing person. Supporting detail can help make the relationships more substantial, and it may even bring certain difficulties of being a werewolf to the fore, such as Rage or the hidden truths of their identities, if any of the characters lead a double life.

Similarly, where the conversation happens is wide open to the Storyteller's needs. If the characters are already part of a sept or a pack with a caern, it can happen there, if the individual in need knows to go there. Alternatively, it can happen at a place that helps establish the greater territory, such as a diner off some exit in a highway town, a library or dive bar in a city, or a farm or ranch house where the characters gather in a more urban setting. Perhaps the characters gather at a public monument or a still-standing structure from a historical period. Remember, you want the players to start gaining a feel for place with this first scene, so use some locale that can be emblematic or even iconic.

The intent of this flexible opening is to share the narrative duties with the players. For example, each player has effectively said, "This person is important" of certain individuals on their character sheets, and when asked, can probably provide the same when it comes to a meeting spot. Helping one another solve problems is part of the pack, and doing so builds a sense of pack dynamics early on.

If no individual seems like a good fit to convey a message of crisis, a spirit can stand in. A spirit probably won't have the same sort of personal connection to the mundane humans in peril, but it can provide a point of view that mundane contacts can't: the news that the spiritual resonance of Development Copse West in the Umbra has been defiled by the ritual.

THE VICTIMS

The dead victims of Muller's ritual are Jacqlyn Bates, Mitchell Ericksson, Aisha Crider, and Joy Amedu. Choose one among them to be the individual that the pack's contact is asking after (for more details about the victims who may inform your choice, see p. 307).

Takeaways

Whoever takes the role of messenger, the request for aid is clear:

- Someone has gone missing.
- The missing individual has spent an increasing amount of time as part of some club. This club has lately been involved with the restoration of Development Copse West, a large tract of "underveloped" woodland in the outskirts of the city. The player's contact has been unable to reach the individual for more than a week.
- The messenger believes the player character might be able to help with the problem, especially since they have already contacted the police and received little in the way of help there.

This last point is particularly important, and it can add substance to the scene and conversation. Why do they reach out to the character or pack? Do they know that the character is a werewolf? Are they themselves outside the law and seeking help from someone similar to themselves? And why are they unable to accompany the characters to the scene? Maybe the Copse has a bad reputation, or the characters themselves realize that working alone might be in the best interest of everybody, especially if the messenger isn't aware of the existence of the supernatural.

Characters are likely to seek Development Copse West, but some characters may want to follow up beforehand with other Garou they may know, to see if the

name of that region sounds familiar. Experienced Garou — a sept leader or mentor, or perhaps a knowledgeable spirit — might connect Development Copse West with the dormant caern and the Sept of the Scarred Eye (see p. 302).

"No Matter How Small" begins with a reactive premise – something is wrong, and can the players' characters help resolve it? If you're using "No Matter How Small" to begin a longer chronicle, you'll probably see players have more proactive goals individually or as a pack. Either way works great, and some combination of both is likely to emerge. For the sake of this particular story, though, it's faster to point everyone toward a problem, the better to get players and Storytellers exploring the systems.

TURNING POINT TWO: INVESTIGATING DEVELOPMENT COPSE WEST

Development Copse West has not yet been investigated by anyone; the characters have the opportunity to discover it first.

Turning Point Two Goals

- Reveal that some sort of event went down, probably connected to the Wyrm
- Provide the players with key clues that encourage them to seek out those that left the glade alive

Key Antagonists: The glade itself is an antagonist (passive, systemic), because it hides a number of secrets, and the characters must explore it thoroughly to figure out what to do next.

What About the Police?

The Storyteller needs to decide if and when the police get involved in what escalates from a missing person's case to a multiple homicide. A police investigation can put the pressure on the player characters and add another layer of complications, but unless the characters are savvy enough to avoid becoming persons of interest, the pressure risks forcing them to go to ground and make the story an agonizing grind. It is entirely possible that the missing persons case is yet to be opened, and that the characters are first on the scene. Conversely, for more experienced troupes expecting a challenge, the copse could already be under investigation by forensics with the press not far behind. The actions of the player characters could also influence when the police get involved, of course. Amaya Gilbert, below, is an example storyteller character suitable for heading up such an investigation.

- **Deputy Sheriff Amaya Gilbert:** Deputy sheriff Gilbert is ambitious and disingenuously friendly. She's the acting lead for the investigation into the deaths revealed at Development Copse West and is eager to use what is surely going to be a high-profile case to make some key arrests and advance her career. Det. Gilbert as an antagonist is generally passive, individual unless something shifts her to active, whereas the local sheriff's department itself is passive, systemic.

Development Copse West

Development Copse West is an area of overgrown woodland located within a larger nature reserve on the outskirts of the city. The copse is often described as mysterious and eerie, with the thick underbrush and tangled vines giving it a wild and untamed appearance. Development Copse West has remained relatively untouched by human activity. The copse has been left to grow wild for many years, as there are no signs of any previous attempts to clear the land.

ßReaching the outskirts of the copse is relatively easy, as the surrounding area has many trails and GPS reception is good. Once entered, the lingering energies of the caern interferes with electronic navigation and the undergrowth makes traversal frustrating and difficult, almost

as if the copse is resisting intrusion. The player characters must make a Stamina + Survival test at Difficulty 2 each (anyone in lupus form gains a two-dice bonus), and those that fail suffer a point of Superficial Willpower damage from exhaustion and frustration. Regardless of the results, the characters eventually find the ritual site, if nothing else by tracking the week-old steps of a group of people leading there.

Characters who intentionally investigate the wider cops and succeed at a Difficulty 2 Intelligence + Investigation test find occasional traces of recent human activity — a rotted stump pulled out of the earth, trash collected and left in plastic bags, and heaps of dry branches awaiting disposal — but the closer they get to the site the stranger these traces seem. Trash has been left in strangely symmetrical piles, branches hung from trees in geometric patterns, and rock stacked in odd formations.

The Ritual Site

Deep within the copse is a glade, a roughly circular opening in the trees about 50 meters across. The glade is covered in tall grass, with a few smaller bushes here and there, but is otherwise easy to traverse. The glade is fully open to the sky. The trees at the edge of the glade look bare (perhaps unseasonably so) and even a bit foreboding.

The glade used to be the heart of the Caern — and the Sept — of the Scarred Eye.

Should the players' characters make their way into the Umbra, there the trees look similarly unhealthy. Most of the trees' umbral reflections are without leaves, and the center of the glade has what look like scorch-marks radiating from a central circle. Characters with Occult backgrounds are easily able to tell (no test necessary) that these details suggest some kind of ritual — but noticeably different from the Rites with which most Garou are familiar.

In the middle of the glade are four oblong mounds and a dug hole of similar shape. Together they form a five-pointed star. The mounds look very recent, and a cursory examination reveals them to be hastily dug graves. If exhumed, the mounds reveal four fully clothed bodies. The corpses appear to be two males and two females. Their faces bear dark ashes smeared from the bottom of the nose, across the lips, and down the chin — evidence of Muller's ritual. Each one of them is also missing a body part - one is missing a leg, another an arm, a third their stomach and a fourth their heart. (A Wits + Medicine or Investigation test at Difficulty 2 is needed to find out the last two, or the bodies will just appear to have been subject to mutilation of their torso.)

At the center of the ritual "star" is a wooden stool. Here is where Muller performed his ritual. He brought ashes from the remains of dogs he burned at home, carried to the glade in a small clay pot, and "blessed" the victims — members of the horticultural club — by smearing the ashes on their faces and then onto the meat-child. A Difficulty 2 Intelligence + Occult test shows that the ashes on the club members mark a path, indicating a flow of essence from their bodies into a now-absent focus.

At the edge of the glade is a fire pit. Here, Muller burned the bodies of dogs he tortured to create the ashes he used in the ritual. An investigation of the pit reveals still-present teeth and bones that suggest multiple animal bodies were burned at the same time. Muller didn't care how thoroughly he burned the corpses, only that he got enough ashes.

A search of the glade testing Intelligence + Investigation at Difficulty 2 reveals prints in the soil suggesting that a total of six people recently visited the glade. Additional successes above two also reveal that one person and what looks like a wolf left the site, but in different directions. The trail is lost after leaving the copse, though.

New Storytellers should note the additional amount of information that successes on the Intelligence + Investigation test reveal. Even if a character gains no successes on the test, they can observe some information, whereas more successes yield more information. Learning information critical to moving the story forward isn't locked behind the success of a roll. For other tests in the investigation, Storytellers are encouraged to use a similar approach by imparting more information for greater margins on rolls.

On a Difficulty 3 Wits + Awareness test, the characters find a number of smooth soapstone rocks with runes carved into them buried. Also buried are a number of crystals carved into spear points. Characters who succeed at a Difficulty 2 Intelligence + Occult test recognize the runes as werewolf glyphs and the spear points as serving some kind of Rite purpose, but unconnected to the murder-ritual. A critical win recognizes them as Cult of Fenris runes as well. (These details reveal the previous presence of Garou at the caern, which Muller is using

without a full understanding of its function, or even that werewolves exist.)

The Fenris Caern

The stones and crystals are the remnants of the former Cult of Fenris caern. If the characters take any of the stones or crystals, any werewolf of the Cult of Fenris reacts aggressively toward them, should the purloined artifacts be recognized. For Storytellers whose troupes prefer more combat, having the packmates followed by a Cult of Fenris spy can provide them with an opportunity for such conflict.

Should the pack successfully deal with Muller's threat, the caern is a perfect place for them to rededicate to their own purpose — and to have the Cult of Fenris as an occasional antagonist making efforts to undermine or retake what that tribe believes to be its property.

Muller's Victims

The victims are:

- Jacqlyn Bates (female): 34-year-old owner of a plant nursery in town. Married. No children. Her husband, Harold, has contacted police about her being missing, but they have yet to act.
- Mitchell Ericksson (male): 27-year-old digital artist working in the gig economy to help make ends meet. Unmarried. No children. Was dating Joy Amedu.
- Aisha Crider (female): 55-year-old aerospace engineer on the cusp of retirement. Widowed. Two adult children, Aimee Crider and Byron Crider.
- Joy Amedu (male): 37-year-old lawyer (prosecutor). Unmarried. No children. Was Mitchell Ericksson's boyfriend.
- The fifth member, Hanna Harcorte (female), survived and isn't present at the ritual site. Hanna is 39 years old. She is a photographer and worked with Mitchell Ericksson, as well as their being friends in the horticulture club. Hanna is married to Victor Harcorte (male), a 41-year-old programmer.

Searching the bodies reveals that the victims' identification is still on them. No money was taken, and nothing suggests any sort of robbery.

Investigating the bodies with an Intelligence + Medicine test (Difficulty 2) reveals signs of asphyxiation, thanks to some sort of poisoning.

A successful Intelligence + Occult test (Difficulty 2) indicates that parts of the scene mimic cultic murder-suicides (such as the 1978 Jonestown incident and the 1997 Heaven's Gate mass suicide).

A successful Intelligence + Survival test against Difficulty 2 reveals that the graves were dug with a shovel or spade within the last 24 hours.

In the Umbra

There are no animal spirits in or near the glade. In the middle of the glade, where Muller sat and performed the ritual, is what appears to be the remnants of a small explosion. The reflections of the grass are simply gone, blasted away. Two meters from the center of the explosion, the spirit reflection of the grass starts again, all of it "flattened" away from the explosion.

Storytellers should allow investigating characters in or viewing the Umbra a test of Wits + Occult at Difficulty 3. On a win, the character notices that, at the center of the explosion, the Umbral ground pulses slowly and ever so slightly, suggesting the beating of a heart. The heart of the previously dormant caern is now beating again — barely, and as a result of the horrific ritual, but the resonances are there. (The pack can make the caern their own, cleansing the negative spiritual cast of the place, should they so choose, especially if they don't already have one or desire to leave an existing sept.)

A few old and knowledgeable tree-spirits reside around the periphery of the copse, but the center is strangely bereft of spiritual activity. (The Storyteller may also allow the players to declare that they're proactively seeking a specific other types of spirit in the proximity, which can provide the same information.) If questioned respectfully, these tree-spirits convey that human activity caused the spiritual disturbance, and that they could feel "dark forces" emanate from the glade afterward, but because they perceive time differently, they have no sense of when it happened or specifics. If cajoled for further information (and with a successful Charisma + Occult test, Difficulty 2), they talk about the conjoining of the physical and spirit occurring in the glade — the creation of a talisman.

The burn pit where Muller destroyed the dog corpses is also a very dark place. Although it doesn't have the same spiritual resonance as does the heart of the caern, it's clear from the oily residue that something connected to negative emotional resonance took place here (in this case, the actions of Muller and the fate of the dogs).

Conclusions

It should become obvious to the players' characters that some sort of ritual happened here, and that two people are missing. The pack probably needs to investigate to figure out who those two people are (which is the crux of the second turning point).

It might be hard for the players to deduce the exact purpose of the ritual, but if nothing else, they should come away from these scenes with the sense that something very disturbing occurred, which should be enough to prompt them into further action.

ACT TWO: PUTTING PIECES TOGETHER

Act two involves some investigation and action on the part of the characters. During this time, they can gather clues, follow up on those clues, and encounter antagonists who may slow their progress (and, in some cases, lead to additional clues).

The key scene for act two is at Muller's apartment. If time is of the essence, or if the players are really focused on taking down Muller as quickly as possible, the scene in Muller's apartment may end up being the only scene in act two. The characters may miss out on other opportunities, but if that's the outcome of their choices, it's okay — you're telling a story together, not running down a checklist of must-have plot points.

Before the characters can search Muller's apartment, they may need a scene or two for preparation and further investigation, especially if they decide to confer with various mundane or werewolf points of contact or allies to discuss what they discovered in Development Copse West. Garou mentors might be able to help them understand that what Muller created in the copse may be a talisman, and that he may have a spirit communicating with him. Similarly, other Garou who have been in the territory for some time can warn the characters about the Cult of Fenris and the abandoned caern.

Armed with the identities of the victims, the players are likely to investigate who they were and their connections. Although there's no evidence in the glade about Muller or Harcorte's specific identities, they shouldn't be too hard to connect to the ritual.

WHO'S WHO

Muller's name is all over the still-active horticulture club's web page. A web search reveals Muller's current phone number and also an old address in a different town. His contact information is available in the city's records (online and in the repository) and is prominently displayed in a search of "Development Copse West," should the PDF of his approved petition to serve as caretaker come up in a search.

Harcorte's name is connected to the website, too. She built the page and registered it. A basic domain query reveals Harcorte's details. Her email address and phone number also appear on the "contact us" subpage.

Packs with less online familiarity should still be able to find these details. As Storyteller, be prepared to have a city periodical or community bulletin board offer information about the horticultural club, and perhaps a few phone numbers and prerecorded responses for plant enthusiasts to join the group, for example. Remember, it's important for Storytellers to keep the information flowing, and unless there's a reason to have information locked behind "one true way" of discovery, that information should eventually flow toward the players. In most cases, you're trying to get them to make decisions, not guess a specific solution, unless there literally is only one way to discover such information.

Sequencing Muller and Harcorte

Harcorte proves a bit harder to find, and her identity may come up only after the confrontation with Muller. If that happens, it's okay. It just shifts the encounter with Harcorte from the second act to the third and may serve as a post-crescendo scene that leads into the next story.

However, if the pack meets with Harcorte before Muller, she shares useful insights on Muller and his motivations, which ideally makes that confrontation easier.

Family and Friends of the Victims

The players are likely to want to delve into the histories of each victim. Some of that information follows.

The characters may learn that, especially if they're moving quickly, the family and friends of the victims might not know what happened to their loved ones. Thus, the packmates may be the bearers of horrifying news; if the characters reveal the deaths of the victims, a family member or friend might not believe them and may well become reluctant to continue with the conversation. Wise packs should have some sort of cover story to justify engaging each victim's social circle. If they're not careful,

the characters run the risk of being reported to the police and even being suspected of the crime.

Friends and family of the victims generally know about the horticulture club. Their stories bear numerous commonalities: What started out as a productive hobby and social gathering became increasingly demanding. The club required ever more time and increasing financial obligation. Victims missed important appointments, forgot bills, and generally withdrew from their former life. Many of the friends and family characterize the victim's involvement with the club as "obsessive." Some openly call it a cult.

All of the interviews direct the characters toward Muller. None of the people who cared for the victims liked Muller or trusted him. Many family members characterize him as a caustic and dangerous influence, and they say things like, "If something were to go wrong, it would be because of him."

Storytellers, make sure the players are engaged but also gaining meaningful information and not unactionable minutiae of the victims' lives. Immersive detail is good, but make it clear that the connection is the horticulture club and Rickard Muller.

TURNING POINT THREE: MULLER'S HOUSE

Muller lives in a prefabricated two-bedroom house that was once part of a low-income (or perhaps off-base military, depending on your story location) housing development. One of the bedrooms was once an office, but it quickly became a makeshift occult shrine after Muller was possessed by the Bane.

Turning Point Three Goals

- Provide the players with insight into Muller's depravity
- Point the players toward Muller's next victim (VanGelder)
- Test the players and spike the tension with a physical combat

Key Antagonist: Bane-possessed dogs (active, individual)

The House

A powerful smell of animal musk and feces overwhelms the characters as they open the door to the home. Muller's body odor permeates the place. Characters who shift into lupus or hispo form can pick up a lot of information from a Wits or Intelligence + Awareness check, depending on whether they seek a quick impression or a longer assessment. A single success reveals fresh scent: Muller was here hours earlier. Two successes tells the character that the odors of multiple canines are present, but also that the scents seem to be decaying somewhat. A third success reveals the smell of old blood and viscera.

Muller was once a pretty clean person, but since he became host to the Bane, he's lost interest in fastidiousness, and over the last year the house has become increasingly filthy. The art on the walls has all been pulled down and discarded in the trash heaps accumulating on the floor. In the final months before the ritual to awaken the meat-child, he abandoned much of his personal hygiene regimen.

All the junk in the house makes moving room to room difficult, apart from a few paths he created through the accumulation. One such path connects the bedroom to the couch, and another, the couch to the small kitchen. He slept on his couch, because he dedicated his bedroom to preparing for the ritual.

We emphasize smell here, and Storytellers should similarly engage other smells, as well as nonvisual senses, the better to highlight the nature of Garou perception.

The Living Room

Despite the art having been removed from the walls, a corkboard remains hanging there. A lined sheet of paper, tacked to the corkboard, bears a list of nine names and phone numbers. At the bottom of the list is Hanna Harcorte's name, written in ink, unlike the other nine names (and missing a phone number). The first two names have been crossed off. Muller murdered both Madelyn Wilson and Aanand Prashash to "satisfy" the meat-child... or the Bane... or the cruel urges rising within him. Ask him at different times (and perhaps the players will), get a different answer.

The first uncrossed name, Birgit VanGelder, is Muller's current target. Each of the other names is a former member of the horticulture club — those who chose to step away after becoming scared of Muller or disillusioned during his plunge into depravity.

- ~~Madelyn Wilson~~
- ~~Aanand Prashash~~
- Birgit VanGelder
- Sissie Ahiati
- Tansy Albertsson
- Anja Sterlingson
- Isabel Forrest
- Marjory Hardy
- Doria Lasseur
- *Hanna Harcorte*

The characters should come to understand that this list is of Muller's past and intended victims. That Birgit VanGelder is Muller's next target is the most important piece of information to set up act three. Assuming the characters track down VanGelder, they'll encounter Muller as he prepares to murder her.

Also in the living room is Muller's aging laptop. It's plugged in, and if it's disconnected from power the battery fails, and the computer shuts down (it can be turned on again by reattaching the power cable).

The laptop is protected by a password, but characters can use a relevant Skill pool such as a Difficulty 3 Intelligence + Technology to bypass the password with the help of a known security exploit in the obsolete operating system. They can also find a post-it note with the password ("Mull3r") on a Difficulty 2 Resolve + Awareness test if they search the house.

The computer has a number of older video games and a series of folders saved on its desktop. The folders include files on Development Copse West and the city's paperwork giving Muller permission to work on the area, as well as extensive files on each member of the horticulture club in the lead up to the ritual (the nine names on the white board plus the five ritual participants). The files are particularly troubling, given what the pack knows, as they go into minute details about each member, including logs of their daily activities and apparent physical health. Muller was clearly stalking the members.

Most of Muller's email is unfiltered spam, but if the characters check his Sent folder, it holds multiple emails labeled "Urgent," first to Madelyn Wilson, then to Aanand Prashash, and finally to Birgit VanGelder, with Muller asking to meet them in private.

The laptop exists in this scene as a helpful container of information to keep the players learning things. And, again, it doesn't have to be a laptop – for less tech-savvy packs, Storytellers can modify the information to be included on a "murder-board" style arrangement in Muller's home. Besides what's noted here, Storytellers can add clues to the files to help the players fill in the blanks. If they missed something earlier, here is a great point to add it to the story.

The Kitchen

In the small hallway to the kitchen is a stand-alone freezer. Getting past it and into the kitchen is a tight squeeze. Although the freezer is empty now, it's where Muller stored the dogs' corpses he eventually burned for the ritual. A successful Wits or Intelligence + Investigation test (Difficulty 2) reveals dog hair stuck to an interior wall of the freezer.

The kitchen is mostly bare of food. Plastic plates and open containers abound, ants and cockroaches enjoying the bounty.

Muller's Bedroom

Muller sleeps in the smaller of the two bedrooms. Like the rest of the house, it's a mess, with piles of refuse and books making even stepping inside difficult. A broken bed-in-a-box has been pushed to the side to make more room for practicing ritual movements.

Although most of the piles of trash and stuff seem to be untouched, one pile of reading material nearest the bed is clearly still in use. This pile of books, magazines, printouts, and newspapers is half a meter tall. The books on the bottom are mostly generic occult and witchcraft volumes, of a type one could find at any chain bookseller. Closer to the top, the books give way mostly to newspaper pages and printouts of online articles about a number of businesses and corporate entities. The entries at the top are all printouts of conversations from the shittiest corners of the internet, but these exchanges nevertheless convey occult veracity.

The stack of printed material is a timeline of the Bane's possession of Muller. The bottom-most books are his first real dalliances with the occult — mass-market stuff. Higher up the stack, the Bane's influence strengthens, pointing Muller to real instances of the spirit world, the occult, and what Garou might recognize as elements associated with the Wyrm all intersecting. A successful Resolve + Occult test at Difficulty 2 reveals that the final

stages of Muller's research routinely converged with incidents potentially associated with the Wyrm: destruction, vengeance, and personal benefit through the ruination of others.

Downtime: Guilt by Association

A character who takes some of the articles and does research (at the Storyteller's discretion, aided by an Intelligence + Finance test at Difficulty 4) eventually reveals that some of the groups, corporations, and facilities highlighted among Muller's notes all operate as fronts for Pentex Group (possibly leading to other stories).

The top of the pile includes printouts and pictures. The printouts are a collection of social media stories about people attacking and bludgeoning loved ones. Here, Muller made lurid notes in the margins, marking incidents and processes he believed "released energy." These last entries served as the blueprint for Muller to create the meat-child.

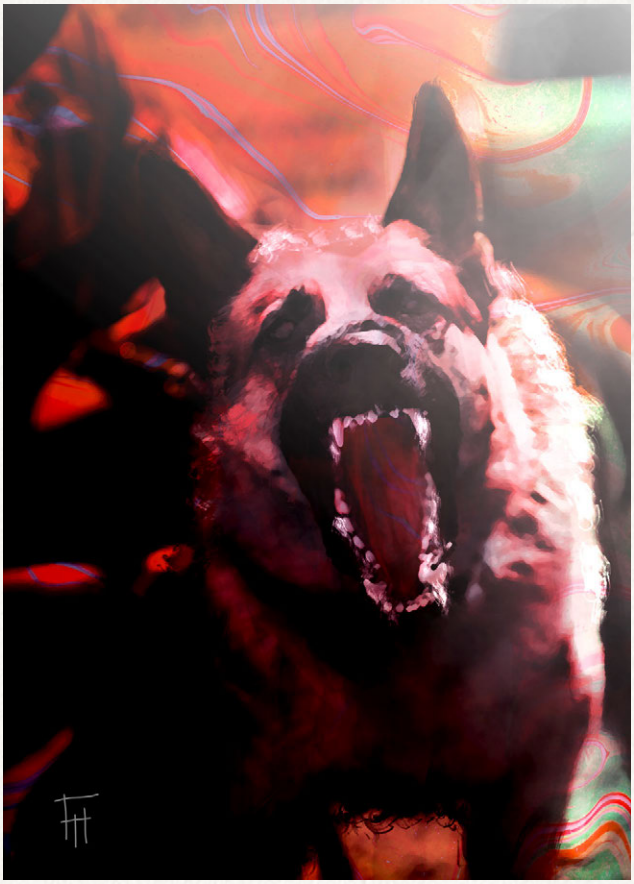
At the top are paperclipped pictures of the ritual participants: Jacqlyn Bates, Mitchell Ericksson, Aisha Crider, Joy Amedu, and Hanna Harcorte. Other pictures of the participants are tacked to the walls of the bedroom, grouped in clusters corresponding to each participant. The pictures were all taken clandestinely by Muller as he followed them through their daily lives and ascertained their "suitability" for the talisman.

A manila folder holds Muller's handwritten process on the ritual itself. He details, step by step, the tormenting of the dogs, the ashes created from their remains, the poison and the method to administer it, as well as dubious occult incidentals such as "phrases of power" and somatic gestures. Unfortunately for the horticulture club, the Bane's influence helped Muller enact enough ritual accuracy to result in the talisman.

The Dog Pit (Converted Bedroom)

The stench throughout the house comes from Muller's bedroom.

The office (the converted main bedroom), unlike the rest of the house, is clean and tidy. The juxtaposition is jarring. Along all of the walls are variations of spiral symbols scrawled in different mediums: permanent marker, charcoal, paint, blood, and feces. Each symbol marks the wall above a large dog cage, an attempt by Muller to understand how to channel spiritual anguish into biological vessels — or, more accurately, victims (as he was instructed by the Bane).



The Bane encouraged Muller to mentally and physically break the dogs, so that, subconsciously, they were desperate for any sort of respite. The Bane then coaxed or bullied lesser Banes to visit the miserable creatures in their sleep.

The process worked. In their pain and confusion, the remaining dogs "received" the Banes, which infused the animals with the Wyrm's power. Muller then killed most of the dogs, took the parts needed for the talisman, and burned the rest of their remains (in the copse) to use in the ceremony.

Unfortunately for the characters, Muller's incompetence reared its head yet again, and he managed to botch one (or more) of the dog-kills. The still-possessed dog remains behind in Muller's apartment. It waits amid mounds of refuse to see what the characters might do, but it's only a matter of time before it makes its desperate gambit. It waits for the group to split up, in hopes of finding a member of the pack left behind in the living room or kitchen for an isolated attack.

BANE-POSSESSED DOG

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 2, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 5, Willpower 4

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 8, Stealth 8

Notes / Other Traits:
Caustic Bite: +1 Superficial Damage bite. The caustic saliva of the dog does an additional Superficial damage to the victim each turn until washed off thoroughly.

Foul Demise: On death the dog sprays those nearby with a corrosive foulness. This causes 1 Aggravated Health damage to everyone in its immediate vicinity, such as in the same room.

For packs with a more martial bent, the Storyteller may want to increase the number of Bane-possessed dogs present. The combat here isn't intended to be the focus of the story, so consider a number of dogs equal to the number of pack members present, and even then, only for packs that are notably capable in combat.

The combat itself should be messy and frenetic, with the heaps of refuse and squalor of Muller's house making for sub-optimal fight space. Use the environment to convey detail but also to make the fight more than just a comparison of rolls and Traits. The dog knocks over piles of this and that, or battered Garou may find themselves hurled through cheap sheetrock walls, for example. The use of firearms or other loud noises will rapidly draw unwanted attention as well, and is a sure way to get the police involved.

Consider following the three-turn maximum for this conflict. After the third turn, the possessed dog flees, either through the door or, if the door is closed or obstructed, by crashing through a window. If the players let it get away, it lays low for a week and then takes to attacking isolated mortals in a setting of your choice during a subsequent session (perhaps an under-regulated water treatment plant run by a Pentex Group front, if the Garou have discovered those connections elsewhere in this act).

Still Missing a Clue?

If the characters leave without the list (and particularly Birgit VanGelder's name and number), they can discover her name and contact details in some other way, such as by point of contact on a horticultural club flyer found amid the detritus. If the players make it to Hanna Harcorte, she can tell them that Muller was often spiteful and vengeful toward the club members who left — effectively communicating the list to the characters through other means.

If the players can track Muller by using Gifts or otherwise heightened Garou senses, they can follow him to VanGelder's house. This challenge, however, is potentially worthy of a scene by itself.

Remember, part of being the Storyteller is getting players the information they need to make decisions. Be prepared to improvise on their behalf, if necessary, at least in terms of getting them that information.

Conclusions

The most important thing for the players is to understand that Muller is on the loose and on a murderous, mutilating rampage. They almost certainly want to stop him, for any number of reasons. Unless the Storyteller deems otherwise, Birgit VanGelder is Muller's next victim. The characters can track down VanGelder and confront Muller in act three.

FLOATING SCENE: HARCORTE'S HOUSE

This scene can fit wherever in act two the players' actions prompt it. If they seek Harcorte before following up on Muller's residence, for example, they can gain information about Muller, or they might learn about her at Muller's residence and make contact with her afterward. Remain flexible.

Kin Calling

Hanna Harcorte was on the path to a life in shambles, but she wasn't quite there yet. Her house reflects that state of affairs. Hanna's a capable web designer and graphic artist in her day job. She was successful enough to get a mortgage on a modest three-bedroom home at the city limits. Her house is situated at the corner of a street in the heart of a recent development (wherever suits your setting). The house and yard appear well maintained.

Hanna's husband, Victor Harcorte, complicates the scene. Hanna returns early from her trip to the woods with the horticulture club and at first refuses to talk with Victor. When he presses the issue she involuntarily shapeshifts, tearing flesh off his hand and subjecting him to Delirium, before retreating to the bedroom. Victor is now frustrated and confused. He remembers little of the attack, having bandaged his hand, but is beset by a (to him) irrational fear of his wife. He certainly isn't

supportive of this pack of potentially dangerous-looking who-are-you-agains? talking to Hanna. If the characters knock or otherwise approach the house normally, they encounter Victor first.

Hanna is in the bedroom. She has locked the door and is terrified of what she might do to Victor, with little knowledge of what happened to her in Development Copse West. All she knows is that she turned into something else in reaction to the poison Muller slipped her. She's not even sure if her transformation was Muller's intent, because it looks as if everyone else ended up dead.

To get past Victor, the players need to give him some plausible reason that their characters should enter the house, unless they choose violence, misdirection, or some other approach. He's extremely suspicious of them but desperate for any sort of help, and in his confused state he's willing to do anything that at least sounds legitimate. A Difficulty 2 Charisma or Manipulation + Persuasion test prompts Victor to (reluctantly) let the characters in to talk to Hanna while he goes to get a drink. A Difficulty 2 Wits + Awareness test spots the fresh bandages around his hand. If asked, he says he burned it on the stove.

Unless somehow prevented, Victor lingers around the corner, in the hall leading to the bedroom, and listens to whatever the characters are saying. Although Victor isn't in the same situation as Hanna, he's dealing with a lot of fear and uncertainty himself.

Victor doesn't seek to physically hurt Hanna, but he'll say things he'll inevitably regret if he's able to interject. If he's able to argue with her, the situation escalates, and she may even ask the characters to remove him, at which point Victor obviously resists. He has no idea what they really are, or how he's gambling with their Rage. If the characters badly hurt Victor, Hanna holds a grudge that can manifest in a future session.

Speaking to Hanna

Hanna Harcorte can be a useful vector for you to channel important pieces of information. Inquisitive players who ask insightful and intelligent questions gain key pieces of information on Muller, the club, and what happened in Development Copse West.

Hanna hasn't been answering her phone and hasn't engaged with her work colleagues. The arrival of the players' pack is a weird situation — unless they know her already, they're strangers arriving at a time of crisis. That said, if they seem earnest in their willingness to help... well, why not? She's shaken by what she has become and what Muller turned out to be, and any port in a storm, as the saying goes.

She prefers to meet the characters in her bedroom, the only place she has been since coming home, though she can be persuaded to talk with the characters in the living room. Wherever the characters speak with her, she's confused and scared and working through the trauma of becoming a werewolf while also surviving a poisoning attempt.

Hanna doesn't know what the Garou are, nor what she truly is, only that she must have been poisoned, felt a pain throughout her body, and passed out. When she woke she had turned into something else. A thing that walked on four legs. She snuck away from the glade in Development Copse West because she didn't know what else to do. She left Muller and the rest of the horticultural club behind and has no idea what happened afterward.

Hanna's at a breaking point and desperate for someone to listen to her. If the players are at all sympathetic, she opens up to them. She describes what happened in the glade, and that she has only hazy recollections after taking the poison. She recalls — dreaming? — about being a wolf, but wonders if the poison might have been a hallucinogen.

The characters are likely to realize that Hanna is Garou and underwent her First Change as a result of the ritual. If the characters calmly and sympathetically reveal their existences as Garou, she eventually accepts her new reality. Otherwise, she continues to deny her werewolf nature, which possibly leads to a tragic end for Victor.

If the characters give Hanna the hard sell about her responsibilities to Gaia, the existence of the spirit world, or the state of a world in Apocalypse, it's all too much, and she probably enters a violent panic. Take it slowly — this is a chance to explore the aftermath of the First Change and what it means for someone's reality to become something very different from what it was not long ago.

Hanna didn't actually witness the feeding of Muller's awful talisman, because she fled after her transformation. She divulges that Muller wanted the participants to "feed the forest." Although she's justifiably angry at Muller, part of her is still loyal to him, and it should take sympathetic roleplaying or a Manipulation + Persuasion test (Difficulty 2) to convince her to fully open up.

If comforted or coaxed successfully, Hanna tells the characters that Muller was particularly hostile and suspicious in the lead-up to the ritual, and that he sometimes spoke in "weird ways." If pressed, she says that he was normally quite erudite, but in the weeks before the ritual he would occasionally struggle with even simple sentences (which happened at times the Bane's influence was particularly strong).

She notes that she was scared around Muller when any of the other "traitorous" members' names would come up, and that Muller often swore to "make them pay." If asked, Hanna can provide the same names as could be found on Muller's corkboard.

Hanna can help the characters piece together information on Muller and where he might be. Under no circumstances does she voluntarily confront Muller.

Other Victims: Madelyn Wilson and Aanand Prashash

Exploring the most recent victims' residences can fit wherever in the sequence of things the players' actions lead to it. These two investigations should give a hint into Muller's modus operandi and transformation into something other than mundane.

If the players investigate the homes of Muller's most recent victims, Madelyn Wilson and Aanand Prashash, they'll discover gruesome murder scenes. Wilson and Prashash were attacked and killed in their respective apartments. If the players' characters scrutinize the apartments from the Umbra, minor baleful spirits linger near the places, feeding on the dwindling negative resonances of the murder sites. These spirits may or may not be Banes, at the Storyteller's discretion, but they're definitely attuned to the misery and violence of the acts that drew them here.

ACT TWO COMPLICATIONS

If the police have yet to make an appearance, later in act two might be a good time. The introduction of the police serves as a reminder that the characters are operating outside mortal law and are on their own. Like in act one, the police can also serve as a call to action — if the characters don't act quickly enough, the police outpace them and they'll lose access to certain locations and information.

The Cult of Fenris can also make an indirect appearance. These Garou aren't necessarily looking for a fight (yet). Rather, they're trying to figure out what went on in their former caern and how these interlopers factor into the situation. For the time being, the Fenris werewolves use human hangarounds to investigate the characters.

* **Lisa Wallner** and **Leo Pilon** Two "citizen activists" acting on behalf of Cult of Fenris Garou to confront the characters about what happened in the copse. Wallner and Pilon are accusatory, unreasonable, and condescending, "just asking questions" about why the characters are present and encouraging them to do what any relevant authorities tell them. Not surprisingly, Wallner and Pilon are themselves uninterested in doing what any authorities tell them, and are willing to get rowdy, draw negative attention, and provoke (but not participate in) latent violence. If the characters make a compelling case that they weren't involved in the ritual, Wallner and Pilon make brutish threats to get them to stay away from the copse "at severe cost," accompanied by menacing gestures. It seems as if the two may have an inkling of what the players' pack might be, but that they've been bullied or goaded into hassling them by Garou they know in the Cult. They are active, individual antagonists working on behalf of passive, individual Cult members.

  If needed, use the stats for Criminal on p. 291 to represent Lisa and Leon.

ACT THREE: THE SHOWDOWN

Act three consists of the final confrontation with Muller and the story's denouement. Turning point four is intertwined with the final act, as many climaxes tend to be. Third acts like this one are intended to unfold quickly, with building tension exploding into physical conflict.

VANGELDER'S HOUSE

Birgit VanGelder (female, 55 years old, unmarried) is a senior manager at a publishing company. Her house is a small one-bedroom, positively resplendent with plants. Ivy grows along all of the home's walls and onto the roof. Inside grow many types of potted plants along the bookshelves, countertops, and other surfaces. The temperature is a bit on the warm side, and the house is quite humid. Planters hang from the ceiling. Even her kitchen stove is filled with plants ("It broke years ago, and I thought this was a better use"). VanGelder names each of her plants.

VanGelder has always been the green-thumb sort, and her membership in the local horticultural club preceded the arrival of Muller. She was never happy with his presence, and she found him boorish and self-aggrandizing. As Muller took on a leadership role in the club, VanGelder's participation waned. She quit the club about six months earlier. When she quit, a number of others followed and started their own club. Muller deeply resented VanGelder's decision to "steal" his flock.

Muller is inside VanGelder's house, armed with a hefty axe. He lurks in the basement, hiding and waiting for VanGelder to go to sleep before he delivers to her the same "well-earned consequences" that Madelyn Wilson and Aanand Prashash suffered.

Optimally, the players' characters arrive before Muller commits his violence. They should have time to approach VanGelder and learn that she hasn't seen Muller, but she did take a call from him not long before the pack's arrival. After ignoring his calls for some time, she picked up. They talked for a bit, and when Muller asked to come over and speak to her directly, she refused, telling him that she had nothing more to say. VanGelder then hung up and made herself some tea. She is tending to various plant-related tasks to distract herself from the phone call and her memories of Muller.

TURNING POINT FOUR: CONFRONTING MULLER

The characters' arrival motivates Muller to speed up his timeline. At this stage, Muller has become overconfident, even manic. The previous two murders and the cruel spiritual resonance he and his Bane puppeteer have absorbed have left him hungry for more brutality. Muller is eager to feed his festering resentments and complete the meat-child. The characters need to deal with Muller, and may feel some responsibility to protect VanGelder.

Remember that the Garou aren't traditional "heroes," and much of the world would consider them to be monsters. How the pack responds to the existential peril VanGelder faces is up to them – they're under no obligation to "save" her. The aftermath of such perspectives is up to your troupe to explore. Are humans acceptable losses? Does duty to Gaia trump one's own legend? What other ethical perspectives inform the choices of the Garou?

Turning Point Four Goals

* Confront Muller before he can continue his rampage
* Test the players and spike the tension with a physical combat
* Set the stage for future narrative developments and conflicts

Key Antagonist: The fomor Rickard Muller and the Bane possessing him (active, individual)

Proactive players probably try to search for Muller, knowing or at least suspecting from gathered information that VanGelder will be his next victim. If the characters use their heightened sense of smell while in lupus or hispo form, finding him is particularly easy, as Muller absolutely reeks by this time, the smell a strange mixture of unwashed human and rotting plant matter. Doing so is accomplished with a Wits + Survival test: One success means they detect the same Muller smell in the neighborhood, near VanGelder's apartment. Multiple successes allow the characters to zero in on Muller's location inside VanGelder's house and gain the initiative. A

critical success also locates Muller's car, parked a couple of blocks away. If searched, the back of the Toyota station wagon reveals the still incomplete meat child under a tarpaulin, in all its reeking glory. (See p. 317 for more on the meat-child talisman.) It is impossible to locate Muller more precisely than "somewhere in the house", the smell of plant matter in the house masking his own plant-like smell.

Otherwise, Muller comes to them, aggravated by the ceaseless goading of the Bane. Muller believes he is potent enough to push past the characters to attack VanGelder. His plan is to sneak up on them and kill VanGelder for her arm. Muller doesn't know what the Garou are capable of, but the Bane will warn him that there's something dangerous about the characters, and that they must be removed for him to get to his target.

Muller tries to maul the characters closest to VanGelder. If he's unable to incapacitate at least one of the characters, he distracts the characters by using the Living Wood Gift (see below) and hides again, attempting further similar hit-and-runs until cornered or he manages to dismember VanGelder and escape.

If and when the Garou kill Muller, the Bane sunders itself from his fleshly moorings and seeks to save itself by fleeing into the Umbra. If the characters aren't themselves watching or in the Spirit Wilds, the Bane probably survives to seek revenge against the characters at some later time.

A player who mentions that their character is paying attention to the plentiful vegetation specifically notices that the plants in VanGelder's house or yard seem to be reacting to Muller's presence (see below). If no player specifies such focus, a player whose character isn't directly involved in the fighting can make a Wits + Survival test (Difficulty 3) to notice.

As the conflict with Muller transpires, don't rely just on dice rolls and ticking down Health boxes. Muller is surely shouting abuse and ranting about his own motivations. Furthermore, the Bane doesn't die when Muller's body does. The packmates may be satisfied with sending it back to the Umbra, or they may choose to pursue it and bring a sense of closure to this nightmare.

RICKARD MULLER, FOMOR

An embodiment of botanical decomposition, Muller's body is now permeated with rotting roots and vines pushing out against his skin. Wounds he sustains are bloodless, showing mulch and reeking of compost. If anyone assumes crinos form or Muller is cornered, Muller's hands will contort into thorn-like poisoned claws able to deal serious damage even to a werewolf. He can also manifest swarms of stinging insects from his mouth, as if breathing his very hate out as a droning, ill-tempered cloud.

General Difficulty: 5 / 2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 8, Social 4, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 6, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 8, Brawl (Thorn-like Claws) 10, Survival (Living Wood) 7

Notes / Other Traits:
Muller has the equivalent of The Living Wood Gift (see p. 173), using his Survival pool in place of the Gift test. He also has the Fomori Traits Claws (Dealing aggravated damage to werewolves and humans alike) and Hatchery. Once per scene he can siphon the life out of all vegetation around him, restoring himself to full Health. He is unable to use The Living Wood after this for the duration of the scene, however.

BANE OF AMBITION

If the pack performs a Rite of Shadow Passage once the Muller-fomor has been killed they have a chance to catch up with the Bane before it escapes. Tracking it through the Umbra requires winning a Resolve + Survival or Occult test at Difficulty 3. If the players think about asking local spirits for aid, they can add successes on a Charisma + Etiquette test to the total.

Power: 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 8, Survival (Hide Tracks) 6, Occult (Umbral Navigation) 6, Stealth 6

Notes / Other Traits:
This Bane is a crude creature of ambition and decay. If followed it will attempt to ambush its pursuers. Failing to spot it (by winning a Wits + Awareness against its Stealth pool) allows it to make a free attack at Difficulty 1 against a member of the pack before combat is joined. This attack will always leave a Health box left on the target, though, no matter the margin. It has similar claws to its previous fomor host, but no other combat abilities.

You can tailor Muller to the size and capabilities of the troupe. If the pack is having trouble taking him down, ignore his powers of regeneration. Conversely, if the pack is likely to take him down in a turn or two, provide him with additional resilience, such as Toughness (p. 267) or extra Health boxes.

Dramatic Developments

If the players don't take elective action of their own, or if the Storyteller chooses to add a bit of additional nuance to the situation, consider the following possibilities.

- Hanna Harcorte arrives at the scene. Either she followed the characters or her growing Rage is urging her to confront Muller herself. If the characters fail to locate Muller in the basement, she tracks him down and confronts him while the characters are close by. The characters will need to both protect VanGelder, fight Muller, while preventing Hartcorte from causing further harm to herself and anyone in the vicinity.
- VanGelder needs to step out for a smoke. She excuses herself to the backyard. If the characters insist, she agrees to allow one to come with her. Muller chooses that moment to exact his vengeance and attacks VanGelder.
- The police arrive and take VanGelder away for protection or questioning. On their way out, Muller assails her, and the conflict becomes an extremely precarious three-way conflict among the characters, Muller, and the panicked police.

DENOUEMENT

Once the characters have dealt with the immediate threat of Rickard Muller, they may have a few remaining considerations worthy of their attention.

- How does Birgit VanGelder fare? Does she die in the conflict and, if so, do the characters take any action to deal with it, such as reaching out to family or friends? Or do they sneak away under cover of darkness, the best to avoid the unwanted attention of mortal authorities, bureaucracy, and the law? If Birgit survives, she's effusively thankful — but does she witness any of her "saviors" taking the crinos war-form? Does she lump Muller and the players' characters into one horrific group of monsters?
- What of the meat-child? The gruesome amalgam of human and animal parts is still around, either in the trunk of Muller's car or hidden at an undisclosed location. We leave the specifics of it to you to decide (if it has any power of its own, that is, once cut off from Muller and the Bane), and it probably warrants a scene or even story of its own to discover what it does, whether it has a spirit bound into it, and if there's still any danger associated with it. Most packs will likely just burn the horrid effigy and be done with it. Unless, of course, it has vanished on its own....
- Some Garou may want to tell their tale to other Garou, if the pack knows of any in the territory. Others may want to confer with elders, more Renowned Garou, mentors, or avatars of a tribal or pack Patron Spirit.
- What of Development Copse West? The heart of the caern is now active, but Muller's ritual has given the caern a decidedly rueful spiritual resonance. This outcome presents a perfect opportunity for the characters to cleanse and rebuild the glade's spirit nexus into a fully functioning caern. But what if the packmates are already part of another, perhaps more significant sept? Should they seek to exorcise the malignant power, or even allow the caern to die? Surely the Cult of Fenris would greatly desire to reclaim the Sept of the Scarred Eye... ■

Muller's Meat-Child

The meat-child resembles nothing so much as a vaguely humanoid mass of ill-fitting body parts — mismatched legs, a single human arm, several dog legs with oversized claws jutting from its torso, and a flayed dog head lolling on its shoulders. Coarse threads hold the whole thing together and various glyphs and occult signs have been branded onto its surface. It smells of rotting flesh, ash, and fear.

While it is entirely possible that the meat-child is nothing more than the creation of a sick mind, a dead puppet of rotting flesh stitched together in vain, it could also be an actual Wyrm talisman. Should the Storyteller choose to keep the meat-child in the chronicle as a talisman, consider the following for its potential.

The talisman is a powerful physical anchor to Banes, conveying powers and abilities above that which they usually are able to manifest in the physical world. A complete meat-child can be possessed by any Bane, instantly turning into a fomori-like creature with the following traits, regardless of the Power of the Bane:

AWAKENED MEAT-CHILD

General Difficulty: 6/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 8, Social 3, Mental 6

Secondary Attributes: Health (Enhanced) 10, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl (Shredding Limbs) 10, Stealth 10, Intimidation (Gruesome Display) 10, Gifts 8

Notes / Other Traits:
The meat-child has the equivalent of the following Gifts: Hare's Leap (p. 147), Spirit of the Fray (p. 148), Hidden Killer (p. 174), using their Gift pool and an effective Glory of 4.

Fomor Traits (p. 267): Claws (+1 Aggravated damage), Delirium, Death Surge, Resurrection

Rage Siphon: Unless the meat-child uses Spirit of the Fray, any Garou taking damage from their claw attack loses one point of Rage, and the meat-child immediately heals two levels of Superficial damage or one level of Aggravated damage.

A Bane possessing the meat-child is driven off if the talisman is defeated and cannot inhabit it again, even after the talisman's eventual resurrection. Once completed, the talisman can only be permanently destroyed if a spirit of Power 10 or more possesses it, thus overloading it in an explosion of viscera.

APPENDIX THREE

Advice For Considerate Play

Playing roleplaying games is an ensemble activity. You play with other people and you create a shared experience together, riffing on each other's ideas and creativity. This togetherness can lead to emotionally intense experiences which makes it all the more important to play in a manner that's considerate of the feelings, experiences and boundaries of your fellow players.

As a rule of thumb, the wellbeing of the people you share the game with should be a prime concern. In this, roleplaying is no different from any other activity involving a creative ensemble. The same goes whether you play in a band or act in a play.

Taking care of each other is especially important when playing horror games. Experience has shown that scary or emotionally difficult material is much easier to play when the troupe has fostered a culture of trust and care.

EMOTIONS

At its best, roleplaying can involve the full spectrum of human emotion. A movie can make us laugh and cry and roleplaying games have the same potential to affect us as any other artform. In the case of roleplaying games, there's a specific mechanism that often comes into play, called bleed by the designer Emily Care Boss. Bleed refers to the way we empathize with the character we play and thus may experience some of their emotions ourselves. My character is sad and now I feel sad too. The mechanism can also work in reverse: A villain makes me angry as a player and suddenly my ordinarily calm and composed character is furious.

Bleed is not good or bad. It's simply a mechanism by which we can have emotional experiences in games. Giving the mechanism a name is helpful because it helps us process emotions that occur during roleplaying.

Note that character-based bleed is not the only way we experience emotions in roleplaying games. Sometimes we emphasize with something that doesn't involve our characters at all, leading to emotional reactions using the more familiar mechanisms we know from reacting to movies, comics or novels.

THE CONTEXT OF PLAY

You can play **Werewolf** in many different contexts. You can play at home with your friends, on a stream in public or at a convention with strangers. It's a good idea to consider how the differences in who you play with and where affect the themes you explore in the game.

The play culture and calibration theorist Johanna Koljonen divides issues that may crop up into three categories:

Physical: In ordinary tabletop roleplaying games, physical safety is rarely an issue. Our living rooms tend to be relatively free of physical dangers.

Mental: When we talk about questions of consideration and calibration in roleplaying games, we're usually talking about those in this category. Taking care of mental issues means ensuring all participants in the game feel comfortable and safe to explore the dark themes inherent in **Werewolf**. Most tools presented in this chapter are about helping players control their own experience so they can keep within their limits.

Community: How does the way we play affect our relationships and role in our community? In the case of private chronicles played in someone's living room, the community aspect is small. If our play happens in public, possible problems it can cause with our communities become more important as a consideration.

In an ordinary, privately played **Werewolf** chronicle, participants should focus on their own well-being as well as that of each other. The people around the gaming table are the people who should be happy and comfortable with the game. When you maintain your own boundaries, you're also creating a better play environment for everyone else.

Public games present special issues because problems in the community category can come from people who are not part of the game at all. If you stream a game of **Werewolf** online, a random viewer may take issue with something that was okay for everyone in the game. This can range from something legitimate, like objecting to an accidentally racist portrayal of a character, to something strange like unrequited parasocial emotions.

CHARACTERS

One of the great things about roleplaying games is that you can play characters different from yourself. In fact, you can purposefully use this to decrease bleed if you so desire. (See Distancing, below.)

You can play a character of a different ethnicity, race, sexuality, gender expression, nationality, social class or any other identity category. Particularly when it comes to questions of sexuality and gender, many players have used roleplaying games for the purpose of self-exploration, figuring things out in a comfortable, fictional environment.

The key to playing characters markedly different from yourself is respect. It's best to avoid caricatures and play everyone as a three-dimensional, nuanced individual, the same as yourself. This tends to lead to the most nuanced and interesting play experience, meaning that the quality of your play will also benefit.

When choosing what kind of background and identities you may wish to explore in play, pay attention to who you're playing with. Respectful play is a good idea in all instances but especially considering the people in your troupe. If you create a character matching the identity of someone you're playing with, you don't want to insult them by playing a lame, ill-informed joke!

Note that in the throes of improvisational play mistakes happen. When you make a mistake, for example misgender someone, don't waste time with protracted apologies and explanations. Instead, listen when someone corrects you, take it to heart and avoid making the same mistake again.

SEX AND ROMANCE

Werewolves are passionate creatures. They fall in love and lust. They have ill-advised trysts and torrid love affairs. They fuck. The background of a losing war to save the world creates emotional intensity that can come out in many different ways, including as frantic trysts between characters. Such scenes can be great fun to play!

There's a lot of variety between different players and play cultures in terms of how much people want to play on these themes. Some prefer to keep sex and romance largely off screen while others enjoy playing through a character's first date in minute detail.

Although you can use some of the calibration tools below to control your own participation in scenes of love and sex during play, it's good to prepare for the eventuality by discussing the subject with the troupe during Session Zero (see p. 203). This way, you can suss out who's interested in playing sex and romance and where their boundaries lie.

In addition to how graphic things can get, another topic of discussion is how much play time can be allocated to these topics. Hogging the spotlight for a two-hour date scene is selfish. (Unless the date is so compelling that the others players are fine with watching it play out.)

FASCISM

Werewolf is not a fascist friendly game. Because it's a horror game about contemporary issues, it can be a game where fascism as a theme or fascists as characters show up. After all, they're an unfortunate part of the real world we all inhabit.

In the simplest terms, you can use Nazis of whatever stripe seems most appropriate for your setting as enemies. After all, who doesn't want to go full Wolfenstein every now and then? In **Werewolf**, you can confront the problems of the world and rip their face off. Nazis are certainly a problem!

As with all other potentially difficult themes, participants can have wildly different reactions and wishes regarding fascism depending on their personality and background. For some, Nazis are cartoonish enemies to be ripped in half. For others, they're a clear and present danger, the people who are calling for them to be eradicated.

This is another topic you may wish to discuss during session zero especially if it's expected that fascists or fascism plays a significant part in the chronicle. What are the players' specific comfort levels with the subject? Remember that people are highly individual. One player whose life has been impacted by fascism may not wish to see them in the game, while another with similar experiences enjoys blasting them to bits.

Note that in **Werewolf**, themes of fascism may be present in the social realm of the players' characters. A friend goes over to the Cult of Fenris, seduced by their message of simpleminded morality. A player may decide to explore themes of ecofascism in their own character by skirting close to hauglosk. These situations create opportunities to grapple with fascism with more nuance than as simple enemies. How do you bring back a friend who has gone over to a hateful ideology? How do you avoid succumbing to bitterness and desperation, and the simple answers provided by a charismatic demagogue?

TOOLS

There are a number of tools intended to help players and Storytellers take charge of their own experience and calibrate it so that the game works for them. Their purpose is to empower you as a participant to maintain your own boundaries as well as help maintain the boundaries of your co-players.

A roleplaying troupe is a creative ensemble. The joy of play comes from the interplay of our creativity as we bounce off each other in the context of the game. The troupe works best creatively when we listen to each other, and conveniently listening also makes it much easier to be considerate of each other's needs during play. Players who listen are good players because they know each other and can support each other, creatively and in terms of comfort.

Note that you don't have to use all the tools described here. The purpose of this section is to provide a selection you can choose from to fit your needs.

Building an Ensemble

You don't have to take the formation of a creative ensemble as a matter of chance or player chemistry, although both matter. There are exercises you can do during session zero to improve the cohesion of the troupe. The key to ensemble building is fostering a culture of listening to your fellow players. You can do rounds where each player (including the Storyteller) answers a question. Here are a few sample questions:

- What's a cool scene that I'd love to play in **Werewolf**?
- What am I looking forward to in the game?
- What am I afraid of in the game, something that would be tedious, cringe or uncomfortable?

You can add more questions, especially if there are topics that you suspect will require a certain amount of delicacy. The point of the exercise is not to debate or discuss until you've determined a final truth but to listen to your co-players' feelings. Humans are social animals and we are good at adapting to each other.

When doing a round, you should avoid interrupting others and accept it if someone just wants to skip their turn.

Post-Game Discussions

Another way to help build ensemble during a chronicle is to reserve a bit of time at the end of each session for a discussion among the players. You can keep this informal or incorporate a round of questions, as you like.

As the Storyteller, you can ask all players individually how they're feeling and how the session went for them. Like with all ensemble-building, the most important thing here is just to listen.

If you want to reinforce a positive atmosphere, one way to do it is to spotlight each player in turn and ask the others to come up with something positive about them from that session. Like so:

The Storyteller: "Okay, let's put the spotlight on Hassan. What did you like in Hassan's play today?"

A Player: "I loved the scene with the babysitter. You're ordinary such a gruff badass but that was surprisingly delicate! No wonder she confessed!"

Lines and Veils

A technique originally described by Ron Edwards in *Sex and Sorcery*, Lines and Veils works great when done during session zero. The idea is that the players and the Storyteller create a list of Lines and Veils for the game which can then be referred to during play to help calibrate things so that everyone is comfortable.

Lines are topics that a player feels should not be part of the game. For example, a player adds "cruelty or violence towards animals" to the list. This means that the game shouldn't feature cruelty towards animals at all, as the focus of attention or even mentioned in passing.

Veils are topics that players feel are fine as part of the game world but that they don't want to see in detail. For example, a player puts "domestic violence" on the list of Veils. This means that domestic violence can be part of

someone's backstory, for example, but shouldn't feature in scenes played out in detail.

Note that the list of Lines and Veils can change during play. Players can add to it or even remove something they themselves put on it. The kinds of things that players put on the list can be highly individual. A player may put a Line on "gaslighting in the context of a relationship" and still be perfectly fine with minutely described ultraviolence.

The X Card

Developed by John Stavropoulos, the X Card is a tool where you draw an X on a physical card and place it somewhere within reach of all the players during play. The idea is that if you find the content of the game upsetting or difficult to process in a way that damages your play experience, you can point to the card, tap it, pick it up and raise it, or otherwise use it to indicate your situation.

The default reaction from other participants should be to immediately stop the scene and move on. You may also use the moment to ask for something specific going forward but you don't have to.

For example, the characters are interrogating a corporate executive. You become uncomfortable with the physical nature and intensity of the scene and tap the X Card. The Storyteller ends the scene and jumps ahead: "Okay, after you're done with the interrogation, you found that..."

Note that even if the game you're playing in doesn't explicitly use the X Card, it should always be okay to tap out when you need to. In any game situation, you can just say: "Hey, let's stop for a second. I'm not comfortable with this. Let's move on." The X Card is just a formalized way to facilitate doing this.

Distancing

The Swedish roleplay collective *Vi åker Jeep* talked about bringing the subjects and themes of roleplay "close to home" to increase emotional intensity. The theory was that bleed (see Emotions, above) would be intensified if the substance of play was highly relatable to the participants. The goal of these games was to create emotionally intense experiences and they chose settings such as the family where players can draw on their personal experiences.

You can do the same if you wish, creating a **Werewolf** game, chronicle or character with a lot of points of reference that relate to your real life.

However, you can also do the opposite if you want to purposefully decrease bleed and keep the game emotionally contained. You can decide to make a character who's more of an abstraction, a marionette you take through the events of the game so that when something bad happens, it won't impact you as strongly.

What we relate to is highly individual, and the same goes for the opposite. Sometimes we find experiences outside of our own lives nevertheless highly relatable, so if you want to create distance you have to do a bit of soul-searching and see what kind of things you find interesting but not that emotionally impactful.

More Information

If you want to read more on these topics, check out the following:

- "Bleed: The Spillover Between Player and Character" by Sarah Lynne Bowman:
  nordiclarp.org/2015/03/02/bleed-the-spillover-between-player-and-character
- "The Battle of Primrose Park: Playing for Emancipatory Bleed in Fortune & Felicity" by Jonaya Kemper:
  nordiclarp.org/2017/06/21/the-battle-of-primrose-park-playing-for-emancipatory-bleed-in-fortune-felicity
- "Larp Safety Design Fundamentals" by Johanna Koljonen:
  jarps.net/journal/article/view/16
- "Participation Safety In Larp", a website by Johanna Koljonen:
  participationsafety.com
- "What do the terms Lines and Veils mean?" on RPG-StackExchange:
  rpg.stackexchange.com/questions/30906/what-do-the-termslines-and-veils-mean
- "Let's Play with Fire! Using Risk and its Power for Personal Transformation" by Bettina Beck:
  nordiclarp.org/2018/03/01/lets-play-fire-using-risk-power-personal-transformation
- "Creating a Culture of Trust Through Safety and Calibration Mechanics" by Maury Brown:
  nordiclarp.org/2016/09/09/creating-culture-trust-safety-calibration-larp-mechanics
- *Sex and Sorcery* by Ron Edwards
- "The X Card" by John Stavropolous:
  docs.google.com/document/d/1SB0jsx34bWHZWbnNIVVuMjhDkrdFGo1_hSC2BWPlI3A

Index

A

Advantages 97
Advice for Considerate Play 320
Aggravated Damage 127
Ahroun 58
Allies and Antagonists 239–293
- Agitated ghost 288
- Asklepian 245
- Bad seed 264
- Bat 292
- Bear 292
- Beat cop 290
- Berserk ahroun 280
- Big cat 292
- Bird of prey 293
- Bitter rage 245
- Caern raider 278
- Clergy 291
- Count fucking orlok or some shit 286
- Countermeasure specialist 272
- Criminal 291
- Cursed beast 283
- Debased lycanthrope 283
- Dimebag dracula 286
- Dirgesinger 278
- Dissonant gestalt 246
- Drattosi 246
- Echo 257
- Elemental 261
- Engling 262
- Executive director munroe 276
- Factory farm overseer 274
- First team #23 275
- Furmling 247
- Glade child 260
- Gray mass 248
- Green siren 265
- Grunt 263
- Guard dog / attack dog 293
- Hollow man 264
- Horse 293
- Iao kill box specialist 289
- Iao surveillance tech 289
- Irrational fae 288
- Lune 260
- Lurking scout 278
- Machine spirit 254
- Magician 287
- Mocking ragabash 279
- Nameless 257
- Naturae 259
- Nexus crawler 252
- Ooralath 249
- Panorama security guard 273
- Pattern spider 254
- Police detective 290
- Project twilight sharpshooter 290
- Psychomachia 249
- Rat 293
- Ravager, the 274
- Ravenous locust 266
- Raven-shifter 284
- Riot cop / pmc soldier / private security 291
- Scavenger pack 250
- Scrag 250
- Scryer 251
- Serpentine 258
- Skitterling 273
- Spider-shifter 285
- Starving remnant 283
- Thinking-engine spirit 256
- Twisted slasher 263
- Vindictive theurge 280
- Wayseeker philodox 282
- Wolf 292
- Wyrmhole 252

Amenity Traits see *Caern Traits*
Animal Hosts 248
Animals 291
Antagonist Formats 240
Antagonists Axes, the 211
Antagonists 239
Apocalypse, the 17
Archetypes 59
Armor 195
Attributes 85–88
- Charisma 86
- Composure 86
- Dexterity 85
- Intelligence 87
- Manipulation 86
- Resolve 88
- Stamina 86
- Strength 85
- Wits 87

Auspice 55
Automatic Wins 120

B

Backgrounds 100–105
- Allies 101
- Contacts 102
- Fame 102
- Loresheet 103
- Mask 103
- Mentor 104
- Resources 104
- Spirit Pact 105
- Talisman 105

Banes 243
Bawn Traits see *Caern Traits*
Black Spiral Dancers 277
Born of Wolves 84

C

Caern Traits 193–195
- Abundance 193
- Balm of Gaia 194
- Ikon of contemplation 194
- Kin-beacon 194
- Permissive gauntlet 193
- Prestigious 195
- Rite focus 193
- Security 193
- Spirit guardian 194
- Spiritual attunement 194
- Well-hidden 193

Caerns 190
Celestine 233
Chagrin 142
Chapter see *Session*
Character Concept 84
Character Creation Summary 83
Characters 83
Checks 122
Chronicle Rewards 218
Chronicle Tenets 199
Chronicle 116
Combat see *Conflicts*
Conflicts 123
Contests 123
Conventional Weapons 196
Cover 124
Crinos 137
Critical Success 121
Critical Win 121
Cult of Fenris 279

D

Damage 127
Delirium 142
Dice Pool 118
Difficulty 118
Disguised Weapons 196
Dodging 125

E

Enhanced Damage Resistance 243
Experience 110

F

Falcon 81
Favor and Ban 58
Feats of Strength 130
Fire and Burning 128
First Change, the 42
Flamethrowers 196
Flaws 97–105
- Addiction 99
- Adversary 104
- Adversary 104
- Caern pariah 98
- Crone's curse 100
- Dark secret 103
- Destitute 105
- Enemies 101
- Folkloric bane 100
- Folkloric block 100
- Folkloric tell 100
- Hopeless addiction 99
- Infamy 103
- Moon-thrall 100
- Pact condition 105
- Person of interest 104
- Repulsive 98
- Serial error 104
- Ugly 98

Fomor Traits 267
Fomori 262
Frenzy 139

G

Gaffling 236
Gaia 15
Gaia's Howl 224
Gaian Spirits 259
Galliard 57
Garou Nation, the 37
Garou 41
Gauntlet, the 230
General Difficulties 240
Gifts 145–179
- A thousand eyes 166
- Against the odds 160
- Ancestral conviction 155
- Animal magnetism 158
- Augur 170
- Balor's gaze 173
- Banish spirit 153
- Beast's fealty 156
- Between the cracks 167
- Blackout 170
- Blessed brew 173
- Blissful ignorance 149
- Blood of the pack 179
- Blood of the wastes 169
- Blur of the milky eye 150
- Body shift 148
- Break the shackles 160
- Brother's scent 167
- Burrow 178
- Call the ridden 159
- Calm the furious beast 167
- Camouflage 168
- Catfeet 146
- Chill cloak 169
- Claws of frozen death 169
- Closing the gap 163
- Command spirit 154
- Command the gathering 156
- Control machine 171
- Coup de grâce 164
- Crow's laughter 149
- Curse of aeolus 164
- Defy death 160
- Dire distraction 176
- Doppelgänger 172
- Drain spirit 155
- Dreamwalk 161
- Energize 171
- Ensnare spirit 152
- Eyes of the cobra 159
- Eyes of the owl 146
- Face in the crowd 166
- Fangs of judgment 157
- Fatal flaw 175
- Feral regression 155
- Fetch bounty 177
- Gaia's candor 156
- Gaia's embrace 174
- Geas 157
- Gorgon's visage 165
- Grasp from beyond 154
- Gremlins 149
- Halt the coward's flight 161
- Hands of the earth 170
- Hare's leap 147
- Hidden killer 174
- Howl of assembly 159
- Icy chill of despair 175
- Jam technology 148
- Kali's scar 164
- Kiss of helios 163
- Lacerating wind 169
- Life's presence 168
- Living ward 155
- Luna's armor 163
- Luna's avenger 179
- Luna's blessing 151
- Mindspeak 154
- Mother's touch 153
- Oathbreaker's bane 158
- Odious aroma 166
- Open seal 150
- Pack instinct 178
- Penumbral senses 147
- Porcupine's reprisal 156
- Primal anger 162
- Pulse of the prey 150
- Quicksand 175
- Raging strike 147
- Rapid shift 161
- Razor claws 162
- Recover memory 172
- Render down 174
- Reveal trauma 168
- Sacred boundary 172
- Scent of running water 151
- Scent of the past 157
- Sense danger 162
- Sense the true form 156
- Serpent's coil 170
- Shadow sense 153
- Share the pain 168
- Sharpened senses 147
- Shield of the wyld 175
- Shrouded aspect 171
- Sight from beyond 153
- Silver claws 164
- Skinbind 171
- Snarl of challenge 162
- Song of inspiration 160
- Song of rage 159
- Song of serenity 159
- Song of valor 160
- Speech of the world 177
- Spider's song 150
- Spirit of the fray 148
- Staredown 147
- Streets tell stories 166
- Strength of purpose 158
- Take the true form 158

Territorial dominance 173
The golden path 178
The living wood 173
The silver compact 179
The thousand forms 152
Thieving talons of the magpie 151
Thunderclap 176
Thwarting the arrow 148
Tongue of the beasts 149
True fear 162
Umbral tether 154
Under the gun 177
Unity of the pack 179
Wasp talons 164
Whelp body 152
Whispered passage 178
Wind claws 163
Glabro 136
Glory 106
Gorgon 61
GPS Trackers 197
Grappling 131
Griffin 75
Guns, Gear, and Other Goodies 196

H

Harano 51, 140
Hauglosk 52, 140
Healing 128
Health 88
Hispo 138
Homid 136
Honor 107
Horned Serpent 69

I

Impairment 128
Impergium, the 36
Incapacitation and Death 134
Incarna 234
Incendiary Weapons 196
Information Awareness Office 288

J

Jaggling 235

K

Kin47
Kinseekers 43

L

Litany, the 46
Loresheets 294–299
Monkeywrenchers 295
Project twilight 296
Renunciate of fenris 298
The black spiral 299
Umbral traveller 297
Losing the Wolf 133
Lupus 138

M

Margin 121
Merits 97–105
Awakened caern 98
Beautiful 98
Caern access 98
Clement lupus 98
Cobbler 103
Corroborated day job 98
Day job 98
Linguistics 98
Moon-quickened 100
Moon-riled 100
Obscure safe house 99
Secure safe house 99
Stunning 98
Zeroed 103
Minor Action 146
Modifiers 119
Molotov Cocktail 196
Moon Cults 40
Moot 49
Multiple Opponents 125

N

Native Gifts 146
Net Gun 197
North Wind 67

O

Owl 79

P

Pack 43
Pentex First Teams 275
Pentex Fronts 269
Pentex Group 268
Philodox 57
Plastic Explosives 197
Players 12
Possession 242
Power 242

R

Ragabash 56
Rage Checks 133
Rage Dice 133
Rage 131
Ranged Weapons 124
Rat 63
Regeneration 134
Relationship Map 111
Reliability 101
Renown 106
Restraints 197
Reversion 242
Rites 180–187
Gathering for the departed 187
Rite of abjuration 180
Rite of accomplishment 187
Rite of binding 184
Rite of caern building 185
Rite of celebration 185
Rite of contrition 182
Rite of dedication 183
Rite of kinseeking 183
Rite of passage 187
Rite of patronage 184
Rite of rage 181
Rite of shadow passage 182
Rite of shame 184
Rite of spirit summoning 183
Rite of the forgetful record 182
Rite of the living caern 182
Rite of the shrouded glen 186
Rite of the whispering field 186
Rite of the winter wolf 187
Rite of the wolf reborn 186
Rite of tranquillity 181
Satire rite 187

S

Scene 115
Sept 48
Session Zero 203
Session 115
Shapeshifting 134
Silver Damage 134
Silver 36
Simple Tests 116
Skill Pool 118
Skills 88–97
Academics 94
Animal Ken 92
Athletics 89
Awareness 94
Brawl 89
Craft 90
Driving 90
Etiquette 92
Finance 95

- Firearms 90
- Insight 92
- Intimidation 93
- Investigation 95
- Larceny 91
- Leadership 93
- Medicine 95
- Melee 91
- Occult 95
- Performance 93
- Persuasion 93
- Politics 96
- Science 96
- Stealth 91
- Streetwise 94
- Subterfuge 94
- Survival 91
- Technology 96

Social Conflict 127
Social Rites 187
Special Affairs Division: Project Twilight 289
Specialties 118
Spending Willpower 122
Spider 71
Spirit 232
Spirit Hierarchy 232
Spirit Traits see *Caern Traits*
Spirits Wilds see *Umbra*
Stag 73
Stargazers 280
Stepping Sideways 229
Stolen Moons 282
Story 115
Storyteller 11
Storytelling Game 11
Stranger Shifters 284
Success 116
Superficial Damage 127

T

Taking Half 119
Talismans 188–190
- Apeskin 188
- Gaia's tear 188
- Harmony flute 188
- Klaive 188
- Partridge wing 189
- Shadowshard 189
- Silver crown, the 189
- Spirit-catcher 189
- Wind whistle 190

Teamwork 122
Theurge 56
Three Turns and Out 125
Three-Act Structure, the 212
Throwing 130
Thunder 77
Time 115
Total Failure 122
Touchstones 108
Trackers and Pools: 118
Traits 85
Triat, the 226
Tribes 58–81
- Black furies 60
- Bone gnawers 62
- Children of gaia 64
- Galestalkers 66
- Ghost council 68
- Glass walkers 70
- Hart wardens 72
- Red talons 74
- Shadow lords 76
- Silent striders 78
- Silver fangs 80

Turn 115

U

Umbra Mechanics 230
Umbra, the 223
Unicorn 65

V

Vampires 285
Veil, the 15

W

Wayward Tribes 41
Weaver, the 227
Weaver-Spirits 253
Werewolf Hunters 288
Werewolf Names 45
Who Goes First 125
Willpower 88
Win at a Cost 122
Wisdom 107
Wolf Life 44
Wyld Spirits 257
Wyld, the 227
Wyrm, the 227

WEREWOLF
THE APOCALYPSE

Name	Concept	Patron
Chronicle	Auspices	Tribe

ATTRIBUTES

PHYSICAL		SOCIAL		MENTAL	
Strength	○○○○○	Charisma	○○○○○	Intelligence	○○○○○
Dexterity	○○○○○	Manipulation	○○○○○	Wits	○○○○○
Stamina	○○○○○	Composure	○○○○○	Resolve	○○○○○

Health □□□□□□□□□□

Willpower □□□□□□□□□□

Crinos □□□□□

SKILLS

Athletics ○○○○○	Animal Ken ○○○○○	Academics ○○○○○
Brawl ○○○○○	Etiquette ○○○○○	Awareness ○○○○○
Craft ○○○○○	Insight ○○○○○	Finance ○○○○○
Driving ○○○○○	Intimidation ○○○○○	Investigation ○○○○○
Firearms ○○○○○	Leadership ○○○○○	Medicine ○○○○○
Larceny ○○○○○	Performance ○○○○○	Occult ○○○○○
Melee ○○○○○	Persuasion ○○○○○	Politics ○○○○○
Stealth ○○○○○	Streetwise ○○○○○	Science ○○○○○
Survival ○○○○○	Subterfuge ○○○○○	Technology ○○○○○

RENOWN

Glory	Honor	Wisdom
○○○○○	○○○○○	○○○○○

GIFTS & RITES

Name	Pool	Cost	Notes

Rage □□□□□

WEREWOLF
THE APOCALYPSE

Chronicle Tenets	Touchstones	Favors & Bans

ADVANTAGES & FLAWS

	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

Harano □□□□□ ***Hauglosk*** □□□□□

Apperance

History

FORMS of the GAROU

Homid Cost: Free
Silver immunity

Glabro Cost: One Rage Check
Physical Tests: Two-Dice Bonus
Social Tests: Two-Dice Penalty*
Regenerate: 1 per Rage Check

Crinos Cost: Two Rage Checks
Spend 1 Willpower per turn or frenzy
Physical Tests: Four-Dice Bonus
Health Levels: +4
Social and Stealth Tests: Fail
Regenerate: 2 Per Rage Check
Claws: +3
Bite: +1 Aggravated
Causes Delirium

Hispo Cost: One Rage Check
Physical Tests:
Two-Dice Bonus**
Stealth Tests: Two-Dice Penalty
Social Tests: Limited to wolves and Garou
Regenerate: 1 per Rage Check
Bite: +1 Aggravated

Lupus Cost: Free
Silver immunity
Social Tests: Limited to wolves and Garou

* Does not apply to intimidation or non-humans
** Does not apply to Stealth tests

Notes

Total Experience .....

Spent Experience .....

Instant Werewolves

For those that want to get in on the action as quickly as possible we have put together examples that emphasize Attributes, Skill, Gifts, and Rites that work well together as well as adhere to the archetypal auspice roles. The list is by no means exhaustive—there are ragabash of all tribes, for instance —but they provide a solid foundation from which to learn the basics of the game and the setting.

Use the suggestions below in conjunction with the Character Creation rules in Chapter 4 (p. 83), focus on the suggested Traits, and add remaining dots to taste. (You'll find Athletics, Brawl, Firearms, Stealth, Insight, and Awareness to be almost universally useful when engaging in matters of environmental and spiritual horror.)

Ragabash

Suggested Tribes: Children of Gaia, Glass Walkers, Silent Striders

Suggested Attributes: Dexterity, Manipulation, Wits

Suggested Skills: Larceny, Stealth, Subterfuge, Investigation

Suggested Advantages: Contacts, Mask, Safe House

Native Gift: Eyes of the Owl (p. 146)

Auspice Gift: Spider's Song (p. 150)

Tribe Gifts:
Children of Gaia — Brother's Scent (p. 167)

Glass Walkers — Skinbind (p. 171)

Silent Striders — Whispered Passage (p. 178)

Rite: Rite of the Forgetful Record (p. 182) or Rite of Shadow Passage (p. 182, uses Occult Skill)

Theurge

Suggested Tribes: Children of Gaia, Ghost Council, Silent Striders

Suggested Attributes: Composure, Intelligence, Resolve

Suggested Skills: Etiquette, Awareness, Occult, Medicine

Suggested Advantages: Moon-Quickened, Caern Access, Spirit Pact

Native Gift: Penumbral Senses (p. 147)

Auspice Gift: Sight from Beyond (p. 153)

Tribe Gifts:
Children of Gaia — Sense the True Form (p. 156, uses Wits Attribute)

Ghost Council — Augur (p. 170)

Silent Striders — Speech of the World (p. 177)

Rite: Rite of Shadow Passage (p. 182) or Rite of Patronage (p. 184)

Philodox

Suggested Tribes: Bone Gnawers, Galestalkers, Silver Fangs

Suggested Attributes: Strength, Charisma, Resolve

Suggested Skills: Melee, Insight, Leadership, Persuasion,

Suggested Advantages: Allies, Mentor, Resources

Native Gift: Staredown (p. 147)

Auspice Gift: Ancestral Conviction (p. 155)

Tribe Gifts:
Bone Gnawers — Odious Aroma (p. 166)

Gale Stalkers — Camouflage (p. 168)

Silver Fangs — Pack Instinct (p. 178)

Rite: Rite of the Wolf Reborn (p. 186) or Rite or Rite of Patronage (p. 184, uses Etiquette Skill)

Galliard
(Artist Variant)

Suggested Tribes: Galestalkers, Red Talons, Silver Fangs

Suggested Attributes: Stamina, Charisma, Wits

Suggested Skills: Athletics, Performance, Persuasion, Subterfuge

Suggested Advantages: Day Job, Beautiful, Fame

Native Gift: Catfeet (p. 146)

Auspice Gift: Song of Serenity (p. 159)

Tribe Gifts:
Gale Stalkers — Lacerating Wind (p. 169)

Red Talons — Hidden Killer (p. 174)

Silver Fangs — The Silver Compact (p. 179)

Rite: Rite of Spirit Summoning (p. 183) or Rite of Celebration (p. 185)

Galliard
(Thrill-Seeker Variant)

Suggested Tribes: Black Furies, Hart Wardens, Shadow Lords

Suggested Attributes: Strength, Dexterity, Charisma

Suggested Skills: Athletics, Brawl, Stealth, Leadership

Suggested Advantages: Allies, Resources, Talisman

Native Gift: Hare's Leap (p. 147)

Auspice Gift: Song of Rage (p. 159)

Tribe Gifts:
Black Furies — Curse of Aeolus (p. 164, uses Resolve Attribute)

Hart Wardens — Sacred Boundary (p. 172)

Shadow Lords — Icy Chill of Despair (p. 175)

Rite: Rite of Rage (p. 181, uses Intimidation Skill) or Rite of the Wolf Reborn (p. 186)

Ahroun

Suggested Tribes: Black Furies, Hart Wardens, Shadow Lords

Suggested Attributes: Strength, Stamina, Resolve

Suggested Skills: Athletics, Brawl, Melee, Intimidation

Suggested Advantages: Moon-Riled, Safe House, Talisman

Native Gift: Raging Strike (p. 147)

Auspice Gift: Razor Claws (p. 162)

Tribe Gifts:
Black Furies — Porcupine's Reprisal (p. 156)

Hart Wardens — Blessed Brew (p. 173)

Shadow Lords — Fatal Flaw (p. 175, uses Intelligence Attribute)

Rite: Rite of Rage (p. 181) or Rite of Dedication (p. 183)