

A SOURCEBOOK FOR WEREWOLF: THE APOCALYPSE

The Moonlit Path



WEREWOLF
THE APOCALYPSE





WEREWOLF

THE APOCALYPSE

SECRETS OF THE UMBRA REVEALED

Werewolves are creatures of flesh and spirit, able to cross the barrier between our familiar, physical reality and the Umbra, a spirit world of mystery and terror. To step into the Umbra is to walk the moonlit path into an everchanging realm of strange spirits and malevolent Banes. This book gives you all you need to know about the Garou's spirit heritage, how to use it in your games, and how to bring the spirit side of your character out to the fore.

Step onto the path and follow the moonlight...

The Moonlit Path enables you to:

- Learn how the Garou interact with spirits
- Master **16 new Gifts**, one for every auspice and tribe
- Use **5 Rites, 8 talismans, and 3 Loresheets** to save the world
- Interact with **3 sample septs** and the Spirit Courts nearby
- Defeat **21 new threats**
- Explore **8 new, detailed locations** as you journey into the Umbra
- Rage against a **detention camp** in a complete story: *The Spider and the Fly*

Wyrmtide is a sourcebook for **Werewolf: The Apocalypse**, a Storytelling Game of Spiritual and Environmental Horror.



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Werewolf: The Apocalypse





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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	7	CHAPTER FOUR: DISEMBODIED MINDS	83
THE MOONLIT PATH	7	SPIRITS ARE LIKE US	85
TEN THOUSAND EYES	8	SPIRITS AREN'T LIKE US	86
INTANGIBLE WORLDS	8	SPIRIT PERSONALITY	87
NEVER LOSE THE PATH	9	A MULTITUDE OF VISAGES	88
 		SPIRITS WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE TRIAT	89
CHAPTER ONE: LIVING WITH SPIRITS	11	BANES AND FOMORI	92
ALLIES AND ENEMIES	11	 	
THE SPIRIT AND THE WOLF	13	CHAPTER FIVE: INTO THE BEYOND	105
THE MATERIAL REALM AND THE UMBRA	13	UNDERSTANDING UMBRAL DESTINATION AND PATHWAYS	107
INTERACTING WITH SPIRITS	18	TIME, DISTANCE, AND CHANGE	109
LEARNING AND TEACHING GIFTS	20	DESTINATION TERRAIN	110
WHAT CAN YOU GIVE A SPIRIT?	24	UMBRAL DESTINATIONS	112
PATRON SPIRITS	25	UMBRAL JOURNEYS	121
ANCESTOR-SPIRITS	34	 	
 		CHAPTER SIX: A CHORUS OF VOICES	125
CHAPTER TWO: AN EXCHANGE OF GIFTS	51	THE MOON CULTS	125
PATRONS	51	THE STARGAZERS	129
TALISMANS	56	THE CULT OF FENRIS	130
GIFTS	60	THE BLACK SPIRAL DANCERS	131
RITES	66	VOICES IN THE UMBRA	132
ADVANTAGES AND FLAWS	68	 	
 		CHAPTER SEVEN: THE SPIDER AND THE FLY	145
CHAPTER THREE: ANATOMY OF A CAERN	71	THE FOE	145
CAERNS IN PLAY	73	STORY STRUCTURE	147
THE LIFE CYCLE OF A CAERN	73	THE PLOT	147
CAERN LOCATIONS	74	PART ONE: BREAKING INTO PRISON	150
ROLES AT A CAERN	75	PART TWO: COME INTO MY PARLOR	152
SPIRIT COURTS	77	PART THREE: ESCAPE FROM LA TÁBANO	156
APPENDIX: LORESHEETS	162		



Its roots are embedded in the mud, and its stalks are submerged in the murky waters, but its flower is large and white and pretty like an artist searching deep in their rotten subconscious to bring out an object of meaning and beauty.

Some say its flower reminds them of the Sun, but it has never seen the Sun, only heard stories. Here in the Umbra, endless variations of the Sun may exist, but in the Bayou, its light is always filtered through the green of the woods, or reflected from the water, or hidden by the smelly clouds.

It is called Beaver Root, but it is not a beaver. In fact, beavers and muskrats eat its root stalks and chew on its leaves. It is a water lily-spirit, in service to a greater spirit, and through her, to other spirits of rivers, seas, animals, and plants. The greatest of these spirits have never been seen in the Bayou, but their presence is often felt: a long time ago as pleasant winds and the growth of all things, but now as mournful cries and painful flashes, spells of cold and strikes of lightning. The powers that once protected the Bayou are fading and without great change, might soon be extinguished entirely.

Now, another powerful spirit has moved in. Monsieur Plastique does not like the Bayou or its denizens. The jagglings around it look like nothing that belongs in a marshland, bags, and bottles that suffocate the smaller creatures and choke the bigger ones. Monstrous spirits have invaded the Bayou and built their boss a throne of trash. From there, Monsieur Plastique orders his underlings to grab spirits Beaver Root knows—Alligator, Heron, and Turtle—and hang them in plastic nooses. He also hanged Muskrat, but he was never Beaver Root's friend—he kept eating its roots.

Monsieur Plastique especially hates Beaver Root, but he hasn't killed it yet. He enjoys torturing it, strangling it with pieces of plastic, or sticking sharp plastic shards in its leaves.

The shuddering shriek is heard again. Leaves are shaken off trees, frogs dive into the polluted water, even the plastic jagglings cover their ears. But it's not just a sound; even a plant without ears can feel it. It's hot and cold, loud and silent, bright and dark, all at the same time, too much of everything. It's the sound of dying. It rings through all of Umbra and maybe the material world, too, but almost certainly within the Bayou.

That's when Beaver Root makes up its mind! somebody has to do something! It hovers over to where the great spirit rested. Here is a

muskrat nest, burrowed into the bank. Beaver Root dives into the water to enter. There sits the spirit, recumbent against the wall with eyes shut, part human, part cypress, and wholly dedicated to surviving the assault the Bayou has been under.

"You should take matters into your own hands," Beaver Root's speaks to her mentally, in the way of spirits.

"I fear my time has come," the spirit answers, her mouth so full of little plastic toys it's hard to understand, even though she, too, speaks in Beaver Root's mind. But in the inbetween, mind and matter are the same.

"No! You must stand up against Monsieur Plastique and save the Bayou!"

"I am trying, little flower," she answers, struggling to keep despair from her voice. "The material world is dying. That's why Gaia screams. Monsieur Plastique is but a consequence of that. No place in the Umbra is safe from the likes of him. Maybe the material world..."

"Let's go there, then!" Beaver Root is full of enthusiasm, but its boss is already struggling, trying not to show how close to the end she is.

"I don't know how," she says after some time. "I don't think anyone here does."

"What about the ones who sometimes cross over?"

"The Rougarou?" asked the greater spirit, almost asleep now. "Maybe..."

Beaver Root realizes it's not getting any more information, as the spirit's eyes close, her breathing frighteningly slow. It dives out of the nest.

It knows what it must do now. Find a Rougarou. There is one that has sometimes visited the Bayou.

The Rougarou is easy enough to track down for she has two spirits: one human and one wolf, and she smells of the physical world. Beaver Root leaves the heart of the Bayou and wades in the nameless rivers and marshlands around it. Eventually, it finds a wolf-looking human moving through the Umbra like she was born here.

"Excuse me?" Beaver Root asks meekly.

The woman-wolf turns to it quickly, looks it up and down, and says, "You look awfully earnest, little spirit. Have you come a long way?"

"Not long enough! I need to find a way to the material realm so my family and I can escape!"

"Escape?" she looks around at the spirit of the Bayou and then shakes her head sadly. "There isn't anywhere left to escape to. Spirits aren't meant to be in the world of meat and blood forever."

"We can't stay in the Bayou, either!"

"If you must," she sighs deeply, pointing with her long finger, "It's easiest at my caern. I follow Mistwalker, as she is a guide when it strikes her fancy. That way."



Introduction

Many young Garou have had this experience when they first find their way to the Umbra: there's a sense of wrongness in the air. Something feels off, and there might even be a sound, a howl, an aural distortion tearing through the spirit-scape.

Such a young Garou might ask their elders whether it was always like this. The answer is no. The Umbra used to be different, more approachable, more receptive to the Garou, but all that has changed in the time of the Apocalypse. There are some alive who still remember how it used to be, but now the Howl rings in the ears of all who step sideways.

It's not just a sound. It can be a smell, a taste, or even visual images of Gaia's pain. All of these tell a single story: that of a dying world and the final battle the Garou must fight.

This is what it feels like to walk the moonlit path. The loss is palpable. What should feel welcoming to the Garou instead feels threatening and alien, as if the entire shadow world accused them of failure.

Yet the secrets of the Umbra remain. To truly succeed in the fight against the Wyrm, the Garou have to traverse the spirit ways and recover knowledge and wisdom lost in the mists of time. They have to reconnect with ancient spirit allies, and in the final reckoning, they must vanquish the greatest servants the Destroyer has ever had.

THE MOONLIT PATH

This is a book about spirits and the Umbra for *Werewolf: The Apocalypse*. The werewolf is a creature of both spirit and flesh and despite Gaia's Howl, the world of the immaterial

is as much part of their heritage as the forests and lakes of the physical world. This is where the name of the book comes from. "To walk the moonlit path" means stepping sideways and entering the Umbra.

Doing it for the first time can be a magical, mysterious, and foreboding experience. Indeed, the wonder and terror of the Umbra never totally fades, even when a Garou gains experience and travels among the spirits. There is always that sense of leaving the comfortable lights of the familiar physical world behind, entering a dark moonlit realm of shadows, strange shapes, and the cool mist of the night air.

There is a reason the Umbra is often described using words like *shadow*, *hidden*, and *twilight*. Not everything can be seen, and much is suggested by vague shapes and intimations. A place's vibe and feeling can be as important as anything you see with your own eyes. Beyond the physical, there is a realm of the spirit, and entering that realm is the birthright of the Garou.

Content Warning

Werewolf: The Apocalypse is a game of spiritual and environmental horror. This book makes use of mature themes and elements you've come to expect from the World of Darkness in general and **Werewolf** specifically. These include body horror, torture, cults, forced labor, possession and loss of agency, migrant detention camps, law enforcement, and border control agencies, spiders, and wildfires. Don't forget that "Advice for Considerate Play" in **Werewolf** (pp. 320–323) provides guidance for introducing and handling topics like these.

TEN THOUSAND EYES

Who inhabits the spirit world but the spirits themselves? Some are eager to join in the great mission of the Garou; others are completely oblivious to it. Many are interested in entering the physical world for their own reasons, but the spirits who don't care about it at all are equally numerous.

For many Garou, the experience is that once they enter the Umbra, there are always ten thousand eyes watching: invisible, hidden, but nevertheless there. These watchers are the spirits of the air and the earth, of animals and plants, of concepts and ideas. There are as many spirits as there are things in the world, meaning their true number must be close to infinite.

Or so many theurges contend. The idea of counting spirits is a folly, for they change as much as (or more than) the world of matter and flesh does.

To the Garou, spirits are the backbone of their worldview, religion, and holy mission. Gaia's Howl proves tangibly that she exists and that she's in pain. There's no question about it, at least not among the faithful tribes of the shattered Garou Nation.

Other werewolves, those of the moon cults or the Black Spiral Dancers, have their own ideas, of course. Often, the spirits you see and encounter are the ones that make the most sense to you. This is why two Garou who commune with the ancient entities of the Umbra can each come back with powerful confirmation for everything they believe in, even if they're in total disagreement. The Umbra is not a place for singular truths.

INTANGIBLE WORLDS

This book is organized into seven chapters in two broad sections. The first three chapters of the book are focused on material that's useful for players and Storytellers both. They flesh out the world the Garou, including the players' characters, live in.

Chapters Four to Seven are primarily meant for the Storyteller, dealing with how to use spirits in a chronicle in interesting and meaningful ways.

Chapter One: Living With Spirits is all about how Garou society interacts with the spirits in their midst. There are spirits moving about every

Oral Culture

Much, even most, of Garou history is lost. To speak of an oral tradition is a misnomer. Rather, it comprises multiple traditions separated by geography. Writing down the legends of the Garou is frowned upon as threatening the Veil, and many werewolves see study and research as wasting valuable time when they should be bringing the fight to the Wyrm where many of them fall, taking their knowledge with them. Compounding the problem is that the Garou are not a culture one is born into. Rare is the one who hears the stories of Gaia's chosen from their childhood. Those joining their ranks are usually young adults, already preoccupied with the concerns of life in this modern world. The Cult of Fenris, of course, understands this weak spot and knows how to strike at it, spreading false tales and recasting the myths of the Garou in their own sick image.

Some questions may be answered by spirits, but their perspectives on matters of the physical realm are always skewed by their nature; what they consider important is not always what Garou consider important, they might not perceive time in the same way, and they may just lie, sometimes without even understanding what they are doing. Researching, discovering, and proving facts about Garou history could have tremendous consequences for the Shattered Nation.

caern, and they're part of the social fabric of the werewolves. Here you find out what that means.

Chapter Two: An Exchange of Gifts deals with one of the most tangible manifestations of the commerce between the Garou and the spirits. Werewolves are capable of learning supernatural abilities from the spirits, if these entities choose to teach them. Such Gifts are crucial in the war against the Wyrm.

Chapter Three: Anatomy of a Caern reminds us that a sept is not truly a living sept until it has a caern, a place of spiritual power it can protect and revere. Such places are centers of Garou culture and society, protected fiercely from all who would despoil them.

Chapter Four: Disembodied Minds explores how to portray spirits so that they're interesting and unique. The challenge for the Storyteller is to make it possible to interact with spirits in a meaningful way while also keeping them alien and unknowable.

Chapter Five: Into the Beyond reveals how to make the Umbra into a playable environment. While the spirit world is mysterious and confusing, it must also be a place the players' characters can visit. They must be able to make choices, accomplish meaningful things, and make disastrous mistakes. The Umbra is a dramatic stage on which the heroic folly of the Garou plays out, as much as or more than our familiar world of matter.

Chapter Six: A Chorus of Voices presents perspectives on the Umbra and world of spirits that stand in opposition to the Garou. It contains information on things like the moon cults, the Cult of Fenris and Black Spiral Dancers, as well as werewolves and spirit entities to drop into your chronicles.

Chapter Seven: The Spider and the Fly puts all of the ideas in this book into practice in the form of a story that you can run as-is or refit into your own game. This book is a collection of ideas, tools, and concepts for you to use as you see fit, and here is an example of what that might look like.



Appendix: Loresheets covers the ideas and concepts of the Umbra from a game mechanical perspective. It features a series of Loresheets that let you connect your characters to the setting elements coruscating out of the Spirit Wilds.

NEVER LOSE THE PATH

The surface of the lake is still, dragonflies buzzing in the reeds. The glow of the rising sun brings color to the horizon visible through the tree line, their fractal shapes now reflecting on the surface of the water. The shadow passes; the sun banishes the mysteries of the night.

Even as you step out of the Umbra and return to the world of the familiar, you know this: there is no light bright enough to illuminate all the mysteries of the beyond. There is always more to explore, more mysteries to learn, more terrors to flee from.

You'll return to the shadow. It's all right. They say you won't get lost as long as you keep to the path. ■



CHAPTER ONE:

Living with Spirits



Among the biggest revelations to a newly changed Garou is the existence of spirits and the Umbra. This is a massive change in worldview for most people. What's more, for the Garou, interacting with spirits, whether it is by trading knowledge or fighting them, is an everyday affair. Garou are also, by definition, pledged to a powerful spirit who makes their own demands on the werewolf's behavior.

This chapter is a look at spirits and the Umbra and how Garou and other dwellers of the material world relate to and interact with them. It also covers the Patron Spirits of the Garou tribes as well as the ancestor-spirits of the Garou.

ALLIES AND ENEMIES

Many of the questions about spirits are quite simple, even mundane. Is it possible for the Garou to have spirits as friends?

Do you sit down with spirits and talk about your troubles? How much are spirits like people, and what kinds of things remind you that they are not human?

Answering such questions makes it possible to see what the social life of the Garou really looks like. Spirits are alien entities, but they're also woven into the social fabric of werewolf life. They can be found at caerns and in the wild. Many are hostile, others merely distrustful. A rare few might even be friendly. They have memories and their own agendas, all of which come into play much the same as when the players' characters deal with humans.

Often, there's a transactional quality to dealing with spirits. They can teach Gifts but want something in return for their help. This is often where the alien nature of the spirit comes to the fore. A spirit's desires appear weird, and its sense of time and place are different from that of the Garou. Such strangeness must be accommodated if the players' characters are to succeed.

It was a metal box as big as a beaver dam but painted red and yellow. Beaver Root observed it from behind a cypress tree, trying to figure out what it was. On its side there were squares and some of them were coated with a sheen that reflected the green glow of the Bayou. Inside something was pulsing a light, an energy, a power. That must be the caern.

The streetcar was in the process of sinking into the Bayou, and vines grew around it, even water lilies like Beaver Root. Long ago, bird- and lizard-spirits had made it their home, but they were gone now, driven out by plastic-spirits that climbed all over it, bringing their trash everywhere. Could Beaver Root just... enter it?

It wriggled through the water and onto shore, wanting to get a look from the other side. There it saw a yellow door stuck open, and in front of the door sat the Monster. Not a horrible monster like Monsieur Plastique, but the Monster of the Bayou, the swamp creature, the four-toed thing. It was a powerful spirit and got along well enough with Beaver Root's own boss. Or so Beaver Root had heard.

Did the Monster live in the streetcar?

"Hello," Beaver Root said weakly from afar.

The creature slowly raised its hairy head, which looked like that of an ape with reptilian ancestry. After a moment, it said in a slow, somber voice, "Want to eat something?"

"No thanks, I'm a plant."

"Right." It could see dozens of small bugs weaving plastic around the Monster's legs or carrying disposable cups and other trash over its feet. The Monster seemed to pay them no mind.

"So... is this the caern?" The Monster looked at Beaver Root without denying or confirming. "I need to get to the physical world."

"The Rougarou call this that," the Monster explained. "I'm sort of guarding it."

"So, will you let me in?"

"I'm not supposed to," said the Monster, but it was clear its heart wasn't in it.

"Well, I really need to go. The wolf-human, the one who follows Mistwalker, showed me this way."

"Why didn't you say so?" asked the Monster gamely, a wry look in its eye. "I mean, I'm happy to let you in."

But it was still blocking the doorway.

"Thanks?" said Beaver Root.

"Bring me back some hot sauce," it said.

"Um. Sure. Only, I'm not sure I'll return."

"You're one of the Bayou's spirits. You belong there. You'll be back."

"If I come back, I'll bring you that sauce."

The Monster nodded and stood up. As it moved aside, the plastic bugs fell on the ground with small cracking sounds.

Beaver Root thanked the creature and floated inside the streetcar. There was plant and animal debris everywhere, but less plastic here. It could feel the pulsating light beckon to it. This was the Gauntlet that led away from this world into the unknown. Into the physical world.

It jumped in.

Lexicon

Caern: A Garou “holy place”. The Gauntlet is thin here, and the Umbra is near.

Fenrir: Members of the Cult of Fenris.

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

Hive: A pack or larger group of Black Spiral Dancers. Roughly equivalent of the Garou *sept*.

Howlstorm: A powerful manifestation of Gaia’s Howl that can hurt Umbral travelers.

Pit: A caern under the sway of Black Spiral Dancers and the Wyrm.

Sept: A number of packs protecting a caern. May consist of many packs, or just one.

Spirit Wilds: see *Umbra*.

To Walk the Moonlit Path: A Garou phrase for traveling in the Umbra.

Umbra: The spirit world; the shadow or reflection of the physical world, seemingly caused by emotional resonance. Also called the Spirit Wilds, among other names.

THE SPIRIT AND THE WOLF

The boundary between the spirit and the werewolf is not as clearcut as it might first appear. Sometimes, the honored dead among the Garou appear as ancestor-spirits, making it possible to interact with them beyond the grave. What’s more, there are Legendary Garou, some living, most dead, venerated in much the same way that important spirits are.

THE MATERIAL REALM AND THE UMBRA

Garou, spirits, and humans don’t truly know what our real world is. Is it a mortal realm where spirits take flesh? Is it a ball of rock and iron orbiting a gas explosion? Is it home? Is it a fragile ecosystem in acute crisis? Is it a complex network of cities connected by roads and cables? Yes. And no.

Nor do they know what the Umbra is. Each may have their own beliefs, religions, philosophies, sciences, and theories, but they cannot know the absolute truth of the matter. However, as players and

Storytellers, it might be useful to remember that the Umbra is a reflection of the real world.

WHAT IS THE MATERIAL REALM TO A SPIRIT?

Some spirits, like some humans, are too small, stupid, or disinterested to try to make sense of their existence. But others seek to understand who they are, what their home, the Umbra, is, and what their purpose is. Many also wonder about the material world and what lies within.

While the Umbra is a reflection of the material world’s spiritual landscape, for spirits, the Umbra is their actual world, mutable and chaotic as it is, and the real world is a strange flesh realm, which they may sometimes explore. To them, werewolves, fomori, and the like, are spirits possessed by a body. Such spirits may decide to embark on corporeal quests (see p. 14) to explore the real world.

Some spirits consider the physical world a playground of sorts where they can let their imagination really run wild, toy with humans, or gather whatever resources they lack. For them, humans living their everyday lives are as toys or playthings. Such spirits may engage in cruel play, indeed, with their victims.





Some spirits have an innate special interest in the welfare of the physical world. For them, the Apocalypse destroying the world is a monumental event, and they acutely sense the reverberations it causes in the Umbra. One of these is Gaia's Howl. Other spirits enjoy the destruction and even revel in it, yet others are pained by the Apocalypse and feel a need to save the world and stop the ecocrisis. Garou typically categorize these creatures as Wyrm-spirits and Wyld-spirits, but the spirits themselves might never have heard of these categories.

Ancestor-spirits are echoes, memories, or souls of dead Garou. For most of them, the material realm is the real world and the Umbra is the afterlife. Some ancestor-spirits might look forward to reincarnating in the physical world someday, while others are content to watch over the new cubs of their pack. They have a very strong connection to the physical world and are often disinclined to interact with other spirits in the Umbra.

SPIRITS IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD

Why would the spirits wish to interact with the real world and the fleshy creatures in it? Many don't. Most can't. While most spirits are perfectly content dwelling in the Umbra, only barely aware of even the existence of the physical world, here are some possible motivations for the spirits to cross the divide:

- ✿ Several groups of spirits compete to spread their influence over the Garou and the physical world. The groups all have a sigil and want it spread everywhere in posters, graffiti, tattoos, brands... To this end, they trade minor favors with Garou or Magicians, or just possess susceptible humans to work their will.
- ✿ A spirit has grown disillusioned with the Umbra and wants to live as a human. They possess a regular human and have no idea what to do: how to eat, or drink, or bathe, or hold down a job. It is up to a pack of Garou to guide the spirit in living like a human and not destroy its host's life.

✿ A Strand Spider is on a corporeal quest (the opposite of a spiritual quest) in the strange physical world, hoping to discover why the machines in a factory that they watch over from the Umbra have been repurposed. They possess creatures and objects and move from one to the other when it suits their purpose, discarding possessed vessels when it no longer needs them. A pack of Garou can either help it achieve its goal to minimize the collateral damage or take a stand against it.

✿ The feud between Gorgon, or another Patron Spirit that the players' characters have a relationship with, and Unicorn spills into the physical realm. Gorgon has sent a jaggling to harm Unicorn's followers or recruited some Garou to do the dirty work. As a result, a conflict in the Umbra is fought in the physical world. It cannot be settled until the Garou in question enter the Umbra to meet with both spirits and arbitrate their disagreement.

GAIA'S HOWL

It is the nature of humans to change their environment. They build shelters against the weather, farm land for sustenance, mine the mountains for ore to create their tools, raise fences to separate themselves from the wilderness, and domesticate animals for food, labor, and companionship. All these things they could do without upsetting the balance of the Triat. But something has changed. Perhaps it was the Industrial Revolution that tipped the scales when coal-fueled mills belched the skies black with soot and an urban underclass formed to eke out a meager living working factories that ate up natural resources and spat out goods that people were told to *consume*. Gaia was wounded.



Is the Weaver real?

To a Garou, most humans living their regular lives could be seen as agents or servants of the Weaver. But are they? Or is this just a werewolf way of describing humans as humans?

Like that famous monologue from *Trainspotting*: "Choose life. Choose a job. Choose a career. Choose a family. Choose a fucking big television. Choose good health, low cholesterol and dental insurance. Choose DIY and wondering who the fuck you are on a Sunday morning..." Are regular humans to a Garou what middle-class people are to Ewan McGregor's heroin addict?

It is indisputable there are spider-spirits in the Umbra, weaving their webs, trying to bring order. But they are rarely seen in the physical world. What, then, are Weaver-spirits among humans? Machine-spirits? Spirits of capitalism? Ghosts of past, present, and future? Or the specter of communism Marx speaks about at the start of his *Manifesto*? Is there a spirit of working 9to5 and then working another job in the evenings to pay your rent?

No, I'm pretty sure Weaver-spirits don't even exist outside of the Umbra.

—Dr. Waabizii Benjamin, Silver Fang philodox

Howlstorms

During a howlstorm, every Garou in the scene must succeed on a Composure + Resolve test at Difficulty 2 or take a point of Aggravated damage to Willpower. This test is made before the Garou decide whether to expend Willpower to prevent Aggravated Health damage for being in the Umbra for more than one scene (see *Werewolf*, p. 230).

The same rules apply to spirits affiliated with Gaia. Other spirits and Banes may be less so afflicted or entirely immune. Difficulty 2 is only the base level—the howlstorm can be more powerful than that.

In the two centuries since, humanity has twisted the knife. Industrial warfare on a global scale, deforestation of the Amazon, overfishing, the unquenchable thirst for fossil fuels, monoculture farming, nuclear weapons testing, strip mining, and a thousand other acts of violence towards the natural world have brought Gaia low. After the turn of the millennium, Garou traversing the Umbra began to notice what came to be known as Gaia's Howl. Sometimes it is stronger, sometimes weaker. Often, it is really a howl, a keening, ear-piercing sound that, at its most powerful, drowns out speech and thought itself. Sometimes, it is a feeling of pressure in the ears, or pinpricks on the skin, or flashing visions of Gaia's agony, or a taste of metal in the mouth. Gaia's Howl can take almost any sensory form, but two things are constant: in the Umbra, it is always there, and it is never comfortable.

Gaia's Howl is felt by both Garou and many spirits, those connected to Gaia feeling it the strongest—mostly tribal Patron Spirits and their vassals. Banes appear to not be affected by the Howl, though they do hear it. The rare human Magician who manages to step sideways and lives to tell the tale cannot even perceive it.

Many spirits take Gaia's Howl as yet another reason to distrust and despise the Garou. They

are the vaunted warriors of Gaia, born to fight her battles, yet derelict in their duty. Ineffective at best, actively harmful at their sadly common worst. Over the past two decades when Gaia's Howl has manifested, the Spirit Wilds have become more hostile to Garou. Stepping sideways was easier in the past, the elders remember. Nowadays, it almost always takes an entire pack enacting the Rite, and preferably at a caern. Spirits always had the prey creature's healthy reservations towards werewolves, but now Garou can face open animosity even from their Patron Spirits' vassals.

There are many views toward Gaia's Howl among the Garou. Many younger ones hear it as a call to action, marking the last opportunity to turn the course of the world before Apocalypse is truly upon us. Others feel that more information is needed before deciding what it means. Many who have fallen into harano think that it either means Gaia is dead already or beyond saving. This, of course, is also the Black Spiral Dancers' doctrine, with the added exhortation to hasten the inevitable collapse. As for spirits, most do not know and those who might know have yet to divulge, either for their own inscrutable reasons or just because nobody has asked the right question yet.

Rarely, but with increasing frequency in the past years, the Howl has begun to occasionally blow so powerfully that it strips away the very stuff that spirits are made of. These howlstorms rarely last long, and Garou do not like to dally in the Spirit Wilds anyway.

There are also some rare locations in the Umbra where howlstorms blow more frequently. These places, called Umbral desolations, are avoided by spirits and even Banes for being so very dangerous, and it is unclear what, if anything, they reflect from the physical world—the Gauntlet around them is so thick. Going in to take a look would be dangerous, but who knows what secrets such a place might conceal?



INTERACTING WITH SPIRITS

"I once told a long-haired human male I would show them wisdom if they brought me fresh raspberries from the physical world. But I knew it was winter where he's from, and he had to go through a whole lot of trouble to find those berries. When he finally brought them, I ate them and offered him some, too. When he asked for wisdom, I told him not to go through so much trouble for such a flimsy prize. And he was, you know, enlightened."

-BEATRIX,

A TRICKSTER JAGGLING IN CHIMERA'S SERVICE

Some spirits are rounded personalities, much like some humans. Even if they follow their own Umbral logic and do not have a physical body with all of its aches and titillations, they do have wants and needs, fears and traumas, friends and foes, lovers and enemies. Nearly all of them distrust Garou.

NO BODY'S PERFECT

One major problem for the spirit interested in the material realm is that they don't have a physical body. That's an issue they have to deal with, and who better to help than a pack of Garou?

Once a suitable body has been found, the spirit experiences plenty of strange things like thirst, hunger, tiredness, arousal, menstruation, or nearsightedness. Ideally, they would have a mortal guide to help in these situations, and once again, the Garou are likely candidates for this awkward mission.

Without a body, many interesting things like eating, having sex, sleeping, or biking are very difficult. They're also difficult with the wrong kind of body. There are many stories of a spirit possessing the body of a child or an animal and getting caught

trying to drive a car. Some spirits are willing to skip that part and just possess the car, which opens the door to a whole slew of other potential problems.

Sometimes, of course, it's easier to just order humans around with Powers or inspire them through dreams without going through the whole process of possessing them. Possessing inanimate objects or animals has likewise fewer complications than humans. Most of what animals do is instinctual rather than intellectual. A spirit possessing a bird understands what the wings are for and how to use them. Likewise, the affordances of physical objects are easier for spirits to apprehend than the complicated mess that is the messy psyche and social context of a human being.

TRUSTING A SPIRIT

Dealing with spirits always involves the question of trust. They have their own logic. Most of them lack the Garou's sense of honor and many are perfectly capable of lying. Some gafflings are transient beings that dissolve when the idea they represent dies. Others turn into different spirits as they mature. What meaning would individual promises hold for such creatures?

The more stable jagglings who have a personality, memory, and more frequent dealings with Garou or humans, are more reliable. Distrustful though they may be, they may cooperate to achieve mutual goals, especially in service of a common Patron Spirit's agenda.

Even a Bane has a sense of self-interest that may see its goals align with the actions of Gaia's warriors: foiling a rival Bane's plots, for example. Certain Banes can also be smooth talkers, seductive, and capable manipulators. However, any cooperation between these sworn enemies is going to be short-lived.

Another question is whether a spirit can trust a human? Human Magicians are well known for trying to cheat, bind, and command spirits without asking permission. There is even a long tradition of folktales about their achievements in tricking spirits. (To be fair, the spirits have lots of stories about tricking humans, too.)



Generally speaking, Wyld-spirits prefer to associate with Garou. Similarly, Banes favor fomori or Black Spiral Dancers. Weaver-spirits prefer machines, or the occasional Glass Walker.

LEARNING AND TEACHING GIFTS

Most Gifts can be used only in the supernatural forms of glabro, crinos, and hispo, and that is how they must be learned, as well. Individual spirits may have preferences for which form works best for them.

An individual jaggling can typically teach only one Gift, something that they themselves are quite adept in. Gafflings might be able to teach simple Gifts (generally those requiring a Total Renown of 3 or less). Patron Spirits, of course, know all the Gifts available to their protégés, and have a separate jaggling for most of them. To ask a Patron Spirit to teach a Gift is like calling the Secretary of the Treasury to ask about your tax return. If you managed to get a hold of them, they would know

how to do it, but they also have people for it.

A spirit won't teach their Gifts to just anybody. Typically, each jaggling only teaches the specific tribe who are the protégés of the Patron Spirit. It's not impossible to convince them otherwise, but they demand greater favors in return.

If the Garou fails to impress the spirit, they won't bother teaching them anything. The student must convince the teacher they're worth it by showing their ability and persistence. The spirit then evaluates if the Garou has what it takes. The Garou must be wise or honorable, or at least the spirit should have heard of their glorious deeds. If doubt remains, the spirit might want to test these abilities by a riddle, a moral quandary, or by asking the Garou's packmates to boast of the Garou's deeds. Mechanically, if the Garou doesn't have enough Total Renown, the spirit says they're not ready for this Gift.

If the Garou is ready, the price must be decided. (See p. 24 for things a spirit might want and p. 25 for more about the Patron Spirit and the spirits that serve it.) This might involve haggling, persuasion,



ainometsala

I never bargain with spirits, just like I never bargain with humans or Garou. I explain to them all about the state of the world and about Gaia's Howl, and if they are rational creatures who want to protect the Earth, they understand and want to help me. If they are irrational, I explain some more until they see I'm right. If they don't want to protect the Earth, they're evil, possibly working for Big Wyrm, and then we only want them to step aside or be destroyed.

It's time to Rage. I don't see where bargaining enters into it.

#GaiaFirst #TimeToRage



REPLY



The Umbra in Ten Simple Rules

There can be a lot to remember about the cosmology of **Werewolf: The Apocalypse**. Here is a summary of things to keep in mind.

1. Garou, as creatures half-spirit and half-flesh, may enter the Umbra, though they cannot stay there for long. Because of their strictly physical nature. Humans cannot enter the Umbra at all, and will be destroyed if forced to do so.
2. The Umbra is a reflection of the physical world. Things originate from there and manifest in the Umbra, not the other way around. Once manifest, things in the Umbra may still influence the physical world. This creates a loop: Something exists in the physical world and casts a shadow into the Umbra. The shadow, in turn affects the physical world.
3. The Gauntlet is the metaphysical membrane between the physical world and the Umbra. To enter the Umbra, Garou must cross the Gauntlet with the Rite of Shadow Passage. This is easier in places where the Gauntlet is thinner, such as caerns and other places of power.
4. The Garou do not astrally project into the Umbra but enter it fully and bodily. The Umbra is a hostile environment to physical life, and for each scene beyond the first, the Garou must spend a point of Willpower or suffer a point of Aggravated Health damage.
5. Gaia's Howl is always present in the Umbra. All Garou hear it, but not all spirits do. Sometimes, it is faint, sometimes powerful enough to do actual harm (see p. 15).
6. Often, spirits do not like Garou. To them, Garou are violent, unpredictable, and destructive creatures that do not belong in the Umbra. They may be patrons or allies, they may cooperate, but they are not friends.
7. Spirits may enter the physical world, but they must take possession of a physical body. This may be an object, an animal, or a willing human. The possessing spirit may cause radical changes to the body. A possessing spirit may be banished with the appropriate Rite or Gift.
8. If a spirit possesses a body long enough, they fuse with it. This happens regularly with Banes. Such a fusion of Bane and its body is called a fomor. Once such a fusion has happened, the resulting creature is half-spirit and half-flesh, and banishment is no longer possible. Cases where a Weaver-spirit possesses a human over the long term are much rarer than Banes, and are called drones. Individual instances of Wyld-spirits and other Umbral entities doing the same may also be possible, although they're very rare.
9. A spirit may also be bound to an object, creating a talisman or a talen. Such a binding is not the same as possession. The Gift Banish Spirit does not remove a spirit from a talisman or a talen, though the Rite of Abjuration does.
10. The Umbra and its spirits are fundamentally unknowable. They can break all of these rules. Expect the unexpected.

WHAT IS GAIA'S HOWL?

She's not a wolf, so why is Gaia howling? It is a call to action, and we must all howl with her! She howls at the Garou, who are content in attacking gas stations and beating up fomori when we should all be looking at the bigger picture. Information is what controls the world. Even polluting corporations whose CEOs only look at the profit margin depend on information. To control information is to control the world. And when we control the world, we can save Gaia.

-OBA "TRAILBLAZER" MAKINDE, GLASS WALKER THEURGE

Of course, she's howling. I'm howling, too. She's in pain. But there's nothing we can do. She's in harano like everyone else. The curtain is down. The game is over and we lost. But we had some good times, she and I. I ruled the Garou Nation as a king, protecting Gaia from her mortal enemies! And enemies there were, oh yes, more than you can count! Black Spiral Dancers, fomori, Banes, Wyrm-spirits, Weaver-spirits, Dagrack, Lord Arkady, you name it. But we were victorious! Until we weren't.

-JONAS ALBRECHT, SILVER FANG AHROUN

It's not a howl of pain. Don't you get it? It's a war cry! Owowowwww! Gaia is telling us the time to act is now. The Apocalypse is here. We're the last generation of Garou that can stop it. After us, it'll be too late, and the war cry will be a dirge for the dead. So, let us fight!

-ROSS THE SHE-WOLF JACKSON, SILENT STRIDER PHILODOX

Even in space, one can hear Gaia's lament. We must shred our auspices and enter the Umbra unencumbered. There we must seek her out, no matter how difficult it may be. We must attend to her and find out what is causing her pain. This we owe to her sister, Luna.

-LIV "RETURNING MAIDEN" AIHAN, GALESTALKER

Gaia's Howl is the call of the spirit of Earth to defend it from Big Wyrm and Weaver and whoever seeks to destroy the only planet we have. Simple as that. The Earth's in pain, she's in pain, we're in pain.

-AINO "LIL GAIA" METSÄLÄ,
FOUNDER AND SPOKESPERSON OF GAIA FIRST!, RED TALON RAGABASH

At first, Gaia's Howl is a mystery, a wordless, meaningless cry. But if we look closer, I am certain we can identify syllables, words, and even sentences. In short, I believe it to be a coded message. She's telling us how to save her.

-ALEJANDRO "VAPORFANG" MENDOZA, BONE GNAWER GALLIARD

This is not a complex question. The Umbra is a shadow of the physical world, and similarly, Gaia is an anthropomorphization of the Earth, a symbolic figure of Garou religion. Gaia's cries are reflections of the pain the Earth is in, the sounds our planet would make if it had a mouth. In the Umbra, it does. If we heal our planet, we heal Gaia.

-DR. WAABIZII BENJAMIN, SILVER FANG PHILODOX

Listen, don't just believe what everyone tells you. You have to do your own research. Gaia wants our attention, right? She's howling for something. But why is she howling? If you've ever had a sister or brother, you know the most powerful emotion is sibling jealousy. So, if she's going through strong emotions, it means she must be jealous of her sister. Who's her sister? You know the answer. She's jealous of Luna. If it's true in the Umbra, it's true in the physical world, too. The Earth is jealous of the Moon. QED.

-GAMILA "DUNESTALKER" MOKHTAR, CONSPIRACY THEORIST AND MOON CULTIST GALLIARD

It is now a familiar part of the Umbra. But what is it? Is it a sound or a feeling? Does it exist in the physical world at all? How do we even know the Howl is really caused by Gaia? Is the Umbra itself crying? Is it the Wyrm who cries or the Wyld? We should let our mental cogwheels turn and not assume we already know the answer.

-DJERTRU SMINTHEIS, A GAFFLING IN SERVICE TO RAT

I don't know what it is, but I know it hurts me to hear it. You do what you want, but we've been punching Banes for centuries, and it hasn't prevented this. We need a better way, and I'm sure the spirits have something in mind if just listen.

-LITTLE SISTER, CHILDREN OF GAIA THEURGE

Look, the humidity's rising and the barometer's getting low. Gaia is a single woman, too. She took on a heaven, and she did what she had to do. And tonight, for the first time, at just about half-past ten... Okay, I'm just quoting "Raining Men", I have no idea why she's howling. But I don't need to know. I'm gonna go find a Bane to beat up and then party with some crystal and coke. I'm doing my part!

-DOMINIQUE "DEATH-IN-WORD" OMAR, SILVER FANG RAGABASH

threats, and attempts by both sides to con the other. The negotiations might hit a dead end, lead to a quest for fetching the agreed-upon price, or the spirit might agree to proceed right away. This is when the experience points for learning the Gift are allocated.

Then comes the act of teaching and that of learning. The spirit asks the Garou to perform the physical part of the Gift, like sniffing for scents, howling to Luna, or focusing their Rage at something. This is not the Gift. This is just doing regular things and has no special results. If the position of the claw or the sound of sniffing isn't right, the spirit may require more attempts. Only when it is satisfied does the spirit place itself around the Garou in the Umbra, whispering their promise to always bestow the Gift. Now, the Garou performs the action again, and this time the spirit performs a supernatural action in relation to it. This is the Gift that is now aligned with the Garou's actions and the pact that they have with the spirit. It might not be easy, and the Garou may experience mental stress. The spirit demands its thanks, too. Mechanically, the player pays Willpower or performs Rage checks, depending on the Gift.

WHAT CAN YOU GIVE A SPIRIT?

There are many situations where the spirits might want something from the Garou: in exchange for teaching them a Gift, as restitution for a slight, for giving an artifact, to pay for their help, or other reasons. The more interesting play they create for the group, the better. Here are some examples:

- * "I want you to change at a shopping mall."
- * "I want you to tell your whole pack a secret you have not told anyone."
- * "Bite off your finger and give it to me."
- * "I want you to not take homid or lupus form for a week."
- * "Explain to me this mortal thing called love."

I have very little to do in prison except read books, write letters on toilet paper, and avoid changing when people look at me the wrong way. It's particularly hard when I can see the gibbous moon from the little window in my cell. Or when I hear of the Wyrm's latest depredations.

But sometimes at night when I concentrate, I can see beyond the physical confines of my cell into the Umbra. It feels like hacking your way from a museum info panel to access the Darknet.

In the Umbra, I see freedom. I can speak to my packmates, consult them on what to do, and give them the toilet paper letters so they can put them up on my website and spread them all over social media. You know, like leaking classified documents.

But the best part is getting to meet with the spirits. My Patron is Rat, and I often meet with its spokesperson, Djervu Smintheis. She promised to teach me a new trick if I stabbed the huge neo-Nazi here in prison. Not sure if that's such a good idea.

-Vaporfang
United States Penitentiary,
Beaumont, TX

- * "Capture my enemy, a spirit of air, and bring them to me."
- * "One of your talents binds a spirit I have dealings with. Use it and let them go."
- * "I wish to experience the material world. Help me possess a human."
- * "A beast spirit has slighted me. Hunt it down in the Umbra and bring me its heart."
- * "Not far from here, there is a blight upon the Umbra, where animal-spirits suffer. It reflects a fur farm in the physical world. End it."

Whatever the spirit's superior (an Incarna if it's a Patron Spirit), they have their own Umbrial intrigues related to other Incarnae, the Triat, Gaia's Howl, the Celestines, or some other being of immense power. (See p. 25 for further information on Patron Spirits and their motives.)

Jagglings and gafflings under their command often want to please their masters and have humans help them further those goals. They might be very concrete things where the direction is clear, even if it might be very difficult. Such goals could be:

- * Scout the enemy's lair.
- * Find out some secret the superior does not yet know.
- * Ask another spirit to become the superior's ally.
- * Kill a Garou, a Bane, or a human in the enemy's service.
- * Mediate between the superior and their enemy.
- * The juggling has angered its superior and asks you to mediate.
- * Find a mythical object such as a specific talisman or an artifact that has the power to defeat the enemy, show the truth, or help in some other way.
- * Retrieve an artifact of the enemy.
- * Get a completely uninvolved third Patron Spirit to do something, such

as the Falcon to fly over the North Wind or the Unicorn to recite a prayer.

- * Deliver an apology to someone the superior has slighted and have it accepted.

Sometimes spirits might also want something entirely abstract, more poetry than actual things one can acquire and deliver. In such cases, it is up to the players' characters to creatively come up with ways in which they can achieve these. They could include:

- * A thought of disappointment
- * The tears of all the world's children
- * The height of a tall tree
- * Your childhood memories
- * Your future
- * Happiness
- * A bottle that never empties
- * A rock so heavy even Gaia couldn't lift it
- * An atom
- * The cool shadow of a cherry tree in the summer



PATRON SPIRITS

A tribe's Patron Spirit is the most powerful connection most Garou have to spirits, but even if they are the protégés of these powerful entities, they rarely see them. Instead, Garou generally communicate with the jagglings and gafflings under the Patron Spirit's command.

It is useful to understand the nature of the Patron Spirits, their domains, desires, allies and enemies, superiors and underlings. If a Bone Gnawer galliard wanted to ask for help from her Patron Spirit, Rat, she might first summon a pack of rats (its gafflings) that would take her to the Umbra, into a rat-infested city, and then to a deep sewer. Here they might meet with Djertru Smintheis, one of the jagglings in Rat's service. Djertru is one of the spirits that speak for Rat, and this probably would be as far as the Bone

Gnawer got. For an extremely dire situation, it's not impossible for Rat itself to make an appearance, but most commonly, the individual jaggling would deal with the Garou. These are creatures the Garou might even grow to have complex relationships with.

A Garou from a different tribe could try to approach Djertru Smintheis or even Rat itself, but they would be viewed with some derision or even enmity for example if they were protégés of Chimera, who does not get along with Rat.

A Patron Spirit may also approach the Garou. It is rare, but not unheard of, for them to do this personally, and most often they dispatch a herald to make their will known. The usual reasons for this are to express their displeasure at the breach of their

Dance of the Patrons

Many Garou don't question why Patrons recruit tribes of Garou. The answer probably varies from Patron to Patron, but some among the Garou suspect that Patrons want influence in the human world and Garou are the best—or perhaps only—option. And those Garou are a dwindling resource for the spirits.

Theurges suspect that Patrons have some influence over who becomes Kin in each region, with certain *ascendant* Patrons influencing humans and wolves likely to be attracted to their tribe. Thus, where Gorgon, Thunder, and Rat are ascendant, many Kin are likely to find themselves attracted to the Black Furies, Bone Gnawers, and Shadow Lords across multiple Packs or septs. Each newly changed Garou might still choose another tribe for many reasons, but most Kin are drawn to one of the ascendant Patrons.

What makes a Patron ascendant in any given region is unclear, with some Garou attempting to gather large numbers of their tribe to help their Patron come out on top and build their tribe back to prominence. Others scoff at this notion, suggesting that chance alone can account for the uneven distribution of tribes in any given region.

ban or because they want the Garou to do something for them. Heralds are usually jagglings.

This section briefly introduces all the known and suspected Patron Spirits, their homes in the Umbra, and some gafflings and jagglings the characters might interact with. All Patron Spirits are Incarnae with jagglings and gafflings under them and Celestines to command them.

SHATTERED NATION PATRONS

The following Patrons deal with most Garou who cling to their traditional society or work within it to change things. They seem to be vested in Garou who largely follow the Litany and work to defend Gaia.

FALCON

Silver Fangs



No Incarna is as noble or honorable as Falcon, who relentlessly stalks whatever goal he has set for himself.

Favor and Ban: Legends say Falcon was the first spirit Gaia sought out after she created the Garou. Even before taking his place at the head of his tribe, he was a natural leader and served many years as the head of all kinds of spiritual courts. He graciously accepted her offer and sought to create a force that could lead Gaia's wolves to victory. To make sure his followers walk in his tracks, he instructed them to lead in both example and demeanor and never risk your status among your followers.

Goals: Falcon wants a world where those with bold visions (and enough bravery to see those visions through) rise to leadership in every circumstance. His greatest goals are establishing himself as the chosen and eternal leader of the Garou's patrons, encouraging the emergence of strong leadership among humanity, and finding a way to permanently destroy the Black Labyrinth. He hopes demolishing the Wyrm's stronghold will avenge his dear friend Lion.

Manifestations: A falcon with gold and silver feathers, brilliant streaks of lighting especially during daytime, the split-second possession of a human authority figure.

Superiors: Gaia, Day, Helios, Freyja



Vassals: Falcon-spirits, spirits of authority, spirits of bravery.

* **Gyrfalcon:** A solitary spirit of giant size who considers hunting in packs dishonorable.

* **Hieracosphinx:** A proud champion of Falcon with a vainglorious streak.

Allies: Stag, Mielikki (the spirit of wilderness and predatory birds)

Enemies: Fly, Owl, Bull

GORGON

Black Furies

Revenge may not be the noblest of pursuits, but it is powerful, and one keenly felt by Gorgon. She holds an old enmity with Centaur's juggling Perseus.

Favor and Ban: Legends say Gorgon was forced into serving a Bane of hierarchy, who used its knowledge of power structures to enslave its neighbors. When Gaia helped smash her chains and her oppressor's face, Gorgon asked to lead a legion of Gaia's children out of gratitude, to ensure no one would suffer from unjust masters ever again. Therefore, she asks her followers to *oppose those in power and never let an injustice remain uncorrected.*

Goals: Gorgon seeks a world without abuse of power. Her greatest goals are to thwart haughty spirits, encourage people of the material world to acknowledge each other as equals, and eventually flatten the spiritual hierarchy. She also seeks vengeance upon Centaur.

Manifestations: A wriggling colony of snakes, stone statues of people or animals, a woman's head impaled on the front of a bronze shield.

Superiors: Gaia

Vassals: Pegasus, spirits of justice, snake-spirits, and spirits of righteous anger.

* **The Grey Sisters:** Three women who share one eye and one tooth and complete each other's sentences.

* **Medusa:** A snake-haired woman, angry at Garou and especially male-presenting ones, yet only attacks first under Gorgon's instructions.

Allies: Chimera, Crab, Gemini

Enemies: Unicorn, Centaur, Perseus

GRiffin

Red Talons

For Griffin, the state of the world is very simple: stop the Weaver, destroy the Wyrm, protect the Wyld.

Favor and Ban: Legends say even before the Wyrm's rise, Griffin despised humanity. He heard the silent pleading of animals exploited and abused by humans and saw their spirits struggling against the Weaver's webs. When he heard Spider sought a position in Gaia's army, he demanded she set a legion aside for him as well. Letting the only force capable of ending the Wyrm ascendant and its cruelty fall under a Weaver servant's sway was beyond the pale. He made sure his legion would be a bulwark against both the Wyrm and Weaver by ordering his followers to *fight on even in the face of death and never use or restore the works humanity creates.*

Goals: Griffin wants a world without human dominance. His greatest goals are hunting down Bat, Fly, and possibly Wolf for betraying animals to humanity, encouraging animals to resist human tyranny, and finding a way to destroy the Weaver's forces.

Manifestations: A blood-soaked griffin, the din of either an herbivore herd or a predator pack, the sudden appearance of a wild animal.

Superiors: Gaia, Day

Vassals: Spirits of wild or feral animals, spirits of destruction or urban decay, disease-spirits.

* **Hippogriff:** A horse with the head and wings of an eagle who speaks with a childlike voice and is full of wonder at everything.

* **Sekhmet:** Appearing as a woman with the head of a cat, a bloodthirsty and volatile spirit whom Griffin often sends to bring bad tidings.

Allies: Owl, Centaur, Gemini

Enemies: Spider, humans, all machine-spirits, Weaver

HORNED SERPENT

Ghost Council

In the bottom of the deepest sea and in the black-watered lake lurks Horned Serpent, whose endless curiosity knows no bounds.

Favor and Ban: Legends say that Horned Serpent once spent time among Banes. She did this not because she believed in their cause, but rather to understand the unique powers they wielded. Before she could solve the mystery of the Wyrm ascendant's forces, they discovered her deception and turned on her. The Serpent wriggled from their murderous grasp and slithered into Gaia's den. There, in hopes of securing the spirit of Earth's permanent protection, she made a pact with the mother of Garou to lead a legion capable of solving the world's mysteries, even beyond those involving the Despoiler. To ensure her followers fulfill that purpose, she asks them to *seek the most advantageous angle in all things and never ignore a chance to sate curiosity.*

Goals: The Horned Serpent wants a world filled with mysteries to solve. Her greatest goals are to discover new lands within the Umbra, encourage a strong sense of curiosity among humanity, and discover the origin of spirits like herself.

Superiors: Gaia, Sea

Manifestations: A large iridescent serpent, messages in a word search puzzle, the hitchhiker who knows more than they let on.

Vassals: Squirrel, water-spirits, spirits of secrecy, spirits of occult hotbeds.

* **Canoe:** Appearing as a human of the culture of whoever meets them, rowing a canoe, they may offer to take Garou to places in the Umbra. As a messenger, they row a one-seated kayak.

* **Lindorm:** A huge snake who offers transactions. It appreciates precious metals and secrets.

Allies: Wolf, Bat, Thunder, Old Man Sea

Enemies: Chimera



NORTH WIND

Galestalkers

North Wind is the strong and patient spirit of the hunt.

Favor and Ban: Legends say the very first Banes brought North Wind to his first famine. Wherever he hunted, the Banes followed, spoiling the grounds and leaving rotten flesh. What they didn't realize was the North Wind pursued them, and by the time they realized they were his prey, a furious gale tore them apart. When Gaia sought spirits capable of leading her children against the Wyrm's forces, North Wind accepted the assignment and asked to lead a legion who'd track their enemies to the ends of the world and beyond. He hasn't forgotten the depths of hunger the Banes drove him to and, therefore, asks his followers to *pursue prey without ceasing and never eat a kill that isn't fresh.*

Goals: North Wind seeks a world where anyone can hunt freely. His greatest goals are to drive away poachers of both physical and spiritual natures, catch and consume a powerful avatar of the Wyrm, and encourage relentless dedication among humanity.

Manifestations: A whistle in the bitterly cold wind, a local predator animal feasting upon an eternally fresh kill, a faceless human hunter wielding a klawie.

Superiors: Gaia, Air

Vassals: Spirits of the hunt, spirits of hunger, weather-spirits.

* **Cloudy:** A cloud with the face of a fat man constantly blowing wind, like on a Renaissance map. He acts lazy and procrastinates on purpose, in order to test the patience of others.

* **Wolverine:** A trickster with an earthy sense of humor and bottomless appetite.

Allies: Spider, East Wind, West Wind, Centaur, Bull, Vulture

Enemies: Thunder, South Wind, Wildfire



OWL

Silent Striders

Many human cultures have believed Owl to be a portent of bad luck and even death. Equally many have seen him as a symbol of wisdom. Both would be correct.

Favor and Ban: Legends say Owl was the very first spirit Gaia approached to lead her children, but the very last to accept. He watched the newly emerging crisis from all sides, including the Wyrm itself. Once he was certain there was no other solution but to fight the Wyrm, he swiftly flew to Gaia's side and promised a legion that would become the greatest scouts to ever walk the planet. Owl's original mandates were lost to time after a spirit not of the Umbra cursed his tribe. In response, he developed new ones: *flee when necessary and never leave a death unacknowledged.*

Goals: Owl wants a world where everyone has the information they need and the will to act on it as effectively as possible. His greatest goals are to map the unmappable Umbra, encourage humanity to create new means of travel and new ways of travel to aid his tribe, and break the curse that forces his chosen to travel.

Manifestations: A majestic owl, messages from a malfunctioning flight information display system, the appearance of a helpful road sign.

Superiors: Gaia, Night, Athena, Lilith

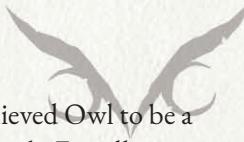
Vassals: Owl-spirits, spirits of transportation, spirits of hotels and other temporary living spaces.

✳ **The Traveler:** A human-like spirit of diaspora with worn shoes, dusty clothes, and a bag containing all of its belongings, speaks every language with a tired voice and a heavy accent.

✳ **The Twice-Born:** Appears as a skeletal mouse, who once was eaten and regurgitated by Owl. Timorous by nature, it will often grant its favor to those who shelter it from harm.

Allies: Griffin, spirits of death

Enemies: Bull (who forced the Silent Striders into diaspora), Falcon, Chimera



RAT

Bone Gnawers

None is as clever as Rat, who finds answers others can't see. Of course, that sometimes involves going into places others won't enter.

Favor and Ban: Legends say Rat was first to realize the forces of the Wyrm were turning toward pure annihilation and destruction. Their wicked acts were first inflicted upon the downtrodden and overlooked, and many powerful spirits refused to listen to a dirty and insignificant spirit like Rat. Gaia listened when no one else would, and when she gave birth to those capable of fighting the Wyrm ascendant, Rat asked to lead a legion who could, like himself, see what others couldn't. Therefore, he asks his followers to *seek lost or overlooked things and never ignore an opportunity to aid the disadvantaged.*

Goals: Rat seeks a world where the underestimated get their due. One of Rat's greatest goals is to uncover secrets involving the fallen tribes, especially the whereabouts of Wolf. His other great goals are encouraging humans to be kinder to the dispossessed and establish a grand hoard made up of things scavenged across the Umbra. He has a specific interest in collecting spirits of extinct animals and lost technologies.

Manifestations: A rat swarm, coded graffiti, a split-second possession of a dispossessed human.

Superiors: Gaia, City

Vassals: Rat-spirits, spirits of lost items, spirits of transgression, sewer-spirits, library-spirits.

✳ **Djertru Smintheis:** An advisor and spy to Rat, variously appearing in the guise of a medieval shepherd girl or a swarm of rodents.

✳ **The Pied Piper of Hamelin:** A man with a flute or other wind instrument, who aids Rat's followers in exchange for payment. He avenges any slights tenfold.

Shifters: Rat also has its own breed of rat-shifters. They run in packs and are the other shapeshifters most commonly encountered by Garou (*Shattered Nation*, p. 130).

Allies: Fox, Unicorn

Enemies: Chimera



SPIDER**Glass Walkers**

There must be order in all things! That is the tenet of Spider, who is a servant of the Weaver, and who exists both spiritually and digitally.

Favor and Ban: Legends say Spider's reason for joining Gaia's cause was simple. Banes loathed the way Spider and their children carefully weaved intricate webs and made sure to tear them to pieces. If that wasn't enough, the children who didn't have their bodies crushed by Banes decided to join them, ruining the perfect order the soon-to-be patron spent countless years building. Spider approached Gaia about leading a legion dedicated to using its associated works against the Wyrm, and the spirit of Earth agreed. They quickly set down rules for children willing to follow them, to *build and repair the structure of ordered things and never harm the great devices of humanity.*

Goals: Spider wants a world where everything is connected and orderly. Their greatest goals are to create a chain of command among the Patrons (it has little interest in leading said structure, only creating one), encourage open communication among humanity, and keep its kindred spirits out of the influence of the Wyrm.

Manifestations: Spider swarms or a single, jet-black human-sized spider; whispers heard on a radio frequency between two stations; an email from an unknown sender.

Superiors: Gaia, Weaver

Vassals: Spider-spirits, technology-spirits, spirits of hierarchy.

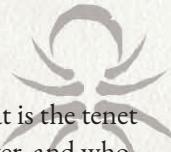
* **Darknet:** An orb-weaver spider which weaves a black web and communicates only via digital devices. Leads supplicants deliberately astray as often as to the right information.

* **The Ghost in the Machine:** A chrome-laden technology-spirit that appears in abstract shapes.

Shifters: Spider is served also by the unsettling and mysterious spider-shifters (**Werewolf**, p. 285).

Allies: North Wind

Enemies: Fly, Griffin

**STAG****Hart Wardens**

Perhaps the strongest link between Gaia and the Garou is Stag, who guided the first Garou in the ways of nature.

Favor and Ban: Legends say the forces of the Wyrm ascendant discovered Gaia's plans to fight them as soon as the first Garou was born. Slavering Banes chased Gaia's newly made family across the Umbra, hoping to kill them all before they could become a threat. She reached Stag's territory and begged for shelter. The soon-to-be patron accepted her and her cubs without hesitation, teaching them about the ways of nature. When they were strong enough to fight the Wyrm, Stag chose to lead a legion capable of defending pristine places. To hone the legion's ability, he asked his followers to *guide the wild like a parent and never let those taking part in your hospitality come to harm.*

Goals: Stag wants a world where inviting natural landscapes dominate the environment. His greatest goals are to expand the presence of sacred places, encourage hospitality among humanity, and reclaim Bane territories that were once his lands.

Manifestations: A stag with immaculate fur, an inviting hearth, the arrival of a friendly stranger with just the right words.

Superiors: Gaia, Forest

Vassals: Cernunnos, spirits of natural landmarks like trees, rivers, and pastures, spirits of hospitality, spirits of walls or other barriers.

* **The Brook:** Gaia's gift of fresh water to all beings. It allows anyone to partake of its waters and purifies everything that it touches.

* **Tree of the Sun and the Moon:** A talking tree that speaks with a male voice during the day and with a female voice at night, and claims to predict the future.

Allies: Falcon, forest-spirits, River

Enemies: Bat, Bull



THUNDER

Shadow Lords

Humans have always feared thunder and lightning, and for good reason. And Thunder enjoys their fear for it is proof of his might!

Favor and Ban: Legends say the Wyrm's forces brought Thunder into Gaia's circle. While he hoped to keep a wide distance from emerging forces of destruction, their armies surrounded him and demanded he submit to their master. After he made the Banes cower and flee, he encountered Gaia and accepted her offer. He promised her a legion that would ensure the Garou's dominance over the Wyrm and ordered his followers to *threaten or exploit the weaknesses of enemies and never be defeated by a lesser Garou.*

Goals: Thunder wants a dynamic world where the only consistency is that the weak and the strong understand their place. His greatest goals are ensuring his spiritual children have a place in every court as a dominant or highly intimidating force, encouraging further division between the meek and the assertive in humanity, and pushing the war against the Wyrm into a new direction. Any will do, as long as he comes out on top.

Manifestations: A thunderclap from nowhere, a ram whose horns pierce the sky, the shadow-cloaked humanoid at the corner of a person's vision.

Superiors: Gaia, Air, Xolotl, Thor, Zeus

Vassals: Enlil, storm-spirits, spirits of dominance or submission, spirits of fear.

* **Lightning:** A sentient jolt of electricity which is horrible to behold and dangerous to approach, but speaks with a very soft voice if addressed.

* **Stormcrow:** A great crow with blue-black plumage, whose appearance often presages disaster.

Allies: Horned Serpent, Wildfire

Enemies: Wyrm, North Wind, Dragon



UNICORN

Children of Gaia

No one understands the mysteries of the Umbra quite like Unicorn, and no one understands the mystery of Unicorn.

Favor and Ban: Legends say when it was undeniable the forces of the Wyrm were turning towards destruction, Unicorn was the only one brave enough to approach one of its most powerful Banes and question why it sought devastation. The Bane tried to deceive Unicorn, and instead found itself trapped beneath her hooves. Gaia saved her from the retribution of the Bane's allies, and in return, Unicorn promised Gaia to lead a legion of her children that would keep the other legions true to their mother's purpose. Therefore, she asks her followers to *understand people, animals, and spirits, and never engage in deceit for personal gain.*

Goals: Unicorn seeks a world where the most hostile forces understand each other. Her greatest goals are to sort out disagreement among her fellow patrons, encourage a greater sense of empathy in humanity, and the eventual dissipation of the Gauntlet, allowing for true understanding between the physical and spiritual world.

Manifestations: A majestic unicorn bathed in eternal sunlight, kind words that hold a greater meaning, a cab driver who asks just the right questions.

Superiors: Gaia, Dream

Vassals: One-horned ponies, spirits of moral conscience, spirits of compassion, spirits of inquiry.

* **The Karkadann:** A wise old rhino-spirit, who imparts knowledge, but only at a glacial pace and through many tangents.

* **Virgo:** A chaste maiden with an ethereal appearance and stars in her eyes. She is protective of innocence and thus rarely friendly to Garou.

Allies: Rat, Pegasus, River

Enemies: Gorgon



OUTSIDE PATRONS

Some Patrons have little or no dealing with the Garou of the Shattered Nation. These Patrons may not be known to or recognized by most Garou.

BAT**Black Spiral Dancers**

The Black Spiral Dancers' current Patron is Bat. Before the first Dancers fell, they were known as the "White Howlers" who venerated Lion. When the tribe joined the Wyrm, it is said that Lion was ritually sacrificed to Bat. Their former patron's whereabouts are unknown; it's either an immensely powerful Bane, hiding after surviving the sacrifice and escaping the Black Labyrinth, or perhaps dead.

Favor and Ban: Neither Bat nor the Dancers are willing to disclose the details of their bargain to anyone who isn't about to pledge allegiance to the Wyrm's forces. However, some veteran Garou have a good idea as to what Bat's commands could be. Given the Wyrm's destructive nature and the tribe's dedication to hastening the end of all things, their orders are most likely something like *dismantle all that is whole and never leave pure what could be soiled*.

Goals: Convert powerful spirits to the Wyrm and bring Gaia to a swift and permanent death.

Manifestations: Flocks of bats, bleeding fungi that grow from the twisted bodies of fomori, a rotting mockery of a Garou's crinos form.

Superiors: Wyrm, Night

Vassals: Bane spirits and fomori who reside with Dancers in their Hives.

* **Chernobog:** A bloodthirsty spirit of misfortune that delights in games. He places wagers for limbs and the lives of innocents against his secrets and honors those wagers.

* **Kaijura:** A gargantuan mutant born of radioactive waste in the Umbra. It speaks very politely.

Shifters: Supposedly, Bat had its own bat-shifters, but there have been no reliable reports of werebats in centuries.

Allies: Fly, Horned Serpent, Luna

Enemies: Day, Sol

CHIMERA**Stargazers**

Chimera is a many-headed fire-breathing hybrid of many animals. Traditionally, the beasts are lion, snake, and goat, but everyone tells her story differently. Chimera's protégés, the Stargazers, have abandoned her, but her vassals do not seem to hold them ill will. Or do they? She must know their new Patron Spirit but does not say. Garou who remain close to the tribe report the possibility their patron is a long-dormant spirit reawakened by Gaia's suffering and that it was the tribe's former patron, Chimera, who introduced the new patron to the tribe. This has yet to be confirmed and may be a convenient legend the Stargazers spread to cover up the truth. Chimera considers herself a strong Garou ally but refuses to speak about the circumstances of the separation from her tribe.

Favor and Ban: Those who remember when the Stargazers were part of the Garou Nation recall that Chimera's requests of their tribe were to *solve the unsolvable and never unleash your Rage without true cause*, commandments that, in hindsight, might have made their departure from the Nation inevitable. Perhaps the reason why the tribe's parting from Chimera seemed so peaceful was because their new patron honors these requests, or perhaps has new requests their former patron approves of.

Goals: Unknown. Previously Stargazers were understood to include defeating the Wyrm through unorthodox methods and encouraging the spread of truth and clarity. Now, some report the Stargazers have abandoned the fight against the Wyrm entirely in favor of restoring balance, though the phrase "restore the Wyrm to its rightful place" has made many enemies among the Garou of the Shattered Nation.

Manifestations: The Stargazers spend much of their nights observing constellations—perhaps this is how their new patron manifests.

Superiors: Gaia, Luna

Vassals: Chameleons, doppelgangers, shapechangers.

* **Meneghwo, the Patchwork Wolf:** A composite werewolf made up of a thousand parts of different Garou. He is a wise champion of Chimera and, unusually for a spirit, friendly to Garou.

* **Beatrix:** Appearing like a mischievous young woman, she is a trickster spirit who loves conning humans for a laugh.

Allies: Gorgon, Bull

Enemies: Wyrm, Horned Serpent, Owl, Rat, Centaur

FENRIS

Cult of Fenris

The Cult of Fenris claims to follow Wolf, or Fenris, the patron of a now disbanded tribe commonly referred to as Wolf's Tribe. The identity of Fenris is uncertain, but most theurges outside the Cult agree that it is an entity separate from Wolf, perhaps its child who has succumbed to hauglusk or fallen under the Wyrm's sway. This leaves the open question of where Wolf itself is. The spirits are not talking, and questing in the Umbra hasn't born any fruit.

Favor and Ban: Many renunciates (*Werewolf*, p. 298) describe Wolf's demands as "*act without fear*" and "*never show mercy to the undeserving*." It's possible the Cult still acts on these demands. If not, their directives from Fenris might be discerned from their actions, which prioritize terrorizing and murdering humans and Garou over effectively fighting the Wyrm.

Goals: Convert or destroy tribal patrons, seek out impure adherents and encourage their slaughter, and empower loyal Cultists. These last two goals can make some Cultists' septs a hotbed of betrayal beneath their seemingly unified façade.

Manifestations: A blood-soaked dire wolf, an uncontrollable wildfire, a being of scorching light in the shape of a werewolf in crinos form.

Superiors: Gaia

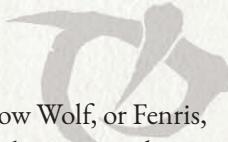
Vassals: Spirits bound to the Cult through loopholes in old agreements with Wolf's Tribe, raven-spirits, individual wolf-spirits.

* **Direwolf:** An ancient echo of the extinct primordial wolves who yearn for old glories. It is still a formidable hunter and does not suffer fools.

* **Gula:** A demented woman who wants to convince you to take everything to the extreme.

Allies: Gaia, Death, Horned Serpent

Enemies: Wyrm, all other Incarnae unless they are direct allies



FLY

Pentex Group

The Board of Directors of the Pentex Group has pledged the work to Fly, an inscrutable entity in service to the Wyrm. Fly wishes Gaia dead, that it might lay its eggs in her body. Its sworn followers execute this mission while satisfying their greed. They are well aware that the Pentex Group's actions are accelerating climate change and destroying the ecosystem they rely on to survive, but most figure that their privilege keeps them in comfort for their remaining years, shielded from the consequences of their actions as the world burns. A few just want to bask in its warm glow.

Favor and Ban: The specifics of the contract between the Pentex Group's directors and Fly are unknown, and the contract itself is locked in a secure vault. From the greedy, duplicitous, ultimately self-destructive nature of the megacorporation's operations, they are probably along the lines of *take everything that you can and never let consequences catch up to you*.

Goals: Gain and consume more and more, until nothing is left.

Manifestations: Swarms of flies, infestations of maggots, animated roadkill, an overpowering stench of rot.

Superiors: Wyrm

Vassals: Bane spirits and fomori working for the Pentex Group and its many fronts.

* **Eule:** A human shape composed of squirming maggots and wearing a tattered robe, who speaks with a thousand mouths. It gives Fly's servants orders that lead to their doom.

* **Plutus:** A miserly old man, a hoarder of wealth, who teaches many Gifts and gives advice but always exacts a terrible price.

Allies: Bat

Enemies: Falcon, Gaia, Spider



OTHER PATRONS

While the Shattered Nation maintains knowledge of their own patrons and their interactions, several other spirits have joined—or left—the ranks of the patrons at one time or another. Spirits are often unable to grasp the questions of the Garou, and sometimes Garou receive contradictory answers from spirits when asked about the Celestines and Incarna.

Differing names for the same spirit (or the spirit's vassals) leaves room for doubt and confusion. Horned Serpent and Rainbow Serpent represent a key instance of this confusion. Whether or not the Horned Serpent simply goes by different names in different cultures is unclear, or if Horned Serpent and Rainbow Serpent are distinct entities. The question of whether or not Horned Serpent represents an individual spirit or deity worshiped by human cultures is another uncertainty.

Below are some of the Incarna rumored to maintain patron levels of power and interest in the material world. Some also function similarly to Pack Patrons (see Pack Patrons in Chapter Two, p. 51). Among the servants of the Wyrm, numerous Maeljin Incarna may function like Patrons as well (see *Wyrmtide*, Chapter Three).

*** Bear:** Heralds of Bear have approached individual Children of Gaia as they have similar interests. Bear is a spirit of healing and rebirth, but also of death.

*** Cat:** Another example of the uncertainty the Garou have surrounding Spirits, many spirits do not distinguish between Cat, Lion, Tiger, Lynx, Puma, Panther, Jaguar, and others. Most regions have a local “King of Cats” or similar spirit who may or may not speak for all these entities.

*** Crow:** Crow has recently sent emissaries among the Moon Cults, Forsworn, unchanged Kin, and other disenfranchised Garou. These emissaries bring strange omens, quests, rumors, and occasionally gifts (or Gifts). Questions about the intent of such presents are often met with quizzical looks and a stock refrain of “This is something you need.” Crow, or perhaps Raven, also supposedly looks after its own group of shifters.

*** Lion:** Legend holds that the tribe once pledged to Lion fell to Bat and are now known as the Black Spiral Dancers. Lion's vassals sometimes lament the loss of this tribe, and other vassals strangely speak of a group of Garou who still serve Lion. Most Garou assume that Lion is a vassal of Cat, but some have questioned the relationship between the two in recent decades.

*** Turtle:** Turtle is sometimes listed as one of the great Patron Spirits of the Shattered Nation, but the tribe of Turtle was wiped out centuries ago—or at least no one seems to think Turtle's tribe left the Concord willingly. Some wonder what such a slow and ponderous spirit might want from the Garou, and others whisper that emissaries of Turtle are once again recruiting for a new tribe.

*** Whippoorwill:** Unknown to many in the Shattered Nation, Whippoorwill has become a patron to numerous Garou packs, particularly among the Black Spiral Dancers.

ANCESTOR-SPIRITS

Ancestor-spirits arise after the death of renowned Garou, an afterimage of who they used to be and how they are remembered. What the Garou refer to as “ancestor-spirits” encompass many different kinds of spirits.

Most ancestor-spirits do not remember everything the dead Garou knew, nor are they an exact replica of their personality. They are mostly a reflection of the dead Garou’s reputation—an archetype or a caricature of that Garou. If a Garou was known for their violent temper—but this was just a carefully constructed image, and the real werewolf was cold and calculating—the ancestor-spirit would be violent and tempestuous.

If the Garou died with an untold secret on its lips, their ancestor-spirit may or may not know it. If the ancestor-spirit is merely an amalgam of memories about the living Garou, it would be useless to approach it for secrets. But, like an algorithmic



text generator, it might give a convincing-sounding answer that is pure nonsense. (Mechanically, such spirits would compare to gafflings.)

The second kind of ancestor-spirit is much more like a ghost, the spiritual part of a dead Garou, freed from its corporeal half. These reflections of dead werewolves retain much of the personality and memories (Power-wise they are on par with jagglings.)

This kind of ancestor-spirit, “ghost Garou,” may exist for incredibly long times in the Umbra, harking back to lost tribes, forgotten languages, and even earlier species of human or wolf. Those who delve deep enough in the Umbra may encounter a Neanderthal woman who changes into a Pleistocene wolf, claiming to be the first Garou. Who knows, she may be right. Such ancestor-spirits are sometimes sought out in ritual quests and spiritual journeys because they possess wisdom otherwise out of mortal reach.

A third kind of ancestor-spirit is an echo of a Garou of great enough Renown to cast a shadow image of themselves in the Umbra even before their death. Certainly, the epic hero Jonas Albrecht, King of the Garou, lives on as a spirit, victoriously fighting the Wyrm and his other enemies in an eternal battle,

even as his mortal counterpart is a sad remnant of a werewolf, still barely clinging to life and the memories of his once-great deeds.

VENERATING THE HONORED DEAD

Some packs venerate their ancestor-spirits and might even consider them their Patron Spirits. Such packs might keep meticulous accounts of the deeds and words of their predecessors, thus strengthening the spirit but also shaping it according to their needs and ideas.

A theurge might lead the pack in speaking to the ancestor-spirits, accessing them in the Umbra, or respectfully summoning them to attend their moots.

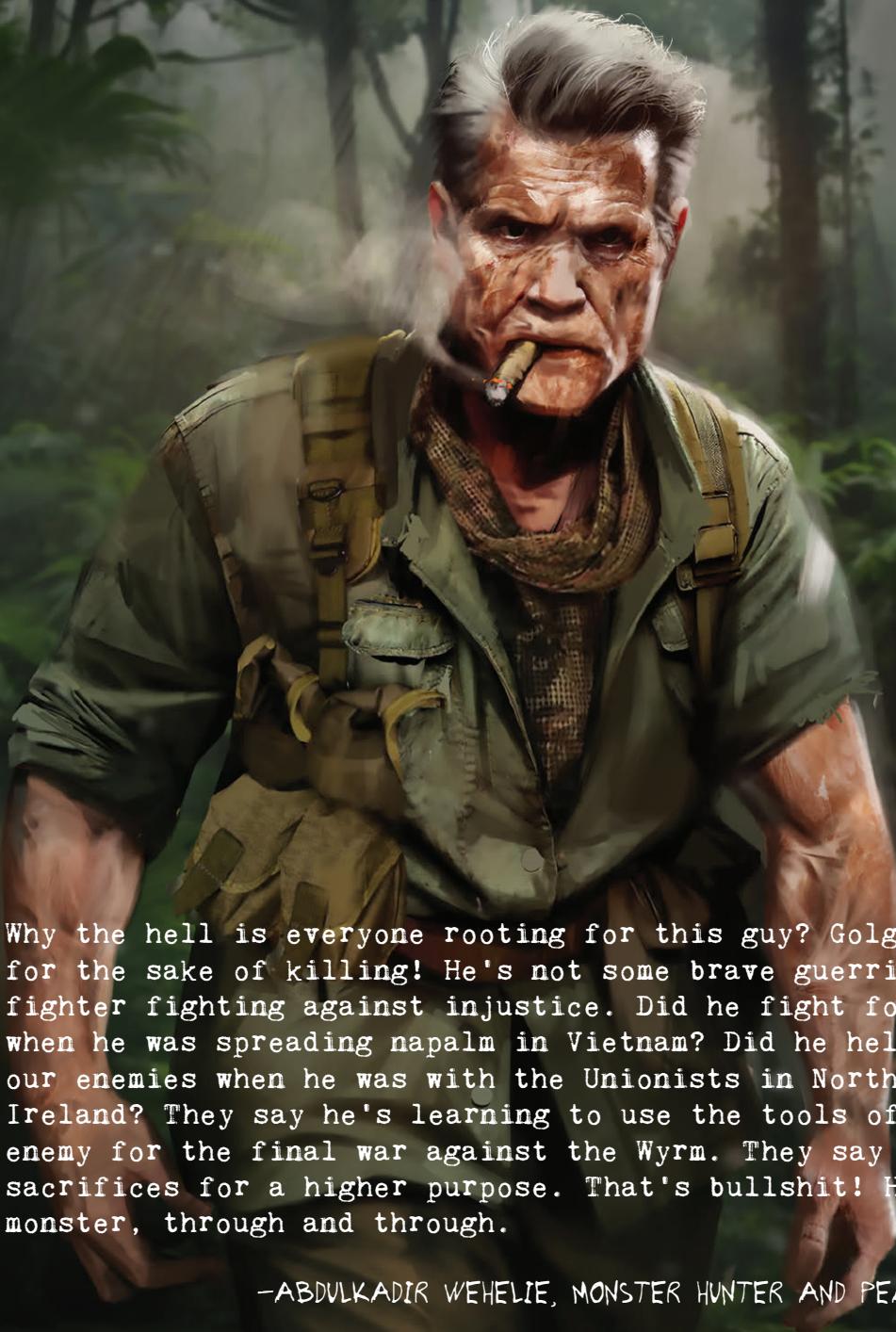
Some packs that are also family in real life (such as a pack of human cousins or a pack who were all the same wolf pack before they changed) might understand the Garou condition to be hereditary in some way. This is most common if they are of the same tribe. Such packs often consider ancestor-spirits to be not just their predecessors but their parents or grandparents and might refer to them as Ancestor Spirits. In their understanding, all Garou are related, and they might consider their tribe’s Patron Spirit to be their physical, genealogical ancestor. ■

Let me tell you what we Garou are. We're humans possessed by a Lune, a Moon Spirit, right? Or a wolf, but you get it. The moon keeps changing. It's the spirit of change. So that's why Garou change from lupus to glabro to homid to whatever. Now, when a Garou dies, it's only their body that dies. The Lune that changed them in the first place, that doesn't die. It goes into the Umbra. And that's what we see when we see an ancestor-spirit. It's the Lune that changed the human into a wolf in the first place! So when we worship the dead, it's really the Lunes that we worship, and when we look at the Moon, we look at the origin of all Garou.

—GAMILA “DUNESTALKER” MOKHTAR, CONSPIRACY THEORIST AND MOON CULTIST GALLIARD

GOLGOL FANGS-FIRST

Cult of Fenris ahroun



Why the hell is everyone rooting for this guy? Golgol kills for the sake of killing! He's not some brave guerrilla fighter fighting against injustice. Did he fight for Gaia when he was spreading napalm in Vietnam? Did he help defeat our enemies when he was with the Unionists in Northern Ireland? They say he's learning to use the tools of the enemy for the final war against the Wyrm. They say he's made sacrifices for a higher purpose. That's bullshit! He's a monster, through and through.

-ABDULKADIR WEHELIE, MONSTER HUNTER AND PEACE ACTIVIST



Reputation: He was born in war, he lived in war, and he died in war. If there is a Garou who epitomizes every horror of war, from heroism to genocide, that is Golgol Fangs-First. Many hard-line ahroun still consider him their personal idol even if they know his legacy is extremely conflicted. He's a murderer, torturer, monster. But all werewolves are monsters, right?

According to legend, his mother fought in World War II and gave birth to him during a battle. Whether she was a Soviet Night Witch, a German *Wehrmachthelferin*, a Roma resistance fighter, or a Finnish antiaircraft battery volunteer depends on who tells the story. In some versions, the mother dies protecting him from enemies or is even torn apart by Golgol himself as he claws his way out of the womb.

He was adopted by either his mother's pack (if she was Garou) or her military unit, who considered him a mascot and let him play with guns even as a baby. He grew up an expert marksman and a fearless fighter, often taking on boys much bigger than him. As the war ended, he was put in a facility, but he escaped and found some of his old foster parents who were joining the Foreign Legion.

He spent his youth in the First Indochina War, the Korean War, the Suez Crisis, the Algerian War for Independence, the Vietnam War, the Sino-Indian War, the 1982 Lebanon War, the Soviet-Afghan War, the Gulf War, and the Yugoslav Wars, as well as several coups, bombings, and invasions. It's unclear on which side he fought, and some say he would often choose the losing one and then change as the tide turned. "Makes for more of a contest," he's known to have said. The legend says that Golgol learned the art of human war to fight for Gaia, but there are those who wonder if he fought just because that's what he loved.

What is certain is that he led a Garou crusade against Pentex fronts in South America in a campaign known as the Amazon War in the 1990s. Pentex front companies and other corporations were cutting down the lungs of the Earth, Banes were rampant in the rainforest, and many generals, police chiefs, and death squad leaders were fomori. Golgol Fangs-First led a guerrilla army of Garou

against various logging companies and, after years of fighting, managed to force them to retreat. In the process, he alienated local shifters and ended up fighting them too, making the Amazon War into a modern retread of the War of Rage.

Most stories agree that Golgol did not survive the Amazon War. But his questionable legacy lives on in memory, in war stories told at moots and in the Umbra. He is respected by Garou generals and soldiers alike, and whenever war is mentioned, so, too, is Golgol Fangs-First. Those approaching his spirit in the Umbra often ask advice in matters of military strategy and tactics.

Golgol Fangs-First may grant the Gifts Closing the Gap, Halt the Coward's Flight, Light of the Moon (p. 65), and Snarl of Challenge. In return for this boon, he usually demands the supplicant to prove their martial prowess by slaying a powerful enemy, be it another Garou or a servant of the Wyrm.

Description: Golgol is a grizzled war veteran with a chewed-on cigar, and a tactical harness. Scars of battle and ritual tattoos decorate his body. What remains of his hair is completely burnt away by napalm. In his later years, he is not a daredevil but rather a no-nonsense general, always willing to go in at any threat, fangs first. He speaks in a hoarse voice and with a vague hard-to-place accent. In lupus, he is a gray wolf with lots of scars and bald patches and has a very strong musk.

RUMORS

* **He's fallen to the Wyrm.** It's obvious, right? War devastates the earth, and Golgol has spent his whole life making sure the fires of inferno rage far and wide. He personifies the destruction wrought by the enemy more than most Black Spiral Dancers.

* **He'll be back to save the Amazon.** The Amazon War never ended! The forest is always going to need its protectors, and Golgol Fangs-First is going to be there, you'll see! Only this time, he has learned of the mistakes of the past. He's going to make peace with the Amazon shifters and win the war against our common enemy once and for all.

GRANDMOTHER WOLF

Unknown



Walk with us, Grandmother! Join us on our hunt so that we can vanquish our enemies and find our way out of this terrifying spiral we find ourselves in. Please, Grandmother, let me just glimpse your white fur so I can follow you. The Wyrm's mad voices are everywhere and they speak to us, they speak to our mightiest warriors and they fall to despair, they become poisoned. Please guide me in my hour of need!

- MAKMAK, WHITE HOWLER GALLIARD

Reputation: Before there were tribes, or even Garou, there was a male wolf and a human woman who became lovers. Their union was blessed by Luna herself, or possibly the woman was Luna. Nevertheless, a child was born of their coupling, and she became the first Garou, able to live as a wolf among wolves or a human among humans. Gaia chose her as her protector and high priestess, and she lives on in the memory of werewolves everywhere.

Many Garou consider Grandmother Wolf their spiritual ancestor, the progenitor of all Garou, the ancestor-spirit to all ancestor-spirits.

They say she lived in a paradise and acted as its guardian, overseeing humans and animals and plants, dealing with Wyld, Weaver, and Wyrm, making sure they all cooperate, and the cycle of nature continues. And it did, in her time, and countless generations after her. Even during and after the Ice Age, it continued.

In one legend, she had five children all born under a different phase of the moon. They were Ahroun the Strong, Philodox the Just, Theurge the Wise, Galliard the Beautiful, and the youngest, Ragabash the Clever. From these, and their connection to Luna, follow all auspices.

In another story, she had two sons, the Man-Eater and the Law-Speaker. They both vied for her attention. Man-Eater wanted to prey on all humans, causing the Impergium, and Law-Speaker wanted to restore order and hide from view, bringing about the Concord. But they were so busy fighting each other they killed their mother in the process. And from their tears sprang all the oceans of the world.

Grandmother Wolf is often invoked when

the unity and common history of the Garou is important, when the role of the werewolves as protectors of humanity is emphasized, and when the young Garou need reminding of their mythical past and their connection to Luna and Gaia.

Grandmother Wolf grants the Gifts Bestial Regression (p. 61), Gnaw (p. 61), Sharpened Senses, and Staredown. In exchange, she demands her supplicant perform an act to heal the Garou Nation, for example by brokering peace between feuding werewolves, forgiving a foe, or even bringing someone back from the Black Spiral or the Cult of Fenris.

Description: Grandmother Wolf is often described as a wolf of uncommon grace and wisdom, her eyes reflecting the light of the moon. She's a mysterious figure, walking the hidden paths of the Umbra, guiding her wayward children when they most need it. Often, the stories about her say that a Garou only realizes that wolf was the Grandmother herself long afterward. She's not known to talk much or at all, preferring the gentle guidance of example.

RUMORS

* She was Gaia! She wasn't just Gaia's high priestess, she was Gaia! Think about it! All Garou look to her as mother? As in Demeter, Gaia, Mother Earth? Ring any bells? Of course she wasn't born to a human, she was a goddess, and we're all part god, too, being her descendants.

* Grandmother Wolf never died. It's not her spirit wandering the Umbra. She's alive, and she has been walking in and out of the Spirit Wilds since the first Garou was born, always there to help nudge them into the right direction.



JEREMY "SOOT PUP" COOPER

Bone Gnawer ragabash

HUNTING FOR FREEDOM

Good people I pray, give ear unto what I say,
 And pray do not call it sedition,
 For these great men of late they have crack'd my pate
 I'm wounded in a woeeful condition.

Fal lal de ral, &c.

For Derby it's true, and Nottingham too,
 Young bays in the fire they're burning.
 They say that Soot Pup so I follow up,
 The fates of the rich has been turning.

Fal lal, &c.

Poor manners of late is babes to suffocate,
 Orphans to be kill'd in their station;
 And if they escape their legs they do break,
 And they're doom'd by the laws of the nation,

Fal lal, &c.

Yesterday I met one Sir Francis Dancet,
 He told me he'd been in the Tower;
 I told him my mind was freedom to find,
 He said you must ask them in power.

Fal lal, &c.

- Uriah "Midnight Oil" O'Malley,
 Shadow Lord ragabash





Reputation: When chimneys were introduced to England, someone needed to sweep them to prevent flue fires. This was first done by the specially trained chimney sweeps. When coal replaced firewood, factories started to form around steam engines, and dense smog clouded the cities; the need for sweeps increased, and the most difficult and dangerous work was given to the master sweeps' apprentices, called the climbing boys. After all, a grown man won't fit in a narrow pipe.

Jeremy Cooper was an orphan, and the local parish sold him at the age of four to his master, who promised to teach him the craft.

When they went to a new fireplace, Jeremy would climb in it, pull his cap down to protect his face, hold his brush up, and climb up the flue naked. His bare back pushed against one end, his knees and hands the other. The loosened soot would fall on him and eventually down to a pile on the bottom. When he was up, he would slide back down and land in the pile of soot which he then had to bag up and remove from the house so his master could sell it. He would do this five or six times a day.

One day, Jeremy had trouble breathing in the chimney, and he became groggy and slow. His impatient master lit a fire in the fireplace to make him work faster. It only sucked what little oxygen there was out of the flue, and Jeremy lost consciousness. Were he not Garou, he would have died. As he fell into the fire, his First Change overtook him, like the Big Bad Wolf in a story he'd once heard. He wasn't big but he was bad, and he savaged his master to death.

Now calling himself the Soot Pup, Jeremy started to climb the roofs of houses and factories, sneaking in through the flue and killing first master sweeps, then workhouse owners, and finally the industrialists who owned the biggest steam engines. He didn't do it to stop the smoke or to clear the smog, but nevertheless, he became a hero of the Luddites who wanted to smash the machines, Communist Garou who stood up against greedy factory owners, and today, the Monkeywrenchers. Bone Gnawers consider him the epitome of their brand of grungy courage.

Although that wasn't his primary motivation, he also helped reduce the smog that coal burning caused, and the cities he visited enjoyed weeks of clear skies.

Soot Pup grants the Gifts Blur of the Milky Eye, Gremlins, Jump Scare (p. 62), and Umbral Pocket (p. 61). In exchange, he demands bloody revenge upon those who exploit those under their authority, be they children or employees.

Description: He's always seen as a young boy of maybe ten years. In the stories, he's never a grown man, always a child, young enough to fit into a narrow flue. He's sometimes seen naked, sometimes clothed in 18th or 19th century style, but always completely covered in black soot. Often, he carries a chimney sweep's brush. He usually has a serious, angry expression but a melodious boy's voice with a strong Cockney accent, interrupted by frequent episodes of bloody coughs. Perhaps because the legend of the Soot Pup presents him like this, in the Umbra he appears eternally young. In reality, if the stories are to be believed, he grew up and most of his accomplishments were not those of a child, but an adult Garou. But why let such details get in the way of a good legend...

RUMORS

- * Communists love him. Even today, radical left-wingers love the Soot Pup, and pinko Garou seek him out in the Umbra to ask for strength in standing up against the gazillionaires and the oligarchs. In the Soviet Union, there was even a cult around him—they made statues and everything!
- * He's Ned Ludd. The Luddites who broke the machines that took their jobs in the Industrial Revolution? Well, they were named after Ned Ludd, who isn't a real person. He's either a made-up character or someone under a fake name. Well, guess what? It's Soot Pup! All the details match!

KAROLA AND ILONA KORÁNYI

Shadow Lord ahrouns



Reputation: To win the impossible war against the Wyrm, the Garou need champions, warriors capable of immense feats of destruction. The Korányi sisters are the warriors of the moment, the legends reputed to never lose. Their tale far outstrips the ability of even the mightiest Garou warrior to live up to because many cling to their story in desperation.

Surely, the sisters will turn the tide and snatch victory from the jaws of defeat!

The sisters have their fans and followers, the desperate and the fearful among the Garou who need something, anything to believe in. Among the more sober-minded, there are other stories, too: Stories about their disregard for the lives of their packmates and followers. Stories of duels ending in the horrifying mutilation of their Garou opponents. Stories suggest the Shadow Lords are the next tribe to fall to hauglosk after the Cult of Fenris.

The legend of the Korányi sisters has two sides. They represent the hope that, even now, the mightiest Garou warriors are still unbeatable. But they also represent the loss of principles and values, the loss of the pack and the sept, in a war where it feels like everything must be sacrificed—even the very things the Garou supposedly fight for.

The ancestor-spirits of the Korányi sisters grant the Gifts Jump Scare (p. 62), Tug the Leash (p. 65), and True Fear. For this, they will accept the sacrifice of something that is holding the Garou back from the fight against the Wyrm. Cut off a Touchstone, dump a partner, quit a job—they are all mere distractions.

Description: The physical descriptions of the sisters tend to grow in the telling. They're young, in their twenties, and impossibly tough, fast, strong, and ferocious. They fight together as if they were one, always anticipating exactly what the other is going to do. In crinos, they are huge, towering figures of sleek black fur tearing through any and all opponents.

RUMORS

* The sisters are not sisters at all. The Garou love their legends, and the Shadow Lords know this. The Korányi sisters are fake, a made-up legend to give those fighting in the Apocalypse something to believe in, even if it's all lies.

* The Korányi sisters are the daughters of the Black Spiral Dancer Zhyzhak. The spawn of the Black Spiral rebelled against the Wyrm and sought refuge with the Shadow Lords. They fight against the memories of their horrifying past even as they seek to destroy everything their original tribe stands for.

* The Korányi sisters are destined to kill the Wyrm! There will be a final reckoning in which the Wyrm physically manifests, thrashing and ravaging everything in its wake. After all the weaker tribes have fallen, only the Shadow Lords remain steadfast, their mightiest champions finally putting an end to the Wyrm and ushering in a new era of balance and peace.

It's not fair, but perhaps nothing is fair in the time of the Apocalypse.

Ilora and Kardla are young. They were raised by another shadow Lord, Baron Szandor Korányi, to be perfect warriors. He keeps saying they're his twin daughters, but something about that feels fishy to me. There's no chance three Garou are born into the same family. Not even with all the blessings of Gaia.

How would you feel if you had to be responsible for victory in this war? If everyone looked up to you and if you failed, all would be lost?

And what if, in that situation, the only thing that you knew you could rely on was Rage and violence? All the things they say about the sisters are true: the stories of their victories against impossible odds, walks in their wake. All true, I've seen these things with my own eyes.

I've seen them fight through a haze of poison gas, too filled with Rage to die.

I've seen them fight against a dozen Black spiral Dancers and survive until their pack caught up with them.

I've seen them execute their dying packmates to stop them from being captured by the enemy.

They're legends in their lifetime, and I'm not going to tell you they're not every bit as good as everyone says.

But there's a cost. They're just Garou, like you and me. They were trained to be the best, but what do you think is left after such training? They never had lives, a chance to think for themselves, make mistakes. Or even we all wanted them to be.

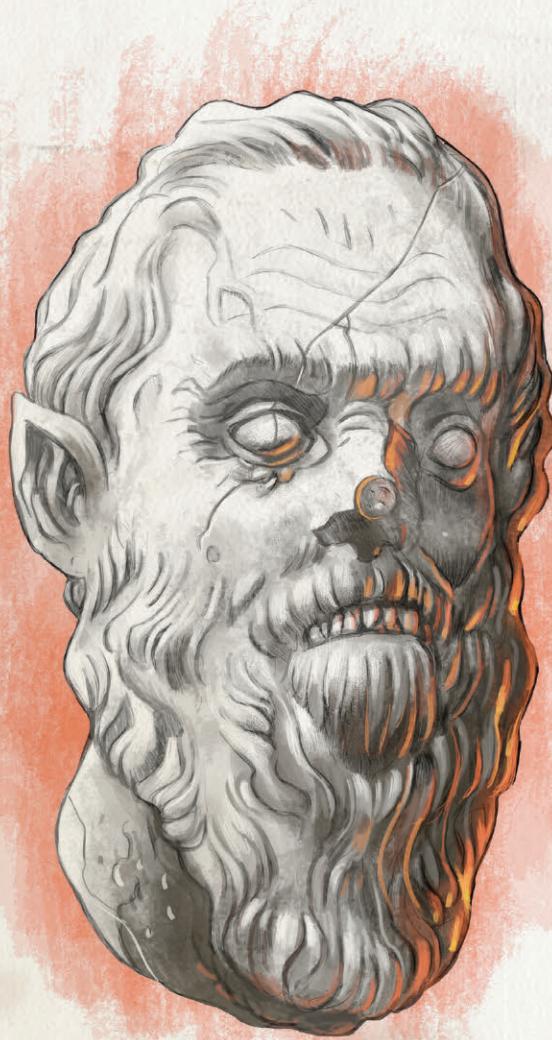
Are we really going to blame them for that?

-Low Growl, Silent strider phidox



LAW-SPEAKER

Silent Strider philodox



Reputation: Where there was chaos, he brought order. Where there was anarchy, he brought law. Where there was Impergium, he brought Concord.

Law-Speaker is hailed as a cultural hero of the Garou and the writer of the Litany. He convinced the werewolves to end the Impergium's merciless hunt for humans; he called for the Traveling Moot, which lasted for years and toured around the world; he chaired the heated discussions; and he forged the differing points of view into the Concord: the Garou

would hide from humans behind what Law-Speaker called a Veil.

In the Tenets of the Litany, he carved in stone (literally, according to some) that humans may not be eaten, the Wyrm must always be combated, the Veil must not be lifted, and the caern must be protected. These, for many, are the key parts, the new innovations. The other Tenets were perhaps already common law among Garou or stemmed from the instinctual behavior of wolf packs or even ancient human legal codes.

However, there are also laws that could've been made into Tenets but weren't: freedom of speech, protection of private property, not killing humans, not killing other Garou, not committing adultery, abolition of slavery, bearing false witness, respecting gods or spirits, how to change the Litany. These are not dealt with in the Litany, and some philodoxes wonder why. Was it supposed to be longer? Were these deliberately left out? Was Law-Speaker in favor of adultery, lying, theft, slavery, and murder? Or were these simply impossible to agree on in the Concord?

Ever since, philodoxes and other Garou of each time have proposed making their own additions to the Litany to protect what they consider to be important. The Litany, as it's known today, is understood to be ancient, but who knows? Maybe somewhere along the line there were Garou who successfully changed the work of Law-Speaker.

The Garou have a tendency to describe their heroes as mighty and strong, powerful and healthy. Most stories agree that Law-Speaker was never like that. He wasn't pleasant to look at. In fact, he was rather ugly in all forms, but his deep melodious voice could soothe, challenge, charm, debate, and convince anyone. Many who encounter his spirit in the Umbra first hear the voice.

And there are many times through history when Garou have heard his voice and been guided by it, and even more times when they have claimed to have heard it. Whenever the Litany is in question or even broken, whenever the Veil has been lifted, whenever a Grand Moot is called, the spirit of Law-Speaker may be called.

Law-Speaker may grant the Gifts Calcify (p. 64), Command the Gathering, Indomitable Spirit (p. 64), and Speech of the World. He may demand the Garou to hunt down someone in violation of the Litany or to fix a violation of the Veil but may also settle for a satisfying philosophical debate. In the Umbra, taking the time for that may be the more dangerous choice.

Description: He is short, fat, and almost bald, bestial in appearance as if he was on the verge of transforming into glabro. His curly beard is tied with bands of gold and flows over his bare belly, but his hairy ears and bushy eyebrows betray the wolf within. He is often seen wearing only a toga or a himation, but sometimes, he drapes a luxurious cloak around one shoulder. He smells of sweat and piss. But his voice! He speaks as if the spirits of eloquence and oration guide his mouth, and even his tiniest whisper can be heard all the way across the moot and makes a lasting impression on any who hear it.

RUMORS

- * He was a mortal enemy of Man-Eater. In fact, they were once in the same pack, howling at the moon together, until they chose opposing paths. Man-Eater's Impergium couldn't have lasted for more than two decades tops and was finally ended when Law-Speaker managed to bring some sense to her followers. Then, they executed Man-Eater. But what's really surprising is that they were lovers once, and I heard they even had a cub!
- * He didn't know Man-Eater. The Impergium lasted for thousands of years, so he had no personal connection to Man-Eater. But he put an end to the spread of violence and fear that Man-Eater had started, finally making Garou and humans civilized.

* He preceded all human law. When Law-Speaker had brought the Tenets to the Garou, the years of nightmare ended for humans, too, allowing for them to build their own cultures. And the first laws of humanity, the Code of Hammurabi, the Laws of Moses, the Kang Gao, Manava-Dharmasastra, the Tirukkural, whatever the Aztecs had, they're all based on the Tenets! So, without Law-Speaker, human societies wouldn't exist!

* He's an agent of the Weaver. The Wyld is supposed be just that, wild. Law-Speaker was working for the Weaver all along, suffocating the Garou spirit. And we let him do it!



If we ever hope to have a Garou Nation again, we must look to the example set by Law-Speaker. We must rediscover the Litany, take it to heart, perhaps revise where need be, and unite under it. Otherwise, the Wyrm has already won.

- Alejandro "Vaporfang" Mendoza,
Bone Gnawer galliard

MAN-EATER

Black Fury of unknown auspice



Reputation: Long ago, humans took wolves in as pets and weren't even afraid of werewolves, the guardians of Gaia's order. All that changed with Man-Eater, who brought about the Impergium.

The legend of Man-Eater describes the original form of the Garou as murderous killers culling humans to suit their vision of a pristine world. At first, she killed humans, the Weaver's Children, who had transgressed somehow, gone into service of the Wyrm. Order had to be maintained, after all. But killing soon became its own goal, and she hunted humans like some wolves hunt rabbits for the pure thrill of the chase and the delicious taste of fear hormones in their flesh.

Some say she was in hauglosk and inspired others to join in. The forbidden pleasure of killing for sport caught on and spread, the spirit of Man-Eater spreading from pack to pack, tribe to tribe, continent to continent, until the Impergium was all there was, and all humans were nothing but prey.

She alone is said to have killed a hundred, thousand, million humans. No wonder any sight of a werewolf can cause Delirium in the survivors' offspring even now. Sometimes, even the mention of her is enough to make humans go crazy.

There are many stories about her, about her hunts, about the humans and other Garou hiding from her; sometimes, she's used as a bad example, sometimes as

a good one. Some say she had lovers and cubs, others that she lived only for killing.

Some Garou look to her for strength when all hope seems lost, and they need to muster the will to continue no matter the cost. Black Furies, the Cult of Fenris, Red Talons, and Shadow Lords secretly hold her in high regard and even consider her a saint. Those in hauglusk may claim they're only following in her footsteps.

Man-Eater grants the Gifts Gorgon's Visage, Howl of Despair (p. 64), Kali's Scar and Resist Toxin (p. 60). She demands death—bringing down a challenging prey is on the benign end of the spectrum, but requesting a massacre in her name is not unheard of.

Description: Man-Eater is a dark-skinned wolf woman in perpetual crinos. Willing to murder at a moment's notice and, in fact, unable not to. Her thick fur is striped with auburn and black. She fights with her strong right claw and wields a bronze glaive in the little claws of her stunted left arm. Her voice is beautiful, deadly, and probably the last thing you ever hear. She smells of blood and sweat and forest and the primeval nightmares of all humanity.

RUMORS

* She is a galliard. Everyone assumes she was ahroun because she was a fighter, but really, all the murder she did, it was to send a message. Don't you get it? She was a galliard! Only her art wasn't drumming or storytelling but killing. That's how she communicated to the humans, and boy, did they listen! Deep down, they can still remember her message.

* She was the first to be killed by silver. Humans had barely mastered bronze at the start of the Impergium, so nobody really knows how it's possible one of their smiths forged a silver dagger to kill her with. I'll tell you: someone must've taught them how someone who didn't like Man-Eater. Anyway, since then, many of our kind have met their end with silver weapons.

* Hauglusk brings us closer to her. People think it's some kind of mental disorder or derangement. But hauglusk is a gateway to reach the right mental state, the one she exhibited, and if we let ourselves go into hauglusk, eventually we'll come out the other side as fierce and powerful as she was.

NONE OF US WOULD BE HERE WITHOUT MAN-EATER.

She represents what it means to be Garou. No, not the Litany. The tenets are there to limit us, the Limits of the Tetany, is what I call them. It's a cage they put us in to stop us from following our true nature. To turn us into dogs!

No, my friends. We are not dogs. We are wolves! We are hunters. And humans are our prey. Man-Eater? She had it right. It's time we Rage, it's time we abandoned the shackles some soft-bellied philodoxes would bestow upon us, it's time we showed our teeth, it's time we tasted some human flesh!

— Laurențiu “Lifeboat” Cântea,
Cult of Fenris ragabash



SABINE "MISTWALKER" ELOI

Ghost Council theurge

Reputation: According to legend, Sabine Eloi walked the four corners of the world, even as a child. Some say she and her family had been enslaved and taken across the ocean, but others argue that no shackles could have held Sabine. In this alternative version, she worked on ships, perhaps disguised as a boy. Or maybe she was a stowaway, traveling ever further afield from her home in New Orleans. Like with most Garou legends, trying to pin down even the approximate century she was born in is difficult.

Once Sabine had her First Change, she became Mistwalker, traveling with Ghost Council and Silent Strider packmates to carry messages between distant septs and discover the ancient secrets of the Wyrm. Although she's now known almost exclusively for her exploits in the Umbra, during her lifetime, her renown Renown was built on going further than anyone else. She's said to have seen more of the world than any Garou and delved deeper into its dangerous mysteries than any Ghost Council werewolf before or since.

Still, the feat that made her a legend was her sacrifice in the fight against an ancient Wyrm spirit, usually said to have been an incarnation of Foebok, the Urge Wyrm of fear, although some say it was more likely the Storm-Eater or a similar Bane of vast



power. She used her own body as bait, drawing the mists possessed by the spirit to her in the physical world so her pack could ambush it and banish it back to the Umbra.

As her body was devoured by the Bane in the physical world, she was reborn in the Umbra as a mighty ancestor-spirit, facing the enemy who had destroyed her once again as it returned across the Gauntlet and drove it away.

After her death, Mistwalker has explored the breadth of the Umbra, going deep into the far reaches of the spirit world. The legends say that you may encounter her when you think you're lost and in desperate need of guidance, someone to bring you home from the most murderous and degrading reaches of the Wyrmlands.

Yeah, I've met her once during a Legendary Rite at a moot in the south. I was young and handsome, and she was quite smitten by me. Heh... Anyway, I asked her about the future of the Garou Nation. She looked sad and wouldn't tell me what she'd seen. I think it's because the Garou still needed their king then, and if I'd known what was coming, I wouldn't have been able to lead. Anyway, I guess what she saw in her travels was... This. The fall. Maybe I couldn't have prevented it. But I think... maybe I would've tried harder.

*-Jonas Albrecht,
Silver Fangs dhraun*

Mistwalker grants the Gifts Dreamwalk, Entreat (p. 62), Grasp from Beyond, and Summon Implement (p. 62). In return, she may demand the destruction of a certain Bane, or for the Garou to stay with her in the Umbra for as long as they can take it (spending at least three points of Willpower or taking two points of Aggravated Health damage).

Description: Mistwalker is a Black Louisiana woman, or maybe Creole. She seems to be in her late thirties or early forties but her penetrating, wise eyes seem those of a much older woman. She's dressed for travel, often in clothes typical of wherever she is at that moment. When speaking with her, it appears as if her attention is always focused on something beyond the horizon. In lupus, she's a red wolf.

RUMORS

- * She's a former slave. Some are certain that Mistwalker was born into slavery in the 19th century and managed to escape through the Umbra. She would have worked to liberate slaves and later provide them with healing and important rituals. She also would have protected them from agents of the Weaver who were eager to bring slavery back.
- * She can speak to the dead. And not just ancestor-spirits of the Garou, but actual dead humans, too. By dying herself, she has unlocked the secrets of life and death, gaining the ability to reach beyond the Veil.
- * She's not the original Mistwalker. There are always Garou, particularly among the Silent Striders, but other tribes too, who seek to venture beyond the far horizon. The ancestor-spirit, known as Mistwalker, is not the remnant of a single Garou, but an amalgamation of all the werewolf explorers who have sought out to go further than anyone before them. Perhaps there never even was an original Mistwalker, or if there was, she explored the forests and savannas of a primeval Earth.





CHAPTER TWO

An Exchange of Gifts

PATRONS

The **guiding presence** of a Patron Spirit is a vital element of Garou culture.

Each tribe reveres its own chosen spirit, and from these spirits they draw strength to support their worldview, define the methods with which they'll take the fight to their enemies, and, ultimately, create their manifesto for how they'll best protect Gaia. The comings and goings of these patrons have far-reaching effects across the remnants of the Garou Nation.

With such close ties to the spirit, it's not just tribes benefiting from such direct lines of patronage, and these spiritual mentors persist across the various strata of werewolf society, most commonly within septs, as core to each caern is its guardian spirit. Of course, no sept, or even tribe, could flourish without the lifeblood of Garou society: the pack. These makeshift family units are the glue holding the dream of Gaia together, and it's their fight fueling the war against the Wyrm. Aligning themselves to a

compelling Patron Spirit is a key step on the pack's journey, and it's often this moment that preempts the shift from a ragtag bunch of rugged individuals to a lean and cohesive unit.

NEW ADVANTAGE: PACK PATRON

Packs are more than just a string of individuals — they're a single, spiritual unit. Though every member of a pack holds allegiance to their tribal patron, the bond between packmates cannot be ignored. The pack patron solidifies and ratifies this spiritual relationship by giving every member a common spirit to rally around. While Garou's tribal patrons are always reachable with the Rite of Patronage (*Werewolf*, p. 184), there are other powerful spirits aligned with Gaia who are more distant and do not readily extend their power to just anyone. Packs with this advantage have a relationship with such a spirit, or several.

To benefit from this Advantage, every member of the pack must invest one Advantage point. If using the Pack rules from *Shattered Nation*, this is a



Nihar knew he'd made a mistake taking a date to the caern. But the follower of Mistwalker had left him in charge, and he had no other place to take Melanie. So, here they were sitting on plastic chairs in front of the streetcar caern under the marquee, sipping beer from disposable cups.

Melanie wasn't exactly his girlfriend—they both knew she was too good for him—but some spark kept her coming back day after day, and especially night after night. This was his attempt to impress her enough to be seen in public with him at the funeral. He was wearing his good jersey and clean sneakers.

"Aren't you gonna share your little secret?" she asked him teasingly. She loved being in control of any situation.

"What secret? I don't have secrets," he lied badly.

"Every full moon, you turn into a wolf and run around hunting for rabbits or something."

"What?" How could she possibly know that? She had nothing to do with that world. She was working for a transport company or something. "Who told you that?"

"Oh, please! I can hear the howls all the way to the city." She let him squirm for a minute and then continued, "I think it's kind of sexy, actually."

"You do?"

"Oh, yeah! My big, hunky monster! I bet you're really dangerous!" She was setting him up for something, but he didn't notice it.

"I'm... Yeah, I am. Very dangerous." He flashed his canines. They were regular human teeth.

"Caught any rabbits?"

"We're defenders of Gaia, actually. We fight the Wyrm, who wants to destroy the environment. You know, pollution and global warming and shit."

"The Wyrm! Sounds kind of badass. Tell me more about the Wyrm. Does it have its defenders, too?"

"It has Bane spirits that sometimes take over a human body. We call those people hum... for... wait, I got this."

"Fomori."

"Yes! Wait, how did you know?"

"How do you think?" she said, grinning widely at her own cleverness and his stupidity. She was waiting for him to make the connection. When he didn't, she drank the rest of her beer and threw the cup on the ground.

"Are you telling me... that you're a fomori?"

"Bravo!" she said. "But you still want me, so it doesn't really change anything, does it?"

He realized the follower of Mistwalker would curse him for bringing a fomor to their caern, maybe turn him into a frog or something.

"You have to go!" he said.

"Why? We're both fomori, after all. I'm possessed by a Wyrm-spirit, and you're possessed by a Wyld-spirit. Can't you see we have so much in common?"

She was loving it. Everything was going exactly as she had planned. Until it didn't. She suddenly lost consciousness, and when she came to, she was somebody else.

"Um, hello?" someone said with her mouth.



Clash of the Patrons

There are many opportunities for Garou to gain the notice of a powerful spirit. The tribal patrons are most Garou's first encounter with this type of symbiotic relationship, but as they grow into a community, they find patrons existing across many levels: packs and septs are the most common, but it's not unheard of for tribal or sept sub-factions and groups to band together under a particular patron, even if only for a short while.

Spirits have their own drives, needs, and resentments. At once both unfathomably complex and fundamentally simple, how a Garou approaches and deals with a spirit is of critical importance—especially when pledging themselves to the service of one. If a spirit is to accept the Garou into their existence, they must be convinced they share common ground and that their trust won't be betrayed. Those aforementioned drives, needs, and resentments? Suddenly, they're more than just theoretical hooks and need to be considered in a wider context. What other causes does the Garou support? How does the Garou treat other spirits (mistreating those embedded in talismans is a good indicator of intent)? What other patrons does the Garou submit to? Every sept has a Patron Spirit, and while many of the tribal patrons are ubiquitous enough to be respected by most (but not all) spirits, less powerful patrons demand no such benefit.

Patron Spirits are far from passive supporters of Garou actions, and while their motives might seem obtuse or counterintuitive to a human mind, that doesn't negate their validity. Walking the thin line between spiritual obligations is an inevitable byproduct of existing in the service of many masters. Consider a pack with both Red Talons and Glasswalkers as members; each Garou's tribal patron stands in opposition to each other when it comes to the treatment of technology. How does this affect the pack's strategy, the relationship between the two Garou, or the relationships of those Garou who aren't aligned with those patrons? Consider the fallout if the pack theurge performed the Rite of Patronage to bring Griffin closer to the pack... The delicate interplay of spiritual obligation is a thread that should be pulled upon. The pack will either unravel, tie themselves in knots, or weave their loyalties into something unbreakable.

Use these divided loyalties to fuel stories, create rivalries, and drive conflict. The Favor and Ban offered by patrons aren't the extents of their power, and gifts (small g) can be offered and punishments dealt should they feel the need to enforce their will. All spirits have allies they can call upon, and whether the Patron Spirit rouses a spiritual army to force the players' characters' hand or the characters themselves are called upon to whip someone else into line following a disagreement, there's much opportunity to consider the Patron's desires.

Characters might consider a hierarchy of loyalty among their various patrons, but which order is correct? Do they serve tribe first, pack second, and sept last? Does their local community take precedence and place the sept's patron at the top of the list? Is the pack the final word on importance, with everything else secondary to the social unit? How do the various patrons feel about this hierarchy? At what point does the disrespect turn the spirit away completely, and what deeds must the Garou perform to win back their patronage?

Pack Merit of one to five points. Each point in this Advantage provides the pack with an additional non-tribe patron to choose from when performing the Rite of Patronage.

A selection of pack patrons are presented below. Other pack patrons exist and can be created as needed.



SEPT PATRONS

Every sept has a Patron Spirit at its heart, defining its place in the world and lending purpose to its members' actions. Sept patrons are an essential part of the community, but unlike pack patrons, they do not require purchasing for they offer no particular favor and mandate no ban, at least by default. They are typically Incarna. Some sept patrons are aloof and distant, while others are quite involved, and care should be taken to flesh them out properly. When doing so, consider what lines they have when it comes to behavior. Just like any other character, what actions would cause them to punish or reward their allies?

PACK PATRONS

The following spirits are examples to be used with the Pack Patron Advantage. Most Pack Patrons are Incarna, while some are major jagglings.

THE BROOK

Ever flowing and ever cleansing, the Brook is an aspirational patron for many Garou packs, proving that with enough tenacity, even the deepest corruption can be purged.

Favor: The Brook understands the volatile temperament of the Garou, able to turn from a dangerously unpredictable torrent into a calming scene of tranquility and back again with little warning. Once per session, each pack member can either increase or decrease their Rage rating by one, although they cannot use this Favor to regain the wolf.

Ban: The flow of water is relentless, and it forever seeks to navigate the terrain, whatever gets in its way—to stop is to stagnate. Whenever a pack refuses to think their way around a problem and resorts to brute force, they suffer from Wisdom chagrin (*Werewolf*, p. 142).

CERNUNNOS

An ancient god of beasts and wild places, Cernunnos—"the Horned One"—mediates the



bridge between man and nature, balancing the needs of both, but never forgetting the needs of the wild.

Favor: When in cities, treat the Gauntlet rating as if it were 1 lower.

Ban: Followers of Cernunnos who slay an animal other than in self-defense or for food suffer Glory chagrin.

COYOTE

The perennial trickster, Coyote favors cousin Wolf, though they are put off by Fenris. Despite their reputation, Coyote isn't some jovial jester, but rather a teacher who recognizes there's always room to learn. Though they give their patronage to Garou, Coyote also has their own coyote-shifters, which may or may not be Laughing Tricksters (p. 141).

Favor: The Experience cost of Wisdom Renown is reduced to the new level $\times 4$. (Coyote needs to have been the active pack Patron during the act which justifies the Wisdom gain, not merely adopted before the end of the session.)

Ban: Whenever suffering from either Honor or Wisdom chagrin, reduce the value by a further 1.

CRAB

Favored by coastal and seafaring packs, Crab recognizes the value of strength through greater numbers.

Favor: Jokes about Crab's followers being experts at stepping sideways are short-lived once the pack gets involved. Like their patron, the pack members develop an almost unbreakable grip, benefiting from a two-dice bonus to grappling and climbing pools, as well as other pools benefiting from a strong grip.

Ban: Crab despises imprisonment and being caged or otherwise captured fills them with unwavering dread. If a member of the pack finds themselves in this situation — even by choice — they must test for harano.

ENLIL

The gods of storms are many, but this Sumerian god of air and wind has long been an ally of the Garou, and just like the mercurial wind that spawned them, Enlil is a true creature of the Wyld.

Favor: Once per session, each member of the pack can have the wind carry their words. One full sentence can be carried, and the words unerringly reach their target, imperceptible to any who would intercept them.

Ban: With air pollution on the rise, Enlil decrees their followers never add to it. Whenever a character creates a fire that produces smoke — including through an internal combustion engine — Enlil ensures the next message they carry in the wind is modified in some unhelpful way.

FOX

Fox is a consummate survivor and a cunning one at that. Blamed, reviled, and hunted across the world, the diminutive Fox knows when to go into the ground, when to resurface, and when to lead the hunt away from what they truly value. It is rumored that fox-shifters exist, but they are elusive indeed. Some theurges believe fox-shifters are responsible for the Laughing Trickster phenomenon in the Umbra (p. 141).

Favor: Once per session, Fox can add four dice to a pool related to escape or hiding.

Ban: Fox's children are constantly chased, hunted, and harried, and the spirit despises anything that calls this to mind. Whenever a character chases prey, be it an enemy that is fleeing or a bus they are trying to catch, they must spend 1 point of Willpower to do so.

GEMINI

One of the more sociable constellations, Gemini is no stranger to duality and recognizes the need to evolve your identity to suit your needs.

Favor: Once per session, Gemini can add four dice to a pool relating to the impersonation of someone else. This might take the form of a computer confirming their new identity, a guard misreading ID, or a wolf pack treating the character as one of their own.

Ban: Gemini doesn't consider itself duplicitous and resents the assumption. If a pack member is accused of lying and cannot convince their accuser of their innocence, they take a point of Aggravated Willpower damage.

MONGOOSE

A tenacious and combative spirit, Mongoose sees much support due to the conflation between serpents and the Wyrm.

Favor: Mongoose teaches that no foe should be feared, no matter their strengths. By sharing their impressive fortitude with their followers, they make the pack wholly immune to mundane poisons and venoms, and add four dice to pools resisting supernatural ones.

Ban: Mongoose is famous for picking fights they have no business being in, but they never back down. Followers of Mongoose who retreat from an active fight (for whatever reason) suffer Glory chagrin.

VULTURE

Eyed with suspicion by many Garou because of their close ties to death, Vulture still attracts packs, even if they may have a more macabre sense of purpose than most.

Favor: Wherever death rests, Vulture is never far behind. Followers of Vulture are just as sensitive to this circle of life and can instantly pinpoint any fresh corpses (anything within a week counts) within a twenty-meter radius.

Ban: When the pack makes a kill, they must leave the body—or at least a good percentage of it—out for the wild animals to feast upon. Failure to do so sees the entire pack suffer Honor chagrin.

WILDFIRE

Like the Rage burning within the Garou, Wildfire understands how change can be destructive, even when necessary for the greater good.

Favor: Wildfire protects its children, and fire inflicts one Health level of damage less than normal, potentially reducing fire damage to zero.

Ban: No fire should ever be extinguished by one venerating Wildfire. If a member of the pack does put out a fire, for any reason, the entire pack loses the wolf.

TALESMANS

Most talismans are made by binding a spirit into a unique, beautiful object. Spirits do not always enter such contracts willingly, and even with a bound spirit, making a talisman is not an easy task.

Talismans are made to last, and not every spirit is willing to be bound. The toolkit of the talisman-maker contains not only persuasion and bargaining but also trickery and intimidation. Spirits have their own way of viewing the world and may not even perceive the flow of time as Garou do. While a spirit of the air might feel that being bound to a weapon is imprisonment, a cat spirit might see it as an exciting chance to see the material world, while a spirit of war or artifice could think such a work is the fulfillment of their purpose. Spirits, in general, are much more amenable to being bound into talens, single-use talismans.

SUITABLE ITEMS

The more exquisite a talisman's design, the more willing a spirit is to enter it. What a spirit finds alluring does not follow the fashions of the human world but their own strange ideas of beauty. An animal spirit might prefer something in the shape of that animal, while another spirit might find 1970s wood paneling irresistible.

The item should also be durable and usable normally. A magnificent axe made of foam and latex will not work as a weapon no matter what spirit is bound to it (except in the Umbra where it might manifest as a real axe). The best talismans are made by specialist talisman smiths, but good quality store-bought items can be used as a base just as well if a spirit finds them acceptable. Artifacts of the Patron Spirits make for great items of this sort, provided the spirit's aspects are suitably related to the talisman's intended purpose.

A Rite of Binding (*Werewolf*, p. 184) is required to bind a spirit. If a spirit enters a talisman willingly, the Rite succeeds automatically.



Once a spirit is bound to an object, the object can be turned into a talisman with the Rite of Forging (p. 67).

FORCING A SPIRIT

Not all Garou feel it is moral to bind a spirit by force, but it is quite possible. In this case, as the spirit doesn't get to choose, the beauty of the item matters less. However, the spirit suffers if it's bound to an uncomfortably ugly talisman. When the Rite of Binding is attempted, the spirit becomes angry. A failure on the Rite means the spirit tries to flee.

TRICKING OR BARGAINING WITH A SPIRIT

"Don't worry, it's only a talen."

There are many ways to convince a spirit something is a good idea. Maybe it is a good idea. Or maybe they want something and believe this is a way to achieve that goal. Maybe the Garou can convince the spirit its superiors told it to be bound. Many spirits have motivations of their own and might be willing to enter a talisman if given something in return. See p. 24 for possible things the spirits might want from the binder.

The negotiation should be roleplayed, and possibly an agreement can be reached without the need for persuasion. If the bargaining proves difficult, the player can try to make their case with the help of a

test of Charisma + Etiquette vs. the spirit's Power. Add or subtract 1 or more depending on how far the negotiating partners are from seeing eye to eye.

WHAT CAN A BOUND SPIRIT DO FROM WITHIN THE TALISMAN?

A spirit in a talisman is not necessarily entirely in its owner's service. If it's bound against its will, realizes it's been tricked, or disapproves of the talisman-wielder's plans, it might try to indirectly act against them.

A bound spirit cannot escape, but (unless explicitly forbidden by its binder) it might whisper the binder's or talisman owner's secrets to someone else, appear in dreams, create strange emanations, attract animals, cause fear, and, of course, act according to its spiritual nature. A fire spirit might cause fires or appear in flames. A bird spirit might attract birds or make someone think they see birds. A machine-spirit could communicate via a cell phone or make a car break down.

To notice a bound spirit's attempts to influence the outside world, make a test of Awareness + Occult. The target number is 3 for a gaffling, 5 for a juggling, and 7 for Incarnae, with possible bonuses applied based on how well the Garou guesses what to look for. Using a Gift like Shadow Sense, Sight from Beyond, or Penumbral Senses grants two extra dice for this.

TABLE 1: TALISMAN AND TALEN BACKGROUND COSTS

Name	Talisman Cost	Talen Cost
Death's Head Brooch	..	•
Electric Camouflage	—	...
Grand Klaive	—
Shadow Mirror	...	—
Spider Box	..	—
Spirit Prison	... or ...	—
Umbral Dust	—	•
Wolf Musk	—	•

TALISMANS

Table 1 (above) summarizes the Background cost for the Talismans presented here.

DEATH'S HEAD BROOCH

These bejeweled trinkets allow the wearer to pass as one of the undead, their living essence undetectable by the Leeches. A few dozen death's head brooches exist, but they're considered cursed objects. If the stories are to be believed, the Ghost Council created them to broker a tenuous peace with some local Leeches, only to be slaughtered by another pack that mistook them for the real thing.

System: If worn, the brooch makes its wearer indistinguishable from the undead. They appear pallid and cool to the touch; their heart makes no sound; they don't appear to breathe; even their blood tastes and smells as the Leech would expect. This talisman cannot duplicate their powers or weaknesses, only the outward appearance of being undead.

Background Cost: This is a one-dot Background as a talen and a two-dot Background as a talisman.

ELECTRIC CAMOUFLAGE

Delirium has long protected Garou from human knowledge, but the relentless advance of technology is changing that. Where once the Garou knew their secrets were safe from witnesses, now there's a permanent record of their shapeshifting abilities with no blessed terror to keep them safe. This talen blurs their visages from electronic record, but this type of security comes at a cost, for the compound used contains silver dust. If nobody in a pack knows the Rite of the Forgetful Record (*Werewolf*, p. 182), the expense is worth it.

System: Silver dust is mixed with clay from a riverbed and various oils to create an ointment and then applied to the faces of all who need its cover. The paste can be washed off without losing its abilities, though silver flecks linger in the skin. Until the next sunrise, cameras fail to record the wearer, displaying nothing but a blurred, glitchy mess. If the Garou shifts into crinos while under the effects, they automatically take Aggravated damage as the silver burns their skin.

Background Cost: This talen is a three-dot Background.

GRAND KLAIVE

These massive silver swords are rare and incredibly expensive talismans possessed by very few Garou. Two spirits are bound in each grand klaive, a war spirit and another. The other spirit might provide something extra, such as a fire spirit lighting the sword on fire, or an ancestor-spirit providing forgotten wisdom.

System: A Rage Check is required every time a grand klaive is wielded. On a failure, in addition to losing the point of Rage, the blade is dropped. A grand klaive does +3 silver-based Aggravated Health damage and may be wielded in homid or glabro form. Depending on the other bound spirit, the grand klaive could also inflict fire-, frost-, or electrical-based damage, or even Willpower damage.

Background Cost: The grand klaive is a five-dot Background. Ideally, it should be acquired during play.





SHADOW MIRROR

This mirror shows things invisible to mundane eyes. It will show the presence of any spirit; a Garou in homid form will seem to be in lupus and vice versa; fomori will look like sick people with foul Banes riding them. The mirror is made of glass and can be broken like a regular mirror.

System: A Garou can spend one Willpower to look into the mirror and see all spirits, all invisible creatures, and the true nature of all creatures for the duration of one scene. If the spirit bound to a shadow mirror tries to act on its own, such as to contact an outsider, these attempts will be visible in the mirror. The mirror grants a two-dice bonus to the pool if used as the reflective surface of the Augur Gift (*Werewolf*, p. 170).

Background Cost: This talisman is a three-dot Background.

SPIDER BOX

To be effective, packs need to work in perfect synchronicity, ever aware of their packmates' movements — an almost impossible situation should the pack become separated on different sides of the Umbra. Spider boxes cross that boundary, giving packs a means to communicate across the Gauntlet. Pairs of Weaver-spirits are bound to old phones, walkie-talkies, and even pagers, creating an open channel between realities. Of course, not every Garou is so accepting of working so closely with the Weaver, but sometimes they must.

System: Spider boxes always come in pairs and can only communicate with their twin. Distance makes no difference to them, but they won't function when both boxes are on the same side of the Gauntlet.

Background Cost: This talisman is a two-dot Background.

SPIRIT PRISON

A spirit prison is a wish-granting talen that has a limited number of uses, which is traditionally three, but could also be just one. They are often crafted in the shape of old oil lamps, rings, or jugs. When the item is rubbed or the right phrase is uttered, the spirit will appear and offer its services. It will not make any wish come true, but it will try to perform whatever task is given to it, as long as it is within its means. It might try to haggle or negotiate, but ultimately, if the owner persists, the spirit will perform the task.

System: The prison's owner must spend one Willpower to summon the spirit from the prison and tell it what to do. The spirit will then go off in pursuit of that goal and return once it has completed it (or it has been proven impossible). The spirit will remain bound to the prison until all wishes are spent. If there is room for passive-aggressive misunderstanding on purpose, the spirit will likely take this opportunity.

Background Cost: A spirit prison is a two-dot Background for a prison with a gaffling in it and a three-dot Background for a juggling.

UMBRAL DUST

This chalky paste can sometimes be found coating the terrain following the passing of Umbral storms. Urban packs place a high value on bags of Umbral dust, as for many, it makes crossing over to the Umbra possible.

System: The Rite Master covers the palms, eyelids, and soles of their feet with the dust before attempting to enter the Umbra. This talen adds a one-die bonus to tests when performing the Rite of Shadow Passage (*Werewolf*, pp. 182–183).

Background Cost: This talen is a one-dot Background.

WOLF MUSK

This simple talen comes in small vials of colorless liquid and is often favored by wolfborn Garou. Wolf musk allows the Garou to “swap scents” with someone, either using them to lay a false trail, incur some misplaced wrath, or simply buy some time against dedicated hunters.

System: Both targets must be sprayed liberally with the musk, although this can be done with subtlety if needed. Until either target next washes, the scents of the Garou and their target are switched.

Background Cost: This talen is a one-dot Background.

GIFTS

NATIVE GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 1

AN EXCHANGE WITH LUNA

The Garou sends their Rage to Luna herself, maintaining control until Luna returns the Rage to them. With this Gift, a Garou can regulate their Rage independently, even losing the Wolf when they want to. The Lair (see p. 127) makes extensive use of this Gift. A Lune or servant of Luna teaches this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: Free

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: When the Garou makes one or more Rage checks, they can choose to fail one or all of them automatically. Keep track of every level of Rage lost this way, particularly if it exceeds the Garou’s Honor. When the Garou can see the moon, they can attempt a Resolve + Honor test against a Difficulty of 3. If successful, they can reclaim any levels of Rage they have exchanged. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: —

RESIST TOXIN

Garou are naturally hardy when it comes to poisons and toxins, and there’s very little that can take them down permanently. However, that doesn’t mean they’re immune; it’s just that they recover quickly. Werewolves with this Gift instinctively purge their bodies of any unwanted contaminants, shrugging off the effects as if it were nothing. A toad or trash-spirit teaches this Gift.



Renown: Honor

Cost: Free / 1 Rage Check

Action: Free

Pool: Stamina + Honor

System: A Garou with this Gift adds their Honor to all tests to resist poison, venom, toxins, diseases, and similar maladies. If a test isn't usually allowed, the Garou may make a Stamina + Honor test against a Difficulty set by the Storyteller to resist the deleterious effects, reducing the damage inflicted or duration of the effect. A critical success or margin of 4 or higher may avoid the effects entirely.

A Garou affected by simple intoxicants can use this Gift actively, making a Rage check and a Stamina + Honor test at Difficulty 2 to shrug off the effects of recreational drugs.

Duration: —

TOTAL RENOWN 4

BESTIAL REGRESSION

The Garou forces a human to connect with their feral side, removing any ability to access the language centers of their mind, gutting their ability to communicate, and reducing them to little more than animalistic grunts and growls. Any spirit of a wild animal can teach this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Resolve + Wisdom

System: To affect a victim, including Banes fomori, vampires, or other werewolves, the Garou touches their target and tests Resolve + Wisdom in a contest against their Composure + Resolve. If successful, the affected target becomes incapable of talking, writing, sign language, or even simplistic gestures—any attempt to communicate meaningfully is removed. The Delirium affects human targets affected by this Gift, who are likely to rationalize away being compelled by primal spirits. Supernatural victims can spend a point of Willpower to shrug off the full effect, but suffer a two-dice penalty to social pools for the rest of the scene. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One scene

GNAW

This Gift allows the Garou to use their terrifying maws to chew through and shred any barrier unlucky enough to get in their way. Wooden doors, concrete walls, prison bars, or restraints—as long as the Garou can get their teeth around it, its days are numbered. Gnaw can be used in crinos, hispo, and lupus forms. A termite-spirit teaches this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: —

System: When using their jaws to break through a physical barrier, the Garou adds their Glory rating to any relevant pool (see “Feats of Strength” in *Werewolf*, p. 130). Any substance can be gnawed through given enough time, although toxic materials remain so.

Duration: One Scene

RAGABASH GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 2

UMBRAL POCKET

The werewolf can do more than simply conceal an object, they can make it truly disappear or at least disappear from the physical realm, as they hide their belongings beyond the Gauntlet. Whatever they hide must be removed from plain sight, but once so obscured, no amount of searching will uncover it. A mouse-spirit teaches this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Minor

Pool: —

System: The Garou can use the palm of their hand, a pocket, a small bag, or something similar to enable this Gift, but the object being hidden must be small enough to fit into it naturally. Once inside, the item cannot be found by mundane means, although someone peeking into the Umbra can see it with ease. The Garou can remove it at will.

Duration: One scene or until removed

TOTAL RENOWN 5

JUMP SCARE

There are untold horrors lurking beyond the Gauntlet, and the deeper one goes, the more terrifying and alien they become. The Garou momentarily peels away these layers, exposing an unwitting victim to flashes of unfathomable chaos and horror. While these glimpses of the unknown are only caught in the corner of the eye, it's enough to break even the most courageous will. Spirits of abstract concepts from the depths of the Umbra teach this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: Manipulation + Glory

System: The Garou selects a target and makes a Manipulation + Glory test against the target's Composure + Wits. If the werewolf wins, the target must spend 1 point of Willpower or lose their next action. If they do so, they cannot spend Willpower to reroll dice. They may still take a minor action. This Gift can be used in any form.

Duration: One action

THEURGE GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 2

ENTREAT

This Gift allows the theurge to charm, cajole, or even force a spirit to temporarily bond with them, taking a sliver of the entity's power for themselves. Occasionally, reckless Garou use this Gift on Banes, thinking themselves clever as they turn the spirit's own power against them. A magpie-spirit teaches this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Charisma + Glory

System: The target spirit must be in the Garou's presence, and the Garou must be aware of it, even if it's on a different spiritual plane. The spirit needn't be friendly but cannot be in active conflict with the

werewolf or their pack. The player engages in a contest between Charisma + Glory and the Spirit's power (if the Spirit chooses to resist). If successful, the Garou adds a two-dice bonus to tests involving a single Skill with which the Spirit shares an affinity. The Storyteller has the final say regarding any suitability.

Duration: One scene

SUMMON IMPLEMENT

A life spent on the move means traveling light whenever possible, as unnecessary equipment can mean the difference between life and death. Of course, the reverse is just as true, so how can one hope to plan accordingly? With this Gift, the user doesn't need to, as they can pluck what they need from the ether. An owl-spirit or servant of Owl teaches this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Minor

Pool: Resolve + Wisdom

System: The Garou makes a Gift test against Difficulty 3. If successful, any talisman that belongs to them, or any item that has been Dedicated to them through the Rite of Dedication, is instantly brought to their hands regardless of its current location.

Duration: —

TOTAL RENOWN 5

BOLT HOLE

With this Gift, the Garou carves out a small piece of the Umbra which they can retreat to, a place of familiarity and peace in an increasingly dangerous world. Many theurges carry objects that remind them of home, all the better to aid their passage to the Umbra. A fox-spirit teaches this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Composure + Wisdom

System: The Garou makes a Gift test against Difficulty equal to the local Gauntlet rating. If successful, they're immediately pulled into their pocket realm, and cannot be tracked or followed by

spirits less powerful than Incarnae. For every additional point of the margin, the Garou can pull another friend along with them, but they must remain in physical contact until safely in the bolt hole. The hole is as big as a large room and represents the hopes and dreams of its owner, though a Brutal outcome twists the place to represent their fears instead. The only exit takes them back to their point of origin, and at the scene's end, everyone is returned there.

Duration: One scene

TOTAL RENOWN 8

GHOST WALK

The werewolf attunes themselves to the Gauntlet itself, shifting into a state neither fully material nor spirit. While occupying this semi-intangible state, they can pass through walls as if they weren't there. For the Garou, they aren't. A wind-spirit teaches this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Stamina + Honor

System: The Garou touches a non-organic surface they wish to pass through and makes a Gift test (Difficulty equals the local Gauntlet -1). If successful, they can walk through whatever surface they're in contact with. This state of intangibility only applies to the surface they're passing through, so it cannot be used to avoid attacks or escape grapples. As with regular Umbral travel, only Dedicated items can be brought with them.

Duration: Until they emerge from the surface's other side



PHILODOX GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 2

INDOMITABLE SPIRIT

For the philodox to be successful, they must lead by example. This Gift removes the adverse effects of injury, allowing the half-moon to fight through the pain as if but scratched. An ancestor-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Free

Pool: —

System: The Garou can ignore the effects of impairment by activating this Gift.

Duration: One scene

TOTAL RENOWN 5

CALCIFY

The physical and spiritual realms exist as reflections of each other, with actions in one causing reactions in the other in a perpetual feedback loop. By calling upon the Weaver's servants, the philodox temporarily halts this loop and induces permanence in a physical feature, such as imbuing plate glass with the strength of steel or rotting wooden doors the impenetrability of a bank vault. Pattern spiders grant this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Composure + Honor

System: The player tests Composure + Honor against Difficulty 3. If successful, anyone attempting to either open, destroy, or otherwise "traverse" the object via feats of strength or Larceny tests must succeed at an appropriate test at Difficulty 3 + the player's margin of success. Calcification of an object stretches no further than one meter in each direction.

Duration: One scene

GALLIARD GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 2

HOWL OF DESPAIR

Throwing back their heads, the werewolf releases all their pain and fury in an earsplitting, keening howl. For those exposed to the harrowing scream, the only feeling is one of emptiness, as if their soul were being fed to the wolves. A servant of Gorgon grants this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Full

Pool: Charisma + Glory

System: The Garou howls or screams and makes a Gift test against Difficulty 3. If successful, everyone in earshot that isn't a part of the Garou's pack suffers 1 Willpower damage, or 2, if the result was a critical win. This Gift can also be used in lupus form.

Duration: —

ULLABY

By calling upon the spirits of slumber with their song, the Garou urges them to visit their target, forcing them into an irresistible slumber, blissfully unaware of the actions of the werewolf. A dream-spirit grants this Gift.

Renown: Wisdom

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Full

Pool: Composure + Wisdom

System: The target must be capable of natural sleep and within earshot of the Garou. The player makes a Composure + Wisdom test against the Wits + Resolve of the target, and if successful, the victim drifts into a deep, peaceful slumber. While sleeping, the target is still awoken by noises and disturbances as usual unless the Garou scores a critical win, in which case they only wake if hurt. Supernatural targets can resist the effects by spending a Willpower, and will regardlessly wake if threatened. If left undisturbed, slumbering victims sleep for hours.

Duration: Until awoken or the scene ends

AHROUN GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 2

TUG THE LEASH

Frenzies are often as destructive to a Garou's allies as they are to their enemies, as one can never predict in which direction the Rage will be directed. This Gift allows the ahroun a modicum of control when in the grip of frenzy. A Lune grants this Gift.

Renown: Honor

Cost: Free

Action: —

Pool: Composure + Honor

System: While in a state of frenzy, A Garou possessing this Gift can make a Gift test at Difficulty 2 to choose an eligible target for their attack rather than following the urges of the frenzy. They must perform an attack, however, and follow all other frenzy rules. When testing to exit frenzy they can add their Honor to the dice pool.

Duration: —

TOTAL RENOWN 5

LIGHT OF THE MOON

The Garou of the full moon shine with an inner radiance befitting their auspice. The resulting glare is strong enough to temporarily blind onlookers and send the undead into piques of terror. A Lune or servant of Falcon teaches this Gift.

Renown: Glory

Cost: 1 Rage Check

Action: Minor

Pool: Charisma + Glory

System: Anyone looking directly at the werewolf (typically those involved in close combat or targeting them with ranged attacks or powers) must make a Wits + Composure test against the ahroun's Charisma + Glory or be dazzled by the light. Dazzled characters receive a two-dice penalty to all dice pools relying on sight. Vampires and creatures susceptible to sunlight sustain one level of Aggravated Health damage each round they are exposed to the light. The Gift ends prematurely if the Garou

is incapacitated by filling either their Health or Willpower tracker or chooses to end it.

Duration: One scene or until ended

BLACK FURY GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 3

HOWL OF DESPAIR (As Galliard)

BONE GNAWER GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 3

UMBRAL POCKET (As Ragabash)

CHILDREN OF GAIA GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 3

ULLABY (As Galliard)

GALESTALKER GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 3

INDOMITABLE SPIRIT (As Philodox)

GHOST COUNCIL GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 3

ENTREAT (As Theurge)

GLASS WALKER GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 6

CALCIFY (As Philodox)

HART WARDEN GIFTS

TOTAL RENOWN 6

BOLT HOLE (As Theurge)

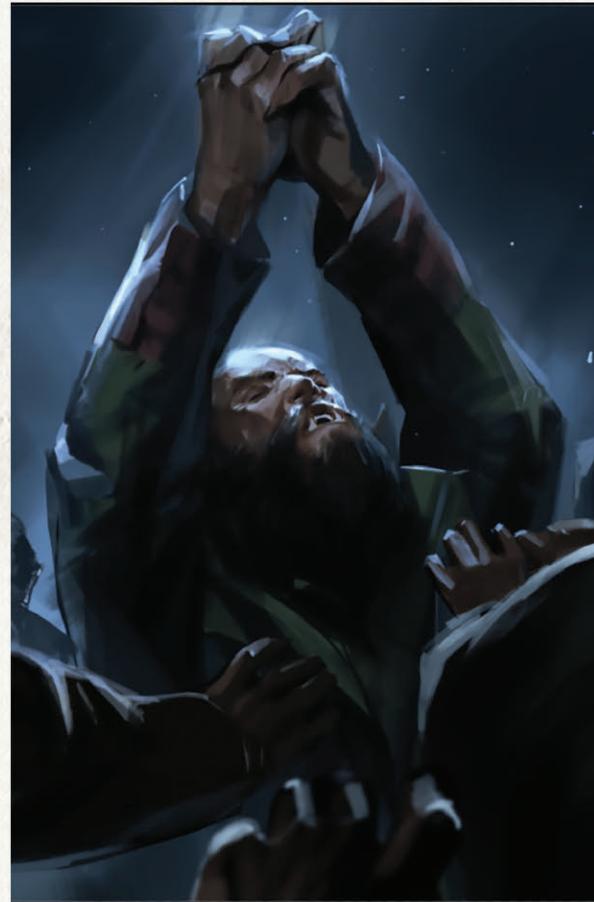


RED TALON GIFTS**TOTAL RENOWN 3****TUG THE LEASH (As Ahroun)****SHADOW LORDS GIFTS****TOTAL RENOWN 6****JUMP SCARE (As Ragabash)****SILENT STRIDER GIFTS****TOTAL RENOWN 3****SUMMON IMPLEMENT (As Theurge)****SILVER FANG GIFTS****TOTAL RENOWN 6****LIGHT OF THE MOON (As Ahroun)****RITES****RITE OF THE BROKEN WOLF**

One of the more humiliating punishment Rites, Garou experiencing this chastisement rarely submit to it as a form of penance but instead have it thrust upon them. The Rite itself strips away the wolf from them, depriving them of their ability to shapeshift or access their Rage and trapping them in their birth form. The resulting experience is remarkably humbling, and more than one Garou has been saved from a path of self-destruction by a well-timed intervention. The Garou being punished is held down, often by their packmates, while the Rite Master holds their throat in their jaws. The Rite is complete once a glyph is scrawled with freshly burned charcoal on their forehead.

Pool: Honor + Leadership

System: The Difficulty of this Rite is equal to



2 + the targeted Garou's highest Renown score, but if successful, the werewolf loses the wolf and cannot regain it by simply howling at the moon. The punishment endures until their auspice moon shines again or the Rite of the Wolf Reborn (*Werewolf*, p. 186) is performed upon them by one of the Garou who punished them.

RITE OF THE CAPRICIOUS SKY

Numerous versions of this Rite exist, with individual caerns often teaching their members their own localized version. Whether it necessitates solemn chanting, burned offerings, harmonized howling, or complex dances, the result is the same: weather-spirits answer the calls of the Garou. If suitably impressed, the spirits agree to alter local weather patterns to whatever the werewolves wish: clear skies for star gazing, dense fog for getting lost in, lashing rains to deter the wary, and howling

winds to erase trails have all seen use by the ever-creative Garou.

Pool: Glory + Etiquette

System: A successful test alters the weather patterns within three kilometers of the ritual site for one scene or about an hour. The Difficulty of this Rite depends upon how great the shift in weather patterns is and how rapidly the change needs to occur. Minor changes to weather patterns (increasing or decreasing the temperature by a few degrees, making light clouds clear themselves or produce a light rain) might be Difficulty 2, whereas larger changes (turning those same clouds into a storm or dense fog) are Difficulty 4. Major changes (creating raging storms on an otherwise calm summer day) are Difficulty 6. Such drastic changes both endanger the Veil and anger nature-spirits and are rarely enacted today. Changes occur after a few hours or so but increasing the Difficulty by 1 makes the changes happen within the hour. Each additional point of the Margin can increase the radius of the effect by about three kilometers or increase the duration by about an hour. This Rite cannot produce weather patterns that are utterly impossible for the time or day or season.

RITE OF FORGING

A multitude of talismans and talens see use among the Garou, each crafted for a specific purpose in their fight for Gaia's salvation. While they have the outward appearance of the mundane, the spirit residing at their core ensures they're anything but. It's common for Garou to forget the sacrifice made by the spirits, imprisoned as they are within the talisman — just more collateral damage in their unending war.

Spirits can be anchored to objects with the Rite of Binding, but while it's a necessary first step, it doesn't offer either the connection or the permanency required to forge a talisman or talen. The Rite of Forging takes that anchor and wraps it in chains of obligation, loyalty, and power, making something more than the sum of its parts.

Pool: Honor + Crafts

System: The talisman first needs to be physically constructed — this might require additional craft tests, but as long as it uses the right components in its build, the quality's more cosmetic than ritualistic. A spirit then needs to be bound to the object using the Rite of Binding; this can be performed by anyone. Once the object is complete and has a spirit inside, the Rite of Forging begins. The specifics vary from sept to sept, but commonly the Rite Master lights a fire and casts something of personal value — covered in their own blood — onto the blaze, signifying a sacrifice of their own. Finally, an Honor + Craft test is made at Difficulty equal to the dot value of the Talisman. On a critical win, the Rite results in the creation of a talisman; otherwise, the object is a talen (Storytellers may allow the creation of multiple talens if appropriate and if sufficient margin is achieved). Brutal results destroy the object and free the (now certainly) hostile spirit. If, during binding, the spirit was hostile or realized it was tricked into the item, treat all dice as if they were Rage dice. Experience must still be spent for objects created, but Storytellers may deem some situations receive a lower cost than usual.

RITE OF GAIA'S BRAVERY

The Rite of Gaia's Bravery temporarily removes the effects of the Delirium on a chosen human, and, for a while at least, they're immune to this ancient fear. Rare is the person who is granted permission to receive this Rite. Performing it without the permission of the Nation's elders was once considered a shameful offense. Since the Nation's fracture, opinions have split, but it's safe to say that overuse of this Rite is rarely well received. The subject of the Rite is lulled into a trance whereafter they're subjected to potent psychedelics, causing them to relive their own life as if they'd been werewolves themselves. Upon awakening, the Delirium ceases to affect them. Rumors abound of a bastardized version of this Rite that the Black Spiral Dancers perform upon allied werewolf hunters, as do theories about a Pentex-developed pharmaceutical providing similar effects.



Pool: Honor + Leadership

System: This Difficulty of this Rite is $2 + 1$ per human participant, and if successful, it persists for a full lunar cycle. The human participants retain their full memory of any experiences, but unless this Rite is performed again, they suffer the Delirium upon further exposure. If the Rite Master rolls a Brutal outcome, the target suffers from the Delirium upon seeing any of the Garou involved in the Rite, regardless of their form. In addition, they cannot have this Rite performed upon them again by that Rite Master for one lunar cycle. This Rite only affects humans and unchanged Kin, though multiple Garou may participate to increase the efficacy as usual.

Humans and Rites

Humans cannot normally participate in Garou Rites. In rare instances where they can, humans never add any dice to the pool, unlike Garou. The difficulty does, however, increase as the number of participants increase. Unchanged Kin count as humans unless otherwise noted.

RITE OF SPIRITUAL SUCCOR

This Rite beseeches spirits of life and vitality to lend their energy to a traveler in the Umbra. It binds the spirit to the form of the traveler for a time, warding off ill effects for longer. It is customary to negotiate with the spirits beforehand for payment of some kind, as many spirits resent being used in this way. A rarer use for this Rite is to briefly shield a human from the effects of the Umbra, an environment intrinsically hostile to physical life. Such an intrusion must necessarily last for only a short time, though a spirit might be willing to undertake the task for sheer novelty value alone.

Pool: Wisdom + Etiquette

System: The base Difficulty for the Rite is equal to the number of participants, though never less than 3. On a win, each participant can stay in the

Umbra for one additional scene without needing to expend Willpower to prevent Aggravated Health damage. Each two additional successes in the margin increases this by one scene. The effects of this Rite end for any given participant if they do not enter the Umbra before the moon next rises or sets.

Humans can participate in this Rite. A human protected by this Rite can participate in the Rite of Shadow Passage, and thus be transported into the Umbra. Their protection lasts for as long as the Garou participants. However, once the protection expires, they die instantly and horribly, their physical form atomized by the environment itself.

ADVANTAGES AND FLAWS**MENTAL**

Flaw (•) Bitter: Even among the grudge-bearing Garou, you're the sort who finds it hard to let go, and your anger forever festers away under the surface, unable to ever truly find release. After you've gained your first point of Hauglok, all Hauglok tests are made at +1 Difficulty.

Flaw (•) Morose: One of life's true fatalists, for you, every silver lining must have a cloud, and while you're dedicated to the struggle, it will always remain just that. After you've gained your first point of Harano, all Harano tests are made at +1 Difficulty.

Flaw (•) Tactile Learner: You're a creature of instinct, and no amount of study or practice helps you internalize what you've learned until the muscle memory kicks in. Any purchase of a Skill dot or a Specialty requires you to have used the Skill successfully in the preceding session.

SHAPESHIFTING

The Garou take their ability to shift forms for granted; it's their birthright, after all, and their single most defining trait. For most werewolves, these capabilities are a given. However, others find the process isn't always as straightforward as others expect.

•• Favored Form: Shapeshifting is as natural to you as breathing, and from the moment you changed, you realized some forms were less taxing to shift to than others. Choose one of the supernatural forms; whenever shifting to that form, you may reroll a single failed Rage Check.

- **Umbral Shift:** The Umbra brings out your primal urge. Whenever you enter the Umbra or your caern's bawn, you can shift to glabro or hispo form for free without making a Rage check so long as you haven't lost the wolf. Whenever you leave the Umbra or your caern's bawn you can instantly change to homid or lupus form. For this Merit, "your caern" can be any caern you have a close relationship with, such as one guarded by your sept, or one with an Advantage on your character pack sheet (see Pack Sheets in *Shattered Nation*, p. 143). A Flaw such as Caern Pariah (permanent or temporary) prohibits using this Advantage in that caern.

- **Willful Crinos:** The first time during each shift into crinos form that you need to spend Willpower to resist frenzy, you do not need to spend any Willpower to do so.

Flaw (••) Slow Shifter: The Wyld is within you, but it takes a little longer to make itself evident and your ability to shift suffers accordingly. Shifting form carries the same cost as usual, but instead requires a full action; during this time the werewolf can do nothing but concentrate on changing. Gifts or other situations that would reduce shifting speed can reduce this penalty to a minor action but no further.

Flaw (•) Wolven Retreat: You have no problems shifting between the varied forms of the Garou when Luna's with you, but once your Rage falters, a dangerous limitation imposes itself upon you. Whenever you lose the wolf, rather than choosing your mundane form, you're forced to become lupus.

Flaw (• or ••) Limited Forms: Your ability to shift into the supernatural forms is restricted, and while homid, crinos, and lupus are all within your grasp, certain partial forms are impossible for you to attain. For one point, you cannot shift to hispo, while the two-dot Flaw removes glabro from your range.

Flaw (•) Painful Change: For you, every change brings with it an agonizing ordeal as you feel

your skin stretched taut, your bones broken and reformed, and your body warped beyond natural tolerances. Whenever assuming a supernatural form, you sustain one level of Superficial Health damage.

SUPERNATURAL SITUATIONS

- **Practiced Rite:** Choose one Rite you know. When leading that rite, you ignore one Brutal result (1–2 on a Rage die) rolled, treating it like a blank (3–5) though you cannot reroll it still. You can take this Merit multiple times but must choose a different Rite each time.

WILD HERITAGE

Garou aren't just creatures of spirit and flesh but creatures of wolf and man as well. Though large packs of wolves have ranged across the globe for millennia, the specific breeds remain largely irrelevant to the average werewolf. However, there are situations where this heritage surfaces and becomes useful. Only one type of heritage merit can be taken by a character.

- **Gray Wolf:** The most common of wolves is also the most well-adapted pack animal, and like your wolfish brethren, you've adapted particularly well to life in the pack. Whenever benefiting from teamwork, you gain an additional bonus die when assisted by two or more helpers (see *Werewolf*, p. 122 for rules on teamwork).

- **Tundra Wolf:** Your lupine heritage hails from the coldest parts of Gaia, and your bright white coat and love of colder temperatures reveal this fact. You suffer halved penalties from cold temperatures (round down), although the Storyteller may deem certain circumstances (doused in liquid nitrogen) are beyond your natural resistance.

Flaw (•) Distinctive Musk: While not unpleasant, your personal scent is distinct and everpresent, and no matter how often you wash or try to cover it up, it never leaves you. Any attempt to track, recognize, or detect you via scent receives a two-dice bonus, and certain Social tests are made at a two-dice penalty, at the Storyteller's discretion. ■





CHAPTER THREE

Anatomy of a Caern

"Look, Beatrix, is it? I get it, your patron lost its tribe, and now you miss the Stargazers. But you can't just go through the Gauntlet whenever you want trying to find them again. If you want to find the Stargazers, you should let your mental cogwheels turn, and see what you can deduce. Are those the clues you have? An arrow and a montera hat. Not much to go on. You're usually too clever for your own good, but now it seems to me you're not clever enough."

-DJERTRU SMINTHEIS, A GAFFLING

Sometimes, a Garou pack or two find a location where the connection between the Umbra and the material world is stronger, and the barrier between our world and its shadow is weak or even broken. If a spirit has shown them the proper Rites, they may consecrate such a place into a caern, which will be their temple, their meeting hall, and their gateway into the Umbra.

The packs that protect a caern form a sept. They are the celebrants of the temple, the councilors of the meeting hall, the travelers of the gateway, and the guardians of the bawn, the perimeter around the caern.

The sept may welcome other Garou and even humans into the caern as pilgrims, tourists, moot participants, or museum goers. Sometimes cleaners, electricians, plumbers, or sushi delivery people may visit the caern, unknowing of its true nature but perhaps sensing something odd.

In the Umbra, caerns are often places where the Gauntlet is thin, where the material world and its shadow nearly touch. Individual spirits might not be able to distinguish when such a thinning is the caern of a pack devoted to Unicorn and when it is simply the domain of one of Unicorn's jagglings. (Unless there was a constant stream of werewolves through it, of course.)



Beaver Root had left the Umbra through the Gauntlet and immediately found a human body to enter. Others had been there before, but it had managed to kick at least one of the previous occupants out. Too bad, but spirits really needed a body to move around in the physical world. Everyone knew that. If you were just floating around as a spirit, you couldn't do that much.

"Are you all right?" the man asked, kneeling by him.

Beaver Root was apparently lying on the ground. Weird. The woman had been sitting in a chair when it had entered her vessel.

"I think so," Beaver Root said. "Is this the physical world?"

"The what? Okay, I'm getting you some water."

That was nice. While the man was gone, Beaver Root experimented with moving the woman's stalks and leaves. No, a human had limbs and branches or something. It managed to wiggle one of them. Then another.

"Melanie? What the hell are you doing?"

Melanie? Was that the woman's name? "Nothing," Beaver Root said and put its fingers into the cup of water. It tried to absorb the water, but nothing happened.

"You must've hit your head," the man said. "Here."

He took her by the head and raised the cup to an opening in it. He poured the water in and some reflex made Beaver Root swallow it. Now it could feel the water in its body. So this was how humans drank! Very similar to muskrats and crocodiles. Of course! They were all animals, after all. Beaver Root could figure this out.

The man clearly wanted to help, and there wasn't really any use to hide the truth from him.

"Here's the thing," Beaver Root said, "I'm the spirit of a water lily in service to the Bayou. This is my first time in the physical world, and I'm going to need some guidance."

"Holy shit! You're a Wyld-spirit? Are you a jaggling or a gaffling? How can I help?"

Three difficult questions. "I don't know what the Wyld or a jaggling or a gaffling are, but you can help."

The man was looking around the porch of the streetcar. "It's kind of messy, I meant to clean before the acolyte of Mistwalker returns. Just a moment." He started to pick up the garbage on the ground and tried to stuff them in the can that was already overflowing.

"I intend to live here in the physical world, and I'd like you to show me around," Beaver Root said.

"Wait, wait, wait! You can't stay here! I mean, you can't stay in Melanie's body. I need her back. We need to get to the funeral. Melanie, are you in there?"

Beaver Root could feel a presence inside the body it was possessing. Was it Melanie? Or the other one?

CAERNS IN PLAY

In the Umbra, caerns are majestic, mythical, and magical, their true nature bare for everyone to see. Where a caern in the material realm is centered on an ancient oak, in the Umbra it rises so high its top cannot be easily seen. In the material world, while all caerns do have a connection to the spirits and are protected by Rites, not all look like that to the casual observer. Sure, there are caerns at churches, old burial grounds, and at very old trees. But just as easily, a caern can exist at a Silver Fang's mansion, in an office, or in a hotel room.

While the caern serves as an important gateway between the material world and the Umbra, a beacon of sorts for spirits, a holy place for the Garou, and a safe haven for its sept, it is also a place where the Garou need to spend time. The Garou might even live there, and certainly, for some Rites, they would need to be able to spend a day or two there. Some caerns double as moot locations or are close enough to be visited during moots.

Caerns can very well combine with the players' characters' Backgrounds, such as serving as a safe house. An interesting piece of storytelling can arise by answering why it is a safe house for only one character.

THE LIFE CYCLE OF A CAERN

Caerns are rarely made in places that have no previous connection to the Umbra. Typically, the Gauntlet in such a place is already somewhat permeable. Such places are often in previous use, either as old caerns or as other kinds of homes to any variety of supernatural creatures.

A pack in the process of creating a caern might need to conquer an existing caern from a rival sept, reclaim an abandoned caern from mystics, fomori, or vampires, reinvigorate a ruined caern, or banish antagonistic spirits or fairies. This battle will likely have to be fought both in the physical world and the Umbra, likely at the same time. Once the Garou have established some kind of hold over the caern site, they must consecrate—or reconsecrate—it and establish relations with the local spirit court. All of this happens within the Rite of Caern Building and can take weeks.

Then comes the active phase of the caern, when it is used by the Garou for rituals and for entering the Umbra. They will protect it from physical and spiritual enemies, care for it, paint the walls, and bring in furniture. It may be their home or a beloved shrine they frequent. Without constant upkeep, they run the risk of letting the caern fall into ruin or become conquered by rivals.



10 Things That Can Happen at a Caern

1. A half-known spirit calls from the Umbra asking for a body to possess, since it has urgent business in the physical world.
2. The roof is leaking, and it is really annoying. Someone in the sept had better fix it. (The other pack promised to do it but didn't.)
3. A storm has taken down a link tower, and now there's no cell phone signal in the wilderness caern. Can the Garou build their own link or fix the existing one? Or would they be doing the work of the Weaver?
4. A neighboring sept asks if they can host a big moot at the caern. Their own is too small.
5. A Garou or Stag's jaggling wants a nice garden by the caern, which involves months or years of cutting, digging, planting, fertilizing, weeding, pruning, and good luck with the weather and the animals. But it is rewarding to eventually see it in bloom.
6. A polite neighbor asks for the Garou to turn down the volume of their music (which is really a Rite or a moot).
7. The pack's Patron Spirit has made a spirit friend who has its own pack of Garou and wants to introduce them. The other pack is from a different social class than the characters, and neither side knows how to behave.
8. During the Rite, someone stole your car from outside the caern.
9. The town wants to evict the Garou from the caern because they are building a new highway, and there will be a gas station right there. This is a long project that starts with letters, continues with phone calls and visits, and (unless stopped) ends with bulldozers. Weaver and Wyrm influence may be felt strongly.
10. A grizzled old Garou enters with her own keys, saying it's actually the caern of her pack, which has been in exile for a long time. But now she's back!

Eventually, it will happen. Garou are mortal, and few septs survive for more than a couple of decades. New leaders arise, forming new packs and new septs; old Garou abandon the ways of their elders and wish to build a caern of their own in a place that is more relevant than the old one. The old caern's spirit guardians may grow weary, protective Rites wear off, or construction workers may destroy the holt or house where the caern was.

What remains could be a place of spiritual connection, a beacon for supernatural beings, a lair of the enemy, or just a broken ruin, symbolic of the shattered Garou Nation.

CAERN LOCATIONS

Caerns exist everywhere. Garou exist, and there are even some in places where Garou used to exist.

The caerns in the untouched or less touched wilds of our world—be it forest, tundra, ocean, glacier, jungle, steppe, mountain, or desert—likely have the least connection to spirits other than those attuned to Wyld. (It would be wrong to say they have the most connection to Wyld since any healthy Garou caern has a strong connection to it.) The Umbral side of such caerns would be home to the gafflings of the pack's Patron Spirit or those of specific tribal patrons.

As most people live in the cities, so, too, do many Garou. City caerns are found in abandoned factories, mosque attics, old towns, harbors, overgrown parks, bar back rooms, catacombs, communes, museum cellars, and arboretums, and there one might feel Weaver's influence: sometimes weaker, sometimes stronger. In the Umbra, pattern spiders would have been attracted here, weaving their webs, trying to close the Gauntlet.

As caerns require constant upkeep and might even be attacked by enemies, there are also abandoned or

10 Locations for a Caern

1. The caern is in the middle of the hilly forest and can't be accessed by car or bike. If you have a vehicle, you have to leave it by the roadside.
2. The caern is built at an expensive hunting cabin with all the luxuries of the city but also easy access to nature.
3. The caern can only be accessed via a narrow tunnel, and you need to be in lupus form to enter.
4. The caern is at a rundown amusement park. The pack sleeps in the haunted house, and to enter the Umbra, you must ride the Ferris wheel.
5. This TV studio does a lot of supernatural shows, and their back lot has sets that have a certain Umbral feel to them. Among these sets is an actual caern because nobody bats an eye if a Garou in glabro walks past. They just assume they're an extra in a horror show.
6. The caern is in a cave and there are prehistorical cave paintings on the walls.
7. The caern is in a hotel suite with two attached bedrooms with room service always available. Few could afford this, but there is a special arrangement with the hotel manager who had to find a way to get rid of the spirits that haunted the place before the caern was founded.
8. The caern is on top of a mountain where the winds blow constantly. It is dedicated to North Wind.
9. The caern is in a castle that has become a tourist destination. It's very difficult to get a moot going nowadays without causing mass Delirium.
10. The caern was in an apartment building in a war zone and was demolished by invaders, along with almost all other civilian infrastructure. The local Garou have the long task of rebuilding ahead of them, if they decide to stay there.

destroyed caerns, and those taken over by the enemy. They can be found anywhere in areas that used to be controlled by a sept, and there, the Wyrm's influence can be felt. On the Umbral side, Fly's gafflings are likely to buzz around, eating the remains and laying eggs in the ruins.

ROLES AT A CAERN

Regular life at the caern isn't all about fighting the Wyrm. As with any place you're responsible for, there's a lot of upkeep involved. Like at a safe house or any other place the Garou gather, someone has to get groceries or hunt, cook, clean, tend the garden, fix the roof, paint the walls, protect the spirits, perform the Rites, organize the moot, pay the rent, walk the pets, chop wood, guard the bawn, sharpen the klawes, shoo away the pattern spiders, commune with the Patron Spirit...

Neglecting any of these tasks might make life difficult for the Garou. These tasks shouldn't take

up too much play time, but they can be a nice way of establishing what the everyday life of the players' pack is like. The backdrop of normality provides a good contrast with the action-packed meat of the stories, and including aspects of mundane life makes the supernatural more meaningful. For most packs, the caern will be a place where this contrast is the most evident—on one hand, it's a place that needs maintenance and cleanup—unless it is in a sewer or a dump—but on the other, it is also a mystic locus. Groups should discuss among themselves what this means and what kind of daily routines, if any, they have at the caern, to establish some background color.

Most septs have at least a few formal positions, and the bigger the sept, the more such titled positions there are. Such positions include Caern Warden, who takes care of security, and Rite Master, who leads the major Rites at the caern. Garou who can claim the title of Elder are today rare and revered. For more on roles in Garou society, see *Shattered Nation*, pp. 43–44.



"Look, I've been to some fantastic caerns in my time. A cave in France with twenty-thousand-year-old cave paintings of wolves. In the jungle, surrounded by a million alluring scents. On top of a mountain where the wind howls louder than you. Well, okay, I didn't go there personally, but I've heard about it more than once. But once you get past the initial 'Wow! This is so amazing! Let me take a selfie,' what you really wanna know are things like: is there a toilet or do I shit in the forest? Is there a fridge for my beers? Are there chairs? Is there a microwave? Where are all the drugs? Are there beds? Are there private rooms in case you want to get comfortable with someone, if you know what I mean? That's what's really important."

—DOMINIQUE “DEATH-IN-WORD” OMAR, SILVER FANG RAGABASH

10 Features for a Caern

1. The urban caern is decorated with graffiti, and every visitor is expected to leave their own sigil, tag, or picture.
2. A printout with the Tenets of the Litany is taped by the entrance.
3. One Garou or pack using the caern also uses it as a drug stash. Cops or a human gang are staking the place out.
4. There's no electricity. If you spend a long time there, your phones and laptops will run out of power.
5. There is a locked door in the caern that nobody has been able to open. No one knows what's behind it.
6. In the Umbra, the caern sits on top of a sleeping giant. Now there's a danger of it waking up to Gaia's Howl.
7. A couple of gafflings haunt the caern, possessing inanimate objects and causing minor but unsettling inconveniences like vanishing car keys or levitating coffee mugs.
8. A long-gone caretaker was a packrat and even after decades, their stuff still turns up, from Fleetwood Mac cassettes and slowly discoloring family photographs to dogeared Ursula K. Le Guin paperbacks and small animal skulls.
9. For Umbral reasons, it is always uncomfortably chilly at the caern, and most wear thick coats or use forms other than homid when staying.
10. The caern is unusually fecund. Plants flourish and animal life breeds quickly. Don't hook up there unless you're sure.

It is not unheard of for humans or wolves to be a part of caern society, if not the sept itself. They could be a Garou's parent, partner, sibling, or child, who understands the others are werewolves but still wants to help them and possibly even live with them. Many of the tasks don't require supernatural abilities to perform, but having a regular person or animal around puts them at risk, too. While sometimes they are given the Rite of Gaia's Bravery (p. 67), only at caerns which expect to see frequent combat and therefore werewolves in crinos is it truly necessary.

SPIRIT COURTS

Beyond the barrier of the Gauntlet, usually thin around the caern, the spirits dwell. Some are attracted to the thin Gauntlet and the possibilities it promises, but most spirits around the caern are just there because it is in their nature to be there. As caerns are spiritually significant locations, the Spirit Wilds around them are teeming. The Garou term for spirits in and around the bawn of a caern is the spirit court, and they do well to keep in the court's good graces.

The spirits themselves may or may not organize themselves into a local hierarchy, but in cases where there are many free-willed spirits present, it does happen. Important local spirits hold roles of leadership and authority among their kind, like the jaggling spirit of a river commands the fish and frog gafflings in its stream. The court's makeup keeps changing as the material world that it reflects changes. Should that river be dammed, its spirit would diminish to a gaffling, or perhaps be transmuted into the spirit of a great reservoir. Angering an important spirit can easily turn the spirits of the whole region against the Garou, refusing to even hear their pleas.

Smart septs keep things at least cordial with the local spirit court. These are the spirits they most often bargain with for teaching them Gifts or settling into their talismans. Of course, Garou are often foolish, and spirits have little reason to trust them. Both sides are aware that a violent altercation will end in the Garou's favor, at least in the short term. For more on spirit courts, see *Shattered Nation*, pp. 126–127.

TABLE 2: CAERN NAMES

If you don't want to come up with a caern name yourself, you can roll twice to name it.

Roll	Part One	Part Two
1	Fortress of	the Moon
2	Domain of	Night and Day
3	Sept of	Life
4	Caern of	Tomorrow
5	Temple of	Winter
6	Union of	Rage
7	Haven for	the Wyld
8	Chamber of	Gaia
9	Sepulcher of	the Spirits
10	Bawn of	[Patron Spirit name]



SAMPLE SEPTS

SEPT OF THE GREEN

"It's certainly not what it was when I was a teenager in the 90s. But once again, it exists. And if we all pull together, you, me, everybody, we'll make Central Park the biggest bawn in America. And this sept will fight off the Weaver for yet another generation."

—SIMON GENTLE, GLASS WALKER PHILODOX

The bawn of this sept is New York City's entire Central Park. There were times in the past when the Wyld-spirits protected the whole park from cars—bikes, skateboards, horse-drawn carriages, and walking were the only ways to get around. Even now in its contested state, the bawn has a calming influence on humans who want to get away from the busy hustle of the Weaver-influenced neighborhoods surrounding the park.

Of particular hatred to the Garou are the

Wollman Memorial Rink and the Carousel, which they consider powerful Weaver locations. But the fountains, the Zoo, and the meditative Sheep Meadow hold a certain appeal to them.

The caern itself is located inside the Ramble, a protected woodland inside Central Park, home to sixty species of trees, 250 species of birds, winding paths, rustic bridges, a meandering stream, and a stone arch. While humans may cruise or hike in the Ramble, there are pathways only noticeable by Garou that lead to the hidden parts of their caern. The Ramble also hosts a small native wolf population descended from the Garou and a wolf who escaped from the Zoo.

HISTORY

Native American Garou have had a caern in this area for centuries before it was Manhattan. With the rise of New York, the Weaver crept in. It wasn't until 1874 when New World Garou managed to organize enough to start a grand project to create within the city a haven of the Wyld. It took two decades and a human civil war, but by 1874, the Park was built and the caern within it was sanctified.

Control of the caern went from the original Silver Fangs to Glass Walker and then to Bone Gnawers, who held it from the end of World War II to the fall of the Garou Nation. Rats, drug gangs, Garou, fomori, cops, Leeches, and developers fought over dominance of the park. But with the help of allied tribes and King Albrecht himself, the Bone Gnawers kept their caern in operation and hosted many memorable moots and revels.

Then the Garou Nation collapsed, cooperation



stopped, infighting started, and many in the Bone Gnawer sept guarding the caern fell into harano or died violently, gripped by hauglosk. The Weaver had won. Buildings and sidewalks were restored to pristine condition, rats poisoned, spirits were banished, and everything was made orderly. The Park was there, but it was no longer a bawn, and the caern was gone.

CULTURE

In the past few years, a new sept has been formed from many New York-based Garou of various tribes. The Sept of the Green shares a name with its caern and has already established itself in the Ramble. One sign of the caern's rebirth is that cars have recently been banned from Central Park.

The members keep a low profile but have good connections within the gay and birdwatching communities who frequent the Ramble. Any Garou visitors to the caern are expected to pay a tithe to help with the upkeep. Appearing in crinos form or lifting the Veil in any other way is extremely frowned upon here. The Garou in the sept actively recruit new members because their numbers are way too low for a bawn this large.

CHARACTERS

* **Simon Gentle (Glass Walker philodox):** A gay man in his late fifties, the only living Garou who belonged to the old Sept of the Green. He has started the slow work of rebuilding the sept, although he is much better at convincing people to join his projects than actually running them. He's outwardly suave but hides deep insecurities and traumas.

* **Soon-duk "Lupine Vixen" Kim (Red Talon galliard):** A Korean-American trans-woman, drag artist, and aspiring actress, she spreads the word about the rebuilt sept in Garou communities across New York. She rarely stops to listen but does really have the best interests of the community at heart. Lupine Vixen is known for stalking the Ramble and stealing people's cameras, cell phones, and other devices and destroying them.

STORIES

- ✿ **The Zoo Heist:** After taking in a great drag show, one of the performers, Lupine Vixen, approaches the player characters and invites them to her caern. She needs their help to sneak into the Central Park Zoo, liberate the wolves, and guide them to the Ramble.
- ✿ **Meet at the Park:** Simon Gentle calls all available Garou for a huge moot in Central Park. This is the biggest gathering since the fall of the Nation. His plan is to reestablish control over the entire park, banishing Weaver agents, Banes, and vampires, but leaving those humans who just wish to enjoy nature. This is a huge project and requires a lot of Garou. But others at the moot have different ambitions.

SEPT OF THE COLD NIGHT

Let me give you the basics. There is no bridge. It won't lead you to the Umbra. Don't go on the ice unless you know what you're doing. And especially don't go at night. You wonder why I'm telling you these things, but once you hear the voices of the spirits at the caern, you'll understand. Whether you choose to heed me is a different question altogether.

—SILUK THE SUN WATCHER, GHOST COUNCIL THEURGE

Some caerns act as the focal points of lively septs comprising dozens of Garou. The Sept of the Cold Night is not one of these. It's a site of pilgrimage among Garou who seek visions or even concrete, real help to assist in the war against the Wyrm. The sept is built around a caern near the coast of Canada's Nunavut territory. The nearest human settlement is Kugaaruk. To humans, the area is accessible by air, sea, and sea ice. A wolf might choose to traverse the frozen northern wilderness, but it's not an easy trek even for a hardy pack.



According to legend, if the time is right and the proper Rites have been performed, you can walk north from the area held by the sept and onto the sea ice. You walk north until you see nothing but the cold expanse of the ice, until the blackness of the winter night is all there is.

It is at this point that, according to the legend, you'll pass to the Umbra and encounter ancient spirits of ice. Aloof from the concerns of the world in their immense power—the tepid thrashing of the Wyrm irrelevant in the face of their power—they can be petitioned for aid or wisdom.

What seems to happen in reality is that many supplicants simply fall into the frozen sea and die. Still, there are always tales about those who came back.

HISTORY

The history of the sept suffers from the tendency of its members to walk away. At the moment, the sept has only two members, and every time someone leaves, more history is lost and forgotten.

Still, there's a pattern. Some Garou come to the sept intent on walking the ice. They venture north and are never heard of again. Others come and stay for a while, living with the sept and learning its Rites. Their goal, too, might be to find something to use against the great enemy, but they tend to have better luck when they walk north.



CULTURE

The Rites and traditions of the sept are in constant danger of being forgotten. Currently, only its two members know them, teaching them to Garou who come in on pilgrimages when they can.

The sept doesn't stand on ceremony, except when it comes to the great spirits of the ice. When it's just Garou, sept business is often conducted in Siluk's small home. Visitors are allowed to sleep on the floor.

CHARACTERS

* Siluk the Sun Watcher (Ghost Council

Theurge: A peculiarity of the sept is that it seems impossible to hold onto its people. They always walk away, either onto the ice or south, to fight the wars of the Garou. Siluk is an Inuit werewolf, but he's not from the region. Like most guardians of the caern and leaders of the sept before him, he came on a pilgrimage and chose to stay. He's been here for fifteen years now, a record for the sept. He's taciturn, both helpful and hostile at the same time. He doesn't want to get to know visitors too well in case they choose to walk the ice and vanish forever into the sea. He has never walked north himself, but the temptation is there.

* Auka Never Dead (Ghost Council Philodox):

Auka got her Garou nickname from falling into the ice during her Rite of Passage and somehow surviving despite being in the freezing water for over an hour. It should have been impossible, yet she emerged still shivering and panting for breath. She's the only Garou to have been born in Kugaaruk within living memory, found and trained by Siluk. According to her, she walked the ice and returned last winter, but she feels she might need help beyond her sept to understand what she saw. Yet, her duty is to remain here.

STORIES

* The Wyrm Comes:

The enemy is implacable. Despite the extremely remote location, the sept is not immune. As Arctic hunting and oil drilling operations threaten the local ecosystem, Auka comes south in search of allies. In times past,

putting Garou on pilgrimage to work in defending the sept has been enough, but not this time.

*** The Secrets of the Ice:** Which is greater, the power of the Wyrm or the natural cycles of Gaia? Are humans changing the climate permanently or will another Ice Age eventually come and freeze the despoiler? Are there lessons to be learned on the great sea ice if one truly does pass to the Umbra as the stories say? And can those lessons be used in the fights of here and now? With questions such as these, the players' pack can be among the pilgrims seeking to walk north.

SEPT OF THE PALE GLEN

The Sept of the Pale Glen is a small but active sept comprising of a few packs, based around a caern of the same name. The caern is located in an overgrown park area at the outskirts of the city, centered in a copse of willows. Its modest appearance in the physical world belies the lively spirit court of the area in the Umbra. In the Umbra, the trees look like they form the palisade around a fortified military camp.

The sept numbers eighteen Garou and is trying to entice more packs to join them. They are rebuilding from recent losses and keeping busy, trying to keep their enemies off balance before they can muster up the numbers to mount a new attack.

HISTORY

The caern is old, predating living memory, on land that has been contested by humans and Garou alike for equally as long. Dig down, and you are likely to find a musket ball. Dig deep enough, and there will be a flint arrowhead. Through war and peace, the Garou have tenaciously held on to this caern.

As a result, the spirit court in the Umbra of the region is like a war camp, populated by spirits of conflict and combat. Its hierarchy shifts. Some days, it is like the strict chains of command of the modern military, some others, it follows the rule of the strongest. Always, at the top of the heap, there is an ancient war-spirit called the General. Just a year or two ago, the sept was dealt a terrible blow.

While the Black Spiral Dancers who attacked them suffered equal losses, the sept's greatest warriors and most of the elders were slain. A young leader, Jason Claws-the-Wind, had the position thrust upon him out of modest seniority.

CULTURE

The Sept of the Pale Glen is in a state of flux. Many are still grieving over the losses they suffered, and Jason Claws-the-Wind is trying to keep them occupied with fighting the Wyrm. He is growing into his role, but everyone understands he is never going to lead from the front.

The Gauntlet is thin at the caern (Gauntlet Rating: 2), and though the spirit court distrusts Garou and to war-spirits, battle is an end unto itself; they can be negotiated with. The spirits do not have a specific enemy. To them, it is important that battles are fought and won, and ultimately irrelevant who fights in them.

CHARACTERS

* Jason Claws-the-Wind (Glass Walker)

Philodox: In his mid-thirties, Jason is the sept's leader. He is energetic and driven in his identification and targeting of threats to the sept and to Gaia. What he is not is a war leader. Instead, he manages, delegates, and recruits. It is only a matter of time before a challenger replaces him, but he has thus far kept everyone pointed at more interesting things to fight. A challenger from outside the sept could end that.

* Emilia Arundel (Ghost

Council Theurge: Once a child of the library, now a bookish twenty-something, Emilia is the sept's Rite Master. The real deal has replaced fantasy novels, and she is burning with curiosity about the Umbra, making use of the caern's thin Gauntlet to make frequent forays and keep in touch with the region's spirit court.

An All-Purpose Sept

The Sept of the Pale Glen is designed to be dropped into your chronicle with a minimum of fuss. While it is written with the vague assumption of an English-language environment in a temperate climate, it is easy enough to switch out specifics and rename the Storyteller characters for anywhere in the world. Do that, and more, and make it your own. For easy character names from different cultures, look up Olympic sports teams of the desired culture and gender from Wikipedia and mix and match.

Such exposure to Gaia's Howl is taking its toll on her, and she is frequently afflicted with the worst migraines.

STORIES

*** Infiltration:** Emilia Arundel stumbles sideways out of the Umbra, badly hurt after an attack by rapacious spirits. The General's spirit court is being influenced by an Eriny (p. 98), with a band of Scrags (*Werewolf*, p. 250) in tow. The Banes must be prevented from subverting the court. Perhaps the Garou can fight the Banes in the Umbra on their own, or perhaps they must become war leaders of a spirit host to defeat their superior numbers.

*** Land Grab:** A local property developer is interested in buying the caern's land and putting up a gas station. The company is also unusually tenacious and determined in cutting through red tape to get complaints dismissed and permits approved. The sept must either work the system to prevent the building's construction or solve the problem violently and deal with the new problems that ensue. ■





CHAPTER FOUR



Disembodied Minds

Spirits are not human. They're conceptual, alien beings that operate on a completely different understanding of reality than humans or even the Garou.

The problem is that the Storyteller, tasked with portraying spirits in the game, is human, subject to human limitations. The question is, how to make spirits work in the game so that it is possible to talk with them, deal with them, and even form relationships without losing that all-important, unknowable mystery that's part of every spirit's makeup?

This chapter's goal is to give the Storyteller tools for how to use spirits in their chronicles. There are new types of spirits, information on themes that can be explored through spirits, and guidance on how to make spirits work in practice as part of the game. Creating memorable spirits is important because without them, the Umbra is just a backdrop. To truly come alive, the spirit world needs its denizens.

Spirit types are not monoliths. If you gathered five fox-spirits in a den, you'd not only find they significantly differ, but also discover they don't necessarily get along, even when serving the same purpose.

Much like how the Garou exist in the world of flesh and spirit, spirits hold a unique position as both individual creatures and cogs in a greater machine.

This chapter also takes a closer look at personalities, motives, and goals spirits could develop, and how to make sure that every spirit your pack encounters is a unique character, no matter their function and standing in the Umbra. It also looks at how to depict your own spirits, ensuring they're just as unique on the outside as they are on the inside.



"I don't really know how to help you," the man said as they were overlooking a giant pile of garbage. The guards had recognized Melanie's body and let her and her guest in, not realizing she was possessed by a nature-spirit and he was a werewolf. His name was Nihar Rokeya, but he had asked to be called Bull Shark.

"This was where Melanie worked," Beaver Root said. "If I'm to stay in this world, I must work here as well."

"That's the thing," Bull Shark said, "I don't think you should stay in Melanie's body. Can't you find your own body?"

"I don't have one. I'm from the Umbra."

"Right. But she needs her body back. Oh, and when you leave, try to make sure the Bane spirit can't enter it, either. Just Melanie's body and Melanie's soul."

Gulls were fighting over the plastic trash and wind was picking up some of it. A lot of it was already in the little river that meandered next to the trash heap. It was painful for them both to look at this.

"What is this place?"

"It's..." he looked at a sign on top of the office building. "Louisiana Plastic Haulers. When you recycle your plastic, they take it here and then send it to China or somewhere else for processing."

They could both see it was not being sent or processed. It was just here, rapidly entering the river.

"I have seen this happening before," Beaver Root said. "In the Umbra. Monsieur Plastique is everywhere in the Bayou. I sense his presence here, too."

"Now that you said it, Melanie was kind of possessed by a Bane. Maybe it was sent by this Monsieur Plastic."

"Plastique."

"Right."

"So, we have to help, right? Fight this Monsieur!"

"No," said Beaver Root. "That's why I left. I don't want anything to do with it. I'll live in this world and find some other work for this body."

Bull Shark looked at him with disappointment.

"What?"

"Nothing. It's just... I thought spirits would be different. But you're just like a human."

That hurt.

They looked at each other in the eye, not noticing how the trash around them moved and rose up first in heaps and then tendrils, closing in around them.

SPIRITS ARE LIKE US

While spirits aren't humans or werewolves, they're often more alike than they think, embodying and representing aspects of both. These aspects are best used to make spirits more approachable or to give quick interactions with spirits more color.

Spirits are like humans and werewolves in the following ways:

- ✿ **Spirits have goals and ambitions:** Spirits do their own thing, but just as we do, they want more out of their existence. Like in all hierarchies, there are those that wish to climb the ladder and make their way to the top. Some spirits have more concrete goals like "ensure my field has the best harvest" or "guide the most superb member of my flock into having the most children." Giving your spirits a goal or ambition to work towards gives your players' characters something they can use as a bargaining chip or gives you a starting point to work with when introducing a spirit as an antagonist.
- ✿ **Spirits have likes and dislikes:** While spirits of a certain type agree on many things, each individual spirit has its own set of likes and

dislikes depending on the environment it lives in, the spirits it knows, and how much it understands or respects the Garou. A water-spirit that comes in indirect contact with humans on the other side of the Gauntlet picks favorites, and some find it's easier to draw from the well it has a hand in running. A spirit of peace remembers a favor a pack once did for it years ago and gives preference to that pack over others in the sept, even if the individuals of that pack are now different. These likes and dislikes can shift rapidly, especially when brought up against ways they're not like humans and werewolves (p. 86).

- ✿ **Spirits are social creatures:** Spirits don't always keep to other spirits of their type and hierachal class, especially when living in the shadow of places in the physical world. For survival and companionship, spirits forge alliances and friendships and wage wars with enemies. These can help the spiritual landscape in your game feel more alive and give your players' characters a political environment to examine and even exploit. In a suburban area, the deer-spirit of the local forest can ally with the nearby neighborhood's spirit of community, whose NIMBY attitude keeps property developers away from the woodland.

What About Gafflings?

As minor, barely sentient spirits, gafflings don't necessarily fit the ways spirits compare with humans and werewolves. The spirit of a single moment in time probably doesn't have any real ambition. The spirit of a dying man's hunger pangs, born from an obscure agreement between two jagglings a decade ago, almost certainly has no real agency to speak of. Some are barely aware they're part of a greater hierarchy at all.

This doesn't mean this section isn't useful when storytelling gafflings, just that it needs a slight adjustment. Instead of using every single guideline, use one way a gaffling is like a human or werewolf. Perhaps a gaffling has just enough free will to want to become an Incarna over the next several thousand years, or their unyielding dedication to their purpose makes them a key part of a Black Spiral Dancer's plans.

In general, everything in the "Spirits Aren't Like Us" section applies to gafflings. In a spiritual station where sentience is a luxury, their function is all they exist for. Moral codes certainly don't apply, and often, hierarchy is the only thing that ensures a gaffling's existence.



* **Spirits have agency:** While a spirit exists to carry out its function, how it carries out that function and who it serves while carrying out that function is something a spirit chooses for itself. This can create conflict and dramatic tension in your game. A spirit of longing might act in such a way that a pack member confuses it for a spirit of hunger. A member of a spirit type that traditionally aligns itself with the forces of the Weaver might see the writing on the wall and lend its services to the forces of the Wyrm ascendant in hopes of surviving the chaos to come or simply to gain an advantage over others.

SPIRITS AREN'T LIKE US

For all the similarities spirits share with humans and werewolves, it's important to remember that they're incorporeal creatures of a world that does not function like the material world and does not need to conform to its standards or its morals. These aspects are best used to remind players of the dangers of spirits and to demonstrate the consequences of what might happen if players' characters underestimate them.



A spirit without a purpose is useless, and a useless spirit is one the forces of the Umbra will repurpose into something else.

Spirts differ from humans and werewolves in the following ways:

*** Spirits prioritize their function above all else:**

Spirits are doing their thing, and their thing is all they want to do. Spirits with enough awareness of their identity and a desire to keep that identity see their function fulfilled, no matter what effect that might have on the physical world. Spirits of pollution must encourage pollution, even if it makes enemies with spirits of the meadow; to do otherwise is to deny what they are and risk the unpleasant experience of becoming something else.

*** Spirits don't need a consistent moral code:**

Spirits do not have morals in the sense that a human or werewolf does. This doesn't mean they inherently have no sense of right or wrong, it's just that what is right and wrong is entirely determined by three factors: how much it facilitates fulfilling their purpose, whether it hurts the allies they've created, and how much it puts them at risk of retaliation. In practice, this means an otherwise pacifistic waterfall-spirit might shock the pack by suggesting they wipe out every member of a construction project that threatens to block water that feeds its waterfall. Its own survival overrides its usual opinion that human lives (especially those that use the waterfall's water to live) are sacred.

*** Spirits are not mortal:** Spirits do not die in the sense that humans or werewolves die. They might be forgotten and fade into nothingness; they might be devoured by Garou; or they might be banished by sorcery into a state where they might as well be dead, but their existence never truly ends. Their essence will recycle into the Umbra, and if the concept, emotion, or object they serve still exists, a new spirit will eventually manifest,

though it may be radically different in personality. Spirits still have survival instincts; even these effectively immortal beings want to live as they are, unhindered, for as long as they're able.

*** Spirits cling to their hierarchy:** While spirits do have agency, they're also part of a greater whole. Aside from the very few spirits that find a way to operate in the Umbra without a higher power to stand for them, the inhabitants of the Spirit Wilds have a boss and a boss' boss, and whatever they say goes. This can manifest a few ways in your game. Some spirits tend to "pass the buck" if it means the werewolves leave them alone, while others claim they were only "following orders" when the pack puts their backs against the spiritual reflection of the wall. A few wield power far beyond their own capabilities simply by being favored by higher-ranking spirits of their kind, giving them a strong leverage against Garou that wish to speak to those higher-ranking spirits.



SPIRIT PERSONALITY

If no two spirits, even those of the same type, are alike, how does one represent their individuality at the table? With a few considerations, the Storyteller can take a spirit's basic function and extend it into a supporting character for any kind of chronicle. For more information on the topic, see *Storyteller's Toolkit*, pp. 20–32.

To create the basic personality of a unique spirit, follow these steps as you plan your next story or as you improvise portraying the spirit at the table:

STEP ONE: DETERMINE ITS PURPOSE IN THE CHRONICLE

Is this a momentary meeting while traversing the Umbra? Is this a spirit a werewolf seeks out to learn a Gift? Does the spirit have a greater hand in the story to come, and is this something the pack should realize right away?

A spirit expected to stick around for a short time doesn't need to reveal every aspect of its personality immediately, so using one or two personality traits enough to establish a conflict or drive the story forward in some way is enough for the scene. There'll be time to flesh out the spirit should the players want to see more of it. A spirit expected to be a greater part of the story or chronicle should also be first portrayed with one or two personality traits, but these should be the start of something deeper as opposed to saving it for later. Consider adding a personality trait that won't show up upon initial contact but could show up in a later appearance. For example, Djertru Smintheis, Rat's spy and information broker, on her initial appearance as a shepherd girl, seems harmless and helpful, even to the point of being naïve, until she leaves the scene and dissolves into a swarm of rats.

STEP TWO: DETERMINE HOW IT SEES ITS FUNCTION

All spirits exist to fulfill their function, but they also exist in an environment with other spirits and might have enough self-awareness and knowledge to see the fruits of their actions on the other side of the Gauntlet. Does it love its work, toiling for the sole purpose of glorifying either the concept that gave it life or perhaps a higher-ranking spirit of the same type? Does it see its work as something akin to a biological function; does it see promoting the concept that gave it existence as something like eating or breathing? Does it see it as an obligation or even a burden? Continuing with Djertru, she is driven by an insatiable curiosity, which offsets her weariness; her oldest form that she can remember was in service to Apollo when he was Incarna, and after so long she is determined to see what's at the end of all this.

Even powerful spirits can become disillusioned with their purpose if left in environments where their abilities feel useless, like a fish spirit in a dying stream.

STEP THREE: DETERMINE HOW IT SEES THE GAROU

Once you have an idea of how important it'll be to your story and how it sees its purpose, you'll need to determine how it sees the Garou as a society. Is it a newly born spirit that relies on the unsavory hearsay of its peers in the court and its higher-ranking brethren? Does it have a history with the Garou, and is that history peaceful or rife with tension? Do its assumed alliances with the forces of the Triat (should it be part of one) influence its view? Has it received the amount of respect it believes it is due after previous encounters with the Garou? Djertru prefers dealing with rat-shifters but has long centuries of experience with the Garou. She dislikes them for their failures and their lack of subtlety and views them as disposable weapons to be directed at common enemies with the right information and calculated emotional appeals.

After these three steps, you should have the blueprint of a personality ready for the players to interact with, but with enough room to refine and change as the story continues.

A MULTITUDE OF VISAGES

Spirits have many appearances. The Umbra allows for all kinds of biological, architectural, and even technological formations for spirits. A description of a spirit's striking physical image or its deceptive first appearances can prepare a pack for what's to come as they communicate with it or catch them off guard as they prepare to negotiate. While the following templates aren't the only ways a spirit can look, they're a great starting point for developing a spirit's unique look.

FLORA AND FAUNA

Given that the Umbra is also known as Spirit Wilds, flora and fauna are best when it comes to literal representations of spirits of biological beings, such as the flora and fauna they're attached to. These

don't have to be, and shouldn't be, just the plant or animal in the surface world but now a spirit. Perhaps a tree's spirit is overgrown in comparison to its well-trimmed surface version, or a wolf-spirit's mouth is always bloody from a fresh kill.

OBJECTS

These are great for literal representations of spirits of inanimate objects. These also don't have to be one-to-one with its surface world counterpart. The spirit manifestation of a prison might have more oppressive architecture. When a werewolf speaks to the spirit of an individual knife, its blade is sharper and more jagged than its physical opposite.

FORCES OR DIFFERENT STATES OF MATTER

Spirits do not have to be solid beings. Fire-spirits are often insubstantial licks of flame, wind-spirits might be breezes contained in fragile air currents, and lightning-spirits could be localized bursts of electric static.

AMALGAMS

Spirits of more complex ideas are often mixtures of various things. The spirit of a local hill is a fusion of a blue jay (an animal that regularly nests on the hill), the grass and dirt that makes up the hill, and the massive network of roots that lie beneath the trees on its surface. Amalgams need not care about coherence; biological and non-biological materials mix freely and proper proportions for limbs, heads, or other body parts need not apply.

MYTHOLOGICAL APPEARANCES

Some spirits follow the assumptions of local human culture and take the form of a relevant figure from mythology. If a village has a traditional river god, the spirit of the nearby river might hold that form long after its population ceases believing in it. If a mostly human pack gets a rare audience with a very high-ranking spirit, it might take the appearance of a deity from a mythology the werewolves are familiar with to make comprehending it easier.

METAPHORICAL APPEARANCES

Spirits of abstract concepts might have a form based on symbolism applied to them by human culture. Sometimes, an owl-spirit isn't an owl, but rather a wisdom-spirit that enjoys playing along with human assumptions. A war-spirit might take the form of a faceless, modern soldier, their weapon always at the ready.

SPIRITS WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE TRIAT

Spirits do not inherently conform to the Garou's view of the Triat. The exact concepts of the Wyld, Weaver, and Wyrm as Garou and certain other shifters know them are not something spirits share.

Even a being the pack sees as an obvious Bane might express surprise at their accusations of being a "servant of the Despoiler."

They might see themselves as an equal partner in the Wyrm ascendant's destruction or may not even see themselves as a part of the Triat at all.

Those that conform to the Triat do so for different reasons. Some align with a Triat force in the way that one joins a religion; it provides a meaning that either works in tandem with their born task or gives them a new one once their original purpose ends. Others align with the Triat force in the way one joins a company; the spirit wheels and deals for the "employer" that best accommodates their purpose. A few align with a Triat force out of pure whim, seeing it as full permission to act without regard for the rest of the Umbral landscape.

With all this in mind, the following examples presented in this section should be taken as a starting point for developing the personality and goals of your own spirits, not rigid categories spirits must fit into. These broad templates are for the Storyteller's aid when developing supporting characters and antagonists, not a hard in-fiction divide.



SPIRITS OF THE WYLD

The spirits of raw creation are often the hardest to understand. Many either cannot or do not see the need for introspection; time spent thinking about why they're creating is time spent not creating. Still, those that pay close attention to spirits associated with the Wyld notice a few trends among them.

Renewal spirits specialize in taking what once was and turning it into what will be. The thrill of taking something rotten and transforming it into something new is unparalleled, and they'll sing odes about it to whoever is willing to listen. They're closest to the spirits associated with the Wyrm, which often puts them in danger. While spirits associated with the Wyrm provide them the material they need, Banes use their byproducts as bait to either seal spirits away or even convince the spirits to become Banes themselves. Examples include many mushroom-spirits and even fly gafflings. Wildfire is a powerful renewal spirit.

Artisan spirits are most interested in creating something completely new. While they'll fulfill the purpose like all other spirits associated with the Wyld, they often have one dream project, something that's never crossed the Spirit Wilds before. Though success stories are fewer and fewer in this age of stagnation and rot, that just makes the prize of a truly original creation more tantalizing. They scour the Umbra for ideas and often make pacts with Garou in hopes of examining the physical world for further inspiration. Examples include abstract spirits of creative impulse and art, but also story spirits and certain flower spirits such as Tulip.

Challenger spirits don't care how their work is interpreted but care very much that it is interpreted at all. Their creations are puzzles that are meant for other spirits or Garou to solve, and for their creations to go uninterpreted throws them into depressive or even outright hostile fits. They're both the boon and bane of spirits often associated with the Weaver. Challengers give the spirits of the Weaver lots of work, sometimes too much. Those favored by a challenger spirit might find themselves the recipient of more "gifts" than they can handle, barely comprehensible and even dangerous creations that

could wreak havoc if not shaped or solved. Those who pass their tests are granted boons. Examples include Typhon and Echidna, the makers of many strange spirits that humans would call monsters.

SPIRITS OF THE WEAVER

The spirits of order are not just the maintainers of the civilization they once lived in, but the maintainers of every conceivable order. This might even extend to spirit society itself; when spirits make pacts with Garou or when a spirit defers to their place in their hierarchy, some werewolves claim powerful spirits associated with the Weaver are nearby.

Arranger spirits enjoy forming raw creation into something with meaning. They're most associated with spirits associated with the Wyld, as these spirits provide them with the material they need. Arrangers can be single-minded when it comes to what a creation should be shaped into and argue with their own kind over what kind of order should be imposed on something. Pattern spiders often fall into this category, but also many spirits of thought as well as bee-spirits.

Guider spirits lead shaped objects across their natural life cycle, bringing them closer towards their inevitable destruction. They're close to spirits associated with the Wyrm, who destroy their charges. This relationship could risk bringing them under a Bane's influence. Banes might tempt them to join them in destruction instead of leaving it up to another spirit. Father Time is perhaps the best-known such spirit.

Symmetry spirits are focused on maintenance, making sure that once something is in order, it stays in order. They repair broken creations which are sometimes well past the point of being viable. These spirits are sometimes terrified of the idea that anything in their charge must eventually be destroyed and might fight other spirits (or even Garou) should they be challenged to give up something they cannot keep in stasis. Many pattern spiders also fulfill this role.

SPIRITS OF THE WYRM

Not all spirits of the Wyrm are Banes. Some still serve in their old role as avatars of destruction in preparation for rebirth, as opposed to the Banes'



destruction for destruction's sake. For the Garou, it can be difficult to differentiate between the two in the heat of the moment.

Morbid spirits are fascinated not only by their work but what happens once their charges are passed along in the Triat's cycle anew. Unlike many Banes, they see their work as a process of constant discovery and often get along with spirits commonly associated with the Wyld. They watch the subjects of their work very closely, and even hang around the other spirits of the Triat as they work, asking questions along the way. They do not become Banes because the end of everything with no promise of renewal cuts off their supply, something they won't stand for.

Deconstructor spirits focus on the work itself with clinical efficiency. They see their work as a strict process that must be followed to the letter and often get along with spirits commonly associated with the Weaver. They're sticklers for timetables like when something should be destroyed, and when it should be brought to the other portions of the Triat. They see Banes as messy or, even worse, lazy. Examples include spirits of rot and entropy.

Philosopher spirits lie close to their Bane counterparts without joining their ranks. If morbid spirits are interested in the *how* of destruction, and deconstructors in the moment-to-moment process of destruction, philosophers want to know the *why* of destruction, specifically why such a necessary force is shunned by most living creatures. They turn their work into challenges and thought experiments, often with unaware victims as the subjects. Despite the potential cruelty and destruction they leave in their wake, they reject Banes because they feel those engaging in destruction for its own sake and with no further purpose aren't engaging in their purpose to the fullest extent.

UNCLASSIFIABLE SPIRITS

Some spirits avoid the Triat altogether. Perhaps they serve a neutral force, such as a celestial spirit of a distant star, or a Gaian spirit that refuses to pay any of the Triat homage. It could be they act in a way that fits into the Triat but do it for their own gratification as opposed to the influence of a higher being, such as a rot-spirit that

has no interest in the Wyrm and simply wishes to do its work in peace. In remote parts of the Umbra (or at least parts of it that the Garou haven't traversed in what remains of their society's living memory), it's possible to encounter spirits with no concept of the Triat at all. These are often spirits associated with very esoteric concepts, which the Wyld, Weaver, and Wyrm would probably have very little use for.

Neutral spirits keep a wide distance from the Garou if possible. Getting involved with werewolves often means being entangled in their schemes, which puts the neutrality carefully forged by themselves or by their spiritual superiors into jeopardy. They've already settled into the hierarchy that works best for them and dread the idea of being forced into one that could change their alliances or even their very nature. Certain spirits of constellations, such as the impassive triad of Carina, Puppis, and Vela, fall here.

Spirits separated from other hierarchies are more willing to work with the Garou. As spiritual freelancers, they're in it for the love of their work. If a werewolf is willing to live with this, and to stay out of the way of their function, they're happy to provide them with assistance or even a Gift. Some of these spirits need Garou; not all were detached from their hierarchy willingly, and they could use a pack's Renown and standing to survive in a harsh Umbral environment. Such spirits may, in time, return to the Triat's fold, but even the frightened and confused animal spirit of a species about to go extinct could fit here.

Spirits completely unaware of the Triat are rarely seen in the Umbra, but when they are, they're most often in the company of moon cults. While all moon cults acknowledge Luna in some fashion, that doesn't mean each of them inherently believes in the Triat. This makes it easier for these spirits and moon cults to find common ground, especially if the cult is open to whatever greater force the spirit claims to serve. This doesn't mean they're a lost cause for Garou; some of these spirits are curious about the concept of the Triat, and a pack might find that recruiting an otherwise unaware spirit to Gaia's cause makes them some of their strongest anti-Wyrm assets.

BANES AND FOMORI

Banes, and the fomori they create, play a large role in a Garou's mission. The havoc they wreak and the misery they leave in their victims are obvious, but even these creatures are individuals with their own personalities and worldview. Though they may not be willing to share their life story with the eight-foot-tall slavering creature hoping to rend them limb from limb, presenting them as characters open new narrative pathways, should a pack be willing to talk to the enemy.

The following Banes are individual characters. For your own Banes using their types, the character's attributes apply to all spirits of its kind. This section also presents what kind of fomori are created when such a Bane fuses with its host for the long term, as well as sample Storyteller characters.

ANOINTMENT, THE KINGMAKER

Anointment is a Kingmaker, a Bane associated with underhanded triumph and abuse of power. While its brethren foster haughtiness and arrogance, Anointment aims a little higher. It wants to create the perfect leader who dominates every world culture. The tyrant who finally ends humanity would be Anointment's masterpiece.

Possession / Manifestation: In the physical world, Anointment looks for individuals who either seek power for its own sake, or those who aren't satisfied with the power they already have and seek out more. It prefers to live in the bodies of middle managers, the overly ambitious, and politicians. If there's someone who strives to have more, no matter the cost, the Bane's happy to help.

In the Umbra, Anointment is a large, ambulatory laurel tree. Its roots tear through the ground as it travels, and thick yellow oil drips from its leaves. When it influences others or begins to possess someone, Umbral bystanders can see that it arranges its leaves like a crown on its victims' heads.

KINGMAKER SPIRIT

Power: 4

Exceptional Dice Pools: Insight 7, Leadership (Aura of Arrogance) 6

Notes / Other Traits:

Aura of Arrogance: In the Umbra, Anointment imbues a target with corrupted essence, enhancing their leadership in exchange for dulling their awareness of anyone's abilities or expertise aside from their own. Anointment's aura is resisted by winning a Willpower test against its Power. Those under its power receive a four-dice bonus to all tests to convince or force others to do their bidding, and a four-dice penalty to any tests that involve listening to others or learning from mistakes. This lasts until the target makes a mistake that threatens themselves or their allies, or Anointment is discovered and driven away.

KINGMAKER-POSSESSED HUMAN

General Difficulty: 3/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 4, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 5, Leadership 7, Politics 7

Notes / Other Traits:

Master's Rebuke: When someone questions their host's authority, Anointment infuses their words with enough power to shatter bones. Once per scene, when a host inflicts Willpower damage during a Social conflict, they may choose to inflict it as Health damage instead.

DEMAGOGUE

When a Kingmaker fuses with a host, it creates a *Demagogue*. These humanoid fomori find others to act as instruments of their will.

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 6, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 4, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Intimidation 8, Persuasion 7, Insight 8



Notes / Other Traits:

Tongue of Command: The Demagogue issues commands from its real mouth on the underside of the host's tongue. A number of human Storyteller characters up to the fomor's Social rating must obey a single command and follow it to their best ability by the end of the scene. Players' characters or other supernatural supporting characters can resist the command by winning a contest of the Demagogue's Persuasion versus their Composure + Resolve.

Grasp of Authority: When grappling with an opponent physically stronger than the fomor, all attempts to pin down or subdue the Demagogue are never less than Difficulty 3, and it receives a two-dice bonus to all contests to take command of the grapple or grapple its opponent.

GUS BAINES

Gus Baines is the Southeast North American regional manager of Biblios, one of many companies connected to the Pentex Group. Six months ago, he was only an assistant to an assistant manager, but a chance encounter with Anointment on a corporate retreat changed everything. Now, he rules a corporate fiefdom as the Bane's special project, at least until his coworkers at Pentex discover he made a pact he shouldn't have.

Personality: Gus flaunts his power at every opportunity. He plays his underlings against each other, egging them on to take greater risks. He'll use them as human shields, sometimes literally. He's a brown-noser among higher authorities until the moment he can seize their power.

Goals: Become CEO of Biblios, hide his transformation from his superiors, develop an efficient method for briefing and deploying First Teams throughout the world.

In Chronicles: In Pentex-focused stories, Gus is a great choice for an early central antagonist. He's a figure players can discover after their first encounter with a front and its defenses and taking him out can lead them further into the Pentex conspiracy in future stories. He can also be a Touchstone's (or even a player's character's)

overbearing boss, keeping his true nature hidden until the worst possible moment.

CRASH, THE ROTBEAM

Crash is a *Rotbeam*, a Bane associated with condemned or abandoned buildings. Once, it was a spirit of the Weaver like its siblings but chose to associate with the Wyrm because the slow and permanent process of the destruction of buildings was an order too lovely to resist. Even now, it accelerates the disrepair and destruction of buildings and watches the results with awe.

It's most interested in bringing healthy buildings to condemnation, especially if there are people living in it. The fraying social ties of a building's residents are just as fascinating as watching the walls fall apart. Sometimes, it follows the residents and begins anew.

Possession / Manifestation: In the physical world, Crash seeks out individuals dedicated to physical destruction and desecration. It prefers to live in the bodies of vandals, arsonists, and construction workers. If there's someone with a strong desire to have a building destroyed, Crash is by their side.

In the Umbra, Crash is a rotted wooden crane. Spiritual reflections of the buildings it has destroyed, all materials spanning from every era of construction, patch the places on its body where the rot lies deepest. Its head is the cargo the wooden crane carries—the cracked head of a marble statue stained with turpentine and oil. Its expression is pure agony.

ROTBEAM SPIRIT

Power: 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Craft 9, Larceny 8

Notes / Other Traits:

Exposed Weakness: After winning Brawl or Melee attack on a target, the Storyteller declares the weakness the Bane imposes on the target and tests its Power. This test may be resisted with Stamina + Resolve. If the target loses the conflict, the weakness applies to the target until the end of the scene. Anyone who exploits the target's weakness receives a dice bonus equal to either the total successes on Crash's



Power test (for non-resisting targets) or the margin of Crash's win (for targets who tried resisting but lost).

ROTBEAM-POSSESSED BUILDING

General Difficulty: 5/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 3, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 10, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 8, Craft 7

Notes / Other Traits:

Unfortunate Accident: When possessing a building, Crash takes advantage of the building's flaws to harm threats. Once per scene, the building rots or collapses in a way that puts its targets in danger, such as a hot water pipe burst or a floor collapse. This counts as a Brawl attack that deals +4 Superficial damage.

SABOTEUR

When a Rotbeam fuses with its host, it becomes a *Saboteur*. These misshapen humanoid amalgams of flesh, steel, and stone seek to destroy homes and other safe places.

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 3, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Craft (Destruction) 9, Streetwise 5, Investigation 7

Notes / Other Traits:

Entropy Slime: The Saboteur vomits a black, viscous substance. Any inanimate object touched by this substance rots at an accelerated rate, either taking 2 Aggravated Health damage every round or crumbling to dust or rust an hour after exposure, whichever is more appropriate to the scene.

Cleaning off the slime stops the process but inflicts 2 Superficial Health damage if skin is exposed to it.

No Wall Blocks Me: When in pursuit, or escaping pursuit, the Saboteur can always tear apart walls or inanimate obstacles of any material blocking its way with its claws, no matter how thick the wall or obstacle is.

SHAWN PARK

Shawn Park studied to be an architect, but a harsh economic market led to him dropping out of college and taking up work as a private building inspector. In practice, the job was simply rubber-stamping projects for the construction company that served as his company's most lucrative (and only) client. His mounting bitterness at his dead-end job made him an inviting host for Crash, and the resulting fomor now seals the doom of every building he examines.

Personality: Crash's exuberance for the process of decay and fascination with the destruction of social ties bleeds into Shawn's frustrated creative ambitions. The amalgam seeks unique ways to bring buildings to ruin, especially if the blame can be pinned on the building's owners.

Goals: Destroy a beloved home, lay waste to a caern, force a major building to rot.

In Chronicles: Shawn is a mobile mystery, as his job allows him to cause several disasters with no obvious connection. One entry point could be a Touchstone or pack ally receiving an inspection from Shawn, only for their home to suddenly fall apart in horrific and dangerous ways. The pack must find a way to break the curse over their friend's home and have a chance to learn about similar incidents around the city. From there, you could have the pack hunt the fomor down right after or save him as a later antagonist.

FINAL SIGH, THE EMPTY STARE

Final Sigh is an *Empty Stare*, a Bane associated with apathy. Much like its domain implies, Final Sigh takes a passive view of their work. It drains the love others have for their hobbies, relationships, and passions in the way that a copy editor cuts out the errant punctuation mark, and it does so with all the enthusiasm of a waste disposal worker tossing another bag onto the truck. It must be done, and it doesn't expect anything too exciting.

Despite this, sometimes it hesitates a bit too long when looking for a new target. Sometimes it wonders, as it dulls a Touchstone's dedication to their Garou friend, if this is the moment it'll learn why people form such strong bonds in the first place. It learns nothing, of course.



Possession / Manifestation: In the physical world, Final Sigh seeks out spiteful individuals, those who've seen their dreams crushed, and those who've achieved their dreams but fear anyone could take them away. It prefers to live in the bodies of washed-up celebrities, disgraced figures, and high-ranking corporate executives.

In the Umbra, Final Sigh is a living fog capable of carrying itself by its own power. When the Bane blows against someone in their path, they discover the fog's pleasantly warm surface gives way to a chilly interior. When it speaks, the fog contorts into the outline of a human face. The outline is unique with every conversation, and some Garou fear it uses the visages of those it once influenced or possessed as trophies.

EMPTY STARE SPIRIT

Power: 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Etiquette 8, Insight 7

Notes / Other Traits:

Will-Sapper: In the Umbra, when Empty Stare wins a Physical attack on the spirit-form of an Umbral visitor, it may inflict the damage it's caused on the target's Willpower tracker instead of their Health tracker.

EMPTY STARE-POSSESSED HUMAN

General Difficulty: 3/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 6

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 6, Brawl 5, Insight 7

Notes / Other Traits:

Nihilist's Armor: Once per scene, Empty Stare takes the apathy and numbness of its host and fashions it into a greasy shell over the host's skin. For the rest of the scene, the host takes 2 fewer points of any kind of Health damage, in addition to any default Health damage reduction. The host feels no pain while the armor is active.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

When an Empty Stare fuses with its host, it creates a *Devil's Advocate*. These imposing, hollow-eyed fomori find individuals and groups to turn away from their dreams and ambitions and towards despair.

General Difficulty: 5/4

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 7, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Etiquette 8, Persuasion 9, Subterfuge 9

Notes / Other Traits:

But On the Other Hand: In Social conflict, the Devil's Advocate always has access to a +3 Superficial Willpower weapon when making arguments that involve questioning its opponent's moral grounding, their dedication to their Touchstones (should they know them), or their loyalties to their pack or sept.

Numbing Patter: The Devil's Advocate verbally dresses down a target, explaining how their chosen course of action means nothing. The target must win a contest of the Devil's Advocate's Persuasion versus the target's Composure + Resolve to resist this attack. A failure prevents the target from using their Willpower for the rest of the scene, and a total failure or Brutal outcome may count as an increase on the Harano tracker at the Storyteller's discretion.

ASTRA DAY

As the daughter of a charismatic televangelist, Astra Day inherited a gift for the spoken word. She tried to establish herself as a motivational speaker and speechwriter, but her promising career came to a crashing halt after her father's scandals tainted her name by association. Now, she's a ghostwriter for the people she once hoped to stand shoulder to shoulder with. Final Sigh appeared to her as she prayed for salvation, and now she aims to put people "on the right path" through her self-help podcast.

Personality: Astra is a helpful, considerate person full of great advice... until she encounters someone "a bit too delusional," i.e., someone

with true passion. In the kindest-sounding words possible, she brutally tears down these people, and even resorts to contacting them anonymously after the show to seal the deal. She firmly believes she's "grounding them."

Goals: Grow her podcast, go on her first tour, learn more about "the wolf men" her inner voice tells her about.

In Chronicles: Astra is an example of a fomor who could be saved, as Final Sigh is more interested in taking the path of least resistance with her as opposed to fully consuming her mind. This could encourage player characters to pursue nonviolent methods in dealing with the possessed.

OL' PANG, THE GREEN EYE

Ol' Pang is a Green Eye, a Bane associated with jealousy. It claims to be the oldest of its kind, and that it knew the world long before any Garou first howled. It's well-versed in kindling jealousy, rivalry, and vicious envy in others, and takes great pride in its work.

It treats the Garou with agonizing condescension, even when a pack has it on the ropes. When it is defeated, it takes its failure with a smile. It believes, in due time, all Garou become dead or Dancers. Ol' Pang, on the other hand, will remain.

Possession / Manifestation: In the physical world, Ol' Pang seeks out not only the envious, but also those paranoid over keeping the things they have and those tempted to obtain something they know they can't or shouldn't have. It prefers to live in the bodies of jealous lovers, the greedy, and social climbers.

In the Umbra, Ol' Pang is a squat humanoid in a moldy yellow raincoat that drips with slime. Within the darkness of its hood is a long white beard that pours from the bottom and two green lights that shine with painful intensity when directly looked at.

GREEN EYE SPIRIT

Power: 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Insight (Covetous Eyes) 9, Persuasion 9, Subterfuge 8

Notes / Other Traits:

Covetous Eyes: In the Umbra, Ol' Pang searches a target's mind for any hidden desires and jealousies. After winning a contest between its Power + Insight versus the target's Willpower, Ol' Pang learns a number of desires or jealousies equal to the margin of the win, each of which may be used as a +2 Superficial Willpower damage weapon in social conflict.

GREEN EYE-POSSESSED HUMAN

General Difficulty: 3/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 7, Mental 6

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Larceny 7, Subterfuge 8, Investigation 8

Notes / Other Traits:

Gimme That: Once per scene, Ol' Pang's host may extend their arms to impossible lengths to grab an object or person. This is a three-dice bonus applied to either an Athletics (for grabbing a moving target), Brawl (for grappling a desired person), or Larceny (for grabbing a hidden target) test or contest. The host's arms extend to either the other side of the room the scene is set in or a number of meters up to twice their Physical pool.

ETERNAL RIVAL

When a Green Eye fuses with its host, it creates an Eternal Rival. Armed with inhumanly perfect physique and wit, these fomori drag talented people into increasingly mutually destructive rivalries.

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 6, Social 5, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 9, Survival 8, Intimidation (Irresistible Challenge) 6

Notes / Other Traits:

Irresistible Challenge: The Eternal Rival challenges a target to a competition of its choosing. If the target



accepts, it's resolved as a normal contest. If the target refuses, they must win a contest of the Eternal Rival's Intimidation against their Composure + Insight. If the target has accepted the fomor's challenge before, each previous challenge adds a one-die penalty to the pool to a maximum of three dice. If the target loses the contest, the fomor's visible disdain compels the target to see the challenge through, even if winning is impossible.

Unearthly Prowess: The Eternal Rival has incredible athletic prowess. No environmental hazard, distraction, or obstacle can reduce the fomor's Athletics dice pool. The fomor's body will horrifically reshape itself to make this possible.

RHETT ALLEN

Rhett Allen wanted to be a professional gridiron football player since he was little. As one of his university's top players, he knew he was close to his dream. Going from small-town high school football to the collegiate circuit meant he was no longer a big fish in a small pond, and he felt inadequate. Off-brand performance enhancers, made by a friend of the coach, opened Rhett to possession by Ol' Pang, who took full control.

Personality: Ol' Pang is as smug about his eternal place in the world as ever. He attempts to hide himself by enhancing Rhett's already fake humility and "aw shucks" attitude, but the supposed ancient who loves spreading jealousy peeks through.

Goals: Learn about modern-day life, turn a friendship into an inimical rivalry, turn the local sept against each other.

In Chronicles: Rhett is best used as a surprise antagonist emerging from a background supporting character. He's most likely a friend of a Touchstone or perhaps a sibling of a player character. If your pack already has Ol' Pang as a regular antagonist, possessing Rhett is a great way to escalate the situation. The odd circumstances behind Rhett's possession could lead to the discovery of a Bane-worshiping cult or a Pentex front.

SCOWL, THE ERINYS

Scowl is an Erinys (plural Erinyes), a Bane associated with vengeance. Its kind shares a name with the Greek goddesses of vengeance, but it's not sure whether they were once worshiped as such, or if human myth shaped the Banes. What it knows is that the world is full of wrongs, and the best way to punish those wrongs is to respond to infractions with bloody revenge. If that ends all life, good. That will be the end of injustice.

Scowl once served under Gorgon and broke away with a murderous vendetta against her. One day, it hopes to slay the spirit in a way every Black Fury can witness.

Possession / Manifestation: In the physical world, Scowl seeks out those deeply wronged, those failing to cope with grief, and very petty people. It prefers to live in the bodies of cops, victims who've been denied justice, and would-be street vigilantes. If someone truly believes they were wronged in some way, Scowl wants to speak with them.

In the Umbra, Scowl is an amalgamation of many mythological depictions of the Furies. It's a black-cloaked humanoid figure with writhing snakes for hair. A pair of wings made from jagged glass emerges from its back, and bright red pus gushes from its eyes.

ERINYS SPIRIT

Power: 7

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 10, Melee 9

Notes / Other Traits:

Enflame the Heart: In the Umbra, an Erinys kindles a target's need for vengeance to irrational heights or creates a need for vengeance where none existed before. This is a contest between the Erinys's Power and the target's current Willpower. If the Erinys wins, the target feels a grave injustice towards someone or something and receives a two-dice penalty to all dice pools until vengeance is obtained in a bloody fashion, or the Erinys is dislodged from the target.

ERINYS-POSSESSED HUMAN

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 3, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 4

Exceptional Dice Pools: Melee 7, Intimidate 8, Investigate 6

Notes / Other Traits:

Final Stand: When Scowl takes a host, it makes the host's burning desire for vengeance an integral part of them. When the host would otherwise be incapacitated, physically or socially, they may ignore this state for a number of turns equal to their undamaged Willpower boxes, no matter how much further damage they take. When this effect ends, Scowl leaves the host and any consequences of the host's incapacitation immediately take hold.

VIGILANTE

When an Eriny fuses with its host, it becomes a Vigilante. These clawed, winged fomori seek out anyone suspected of even the pettiest crime and tear them apart, whether the victim committed the crime or not.

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 7, Social 5, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 4

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 8, Firearms 9, Melee 8

Notes / Other Traits:

Living Projectile: Any of the Vigilante's limbs can reshape itself into a projectile weapon, firing barbed spikes of bone and cartilage. This is a +1 Aggravated Health damage ranged weapon. The fomor may transform up to four of their limbs into weapons. All weapons may be fired at a single target, which is a single attack of up to +4 Aggravated Health damage.

Mark of Vengeance: The Vigilante spits a burning jelly on a target, marking them for future vengeance. For the next week, the fomor knows exactly where the target is within an eighty-kilometer radius. The mark is a rash on the skin in an ominous symbol, and it increases in pain once the fomor is close enough to strike the target.

DALLAS COBURN

Dallas Coburn came home to find her parents murdered and her brother missing. Unbeknownst to her, her brother Stefano underwent a First Change and their parents were collateral damage. Filled with rage, she sought vengeance. Her violent citizen's arrests of shady figures along the way attracted Scowl's attention. Dallas let Scowl in, only for the Bane to discover that she wouldn't relinquish control.

Personality: Dallas is consumed by grief and rage, but not her Bane's influence. Her quick impulse to violence and tendency to jump to conclusions is entirely her own. She has no qualms with her new form, and Scowl doesn't mind being a prisoner since she does what it wants anyway.

Goals: Find the person who killed Dallas's family, commit a public act of justice, find Stefano.

IN CHRONICLES

Dallas is an example of a rare kind of fomor. Though her body is monstrous, her willpower subsumed the Bane, and she neither knows nor cares anything of the Wyrm or its designs. This could shake up what would otherwise be a standard enemy. Depending on the level of tragedy you want in your story, Stefano himself could be a pack ally or even a member of the Cult of Fenris. You could retool Dallas so that her sibling is a player's character and save her appearance for the moment it'd cause the most drama.

SKEIRO, THE REPROBATE

Skeiro is a Reprobate, a Bane associated with transgression. While many Reprobates focus on weakening morals or subverting the law, Skeiro's preference is more esoteric. It's interested in transcending the barriers between the world of flesh and the Umbra and hopes to achieve this by tempting humans into learning the Spirit Wild's secrets.

Though it claims to do this to spite the Garou's Veil, those willing to see through its deceptions discover a more depressing motive. Skeiro craves the freedom from the rigid hierarchy that the world of flesh has. If it can't have it, it'll shatter humanity's world and make it like the Umbra.



Possession / Manifestation: In the physical world, Skeiro seeks out the curious, the innocent, and the jaded. It prefers to live in the bodies of occultists, academics, and dilettantes.

In the Umbra, Skeiro is a snake. Its snake skin is layers of every writing material humanity has ever used, ranging from ancient fragile paper to human flesh. Lost knowledge is written on its skin, and it sheds its skin every so often to attract curious spirits and Garou into its den. Possessed individuals often have whatever knowledge was written on its current skin imprinted on their bodies.

REPROBATE SPIRIT

Power: 8

Exceptional Dice Pools: Insight 11, Subterfuge 10

Notes / Other Traits:

Forbidden Knowledge: Once per scene, while in the Umbra, Skeiro transmits a blast of information into the target's mind by winning a contest of the Bane's power versus the target's Willpower. This information is usually about the Umbra or the Wyrm itself and is not necessarily true. The information overload stuns a character either for a number of turns equal to the margin of the win or until they receive a number of Health damage equal to the margin of the win, whichever comes first. Stunned characters suffer a two-dice penalty to any action other than defend.

REPROBATE-POSSESSED HUMAN

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 4, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Stealth 6, Streetwise (Physical World Rumors) 5, Occult 7

Notes / Other Traits:

Weakened Flesh, Weakened Gauntlet: Skeiro imbues its host's blood with an acid corrosive to the Gauntlet. When the host takes Aggravated Health damage, they reduce the Gauntlet of the scene's

setting by one, minimum 1. A number of Banes equal to the levels of Aggravated damage sustained may attempt to cross the Gauntlet after its reduction. This lasts until the end of the scene.

ICONOCLAST

When a Reprobate fuses with its host, it becomes an Iconoclast. These fomori freely spread forbidden knowledge in the form of half-truths, convincing victims to bring more Banes into the physical world.

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 6

Secondary Attributes: Health 4, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Persuasion 8, Subterfuge (Tell Me More) 8, Occult (Spirits) 7

Notes / Other Traits:

Tell Me More: While in conversation with the target, the Iconoclast tries to trick them into revealing a secret, such as the identity of an ally or the location of a pack's stronghold. The target must win a contest between the fomor's Subterfuge and the target's Manipulation + Etiquette, Subterfuge, or Intimidation. If the target loses, they tell the fomor what it wants.

Two-World Laceration: The Iconoclast has claws that rend both flesh and the Gauntlet to shreds. After winning a Brawl attack and inflicting damage, the target's wounds become a passageway through the Gauntlet either for the rest of the scene or until they're healed. Once per round, an allied Bane can emerge through the target's wounds, an extremely painful (though invisible) event that inflicts 1 Aggravated Health damage on the target. The Bane will then try to possess something or someone nearby. These are usually Furmlings (*Werewolf*, pp. 247–248), but if more challenge feels appropriate and there is a susceptible victim nearby, a Scrag (*Werewolf*, pp. 250–251) might also make an appearance.

Possession and the Player Character

A common theme of **Werewolf** stories is the loss of agency. Roleplaying games, on the other hand, thrive on player agency. In **Werewolf**, the frenzy rules already deliver enough loss of control for most players. Having a Howling Insanity possess a player character is certainly possible, but we advise that you know your players and, if possible, without spoiling the story for them, find out if they are fine with it. The connections on their Relationship Map are generally fair game, though.

That does not preclude players' characters from *having been* possessed, though, for which purpose see the Possessed Flesh loresheet on page 165.

KAYDEN WINTER

An encounter with the supernatural opened Kayden Winter's eyes, and they've been obsessed with the occult ever since. They studied languages just to read arcane texts and even learned some ceremonial spells. It was one of these spells that summoned Skeiro, which saw someone filled with hubris—a perfect pawn. Skeiro possessed them. Now, Kayden drifts in and out of awareness, looking for a way to regain control of their body. Unless they receive outside help, it is only a matter of time before Skeiro and Kayden fuse into an Iconoclast.

Personality: When Kayden isn't overtaken by Skeiro, they're a brusque, to-the-point person. When the supernatural is involved, they shift into obvious excitement. Even now, they consider themselves an expert on all occult topics and often talk over those that know better.

Goals: Create a permanent entrance into the Umbra, bind Skeiro to their will.

IN CHRONICLES

If the pack is willing to live with the ticking time bomb that is Skeiro's increasing control of Kayden, they could serve as an excellent source of information for strange and unusual events. They could also serve as two types of antagonists in one body, with Kayden's genuinely curious inquiries into the pack's secret lives fueling Skeiro's greater plot to completely tear down the Gauntlet.

WURRANG, THE HOWLING INSANITY

Wurrang is a Howling Insanity, a Bane of uncontrolled rage. While there are many different kinds of Banes associated with wrath, anger, fury, resentment, and spite, the Howling Insanity is a special type of spirit. They are rare in the extreme. Those theurges who know of their existence fear them. As a rule, Garou cannot be possessed by spirits, but as with all things of the spirit realm, there is something to break the rules. Howling Insanities can, indeed, possess Garou and, in rare, terrible cases, fuse with them to create fomori.

Upon possessing a Garou, the Bane will generally seek to enter crinos form and kill everyone nearby to prevent its vessel from being captured for a Rite of Abjuration. The ensuing despair also makes it easier for it to seal its possession. Once Garou understand what has happened, they will go to any length to prevent the victim from becoming a fomor. Even death is preferable.

Possession / Manifestation: While most of its kind are content with Black Spiral Dancers who are already close to the Wyrm, Wurrang hunts for the most dangerous prey: Gaia's warriors. Especially succumbing to hauglosk makes a Garou susceptible to its influence. Most of its victims have been Fenrir, but werewolves of other tribes are by no means immune.

In the Umbra, a Howling Insanity appears as a smoky cloud that manifests wolfish jaws and the clawed hands of a werewolf in crinos. A pair of yellow eyes stares out of the cloud with a mad intensity and when it fights, it is heralded by an inarticulate howl of rage.





HOWLING INSANITY SPIRIT

Power: 8

Exceptional Dice Pools: Insight 11, Subterfuge 10

Notes / Other Traits:

Wolf's Clothing: A Howling Insanity is capable of possessing Garou. Only a Garou who has

succumbed to hauglosk or that is in frenzy is vulnerable, though. The Howling Insanity attempts to take over, and the Garou must resist it with Composure + Resolve. These are Mental attacks that deal Aggravated damage. The three-dice bonus from frenzy resisting Mental effects applies normally. If a Howling Insanity manages to deal this damage to a Garou who has no Willpower left,

the Garou is possessed, and their body is controlled by the Howling Insanity. During this possession, the Garou has an additional 2 Health levels and a two-dice bonus to all Physical dice pools. They can only use Native Gifts and those taught by Banes. It does not need to make Rage checks to change shape.

The Howling Insanity can be expelled by the Garou with a successful Composure + Resolve test against the spirit's Power test once they are no longer in frenzy and have at least 1 Rage. A Howling Insanity can also be exorcised with a Rite of Abjuration (*Werewolf*, pp. 180) as normal.

HOWLING INSANITY-POSSESSED GAROU (HOMID FORM)

General Difficulty: 5 / 2

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 8, Social 4, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 11, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 10, Melee 10, Intimidation 8

Notes / Other Traits:

The possessed Garou has the equivalent of the following Gifts: Hare's Leap and Raging Strike (both *Werewolf*, p. 147). It can change shape as a Garou can but does not need to make Rage checks to do so.

HOWLING SHAMBLER (HOMID FORM)

If a Howling Insanity successfully fuses with its host, it becomes a *Howling Shambler*. Little of its former personality is left. It is a being consumed by Rage, and its purpose in this existence is to seek out the Garou who knew its former vessel and slay them or be, in turn, destroyed. It tends to stay in glabro or hispo form and shift to crinos for battle.

General Difficulty: 6 / 1

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 9, Social 2, Mental 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 13, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 12, Melee 10, Intimidation 10

Notes / Other Traits:

The Howling: Shambler can change shape as a Garou can but does not need to make Rage checks to do so.

Howl of Horror: Howling Shamblers can emit a horrible cry which invokes fear in those who hear it. Everyone present must make a Stamina + Resolve test (Difficulty 4) or suffer a three-dice penalty on all of their dice pools for their next action. Other fomori and Banes are immune to this effect. The Shambler cannot Howl on consecutive turns.

MAXIMILIAN THE GREY

Once, Maximilian was a proud ahroun of the Silver Fangs, his name sung from the Black Forest to the Black Sea. His assaults upon Black Spiral Dancers were the stuff of legend, but as many Garou are, he was consumed by his rage. During a battle, he was overtaken by a Howling Insanity. When the smoke cleared, he was the only one still alive on the battlefield. Despair and thirst for vengeance battled for his soul. Whichever lost, the Bane prevailed. Now, months later, Maximilian is a bedraggled, emaciated shadow of his former self. He barely eats and sleeps only the minimum. He is driven by murder.

Personality: Maximilian is single-minded. If someone cannot help them attain their goal, they are either irrelevant or in the way. Preferably in the way, so he has an excuse to vent his anger.

Goals: Murdering every Garou he ever knew.

IN CHRONICLES

A friend of the players' characters, perhaps someone on their Relationship Map, has heard that evil has befallen their old comrade-in-arms, Maximilian. While they have duties that keep them from investigating, the characters can do it. They run into evidence of Maximilian's approach and the murder of Garou packs. Their friend is Maximilian's next target, and it is up to them to stop him. ■





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CHAPTER FIVE



Into the Beyond



Placing scenes in the Umbra is a chance for the Storyteller to work their descriptive muscles. The spirit world is full of mystery, and it comes alive in the small details the players' characters notice as they explore its depths. Yet, a playable location in a game of **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** doesn't work on pure mood alone. The environment needs to be actionable, full of opportunities and choices the players' characters make. This way, the game remains interesting moment to moment.

The topic of this chapter is how to make the Umbra work in your game. How do you keep the Umbra fresh after numerous forays into the Spirit Wilds? What kinds of choices are possible in an environment that can't really be mapped?

And what does a Storyteller do if the characters find themselves suddenly in the Wyrmlands, spirit territories infested with malignant Banes?

The traditional problem of a mysterious

environment in a roleplaying game is that the players don't have enough information to make meaningful choices. The environment is so confusing that they're paralyzed with indecision. That's the challenge of the Umbra for the Storyteller: keep the atmosphere suitably eerie, while still giving the players something concrete they can use as the basis for their actions.

Mapping the Umbra is a task many have tried, but none have found a reliable method. Its pathways shift and twist by some unknown whim, shuffling its locations in seemingly random patterns.

While an ever-changing spiritual landscape keeps the Umbra mysterious and dangerous, this can be hard to model at the table. If there are so many things for werewolves to do in the Umbra, where are they? How do they get to them?

This chapter provides a framework for creating Umbral destinations, guidelines for Umbral travel, and considerations for common settings in Umbral-focused stories.

The Umbra and the physical world seemed to overlap in ways scarcely possible. The Bane had returned to Melanie's body and was wrestling with Beaver Root and Melanie's own weak spirit over control. The body itself was contorting in pain and making muffled sounds.

It was an incorporeal spirit now, watching impotently as Monsieur Plastique pummeled Bull Shark, who bravely tried to resist. He had changed into the form of a huge wolf-man! Who knew humans could change their shape so easily? Or was he a Rougarou? Or was this even real? Maybe Beaver Root just saw Bull Shark's true spirit in the Umbra?

For it was in the Umbra. No, not the Umbra. This was the material realm. It saw a vision of the Umbra, this same place in the spirit world, its home in the Bayou. Monsieur Plastique had taken over both at the same time, everything drowned in cellophane, strangled by nylon, turned to vinyl. Even the spirit of the Bayou was replaced by an unmoving plastic image of herself.

Was this a dream? A nightmare? Perhaps Beaver Root was still in its home pond, dreaming of the material realm as it, too, was wrapped in something synthetic.

Bull Shark, now looking like a bloodied human, struggled to Melanie's body and tried to speak to it. It was hard to hear the words, but he must've been worried.

It hurt. Everything hurt. The material world hurt, and the Umbra hurt. And through it all, it could sense Gaia's Howl, the terrible, petal-shredding cry of anguish as the world was dying. Killed by Monsieur Plastique.

This was even louder and more painful than before, and it shook Beaver Root so much it could do nothing but try to shut it off. That was when the Bane spirit finally kicked it out of Melanie's body.

The sights, sounds, and smells of the garbage hill melted into the vistas of the Bayou, dark clouds turning into dying plant-spirits, once-beautiful birds transforming into plastic bags fluttering in the wind, the sounds of the gulls turning into the taste of hot sauce which Beaver Root had never tried, the scents of the marshland becoming the noise of the machines. Nothing was as it seemed.

"Come here," said a familiar voice through it all.

But the nylon nightmare was too powerful.

UNDERSTANDING UMBRAL DESTINATION AND PATHWAYS

The best way to imagine the Umbra as a navigable landscape is as a series of destinations, distinct points of communities, landmarks, or other points of interest separated by pathways, connections between the points that provide peril, create an opportunity the players can use later, or leave hints of what lies at the upcoming destination. This style of conceptualizing terrain is also called a *pointcrawl*.

A destination can be of any conceivable size: a single cottage in a forest or grazing plain the size of Australia. The same is true for pathways; a street is just as much a pathway as a ravine crossing, which are both just as much a pathway as rowing a kayak across an Umbral sea. Destinations can be placed on a personal map in any order, and pathways can connect any number of destinations.

ELEMENTS OF AN UMBRAL DESTINATION

A good destination in the Umbra has the following elements:

- ✿ **Aesthetic:** Each destination has a distinct look determined by either the spirits that reside there or an event that defines it. A destination with mostly stone-spirits might be a beautiful canyon. An abandoned Hive still emits the scent of blood and bile.
- ✿ **Cast:** Destinations usually have at least one character connected to the area. This could be a local spirit, a fellow explorer like the pack, or even someone looking to conquer and exploit the area. If a destination has no cast whatsoever, this might be a mystery the pack could get involved with, the consequences of the pack's actions, or a hint of a future threat.
- ✿ **Conflict:** Destinations either have an active conflict happening in them or are related to an ongoing conflict elsewhere. This doesn't need

to be related to the problems the pack currently faces, and they don't need to be conflicts the pack can easily solve, but they should be ones the pack can learn about and get involved with now or in a future story.

- ✿ **Opportunity for Change:** Destinations are just as mutable as the Umbra itself. They don't have to be different every time a pack visits, but possibilities for shifts in status quo should arise as the chronicle continues.

ELEMENTS OF AN UMBRAL PATHWAY

A good pathway in the Umbra has the following elements:

- ✿ **A Clear Route:** It should be obvious when a pack is on a pathway as opposed to a destination once they're on it. That doesn't mean they need to know before they reach it, however, destinations might contain hidden pathways — possibly a secret route or bait for a trap.
- ✿ **An Obstacle or Diversion:** Pathways usually have something on them that risks blocking the pack's path, tempts them to slow down, or otherwise makes it more than just a way of getting from point A to B. In mechanical terms, pathways should have at least one opportunity for a test, contest, or conflict.
- ✿ **A Visible Transition:** While the pack doesn't need to know exactly where they're going, it should be clear they're headed somewhere. At least one element of foreshadowing the destination ahead should be provided, usually after overcoming an obstacle or diversion.
- ✿ **Opportunity for Change:** Pathways also change. Not only could any obstacles or diversions change, but the destinations they connect could also change as the chronicle continues.



STARTING YOUR UMBRAL MAP

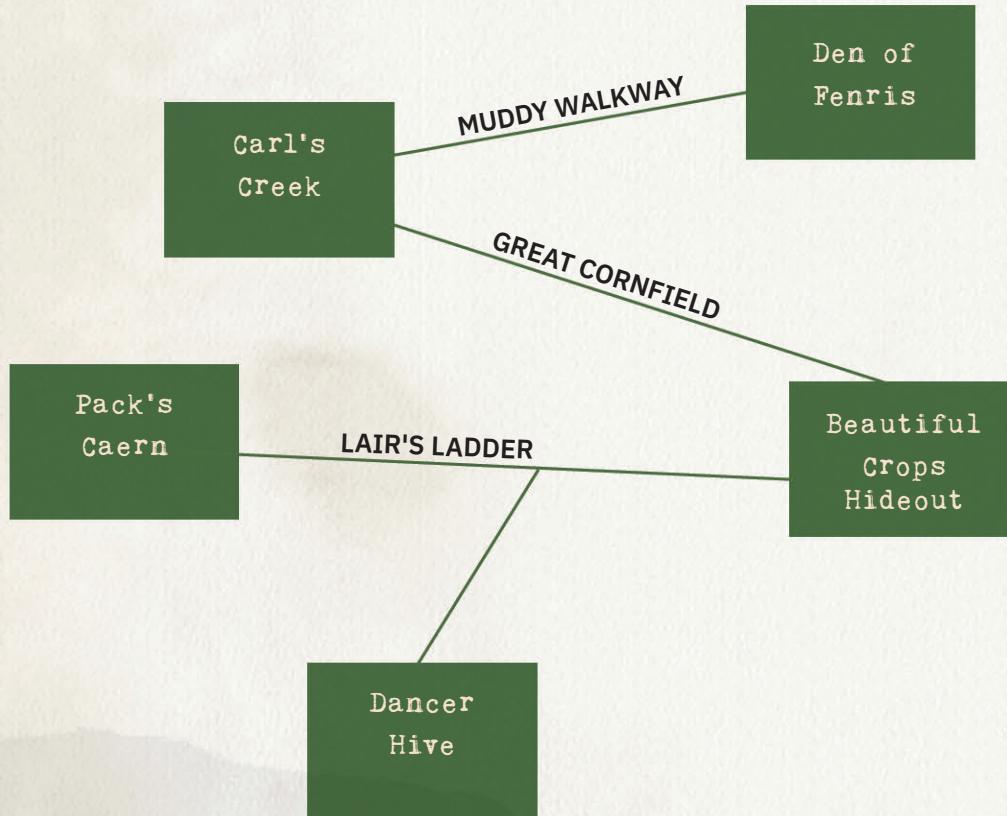
Since the Umbra is just destinations and pathways, you could just make both up on the fly and keep them together in your head or as a list in notes you might keep. However, it might be easier and more fun to create a personal map of the Umbra, both to record destinations and connections you've already created and to more easily rearrange them to keep things fresh. It is very much like the Relationship Map in that it is changeable and psychogeographical, rather than a literal map representing fixed territory.

Every Umbral map begins with up to five destinations, with at least three pathways connecting them. These destinations could be:

- ＊ The Umbral reflection of the pack's caern.
- ＊ The Umbral reflection of the sept's stronghold should the pack belong to one, and should it be separate from their caern.

- ＊ The Umbral reflection of a major landmark in the physical world of your chronicle's setting.
- ＊ An Umbral destination beyond the shadow of the physical world, such as a place the sept regularly holds moots, or the home of a spirit a pack member knows.
- ＊ An Umbral destination connected to an established or future antagonist of the pack, such as a Black Spiral Dancer Hive or a Bane's lair.
- ＊ An Umbral destination the pack has yet to discover, like a spiritual court in a nearby city or the domain of a powerful spirit.

Your Umbral map should ideally be made either with pencil and paper or in a digital medium that makes it easy to shuffle around pathways between destinations as necessary. From here, you can add new destinations and connections between destinations they appear in the chronicle.



Gaia's Howl in Stories

When the players' characters are in the Umbra, Gaia's Howl should always be a part of the scene, even if a small one. Consider how it sounds like, or if it is felt in some other way: pinpricks on the skin, pressure in the ears, the smell of decay. Consider how it affects the scene and any spirits present. Spirits connected to Gaia in some way tend to be affected, Banes less so. Note that a lot of how spirits are defined in this game is the Garou view, which may not always be the whole truth of the matter. If you feel your story benefits from a Glade Child who does not hear the Howl or a Bane that it has driven to madness, that is fine, and in general, it is good to have spirits do the unexpected once in a while.

Howlstorms and Umbral desolations make things even more dangerous in the already-hazardous Umbra. Howlstorms are there to highlight that time is short to save Gaia and to dial up the danger of the Umbra, much like the Rite of Spiritual Succor (p. 68) can dial it down. And make no mistake, it is only the Black Spiral Dancers who think Gaia is dead. The hope that she may yet be saved is at the core ***Werewolf: The Apocalypse***, and without that hope, there is really no reason not to just embrace harano and wait for death.



TIME, DISTANCE, AND CHANGE

Time and distance are tricky things in the Umbra.

Here are some guidelines for dealing with how long and how far journeys are, as well as when to shake up the Umbra itself.

IMPRECISE ENTRY AND EXIT

Entering and exiting the Umbra isn't teleportation *per se*. Characters cannot enter the Umbra, take 10 steps, and expect to exit 10 steps from where they entered the Umbra. Many Garou have tried this to get past walls or locked doors, only to find the Umbra also impassable or that they've ended up many meters from where they intended. Sometimes, it works, particularly with a Critical success or high margin on a test. Often travelers end up near where they want to go, but not exactly there. This also says nothing about the danger of entering the Umbra. Not only is the Rite of Shadow Passage—and other means of entering the Umbra—risky, but the inhabitants of the Umbra, along with Gaia's Howl, can pose a real danger. Failure to exit is a remote, but not entirely improbable, chance. Packs

that lose their Rite Master could be stranded in the Umbra, eventually becoming Starving Remnants (*Werewolf*, p. 283).

TRaversing Umbral Reflections

Unless supernatural abilities say otherwise, traveling through points connected to places in the physical world uses the same distance and time as actually traveling to them outside the Umbra. The Weaver's webs are thick, which holds the concepts of time and distance firm.

TRaversing Deeper Places

As soon as the pack steps onto a pathway connected to a destination "deeper" in the Umbra, measured distance ceases to be. A more fitting measurement is the number of destinations between where the pack is and where they want to go.

Time may warp. Depending on what's more dramatically interesting, here are some options on how time passes relative to the physical world:

★ **As Normal:** Time in the Umbra is the same in the physical world. This is best when a story depends on time being critical in the physical world.



- ✿ **Time Crawls:** Time in the Umbra slows down to half the physical world's or less. This could symbolize a destination in the doldrums or denote it as a bulwark against change.
- ✿ **Time Speeds:** Time in the Umbra increases to half the physical world's or less. This could symbolize a destination in chaos or denote it as a constantly changing place.
- ✿ **Time Stops:** Time dissolves completely. This could symbolize an unchanging destination or be the work of a powerful spirit.

SHUFFLING PATHWAYS

How often should the pathways between your destinations change? Consider one of these three options depending on the needs of your chronicle:

- ✿ **Every Time the Pack Steps Sideways:** As the Umbra must be reinterpreted with each crossing of the Gauntlet, so must the pathways change with each entrance into the Spirit Wilds.
- ✿ **At the Start of a New Story:** For an easier option, consider changing your Umbral map

pathways at the start of a new story. This keeps things fresh without having to reshuffle your map every other session. This is the default assumption of *Werewolf*.

- ✿ **After a Major Victory or Failure:** For a compromise between the previous two options, consider shuffling your map when the pack achieves a great victory or suffers a terrible failure. This keeps the Umbra not only unpredictable but also reactive to players' actions.

DESTINATION TERRAIN

There are types of terrain that recur through the Umbra. They may have specific game mechanical effects and a recognizable mood that distinguishes them from other places. Even if a character has never been to this particular corner of the Wyrmlands before, they recognize the atmosphere. The destination terrain is not a location in itself. It's a landscape or a type of place that you need to elaborate further to create your specific destination.

FOUNTS

Founts are an umbrella term for the home of an individual spirit. The spirit doesn't have to be important or powerful, but it does have a reason for carving out a piece of the Umbra for its own. These destinations sometimes contain a formal court of spirits or a loose gathering of disparate spirits. In this case, the spirit with which the fount is associated is usually the leader or otherwise important to the greater community in some way. The size of a fount typically corresponds with the stature of the spirit in question, though not always. A gaffling may have a burrow while an Incarna has a vast realm.

System: When a spirit is in their own fount, they have an additional 1 Power. In the case of spirit courts, sometimes the bonus applies to all the spirits who take part in it.

JAGGED LANDS

In the tales of galliards, the Umbra is often depicted as a shadowy realm of cool, dark forests and mysterious glades. Jagged Lands put the lie to this stereotype. They're not created by the shadow of any particular Umbral being but rather come into existence through relentless strife in the physical world.

The Jagged Lands are hard. The terrain is difficult to navigate, with cliffs and mountainsides, swamps and glaciers. It's always too cold or too hot. Traveling even a short distance becomes a struggle. The inhabitants of Jagged Lands tend to be spirits to relish conflict, making any progress that much harder.

System: All Survival tests made in Jagged Lands increase the Difficulty by 1.

MOONLANDS

Some galliards say that the Moonlands spread wherever the light of Luna falls. This is not quite true, for it would make much of the Umbra into a Moonland at nighttime. Still, there's some truth to the claim. The Moonlands only appear at night in the light of the moon, bringing out the mystical

and the strange. They're elusive by nature, gone by dawn as if they never existed. This is why it's difficult to find spirits who dwell there, often requiring searching within as well as without.

Moonlands have been shrinking in recent centuries, and many Garou argue that once upon a time the entire Umbra was one vast Moonland at night. For the tribes of Gaia, Moonlands can be difficult because while they seem tightly bound to the heritage of the Garou, the spirits who dwell there are not automatic allies in the fight for Gaia. Often, Moon Cults have a much better grasp of the Moonlands than the defenders of Gaia.

Full of shadows and mystery, Moonlands feel as if secret truths were hidden around every corner. The silver moonlight reveals glimpses of truths long forgotten.

System: All tests related to secrets and mysteries are made with two additional dice in the Moonlands.

SUNLANDS

Rare now, but once upon a time the whole of the Umbra was one vast Sunland from dawn to dusk. Who knows whether such stories are true, but now the Sunlands are rare, often reflecting the last remaining wilderness areas of the world, such as deserts and wastelands.

Sunlands are awkward for the Garou because long ago the shapechangers who called them home were the lions and the bears, other shifters who the Garou murdered in the War of Rage. Because of this, while the Sunlands appear as if a paradise, the perfect pure state into which many Garou long to return, they'll never be truly home there. Local spirits have long memories and their friends and allies died at the claws of raging werewolves.

The savanna stretches forever in the Sunlands and there are few signs of human inhabitants. Animals roam free and prosperous as the light of Helios illuminates all.

System: All Difficulties for tests made by Garou are increased by 1 in the Sunlands.



UMBRAL REFLECTION

Umbral reflections are the spiritual interpretations of locations in the physical world. Not every physical world location has an active reflection, but those that do are one or more courts of spirits representing what the location is, what the location is made from, and the prevalent emotions of the people that reside there.

System: The Umbra and the physical world exist in a feedback loop where something originates in the physical world and is reflected in the Umbra, which then affects the physical world. With Umbral Reflections, this happens at a local scale and may have game mechanical effect. For example, a local police precinct is the site of routinely forced confessions, planted evidence, and jail deaths. The precinct has a strong Umbral reflection populated by spirits of authority, obedience, and mendacity. This, in turn, has the effect that in the physical world, all tests to exercise authority for corrupt personal benefit are made with one additional die. If the Umbral reflection is cleared out, this effect vanishes.

VEILED LANDS

Some Umbral locations are hard to find. Veiled Lands may be a secret basement in a small cottage or a hidden vale hiding between mountain ranges but the stories about them are vague and confused because of their very nature. Few find the Veiled Lands because that's their very purpose.

Spirits go to the Veiled Lands to hide their secrets and sometimes these are the very secrets Garou need for their war for Gaia. Veiled Lands tend to be peaceful and quiet but there's always a feeling of threat in the air. Once secrets are revealed, awful things may happen.

System: Finding Veiled Lands requires a Resolve + Occult test at a Difficulty of 5. Spirits may know where they're located, but the price for such knowledge is always high.

WYRMLANDS

When entire territories in the Umbra become infested by Banes over a long period of time, they slowly turn into Wyrmlands. These Umbral

territories are defined by the malignant energies of the Wyrm, hostile to the tribes of Gaia. They're often the home of founts where Banes originate. Once, these lands were believed to be exclusively found deeper in the Umbra, close to the Black Labyrinth where the Wyrm itself is said to dwell, but now such poisonous landscapes are expanding everywhere within the Umbra.

The Wyrmlands vary in size. Some are just landfills, while others are desolate wastes stretching to the horizon. They feature spirit communities of pain, strife, and despair, often consisting of Banes who fight each other as much as they fight any outsiders. These present opportunities for underhanded Garou: sometimes it's possible to incite Banes against each other. Still, they assume the worst from intruding Garou and are prepared to defend themselves and each other. They often have a leader, usually the most powerful Bane. Garou, who find ways to stay in the Wyrmlands, often find Banes with their bluster down and might even find ways to establish camaraderie and redemption with them. However, it's just as likely for Banes to plant the seeds of doubt in a pack's heart.

System: Any tests involving Resolve or Composure are made with a one-die penalty when in the Wyrmlands. The environment is not conducive to self-control.

UMBRAL DESTINATIONS

This section provides examples of specific places in the Umbra, which you can either use as-is or as the basis for your own destinations.

DEN OF FENRIS

When Wolf roamed the Spirit Wilds and led his tribe, he claimed many dens across the Umbra. While no one knows where the spirit went after the rise of the Cult of Fenris, these dens remain. A Den of Fenris is either a large hole in the ground, a carefully carved-out tree trunk, a cave converted

into a home, or sometimes large empty spaces in the spiritual reflections of urban areas.

While many of these dens were scoured clean by the Cult, plenty more contain remnants of Wolf's tribe, and perhaps provide clues as to Wolf's fate in these uncertain times.

DENIZENS

Once, Dens were considered the unofficial home of Wolf's tribe, where those under his patronage would gather away from the foolish politics of the Nation and the grievances they had with pack members outside the tribe. Perhaps it was in these Dens where the philosophy of the Cult first emerged, as some werewolves' complaints turned to criticisms of the Nation's purity.

Now, Dens are mostly abandoned, save for wolf-spirits taking shelter. These spirits might also wonder where Wolf might be. A few are held by Cultists, ready to engage unprepared Garou.

TESTS AND OPTIONS

Physically excavating a Den for information on the Cult's past or hints as to the current whereabouts of Wolf is usually a Strength or Dexterity + Investigation test. Interpreting wall art for information about the past of Wolf's tribe is an Intelligence + Academics or Occult test. Difficulties for these kinds of tests might be high, especially if the pack's looking into information the Cult would rather have forgotten. In general, consider setting the Difficulty somewhere between 3 and 6.

VARIATIONS

- ＊ When the Cult of Fenris usurped Wolf's tribe, not all of its members joined the cult or abandoned their patron so easily. Some dens still hold the bloody remnants of Wolf's tribe fighting each other. Here, packs can find weapons capable of striking fear in a Cultist's heart.
- ＊ The Den of Fenris is the Umbral home of not just a single Cult of Fenris pack, but an entire sept. With strong spirit pacts and careful trips into the physical world, the Cultists can strike when the pack least expects it.

ELGO SYSTEMS HEADQUARTERS

Ellgo Systems is an information technology company based in Canada that focuses on supporting business-to-business transactions. They're known for being fast, cheap, and willing to take on any contract, no questions asked. Their culture is defined by crunch time and high turnover. Within its gray Art Deco buildings lie floors of open-plan offices. Each desk is packed together in a cramped but efficient structure.

The spiritual reflection of its headquarters is perhaps more alive than the actual physical workplace. Here, all the toil for low pay is a spiritual generator. For many spirits associated with the Weaver, the spiritual reflection of Ellgo Systems Headquarters is their nursery.

DENIZENS

As a stronghold for the forces of the Weaver, Ellgo Systems Headquarters is home to many of the spirit kinds associated with it, such as Orb Weaver pattern spiders and thinking-engine spirits. These two types specifically work in tandem here, managing both company workflow and cash flow.

Not every spirit born here aligns itself with the Weaver. Wyld-influenced spirits of daydreams emerge from the minds of bored employees, and the pressures of work give rise to spirits of dominance, greed, and envy, some of which have become Banes.

TESTS AND OPTIONS

The pattern spiders and thinking-engine spirits have the closest contact with the companies whose transactions Ellgo manages. Packs can get more information about a company connected to Ellgo by convincing the spirits to share what they know with a Manipulation + Etiquette or Persuasion test at Difficulty 3. Using Intimidation raises the Difficulty to 4.

When getting information from these spirits, they present it as-is. They make no attempts to interpret what it might mean or connect the dots as to who is funding who. They only care about the work reaching its conclusion, not what its context is.







VARIATIONS

- ＊ Once spirits of business and marketing overpowered most Weaver-aligned spirits, the headquarters' spiritual reflection became a true marketplace. Information and even lessons in Gifts are bought and sold here.
- ＊ Ever since Ellgo Systems became a front for the Pentex Group, the headquarters' spiritual landscape changed for the worse. The building is now a battleground of Weaver and Wyrm-spirits vying for total dominance over each other. As the company slowly shifts into laundering each front's business, the Wyrm's hold grows stronger.

THE FORGOTTEN MOUNTAIN

Legend says this portion of the Umbra was once part of the physical world. Exactly where it was depends on who's telling the legend — packs across the world claim the original piece of land was in their country. What each version of the legend agrees on is over a thousand years ago, people forgot the mountain existed, and forces of the Wyld took it into the Umbra, human inhabitants and all.

This lush yet snow-peaked mountain moves through the Umbra like an iceberg, emerging unexpectedly in places, settling even near shadows of the physical world and settling as if it had always been there.

DENIZENS

The Forgotten Mountain is home to many spirits associated with the Wyld, especially Echoes, Nameless, and Serpentines (*Werewolf*, pp. 256–258.) It's also home to Gaian spirits of mountain flora and fauna like bears, hawks, wildflowers, and ferns. There is no sign that the mountain itself has a spirit, though other mountain-spirits hope to meet it.

The community is organized in a way that charitable Garou call “anarchic tendencies” and less sympathetic ones call “mob rule.”

They'll listen to and respect each other but won't extend the same regard for the landscape they're crushing without a good reason.

TESTS AND OPTIONS

Bringing order, or at least getting inconsiderate spirits of the Forgotten Mountain to stop causing chaos when they arrive in the shadow of the pack's territory, requires a material offering, a show of immense force, or a great favor.

Sometimes, packs need to reach someone on the Forgotten Mountain and don't have time to wait for it to emerge. Discovering the destination's current location is an Intelligence + Survival, Investigation, or Occult test at Difficulty 4. If a pack member has a pact with a spirit of the Forgotten Mountain or a piece of the Mountain itself, the Difficulty is reduced to 2.

VARIATIONS

- ＊ The mountain is, in truth, a volcano. It's never erupted, but the spirits that call it home secretly kindle the magma inside. One day, the mountain will burst open, and it will give a fiery birth to something both beautiful and unstoppable.
- ＊ The Forgotten Mountain looks for a place to stay. It doesn't just emerge in parts of the Umbra that closely reflect the physical world; it attempts to root itself there. Its inhabitants attempt to usurp the native population, and its attempts to take the area are so blatant it might even affect the physical world's landscape.

GOLDEN CAY

Golden Cay is a planned community, one of many suburbs around a bustling city. Built in the late 1990s to appeal to middle-class first-time homeowners, many of its residents knew each other well and were generally friendly to outsiders.

A few years ago, during wildfire season, Golden Cay was consumed in flames. Its inhabitants have finished picking up the pieces and mourning those lost, but just as their original homes burned away, so did the veils of secrecy among their community. Long-held grudges boil over, unrequited love spills out, and unstated debts come due. Another fire threatens to spark, and nowhere is it more obvious than its Umbral reflection.

DENIZENS

The spiritual landscape of Golden Cay is populated by spirits of construction, civilization, and secrecy. Spirits of friendship and cooperation remain after the wildfire, though in fewer numbers than before. A massive population of ash-, fire-, and dust-spirits are finally moving out of the area, finding little to keep their interest. All the spirits here take a greater than usual interest in the activities beyond the Gauntlet and seize opportunities to watch the community's little dramas and relate the tales to the others.

Most concerning is the increasing number of Banes in the area. These Banes of jealousy, rage, and mockery see the community's human inhabitants as potential hosts and attempt to urge the community's inhabitants to more dramatic and potentially dangerous outbursts.

TESTS AND OPTIONS

Whether it's because of the destruction the community suffered, or some strange inherent nature of the physical land only recently unlocked, the Gauntlet in Golden Cay is shockingly thin. Shadowshards (*Werewolf*, p. 189) always work within community limits, and the Difficulty for the Rite of Shadow Passage (*Werewolf*, p. 183) is never higher than 3.

VARIATIONS

- ✿ The reconstruction and regrowth of the surrounding areas invite an influx of Wyld-aligned spirits. These spirits are also fascinated by the drama before them and want to be active participants as well. This may drive them into alliance with the land's Banes, who might even convert them.
- ✿ The fire that destroyed Golden Cay was no accident. The community's been host to Wyrm-aligned cult since the mid2000s. It was they who called Banes of inferno here; both this and the community's fraying social ties are part of a greater plan to call down an "angel of the void," most likely a Nexus Crawler (*Werewolf*, p. 252.)

GRAVE OF THE FUTURE

Dreams deferred and misplaced futures are subject to the same forces of creation, stasis, and destruction as anything else. When a great plan doesn't work out, when a hope is snuffed out, when a possibility is snatched right out of the grip of feasibility, its spiritual reflection often ends up in the Grave of the Future.

This destination is a large building, a bizarre fusion of a mausoleum, a museum, and a movie theatre. Vanitas paintings mingle with sugar skulls on the walls, and messages in dead or never-to-be-formed languages are printed on signs.

DENIZENS

Spirits of the healthy Wyrm, mostly those of despair, failure, and decay, care for the Grave of the Future. Sometimes they seem more like spirits aligned with the Weaver; they carefully categorize and display their latest acquisitions. After an arbitrary amount of time, the exhibits are destroyed and ready to be reborn.

These spirits have a hatred for Banes, and those that confuse them for their ascendant Wyrm brethren might be violently corrected.

They'll let anyone enter the Grave of the Future and might even let a visitor take an exhibit if they can convince them it's "not the exhibit's time." However, they charge a hefty price for admission: all visitors must present proof of a time they were in despair or evidence of their greatest failure.

TESTS AND OPTIONS

The exhibits on display contain all kinds of failures, but what might appeal to certain Garou is some of the most recent exhibits: those of the shattered Garou Nation. Perhaps the Nation's lost secrets could be found here.

Searching the Grave for a relevant exhibit is a Resolve + Academics or Investigation test, with a Difficulty between 3 and 7, depending on the historical significance of the failure.



VARIATIONS

- ＊ There is a secret wing of the Grave dedicated to failures yet to come. It is behind a well-hidden door, and those who wish to enter must pay an even greater price than what was required to enter in the first place.
- ＊ Unbeknownst to the Grave's caretakers, a pack of Black Spiral Dancers have kept track of the destination and covet it for themselves. They see it as the foundation of an incredible Hive and see its inhabitants as potential allies, should they be driven into becoming Banes. For now, they pose as regularly visiting Garou, and some even claim to be the destination's "curators."

SURVIVAL TEST FIELD

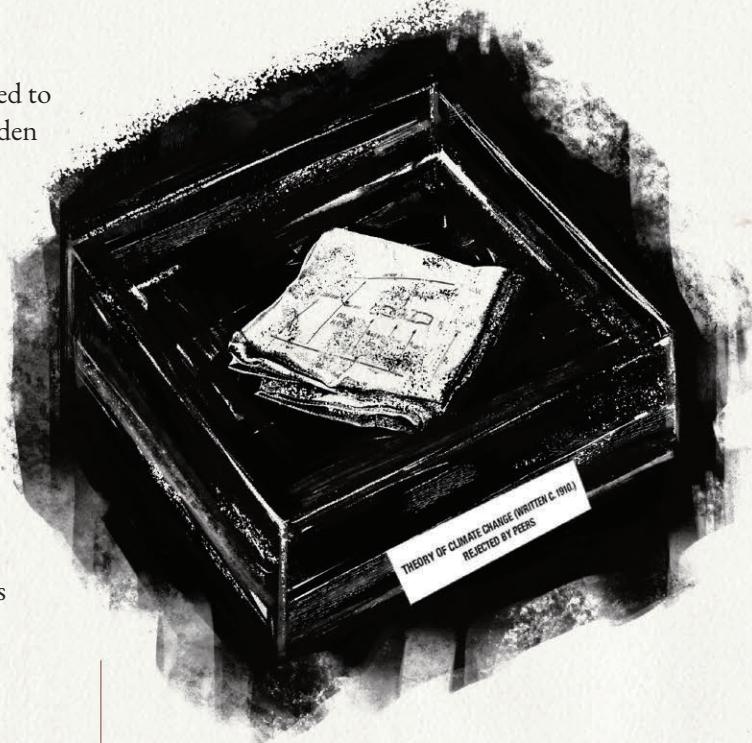
One of the greatest dangers of the Umbra is how easy it is to get lost. Once a werewolf travels past the shadows of familiar places, it takes great stamina and a mind willing to interpret the abstract on the fly to navigate a place where the dimensions of reality relinquish their full control. Only the most experienced or the most unfortunate Garou travel through the Spirit Wilds alone.

It is these two kinds that are often captured and placed into the Survival Test Field. One part sterile laboratory, one part proving ground made from searing asphalt, here Garou are subjected to relentless experiments.

DENIZENS

Spirits of strife, fear, experimentation, and curiosity form the staff of the Survival Test Field. These spirits organize depending on what active experiments are being run. This creates loose affinity groups: there's a group that continually carves Garou to test their regenerative properties, another that pushes them through a nearly unending obstacle course to test their stamina, and plenty more.

They do this in the name of preventing the Apocalypse. They, too, believe that Gaia is dead or dying and are sure with her death comes the end of



the physical world, and then the Umbra with it. So, if Gaia can no longer improve her soldiers, they will, no matter what it takes. They will never succeed and only inflict brutality on the Garou.

TESTS AND OPTIONS

Surviving the Field's barbaric experiments usually involves Tests with some kind of Physical attribute, often Stamina but also Dexterity.

Escaping or rescuing other Garou from the Field is done in two ways. The physical method involves Skills like Stealth, Larceny, Survival, and Athletics. Talking or lying your way out of the destination involves Etiquette, Subterfuge, and maybe even Occult.

VARIATIONS

- ＊ The Survival Test Field was organized by the Garou Nation decades or perhaps even centuries ago. The spirits here are following an old pact made with the Nation to create stronger werewolves, but the Nation's end sent them spiraling out of control. Perhaps this pact can be broken or redirected toward the Garou's new situation.

- ✿ The Survival Test Field is in the Wyrmlands, but the ones who perform the experiments in it aren't Banes. They're prisoners of the Wyrm's foot soldiers who run the facility in secret, unaware their beliefs and fears are being manipulated to learn how to better turn the Garou to the Despoiler's purpose.

VAST FOREST

The Umbra contains swathes of forests, but only one is the Vast Forest. It contains every climate that a forest could thrive in. Pieces of a North American forest mingle with a South Asian jungle share space with swathes of Central African rainforest.

Here, all elements of human civilization are gone, replaced with the ordered chaos of nature unrestricted.

If the Garou are willing to meet the destination on its own terms, they might be richly rewarded.

DENIZENS

The Vast Forest is home to Gaian spirits of all types. The cycle of predator and prey spins endlessly here: hunters tear apart their prey and search for more, and the prey rises again to play the role to another pursuer. Unique symbiosis occurs here, often between spirits of animals who'd never meet in ordinary circumstances in the surface world.

The most populous spirits here are the wolves. These eccentric spirits have great interest in the Garou, but don't consider them kin. Even wolfborn Red Talons don't meet their standards; these spirits are more wolf than flesh-and-blood wolves.

TESTS AND OPTIONS

The Vast Forest is a great place for players' characters to learn new Gifts. Any Gift taught by an animal- or plant-spirit may be taught here, though seeking out a relevant spirit and earning their trust is a greater challenge than other Gift-seeking journeys.

Gaining the trust of a spirit in the Vast Forest, especially that of its wolf-spirits, involves undertaking tasks that prove the Garou can live as a pure animal, not as a hybrid of flesh and spirit.

These tasks often involve Animal Ken, Survival, or Streetwise tests, and it may be necessary to complete them only in lupus form.

VARIATIONS

- ✿ The Vast Forest doesn't just contain the spirits of currently living flora and fauna species, but also those long extinct. Perhaps it's one of the last places one can find the Gaian spirit of a dinosaur or the spirit of a long-dead flower type mentioned in an old text. If they exist, it is only human memory that keeps their spirits in existence.
- ✿ A rot threatens the Vast Forest. Drattosi, Furmlings, and Banes of disease and spoilage organized a raid on the destination, and they're making great progress. For now, their assault remains hidden from the native spirits, due to the near-infinite size of the forest, but it won't be long before the Despoiler claims the land.

WEB OF PIPES

Under the Earth and deep in the Umbra lies the Web of Pipes, the communal spiritual reflection of the sewers and underground pipe systems of every developed area on the planet. It's easy to get there; just travel deeper into the shadow of a sewer and it opens into the Web. No matter what kind of architecture the entrance has, the Web has the same look: bricks of obsidian and steel pipes cushioned by Weaver-spirit spun threads.

If a pack can survive a perplexing pathway, its natives and the smell, the destination isn't just one way to travel around the world surreptitiously; it's also a convenient entrance into the deeper portions of the Umbra.

DENIZENS

The Web of Pipes is home to spirits of industry, civilization, and infrastructure. Drones and guardian pattern spiders are ubiquitous here, often clinging to the pipes. Spirits of animals who live in sewers—such as rats, frogs, and lizards—as well as Banes of waste, disease, and poison also call the Web home.



The Web's inhabitants can get just as lost as Garoudo, but they don't seem to mind. The destination is littered with empty nests and homes, abandoned after a spirit went to retrieve something or explore, only to realize they couldn't find their way back.

TESTS AND OPTIONS

To the untrained eye, every segment of the Web of Pipes has no differences. Those who examine closer find vague reflections of the destinations in the Umbra a portion is attached to, or the part of the physical world it reflects. This is critical for using the destination as a means of finding pathways.

Discovering new pathways in the Web of Pipes is a relevant Mental Attribute + Survival, Streetwise, or Investigation test. Difficulties for finding pathways to shadow destinations range from 2 to 4. Difficulties for finding pathways to deeper Umbral destinations range from 3 to 6.

VARIATIONS

- ✿ As the Web of Pipes is an Umbral reflection of sprawling infrastructure, it's possible it might be a gateway to whatever stronghold spirits associated with the Weaver might hold. Perhaps an immense colony of pattern spiders lies at the center, if such a thing exists here.
- ✿ The Web of Pipes is one of the few places the rat-shifters claim in the Umbra as their sole territory. Should they discover the pack navigating the Web, they might demand payment or attempt to drive them out.

OTHER LOCATIONS

Other possible locations include:

- ✿ The González home is a micro-community within the Umbra, home to an entire court. The spirits know the Gonzálezes and even have plans for them. The previous owners neglected the house, and some spirits want to possess the family to ensure their home remains safe.
- ✿ The Railroad Depot was once the heart of the city's transportation and nightlife, but changing

times have brought the district into decline. Its Umbral reflection is divided between the spirits that took residence during its heyday, the ones brought in due to its decline, and many unaffiliated spirits that are just attempting to pass through. A civil war is imminent.

- ✿ The Four Gates Hotel is known for its dirt-cheap rooms and being the staging ground for shady or outright illegal transactions and activities in the city. The spirits of vice and deception call their spiritual counterparts home and make a game of seeing who can possess a guest the fastest.
- ✿ Coral Bay Farms is one of the corporate farms that provide raw material to Young and Smith's food processing plants. It provides grains, milk, meat, and fruits. The land use is unsustainable, and Banes emerge from it. These, too, are the farms' crop; both companies are fronts for the Pentex Group.
- ✿ In the Umbra, the shadow of the real world's oceans is one entire body of water. Those who survive encountering the spirits of its predators use it to travel to its edges in the material world. Its waters also touch the deeper parts of the Spirit Wilds, a danger for the unprepared.
- ✿ Deep in the Umbra, a community of joy-, mirth, and pleasure-spirits came together and threw the ultimate party. The revelry never ends, and all may partake. Just don't try to bring up a serious matter. Like the Bacchantes of old, they will meet this with violent retribution.
- ✿ Spirits of possibility and insecurity gather at the Fork in the Road, a crossroads deep within the Umbra with billions of pathways. Some say it's the center of the Spirit Wilds, and those who explore every road can map it. One pack swore to try; they haven't been seen since.
- ✿ Rumors speak of a "Primordial Plain," which is believed to be the oldest part of the Umbra. Most scoff at the idea. If time is flexible in the Spirit Wilds, then age has no meaning. And yet those who've been there meet the spirits of truly ancient concepts and come away amazed.

UMBRAL JOURNEYS

Whether it's learning something, saving someone, or making contact, every journey into the Umbra has great purpose.

Here are four examples of journeys your pack could undertake, either ready to use as-is or for further customization.

AN ELDER'S RESPITE

Cast: A respected sept elder (5 / 3), a spirit of peace (Power 5), a Fenris cultist ("Berserk Ahroun," *Werewolf*, p. 280.)

What Happened: A sept elder, never known for abandoning their post, suddenly goes missing. The pack takes part in the investigation. The remnants of a Rite of Shadow Passage lead the pack into the Umbra, where they discover the elder in the Umbral reflection of a meadow, building a shelter. They make their intention clear: they're tired of fighting, and they want to spend their final days in the Umbra. The pack must decide what to do with the elder. The elder is nearly out of Willpower and cannot live in the Umbra for much longer.

What Could Happen: The elder is clearly on the edge of harano, if not already in its depths, and the pack must convince them to return to the fight. The elder defends their position by describing how all their deeds achieved nothing and begs the pack to carry on where the werewolf left off and to let them die on their own terms. Perhaps showing the elder the good they've done could help; tangible proof, either in or out of the Umbra, could revive their fighting spirit.

* If the pack decides to grant the elder their wish, they have a further decision to make: should the elder be left to survive in the Umbra, potentially becoming a Starving Remnant if their resources become scarce, or should the pack risk retribution from the sept and put them down here and now? Should they choose the latter, a spirit of peace that resides in the meadow stops them, threatening to defend the peace of the meadow with violence if they draw blood.

* An aged Fenris Cultist, who once shared a pack with the elder, arrives. They reveal they've been watching the elder for some time. This meadow was once a land where both wolves came to rest after hunts, and the Cultist finds it a fitting place to cut out a loose end and slaughter the elder. The elder isn't willing to die at the hands of their old friend but can't keep up with the Cultists' onslaught. The pack must save the elder.

Attribute Focus: Physical or Social

MAW OF THE BLACK LABYRINTH

Cast: Would-be Dancer convert (4 / 3), a Black Spiral Dancer recruiter (Dirgesinger, *Werewolf*, p. 278), a hidden Dancer agent among the sept (5 / 3.)

What Happened: During a moot held at the sept, a late-arriving pack makes a shocking announcement: one of their own has decided to join the Black Spiral Dancers and is currently on their way to the Black Labyrinth. They beg any fellow sept members for help, especially the players' pack. Should they accept, they face an incredible challenge. They must rescue someone from the Black Labyrinth without being tempted into entering or pulled into it by one of its inhabitants.

What Could Happen: The pack has good news. Upon entering the Umbra, tracking the would-be convert's whereabouts reveals they haven't gotten into any contact with the Black Spiral Dancers, and they're looking for the Black Labyrinth on their own. Something about the situation isn't right, however. A member of the other pack leads everyone down strange detours that keep them away from the would-be convert. The players' pack may discover that one of the other pack's members is also a Black Spiral Dancer, buying time for their ally.

The packs arrive at the Black Labyrinth just in time. They find the would-be convert in the company of a recruiter, who clearly brought the werewolf down this path in the first place. The recruiter sees the packs and decides to make a deal: stand in the presence of the Black Labyrinth's entrance, look within it, and if a single person doesn't choose to enter it, they'll let the would-be



convert go home with them. The pack must face the Labyrinth's increasing threats and temptations to enter, and the possibility that this is just a distraction while the recruiter brings their target inside.

The packs arrive too late. The other pack's friend emerges from the Black Labyrinth as a Black Spiral Dancer and demands both their old pack and the players' pack enter it as well. Fighting their way out is possible, but at least one member of the other pack still believes they can pull their friend back from the brink. They claim there are ex-members of the Dancers capable of purifying their brethren of the Wyrm. The pack must escape, kill the new Dancer, or help kidnap them in hopes of finding someone who can deprogram them.

Attribute Focus: Physical or Mental

THE LAND CRIES OUT

Cast: Possessed Workers (4/2), Field-spirit (Power 7), Occult investigator (4/3)

What Happened: Through a Contact, Ally, or Touchstone, the pack gets wind of strange events happening at an oil rig a few kilometers away from their territory. Its workers report seeing things that aren't there, and some fall into bizarre temporary mental breakdowns where they attack themselves and others.

While this sounds like the work of a Bane, the pack discovers the responsible spirit is anything but. It's the spirit of the field the oil rig is built on, twisted by the structure into one part nature spirit and one part oil-spirit.

This tortured amalgam wants to fulfill its task and get revenge on those who made it this way.

The pack must decide what to do with the spirit.

What Could Happen: The pack might be able to talk the spirit of the field into becoming one type of spirit again, easing its pain and ending its crusade. The field-spirit isn't sure whether to be a nature spirit once more and live in pain as the company continues digging or becoming an oil-spirit and letting the company that built the rig "win." If the pack has an outstanding argument for either option (or has one of their own), it'll accept their decision and transform itself.

The spirit uses its properties as a partial oil-spirit to possess any worker that's come into contact with oil brought up from the field. It hopes if it brings every employee under its control, it can peacefully get the oil rig to stop. The pack must protect the workers from falling under the field-spirit's control while keeping them in the dark about the true nature of their coworkers' actions. To make matters worse, some of the remaining workers believe the pack is responsible.

An amateur occult investigator gets involved with the case, hindering the pack's attempts to communicate with the spirit. Uniformed and arrogant, the investigator believes exorcising the spirit is the best course of action and ends up possessed thanks to a botched ritual. In the investigator's body, the spirit decides to kill each of the oil rig workers one-by-one and then destroy the rig itself. The pack must find a way to save the workers, stop the spirit's plan, and pull it out of the investigator.

Attribute Focus: Mental or Social

NUCLEAR NEGOTIATION

Cast: Nuclear Drattosi (Power 6, *Werewolf*, p. 247)

What Happened: Through the guidance of a sept elder, the advice of a spirit, or through the grapevine, the pack learns of a lost caern a few kilometers away from their territory. There's just one problem: sometime after the caern was abandoned, the land was contaminated by waste from a nearby uranium mine, transforming its spiritual reflection into Wyrmlands populated by Drattosi made from balefire.

All might not be lost. The Banes aren't happy to see Garou in their midst, but they aren't actively hostile. Could it be possible to make a deal with them and help revive the caern?

What Could Happen:

* The nuclear Drattosi are open to the Garou reviving the caern. They've attempted to do it themselves to no avail, so if the pack is willing to try, they're welcome to it. They're even offering to abandon the land and move into similarly tainted areas. However, unless the pack can talk them into a better price, their demands are dire. They want



the pack to either give them more suitable land (i.e., irradiate some other place) or ignore them as they influence humans to despoil other lands, which may draw the ire of the pack's peers.

- ✿ After a tense negotiation, the pack has a chance to discover the Bane community's secret: they don't want to live like this anymore. They feel isolated from other spirits, even other spirits associated with the Wyrm. This doesn't seem to be some kind of elaborate trick; the Banes genuinely wonder if there's another way to exist.

The pack has a chance to show the Banes the kinds of spirits they could become.

- ✿ If they're successful, they might pull the Drattosi into becoming spirits of a healthy Wyrm or other spirit types.
- ✿ All hints of parley were a trap. The Drattosi were merely biding their time until they could spring an ambush on the pack. Though their forces potentially overwhelm the werewolves, not everyone is completely willing to light the pack on fire. Even if it were only pretended, the possibility of making peace with the Garou makes some hesitate to fight, which the pack could use to their benefit. If the pack exploits the Bane's split, the fight becomes three-sided: those that want to kill, those that want to negotiate, and the pack themselves.

Attribute Focus: Social or Physical

OTHER JOURNEYS

Other possible journeys include:

- ✿ A dispute between the two spirits in the sept's local spirit court is growing out of control. The sept suggests the pack serve as a neutral party for a negotiation held by higher ranking members of each spirit's type, to be held deep within the Umbra.
- ✿ While rushing to an important destination, the pack encounters a Magician (*Werewolf*, p. 287)

who used a ritual to enter the Spirit Wilds and can't escape. They beg the pack for help. They must decide whether to help the lost occultist, bring them along on their mission, or leave them to their fate.

- ✿ The local court is in a panic, which leaks into the physical world. The pack discovers a spirit of predation hunting the court's denizens. The denizens can't fight back, but the spirit's only doing what comes naturally. The pack must decide whether to destroy the spirit or guide it away.
- ✿ After impressing a powerful spirit, it invites the pack to its Umbral home to learn a Gift. The long journey is arduous, but nothing compared to what it plans for the pack. The spirit makes its terms clear: the Gift is theirs if they can pass the spirit's deadly test.
- ✿ The pack got lost in the Umbra, and there's no hope of finding a way back to their path. A spirit offers to guide them to their destination. Soon, the pack realizes it's a Bane. Should the pack trust the Bane, and what might be the consequences if they do?
- ✿ A swarm of pattern spiders invades the Umbral reflection of an apartment building and continuously weave webs. They appear to be sick. The pack must exorcise the apartment building without disrupting the building's spiritual or physical environment, even as the overdose of order infects both its spirits and physical tenants.
- ✿ A powerful moon cult declares a swath of territory in the Spirit Wilds as their own, ignoring a long-established court's protests. The court recruits the pack to force out the cult. The pack must either engage with a potentially overwhelming enemy or negotiate with a pack with no common ground.
- ✿ A pack ally asks them to investigate the whereabouts of a friend who went missing. They discover the friend underwent the First Change and stepped sideways. The pack must locate the friend before they become a Starving Remnant (*Werewolf*, p. 283) and deal with the consequences if they can't find them in time. ■



CHAPTER SIX

A Chorus of Voices



What is a fact in the world of spirits? Does the Wyrm actually exist? You can hear Gaia's Howl, but does that mean you can trace it back to its source?

The Garou have clear beliefs built around the spirits and the Umbra, and when they explore the Spirit Wilds, they often find confirmation for their ideas. There are spirits who speak of Gaia, and Banes who serve the Wyrm.

Still, the truth of the matter is that the Umbra tends to reflect the dreams and aspirations of whoever chooses to explore it. Because of this, other entities have completely different viewpoints on what spirits are and what the Umbra is like. That's the trouble with Garou faith: everyone can get those beliefs confirmed as facts as long as they pretend that their truth is the only truth.

This chapter is dedicated to such alternative viewpoints. There are many who walk the Moonlit Path apart from the warriors of Gaia: Stargazers delve deeper than any other tribe in search of impossible mysteries, the Cult of Fenris runs Great Hunts seeking to destroy the Wyrm itself, and Black

Spiral Dancers commune with ancient Banes.

What's more, even humans sometimes glimpse the hidden world. Perhaps their view is the clearest of all, for they don't have preconceived notions of the Garou.

THE MOON CULTS

While they diverge greatly from the views of their fellow Garou, the moon cults are still a part of the Shattered Nation, but their apparent abandonment of Gaia does not earn them any friends. Seeing them as wayward at best, other Garou keep them at arm's distance, and many septs outright refuse to allow them into their Rites.

This ostracism has caused many moon cults to develop their own Rites and norms for interacting with the Spirit Wilds, with the common element being their worship of Luna (as a new mother or as a sister). This dedication is what has given the moon cults their boosted popularity among the younger generation of Garou.



Men in black suits made powerful music with their brass pipes. Women danced in dresses of all colors. Drums, parasols, and costumes appeared in abundance. To Beaver Root it seemed almost as if a piece of the Umbra had broken through in the middle of Bourbon Street. But Bull Shark had called it a funeral.

They had been sorely beaten and defeated at the plastic dump, but the acolyte of Mistwalker had arrived, summoned the spirit with her voice and carried Bull Shark away in her powerful hands. They had returned to their streetcar caern, changed clothes, and hurried to the city where the funeral took place.

One of the Garou in their pack had died recently (apparently "a blue musician"), and this procession was for him. He lay in the coffin in the horse-drawn hearse as the second line followed.

"You're telling me you took a fomor to the caern?" asked the acolyte angrily after Bull Shark had explained the situation.

"You don't understand! I love her," Bull Shark tried to explain.

Beaver Root could do little but observe them, like a fainting breeze already too weak to blow.

"Love is no excuse for being stupid!" she muttered.

Bull Shark shrugged wearily, taking the well-deserved scolding.

"You should be working to pull the Bane out of her! Especially if you love her! There's no way to live with what that thing is going to do to her!"

He looked up, amazement on his face. "You can do that?"

"Yes! If you've got more than rocks in your head!"

Beaver Root thought intensely. If one could drive away the Bane from Melanie's body, then maybe, with enough power, they could drive Monsieur Plastique away from the Bayou!

But Monsieur Plastique was magnificent, and Beaver Root was just a tiny spirit without a body in the physical world.

"I'm just an ahroun," yelled Bull Shark to the acolyte over the music. "How do I banish the Bane without harming her body?"

Then Beaver Root got it! At least, it hoped it did.

After a quick negotiation, it agreed with Bull Shark on what to do. The two separated from the procession, ducking into a nearby alleyway as the acolyte led the second line down the street. Bull Shark opened his mind and gave his body over to Beaver Root. Bull Shark's own spirit was there but made room for the flower that now took over.

As that happened, Beaver Root felt the borrowed body change. It grew taller, arms expanding as a flower reaching toward the sun. This was not so very strange, it decided. It was uncomfortable, but not unnatural.

It was almost as if the Garou were blossoming!



This worship of Luna is often focused on different aspects of the moon. While it is rarely just an auspice-cult, it is not unusual for a moon cult to give priority to a single auspice or even worshiping the moon in an unusual phase such as the hunter's moon or the lunar eclipse.

THE CRESCENT COVEN

The Crescent Coven is one of the largest moon cults in North America; its members range from newly changed cubs to grizzled veterans who sought greater mastery of the Umbra. This led them to the embrace of Sister Luna, a teacher of the art.

For the Crescent Coven, Luna is a mystical goddess with dominion over the spiritual world, a figure quite like the ancient goddess Hekate (among others). Scores of young packs have adopted some of the Coven's self-empowerment teachings, leading to a small wave of young amateurs who attempt to control their Rage through shadow work. The Crescent Coven now number around twenty packs, with many more following some of the teaching shared by their Elder Witch, the Black Haruspex, an elderly Shadow Lord theurge.

To the Matron Moon—Our Guide and Sister!

Agenda: The Crescent Coven and their patrons are seeking to change the way Garou see themselves, not as warriors of a lost cause but as mystics who can bring about a new age of enlightenment.

Spiritual Ties: The Crescent Coven knows many spirits and counts them among their resources. Each member has at least one personal bond with a spirit. Their most powerful ties are forged through the sacrifice of the witch's own human shape. In this act, a witch earns the patronage from Crescent Moon Lunes, who can assist them in their Rites.

Umbral Approach: The Coven is also careful to keep any conflict with other Garou inside the Umbra where they have the advantage. It is not unusual for them to forcibly bind spirits to their will, as the doctrines of the Coven do not recognize the sentience of spirits as real or worthy of respect

compared to the will of a Garou. Many members of the Crescent Coven learn the Rite of Binding and have the Practiced Rite merit with it (p. 69).

IN CHRONICLES

- ✿ Several spirits known to the pack disappear in a short period of time. Soon afterward, the Crescent Coven makes contact with the players' characters' sept and offers to trade new talismans for favors. Is the Coven trying to sell the sept's own allies back to them or is this merely a coincidence? If the latter, the question remains what happened to the spirits, and whether the Coven knows something.
- ✿ A young theurge of the players' characters' sept revolts against her mentor, fleeing to the Crescent Coven and the freedom it gives her. The mentor is angered by this affront and demands she be returned to the sept and will not take no for an answer. The players' characters must act as mediators to mend the relationship between the theurge and her mentor or prepare for war between the local packs and the Crescent Coven.

THE LAIR

"Come with us and stop being afraid."

Killing loved ones is a heavy burden for many a Garou, and the fear of it often leads to The Lair. This moon cult seeks out the frightened and remorseful, leading them to a sanctuary where you can sleep without Rage harrowing your sleep. This Umbral cave, known simply as The Lair, is a miraculous gift from Sister Luna in return for their worship.

To members of The Lair, Luna is the mistress of Rage, a motherly figure both wrathful and protective. Through her grace, the members of The Lair help one another perform the necessary sacrifices, always reminding each other of the price of their Rage. Of course, the price is paid come their auspice moon, when the Lair is filled with the howls

of a Garou frenzying, their Rage unchained, while the rest of the Lair keeps them away from the outside world. Or, in some cases, they unleash the frenzied Garou on whatever foe deserves to feel their Rage.

Agenda: Garou can become more. The Umbra holds the key to Garou evolution into creatures capable of changing a doomed world. The Lair has the tools for individuals to improve themselves and reach this higher state.

Spiritual Ties: The Lair makes deals with Lunes to help keep their Rage in check, often neglecting spirits who cannot help them progress towards The Lair's goal. An Exchange with Luna (p. 60) is only one way Lair members use to deal with their Rage.

Umbral Approach: The Lair approaches the Umbra in the same way as they approach their Rage: it needs to be controlled and kept docile, only to be unchained at opportune moments.

IN CHRONICLES

* A werewolf arrives at the caern, claiming he is a Silent Strider messenger en route elsewhere. In truth, he is a recruiter for The Lair and seeks the company of the youngest Garou in the sept to teach them to be ashamed of their Rage and convince them to join the moon cult. Once found out, he remains diplomatic. Such undermining of Gaia's tribes cannot stand, but how to get rid of him without alienating the youngsters that his message resonates with?

* An ahroun member of The Lair has escaped her bonds and is in a frenzy until dawn. The Lair's members are dead or badly hurt and request the players' characters' aid to track her down and preferably capture her before she can do worse to endanger innocent bystanders or the Veil. After she has been bound and brought to her senses, she will be in horror of her own actions and may attempt something desperate.

THE IVORY PRIESTHOOD

Death is only the beginning of something new — thus says the circle.

Growing out of a Silver Fang splinter group focused on funerary traditions, this moon cult left their orthodox tribemates behind after they began an immense Rite meant to be the great funerary Rite for Mother Gaia. Afterward, the Priesthood grew beyond their tribal origin, initiating new members, particularly from the Ghost Council and the Silent Striders.

Claiming to know the secrets of death, the Ivory Priests remain uneasy allies for the members of the Shattered Nation. Many of them display the skill to reach into the Umbral darkness and commune with the departed. An Ivory Priest often requires costly sacrifices for services rendered, caring little for anything but their own cause.

Agenda: The Ivory Priesthood is attempting to gather and send as many ancestor-spirits as possible into the deepest Umbra, as they are seeking to perceive what awaits the world after its moment of dying.

Spiritual Ties: The Ivory Priesthood has ties to many spiritual powers in the darkest recesses of the Umbra. Some of those spirits were once living, while some of those entities are either manifestations of the moment of death or chthonic things never meant to see sunlight. These are the Priests' allies in the fight against stagnation and division.

Umbral Approach: The Ivory Priesthood considers its members the living psychopomps of the Garou, and it often takes umbrage with ancestor-spirits that insist on remaining close to what was important to them in life. Bringing those same spirits back from the beyond is another matter entirely.

IN CHRONICLES

* The Ivory Priests are enraged with the number of Starving Remnants haunting the Umbra near the players' characters' caern. An Ivory Priest philodox challenges them to deal with it or pack up and leave, as the moon cultists are clearly more fit to take care of the territory. The pack must either venture into the Umbra to hunt dangerous game or prepare to defend their caern with force.

* After the death of a dear friend, the Ivory Priests appear and claim the right to perform his funerary Rite, even though the deceased was never a Silver Fang. The Ivory Priests claim that they were. Finding out the truth is difficult. Possibilities include venturing into the Umbra to ask the dead Garou's ancestor-spirit or seeking out Garou who knew them of old. The Ivory Priests may be speaking the truth or trying to gain access to the caern for their own ends.

THE STARGAZERS

While Chimera no longer is the patron of the Stargazers, this tribe retains a lot of its enigmatic ways, much to the chagrin of those who interact with them. Not a single Stargazer seems capable of producing a straight answer, often to the frustration of less cerebral Garou.

Those who do have the patience to catch a glimpse of what the Stargazers are doing within the Umbra have seen them employ various forms of divination to guide themselves into the Umbra. To the Stargazers, the Umbra is a trove of sympathetic connections and symbolism they employ to affect change in the world. While in the material world, the Stargazers seem hesitant compared to the Garou; however, the tribe is far more decisive when it comes to acting in the Spirit Wilds. Both the direct and indirect actions of a Stargazer can shake up a region in a way that triggers domino effects: persuading Umbral rivers to change their flow, disrupting commerce for a few hours; tricking a media spirit to go into an uproar over the delay of a single product, which in turn breaks down the choke hold of desire spirits across the city.

Even though Garou do not naturally belong in the Umbra, Stargazers seem to handle the Umbra more easily than most and packs that attempt to follow a Stargazer often find it difficult. Curiously, most spirits seem to view the Stargazers as the most approachable tribe, and more than one spirit court treats Stargazers with respect most Garou would

need to work hard to earn even a fraction of. The Stargazers often have far stronger pacts with spirits, leading to a higher-than-average amount of Gifts and Rites among the Stargazers than the Garou.

Agenda: Where the Stargazers of old would spend years trying to make fellow Garou understand their ways through reflections on the past, current Stargazers only discuss issues that need to be handled in the now. Their future goal? Their great plan? If asked, the Stargazers do not answer verbally but let their deeds speak for themselves.

Spiritual Ties: Even as the Stargazers form pacts across the Spirit Wilds, they are careful never to fall under the sway of any one spirit. Some Stargazers have made their abodes in abandoned caerns, now only accessible through an Umbral entrance. These are usually well guarded by scores of guardians, such as centaur-spirits, guilt-mirrors, and daimons.

Umbral Approach: It is rare for Stargazers to abandon their neutrality and venture into direct conflict with other werewolves, but it does happen. The Umbra is their battlefield of choice. While they've abandoned their old septs, the Stargazers have forged many new ties in the Umbra to make up for allies they lost. Hence, a conflict with Stargazers puts bonds and alliances with spirits at risk, as the influence of a Stargazer can hold more sway over spirits than that of a Garou.

"Are they supposed to be our guiding star? Or falsehoods to be revealed? Let's hope the answer is revealed before all is lost."

-KOLYA SUNYE, SILENT STRIDER PHILODOX

IN CHRONICLES

* The search for a solution to a tricky problem involving the Umbra around their caern leads the players' characters on the trail of a Stargazer pack who are known to be wise in the ways of the Spirit Wilds. The characters must make the journey to the pack's territory through trackless wilderness and request them for aid.



The Stargazers are willing to help, but at a price. The pack is sent on another trip even farther afield to retrieve an old talisman and bring it back to them. This quest comes with a mystifying taboo. They must not take homid form as long as they hold the talisman.

- * The actions of the players' characters in a previous story have inadvertently crossed a Stargazer pack, who have embarked on an Umbral smear campaign. Spirit allies will refuse their requests, the caern's spirit court gives them the cold shoulder, and nobody wants to teach them new Gifts. They must figure out what was the strange thing they did wrong and how they might placate the Stargazers. Going in swinging will only make the problem worse.

THE CULT OF FENRIS

The Cult of Fenris sees the world as its Gaia-given domain. Any spirits dwelling near a conquered caern are brought to heel and forced to contribute to the war effort, while those daring to resist are shackled and enthralled by the theurges of the Cult. If they still resist, the Cult feeds their essence to the manifestations of Fenris to run with the pack.

Fenrir packs hunt in the Umbra with no limitations on themselves, waging their war despite the collateral damage inflicted upon the Spirit Wilds and despite what this would entail for the surrounding world.

While the Cult views the Umbra as a resource, they refuse to form bonds or bargains with inferior spirits. Fenrir packs never take any other patron than Fenris himself, seeing any other spirit as nothing but a tool to wage war with. This means the Cult of Fenris uses many enslaved spirits, either as weaponized talismans or by forcing spirits to possess mortal flesh as expendable pawns for their cause.

Enthralling spirits is a very old practice, one most modern Garou find abhorrent. The Cult justifies it with references to legends and their ancestral practices. In fact, the number of stories the Fenrir

galliards share at their moots seems to be growing, and more than one astute observer has noticed a lot of those stories seem to remind them of stories they've heard shared by now-dead Elders of their own tribe.

This practice of warping history is especially dangerous to an oral tradition like the history of the Garou, which the Cult has been trying to distort since their split from the Nation. The main target is spiritual instead of physical. Change enough memories among the ancestor-spirits and force them to remember the past differently, and you've changed history. A tale of the Black Furies' vengeance is transformed into a story about a Fury who could only get their revenge through the aid of the great Wolf, or even a version where the protagonist was, in fact, a part of Wolf's tribe. With just a few facts scattered within the lies, those tales of past glory can become evidence of the Cult's righteous cause.

By erasing, twisting facts, and turning them into propaganda through spiritual means, the narrative pushed by a lot of Fenrir galliards often refers to their claim of Wolf's tribe being the *Ur-Tribe*: the one tribe from which all other tribes have sprung. This is a legacy they still use to browbeat their opponents, in spite of the Cult being only partially composed of the original tribe. The majority of the Cultists are zealous converts from the tribes of the Shattered Nation.

Agenda: The Cult of Fenris see themselves as the heroes of the Apocalypse; warriors who will stand victorious once all weakness has been purged from the world. There is no mercy for the weak, especially not the spirits that would dare to refuse the chosen warriors, so either entralling or destroying them is the only choice left.

Spiritual Ties: The cult interacts primarily with the spirits of Wolf's brood. While they also interact with other spirits, the recent animosity of spirits towards werewolves has only caused the Cult to have even less hesitation in crushing uppity spirits between their jaws. Any talisman in their hands is a tool that is used as such.

Umbral Approach: The Cult of Fenris dominates. They take. For them, the Umbra is just another battlefield, and if they need to burn large swathes of it to get their way, this is the way

Historical Perspective of Spirits

When the Cult of Fenris engages in something, it is often seen in the real world as well.

Understanding the past through a careful examination of sources is a challenge, one that can be hard to do when counterfactual statements are treated as facts. It is even more challenging in the world of the Garou, where the editorial whim of spirits telling tales can change the Umbra itself.

To the Garou, liberating the truth from stories can be a tough nut to crack. If the Cult is successful in claiming these for themselves through moots and Story Rites, the Fenrir can draw real, spiritual power from stories. They could perhaps even hurt the players' pack.

An enterprising galliard might be able to convince attending spirits and change their memory of what occurred. In some cases, the players' pack will need to find ancient or dormant spirits to reestablish the true story.

it must be. They use the Umbra as a tool of their recruitment, using spirits to seek out new Kin to become soldiers for the Cult.

IN CHRONICLES

- ✿ After the players' characters have consulted with the ancestor-spirit of a long-dead theurge who lies buried in their territory, the Cult of Fenris lays siege to their caern. They demand that the pack hand over the theurge's bones, to which the ancestor-spirit remains bound. The spirit still holds knowledge that the pack could use. Will they acquiesce to the Cult's demands, try to pass off fake bones to gain time to get what they need, or just throw down?
- ✿ The war fought by the Cult causes tumult in the Umbra. The destruction causes a flood of gafflings to seek refuge in the pack's territory. Their absence from their home causes even greater calamity and imbalance. Can unity

among those deemed weak be what is needed to resist when the Cult decides to expand their war to the pack's turf?

THE BLACK SPIRAL DANCERS

It's the age of the Apocalypse. The Black Spiral Dancers have won. The Umbra is just the shadow of a corpse, their personal playground to do with as they please. Why should they even care about it? This is the lazy Spiral Dancer's answer. Shrewd werewolves among Bat's tribe know better.

The Umbra is so much more than Gaia. It is also the Wyrm. The Wyrm dwells within, and it wants to shatter the restraints placed upon it. Hence, spiritually inclined Dancers do their best to engender blights across the Umbra, hoping to see the Black Labyrinth manifest itself in the material world. It's not impossible to imagine—dig deep enough and you can see the Wyrm's influence.

The primary weapon of an enterprising theurge among the Black Spiral Dancers is their ability to craft and place curses. A curse is created using several Rites, binding multiple Banes, obscuring their presence, and tarnishing the local Umbra. While many Garou are familiar with the same practice, only the Ghost Council and the Red Talons have a tradition of teaching their theurges how to do it but not to the degree the Black Spiral Dancers have embraced it.

Despoiling the last places of spiritual purity has become an integral part of most Spiral Dancers' schemes, and through this, they hope to earn the necessary clout to further their own standing in the tribe. They tear apart what was once holy, nourishing the rot by feeding and nurturing Banes. They burn away the spirits to create great blights. They lure in spirits to form breeding grounds for new Banes. Finally, there are the Pits, those polluted and foul caerns where the Spiral Dancers can experience the full warmth of the Wyrm's fetid embrace. Hives are formed as they tear apart the Umbra itself, using rot and vitriol to manifest a domain where only Banes can survive. Like the caerns of the Garou, Pits are sacred



to the Black Spiral Dancers, and even if they should be conquered by the enemy, Pits are almost impossible to close again.

"I can smell the rot of Gaia in the Umbra—and all I wanna do is to start a fire and cook me some dead goddess."

—ROSE RIPPER, BLACK SPIRAL DANCER AHROUN

Agenda: The Black Spiral Dancers see the Umbra as their prize to rule over and are, as a rule, not interested in allowing anyone else to touch their territory. Some spiritually inclined packs are delving into the Umbra's far reaches, hoping to unleash ancient Wyrm-spirits, earn power for themselves, or even find a way to subvert Garou caerns.

Spiritual Ties: Some claim the Spiral Dancers have legions of allies. When it comes to Wyrm-spirits, it is difficult to maintain a partnership. Most of the Wyrm's brood turns on the Dancers if given the chance. The rare stable partnership is found with those spirits belonging to Bat's brood, Patron Spirit of the Spiral Dancers, and even that is tenuous at best.

Umbral Approach: The Black Spiral Dancers are anything but subtle, and in the Umbra, they revel in their power as werewolves. Most of them use the Umbra as a place to act out their power fantasies against unassuming spirits. When they are outnumbered, they use the Umbra to spy on their enemies, and sometimes they use it to meet with potential defectors.

IN CHRONICLES

* The Black Spiral Dancers are convinced that a pregnant human woman is carrying a half-spirit child that is going to be Kin or even the Wyrm's messiah. They will stop at nothing to get to her. The pack must oppose the full might of a Hive if they want to keep the poor woman safe. If they delve into the mystery of where they have picked up this delusion, they will eventually trace it to a mischievous Reprobate (p. 99) who has mixed

the woman up in its schemes.

* A Black Spiral Dancer theurge sits at a bonfire one night, surrounded by mighty spirits tasked with keeping the peace until dawn. The spirits offer the players' characters a chance to talk with the Dancer, who wishes to learn from them. In return, the theurge tells them the secrets of everything Black Spiral Dancers have done to and stolen from their sept. At dawn, they must decide whether to let the Dancer go or present a challenge to single combat.

VOICES IN THE UMBRA

Here is a selection of Storyteller characters and groups to use in your stories as enemies, allies, sources of knowledge, and drivers of plot.

PAUL AND SONS

"I'm just a traditional family man."

—PAUL LAUGHS-AT-THE-KILL

Paul used to be cool. Quarterback for his high school and self-proclaimed “alpha male.” After the change, it did not take long for him to learn just how insignificant he was compared to the Black Spiral Dancers who claimed him.

For years, Paul was the runt of the pack, and the others treated him like he was the lowest in the prison hierarchy. They used him as the guinea pig for a Rite, forcing him into having sex with a Wyrm-twisted spirit of fertility known as the Mother-of-Monsters. If only it had stopped there. After enduring months of mockery, Paul’s flesh burst, and little half-spirit monstrosities formed out of Paul’s flesh. His laughing packmates simply smiled at his pain and called those living lumps of flesh Paul’s “children”.

In his humiliation, Paul finally found a way to deal with his tormentors. Entering a pact with the Mother-of-Monsters, Paul began secretly raising his Sons. Feeding them on a diet of flesh, first from his



own pack and then kidnapped victims, it became obvious they needed werewolf-flesh to thrive. Then the family began their hunts in earnest.

Goal: Hunt down enough victims to bring more Sons into the world, then claim a caern to make them strong enough to become permanent beings.

PAUL LAUGHS-AT-THE-KILL (HOMID FORM)

Description: A pox-scarred man in his late thirties, dresses in old hoodies covered in more stains than actual color.

Personality: Paul keeps himself composed for the most part but can explode into fits of hysterical anger at anyone who attempts to keep him from what he feels like he deserves.

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pool: Physical 7, Social 3, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 6, Gifts 6, Leadership (Fatherly) 7, Intimidate 6

Gifts: **Razor** Claws, Hidden Killer, Spirit of the Fray, True Fear, Pulse of the Prey.

THE SONS

Descriptions: Hairless, eyeless humanoids, vaguely shaped like the crinos form.

General Difficulty: 5/1

Standard Dice Pool: Physical 9, Social 2, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 2

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 11, Athletics 7

Notes / Other Traits:

Claws: The Sons' claws and fangs inflict +1 Aggravated Health damage on Brawl attacks.

Man-Eater: The Sons suffer 1 level of Superficial Health damage each day they are not in the Umbra unless they eat an entire human — after which they are exempt for a day. If fed werewolf flesh, this lasts until the victim's auspice is next in the sky.

IN CHRONICLES

* Paul Laughs-at-the-Kill has set his sights on the local Black Spiral Dancer Hive and has forced himself into their leadership, feeding the former leader to his spawn. The Hive's members are no match for Paul and his Sons, and the Dancers seek the players' characters' assistance either through manipulation or direct request. Of course, the Dancers intend to kill overwhelm and destroy the pack once Laughs-at-the-Kill has been taken care of.

* While hunting Paul Laughs-at-the-Kill, the players' characters find another seduced victim of the Mother-of-Monsters. A swiftly administered Rite of Abjuration may yet reverse the process, if the cursed werewolf can be made to stay still long enough. A swift death may also be a mercy. Whatever they wish to do, they should decide fast because Paul and his Sons are on the way to claim his new step-sibling.

DIRTY DESPAIR

When even nihilism fails, where do you turn? Dirty Despair is a Forsworn, a tribeless Garou, who has been disillusioned more than once. The raggedy theurge wanders in the mountains each night, roaming the heights and doing little else but going through the motions necessary to survive.

Previously, she was the Black Spiral Dancer known as Burnt-Hate, but she realized the tribe's dream of Gaia's destruction was as useless as any attempt to save Gaia. The Wyrm would just start eating the world all over again. No point in helping it except to be killed.

Harano claimed her, and she stepped away from everything.

Dirty Despair dwells in her own squalor, just trying to live with harano lodged deep inside of her. What keeps her alive is her mastery of Rites and many Gifts. Her knowledge about the strangest parts of the Umbra is unrivaled, and to murder her would unleash countless curses from all the pacts she's managed to form over the years. The price has been steep. Each day, disguised as a corpse, she buries herself in graveyard dirt, and each night she rises.

"I'm not dying for Gaia, not dying for the Spiral. I am living for me."

-DIRTY DESPAIR, FORSWORN THEURGE

Goal: Survive. While it seems easy enough, this old theurge has countless enemies who want to claim her spirit. This has made her quite mercenary; in return for her help with whatever the pack needs, Dirty Despair requires one of her spiritual enemies to be defeated and bound. Alternatively, she requires certain mystical trinkets either from the Umbra or other theurges to repay debts or even extend her life.

DIRTY DESPAIR (HOMID FORM)

Description: An old woman, around sixty years old, all dressed in rags and countless trinkets tied to her person.

Personality: Dirty Despair is a sardonic old hag, having very little patience for anything resembling idealism or devotion to a cause.

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pool: Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 8

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 8

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 6, Gifts 8, Intimidate (Spirits) 9, Occult (Spirits) 9

Gifts: Razor Claws, Mother's Touch, Ensnare Spirit, Shadow Sense, Banish Spirit, Grasp from Beyond, and Drain Spirit

Rites: Rite of Abjuration, Rite of Binding, Rite of Caern Building, Rite of Caging (*Shattered Nation*, p. 74), Rite of Chiminage (*Shattered Nation*, p. 75), Rite of the Capricious Sky (p. 66), Rite of Dedication, Rite of the Forgetful Record, Rite of Forging (p. 67), Rite of the Grim Reach (*Shattered Nation*, p. 75), Rite of Patronage, Rite of Shadow Passage, Rite of Spirit Summoning, Rite of Spiritual Succor (p. 68), Rite of Tranquility

IN CHRONICLES

* Seeking out other Garou as teachers is never risk-free but seeking out Dirty Despair might be the players' characters' only option to learn a certain Rite, such as Rite of Spiritual Succor. Of course, such a favor exacts a price. Eliminating a pack of Black Spiral Dancers from her old life who are on her tail is from the more straightforward end. She can also request them to fulfill a spirit's demand of her, such as venturing into the Umbra and paying obeisance at the court of an Incarna, or enacting a specific Legendary Rite.

* A Relationship Map connection gets herself indebted to Dirty Despair, and the old theurge was looking for someone to pretend to be her when the Lady of Frost, a spirit of winter, comes to claim her warmth. However, if the players' characters agree to endure the spirit's cold touch in her place, she releases the Touchstone. The Lady of Frost is a juggling in service of North Wind and may be favorable towards Galestalkers—or see it her duty to really test their mettle.

LOUIS SILVERSIGHT

Louis Silversight is an elder ragabash of the Stargazers, who has spent countless years trying to find the answer to his questions about existence and Gaia. After years of searching in the Umbra, Louis is now convinced he knows the answer: Within the Umbra, there is a new world waiting to be born. It is a strange and alien Gaia, where the laws of nature differ and little makes sense to the current world. But that hardly matters because it will become the new Gaia. To fit this ideal, he coaxes and deceives the spirits to fundamentally change themselves, creating scores of new amalgam-faced spirits that look almost impossible to a sensible soul.

Silversight often spends the nights of the New Moon utterly blind, removing his eyes to be able to understand the path forward during his self-imposed isolation from the world. The Stargazers see their



tribemate as a lost cause. Years ago, his pack silently left Louis behind to indulge in his vision-induced madness. Puzzlingly, Louis is still paying homage to Chimera as his Patron Spirit, and the spirit is not correcting him. Louis Silversight is what happens when a Stargazer falls to hauglosk, unable to see any path but his own. Whatever he's seen in the Umbra, it has no place in the material world.

"I could show you such wonderful things, if only you'd put aside your ignorance and believe there is a way forward that does not demand bloody violence."

-LOVIS SILVERSIGHT, STARGAZER RAGABASH

Goal: Louis Silversight is a social mastermind, manipulating several packs at once while being solely focused on his end goal. The old ragabash seeks to manifest a new paradise in our world, erasing the scars marring Gaia. He believes this should awaken the Mother once more, bringing an end to the war.

LOUIS SILVERSIGHT (HOMID FORM)

Description: Louis is in his mid-fifties, sharply dressed in a half-cloak and a designer suit. Notably, he has a set of scars around his eyes, the result of multiple self-inflicted eye removals.

Personality: Louis is a pleasant and dignified man, but it's all an act. Beneath the mask, he's a wild-eyed zealot and can be unhinged if something seems to defy his predicted outcome.

General Difficulty: 5/3

Standard Dice Pool: Physical 6, Social 10, Mental 9

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 10

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 6, Gifts 10, Occult 7, Stealth 10

Gifts: Ancestral Conviction, Banish Spirit, Blissful Ignorance, Blur of the Milky Eye, Crow's Laughter, Gremlins, Open Seal, Pulse of the Prey, Scent of Running Water, Silver Claws, Spider's Song

Rites: Rite of Shadow Passage, Rite of Spirit Summoning, Rite of Spiritual Succor (p. 68)

IN CHRONICLES

* The players' pack encounters the old Stargazer at a moot, but little else happens during the night. Louis Silversight has seen the pack play a role in his grand design and soon begins to advise people around them such as their Touchstones. He seeks to test the pack and make them stronger. Finally, he seeks to manipulate them into undertaking a journey deep into the Umbra to seek out a powerful spirit and either bring back its wisdom or die as a sacrifice.

* Spirits in service to Chimera attempt to reach out to the players' pack, trying to warn them about the madness of Silversight. However, their many-faced nature prevents them from being sincere and forthright. They possess animals and objects, presenting riddles and challenges that subtly point the pack towards Silversight's plans.



ELODIE HYMN-OF-VICTORY

Daughter of a French ambassador, Elodie Vinet was always meant to become powerful. Her First Change sent her down a different path, one neither her parents nor boarding school had intended for her. For years, she was Elodie Crowned-Hymn, serving under her Silver Fang elders, who all greatly enjoyed the praise this operatic galliard could offer up to the spirits, even as the Nation collapsed around them all.



When the Cult of Fenris broke away from the Nation, most of the elders did not realize that power and respect meant far less to Elodie than results. Elodie Crowned-Hymn went away. In her place, Hymn-of-Victory, a galliard of the Cult of Fenris, emerged. Elodie is still a ruthless politician, well-versed in the language of power, which she is not afraid to use as she leads her own pack into the Apocalypse war.

"You are a coward, utterly unworthy of Gaia's gift—such wretched weakness must never be forgotten by the spirits!"

—ELODIE HYMN-OF-VICTORY, CULT OF FENRIS GALLIARD

Goals: Like many other Fenrir galliards, Elodie immediately seized on the chance to claim and retell past stories, informing the world: the Cult of Fenris was always here, hidden away just beneath the surface. As Elodie explains to her new recruits, the Cult of Fenris was inevitable, as was the failure of the Nation. Tales of defeat and despair needed to be forgotten, and the Garou who oppose Fenris prevented from infecting Kin with the mind-virus of weakness and defeatism. When Elodie tells a story, those who oppose her version of it are challenged, humbled, and perhaps even slain, letting her might settle what is fact.

ELODIE HYMN-OF-VICTORY (HOMID FORM)

Description: Elodie is a muscular woman, dressed in combat fatigues and with an ever-present, intense scowl on her face.

Personality: Elodie is a tactically minded person, always looking for angles to exploit. She has a better grasp of her Rage than most Fenrir and is quite eloquent, but her eloquence turns into a desire for battle when she leads her pack into the fray.

**General Difficulty:** 5/3**Standard Dice Pool:** Physical 8, Social 8, Mental 6**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 6**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 6, Gifts 7, Performance 9**Gifts:** Eyes of the Cobra, Song of Valor, Primal Anger, Against the Odds**Rites:** Rite of the Broken Wolf (p. 66), Rite of Dedication, Rite of Shadow Passage, Rite of Spirit Summoning**IN CHRONICLES**

- ✿ Blackbeak, a raven-spirit, seeks refuge near the players' pack's territory, hoping to escape the wrath of the Cult of Fenris after retelling a simple story it had heard years prior. The very next night, Elodie Hymn-of-Victory demands the pack surrender the raven-spirit and renounce it as a liar during a storytelling Rite. If (or when) they refuse, she mounts a campaign of recasting the tales of the pack's great deeds as stories of cowardice or attribute them to the Cult's werewolves. If they do not take action, they lose the Renown they have earned for their deeds.
- ✿ Elodie Hymn-of-Victory attends a moot where the players' pack is present. She is there to target the most senior galliard present, named Voice of the Night. Elodie's plan is to interrupt the galliard's tale of a legend and sing her own Fenrir take on it, provoking him into challenging her to single combat. Elodie knows she can take him. Of course, this all assumes that the players' pack does not realize what is going on and interrupts it.

NEFELI MAKRIS

Nefeli's father was a brilliant scholar at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and an even more brilliant spiritualist. This is why the wolves killed him. Everyone denied they had seen the monsters, but Nefeli remembered vividly the werewolves ripping her father apart in their own

backyard, marking Nefeli's mind for life. Her therapists and family tried to convince her it was a false memory for years until the determined woman finally found evidence of those werewolves in her father's old research.

Obsessed with pursuing her father's skills, Nefeli studied his incantations, hoping to grant herself the strength to enter the Spirit Wilds, but she did not have the experience to match the ambition. Nefeli cannot remember what happened, be it because of the trauma or because the memory was taken from her. Perhaps she made a pact with something. Perhaps she offered a sacrifice. On a moonless night that felt like a lifetime as Nefeli's flesh shifted and tore into a variety of shapes, finally returning to a human form when dawn broke. She awoke covered in blood that was not hers. The curse that befell Nefeli left her almost as close to a Garou as one could be, much to both her and the local Garou's consternation. While she can perform Rites as a Garou, her condition forces her body into crinos during the full moon, while her spirit leaves her body.

After tense negotiations with the Garou of Thessaloniki, Nefeli negotiated a fragile peace with the werewolves who claim to know nothing about her father's murder. Nefeli does not believe them, but her condition means she has a need for as few enemies as possible.

"What happened to her was tragic. What she did to herself was worse. Whatever she's going to do, someone else is going to be a problem."

-ROSS THE SHE-WOLF JACKSON

Goals: Find her father's actual killers and rid herself of the curse, in that order. While she could work with Garou, she does not trust them in the slightest and exploits them to either learn more Rites or act as bait for worse werewolves.

NEFELI MAKRIS (HOMID FORM)

Description: Nefeli is a scrawny woman, barely out of her teens, dressed in local thrift store attire.

Personality: Nefeli takes care of herself and is highly distrustful of anyone who knows what she is, especially Garou. When she talks, she's curt and polite, but prefers her own company and keeps conversations short.

General Difficulty: 4/3

Standard Dice Pool: Physical 6, Social 7, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 6, Occult 7, Academic 6

Gifts: None

Rites: Rite of Binding, Rite of Shadow Passage, Rite of Spirit Summoning.

IN CHRONICLES

- * The players' pack meets Nefeli on neutral ground. She needs the pack to keep her safe and behind locks when she goes into crinos the next full moon. In exchange, she is willing to tell them what she knows of the local spirits and Umbral landscape.
- * The narrative function of a secret is to be revealed. Nefeli is desperate to learn the truth of her father's murder. She has finally learned the correct Rite to summon a spirit and force the information out of it. The spirit appears in a mirror, wearing the guise of her father, and tells her the truth. Her reaction is to frenzy and go on the hunt. The spirit seeks out the players' pack and tells them what happened. It is up to them to minimize the harm caused by the cursed Nefeli, and perhaps exact some vengeance, be it against the Cult of Fenris, Black Spiral Dancers, or a murderous moon cult.

CAITLYN AVERY, THE LOST LEGEND

"Caitlyn always had them sad eyes, but she sang like an angry, brimstone preacher. Reckon the sadness won out in the end."

-HATTIE THUNDERWIFE, CHILD OF GAIA AHROUN

The name Caitlyn Avery means very little to the current generation of Garou. To those Garou who are old enough to remember the halcyon days of the Nation, the mention of her name resonates with some of the greatest victories and a loss felt across a generation.

Caitlyn "Sorrow-Slayer" Avery was a Hart Warden galliard, a folksinger traveling across the Americas, bringing with her tales of her victories from across the land, connecting septs through telling tales and singing songs. Her songs gave hope for a victory against the Wyrm, even guiding Kin through their First Change with music heard across the Gauntlet. At the top of her fame, Sorrow-Slayer was chosen to lead five entire packs into a fight, singing of hope and victory as they fought against the Coal-Burrowers' Hive. The cost was great, sacrifices were many, but they prevailed.

And then she died. Not in glorious battle, but in a small, conservative, rural caern. Word is harano claimed her and Caitlyn took her own life with a silver blade. Her packmates thought she couldn't bear the weight of her own legend. Ashamed of her weakness, the sept denied her a proper burial, left her remains untouched in the woods, and went on with their war. At some point, there were no more Garou there.

Years later, Garou returned to the forgotten caern and came face to face with the spirit of Caitlyn Avery. Few have returned from the caern, and those who did told of being trapped within fugue dreams, where they were forced to endure all the catastrophes the spirit is certain happened, as opposed to the actual victories. Sorrow-Slayer's spirit is marred by her guilt and doubt.

THE HARROWED SPIRIT OF SORROW-SLAYER

Possession / Manifestation: In the physical world, she can possess instruments, wind chimes, birds, and even fires which her song can be heard from. In the Umbra, Sorrow-Slayer manifests as woman in glabro, dressed in flannel and denim, sitting at a bonfire in the woods. Sorrow-Slayer strums her guitar while humming a small tune.

Power: 9

Exceptional Dice Pools: Performance 12

Notes / Other Traits:

Sorrow's Sympathy: All contested tests involving this spirit are penalized by the target's Harano or Hauglosk score.

Shared Delusion: When near the caern she haunts, the song of Sorrow-Slayer places the pack in a dreamscape. In this dreamscape, the targets are bound to take the part of defeated Garou in one of her songs of war, as the spirit remembers it. To escape this vision, the target needs to go against the



narrative and snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. If the pack fails in this, a new narrative is formed, and every pack member must make a Composure + Resolve test against Difficulty 6, suffering the margin of failure as Superficial Willpower damage.

Example Delusions

- ✿ Rally the packs before a last stand: Charisma + Leadership vs. Power
- ✿ Fight your way into the belly of the Pit: Dexterity + Brawl vs. Power
- ✿ Pull a young Garou from certain death: Strength + Athletics vs. Power

Harano's Mark: The Harrowed Spirit turns into an ancestor-spirit when 5 Shared Delusions are defeated, matching the amount of harano held by Caitlyn Avery at her time of death. Storytellers may have a previous pack that survived an encounter with this spirit that have already defeated one or more Shared Delusions.



IN CHRONICLES

- ✿ Some theurges have thought it might be possible to help this harrowed spirit to become a true ancestor-spirit, but it would have to be attempted by a pack young enough not to be weighed down by their own regrets. They approach the players' pack to undertake this mission. If they do succeed in overcoming Caitlyn Avery's delusions and letting her spirit pass into the Umbra, the ancestor-spirit sings of this deed across the Spirit Wilds. This earns them great Renown and mark them for enemies.
- ✿ Word of a pack encountering Caitlyn reaches the Player's Sept, but the Cult of Fenris also has designs on the spirit of Sorrow-Slayer. They cannot fathom such a legend might not join their cause and heard the same news from the lone wolf who escaped Caitlyn. Can the Sept risk the Cult of Fenris recruiting Caitlyn and claiming the caern? Or can the extremist pack be eliminated before or during their encounter with Caitlyn?

THE SEPT OF TEARDROPS

"Please... help u—"

Out there, a radio is broadcasting for Garou ears only. The Transmission of the Teardrops is like a message in a bottle, haunting the radio waves, audible only to the half-spirit Garou. It is a recording of a young man calling for help across the radio waves, talking about how all their elders have died. The enemy has surrounded the Sept of Teardrops; their defenses might only last a couple of days.

Anyone traveling to the lost Sept of the Teardrops finds nothing but a busted old radio tower atop the dormant caern. Here, Starving Remnants (*Werewolf*, p. 283), all that is left of the Sharpclaw Pack, begin to cry out for help from across the Gauntlet. These Remnants are stronger than usual as the Sharpclaws had already undergone their Rites of Passage.

The Sharpclaw pack was the youngest to ever run in the Midwest, fresh out of their Rites of Passage. The Sharpclaws wanted to prove themselves in the

old-fashioned way, braving the Umbra and earning a name for themselves by retrieving a lost talisman from a rattlesnake-spirit named Smiling Dust. It was supposed to be an important night to empower the sept's youngest, but calamity struck while the Sharpclaws were away. The Sept of Teardrops was betrayed by one of their own, and the attack happened while the sept attempted to guide the young pack back from the Umbra. As the pack got stuck in the Gauntlet, a score of rust spiders in service to Black Spiral Dancers descended and tore them apart.

- ✿ The voice once belonging to Eduardo "Wolvenlaw" Quesada, the young philodox, is speaking about betrayal and is the most coherent voice, almost able to pretend it's a person. (Subterfuge 9, Persuade 7)
- ✿ The voice that used to be Layla "Mourner" Cotton was supposed to become a Silent Strider ahroun, and all it now wants is to destroy those who abandoned her. (Brawl 10, Stealth 8 — Spirit of the Fray)
- ✿ Maggie Mouse, once a demure Glass Walker ragabash, keeps learning to mimic new voices to draw in their victims as the pack attempts to claw themselves back to flesh and a new chance for life. (Subterfuge 9, Stealth 8 — Blissful Ignorance)

Umbral Journey: Helping the Sharpclaws Find Rest?

Your pack might feel obliged to help the poor spirits move on, or at least get them out of a valuable resource. Unless bound through Rites, the Starving Remnants manifest every moonrise. Giving them their final rest requires an Umbral Journey (p. 121) using the memories of the defeated Sharpclaws to locate the fount of Smiling Dust the Rattlesnake and claim the talisman known as the Snake's Tear.

IN CHRONICLES

- ✿ A Ghost Council theurge with an idea approaches the players' characters. She has tracked down the werewolf who betrayed the Sharpclaws, now running with a pack of Black Spiral Dancers. Her theory is that if the traitor's severed head is presented to the Sharpclaws, their souls should pass on. She wants the players' characters to get the head and take it to them.
- ✿ Near the radio tower that the Sept of Teardrops' transmission comes from is a dormant caern. Were the Sept laid to rest, the caern could be claimed and brought to new life by the players' characters. Was its guardian spirit perhaps responsible for the mystic Transmission of the Teardrops?

THE LAUGHING TRICKSTERS

"Let the Fool Die a Fool's Death"

There is something strange out in the Umbra. The oldest theurges speak of the laughter capable of haunting every step of a journey into the Umbra. It is unnerving, and in some cases, it even follows you out of the Spirit Wilds, into the real world.

There are tales of septs having a smiling guest, only for this guest to gradually reveal little, innocent secrets that mount and finally cause deeper and more destructive secrets to erupt into the open. Following these figures as they depart does little to help, as they wrap themselves in the shape of a rabbit, fox, or coyote, dancing across the Gauntlet as if it were nothing.

The Laughing Tricksters are hard to truly understand. It is easy to mistake them for spirits, but they take flesh like a Garou and, on more than one occasion, have bled like one. At times, these gleeful figures only throw mockery at a lost Umbral traveler. Other times, maybe they pass by, laughing at their own jokes. They have also been known to hide near a caern for days, waiting for any opportunity to humble a foolish Garou.



Garou with a Pack Patron of Fox or Coyote (p. 55) may have a leg up when dealing with Laughing Tricksters.

THE OLD TRINKETEER (HUMAN FORM)

Description: The Old Trinketeer is a wily old coot, dressed in an eclectic, yellow-and-white tweed suit. He sells his wares out of a trunk and gives unsolicited advice to people.

General Difficulty: 5/3

Standard Dice Pool: Physical 5, Social 8, Mental 10

Secondary Attributes: Health Willpower

Exceptional Dice Pools: Occult 8, Subterfuge 10, Gifts 7

Notes / Traits: The Old Trinketeer has an equivalent to all ragabash Gifts.

Change Shape: The Old Trinketeer can transform into a fox or a coyote as a minor action. In this form, the shifter gains a three-dice bonus to Awareness tests but suffers a three-dice penalty to Brawl tests against larger opponents.

Gift of Shadow Walk: The Old Trinketeer can perform the Rite of Shadow Passage as an Action instead of a Rite, using their Gift dice pool.

Umbral Being: These beings are more spirit than flesh, suffering no damage for staying in the Umbra but suffering 1 Superficial Health Damage each day they remain in the physical world.

IN CHRONICLES

* After the death of a theurge from the sept, a strange black fox attends the funeral, requesting the theurge's tongue as payment for services rendered in the past. Most argue against desecrating the body. Unless the Players' pack intervenes, the sept is plagued by missing items, accidental injuries, and unruly spirits. Can the sept make amends, or must they destroy the Laughing Trickster?

* The pack comes across some dirt on a rival caern or pack, which cannot be a mere coincidence. In return for more information, they must complete a series of horrific labors meant to test their resolve, teamwork, and dedication to Gaia. A laughing voice promises the pack a clear means of discrediting or destroying the rival if they succeed, but what cost is there to deal with such a fickle entity?

LUNA MANOR: THE LODGE OF THE WEEPING MOON

The Enlightened Society of the Weeping Moon is not what it used to be. Luna Manor was once the pride of society in the region. It had it all: a ballroom meant for inviting young debutantes, a cellar filled with secret rooms for the subsequent erotic seances, and intricate circles of inlaid silver intended for binding rituals.

Decades ago, the Society succeeded in its first great ritual working. A pair of moonlight entities was trapped and was to be enthralled until the Purification when the world would be destroyed by the Moon itself. Two Lunes, **Vesper Mooncoat** and **El El**, found themselves forced into service for 555 cycles or about 46 years. Curiously enough, the Society did not prosper as they hoped, and gradually members drifted away from the Society. Luna Manor was sold, first as a restaurant and then as a community hall, but all owners have suffered nervous breakdowns due to the influence of the two Lunes trapped inside a pair of lanterns in the attic.

Some 554 cycles have passed, and the two Lunes are about to be free. While Vesper Mooncoat has endured the sorcery used to trap them, El El has been warped by their captivity. The Full Moon Lune has fully bought into the Society of the Weeping Moon's propaganda and is ready to rise above the landscape, spreading the mad light of the Weeping Moon to all.

More information on the Enlightened Society of the Weeping Moon can be found in *Wyrmtide* (p. 67).

VESPER MOONCOAT, LUNE OF THE CRESCENT MOON

Possession / Manifestation: When in the Umbra, Vesper is a featureless maiden, with neither eyes nor face, but she has a pair of horns protruding from beneath her white, hovering hair. Vesper is also dressed in a quilted coat filled with moving lunar symbols. She manifests in the world as moonlight and ethereal sensations.

Power: 7

Exceptional Dice Pools: Leadership 8, Melee 9

Notes / Other Traits:

The Horned Moon's Reach: Vesper can communicate through dreams and through telepathy once near her light.

"If you cherish my Mother Moon, please, help me, cousins."

—VESPER MOONCOAT

EL EL, LUNE OF THE HARVEST MOON

Possession / Manifestation: El El is an immense, almost featureless figure, round and muscular, arms not unlike a gorilla, accompanied by an intense, almost sickening orange light emanating from it. In the material world, El El manifests as a dizzying sensation, angry and intense, its light making you nauseous, horny, and bellicose at the same time.

Power: 10

Exceptional Dice Pools: Subterfuge 11, Insight 12

Notes / Other Traits:

The Full Moon's Gaze: Anyone who feels El El's light or presence feels a need to indulge in their desires. If they lose a contested Power vs. Willpower test against El El, they'll pursue their desires with nothing stopping them, adding 1 to El El's Power rating for the night.

IN CHRONICLES

* Strange things are afoot near the old Luna Manor during the last days of September. As the pack

investigates, they encounter a group of young adults engaging in ritualistic celebrations of fertility, unlike anything seen in modern religions. Spirits that have been nominal allies turn their backs on the player's pack or even sept as they flock to old Luna Manor in what can only be described as a feeding frenzy. With the ceremony complete, Vesper Mooncoat and El El are freed.

* One of the pack dreams about Luna Manor as Vesper Mooncoat is attempting to get help to escape her prison before El El breaks out. If the pack attempts to help, they cannot release Vesper without freeing El El as well. ■





CHAPTER SEVEN



The Spider and the Fly



"Will you walk into my parlour?" said a spider to a fly;
 "'Tis the prettiest little parlour that ever you did spy.

The way into my parlour is up a winding stair,
 And I have many pretty things to shew when you are there."

"Oh no, no!" said the little fly, "to ask me is in vain,
 For who goes up your winding stair can ne'er come down again."

—MARY HOWITT, "THE SPIDER AND THE FLY"

The Moonlit Path examines the Umbra and the spirits from every angle to give an impression of what they mean in the world of *Werewolf*. This chapter puts those concepts into practice in a story that you can run at your table.

This story, "The Spider and the Fly," is a sandbox-style scenario that can be adapted for any troupe. This style of story works best when the Storyteller uses the Relationship Map to motivate characters to engage with the story's conflicts and adapt scenes to the troupe's interests.

THE FOE



At the border of Texas and Mexico, there is a detention camp. Its official name is the Sandcreek Border Detention Facility, but everyone calls it La Tábano — the horsefly. The camp is one of many run by the Pewter Group, a private prison corporation (but not a Pentex front, see *Wyrmtime* p. 65 for more information), on contract

"If we're going to do this, we're going to do this right," said the acolyte of Mistwalker to her pack as they were fleeing the jazz funeral before they attracted too much attention. "You two know what you're doing," she said to the old Black man and the white woman in the blue dress. "Focus only on Monsieur Plastique." They nodded and the man changed into a wolf, retaining his sash and sunglasses.

"What about me?" asked the flower-spirit in its borrowed body.

"You an' me, we'll take care of your girlfriend like a crawfish."

"I can't kill her." Or can I? thought Beaver Root. Bull Shark couldn't, but maybe it could.

"I know. You pinch the tail and I'll pluck the head."

"What?"

The other pack members exchanged exasperated glances, having grown accustomed to Bull Shark's slow wits, not realizing this confusion was all due to the spirit inside him.

"You'll fight her body so I can throw away the squatting spirit."

"Oh, right!"

They took the bus northeast towards their caern and the plastic heap.

At the garbage site, they could see all the refuse had formed into a tornado of trash. Monsieur Plastique itself had manifested taking over a cloud of refuse! Before him stood Melanie, every bit the fomor, a loyal servant of destruction. Not that she could help it.

The two others ran straight for the plastic giant while Beaver Root and Bull Shark fought Melanie. Behind them they could feel the acolyte work her GITS, strengthening them and weakening Melanie.

The Rougarou body turned into a massive murder beast. Beaver Root was taken by blind hatred as it had never experienced before as Bull Shark's Rage swept through him. It creaved the kill, kill, kill. Kill the fomor, kill the Bane, kill everything and everyone. It jumped for Melanie, tipping her over, and took her little body between its enormous bloodthirsty jaws. It could practically feel her blood watering its roots.

"Stop, stop! Nihai! Stop!" The sounds came from far away and were not directed at Beaver Root. But something managed to direct its Rage even if it couldn't, and it noticed it was now attacking Monsieur Plastique himself, going for the throat, whether it had one or not.

Monsieur Plastique beat and whipped and cut at Bull Shark's body with every plastic item imaginable, but Beaver Root kept biting and clawing at it. Eventually Monsieur Plastique managed to grab the Rougarou body with his plastic arms and throw it away, but in doing so, parts of itself were torn off, too.

Soon Monsieur Plastique exploded in a pile of garbage and was no more.

with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) with funding from Eco-Prosperity, LLC (which *is* a front for Pentex). Like many competitors, Pewter Group makes a hefty profit by limiting the prisoners' access to food, medical care, legal aid, and heating and spending little time on training or overseeing the guards. Sometimes, even top management is seen joining the regular guards in harassing or torturing their unwilling "customers." The facility is cleaned and maintained by detainees who work the whole day for \$1 to afford food.

The camp also holds the caern of La Mosquitero, "the Mosquito Net," and its inmates include the beleaguered sept of Cuna de Esperanza ("the Cradle of Hope"). The camp's warden, Muriel Pitt, and many of its guards are fomori, but the greatest threat is Zimbardo, a Strand Spider dwelling in the Umbra.

The camp is medium-sized, with 3,000 detainees and a complement of 150 armed guards, 30 of whom are fomori. The guards exercise their power over the detained migrants in capricious and brutal ways. The ones who are not already fomori are easily open to possession by Banes. Zimbardo wants to see the camp function according to its purpose, like an oiled machine. This drives it into conflict with the warden, who has sunken into apathy and cannot bring herself to rein in the brutality and aggression of her staff.

The Garou remain hidden because of their adversaries' inability to work together. Zimbardo knows of the caern and has woven its webs around it but is unaware of the Garou. It has not felt it necessary to tell Pitt about the caern's existence.

STORY STRUCTURE

The story has three chapters:

In "Part One: Breaking into Prison," the pack discovers a local spirit has gone missing, with signs pointing to the La Tábano detention camp. They travel to the camp and meet the Garou tending the La Mosquitero caern.

In "Part Two: Come into My Parlor," the pack explores the camp and meets its inhabitants, finally

discovering where Oier Apaza is held and why the jaggling went missing.

In "Part Three: Escape from La Tábano," the pack rescues Ximena and Oier Apaza from the camp through the Umbra, braving many threats.

THE PLOT

One of the players' characters notices that their Patron Spirit's jaggling, the one they usually communicate with, hasn't been around for a while: not in dreams, not anywhere. What's going on? It doesn't answer ordinary calls or the Rite of Spirit Summoning and is nowhere to be found in the Umbra. (The spirit should not be bound to any physical object or feature; ideally, it was introduced in a previous story or can be found on a player's character sheet. If a suitable spirit does not exist in your chronicle, see the vassals of various Patron Spirits in Chapter One for ideas.)

When the players' characters investigate, a herald of the Patron Spirit appears, possessing a suitable animal to communicate with them. The herald explains that the messenger spirit is missing. The spirit tasks the pack to find out what has happened and rescue the missing spirit.

The herald tells them the jaggling left the Umbra for a hot and dry place in the physical world through a place in the Umbra that is nearly webbed in by a great pattern spider. It is a place where people are taken and held captive, but it also holds a caern. Humans call it La Tábano.

If they mean to find the jaggling, they must investigate the place thoroughly and get accustomed to the guards and the inmates. As they do, they discover the horrors that occur there daily and hopefully befriend the Garou imprisoned there.

In part two, the pack gets acquainted with the camp, its inmates and guards, its buildings and routines, the bugs that are everywhere, and eventually, the Cuna de Esperanza pack and their caern. There is no sign of the jaggling, though.

The players' characters are asked to help Ximena and Oier Apaza escape. They might agree or they



might simply wish to do whatever it takes to find their missing spirit, or even try to stage a full-scale jailbreak. It soon becomes apparent that many of the guards are fomori and the camp is the combined work of the Weaver and the Wyrm. If push comes to shove, their own Patron Spirits strongly favor fighting their age-old enemies and helping the Garou. Fortunately, the Cuna de Esperanza pack plans to take the Apazas out through the Umbra. It's a bit convoluted, but it just might work.

The plan involves making a partridge wing talisman (*Werewolf*, p. 189), using Umbral Pocket (p. 61) and Summon Implement (p. 62) Gifts, and performing the Rite of Spiritual Succor (p. 68). The original reason for the players' characters to come here, the missing jaggling, is tied to the partridge wing.

When a fight breaks out with the guards possessed by the Reprobate Banes, it becomes obvious they're taking orders not from the camp warden (a human woman possessed by Final Sigh, the Bane of apathy) but from something more nefarious. The camp's real leader and *raison d'être* is a massive Strand Spider who swathes her frightened prisoners in silk before devouring them. Rescuing Oier might mean confronting the monster.

Setting It Elsewhere

As written, La Tábano is in Texas. However, such detention facilities can be found in many states in the U.S., and not just along the southern border. However, to suit your chronicle's needs, it may be placed anywhere in the world where there is a constant flow of people fleeing war or oppression or seeking a better life for themselves. With research and renaming, La Tábano and its inhabitants can be located in France, Australia, Turkey, or the United Kingdom. With more adjustment and research, La Tábano can also become a private prison, a refugee camp, or a forced labor camp.

The key ingredients for La Tábano are an oppressed population, inefficient and brutal management, and the banality of evil.

THE CAMP

Either through the Umbra or along the dusty Texas roads, the players' characters make their way to the detention camp of La Tábano, built to house immigrants who have tried to enter the United States without the appropriate paperwork. Thousands of refugees and asylum seekers are kept in miserable conditions. It is packed far past capacity, and though some get to sleep with a roof over their head, many are forced outside into small tents. Young and old, sick and healthy, they sleep on the ground, fighting off bugs and predators, hiding from guards looking for someone to torture, and struggling to find something to eat.

The detainees are forced to organize and survive as best they can, and one of these solutions is Cuna de Esperanza, a sept for Garou inmates, which is like a family that protects their own. Were it not for the small caern of La Mosquitero inside the camp compound, they would have left long ago. Even the fomori are unaware of their existence. The Garou also try to help others where they can.

The center has a massive problem with both flies and spiders, which are mysteriously being drawn there. Cockroaches, ants, mosquitoes, and scorpions are not rare but common throughout this region. Everywhere in La Tábano there are detainees and guards with painful horsefly bites and spiderwebs full of big and small flies. With the lack of food, some detainees have become experts in picking flies from the webs and eating them. Sometimes there are such thick swarms of flies in the air that it is difficult to see or even walk.

LOCATIONS

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY DETENTION BUILDING

These cramped buildings are full of detainees. The cramped quarters are full of bugs even though patrols of starving inmates work to clean them. Small rooms are full of triple bunk beds with mattresses or blankets on the floor between them. Fights often break out over who gets to sleep where. Crime and disease are rampant; whenever a guard is seen, everyone tries to avoid them. Children live



in their own areas of the buildings, divided into a number of gangs (some of them at war with each other or the adults).

LA MOSQUITERO

The caern of La Mosquitero is centered around the makeshift tent village in the southwest quadrant of the compound. There is no central structure, merely the flat expanse of dusty ground where once coyotes roamed before it was walled off with concrete and steel. When the Garou wish privacy for their affairs, they do so in a large, ramshackle building whipped together out of an aluminum frame and some tarps for spiritual needs. The space is small and dominated by the religious icons of the camp's population.

The tents are chest-high to a man and laid out in an uneven grid, close together. The guards, especially the fomori, feel uneasy here and never come among the tents alone. Insects have no such

compunctions, though, as with the detention buildings, the people living in the tents endeavor to keep the area clean.

INTERROGATION CENTER

This square building is covered in spiderwebs and is heavily guarded by the fomor guards. Inside are corridors and offices, all covered in webbing and eggs, but possible to walk through in an orderly fashion, which is the only fashion in which anything happens here. This is the only place in the camp with no other bugs, except for spiders of all kinds. They, or their trapped prey, must be the reason for the sickly-sweet smell inside.

There are small cells for tortured prisoners here and one large hall where the Strand Spider conducts its business, possessing a surgeon's table to do so. The spirit conducts all "interrogation," i.e., torture, according to a meticulous schedule of violence.

OFFICE

The office building contains archives, surveillance rooms, shared office spaces, and the private office of Warden Muriel Pitt. Inside, it would look very much like a typical office if not for all the bugs. The fomori aren't bothered by them, but the human workers can't stand them. This is the place to find information on the employees, the prisoners, Pewter Group, or the camp.

PART ONE: BREAKING INTO PRISON

This first chapter in the story involves the characters being alerted to the missing jaggling spirit, traveling through the Umbra or the physical world to the La Tábano detention camp for immigrants. The players' characters have two options for approaching things: travel through the Umbra and exit through the Gauntlet or try to figure out where the other side of the Gauntlet is and travel there physically.

Alternative Beginning

In an ongoing chronicle, a slow-burn start featuring travel through the Umbra may be a fine way to begin this story. If running this story as a one-shot scenario, consider bypassing Part One entirely to focus on La Tábano itself, keep the story focused, or fit the amount of time the troupe has allotted to play.

It's also possible to start the story with players' characters as inmates or Central or South American refugees trying to enter the U.S. and ending up here. In this case, it might work best to create new characters for this story with this exact setup in mind or if the previous parts of the chronicle took place in South America and ended with the characters trying to immigrate to the United States.

THE MISSING JAGGLING

The seeds of "The Spider and the Fly" are planted with the revelation of a missing spirit, a jaggling on the troupe's Relationship Map. If choosing a spirit one of the characters has a Spirit Pact with, the relationship with Golden Dog later may be troubled, as such a spirit may not have willingly entered the partridge wing talisman.

If integrating this story into an ongoing chronicle, the Storyteller might introduce one or more jagglings in a preceding story, so the disappearance of a troupe-favorite spirit has more impact.

THROUGH THE UMBRA

In the Umbra, the players' characters have to walk the ever-changing Moonlit Path. Traveling through the Umbra is likely faster than in the real world, but also far more dangerous. Even finding the destination without the aid of spirits is very difficult. Without such assistance, they'd be better off just renting a car.

SCENES

NAVIGATING THE MOONLIT PATH

Opening the Gauntlet and entering the Umbra with the Rite of Shadow Passage is not an everyday event. What do the players' characters take with them? Remember that unless they have Gifts that allow them to do so, only Dedicated items can be brought through the Umbra. What do their immediate surroundings look like? How do they find their way forward? See Chapter Five of this book on how to run scenes in the Umbra.

Traveling the Umbra is dangerous and navigating without a guide is very difficult. To survive the trip or even get anywhere, they will need the help of spirits. These may be spirits established previously in the chronicle or the Patron Spirit's herald. This requires bargaining, but the herald understands the hurry and will accept the players' characters' sacred word that they will pay its price after they have performed their task. See Chapter One of this book for what spirits might want in payment for their help.



Take the time to go through the strange things in the Umbra. The players' characters might already be familiar with some spirits or Umbral locations, and this is a chance to meet them. They will hear, see, feel, taste, and smell the pain of Gaia's Howl. They might get lost and go through strange locations before they find the caern of La Mosquitero. This can be just one scene or many, depending on the pace you want. Without a protective Rite or the aid of a spirit, staying long in the Umbra is harmful.

APPROACHING THE CAERN

The caern of La Mosquitero is located in a vast Umbral desert, reflecting the real Texan desert: cacti, rolling tumbleweeds, rattlesnakes, scorpions, several relentless suns above, mesas in the distance, cold dark nights, and spirits of all of the above.

In the Umbra, La Mosquitero looks like a small, serene pond of cool, clear water that glows faintly. Pattern spider drones (*Werewolf*, p. 255), numbering one more than the players' pack, have woven their webs around it and upon the pond, making an exit harder than one might expect at a caern. This place has a Gauntlet rating of 3 unless the spiders are dispatched or drawn away somehow, after which the webs are easy to remove, and the Gauntlet falls to 2. The Gauntlet in the surrounding area is generally 3, except inside the Umbral camp where it is 5. The caern's guardian spirit is nowhere to be found.

Next to the caern they see a horrible prison camp guarded by Banes in the shape of humanoid flies. The fences surrounding the spiritual camp are at intervals comprising barbed wire, concrete, and earthen ramparts. The horrors inside it change according to mood and association, going from endless form-filling and waiting to waterboarding and sexual abuse. The fly guards are in a constant war with pattern spiders, shooting at them and everyone else approaching the camp. In the middle of the camp is the lair of a massive Strand Spider the size of a van, surrounded by human-sized cocoons and webs in which many flies have been caught. The spider is too strong to fight without terrible risk. Fortunately, that's not the destination. Not yet,

anyway. It should be obvious that trying to fight their way into the Umbral prison camp is bordering on suicide, but if they do engage the fly guards, use the traits for Bitter Rages (*Werewolf*, p. 245). There are dozens, if not hundreds, of fly guards.

Note that in the Umbra, unlike in the physical world, La Mosquitero is not within the camp's walls, reflecting its role as a spiritually liberating force. However, once the players' characters perform the Rite of Shadow Passage to return to the physical world, they emerge in a tent inside La Tábano (see Imprecise Entry and Exit, p. 109). Its only solid wall is a shelf made of scrap wood and plastic boxes, full of religious icons and figures. Nobody else is inside, but there are certainly people nearby, occupying the tents immediately outside, perhaps attending to chores. These are inmates; the guards dislike coming to the tents.

THROUGH THE PHYSICAL WORLD

If the characters decide to find the location in the physical world, they need to do some occult detective work, travel to Texas, and infiltrate the heavily guarded camp.

SCENES

DETECTIVE WORK

To figure out what location in the material realm a point in the Umbra reflects is not always trivial. This is a Difficulty 4 test, using a suitable pool such as Intelligence + Investigation (if trying to figure it out, Specialty Deduction) or Manipulation + Occult test (if trying to ask theurges, spirits, and mystics, Specialty Umbra). Teamwork is recommended for this, and it's possible the players' characters have Rites, Gifts, or talismans that might prove useful as well. If they can't figure it out, the Patron Spirit's herald will tell them, but they will owe it a personal service or risk Wisdom chagrin. It turns out the caern is in Texas, near the Mexican border.

THE LONE STAR STATE

The players' characters need to get to Texas. In case the players' characters already happen to live in Texas,

this is more about getting to that part of the state. If the players' characters live in South America, they can also approach La Tábano from the Mexican side, in which case they'll have to cross the border and then infiltrate, or possibly just let themselves get captured.

As Storyteller, if you want to use real-world maps and routes, you can consider La Tábano located near the U.S. town of Presidio, Texas, looking over the Rio Grande near Ojinaga in Chihuahua, Mexico. In real life, there is a border crossing there but no detention camp.

SCOUTING THE PERIMETER

The pack has reached the border area and sees the U.S. border control and the detention camp. There are spiders, horseflies, ants, and termites everywhere. The Garou can spend time exploring La Tábano from the outside, marking the guard tower, lights, possible ways to cross the fence, and so on. If they're patient, they can take note of guard schedules, supply trucks, and the environment around the camp. A Difficulty 4 Intelligence + Occult test reveals that some of the guards employed at the camp are fomori. Use the previous section, Through the Umbra, to determine what Gifts such as Penumbral Senses reveal.

If the players' characters manage to get an aerial view (by searching online, utilizing a flying spirit, or illegally flying a drone with a camera to take a look), they notice, with a successful Difficulty 4 Wits + Awareness test, that the whole place looks like a fly. A critical win or margin of 2 or more helps them notice it's like a fly caught in a spiderweb.

INFILTRATING LA TÁBANO

One way or another, the pack must get into La Tábano. They can cross the Rio Grande into Mexico (either by swimming or through border control) and then try to travel back and get arrested. They can attack the guards when a gate opens to let a car pass through (losing all possibility for clandestine investigation). They can dig a tunnel under the wall in the muddy southwest corner. They can jump over the fences with magnificent feats of strength. They can capture some guards leaving work for the day and disguise themselves as personnel. Or they

can use their supernatural abilities to get in some other way. In any case, the guards are not expecting anyone to try breaking in.

Eventually, they will have made their way to La Tábano.

PART TWO: COME INTO MY PARLOR

This second chapter is set entirely in La Tábano detention camp. The players' characters explore the camp and get to know the Garou, Banes, and humans living there, getting glimpses of the dark secrets behind the camp's existence.

LA TÁBANO

The pack has made its way into La Tábano, a detention camp for immigrants who have tried to enter the United States without the appropriate permits. It is not a nice place, and it has more in common with a concentration camp than a prison. The players' characters have to get to know the inmates and the guards, figure out what is going on, and find a way to get their jaggling and probably the Apaza siblings out of there.

The following scenes can happen in any order, depending on the players' characters' choices. When a suitably dramatic scene or reveal happens, you can stop the session there with a nice cliffhanger, such as the characters peering inside the Interrogation Center or learning about the location of the missing jaggling from Golden Dog.

Many of the scenes are related to Storyteller characters, which are introduced in pp. 155–156 and Locations on pp. 148–150.

SCENES

SNEAKING AROUND THE PLACE

To get a feel for the place, the players' characters will have to snoop around different locations in the camp. Whether they're there as inmates, hidden infiltrators, pretend guards, or something else, they

should at least familiarize themselves with one of the Detention Buildings, La Mosquitero caern, and the Interrogation Center. They should probably figure out how every place is guarded. They might also explore the camp's tents, offices, guard towers, cars, surveillance technology, plants, scents, and anything else.

BEFRIENDING THE INMATES

Most inmates are simply humans who have tried to get into the United States for some reason. Some have come for a chance to find work; some are trying to reach their friends or families; others wish to escape persecution or violence back home. Many children in the camp have been separated from their families and live in their own overcrowded rooms in the Primary Detention Building. Typical inmates are malnourished young people, many of whom only speak Spanish. Other languages spoken in the camp include Portuguese and many Indigenous languages such as Nahuatl, K'iche', Q'eqchi', and Quechua. The Speech of the World Gift (*Werewolf*, p. 177) may be very useful. Everyone has fly bites on their faces and bodies.

Interesting inmates include the Cuna de Esperanza pack (p. 155), Oier Apaza (held captive at the Interrogation Center), and Xavier Arredondo, who is something of a leader or an organizer to many humans present.

The human inmates have no clue about the missing jagglng but suffer horrors daily at the behest of the guards or simply because of neglect. Inmates suffer from a lack of food, clean water, and medicine, coupled with sexual abuse, random beatings, separation from families, disease, and the constant presence of flies and other bugs. Obviously, this has led to deteriorating mental and physical health for most of those poor souls held here.

Everyone fears being sent to the Interrogation Center and knows most people never return from there — those who do have been tortured to the point of madness.

SPYING ON THE GUARDS

Observing the guards will reveal that their attitude toward the inmates ranges from indifferent to cruel.

The number of flies buzzing around the more violent ones is a clue that Fly is somehow involved and that they are fomori. In fact, they are inhabited by Reprobate Banes (p. 99). A successful Difficulty 4 Intelligence + Occult test also reveals the fomori's powers.

The camp warden, Muriel Pitt, stays mostly in her office, not really interested in giving orders or running the camp. She does what she must and then leaves, never working late. All physical records of inmates and confiscated items are with her in the office building.



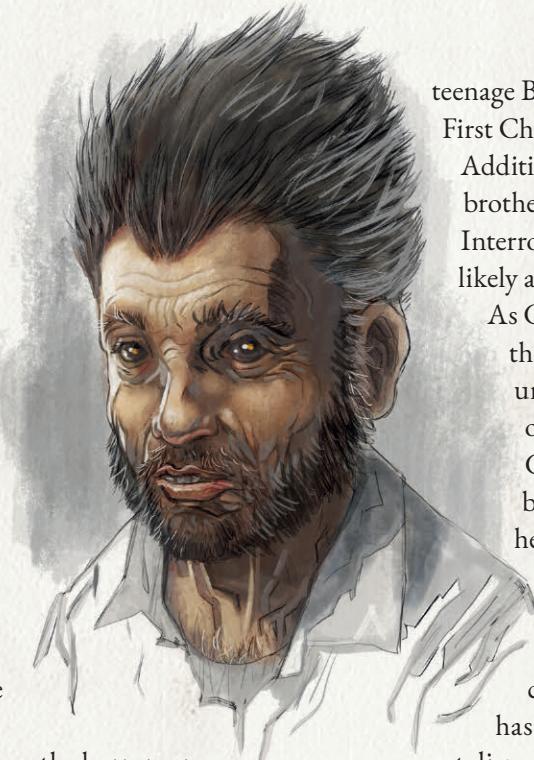
A good reason to observe the guards can be to learn their routines, blind spots, strengths, and weaknesses. Fomor guards occasionally enter the Interrogation Center, either bringing in prisoners or taking orders from the spider to the office. The human guards are afraid of the Interrogation Center, and this can be one way of figuring out who the fomori are. But they, too, may engage in wanton cruelty and abuse towards the inmates without repercussions. A key part of the dark atmosphere of this story is the sheer banal mundanity of how the horrors are inflicted in the camp.

BUGS, BUGS, BUGS!

A key feature of La Tábano is the swarms of bugs. Most of them are completely mundane flies, mosquitoes, spiders, horseflies, and the like, and can be fought with smoke, bug sprays, and simple swatting. But there's just so many of them. Whenever the characters are outside and sweaty, flies descend on their backs. When it's hot, horseflies try to bite them. When they eat, flies land on their food. When they go to sleep, mosquitoes buzz somewhere just beyond their reach. And there should be at least one scene where a massive, thick swarm of bugs surrounds them like a fog — until they figure something out, they can't see or even move, and they are constantly stung and bit everywhere. (Turning into crinos or using guns won't help much against bugs.)

CUNA DE ESPERANZA

This is the Garou sept guarding La Mosquitero. It resembles a makeshift family who has to stay together to survive and was formed here in the camp by Papá Luna. The other members are the traumatized and enigmatic Golden Dog, and the



teenage Balada de Sangre, whose First Change occurred at the camp. Additionally, Golden Dog's human brother, Oier, is currently in the Interrogation Center. These are the likely allies of the players' characters.

As Garou, it would be simple for them to break out, but they are unwilling to abandon the caern or the other inmates. However, Golden Dog asks the pack to break Oier out. While it breaks her heart to part from her brother, this way, he stands a chance to live.

This will likely not come up yet, but Golden Dog has crafted a partridge wing, a talisman into which she has bound

the missing jaggling, completely unaware of its connection to the characters. The talisman is hidden in an Umbral pocket and easily accessible at any time, but it is not actually located in the camp. If she hears the players' characters talking about their jaggling, she will soon realize what's happening but will not speak out. An insightful pack member might realize she's concealing something, and if confronted in the right way, she might tell the truth.

THE DEEPER MYSTERIES OF LA TÁBANO

As the players' characters look deeper into things, it will become clear that camp warden Pitt holds little authority, and the guards have no leadership. However, there is something far more nefarious at work. The power behind the camp is a massive Strand Spider, who cocoons and devours its frightened prisoners.

A real confrontation with the Strand Spider should ideally be left for Part Three, but this Part can very well contain a scene where the players' characters sneak into the Interrogation Center or ask around for information on it. The mood there is truly terrible, with horrifically systematic torture like an assembly line of violence.

SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

Cuna de Esperanza Pack: The sept protecting La Mosquitero consists of one very small pack. The pack very much resembles a family, with the fatherly Papá Luna as the parent and the other Garou, nineteen and eighteen, as the children. Whenever there is food, they eat it together. Ximena “Golden Dog” Apaza seeks to break her human brother out of the camp. Marco “Balada de Sangre” Batres Obrador had his First Change only after being interned in the camp and is still trying to find his footing. Ximena’s brother Oier is usually with them but is currently being tortured at the Interrogation Center, whence few return. While Papá Luna and Balada de Sangre are committed to taking care of the caern, Golden Dog wants to break out of the camp with her brother—and she’s got a plan. For the members of the Cuna de Esperanza, see p. 160.

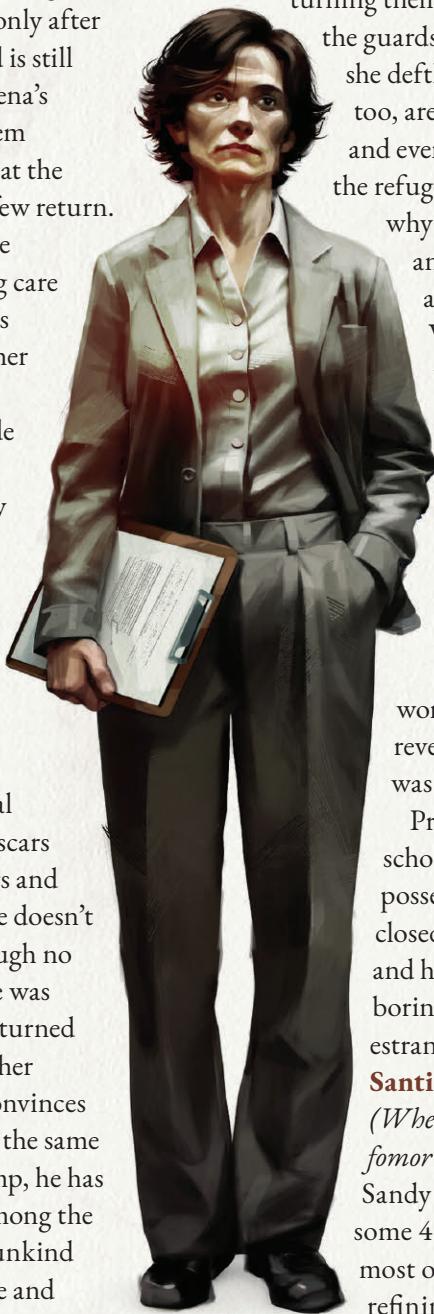
Xavier Arredondo: An elderly detainee who used to work as a foreman for Developers Forestry Group, a Pentex front. As such, he cut down large swathes of the Amazon rainforest. There, his worksites were attacked by both Golgol Fangs-First’s forces and the local shifters. He still bears horrible scars on his face from a shifter’s fangs and remembers the incident well: he doesn’t suffer from the Delirium. Though no one believes his story of how he was scarred, he believes nature had turned against the camps and any further evidence of the supernatural convinces him that La Tábano will suffer the same fate. Since ending up at the camp, he has become a community leader among the other detainees. Life has been unkind to him, but he can still organize and

lead. Thus far, Xavier knows nothing of Cuna de Esperanza’s true nature. If his traits are needed, use the traits for Clergy with a Willpower score of 9 (*Werewolf*, p. 291).

Muriel Pitt, Camp Warden: The warden is a Devil’s Advocate fomor herself, fused with an Empty Stare (p. 95). She cares about nothing, mindlessly taking orders from ICE or Pewter Group and the demands of the Strand Spider Zimbardo, turning them into schedules and procedures for the guards. If the players’ characters meet her, she deftly analyzes them and notices how they, too, are indifferent to the suffering of others and even of the world. They don’t care about the refugees, human rights, or even nature. And why should they? It’s not like they can make any difference. This counts as a Mental attack, which will cause Superficial Willpower damage if not resisted. She won’t start a fight, but she will defend herself and order the fomor guards to fight the players’ characters if they become violent. A successful Manipulation + Insight test or Wits + Investigation (Difficulty 2) reveals she is so indifferent to inmates escaping or perishing that she merely covers up or deletes records. This test might be won at a cost, with this information being revealed one or more scenes after the test was attempted.

Previous to this job, she worked as a schoolteacher for many years, already possessed by the Bane. When the school was closed, she was recruited by Pewter Group and has been stationed at La Tábano for four boring years. She has an ex-husband and two estranged kids, both teenagers.

Santiago “Sandy” Lopez, fomor guard: (*When you need to introduce an individual fomor guard, you can use Sandy Lopez.*) Sandy was born and raised in El Paso, Texas, some 400 kilometers from the camp. While most of his family worked at a petroleum refining company, he enlisted in the military



to get into college. After serving in Afghanistan and returning home, scarred and traumatized, he found college life wasn't structured enough for him. He was accustomed to receiving orders and doing what he was told. His experience in the army made him a very suitable candidate for ICE. He worked as a border guard at another facility for a while until he was recruited by Pewter Group two years ago. That's when he transferred to La Tábano and also when he was possessed by the Bane. Like most of the other fomor guards, he is a Grunt (*Werewolf*, p. 263).

Noah Jackson, human guard: (*When you need to introduce an individual human guard, you can use Noah Jackson.*) A proud redneck, Noah grew up in the small town of Trinity, Texas. Noah is only nineteen, and his unemployed, single dad brought him up to love America and hate the Union. Unpopular with the girls, he has directed his youthful bitterness at various times toward teachers, foreigners, women, Black people, LGBTQ+ people, Democrats, or immigrants. He is undisciplined and does not take orders well, but he got to know some Pewter Group people at the supremacist rallies. Now, he uses the job as an excuse to inflict cruelty on the detainees at La Tábano. He would be prime material for the right Bane to possess, but he hasn't drawn the interest of the Banes in the camp. For Noah and other human guards, use the traits of Riot Cops (*Werewolf*, p. 291).

PART THREE: ESCAPE FROM LA TBANO

In this part, the players' characters will help the Apazas escape with a complex plan and then escort them through the Umbra into safety.

THE PLAN

By now, the pack should be clear on what to do: save Oier Apaza from the Interrogation Center and get both him and Ximena out of La Tábano.

Since Cuna de Esperanza already has a plan, it's likely the players' characters want to try that or at least use it as building blocks for their own plan. Here's the plan:

THE PREPARATIONS

Golden Dog has made herself a partridge wing, a talisman that immunizes its holder to the Delirium. Its purpose is to keep Oier in his senses during the escape.

Papá Luna has hidden it in an Umbral Pocket (p. 61) with his Gift of the same name. It can never be found unless he pulls it out of his pocket intentionally. Someone else searching his pocket can't find it.

Just in case something happens to Papá Luna, he has dedicated the wing to Balada de Sangre, who can use his Gift of Summon Implement (p. 62) to retrieve it. If both of them should die, the wing and the juggling are permanently stuck in the Umbral Pocket.

For the players' characters to gain entry into the Interrogation Center, they may need a diversion. This can be achieved by one of the Cuna de Esperanza, or the human inmates. The humans have to be organized, but it is doable. The contact point for this is elderly detainee Xavier Arredondo with whom Papá Luna has an understanding.

THE EXECUTION

This is the difficult part, where the players' characters come in.

They need to enter the Interrogation Center, find and retrieve Oier Apaza, and bring him to the caern. At the caern, Golden Dog will perform the Rite of Spiritual Succor on him to keep him safe in the Umbra. Then, the players' characters and the Apazas will perform the Rite of Shadow Passage to enter the Umbra and escape the camp before returning to the physical world.

This has to be done without getting into a battle with the guards. There are too many of them to fight, and if they are focused on the players' characters, they will not have time to perform the Rites that the plan demands. With the proper distraction, however, it should be doable.



Papá Luna arranges with Xavier Arredondo to create a distraction, a nonviolent protest of noncompliance on the opposite side of the compound from the caern and the tents.

The players' characters are free to propose changes to the plan, utilizing their talents as they see fit. Of course, many situations require dice rolls, or other unforeseen things might happen that force the characters to improvise.

What could go wrong?

FOLLOWING THE PLAN

In this part of the story, the characters will likely want to follow the above plan, more or less. If they have a better plan, by all means, follow that!

SCENES

GOING THROUGH THE PLAN

Golden Dog and Papá Luna explain their plan to the players' characters, who are free to ask questions, suggest changes, or volunteer for specific duties.

PASSIVE RESISTANCE

At a prearranged signal from Xavier Arredondo, the inmates on shift cease work and convene on the northeastern side of the camp and sit down. This happens even at night; there are fewer initial participants, but soon the whole camp is going to be awake. Once a guard asks what they think they are doing, he announces a work stoppage until the warden has heard his demands for better conditions and sufficient food.

This is answered with violence. A riot soon ensues. The players' characters are not supposed to get involved, but the riot spreads and escalates, and from this point on, action in La Tábano happens to the tune of sirens and angry shouting, seen through a haze of smoke and tear gas. The guards initially respond with rubber bullets but if the Garou wield lethal force against them, they soon respond in kind. Remember that the human guards, as well as the inmates, suffer from the Delirium if they see a werewolf in crinos form. The fomori have no such problems.

THE INTERROGATION CENTER

This squat, square building's outer door is always locked, though not actively guarded. A Difficulty 4 Strength + Athletics test can break it, and the electric lock can be bypassed with a Difficulty 3 Dexterity + Larceny test. Gifts such as Gremlins and Open Seal likewise work. Breaking down a door is not quiet and will alert the guards inside.

Inside, the building is usually occupied by four fomori guards keeping an eye on the inmates and gambling in the break room. They are fast to respond with violence to anyone who looks like they do not belong there. Once the riot breaks out, they will not leave their posts, but they will be glued to the security camera feed, giving them a one-die penalty to tests to spot anyone trying to move stealthily.

The building is very clean, though the floor and walls are bare, unadorned concrete, lit with bright lamps with a sinister green tint. The cells have small windows, allowing the guards to see the inmates. There are six holding cells here, three of which are occupied. At the end of the corridor lies a large room with an elaborate surgeon's worktable at its center. Jointed mechanical arms hold pliers and scalpels. This is the table where prisoners are strapped for interrogation. Zimbardo the Strand Spider will possess the table itself and work on the inmate, asking questions with no satisfactory answers. "Do you understand your crime?" "Who are your accomplices?" "Why do you believe in innocence?" Everything is impeccably clean. If someone looks into the cleaning supplies closet, they will find it very well equipped, especially with bleach. There is also a case of military-issue body bags.

Oier Apaza is in poor shape, with 3 points of Superficial Health damage (out of 5), but he is conscious and has his wits about himself. He is eager to get going and figures that introductions can be saved for later. The cell doors are not as sturdy as the outer door and break on a Difficulty 3 Strength + Athletics test. The lock is of the same make, though.

DESTROYING THE RECORDS

The pack's illegal infiltration into the camp is recorded in surveillance camera footage and possibly paper documentation. While the written information is stored on a cloud server, the surveillance camera footage is saved locally on hard drives in the office building. That's also where all the confiscated material and paper records are. Unless the characters know the Rite of the Forgetful Record (*Werewolf*, p. 182), getting rid of the documentation is an additional complication that may involve fighting guards, facing the Warden, and searching the office under time constraints. Or just arson.

GETTING OUT

Exiting the Interrogation Center and getting to the caern is relatively simple. The guards' attention is largely elsewhere and as long as the players' characters don't draw attention to themselves and move fast, they will not be bothered unless the Storyteller feels this is a good time for a fight. At the caern, they meet up with Golden Dog. The process now is to first perform the Rite of Spiritual Succor to make the trip to Umbra survivable for Oier, and then the Rite of Shadow Passage to enter the Umbra. If the players' characters cleared out the pattern spiderwebs from the Umbral side of the caern earlier, the Gauntlet here is 2. Otherwise, it is 3.

THE BEST LAID PLANS OF WOLVES AND MEN

Few plans survive enemy contact, and Golden Dog's stratagem is perhaps unreasonably intricate for such creatures of Rage as the Garou. The players' characters may do something so overtly noticeable that the guards must focus on them. It is also entirely possible that they wish to stage a full-blown jailbreak. This is a valid option, but by necessity one of brute force, as it is not feasible to get every one of the thousands of inmates safely through the Umbra. Breaking down the gate and having everyone run to the hills can happen. It will be an ugly and violent business, but then, so is La Tábano.

DESTROYING THE CAMP

Some characters (or players) may refuse to let the entire abomination that is La Tábano continue

to exist. Destroying La Tábano is harder than it may sound. See "The Fate of La Tábano, p. 159). Nonetheless, the pack might set its sights on this goal, which may be a fitting, if tragic, end to the story or chronicle.

THE UMBRA

The plan is only detailed up until the players' characters have reached the Umbra. Immediately upon stepping through the Gauntlet, Golden Dog will press the partridge wing on her brother. He has never before entered the Umbra and has no context for what he is experiencing. The small blessing is that at least he cannot perceive Gaia's Howl.

SCENES

FIRST TIME IN THE UMBRA

Oier has stepped from one scary place to another, but also from a world of mundane horrors into one of supernatural fears. For him, the Umbra is like a dream, a fairytale, an acid trip, a nightmare, and madness. He is completely naked, holding on only to the partridge wing, trying to cover himself with spider webs, seeing Garou in their true form, and being afraid of the pattern spiders. He begins to rave about the First Fortress.

The players' characters must soothe him and allay his panic enough that he can walk the Moonlit Path. One possibility for this is to invoke the ancestor-spirit of the legendary Garou Law-Speaker, who could calm him down, explain everything, and form some sort of truce and alliance between man and wolf for the duration of their stay in the Umbra (See p. 44 for more on Law-Speaker.). Time is of the essence, however, because if the Rite of Spiritual Succor runs out while Oier is still in the Umbra, he will die.

THE PATTERN SPIDERS

The commotion in La Tábano has also riled up the Umbral camp and Zimbardo the Strand Spider. It dispatches guardian spiders (*Werewolf*, p. 255; Power 5) to capture the pack, one for each players' character. If the Storyteller feels that the story needs a major fight, Zimbardo itself (Power 8) can haul its car-sized

mass from behind its walls and attack, prodding at the Garou with its freakishly tall legs, biting them and spraying web everywhere. Anyone who is wrapped in silk and taken into the camp can console themselves that at least the inherent hostility of the Umbra will kill them before the Strand Spider gets around to eating them. This may inadvertently also help the pack destroy La Tábano itself.

THROUGH THE SPIRIT WILDS

This can be one scene or several, depending on your needs as a Storyteller. Haste should be the players' characters' main motivation, though. What kinds of spirits do they encounter, which Umbral locations do they pass through, do they get lost or tempted, does Oier try something stupid? The possibilities are endless.

The players' characters will probably want to return to their caern, but if they want to exit somewhere else, that is also possible. For some, the priority could be getting out as soon as the Rite of Shadow Passage feels safe to perform. Distances mean little, but the right kinds of associations are important. Basically, the nearest exit could be in Canada or Kyiv. New pathways can be formed in the Umbra with the power of the mind, and humans might even think they encounter their homes or loved ones there. Remember that the Gauntlet is 2 levels weaker when exiting the Umbra than when entering it.

TRAPPED IN THE UMBRA

Should the Rite of Shadow Passage fail while in the Umbra, the pack and any other travelers are in extreme danger. Garou trapped in the Umbra risk becoming Starving Remnants (*Werewolf*, p. 283). Loss of the Rite Master (perhaps from combat with Zimbardo the Strand Spider, above) may doom the pack entirely or simply Oier if he cannot leave before the Rite of Spiritual Succor expires. Being trapped in the Spirit Wilds is a grave situation that cannot be understated and a clear — though unlikely — possibility given the nature of dice. Storytellers wishing to avoid this possibility may need to take half (see *Werewolf*, p 119).

RETURN TO THE REAL WORLD

For Oier, leaving the Umbra is simultaneously like

waking from a strange dream, coming down from a drug trip, and traveling to another country. He might feel nauseous, hungry, faint, tired, thirsty, feverish, or all of them at the same time. His clothes did not survive the trip, and he comes out naked, as does everyone else whose clothes have not received the Rite of Dedication. The Garou who brought them here perhaps feel a certain responsibility to help the Apazas at least get dressed and find a place to sleep. Afterward, Golden Dog finally releases the juggling, and the little spirit happily makes its way home.

FOLLOW THE TRAIL

Once the Apazas have been rescued, the hardest part is done. There is no followup from the authorities. Even though the guards and Muriel Pitt realize their captive has been sprung loose from the Interrogation Centre, the apathetic warden's first order of business is to destroy any record of Oier being brought to La Tábano, followed by doing nothing else. If she died during the events, it is up to the Storyteller whether her replacement ever even figures out they are missing an inmate or two.

Oier and Ximena, in turn, have no papers and poor English, and the players' characters now have some responsibility for their fates. They are streetwise and nothing if not survivors. Moreover, Oier knows about the Garou and the legend of the First Fortress, which puts him in danger. Seeking out the fabled Fortress in the Umbra and discovering its secrets can be an entire chronicle unto itself.

If the players' characters bargained for guidance with their Patron Spirit's herald to get to La Tábano, the spirit will be expecting them to pay up or perform whatever deed it demanded in exchange for its service.

THE FATE OF LA TÁBANO

Of course, there is also the problem of La Tábano itself, a monument to inhumanity factoring in its unnatural guards. Most Garou would see it ended, one way or another. With a sufficiently large force of Garou, it would be possible to overcome the guards and tear down its walls. A frontal assault endangers



the Veil, the caern, and the inmates. As the Umbra is a reflection of the physical world rather than the other way around, defeating Zimbardo the Strand Spider at the heart of the camp may clear out much of the spiritual evil, but still leave all the physical, human horrors behind. A campaign of exorcising (or murdering) dozens of fomori guards would alleviate some of the suffering from the camp but possibly raise other issues related to the safety of the Veil, the caern, and the inmates.

Uncovering the camp's atrocities in the media could bring enough public pressure upon ICE to terminate Pewter's contract. A well-made exposé video of the camp could be leaked to the right hands, where humans could step in and help right the wrongs if a campaign of activism is stoked. Or perhaps it may simply motivate the next contractor running La Tábano to keep their house in order.

In any case, the Garou of Cuna de Esperanza still dwell within La Tábano, and it is only a matter of time before someone's Rage boils over at the injustice. Finally, there is the question of what happened to La Mosquitero's guardian spirit, and whether it is perhaps trapped in a pattern spider's web within the Umbral concentration camp.

ALLIES AND ANTAGONISTS

PEDRO "PAPÁ LUNA" VALDÉS ÁLVAREZ

Pedro Valdés is an architect who managed to reconcile family life with being a Garou, until his family was threatened by a drug gang. Fleeing reprisal after killing several of them, he left Mexico for the United States with his wife and three children, but the border guards separated them a year ago. Pedro was incarcerated in La Tábano, missing his family terribly. His grief was alleviated by his discovery of the caern that he calls La Mosquitero. He is now dedicated to helping the other inmates, especially the children. He has devoted himself to his new pack and his temporary family, but the rare times he gets the chance, he enters the Umbra to look for clues of his real family. He speaks decent English.

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pool: Physical 3, Social 7, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 7

Auspice: Ragabash

Tribe: Hart Warden or Children of Gaia

Exceptional Dice Pools: Academics 7, Brawl 5, Leadership 9, Persuasion 9

Renown: Glory 3, Honor 2, Wisdom 4

Gifts: Blur of the Milky Eye, Penumbral Senses, Umbral Pocket (p. 61). If Hart Warden, Crow's Laughter. If Children of Gaia, Brother's Scent.

Rites: Rite of Shadow Passage

XIMENA "GOLDEN DOG" APAZA

Ximena and her brother Oier come from Argentina. She, at 19, is a year his senior. She's a Garou, he is not, and they are both haunted by their past. Neither speaks much of what has happened, but Papá Luna has gleaned that Golden Dog had a pack that she belonged to and that they, as well as the Apazas' parents, are now dead because of something the pack's theurge discovered about the First Fortress (see p. 163). For the same reason, they left for the United States. Oier knows of her sister's nature, and more besides. For the past eight months, the siblings have lived in La Tábano, but strangely enough, found acceptance and family there, within La Mosquitero. Ximena's primary motivation is to save Oier, and she beseeches the players' characters to aid her in this. For Oier, use the traits for a criminal (*Werewolf*, p. 291).

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pool: Physical 6, Social 5, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 4

Auspice: Ahroun

Tribe: Silver Fangs or Galestalker

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 8, Stealth 8, Persuasion 6, Subterfuge 6

Renown: Glory 2, Honor 3, Wisdom 1

Gifts: Eyes of the Owl, Razor Claws. If Silver Fang, Pack Instinct. If Galestalker, Camouflage.

Rites: Rite of Forging (p. 67), Rite of Spiritual Succor (p. 68)

MARCO "BALADA DE SANGRE" BATRES OBRADOR

A teenage Mexican boy who changed for the first time at the camp. Outside of the camp, he spent all of his life in Cartolandia, the cardboard ghetto outside Mexico City, with very few prospects save for one day getting into the Land of Plenty. He can't read and has no marketable skills. But since his change, he's become a storyteller and a violent fighter. (The latter got him into trouble many times in the camp.) He now dreams not only of

the United States but also of a Owl, and the First Fortress in the Umbra.

General Difficulty: 4/2

Standard Dice Pool: Physical 3, Social 6, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 8

Auspice: Galliard

Tribe: Silent Strider

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 6, Intimidation 8, Performance 8

Renown: Glory 1, Honor 3, Wisdom 2

Gifts: Animal Magnetism, Summon Implement (p. 62), Staredown

Rites: Rite of Dedication ■

"He dragged her up his winding stair,
into his dismal den,

Within his little parlour—but she ne'er
came out again!

—And now, dear little children, who may
this story read,

To idle, silly, flattering words, I pray
you ne'er give heed:

Unto an evil counsellor, close heart, and
ear, and eye,

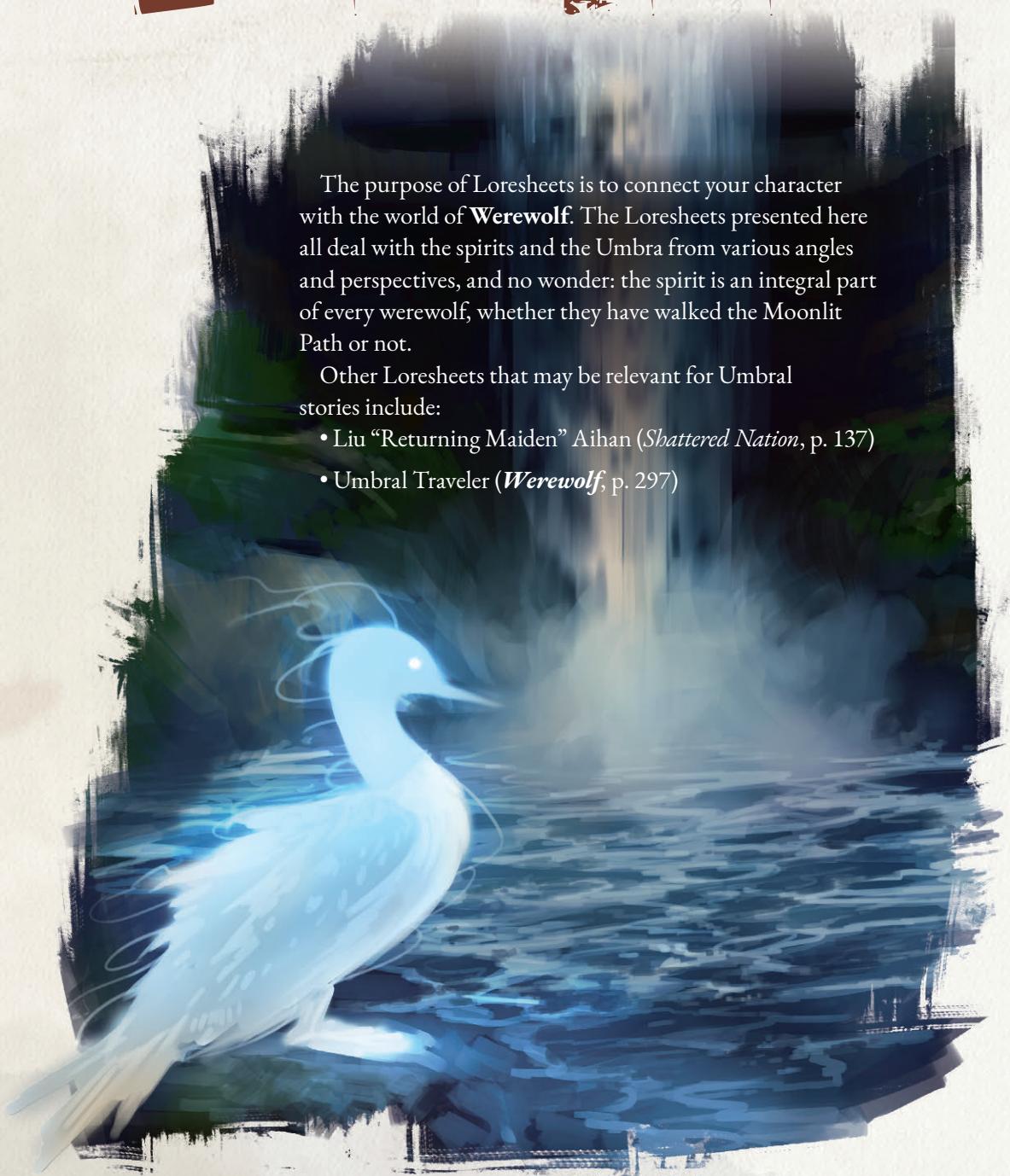
And take a lesson from this tale, of the
Spider and the Fly."

—MARY HOWITT, "THE SPIDER AND THE FLY"



APPENDIX

Loresheets



The purpose of Loresheets is to connect your character with the world of **Werewolf**. The Loresheets presented here all deal with the spirits and the Umbra from various angles and perspectives, and no wonder: the spirit is an integral part of every werewolf, whether they have walked the Moonlit Path or not.

Other Loresheets that may be relevant for Umbral stories include:

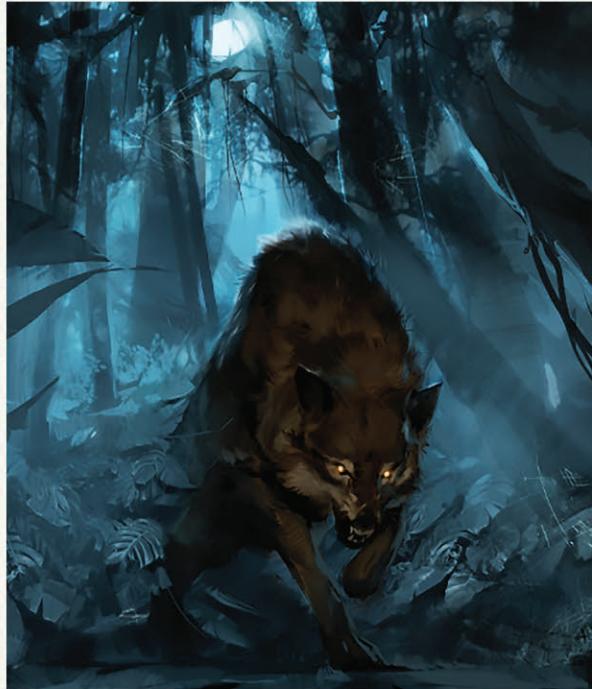
- Liu “Returning Maiden” Aihan (*Shattered Nation*, p. 137)
- Umbral Traveler (**Werewolf**, p. 297)



FIRST FORTRESS

The First Fortress was many things, according to Garou legend: an outpost in the Umbra, a library, a meeting place, and a courthouse. Lunes assist its visitors. It is safe for Garou to visit, protected by a spirit of great power, who stalks its hallways on silent paws. Some claim it was once the Garou Nation's capital. Some say it exists half in the Umbra, half in the physical world. No record of a "First Fortress" exists, and some believe it never existed at all.

You know First Fortress is real; you've been there, where Gaia's Howl was a distant echo. Perhaps you discovered it by accident. Maybe you read a forgotten Garou Nation document. Maybe the spirits of the First Fortress chose you to lead and liberate them. Whatever the reason, you remind the Garou of their ancient glories.



- **Waypoint:** The location of First Fortress is etched in your mind. When you navigate the Umbra with First Fortress as a stop or your destination, you receive a twodice bonus to all navigation tests during your journey.
- • **Ancient Panoply:** You have access to First Fortress' treasures. You may begin each story with a new talisman of up to two dots retrieved from the First Fortress. These are oneofakind and risk being lost or destroyed.

- • • **Fortress Servants:** The spirits of First Fortress must fulfill their pacts, and you'll help them. Once per story, you may invoke the name of a spirit with a Power of 6, and it performs one task for you to the best of its ability. The spirit can manifest itself in the physical world and possess hosts. When the task is done, it's freed from its pact and exists freely in the Umbra.
- • • • **Historian:** Your careful studies of First Fortress' libraries reveal facts about the Garou Nation no one else knows. Once per story, with the Storyteller's approval, you may make one statement about the Garou Nation's past that is more or less true. No one is obligated to believe you without proof.

- • • • • **Final Defense:** You know how to use First Fortress's defense systems, including one its builders hoped would never be used. When fighting inside the First Fortress, you always have a fourdice bonus to Brawl and Melee tests, which stacks with other bonuses. Once per chronicle, you may sing the song that selfdestructs First Fortress. All supporting characters in the Fortress are Incapacitated and permanently killed at the end of the next turn, no matter their Health or capabilities. If you cannot escape in time, this includes you.





THE MOONLIT PATH

The Umbra is a dangerous, hostile place that is rightly feared by many. It defies logic. Whatever rules it follows often change on a whim, throwing even the most prepared Garou off guard, separating them from the pack, and pulling the unwary deeper into its chaos. Once lost, few return and those packs, either brave or foolish enough to attempt a rescue, usually achieve nothing more than adding their names to the list of the lost.

Still, a lucky few somehow find their way home, but when they do, they're rarely the same again. You are one such survivor, lost to the Umbra and subjected to its unfathomable depths until the exposure almost killed you. You find it hard to recall your experience in detail. Still, you and other survivors all have one detail in common—a manifestation of Luna herself came and found you, sheltering you from danger and illuminating the path to safety. Not everyone wants to believe your tales, but so far, no one has a better explanation for your miraculous return.

While these levels are aligned to phases of the moon, any auspice can benefit from these Gifts.



- **Travel in Darkness:** The moon doesn't always shine, and neither do you. As long as you remain still, you can remain invisible to any single nominated spirit while in the Umbra.
- **The Open Door:** Reminiscent of the crack of light from an opening door, the crescent moon eases you into the Umbra. Once per session, you may ignore the damage inflicted by a Brutal result on the Rite of Shadow Passage.

- **The Road Less Followed:** The halfmoon is perfectly balanced, able to see both sides of an argument. You share this insight, and when negotiating with spirits in the Umbra, you may ignore any negative effects from your Rage dice.
- **The Path of Sustenance:** The gibbous moon wants for very little, and despite the tribulations of what's gone before and what will come, it remains almost full—just like you. You only need to spend Willpower once per session to remain in the Umbra.

- **The Route Home:** With all the inevitability of a full moon, even death won't stop you from rising again. If you die in the Umbra, at the scene's end, you come back to life (and the physical world) with one Health level left unblemished. Where you end up, geographically, is up to the Storyteller.



POSESSSED FLESH

Spirits and humans are often intertwined in ways that few would care to think too much about. Garou, as a rule, cannot be possessed by spirits. However, the rare Bane of uncontrolled rage, Howling Insanity, can accomplish this seemingly impossible feat. Perhaps they are uniquely attuned to the darkest impulses in the nature of werewolves, who knows?

You were possessed by a Howling Insanity. Either it was abjured through a Gift or a Rite or you banished it through sheer force of will. In any case, it is gone now, but the experience left an indelible mark on you.

If you pick this Loresheet, talk with the Storyteller about the circumstances of the possession and how the Howling Insanity was driven out.



- **Spiritual Eye Contact:** You've got an almost sixth sense to recognize the stare of a possessed. You can test Wits + Insight (Difficulty 3) to discern whether a person is possessed.
- **Spirit Talker:** Ever since the spirit left your body, you understand how to treat with other spirits of the Wyrm. Any Rite dealing with Banes allows you to set a Rage die from the dice pool as a success before the roll.
- **Branded:** Possession triggered your First Change, leaving your flesh marred, but the spiritual branding allows you to walk among certain spirits with more ease. You get a twodice bonus to social tests when interacting with Banes.
- **Symbiotic Bond:** You've come to terms with the occupant of your body, or you've trapped it deep within your psyche. Or perhaps the Howling Insanity inhabits your body on a semipermanent basis. Once per session, you can draw up one of the spirit's exceptional skills and add them to your own dice pool, though it does obviously display the presence of said spirit.
- **Liberator:** Your experiences with possession have made you able to break bonds that would otherwise seem impossible. No matter how long a spirit has possessed a host, you can work to separate the two, or contribute to a Rite that aims to do so.



The Monster of the Bayou was sitting by the streetcar, wiping dead plastic bugs off its fur as a light flashed behind it. Someone had entered. Was it Mistwalker's acolyte? It strained its neck to see better without getting up. It was the water lily.

"Oh, it's you," he chuckled, "I knew you'd fail."

"What do you mean?"

"A spirit can't live in the material realm forever. I said you'd be back."

Beaver Root smiled, the way a flower can smile in the Umbra. "I guess you were right."

"Did you find the hot sauce for me?"

"Will this do?" Beaver Root extended one of its leaf stalks and handed the Monster a bottle of red sauce.

"Let's try," the Monster said and poured some on its bowl of gumbo. It took a spoonful and meant to savor the taste for a while, but its amber eyes started tearing up. "It's the good stuff," it said, voice quavering in joy, and moved a little to let Beaver Root leave the streetcar.

The lilyspirit moved into the water and there waded toward the Bayou. It had grown from a scared little creature to a protector of the marshland and a friend of the Rougarou. It had gone to battle with the acolyte and defeated Monsieur Plastique. It had inhabited the bodies of a human and a Rougarou, and it had raged.

Whether Melanie and Bull Shark would survive, it didn't know. The acolyte had promised to tend to their wounds, and she had said Bull Shark was strong. Maybe they would recover. But whether they would or not, they had defeated Monsieur Plastique, and the city had taken over the plastic dump which was already being cleaned.

The effects could easily be felt here in the Bayou. Most of the plasticspirits were gone, and the ones still lingering fled at the sight of Beaver Root. The spirits of the flora and fauna were back to normal. As Beaver Root returned to the Great Spirit, it found her emerging from the nest she'd been resting in. It spoke to her with eyes bright and head unbowed and told her that it was over. The Bayou was safe.

Then they felt Gaea's piercing howl again as noxious clouds drifted over the wetland, carrying with them swarms of flies and pattern spiders, and they knew that although the battle had been won, the Bayou was not yet out of danger.

Beaver Root looked to its friends, all quivering in fear, then to the Great Spirit of the Bayou, who gave it an approving nod. "It is not a cry of pain," Beaver Root said to the others. "It's a call to war!"

It is a call to rage!"



VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

HUNTER

THE RECKONING

WEREWOLF

THE APOCALYPSE

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