

THE LIVE-ACTION GAMING MAGAZINE

Mind's Eye TheatreTM JOURNAL

BECAUSE THE MIND'S EYE NEVER BLINKS



Mind's Eye Theatre™ JOURNAL

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WELCOME TO THE
MIND'S EYE THEATRE JOURNAL,
THE MAGAZINE THAT PICKS UP WHERE OTHER
MIND'S EYE PUBLICATIONS LEAVE OFF.

THIS ISSUE PRESENTS:

- RULES FOR LIVE-ACTION NUNNEHI
- THE NEXT INSTALLMENT OF THE MAYDAY!
CHRONICLE
- WORLD OF DARKNESS FICTION
- A LOOK AT TWO OF THE
LARGEST LIVE-ACTION GAMING
ORGANIZATIONS: THE
CAMARILLA AND ONE
WORLD BY NIGHT
- TOPICAL ISSUES ON
LIVE-ACTION
ROLEPLAYING AND MORE!

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THE LIVE-ACTION GAMING MAGAZINE



Mind's Eye Theatre
JOURNAL

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Mike "Dunce" Tinney, though we know not why.

Justin "Stud" Achilli. Ouch. That's all, just ouch.

Fred "I was just singing a song about you" Yelk, for the change he inspired at the last minute.

Ken "Snakes and Ladders" Cliffe, for that last bit of perspective.



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WORD FROM THE DEVELOPER

WELCOME TO THE mind's eye theatre journal!

Welcome back, everybody, to the second issue of the MET Journal. And for those of you who are new to the publication, let me take a second to acquaint you with just what you've got here.

The **Journal** is a quarterly publication dedicated to filling in the gaps in your White Wolf LARP environment. We offer rules for new character types, original storylines to work into your chronicles, guides for keeping your games under control and running smoothly and rules updates you won't find in any other **Mind's Eye** release. Plus, you'll find answers to the questions that have plagued your chronicles (*Why are so many Changeling birthrights changed into Merits and Flaws in *The Shining Host*?*), original World of Darkness fiction and columns from those who've been there (wherever there is) and survived to tell the tale. The **Journal** is packed with facts and guides that expand upon what's published in the MET books.

In this issue, we have a chat with the spokespeople of two of the largest live-action roleplaying organizations in the world, look into some of the legwork that goes into setting up a successful, long-running LARP chronicle and delve into the particulars of creating Nunnehi changelings for MET's *The Shining Host*. And that's just a sample of what's in store for you here. We've also got an *Oblivion* adventure that will rock your whole shadowed world, a look at how MET has changed since its inception and more.

In future issues, we'll look into one of Atlanta's own oldest and largest independent LARP organizations, ways to keep problem players under control, a word or two on the state of MET from Cynthia Summers (the **Mind's Eye** developer here) and anything else you might need to round out your live-action chronicle.

And you can help make the **Journal** even better. Send us letters on your opinions about the state of live-action roleplaying today. Send us questions about the features and rules you see here and about the broken rules you might come across in different MET publications. Send us horror stories of games gone wrong and how your players' characters fixed them. We're interested in all aspects of live-action roleplaying, and we want to know what you think.

Stick around. The **Journal** is on the cutting edge of the live-action genre; we've got something for everybody. And if we don't have it yet, let us know. We'll get it for you.

Carl Bowen, Developer

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THE CURRENT THINKING

Ah... conflict. If nothing else, that's what this section is here for. Sort of a cross between a round-table discussion and a WWF cage-match, this is the place to hash out MET issues ranging from licensing to rule-brokerness to LARPing style. Give me your opinions, respond to opinions you see here, bribe me just to get your name in print, whatever. Just keep it relatively clean, and stay off the bad side of the people you disagree with. After all, that keen-edged rapier wit is designed for each others' arguments and opinions, not for each others' personal lives.

As this hotbed of conflict and contention (just kidding) opens, we find letters on all manner of subjects. Live-action gamers are at no loss for words when it comes to their opinions over LARPing (as many of you can easily attest). This first letter deals with general concerns one finds in any LARP situation, and it boils down to mechanics versus gameplay.

First of all, [rules] simplicity is no guarantee of quality. The support of roleplaying over mechanics has always been, in my opinion, in the hands of the players more than anything. The Storytellers in a respective LARP can certainly assist or interfere but this is usually secondary.

I think [creating a character to exploit the rules or benefit from a loophole in the rules] makes for odd reasoning to play at all. As a good friend of mine has said a number of times, "Why play something you don't enjoy?" Some people get enjoyment from tackling the big boys in-game, from arbitrating odd and complicated rules or from simply playing a *Vampire* character they know will never be prince. The point is to design a character that will be fun to play and let the rules concerns come second.

— Scott McDaniel

Atlanta Interactive Theater Storyteller

This next letter deals with the issue of crossover games and how well LARPs are suited to deal with the unique problems inherent to them.

I have been playing WoD games for upward of five years, give or take, and after all that time, I've finally come to the conclusion that there is not a single element about one line that prevents crossover. In fact, I think that all of the lines belong in the WoD and can be treated as equally important. The only line that has ANY trouble with crossovers is *Vampire* (including Kuei-jin) because of the whole "I can only play at night" problem. The other four (*Werewolf*, *Mage*, *Wraith* and *Changeling*) work perfectly well together.

I am currently running a chronicle that includes everything in it. The only restriction that I put on the players was that they had to play something that could do stuff both during the day and the night. Outside of that, I let them play anything. Everything runs together pretty smoothly, too. I'm not going to lie and say it's easy, but it's not particularly difficult either. It's just a matter of taking a little extra time and research to put the pieces together. I haven't had to invoke the Golden Rule either, at least not in order to have one "race" be able to function with another.

Sheer "gunslinging" ability isn't all that goes into a game being balanced. Most starting Garou could wipe the floor with most starting vampires. But that is definitely a minor exaggeration on the truth. Not all Garou are Get of Fenris/ Red Talon type characters. Not all Garou have incredible strength in Crinos. Not all vampires are [wusses] when it comes to combat (the Brujah are a prime example, although the Gangrel and Nosferatu also fight well), and so it is possible, with some Potence, and



maybe a little *Celerity* or *Fortitude*, for a vampire to best a Garou in combat. However, a clever vampire will easily be able to overcome the ferocious Garou with a well placed use of *Dominate* or *Presence*, make him go mad and attack his own pack with *Dementation* or something equally heinous. Vampires, unlike most Garou, don't rely solely on power to win their victories. They have more subtle ways of doing things.

A similar argument could be made for mages vs. vampires. (**Provided a live-action Mage system even existed, of course.**) The mage is actually at a slight disadvantage against other supernaturals in that he can't just do shit and not suffer any immediate consequences. Paradox should keep him in line enough (if he's smart anyway) so that the playing field is level when he deals with other supernaturals. Just because the mage can shape reality doesn't mean he's invulnerable, or that his mind is made of iron. The vampire still has the options of *Dominate* and *Presence* at his disposal. Plus, this time the vampire will potentially be stronger than the mage is (and he won't have to worry about that mage regenerating damage, either).

So, in my opinion, the systems [for tabletop and, by extension, live-action] are balanced. Each character type has its own strengths and its own weaknesses. Starting mages are not gods, vampires are not wusses, and, despite first-edition rules, werewolves are not indestructible.

All that being said, why not cross the genres over?

— Gregory Plunkett

Not written in direct response to Gregory's letter, though certainly in the same vein, comes this letter from a former Athens by Night LARP Storyteller.

Alright, here's my opinion of different participants in a WoD LARP. First off, given enough time, rules can be created [to translate] any tabletop system. The limitations I see present between the different inhabitants of the WoD aren't mechanical at all. The limitation is also not your ability to get all of these inhabitants in one area. Anybody could do so if they created a background rich enough. The limitation, which I think is fundamental, is the fact that once you've got all of these groups in the room together with their rules that are easy to use and understandable, what do you, as a Storyteller, do with them?

I'm not going to try and say what they "should do" because players always have a knack for explaining why they're the exception. However, I'm going to watch as the Garou travel into the Umbra to wage their wars. I'm going to see the mages disappear. The wraiths will never appear except in rooms where others won't be present. Changelings will do whatever it is changelings do. Vampires will try to figure out who's in charge and go from there for the rest of eternity.

Essentially, to do any of the inhabitants justice the game must be focused to them. The Garou deserve their own game for the Umbra alone. Mages deserve their own game because the ST's need to spend their time worrying about Paradox. Vampires deserve their own game because they're prone to creating international effects. That's the limitation of these different worlds. They're so interesting, so intricate, so demanding that as an ST trying to create a cohesive game, you accomplish nothing by spreading the population out....

The writer then went on, a bit later, to expound upon the phenomenon of LARPers forming into cliques that appear in games as groups of related characters.

...While I try to make my associations in game as much as I can, I would be lying if I said some outside consideration isn't given. In truth, it doesn't hurt anything for me. Sure, I might suddenly just be 'buddying' up to somebody but I think that has a real world image to it. Sometimes, you just start naturally close to somebody. This behavior [in LARPers] certainly shouldn't be demonized.



As to 'groups' of people, well it's a game and you want to enjoy yourself. Sometimes you just want to be with your friends and you use the game as a social outlet. I've got no problem with that. Way back in the day I played this game simply so I could spend some time with my friends and relax. It's not so bad if a mass of people come in together, knowing and working with each other. It certainly doesn't detract from my rp'ing experience. In the end, I'm not going to go out of my way to draw such a black and white line between oog and ig. Personally, it's something that happens in LARPs where people are doing their best to have a good time.

— Ryan Vila

Athens by Night Storyteller

Returning to the idea of character versus wad-o-Traits, Phil Clippinger had this (among other notable bits) to say...

Knowing too much about the powers of other characters is the fundamental cause of Live-Action-MUDding. (I cannot say that I am wholly innocent of said crime, but for about a year I've been reformed.) The whole purpose of "Role Playing" is that you, as a player, adopt a character's "role", and "play" through it in the story.

What defines your character? Is it the fact that he was raised in the slums of Montreal by a submissive, weak mother and a father who beat her to alleviate his frustrations from working a dead-end minimum wage job, up until the point that a Pander embraced you to see how you would turn out? Did he go on to join the Sabbat of Montreal, but find that their sadistic, self-loathing ways were only grotesque facsimiles of his mortal father's actions? When he left them all behind and started to wander the United states, did they hunt him? Why did he come to [the city he now calls home]? What are his feelings about the Camarilla? Is he here in hopes that the Montreal Sect won't look for him in a Cam town, or is he inclined to follow the ideals of the Camarilla? Or does he see the hypocrisy in this system as well? Are these the kind of qualities that define your character? Or is it the fact that he was ghouled so he has *Celerity*, *Potence* and *Fortitude*, and then he got Embraced so now he's got access to *Thaumaturgy*, *Dominate*, and *Auspex*, and even gets his generation for free?

If you've got a good *character*, you shouldn't have to worry about your Traits and Abilities. And you certainly shouldn't worry about the Traits and Abilities of others. Ok, you saw Joe Brujah kick some ass at the last gather. You're not going to get into it with him. That's fair. Steve and Dave Brujah kicked some ass too. Maybe you shouldn't [mess] with the Brujah on a whole. You don't know exactly what they have the potential to do, you just know what you've seen them do.

— Phil Clippinger

FURTHER FUEL

Well, that's what *they* have to say; what do *you* have to say? Should LARPs be one-creature-type-only affairs, or should crossovers be as common as having different species of trees in the same forest? How do you properly balance the concerns of creating a character against the necessity of game mechanics? And for those of you who still want to respond to the topics presented in Issue #1 (or topics that haven't been voiced here yet), it's never too late. Let me hear from you!

You can e-mail your responses to these points or opinions on subjects of your choosing to carl@white-wolf.com or mail them to:

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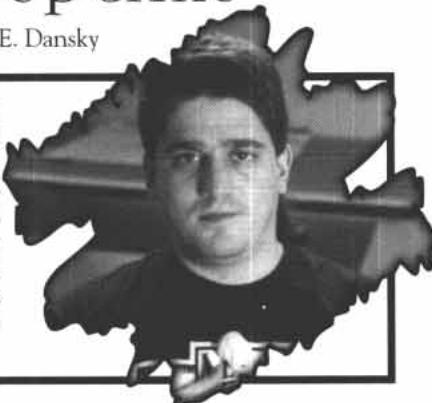
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DEADGUY SPEAKS

by Richard E. Dansky

Rich has been a part of White Wolf since just shortly before Christ crawled from the primordial ocean at Cyprus. He has developed *Mind's Eye Theatre*, *Wraith: The Oblivion* and *Vampire: The Dark Ages*. Watch for this column to showcase Rich's unique insight, wit, observations on life in general, and (should we be so lucky) his views on *Mind's Eye Theatre* development. In this column, Rich takes a random sample of some of the more... unusual specimens of LARPers out there.



I'LL STAY UP IN THE HELICOPTER WHILE JIM GOES AND WRESTLES THE TWINK TO THE GROUND

Or

FUNNY HOW EVERYONE KNOWS ONE OF THESE GUYS, AIN'T IT?

This issue's column was supposed to be about, among other things, elves in barns, but someone got me a whole set of writer's blocks for Hanukkah (they're a lot like Legos, only the baby's a lot less likely to eat them). As a result, that essay's in mangled ruins somewhere in the overgrown recesses of my hard drive.

Instead, this time around you get the result of my observations of years of LARPing. Ladies, gentlemen and Salubri were-rabbit abominations (thank you, Clayton Oliver), I present for your edification and amusement: The *Mind's Eye Theatre* Bestiary.

(Note: This has nothing, *nothing* to do with the *Bygone Bestiary*. Anyone who wants MET statistics for a Sea Bishop needs to stop playing with his mail-order brine shrimp, right now. Put the Sea Monkeys down and back... away... slowly.)

A final caveat: The critters described here are rare but easily identifiable. They move among the vast majority of *Mind's Eye Theatre* players like killer whales through a medium-sized bowl of ramen, instantly recognizable as being something Other. Most games have at least one of these guys running around; some have the full menagerie. To their credit, the vast majority of *Mind's Eye Theatre* players simply work around these roleplaying menhirs; it's just that occasionally, like the Grand Canyon, they present insurmountable obstacles.

In any case, here's a guide to recognizing these behemoths of the LARP scene, including percentage in lair and treasure ty—err, is that the legal department on the phone? Hang on, I'll be right back. In the meantime, enjoy.

THE TWINK

Quote: I use Forces 3, Entropy 9, Celerity, my twin silver-handled katanas and my Crinos form to cut to the front of the line and order a cheeseburger.

Character Concept: Bigger, better, faster, more! Umm, and some more after that!

Appearance: The Twink usually doesn't bother with much in the way of costuming. After all, he's got Massive Cosmic Powers at his beck and call, so he doesn't need to dress up. When you're the ultimate force of destruction, you can dress casual and get away with it.

Natural Habitat: Elysium. Why? Because if the Twink has managed to finagle a way to get his Risen Euthanatos MokolÈ kinfolk character past the local Storyteller (usually by

hitting said Storyteller on the back of the head repeatedly with a skillet and taking the wobbly bobbing motion that results as a nod of approval), he knows that someone else has done it, too! And that someone else might be able to, somehow, in some way, defeat his Immortal Kuejin Diabolist Baali-Tremere crossbreed. Ergo, he's going to stay where it's safe.

Notes: The Twink is motivated by two forces: the desire to avoid character death at all costs and the desire to let everyone else know exactly how butch his character really is. As a result, you will often see the Twink using Disciplines left, right and center to do things like open doors, rearrange geraniums and the like. Mysteriously, though, he never runs out of Blood or Willpower Traits by doing so. Fascinating.

THE CHAINSAW

Quote: *I kill you. And you. And you. And hey, you, over there — in the green shirt. Yeah, I kill you, too. You're here to read the meter? Screw it, I kill you anyway.*

Concept: To make like Ozymandias, only without all that boring looking on works and despairing stuff, you know?

Appearance: The Chainsaw exists to kill, and the sheer number of weapons draped off his costume (usually lifted from Clint Eastwood by way of post-Highlander Christopher Lambert) makes this abundantly clear. Broad-brimmed hats are *de rigueur*. A rare subspecies prefers to use no weapons at all, relying instead on innate powers. Such creatures are thought to be the result of Chainsaw-Twink crossbreeding, though reliable reports indicate that each partner tries to kill the other immediately after the consummation of such a union.

Natural Habitat: Chainsaws can be found at the entrance to most games, mentally tallying new players for later identification and extermination. Chainsaws can also be found at the front of most Blood Hunts and leading the list of converts during the inevitable "Sabbat infiltration" plotline, believing that getting whacked on the head with a shovel grants them a license to kill.

Notes: The Chainsaw is not evil, merely misguided; he thinks that racking up a body count is a form of roleplaying. He sees himself as the Darwinian scourge of the LARP, weeding out the weak so that stronger character concepts may survive and prosper. He fills the role of... oh, who am I trying to kid with this crap? He's a weenie. Get 30 Terrified Newbies to gang-tackle him, then steal his stuff.

THE TERRIFIED NEWBIE

Quote: *I, umm, I'm not really sure what's going on, err, umm, so could you, umm, tell me what, errr, oh, never mind.*

Concept: The Terrified Newbie has no idea what's going on around him. This is perfectly understandable for someone at his first game, but this guy's been doing it for three-and-a-half years.

Appearance: A cape. The Terrified Newbie always wears a cape. Hopefully he's wearing something else underneath it.

Natural Habitat: The Terrified Newbie rotates on a seasonal cycle (read: every 15 minutes) between the check-in table and the deepest, darkest corner of the game site, there to quiver in helpless confusion. Occasionally, this lemming-like journey takes the Terrified Newbie through actual gameplay, which inevitably screeches to a halt as a result of questions like "Which one is rock, again?"

Notes: The Terrified Newbie has no actual interest in playing, merely in attaching himself, lamprey-like, to some kind soul foolish enough to offer a few minutes to help out. What the Terrified Newbie craves is attention, and he will go so far as to self-prepinate to avoid actually learning what's going on (and thus being forced to do something silly like, oh, I dunno, play).

THE CUTE NUTBALL

Quote: *So I based my character — she's a Malkavian, you know — on Elmo. Tickle me.*



Concept: Horror wears flannel pajamas with feeties!

Appearance: Fuzzy slippers and/or teddy bears. Need I say more?

Natural Habitat: Cute Nutballs generally prowl the corridors of a game to see and be seen. They do, to their credit, interact on a regular basis with other players. Unfortunately, most seem compelled to use accents straight out of *The House at Pooh Corner* when doing so.

Notes: The Cute Nutball often bases her character around the regression motif, i.e., "I was Embraced while watching *Rugrats*" or "I may have been Embraced at age 38, but I really wanted it to happen while I was watching *Rugrats*." Many of them are excellent roleplayers within a very limited range. The problem is that Cute Nutballs tend to travel in packs (or perhaps to generate spontaneously), meaning that the incautious LARPer is liable to find himself knee-deep in what looks like vampiric daycare.

Addendum: The occasional Cute Nutball eschews the pajamas look for schoolgirl outfits. The less said of the effect this has on the local pathetic lech population, the better.

THE STORYTELLER'S S.O.

Quote: *How much longer is this going to take? Umm, I'm the... Seneschal? Honey, what's a Nosefur Achoo, and why is it trying to get my phone number?*

Concept: If I actually spend my Saturday night doing this, he owes me big time.

Appearance: Completely and utterly bored. The blasé expression generally changes to a look of sheer panic if it looks like one of those mutant freaks in black is going to come up and talk to her.

Natural Habitat: Anywhere but a LARP. With return visits, she risks conversion to her S.O.'s cape-flaunting ways, so she'll do everything in her power to make sure she never, ever comes back again.

And yes, she's read *Lysistrata*.

Notes: She's a nice, normal human being with outside interests who's willing to put up with her S.O.'s weird *Vampire* habit thingie whatever — once.

I repeat: Once. Try to make her do it more than once and she evolves into a new species, the Storyteller's Ex.

THE MOCKER

Quote: *This is all so lame and pathetic. Running around and pretending you're vampires. You guys have no social skills. Me? Oh, I'm going to go home and play "Resident Annoyance" for nine hours straight.*

Concept: He don't need no steeenkin' concept; he ain't playing.

Appearance: The Mocker is dressed like most of the people playing in the game — at least, the ones without capes. The irony of this generally escapes him.

Natural Habitat: The Mocker hangs out where LARPers hang out when they're not playing, within earshot but often no closer. He makes a point of claiming that he's standing upwind, just to be pushy about the whole thing.

Notes: The Mocker is often the larval form of the standard Player; he generally maintains Mocker status only so long as he doesn't actually bother to read the books or play the games he's making fun of. Once he gets dragged into putting his money where his mouth is, he either evolves or finds a new hobby.

**THE ONCE AND FUTURE AUTHOR**

Quote: *Actually, I think the rules for this stuff suck. I've written a better system, and it's a vast improvement. Can you see it? Uh, no, I left it at home. In Montana. Really.*

Concept: Anything they can do, I'm sure I can do better when I get around to it.

Appearance: The Once and Future Author is possibly the only species of MET player commonly found in tweeds and/or mock turtlenecks. Sweaters are a good indicator, as are wire-frame glasses, but those are also signs of the Nerdy Tremere (who's an entirely different kettle of clove-smoking, bloodsucking fish).

Natural Habitat: The Once and Future Author is often found in the middle of a flock of younger players, possibly even a nest of luckless Terrified Newbies. What he's doing there can best be described as "holding court," as he spins a web of his thoughts on rules modifications and ideas that he's sure would improve the game immeasurably. What those ideas actually are is a bit harder to get out of him; he's just sure that what he's capable of coming up with is bound to be better.

Oh, and check the local coffeehouse. He's the one in the corner with the laptop, playing Solitaire.

Notes: The Once and Future Author is careful to maneuver himself into delicately controlled situations. These situations are designed to play up his knowledge of rules loopholes and allow him the opportunity to pontificate about possible improvements. Normal, average roleplaying situations, however, tend to drive Once and Future Authors off.

THE MOMMY/ DADDY PLAYER

Quote: *So can I take that power? The other Storyteller said that it would be OK if it were OK with you! *blink* *sad puppy eyes**

Concept: Plllleeeeease can I have it? I'll be your best friend!

Appearance: The Mommy/Daddy Player is capable of the most astonishing camouflage imaginable. Normally he appears to be an average player, but once he gets alone with a Narrator or Storyteller, he sheds his disguise and starts wheedling shamelessly.



Natural Habitat: Under most circumstances, the Mommy/Daddy Player mingles happily and innocently with the crowd. It's just a bizarre combination of events that brings out his latent mutant powers and causes humanity to hate and fear him and send giant pink robots from the future to destroy his exclusive boarding school, and...

...err...

...umm. Where was I?

Anyway, most of the time Mommy/Daddy Players are perfectly cool, mingling with the roleplaying throngs around them. It's just that occasionally, one catches sight of a power or Merit or some other neat gadget that another character has that is completely new to him. According to scientists, this triggers a physiological reaction that causes the M/D P to either swim up the Willamette River and spawn or to start stalking the local Storyteller in hopes of cornering her and begging permission to add the new power to his character sheet as soon as possible.

Under most circumstances, the Storyteller thus confronted sensibly avoids the decision and sends the M/D P off with a bland "If the other Storyteller says it's OK" or some such. The fatal mistake the Storyteller makes in this instance is assuming that her counterpart is going to show some sort of common sense and bounce the M/D P on his ear a few times to see if any brain cells shake loose. Unfortunately, this is when the M/D P's cunning survival mechanism kicks in.

Instead of going up to the second Storyteller with "Well, Anne blew me off when I asked for Master-Class Temporis," he sneaks up on his prey with "Anne said it was OK for me to have Master-Class Temporis if you said it was OK." In many cases, the helpless second Storyteller is taken by surprise and gives assent, which concludes the cycle for the M/D P. He scurries back into play, and it's left to the Storytellers to figure out what the hell just happened the next time the entire game rewinds six hours.

Notes: All conversations with M/D Ps should include the word "no" at least three times per sentence, more if possible.

THE SCAMMER

Quote: So, want to go back to my place after the game is over and talk about our characters' relationship?

Concept: I'm a — what clan do those three women in the black dresses play? Toreador? OK, I'm a Toreador.

Appearance: The Scammer often wears fake fangs, dark sunglasses, a white poofy shirt, pirate boots and a vest of some sort — unless the women in the game have demonstrated a preference for some other sort of raiment. In that case, all bets are off.

Natural Habitat: The Scammer is a migratory animal, following whomever captures his fancy around all night while attempting to involve her in his plotlines. Since most of those plotlines involve what can charitably be called Naked Coed Blood Bonding, the Scammer generally spends a lot more time on the prowl than doing anything else.

Notes: The Scammer can generally be counted on to do whatever the most attractive woman in front of him at a given time tells him to do. The trick is A) to keep him from looking

at any other attractive women while he's still useful and B) to bribe the object of his temporary obsession sufficiently to get her to use her influence over the Scammer in your favor.

Look on the bright side. If he weren't at the LARP, he might be dating your sister.

THE RULES LAWYER

Quote: *It clearly states on page 34 of this mimeographed galley proof of issue 4 of White Wolf Magazine that under certain circumstances, I can in fact rip out an Antediluvian's spleen just by looking at him imploringly and saying the phrase, "Your mother dresses you funny." You didn't know that? I thought everyone knew that.*

Concept: Who's got time for a concept when there are rules to memorize?

Appearance: The Rules Lawyer is often nattily attired, albeit never in a way to call attention to himself. Often, he can be identified by the condition of the books he carries with him; pages with rules advantageous to his character are marked with tape flags or sticky notes. In some extreme cases, the Rules Lawyer re-binds his books for easier access or simply has them tattooed on his forearms so that he might literally bludgeon the opposition to death with them.

Natural Habitat: Existing on the fringes of the pack, the Rules Lawyer frequently tries to blend in with the rest of the game. He emerges only briefly to debate a ruling or call on an obscure optional rule, then submerges back into the herd.

The only way to isolate a Rules Lawyer is to challenge him deliberately. This can be done by making a call that contradicts some weird Risen-sluagh-kinfolk-using-Mage-Spheres kind of rule that is near and dear to the Rules Lawyer's heart. Doing so causes the Rules Lawyer to burst from the pack in a frenzy of quotations and finger-pointing, which continues until the Storyteller either gives in (just to shut him up already) or has him shot with a tranquilizer dart.

Notes: The Rules Lawyer honestly believes that adherence to the rules — all of them — is the absolute best thing for the game. He just can't help it if he knows the rules better than anyone (and that often includes the authors and the developer, mind you) and puts that knowledge into play. Pity he can't find time to read the sections on giving characters personalities, but hey, something's got to give, right?

There are other recognizable types, of course: The Boffer Basher (who can't understand why everyone's upset at being clobbered with plumbing supplies in Elysium)—

(Ahem, thank you, Rich. That will be quite enough. —Carl.)

—the Lone Fruitbat (who insists on playing Garou in a Vampire game, a vampire in an Oblivion game or a pooka pretty much at any time), the rare Wandering Twink ("I got 64 points at this game last week and I wanted to spend them — oh, the game was in Dubuque") and so on. Fortunately, these critters' population density is inversely proportional to their recognizability factor: There are only a few in a given game, but hoo boy, do they stand out. But now you know what to look for, and, more importantly, what to avoid. Have fun....

-the deadguy-



THE EVOLUTION OF MIND'S EYE THEATRE

by Jess Heinig

*In his tenure as the developer of the Mind's Eye Theatre line, Jess oversaw the development of the *Laws of the Hunt* book as well as parts of *Laws of the Wyld West*. The Mind's Eye Theatre game line has changed quite a bit over the years, and it continues to change as new rules and updates become necessary to correct oversights, loopholes and errors.*



This article covers the same sort of bases as the column of the same name in *Laws of the Hunt*: a look at the most current versions of rules for *Mind's Eye Theatre* and how they apply to all of the game lines. This article isn't an attempt to address specific cases — that's the purview of the FAQ section — but it does talk about some changes that have far-reaching effects on most, if not all, of the books for *Mind's Eye Theatre*. If you've got this article and a *Mind's Eye Theatre* book, you should be playing the most current version of the game!

CHALLENGES

As described in the various *Mind's Eye Theatre* books, a challenge involves a simple game of Rock-Paper-Scissors between two or more people. The victor wins the challenge and accomplishes his desired result; the loser fails in his attempt.

In the event of a tie, challengers check their appropriate Traits. Thus, in a Mental Challenge, both participants check their number of Mental Traits, and the person with the most Traits wins. Use the current number of Traits! As a player expends Traits (losing them in challenges or activating powers), the character tires out, runs out of confidence and gets fatigued — eventually, even the most powerful character wears out.

If both sides have the same number of Traits, the win goes to the defender, but both parties lose the Traits they bid.

RETESTS

Several different factors allow for retests, Abilities, overbids and special powers among them. In general, though, retests all have the same effect.

A retest can be called only when a player loses a test — if you win a test in combat, you cannot use your *Brawl* Ability to retest and do the same thing again, for example, even when supernaturally compelled. When a retest is called, you lose the Trait(s) you bid in the initial test (mark them off immediately) and then perform a new test. If you lose the retest, you still lose the challenge. If you win, you still lose the initial Trait(s) you bid, but you win the challenge. In a tie, compare Traits as normal, but remember that you lose the Trait(s) you bid for the initial test.

A retest called by use of an Ability expends the Ability automatically, regardless of the outcome of the test; if you fail to punch someone and call for a retest with *Brawl*, the *Brawl* Ability is expended automatically. Conversely, a retest called with an overbid does not expend the overbid Trait automatically — you only lose the overbid Trait if you lose the test. Note that calling an overbid requires only one Trait, even if you are injured or were otherwise forced to bid more than one Trait on the initial test.



A retest may be canceled as described in *Laws of the Hunt*. In a case wherein an Ability-based retest is called by your opponent, you may cancel his retest automatically if you have at least two more levels in that Ability than he does. Thus, if your opponent calls for a *Brawl* retest in combat but has only one level of *Brawl* Ability, you may expend a level of the *Brawl* Ability to cancel his retest completely if you have at least *Brawl* x 3. If you and your opponent have the same amount of current *Brawl* Ability, or if your current Ability is less than your opponent's (or not two levels higher), then you cannot cancel his retest; you must wait for the opponent's retest and then expend a level of your Ability for a retest of your own (if the opponent's retest succeeds). Thus, with high levels of Ability, you can completely prevent a less skilled opponent from turning the tables on you. However, if you are evenly matched, there is always a chance for luck and a little bit of skill to intervene. Note that a cancellation may be done only with a like Ability or power: If an opponent calls for a retest with *Brawl*, you must cancel it with your own *Brawl* or *Melee* Ability, not with the Merit: *Luck* (for instance).

A given source may be used as a retest only once on any particular challenge. A character with *Brawl* x 3 cannot use *Brawl* multiple times for retests on a single challenge, but he could use *Brawl* followed by *Luck*. Certain powers end a challenge automatically, and no retests may be called after the use of such powers.

MASS COMBAT

Mass combat involves multiple attackers assaulting one defender. In such cases, the first task is to determine who's attacking whom and how. The original rules for mass combat, revised and elaborated here, make mass combat much more dangerous.

A mass attack occurs when up to five people assault one target with similar methods. Thus, if five people all attack one vampire (using swords, stakes and torches), they conduct one mass challenge. However, if different forms of assault were used (a shotgun from one attacker but a spell from another) then each different form of attack—Physical, Mental or Social—would be handled as a separate challenge or mass challenge.

In a mass challenge, the defender throws one symbol (rock, paper, scissors or a special symbol allowed by certain powers) while each attacker throws one symbol of his own in the same challenge. Each attacker bids one Trait (or enough Traits to enter one challenge), and the defender bids enough Traits to engage in challenges with every attacker; if the defender has insufficient Traits, he may choose the attackers against whom he wishes to defend. The defender compares his symbol to every attacker at the same time, then resolves each result simultaneously: Losing three tests and winning two causes the defender to lose three Traits and suffer all of the results of losing to the three victorious attackers. If the defender counterstrikes, he may choose to affect any one attacker whom he defeated in the mass challenge. Retests should also be made together, but each party must bid enough Traits to cover all targets; thus, the two losing attackers in the previous example could bid one Trait each to retest, and the defender would have to bid two Traits to retest against them both, resolving the retest as a second mass challenge.

WILLPOWER

Different Mind's Eye Theatre books give different rules for what can and can't be done with Willpower Traits. The most consistent set of rulings to date is listed here, along with the reasons *why* certain changes have been made.

- Willpower can be used to refresh all Traits in a single Attribute category (Physical, Social, Mental) once per category per session.
- Willpower can grant a retest on a Social or Mental challenge, if the Storyteller feels that Willpower would be appropriate to the challenge. A character cannot simply ignore the effects of such challenges with Willpower; that would nullify the use of many special powers ("I ignore your *Presence* with a Trait of Willpower, then hit you four times with



claws.”). Similarly, certain challenges are not appropriate for expenditure of Willpower; a Willpower Trait should be used only on Mental and Social Challenges to resist influence or injury. “I expend a Willpower Trait to retest your *Auspex* challenge against my *Obfuscate*” is not an appropriate use of Willpower, since the cloaked individual cannot simply will himself to remain better hidden from the character with *Auspex*. However, Storytellers must decide for themselves which types of challenges permit this defensive use of Willpower and which do not. By default, Willpower Traits provide a generic retest on a Mental or Social Test, once per challenge.

- A Willpower Trait cannot be used to win a Static or Simple Test automatically, considering that many special powers and effects are predicated on such tests. Allowing a player to (for instance) expend two Willpower Traits and automatically win the two follow-up Static Challenges to stake a vampire through the heart unbalances play.
- A Willpower Trait can be used to ignore all wound penalties up to and including Incapacitated for one challenge and one challenge only, including all retests made as a result of the challenge.
- Using a Willpower Trait allows a player to attempt an action that would normally require an Ability not possessed by the character. Thus, the player could spend a Willpower Trait to try to disarm an alarm even if the character does not have the *Security* or *Science* Ability. The Willpower simply allows the player to make the attempt. However, success is not guaranteed.

TIME

The inexorable press of time in *Mind’s Eye Theatre* games breaks down into different segments to approximate the durations of various powers and events.

NORMAL TIME VERSUS COMPRESSED TIME

For the most part, *Mind’s Eye Theatre* games run in *normal time* — the amount of time passing in the real world equals the time passing in the game. Thus, if a player wanders about the game site, talks to a few other players and has a drink (taking up an hour of time), then an hour passes in the game as well.

Under some circumstances, though, the game shifts to *compressed time*. The resulting phenomenon is called (in the vernacular) a *time-bubble*. In compressed time, game events do not actually take as long to occur as the real world dictates. Thus, if a series of tests takes five minutes to resolve one turn of combat, then the players involved in the turn have experienced compressed time — their characters have had only five seconds of game time pass.

Moving from compressed time to normal time can be tricky. The best solution is to assume that the extra time is taken up overseeing wounds, helping allies, getting back to the game site or attending to other minor details. Thus, if several players in compressed time take two hours of real time to finish a combat, but only pass a few turns in the game, then it’s best to assume that they return to the game site two hours later, having rested, driven to the appropriate location and so on.

MEASURES OF TIME

A *turn* is the brief amount of time needed to use a quick special power or to make a single attack against someone. In general, a turn lasts five seconds; most characters can take a single action in one turn. A Narrator may choose to make a turn last as long as a minute depending upon circumstances, but a turn is usually just a brief interval of time. *Laws of the Hunt* states that a turn takes four seconds, but considering that many powers work in intervals of five seconds, the latter is a more sensible time frame.

A *conflict* comprises several turns. If a player involves himself in a series of challenges with multiple individuals, unbroken by changes in time, space or events,



this segment of time is one conflict. An example of a conflict is a single combat between two sides or a series of tests as a character in a car tries to pursue a fleeing opponent. As long as the tests continue to resolve a single outcome (finishing the combat, chasing the enemy, conditioning the mortal, etc.), the incident is a single conflict. A conflict is assumed to last 10 minutes if an absolute scale of time is necessary, although this estimate may be extended to account for a particularly long conflict.

A series of conflicts makes up a *scene*. As long as the characters pursue the same goal within a given period of time, they are within a particular scene. Thus, a coterie of vampires fighting against its Sabbat foes would have a conflict for each battle fought, but the series of battles taking place in one graveyard would comprise a single scene. A scene is assumed to equate to one hour of time; powers listed as "lasting for a scene" end when the scene ends (in the previous example, if the players left the graveyard or slept for the day) or when an hour of time elapses in normal-time play. Thus, if a player invokes *Entrancement* on someone for ascene, the targeted individual remains entranced until the game markedly shifts location and time, until a real hour has passed or until the conditions for breaking the *Entrancement* are met.

One session generally results from an evening's play. A session usually includes several scenes but may only be one. Most game sessions last several hours in real time. A session has no predetermined time; when in doubt, assume that a session lasts from sunrise to sunset (or vice versa) for game purposes. For ease of tracking Traits and the like, a session ends when all of the players go home for the evening, and it begins when they come back again. At conventions or locales in which a game proceeds constantly for several days, assume that each session is comprised of one day and one night (the Storyteller should decide in advance if the session breaks come at sunrise or sunset). For most games, a session is simply the monthly or weekly game night.

A story is the result of several sessions developing a coherent plot. A story can be told in a single session, but it is usually the result of several interlinked sessions. The conclusion of a major plotline, be it the death of a character, the resolution of a problem or the changing of a traditional event or thing, marks the end of a particular story. Certain Traits and powers last for the duration of a story or can be used only a certain number of times in a given story. For ease of record-keeping, Storytellers may simply decide on a particular calendar break (at their discretion) as the refresh date for such powers, allowing them to update all game participants regularly instead of having to track diverse time arcs with different Traits.

Finally, a *chronicle* is the tale of many characters and settings spun together through their stories. As long as a game continues with the same characters, places, rules and events, it is probably a single chronicle. Multiple threads resolve themselves, and numerous stories may end in the course of a chronicle. Like a series of books or movies, the chronicle is the overall picture of what's happening in a particular part of the World of Darkness. Any given game can be considered a chronicle in its totality; that is, the chronicle changes when the Storyteller decides to start a new game, possibly with different characters, changed rules and new goals.

LOOKING AHEAD

Obviously, as the *Mind's Eye Theatre* game system continues to develop, new rules and new problems will crop up. The changes mentioned here may not be good for all time. However, introducing these corrections now should go a long way toward correcting some of the more blatant difficulties in the *Mind's Eye Theatre* system — we'll admit it, we're human (more or less), and mistakes do occasionally creep in. When in doubt, use the most recent sets of rules published; every *MET* book takes steps toward a more coherent rules base. If you like the new additions you see, don't hesitate to integrate them into your existing games — after all, the fact that *Military Influence* wasn't written into *Laws of the Wild* shouldn't preclude you from adding it to your own! As always, this journal serves to keep players and Storytellers informed. Watch this space — we have new ideas, suggestions and input coming all the time, some of it even from dedicated players out there (like you).

AT HOME WITH THE CAMARILLA

by Jenn Kellam

Director of Public Relations for the Camarilla fan organization

This article, and Duncan Wyley's, serve a pure and simple purpose: to show live-action gamers (who don't know) that they're not alone and that LARPs are not insular gatherings of gaming-community patrons with a flair for acting. Both the Camarilla and One World by Night (among the many, many such organizations) make live-action gaming a global neighborhood, as well as making other valuable contributions.



Whether you are hammering nails onto a new roof for Habitat for Humanity or hammering nails into the coffin of your character's nemesis, the Camarilla, White Wolf's official fan club, is here to build a community. We frequently refer to ourselves as an organization of gamers for gamers, and it is this community ideal to which we aspire and grow. Based on the concepts of education and leadership training, the Camarilla gives people new skills, new friends and one heck of an exciting world-wide game.

The Camarilla is a non-profit organization based out of Salt Lake City, and our purpose is threefold. First, we strive to provide a continuous world-wide live-action interactive theater game based upon White Wolf's World of Darkness — more simply put, a LARP. We utilize several e-mail lists and a host of volunteer Storytellers to run this game. The chronicle has been in place for six years, and it's still running! This October, the entire organization of the Camarilla came together to solve a complicated and deadly plot that affected the whole chronicle, something never seen before! Over a year of plotting and work went in to create the horror and the complexities of the plotline we lovingly refer to as the "Vorosja Debacle," and all Camarilla players will continue to feel the fallout for years to come. It is just this kind of long-term chronicle that the Camarilla promotes.

Our second goal is to promote community service and civic involvement. This effort gives our members a sense of personal accomplishment, as well as reminding our communities that gamers are people who are just as concerned and civic-minded as their next-door neighbors. Over the years, we have hooked up with the Red Cross, the Special Olympics, AIDS research, shelters and tornado and flood relief, and we have donated thousands of hours to helping out in our local communities.

One of the Camarilla's funniest stories comes from an auction we hosted. A member bid a rather large sum of money, and the auctioneer began to argue with the member, insisting that this was *real* money and not in character money. The



argument continued until the member walked forward with a personal check for the amount mentioned. Everyone involved in the donation began to laugh and cheer as the auctioneer's jaw hit the floor. The story spread like wildfire, and that year many children at the Shriners Hospital were given another chance at life.

Our last and most important goal is to provide our members a good time, in game and out. We have been asked to host the openings of movies like *Blade* and *Men in Black* while dressed in costume, we have raised the Elder Gods in Call of Cthulhu LARPs, we have participated in One World by Night and Liquid Dreams LARPs and we have danced down the trods with our **Changeling** Storytellers. We try to promote events that everyone would be interested in or would like to be involved in. I guess the most important thing to mention is that we strongly encourage new and old members to go to their officers with their ideas for events and work on putting them together for everyone to enjoy.

One region rolled some of the objectives of the Camarilla together into a day called the "Garou Moot and Pool Party Barbecue." In character, members playing Garou got together to celebrate the summer solstice. Everyone had fun as they tried to convince the Red Talons to get in the pool and get a little wet! I also heard rumors of members having a lot of fun during a weekend at a regional game and a day at Six Flags over Georgia with members from several different states! There is something in the Camarilla for everyone, and that is what we are all about!

The Camarilla began in February of 1992 in Seattle, Washington. Jana Wright and Matt Burke made an all-important phone call to White Wolf to find out if there were any fan club organizations for the new **Vampire** game. The answer was no, and thus began the Camarilla, White Wolf's fan club. The concept of the club was that it existed for people who not only enjoyed the game but pursued other interests that would fit within the Gothic concept. It was also at this time that the first members named our magazine *Requiem*, and they have watched it grow from a simple newsletter into the quality production that it is today. In March of 1992, at Norwescon, the first members handed out flyers and an interest sheet to find out



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if such a club had potential. Later that year, at Vikingcon, the first members of the Camarilla made their entrance in the public eye and hosted the first meeting of the founding members and Inner Council.

In April of 1995, Heidi Preuss became the President of the Camarilla, and its headquarters moved to Salt Lake City. Since then we have grown from an organization of 1,400 members and one e-mail list to a thriving organization of over 4,000 members in 11 countries world-wide. We host over 190 e-mail lists to support our diverse interests, including humor lists, creative writing rooms, in-character lists and forums for education, debate and announcements. Internet Relay Chat, or IRC, is also a tool that the Camarilla utilizes frequently in order to promote the global game as well as host online meetings with members all across the world. *Requiem* has turned into a magazine with a color cover, glossy pages, excellent writers and fabulous artists. Every Camarilla member can enjoy any of these above benefits, as well as a 20% discount on all White Wolf materials purchased directly from White Wolf, a membership handbook filled with wonderful ideas for the organization of chapters, and access to the members-only section of our website, which hosts many pages of information and educational materials. Over the years, we have grown stronger and learned more about running a club with such diverse interests as ours.

At this point, it is probably best to explain how the Camarilla's communication lines and hierarchy are built. The Camarilla is organized with our purpose in mind. First of all, the club maintains two lines of officers: the Storytellers, who are in charge of the games, and the Coordinators, who are in charge of keeping the organization functioning. We decided to organize things along these lines to better relieve stress upon any single person. A Storyteller who does not have to worry about making sure that the rooms are secure and paid for, keeping the members happy out of character, taking care of the newsletter, and securing future game times is free to plan for the game and the in-character events. A



Coordinator who does not have to worry about the Sabbat raid tonight, the character histories due for review or the outcome of a cross-regional Influence battle is free to plan next week's birthday party. Almost every level of the organization utilizes a balanced team of Coordinators and Storytellers working together for the enjoyment of all members.

The most important part of the organization is the individual person. Thus, local members maintain the basic organization and flavor of their own chapters, and this feeds into the personality and cohesion of the organization as a whole. If local members want to create a chapter dedicated to creative writing and critique, the Camarilla helps them set their chapter up that way. If they wish a chapter dedicated to hosting or attending troupe games, we help set their chapter up that way. Each chapter is in charge of its own identity under the ideals of the "Chapter Strong" philosophy of the Camarilla. Most chapters are active participants in the international global game, and most utilize the Storyteller-Coordinator partnership method to organize their officers.

At the base level, then, are local chapters, with the Coordinator and Storyteller in charge of organization. Chapter-level games are the most prolific and form the bulk of the Camarilla's chronicle. Chapters are also the closest social circles, hosting such things as weekly *Buffy* parties, after-game get-togethers and donation drives.

Next up is the domain level. The domain is an organization of several chapters in one city that have set their groups up to work together. The domain may host citywide games, promote citywide service events or host a domain party and get-together. This level of the organization helps in large cities. It breaks up the chapter officers' workload and builds continuity and an extra level of communication for the members. The Domain Storyteller hosts the larger games and is in charge of weaving all the plots of the chapter games into a single unified story. The Domain Coordinator maintains the newsletters, secures game sites, opens and maintains lines of communication between chapters and organizes the occasional domain service or social event.

Next, the United States is divided into eight regions. Each region is headed by a Regional Coordinator and Storyteller. The Regional Storyteller weaves all the sanctioned domain and chapter storylines into an even larger unified plotline. The



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Regional Storyteller will also send down regional plotlines to the local levels so all the members of the region can become involved in the larger game of the Camarilla. The Regional Coordinator hosts regional conventions, puts out newsletters, hosts service events and organizes the occasional regional social event. The Regional Coordinator also has the task of ensuring that lines of communication remain open between all the cities and states in the region. The regional officers are the liaisons to the Board of Directors. In this way, board officers can ensure that the regions are receiving important information through their officers.

Countries outside the United States organize themselves along lines appropriate to local laws and customs. They maintain close communication with the Camarilla offices in Salt Lake City and weave their experiences with the learning of United States players. We grow and build with each other out of character, and in character. People across the oceans have found friends and pen-pals. Some people have even traveled long distances to finally meet those Camarilla members whom they had only seen as writing on a screen. One member published the chronicle of her trip from the UK to Italy as she visited Camarilla players along the way. This really helped to bring United States members an understanding of their fellow gamers overseas.

Finally, the board of Directors organizes the vision and inner workings of the Camarilla. Eleven Directors work year-round to produce the quarterly magazine, the *Requiem*, promote the Camarilla at conventions such as GenCon and DragonCon, organize the annual International Camarilla Conclave convention (ICC), educate, promote community involvement and so much more. The president heads the board and maintains a managerial view of the functional workings of the organization. The Master Storyteller weaves together the plotlines of the regions and the international games and passes down national and international storylines for the various games. The MST is also in charge of rules clarification and supplement creation.

Through it all, small projects are always cropping up. These projects are often the ideas of general members (and they are spearheaded and run completely by the people who brought them up, with minimal Board advisement) or they are ideas brought together by the Board itself. The appropriate member of the Board gathers teams to complete the project in a timely manner. These teams often include people from all around the globe. In this way, the hierarchy of officers actually creates a circle of communication and education. Each person lends a talent and ability to the other members, and everyone is encouraged to keep an open mind and sense of willingness, because there is always going to be someone out there who has something to teach you or a new way of doing something better.

In the future, the Camarilla looks to further our relations with White Wolf, solidify the continuity of the international game and organize informational databases of member information. We are in the process of creating a MUSH, we plan to further tabletop gaming activities, upgrade our magazine and promote relations with other LARP organizations to expand the community of gamers for gamers. Some of our biggest interests are our continuing good relationships with the media and local government organizations—there is so much to do and become involved in! And it involves everyone from the individual members to the board of Directors. In the Camarilla, everyone is responsible for ensuring that the games and the events all run with our Five Real-Life Traditions in mind:



1. Steadfastly follow the policies and Code of Conduct of the Camarilla.
2. Be courteous and cordial. Solve problems, don't create them.
3. Playsafe: don't touch, no stunts, no dangerous props. No drinking and no drugs.
4. Compliment, don't criticize.
5. Have fun!

The most noted aspect of the Camarilla is the six-year-old sanctioned continuity of the global game. We utilize White Wolf books and materials, focusing our efforts on creating a shared World of Darkness. Any official chapter of the Camarilla can become a part of the continuity. Once this happens, players can join a tapestry of shared events and political maneuverings and lend their own characters to become a part of the hunting, posturing and manipulations of the game. We support **Vampire**, **Werewolf** and **Wraith**, and our Storytellers recently added **Changeling**.

The Camarilla, taking its lead from White Wolf, has separated our venues to support a game that more closely resembles the World of Darkness. We host Camarilla/ anarch/ mortal, Sabbat/ mortal, changeling, Garou/ Kinfolk/ Beté and wraith venues. On the rare occasion that they happen upon each other, the venues do cross. The Influence game, which is very strong in the Camarilla, crosses all venues — mortals can learn of careless Kindred through an Influence war. In Chattanooga, Tennessee, Camarilla members play common mortals slowly becoming pawns in the lives of the Kindred. The game has an *X-Files* feel, as the players' mortal characters are immersed slowly in the global continuity of Kindred and Garou games.

As you can tell, we support all manner of games. It is important to note that there is a difference between sanctioned games and troupe games. We do host and promote several troupe games. These can be anything from a game that uses our rules and creation system but stays outside the continuity to a "God Game" in which everyone plays a Methuselah and attempts to kill the others off until there is only one left. We encourage members to attend LARPs hosted by organizations that are not a part of the Camarilla.

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We are currently in the process of developing a functional and easily workable method to create a sanctioned White Wolf tabletop continuity. In the meantime, we do engage in general tabletop gaming within our chapters. Members encounter the World of Darkness, Cthulhu and his Miskatonic madness and traditional dungeon crawling in *AD&D*. Camarilla members have even taken board games such as *Talisman* and *Star Wars Monopoly* and created chapter and domain tournaments! We also enjoy participating in more active games like touch football and ultimate frisbee: One region frequently challenges its domains to fight it out on the frisbee field or basketball court!

Over the years we have endeavored to participate more and more in conventions on a local and national level. In 1998, several local chapters hosted events such as demonstration games or community service booths at local conventions. Nationally, the Camarilla participated in GenCon and DragonCon. We met many wonderful people at these conventions and managed to meet other LARP organizations. At GenCon, we met One World By Night and wore its "Bite Me" buttons in order to participate in its LARP as mortals. (Of course, we did get together with other mortals and attempted a mortal uprising against the oppressive tyranny of the vampires.) At GenCon, we met the creative members of Liquid Dreams, an all-Sabbat LARP in Atlanta. We also met many of the members and coordinators of Sabertooth, a **Vampire** organization in New York. It was amazing to make all these connections and realize that we are all a part of a much larger community.

Many regions host regional events every few months. These events usually encompass entire weekends during which the region rents out a hotel. During that weekend, members host several tabletop games, a weekend-long sanctioned game, how-to lectures and regional member and officer meetings, as well as organize a dealers' room. In the dealers' room are exhibits from local non-profit organizations and local shops and artisans. White Wolf occasionally puts in an appearance to promote the most recent publication in the **Mind's Eye Theater** product line. One region has had such success with one hotel that the managers proclaimed the Camarilla one of the nicest groups they have worked with and left us with the keys





to the hotel and the owner's home number in case of emergencies. They invited us back for next year. The Camarilla is trying its best to promote gamers and the gaming community as a group of responsible and fun-loving adults.

Nationally, the Camarilla has put together a convention that we lovingly call ICC, or the International Conclave of the Camarilla. The first year of the convention was 1996, and it was hosted in Houston, Texas. Every year the convention has grown by 30%. It consists of four days and nights of LARPing, tabletop gaming, a charity auction, meetings for officers and members, open board meetings, parties, dancing and, of course, a well-used booth from White Wolf. We host it every year during the week before Halloween. It is a time when members from literally all over the world come together and renew friendships out of character and pursue the hunt as Garou or seek the demise of a centuries-old enemy as vampires. This year, in Salt Lake City, we added our **Changeling** and **Wraith** venues. We also had a surprise when Fox Television showed up to videotape us for their newscast! It was really amazing to walk through the halls and hear people calling to each other and introducing new members. Over 550 people from all around the globe attended this last convention, and we are expecting that number to grow even larger in Portland in 1999 and Cleveland in 2000!

There remains something to be said about the creativity of the members and the family created by the Camarilla. Our members are writers, students, lawyers, doctors and rocket scientists. We are roleplayers and community members. We are old and young, we are tall and short— we are a little bit of everything. I have seen members come in off the streets and turn their lives around. I have seen chapters get together to raise money to help defray medical costs for a member who is sick. I have seen members find other members jobs. I have attended parties, weddings and graduations and welcomed new babies home. Members get together to write stories and articles, create works of art and take amazing photos! The Camarilla is about bringing in the innate talents and abilities of every member and sharing them with each other to create a community, write a story and bring about a little change.

AT HOME WITH THE CAMARILLA



IF IT IS BROKE

From time to time in a live-action roleplaying environment (especially one in which numerous characters are involved), things get out of hand, and characters make decisions that get everyone in their respective societies in a great deal of trouble. Vampires break the Masquerade; Garou endanger the Veil; changelings blow the rights of the Escheat right out the window; wraiths violate the *Dictum Mortuum*. But what's to be done when the thought of having to push that big, ugly RESET button looms? This column hopefully serves as a guideline. In each installment, you get the problem plus the solution (all of which come out of real gaming experiences).

HOW NOT TO THROW A MUSIC FESTIVAL

THE PROBLEM

It all started reasonably enough. A Sabbat troublemaker had been dropping hints of his whereabouts to the local Camarilla-loyal denizens of [Anycity], GA. He had been taunting the prince and primogen council shamelessly, and the prince had finally dispatched a small coterie (including a Tremere, a Malkavian and a Gangrel) to find this vampire before he did some real damage to the Masquerade. Following a tip, the coterie tracked the Sabbat to a side-street in Atlanta adjacent to the site of the Music Midtown Festival.

Dodging through a crowd that had gathered to taunt and out-shout a local street-preacher (one of Atlanta's many), the coterie closed on the Sabbat's position. They spoke to said rebel, but he was not content to stay put. Drawing the three along, he moved closer to the crowd (a crowd which drew in the people leaving the Festival just down the street). When he had led them to the center of the crowd, the Sabbat sprung his trap, designed to shatter the Masquerade in downtown Atlanta. Without warning, he uppercut the Malkavian, sending the hapless Lunatic flying across the street and over a row of parked cars. The Gangrel leapt at the Sabbat, *Wolf Claws* gleaming in full view, and missed. He sailed through the air, trying to catch himself, but only managed to draw 10 deep rents into the hood of a parked car before rolling into the people-packed street. The car's alarm went off, and those pedestrians who hadn't already noticed (or bolted like sheep from) the commotion all turned to stare agape.

But it was the action of the Tremere that really stuck in their minds. Thought he was too stunned to move when the formerly talkative (even genteel) Sabbat first attacked, the Tremere regained his wits as his two companions fell in short order. He stepped into a clearer line of sight with the Sabbat and enacted the *Thaumaturgy* power *Theft of Vitae*. As the Sabbat gasped in unexpected pain, a viscous red torrent leapt from his body to the outstretched hand of the Tremere. Suddenly rethinking his goals (he'd done more than enough already), the Sabbat turned his supernatural prowess to self-preservation. Disappearing at inhuman speeds, he carved a path through the throng and out of sight.

At which point, of course, all hell broke loose. The rowdy, milling crowd scattered in panic (those who still could, anyway), and even the vociferous street preacher turned tail and fled with the sinners. The fleeing people collided with the ones spilling over from the Music Festival, all shouting about what had happened. Aghast, the three



Camarilla-loyal vampires slipped away (under the woozy Malkavian's power of *Cloak the Gathering*) as sirens began to push their way to the scene.

THE SOLUTION

Naturally, when word of this fiasco got back to the prince of [Anycity], said prince was not happy. Shattering the tranquillity of Elysium, he gathered every Kindred in attendance. He commanded everyone present to pool every last resource available to them (every dollar; every ounce of Influence) and work toward quashing the problem.

In the end, the following Influences came to the fore:

- Church
- Finance
- High Society
- Media
- Police
- Street

And how did the unlucky Camarilla vampires use these Influences? In short, the vampires used each to create and cement a plausible (if not highly likely) cover story, reasoning that an outlandish believable story would have a much greater impact and would be more memorable than an outlandish *unbelievable* story.

The cover story stated that, in the late hours of the Music Midtown Festival, an outspoken fire-and-brimstone street-preacher had taken it upon himself to bring light to the eyes of the baleful sinners of Atlanta. In so doing, however, he had shamelessly lain about with accusations of exactly *who* was a sinner and *why*, and (in his own spectacularly undiplomatic idiom) he had managed to start a small-scale race riot.

However, merely saying a thing is never enough to make it true, and it took the collective Influence of every [Anycity] Camarilla vampire to make it a reality. The Media and Police Influences went out almost immediately to clear up the public and official record of what happened. A plant inside the area police department was dispatched to monitor incoming eyewitness reports and either lose them entirely or alter them in such a way that the supernatural violence reported was toned down to the level of monstrous human violence. Those vampires with eyes in the local public media maintained a vigilant watch on live videotape submissions—thus curtailing the release of anything directly incriminating—as well as calling many different broadcast stations and newspapers with false scoops on the story the Kindred wanted to see put forward. Some of the Police Influences also went into having the incriminating car towed away and destroyed. (One generous vampire even used a *Bureaucracy* Influence to see that the human auto-owner's insurance company paid the salvage cost.)

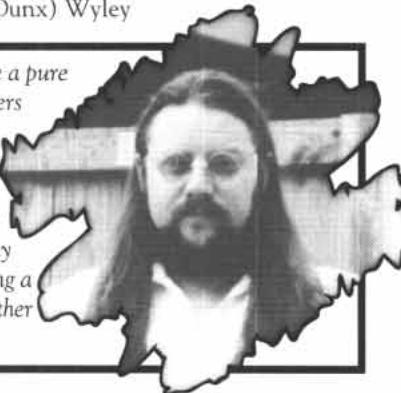
Finance, *Church*, *High Society* and *Street* all went to backing up the public and official view of the story once the Kindred had gotten it out. The vampires used *Finance* and *Street* to bribe various "eyewitnesses" to speak to the police and local news broadcasters. The *Church* Influences coerced local churches from all around Atlanta and [Anycity] to issue press releases condemning the wayward street-preacher who'd started the whole mess and to offer any sort of community aid in their power. Similarly, the *High Society* Influences were used to cajole a similar series of press releases from the promoters, performers and subsidizers of the Midtown Music Festival.

Due to the vampires' quick reaction and blanket Influence-spending, the story they wanted heard quickly became the official story. As for the coterie of vampires who let the situation get so far out of hand in the first place... well, let's just say that there are some horrors in the World of Darkness that are best left unspoken.

ONE WORLD

by Duncan (Dunx) Wyley

This article, and Jenn Kellam's, serve a pure and simple purpose: to show live-action gamers (who don't know) that they're not alone and that LARPs are not insular gatherings of gaming community patrons with a flair for acting. Both the Camarilla and One World by Night (among the many, many such organizations) make live-action gaming a global neighborhood as well as making other valuable contributions.



One World by Night (OWbN) is just that — one world.

One world of volunteers who form a grassroots not-for-profit organization of loosely knit chronicles spanning the entire globe.

One World of opportunities for our members to play their home-chronicle characters at games just a few hours away, in many of our neighboring cities or in far-flung exotic places like New Zealand or Brazil!

One world of emphasis on a story that is meant for the enjoyment of the players, giving them whatever pleasures it might.

Overall, One World by Night is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating links between **Mind's Eye Theatre** games around the world. By combining the various stories of its member chronicles, OWbN hopes to enhance its members' enjoyment by expanding local plots to the global level, truly creating a World of Darkness.

Well, so much for the glib introduction ripped straight from our website. Allow me now to sit back, sip at my glass and tell you a little bit more about us than you might find on the Internet.

First, allow me to introduce myself. My given name is Duncan Wyley (although most of my friends call me Dunx), and I'm the Head Coordinator of OWbN (strangely, often pronounced "Obi-Wan" — just don't tell Lucas). I have been in this position for about a year by the time you read this. Before that, I spent about two-and-a-half years Storytelling in my local chronicle, during which time I discovered the pack that I now lead. And before that were about 17 long years of gaming.

Over the course of this year or so, I have met, via the Internet, some of the sharpest minds and finest gamers it has been my privilege to know. During my involvement in the development of an organization of this scale and scope, these people have taught me many things. Primarily, they have shown me that there is a large number of enthusiastic people who believe in the development of our hobby on a grand scale. No longer content to restrict themselves to one city, these people wish to encompass the world in their passion.

We're trying... no, we *are* fostering and encouraging relationships between MET games internationally. We're working to encourage and develop the skills of

roleplaying and live theater in the people involved in our hobby. And we're having some fun along the way!

OWbN would like to grow, and we are still accepting and processing membership applications at present. Our website at <http://www.owbn.com> has more information for readers who might be interested... c'mon, you know you want to.

Bwa-hah-haaa! Soon ve shall rule za verlt!

No, seriously... We're working toward becoming an expansive community of camaraderie and roleplaying. In some small way, we are contributing both to ourselves, in terms of fostering plots and friendships, and to the gaming community as a whole, in terms of growing awareness and acceptance by a number of social groups. Many of our players are involved in the business and social communities in our respective towns and countries, and the friends we make in these organizations come to accept that what we do is a harmless pastime. In both ways, our hobby is fostered. This is, in my opinion, a Good Thing.

To ensure our enjoyment, we've constructed an organization that is easy to join and participate in, with only a few restrictions to keep things comparatively sane.

One World isn't a hierarchy that costs our chronicles anything to join or stay with. The main thing we ask is that our chronicles emphasize stories that are meant for the enjoyment of our players — we hope that any players who may travel from around the world will be enraptured by and entrapped within the intricacies of another shadowy corner of our One World.

We're not a small group of individuals that changes your chronicles to suit its whims. OWbN's founding idea is that all games have a great degree of autonomy — essentially, as we put it, "your game is your game." This philosophy has yielded us a veritable melting pot of styles and personalities. With no central overriding theme and no dominant personality other than trying to be generally receptive to all styles of games, we appeal to all types of gamers.

When we encounter situations that involve crossover interaction between chronicles, we encourage the Storytellers of those chronicles to communicate and elaborate the plots for the enrichment of both (or all) the games involved.

We are not some industrial bureaucracy that forges and legislates its chronicles into carbon copies of one another; chronicle-diversity is essential. We all build upon one another — good ideas spread, and bad experiences are shared in order to keep other chronicles from facing similar problems. Individuality is the heart of our organization.

One World isn't limited. The only limitations are the ones we place upon ourselves and the ones required to administer the organization. With the addition of each new chronicle, we add to the experience, wisdom and creativity necessary to expand and enhance the ever-unfolding story that is our One World by Night.

Hmm... Perhaps a little background is in order.

One World by Night started in Chicago, Illinois, USA in March of 1994 at a local roleplaying convention by the name of Concentric.

Hey, neat! We're five years old this year. Maybe we should throw a worldwide party or something.

Anyway, a game was held between a local gaming group in Chicago and another group from Indianapolis, IN known as *The Beautiful and the Damned*. After



the convention, the game never ended. The convention's plots were incorporated into the new Chicago game (started by Mario Bonassini), and the original storyline for One World by Night was born.

The Chicago game grew quickly as the players played within the Excalibur nightclub, the actual model for the Succubus Club of White Wolf's **Chicago by Night**. In addition to Chicago players like Dave Gill, other non-Chicagoans joined the game. John Flournoy was running the Lafayette game at Purdue University, IN, and among his players were two students from the East Coast, Bill Hyatt and Rich Devine, two of our first Head Coordinators. When some of these players left for their respective home cities, the idea of an intertwined World of Darkness arose.

One night at a Chicago game in the top floor of a bar called the Morseland, Dave Gill and Bill Hyatt put forward their ideas for a shared game, though it would be unlike either the Camarilla or the Shared Universe system. The focus would be a shared story, not shared rules. Bill had the exact same idea and even had a name for the concept. The first Midwest shared game was created between Lafayette, IN and Chicago, IL.

After about three months, Bill and Rich went back to NVA and we thought the game would end. On the contrary, our little experiment proved that a shared game was possible but that it needed work. It needed a charter so that all the Storytellers would know what they were getting into. The charter needed to outline clearly that your game would remain your game and that no one would stop you if you wanted to go through the entire rulebook and rewrite it (as we all did several times over). But goofy-ray-gun-wielding Mummies were not in any way to have a part in the shared story.

Bill, who had named One World by Night, became the Coordinator, creating a web site and acting as a contact for other games. He talked to people about our project and marketed the organization's focus — "your game is your game."

We soon recruited Jake Holub and the San Francisco delegation, both of whom are with us still. We became national, spanning coast to coast, in a matter of a few months.

Concentric '95, in March, was the first OWbN Conclave, at which we discovered how different our rules really were and polled the players to find out if they wanted some universal rulings. The answer was an overwhelming affirmative. Not only were they telling us that they enjoyed being a part of the game but also that they were confident and comfortable with us making these universal decisions.

GenCon '95 was the organization's first officially sanctioned event (although it was not officially part of the convention) and the first meeting of the chronicle representatives. This was the first occasion upon which we firmly decided on some of the articles that now comprise most of the charter rules. No chronicle would be allowed to act against or outside of these rules, for we believed that we had the plan for creating a successful network of LARP chronicles. From these Articles came written hints and models for starting a successful chronicle, optimum conditions and where to look for renting sites. OWbN had created a kind of manual for running your own game and keeping it afloat.

Since then, OWbN has grown to encompass over 60 chronicles, mostly in the USA and Brazil. Other countries, such as Spain, Brussels and New Zealand, also have member chronicles.

We recently ran another convention LARP at GenCon '98, the world's largest gaming convention, held annually in Milwaukee, WI. The attendance was phenomenal, exceeding 240 players.

The latest event was the Mid-Atlantic Conclave, held in Baltimore at the end of October. It involved the cooperation of three different games in the area, a monumental feat of organization that was pulled off flawlessly. Characters and Storytellers from 13 different chronicles from California to Chicago to New Zealand attended.

That's right – New Zealand. That little agricultural country. That's where I live. I had a great time.

But I digress.

OWbN is administered primarily through a series of coordinators and council members drawn from the various chronicles. Each chronicle has a voice on the Council through its council member, who is selected by the players and Storytellers in that chronicle. The council member is responsible for representing his chronicle's interests, keeping the Council apprised of any situations of regional or international significance that may arise, and voting on any matters that may come up in council, such as the admission of new chronicles to OWbN.

Council Members are also primary contact points (alongside the Storytellers) for other chronicles wanting information or updates on current plots in their local chronicles. In most cases, council members are also Storytellers (although this is not always the case) and can give immediate answers — otherwise they direct the querent to the appropriate person or ask the question on the person's behalf.

Voting itself is a simple matter — in most cases, a proposal to the Council is presented and (hopefully) seconded. A period of discussion is allowed and then a vote is called. Each chronicle is allowed one vote, as are the HC and AHC. Generally, a majority of the received votes will indicate the proposal's success.

The Council also votes on applications for chronicle membership, and the Admissions Coordinator may cast a vote in the case of a tie in these situations.



ONE WORLD



With the continued expansion of OWbN, we slowly refine our internal management processes. This year should see some very progressive steps in this direction. The improvement of our operations should streamline a number of issues.

A set of coordinators is elected each November to hold positions of specific responsibility in OWbN.

The Head Coordinator (HC — me) oversees the entire operation of OWbN and is assisted in the task by, naturally, an Assistant HC. Alongside these two, an Admissions Coordinator tracks new applications to OWbN and keeps tally of the membership. These three people form the core of OWbN's administrative team for out-of-character issues.

The HC is primarily responsible for overseeing the progress of OWbN as an organization, for dealing with matters arising in regard to the OWbN Charter and for maintaining some sort of order amid the chaos. The HC also assesses disciplinary situations that may require OWbN's attention and dispenses advice to chronicles as requested. If he's a good boy, he gets a pat on the back occasionally.

He (or she — although we are yet to see a woman be insane enough to stand for the position, I believe, so please forgive the male pronoun) is also responsible for supervising the other coordinators as a group. He selects the coordinators each year (subject to a verifying vote of confidence for each by the Council) and thus hopefully assembles a team that can work together for the betterment of the games in general.

The Assistant Head Coordinator (Joyce Summers) is responsible for maintaining the sanity of the Head Coordinator by dealing with the administrative minutiae of OWbN, such as voting procedures. This year will see the further expansion of the scope of this position to encompass maintenance of and regular contact with our more distant chronicles and assistance with the redevelopment of a number of our organizational systems.

Matt Giezentaner, our Admissions Coordinator, and I will continue to receive and assess the initial admissions applications to assist new and existing chronicles in their applications to One World by Night. Matt is available for consultation with anyone considering joining OWbN and can answer most questions you may have or direct you to someone who can. His contact information can be found at our website.

Speaking of which, OWbN is strongly tied to the Internet as a primary mode of communication. There's no way I'd be running it if I had to pay for all those toll calls to the States every time I needed to see what was going on.

So if you're interested in joining up, please bear in mind that you will need people in your group who have regular access to the Internet — at the *very least*, your council member must be able to receive Council mail.

OWbN has a number of e-mail lists that allow for quick and easy communication between our members, in or out of character. This system provides another level of interaction, a challenging and informative method for players to share in the loves and lives of each online character's shadowy existence.

Many players access these lists daily, and there are some people we just *can't* shake off the Web.

We've found that this sort of international interaction has really helped characters in their recognition of each other and encouraged cross-chronicle



interaction — even if it is just traveling across the entire country to give a rowdy Ravnos a *Puissance* wedgie.

All chronicles are also strongly advised to have a website and to (try to) keep it updated with the latest news and game information so that others in the area can check out when they can attend their neighbors' games. Keep a copy of your house rules there as well so potential visitors can read up on the local variances to reduce interruption in the flow of the game.

Moving on...

As OWbN has grown, the need for specific clan coordinators has developed. At present, OWbN has coordinators for the more specifically structured clans — Assamite, Giovanni and Tremere. This concept may soon be expanded to encompass other clans. Additionally, we have a coordinator for Sabbat activities and another for the Garou players. As OWbN continues to grow and different types of chronicles join in, the structure of OWbN will adjust appropriately.

Additionally, to centralize and control the flow of information and clan activities, we have coordinators for each of the seven Storyteller-controlled justicars. These people act as clearinghouses for the various and nefarious wheelings and dealings of these ancients, and they give many of OWbN's players a focus for their gameplay — and they instill appropriate fear in the characters. The "JustiCoords" maintain regular contact with the Storytellers of OWbN as required and assist in resolving plot issues involving their offices.

We generally keep the justicars' actual appearances at games limited to conclaves. Archons or secretariats to the justicars are preferred forms of Camarilla enforcement if intervention or contact is required. Recent events in the OWbN continuum have seen a marked increase in the number and caliber of archons appearing in Camarilla domains. The death of Xavier, until recently the justicar for Clan Gangrel, has obviously shaken the heretofore impervious justicarate, and there is visible evidence of its unease.

Therefore, OWbN has an infrastructure that exists to support all the people and characters associated within. Storytellers have access to many other Storytellers to be inspired by and to inspire. Players have access to thousands of other players to interact with, plot with and generally breathe life into what we call our One World by Night.

Well, that's pretty much how we run the organization, but you'd probably prefer to hear about the chronicles.

OWbN is dominated at present by Camarilla-based vampire games. There are exceptions to this — a few games are primarily Sabbat or Garou in focus, a couple are anarch in nature, and some games mix'n'match genres.

The primary rulebooks we use are *The Masquerade Second Edition* and *Laws of the Night*. Other books see inclusion as the Storytellers see fit and as discussed by the Council — for example, some aspects of *Laws of Elysium* are generally considered in OWbN to be restricted to Storyteller characters rather than open to players. OWbN's vampire games are directed primarily at the younger Kindred. There are restrictions on the play of true elders and on some of the types of Kindred permissible in any chronicle — for example, True Brujah or Salubri. Similar rules will apply to other supernaturals as they are developed and enter OWbN.



Variants on the White Wolf MET rulebooks are permitted within reason. We recommend that chronicles stick fairly closely to the White Wolf products so that there is some internal consistency in the way the game is played. It was very pleasant to find that most of the rules I encountered in Chicago and Baltimore worked much the way they work way over here in Hamilton. Variations in the interpretations of the rules also opened my eyes to the possibilities of other interpretations that I hadn't considered. I never claimed to be a rules lawyer, but I found some of the ways the systems were played very educational.

Never discount a learning experience. Most of our people are happy to share their ideas, and though we have our fair share of squabbles over some things, any idea that might enrich your game or your gameplay is important. Many of our chronicles adopt systems from others in OWbN.

We hope to expand our horizons beyond **Vampire**. With the release in 1998 of a number of White Wolf's MET products, we now have a considerably greater scope with which to work, play and flourish. This will involve some changes in our internal structure, but we bid *Flexible* on that matter.

Our Garou coordinator, Krissy Ryan, is working busily on further integration of Garou chronicles into the fold. As I write this, we've recently welcomed another Garou game. The *Kenosha: Bad Moon Rising* game had been playing alongside *Kenosha: The Eternal Aria* for some time and was gladly given admittance, as the players had played by OWbN rules for some time and had remained in regular contact with OWbN both in and out of character. This put them in good stead when their game's number came up.

At present, Matt and I are discussing the possibility of adding a **Changeling** game. We're not averse to a **Wraith** game joining in, but we foresee some difficulties with character interaction because of the Shroud. We'll cross that bridge when we come to it, I guess.

In numbers, our games range wildly and widely. Some chronicles have less than a dozen people; others number around a hundred regulars, including visitors from nearby games. We don't have an accurate count of our total membership, but estimates place us at over 2,000 players in over 50 games in six different countries.

At present, OWbN is slightly fractured because of language barriers between some of our chronicles. With the advent of translation sites on the Internet — my personal favorite is <http://babelfish.altavista.com> — I hope to see much of that barrier crumble over the next year, and it should encourage a broader scope of interaction all around.

OWbN tries to hold at least one conclave a year. In 1998, we held two fairly large conclaves (Chicago and Baltimore) and ran a huge game at GenCon in August. These games are organized by enthusiastic teams of Storytellers with too much time on their hands and too much caffeine in their systems. More large gatherings of this nature are in the cards for 1999, although details are still being worked out. We'll post all upcoming major events on our website.

In between such events, players are often road-tripping to other cities just for the hell of it. Just traveling between OWbN cities is an experience in itself — meeting new people both in and out of character and experiencing the unique flavor of a new game can often prove a refreshing and eye-opening experience. Travel the world, see the sights, play a little *Vampire* and make a lot of new friends.

And you don't necessarily have to travel to other games to affect them — email communications and expenditure of Influence or use of city contacts through the Storytellers can have as much of an impact as being there would.

It has been my personal pleasure to attend the two American conclaves this year, and I am proud of the efforts of all concerned in the organization and execution of the events. I would like at this time to formally thank all of you who invited me and forked over for the plane tickets... twice....

I'm still humbled by that experience.

Some of our chronicles are also in contact with various independent games in their areas. Though our official stance is that these games don't necessarily exist in our continuity (at least, until they join OWbN, he smiles), we in no way discourage our people from talking with other games and other groups. After all, we don't have all the answers to all the questions — why limit our opportunities to learn?

OWbN is developing a good relationship with White Wolf, and we are pleased to have been of assistance in the past in terms of playtesting and opinion. A few of its staff are on hand, either as friends or accomplices, and we acknowledge the help that they have given us in the past. We hope to continue this productive and convivial friendship in the future. I guess the opportunity given me to write this article means we must have some degree of respect in White Wolf's eyes (heh).

OWbN is perhaps very reflective of the World of Darkness as given us by White Wolf. We don't slavishly follow the books as written in terms of Storyteller characters or sourcebooks (or our Milwaukee and Chicago games would be very different if we did), but are instead working on our own continuity, using many of the White Wolf sources to fill in the gaps.



As an example, we took the opportunity in 1997 to echo the 13-year meeting of the Inner Circle to change several of the justicars. Clan Toreador kept Madame Guil, who originally appeared in **Diablerie: Britain**, and Clan Malkavian kept Justicar Lucian, a character from the card game. The Ventrule opted to choose Tai Pan Robert Pedder as their next lawmaker. Other than those characters, the other justicars (Masako, Clan Brujah; Kharel, Gangrel; Ctarinov, Nosferatu; Malaphar, Tremere) were created within OWbN to fill the positions.

New concepts presented by White Wolf (such as the many alterations to the WoD as presented in the revised edition of **Vampire: The Masquerade**) are discussed by the Council and the Storyteller teams before anything is introduced to the mainstream of the games. However, OWbN's in-character politics do have a natural progression that is becoming very similar to a number of things that White Wolf has presented.

So what's happening in One World by Night as the millennium approaches?

Some Kindred truly believe the Final Nights are drawing near as the numbers of the Caitiff grow and the clans of the Camarilla become more fractious each week. The elders seem aloof and uncaring, the justicars play unknown games behind closed doors, the Sabbat is around each corner—in many cases well rooted in place among its unsuspecting opposites.

Meanwhile, the Garou struggle to preserve their heritage as their own enemies plant themselves more securely than ever in the cities and drive the werewolves from their cairns. Their war against the Wyrm continues unabated.

The Gangrel of America face desperate times as their elders are slowly stripped from them by negative forces. The loss of many of their elders in recent times has shaken the Gangrel's dedication and loyalty to the Camarilla.

Clan Brujah struggles to remain a cohesive whole, its members torn between their loyalties to the Camarilla and to their clan. Browbeaten by their elders and tongue-lashed by their anarch brothers, their loyalty also sways.



Clan Tremere fights to maintain a united front while dealing with public ridicule and suspicion. The Tremere often find themselves leaned upon to provide solutions to matters of the supernatural and then discarded unceremoniously by the other clans once they are no longer useful.

Clan Ventrule endeavors to stand proud and aloof as certain elements undermine its efforts at dominance—the prevalence of Ventrule princes in the Old World is far from echoed in the New, an embarrassment at best.

The Nosferatu... well, nobody really knows what they are up to, but there is some evidence that they may be closing ranks for some reason.

The decadence of these last decades has distracted many of Clan Toreador. Has true art died with the rest of the world? Many of them ask that question in this twilight of the Muses.

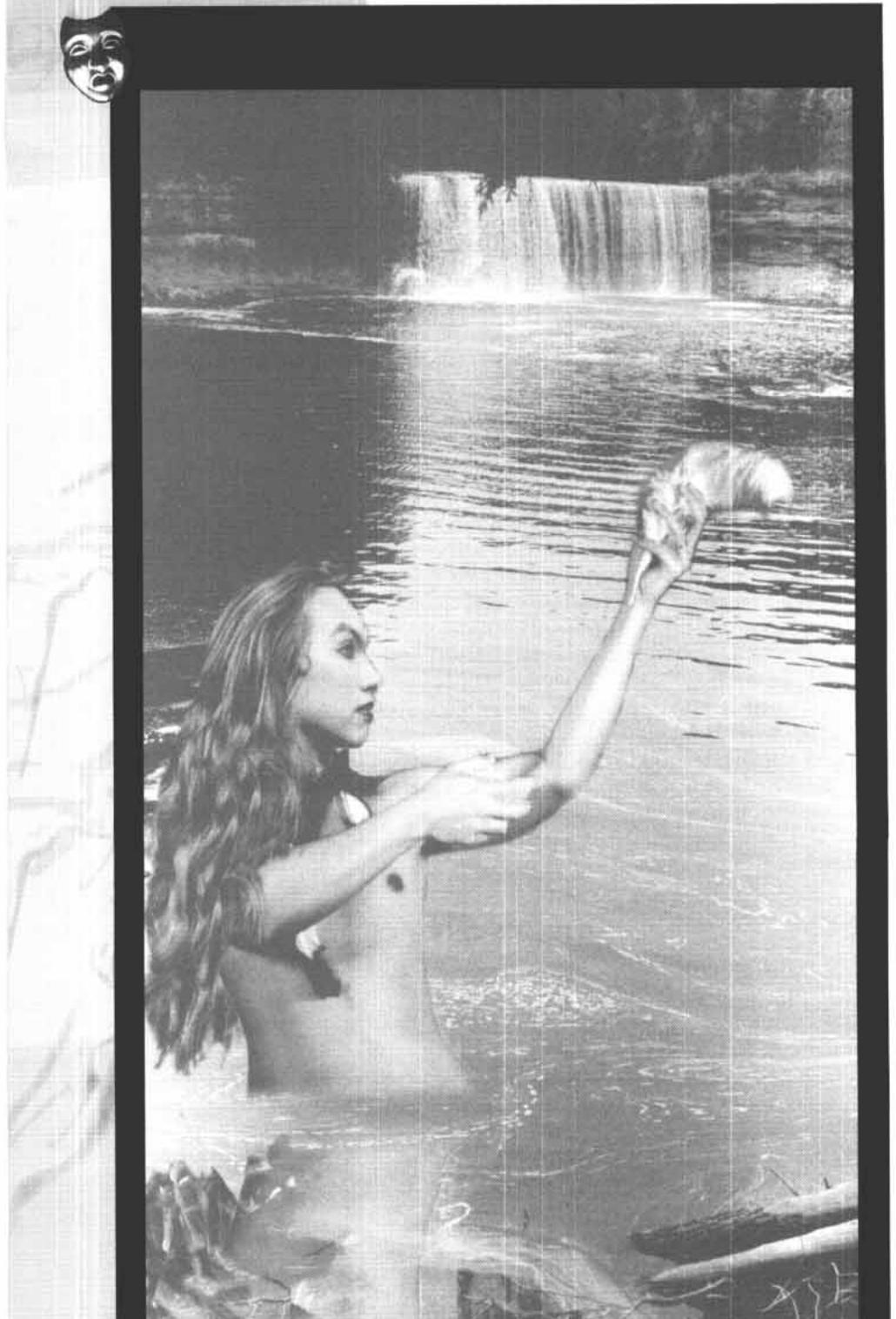
And the Malkavians? What of them? They're changing, but from what and to what? Who can tell, anyway?

OWbN is set in the modern day, very much so. Many of our chronicles utilize the real world's activities as tie-ins for their plots. Our players are enthusiastic and energetic and many small plots spill from city to city. Mix in a little Storyteller magic and our World of Darkness comes to life. Would that I could tell you all of some of the awesome plots going on, but I think I'd get lynched.

We have our own character personalities developing — (in)famous names and coteries, such as the NWO in Baltimore, the First Family in Chicago, the dubious House Malice, the dread archon Uma Nottingham, the Legion Sisters, Maddy Zurich, Dana Stone, Archbishop Santiago, the irrepressible Malkiepoos....

The list goes on, and I could probably talk for hours, but I'm not quite up to writing the sourcebook yet.

In closing, I would like to thank Joyce Summers, Matt Giezentaler, Ross Anderson and Lance Larsen, among others, for their contributions to this article. I'd also like to thank One World by Night—though you motley lot may be a pain in the neck at times, you're all wonderful people this side of the Masquerade.



NUNNEHI FOR THE shining HOST

by Peter Woodworth

*Considering the popularity of Mind's Eye Theatre's **The Shining Host** and the resurgence in fascination with Native American culture and mythology, I couldn't think of a better summer feature than one on how to incorporate the Nunnehi into a LARP setting. And when Peter Woodworth, the author of **The Shining Host**, agreed to write the piece for me, I jumped at the opportunity.*

THE PEOPLE

The Nunnehi (which means "people who live anywhere") are the faerie folk indigenous to Concordia, having dwelled here many centuries before the first Europeans or their Kithain cousins ever set foot on it. Like the Kithain, the Nunnehi were torn between two worlds, the Earthly realm and the Higher Hunting Ground (Nunnehi Dreaming), and they struggled daily to preserve the old ways. To keep faerie spirits alive in those long-ago days, wise Native Americans acted as hosts for Nunnehi spirits, allowing them to use their bodies until the spirits were passed on naturally to children. Over time, the Nunnehi fire nearly died out, but a recent surge of Native American pride has done much to revitalize it, and now the Nunnehi Nations stand ready to claim their rightful place once more.

Nunnehi make excellent additions to **Mind's Eye Theatre** games that take place in areas of great natural significance, and many of the native fae preserve a level of innocence and trust in the natural order that even other changelings lack. What's more, many of them have grudges and alliances with the Kithain stretching back to before the days of the Revolutionary War, thus presenting a uniquely historical aspect to any modern game. Centered as they are on the spiritual world, the Nunnehi also present an excellent change of pace for players used to "typical" Changeling stories—or an excellent challenge to motleys who think they've seen everything the Dreaming has to offer! Facing Nunnehi forces Kithain to examine the high costs of the modern culture that they are a part of, and playing a Nunnehi demands action before yet more of the world is allowed to fall to the tainted touch of "progress."

Among the Nunnehi themselves, old tribal blood feuds persist, occasionally spilling over into the chimerical realm and forcing them to wonder who the true enemies are—the Europeans without or the hotheads within. Conversely, many Nunnehi Nations are much closer than their kith counterparts, and quests shared by heroes of allied Nations are the stuff of legend.

THE MANY WORLDS

Nunnehi believe there are three worlds: the Upper World of totems, visions and spirits, the Middle (physical) World of humanity and the Lower World of the dead. The Upper World is largely a reflection of the Middle World, but it is much more vivid and profound, offering a glimpse of the true nature of things. Some of the Upper

NUNNEHI FOR THE SHINING HOST



World is beyond imagination, the home of great gods and heroes. The Lower World, by contrast, is also a reflection, but it is ashen, dull and decaying, a place of sadness and despair. Great trods connect all places in the spirit world, and visiting it is an important part of a Nunnehi's life. All things living and dead are part of the great cycle. Nunnehi who possess at least Basic Wayfare and one level of the *Nature* Realm may cross into the Upper World by stepping into a quantity of their chosen totem: a flowering bush, rock face or a waterfall. In addition, all Nunnehi may cross over using a body of pure water. Note: Nunnehi cannot cross into the Lower World on their own, although they may use the *Spirit Link* Art to speak to its ghosts.

System: The Nunnehi must perform a Bunk and win a Static Mental Challenge using the *Mythlore* Ability against a difficulty of the Banality level of the area in order to cross over. (If the Nunnehi possesses the *Portal Passage* Art and the *Verdant Forest* level of the *Nature* Realm, all difficulties are lowered by two.) The Nunnehi may bring others along, as long as they hold hands and the Nunnehi spends one Medicine Trait for each passenger. Those characters who cannot cross over on their own are stuck if the Nunnehi abandons them, and they must seek out a special trod to get home.

(More detail on the Upper World — or the Umbra — can be found in *Laws of the Wild*; for the Lower World, consult *Oblivion*.)

GLAMOUR AND BANALITY

Nunnehi refer to Glamour as "Medicine," and they may gather it from artistic performances as Kithain do, although they are two Traits down to do so unless the artist is Native American and performing a traditional piece. Furthermore, the difficulty to enchant mortals increases by one inside the confines of a city.

Most Nunnehi prefer to gather Medicine from natural sources. They have three ways of doing so: Harvesting, Raiding and Blessing. Harvesting (equivalent to Reverie) is handled with the same systems, except a Static Mental Challenge is employed and Harvesting requires at least one hour spent in contact with the natural scene being enjoyed (lying in a field of flowers, dipping toes in a stream, sunning on a rock).

Raiding, the equivalent of Ravaging, also uses the same systems, but the Nunnehi runs the additional risk of attracting the ire of angry spirits if she fails the Raiding challenge. (Narrator's discretion, but typically distracting and unpleasant.) Blessing uses the same mechanics as Rapture, but it can only be achieved through a direct audience with the Nunnehi's totem spirit while in the Upper World and only once per season. Totems usually honor such requests for an audience, but they expect no less than the absolute best in exchange for their time!

NUNNEHI CAMPS

Nunnehi do not recognize a Seelie/Unseelie distinction, instead using the Summer (or Dogwood), Winter (or Rock) and Midseason (or Laurel) camps. Summer Nunnehi tend to be outgoing, warm and friendly; Winter Nunnehi tend to be withdrawn, cold and unforgiving. Midseason fae are tricksters one and all, balancing the two camps as they see fit. Many Nunnehi follow camps on a seasonal basis, although this is by no means a requirement. For example, many Nunnehi adopt their Winter aspect when recently wronged or insulted, and some assume their Summer mien when falling in love or taking on quests. A few uncommon Nunnehi adhere to the same camp nearly or completely year-round. Nunnehi may change their camp freely as Kithain do, although most prefer a private ritual of transition before showing off their new camp allegiance.



It is important to note that Nunnehi are not openly divided between Summer and Winter factions like the Kithain are with the Seelie/Unseelie dichotomy. Nunnehi of different camps may have trouble seeing eye-to-eye on certain issues, but all recognize the role each has to play in the greater cycle.

NUNNEHI SEEMINGS

Nunnehi have three seemings, just like Kithain do. During creation, add one additional Glamour (called "Medicine") Trait to the usual starting totals, a boon of the Nunnehi's spirit ties.

Youngling: Children are the treasures of the Nation, and they are defended by all, regardless of camp or family. Most are given silly names to shield them from jealous spirits, and all are considered to be of the Midseason camp.

Brave: The dynamic, creative force of the Nations, braves are great lovers and fighters who strive to put a new face on the old ways. Braves are given new names based on accomplishments or reputation, and they may choose their camp freely.

Elder: These Nunnehi are revered for their great wisdom, and they seek to keep old legends alive for the next generation. They may choose their own name, and most settle into one camp for the majority of their time, leading and teaching other Nunnehi.

NUNNEHI FAMILIES

Nunnehi do not recognize kiths, but Families. A whole Family is called a Nation, thus the origin of the title "Nunnehi Nations."

CANOTILI (TREE DWELLERS)

These mischievous forest dwellers of the Midwest aid or hinder hunters who venture into their territory.

Affinity: Prop

Birthrights:

Earth Blend: By remaining perfectly still, the canotili may change color to match her surroundings like a chameleon. There is no cost, but the player must cross her arms to signify this Birthright's use as if she were using *Veiled Eyes*, and movement of any kind cancels this power immediately. This only functions in areas of natural wilderness. This is a Wyrd Birthright, but only if the Nunnehi attempts to hide in view of mortals; canotili already hidden remain so even if mortals enter the area.

Physical Enhancement: All canotili gain the additional Physical Traits: Wiry and Rugged, which can never be lost permanently.

Frailties:

Terror: When surprised, canotili exude a pheromone that causes powerful fear in non-canotili around her; all such creatures must win a Simple Test (or spend a Willpower Trait) or flee in terror. Supernatural creatures do not flee but instead strike out instinctively at the canotili, receiving a free retest on the first combat challenge resulting from the surprise. Canotili cannot control this fear response in any way.

INUAS (SPIRIT HELPERS)

Acting as advisors to tribal shamans, these faeries of the far north exhibit great magical and shapeshifting powers.

Affinity: Fae



Birthrights:

Imbue Amulet: Inua may invest an amulet for a chosen shaman with a single Art, selected from Chicanery, Legerdemain, Primal, Soothsay, Sovereign, Spirit Link or Wayfare. The power must also have a specific Realm attached (such as the Familiar Face level of the Actor Realm) and is only good for that particular Realm; each amulet is only good for one use. Investing an amulet is considered a sacred trust by the inua, not a means for greedy players to create a magic amulet factory.

Change Form: Inua may freely change shape into one animal of a local type, chosen at character creation. A second shape may be learned during character creation as a five-Trait Merit. Finally, an additional shape may be learned at a cost of four Experience Traits when a character becomes a brave or an elder. This is a Wyrd Birthright.

Frailties:

Susceptibility: Inua within a few yards of a pollutant (air pollution counts!) suffer a one-Trait penalty to all challenges; those inua actually in direct contact with a pollutant are at a two-Trait penalty.

KACHINAS

Helpful faeries of the Southwest, the ethereal kachinas bring rain and plenty to communities that honor the ancient ways.

Affinity: Nature

Birthrights:

Prayer of Plenty: With a Static Mental Challenge of the Occult Ability (difficulty 7), a kachina may cause a boom in plant growth and rainfall in an area, ensuring good crops. The kachina does this only if her tribe performs the proper dances and ceremonies first.

Cloud Form: With a Medicine Trait, the Nunnehi may transform into a cloud or wisp of smoke. They are immune to physical attacks and may float in this shape, but they are at the mercy of any prevailing winds and must return to a safe altitude before changing back or else suffer falling damage. Changing back slowly costs nothing, although an instantaneous reversion costs the Nunnehi one Mental Trait. This is a Wyrd Birthright.

Frailties:

Single Mind: Kachinas must choose one craft- or performance-related Ability upon which they are especially focused; they must purchase at least one level of this Ability and are one Trait up on all challenges involving it. However, they are two Traits down on all other craft- or performance-related challenges because of their singular focus.

MAY-MAY-GWAY-SHI (ROCK FISHERS)

Talented fishermen, these Northeastern faeries dwell deep within the rocks they love.

Affinity: Scene

Birthrights:

Door in the Rock: The Nunnehi may make a Static Physical Challenge (difficulty 4) to pass through a rock wall to the other side (or into a cave, if such is the case); he may also extend a single arm or leg through the wall. By spending two Physical Traits, the Nunnehi may take a vehicle (and anyone in it) safely through the wall, as well. This is a Wyrd Birthright.

Call the Swimmers: By spending a Social Trait, the Nunnehi may summon a netful of fish to himself in a body of water.

**Frailties:**

Weakness of Will: When confronted by a seafood feast or an unguarded fish supply, the Nunnehi must spend a Willpower Trait to avoid indulging himself (and leaving himself open to all manner of ambush).

NANEHI

These sociable Nunnehi of the Southeast can alter their shape and enjoy attending human festivals.

Affinity: Fae**Birthrights:**

Shape the Body: By spending a Medicine Trait, the nanehi may alter her body to be anywhere between two feet in height to normal human size, may make herself look older or younger and may temporarily add (or subtract) a Gorgeous Social Trait. Anyone looking for the nanehi must win a Mental Challenge to recognize her if her form has been altered significantly, and the changed nanehi should wear a description card or otherwise clearly indicate her altered state to other players. This is a Wyrd Birthright.

Voice of Beauty: Nanehi are one Trait up on all *Performance* challenges; two Traits up if the performance involves traditional tales or dances.

Frailties:

Face in the Water: Nanehi are vain creatures and are one Trait down to resist any Social Challenges involving flattery; they also have a one-Trait penalty to all challenges while their appearance is affected adversely (if they are covered with mud, for example).

NUMUZO'HO (CRUSHERS OF PEOPLE)

Masters of the elements, these troll-like giants of the far west pay a terrible price for their strength.

Affinity: Nature**Birthrights:**

Extraordinary Size: Numuzo'ho gain the Physical Traits: *Brawny*, *Muscular*, *Tough* and *Tireless*. This is a Wyrd Birthright.

Rouse the Elements: By spending a Willpower Trait and a Medicine Trait, the numuzo'ho may cause an elemental disturbance like a storm or earthquake. What occurs is at the Storyteller's discretion, but this power may be used only once per phase of the moon, and using it for selfish or inappropriate goals angers the local spirits, who may refuse the power until the character atones and shows the proper respect.





Frailties:

Weight of Years: Upon becoming an elder, the numuzo'ho either loses an arm, leg or eye to age and decrepitude. This change cannot be healed or averted in any way, and it should be represented by using the appropriate Flaw (like Lame or One Eye), but the character gains no Traits for it.

Pu'gwis

These cursed fae of the far north are hideous to behold, yet they possess entrancingly beautiful voices.

Affinity: Actor

Birthrights:

Song of Beckoning: Pu'gwis may call others to them with a hypnotic song; this does not affect most supernatural creatures, but mortals may be called with a successful Social Challenge against their Willpower.

Song of Dismissal: The pu'gwis may remove all memories of himself from the people around him with a successful Social Challenge, which targets may resist with Willpower. Targets summoned by the Song of Beckoning use only half their Traits to resist, and anyone — even other supernaturals — may be affected by this power.

Frailties:

Decay: No pu'gwis may have more than three strength-related Physical Traits, and in kith form they automatically gain the Negative Social Traits: *Repugnant* x 3. This is a Wyrd Fraility, although pu'gwis have the *Repugnant* Trait even in human form and may never take any beneficial appearance-related Social Traits.

ROCK GIANTS

Fearsome fae of the Northeast, these stony giants have tastes and dispositions not unlike redcaps.

Affinity: Nature

Birthrights:

Flint Coat: Rock giants gain an additional health level, and any attacks by stone weapons do no damage whatsoever. This is a Wyrd Birthright.

Prowess: All braves gain the Physical Trait: *Brawny*, which may never be lost permanently; elders gain an additional *Brawny* Trait. Rock giants also gain a free level of the *Brawl* Ability, which may never be lost permanently.

Frailties:

Hothead: If their bravery or prowess is questioned, rock giants assume their Winter aspect automatically and focus on nothing else but proving their might to the offender. No apologies or explanations suffice — at least one blow must be struck against the offender or a chosen champion before the rock giant can rest.

SUREMS (YAQUI LITTLE PEOPLE)

Southwestern faeries who despise violence and noise, these Nunnehi possess uncommon strength nonetheless.

Affinity: Actor

Birthrights:

Serenity: By spending a Social Trait and succeeding on a Static Social Challenge, the surem may exude an air of serenity for five paces around herself, forcing anyone already within that range (or who enters later) to spend a



Willpower Trait to become or remain angry or agitated. This aura includes the surem herself and lasts for one scene.

Congeniality: Surems receive a free retest on all Social Challenges related to maintaining peace, trust or friendship.

Frailities:

Plowshares: Surems must win a Simple Test to resort to violence (including speaking harshly) and are one Trait down on all tests when acting in a violent manner.

TUNGHAT (GREEN DWARVES, OWNERS)

These Midwestern faeries have close ties to the animal world and the hunting cycle.

Affinity: Nature

Birthrights:

Animal Illusion: By spending a Medicine Trait, the tunghat makes others (including animals) see him as a version of an animal of a certain type. This illusion is always slightly flawed, and characters with *Heightened Senses* and similar talents may see through it with a Mental Challenge.

Summon the Herd: By spending a Social Trait, the tunghat may bond with a type of animal; by winning a Static Social Challenge, the tunghat may summon animals of that type who are within a half-day's travel, determine their general health and appeal to them to give up their lives for the good of others.

Frailities:

Animal Mind: A tunghat who maintains an animal illusion for more than one hour must win a Static Mental Challenge or forget that he is not actually an animal of that type. If that happens, he begins acting in an animal manner and even wanders toward any nearby hunters.

WATER BABIES

Messengers to the spirit world, these faeries of the far west are known for stealing children.

Affinity: Nature

Birthrights:

Synthesize Air: Water babies and anyone they are touching may breathe freely underwater.

Strength of the Wave: Water babies are two Traits up on all Physical Challenges to drag a person underwater to drown her. They may use this bonus only as revenge for a crime. If the target isn't guilty, the bonus does not manifest, a sure sign that the target is innocent.

Frailities:

Water Dependency: Water babies kept for more than 48 hours from immersing themselves in water begin to die, losing one Physical Trait every day. Once all these Traits are gone, the water baby is unable to move and dies in another 24 hours if not returned to water.

YUNWI AMAI'YINE'HI (WATER PEOPLE)

Of southeastern origin, these playful, water-loving Nunnehi can assume the form of water creatures.

Affinity: Nature

Birthrights:

Shape of the Swimmer: These Nunnehi may assume the shape of one water creature by expending a Medicine Trait, provided no witnesses other than animals or other yunwi amai'yine'hi watch. All benefits of the form are gained. Changing back costs nothing.

Stir the Waters: As the numuzo'ho Birthright: *Rouse the Elements*, except the effect created may be water-based only, and no Willpower Trait is required.

Frailties:

Snare of the Hunter: If the Nunnehi becomes the prey of a hunter while in animal form, she must make a Static Willpower Challenge to avoid succumbing to panic and thinking only as an animal. In this state, she cannot use her Arts or other talents, only her animal form's natural advantages. Once at least temporarily safe, the Nunnehi may spend a Willpower Trait to regain her senses.

YUNWI TSUNDSI (LITTLE PEOPLE)

These handsome, nockerlike faeries of the southeast are adept at craftsmanship and staying out of sight of mortals.

Affinity: Prop

Birthrights:

Out of Sight: By spending a Willpower Trait, the Nunnehi may become effectively invisible to mortals, gaining the benefits of *Veiled Eyes* for the remainder of the scene. Note that supernaturals are not affected by this Birthright, only mortals.

Clever Hands: All yunwi tsundsi receive a free level of *Crafts* that may never be permanently lost and are one Trait up on all *Crafts* challenges.

Frailties:

Flames of Anger: If slighted by someone he seeks to help, the Nunnehi must make a Static Willpower Challenge or inflict a series of accidents on the target; these acts are not fatal but designed to teach the offender the value of proper manners. This compulsion lasts for one entire passage of the moon or until the offender makes a formal offering of apology.

NEW ART: SPIRIT LINK

This Art allows the Nunnehi to interact with their ancestors and the spirit world in general, and it is an important part of the upbringing rites of most of the Nations. Only Nunnehi may learn this Art, unless the given changeling has been adopted by a Nunnehi Nation.

Type of Challenge: Mental

BASIC

World Sight: With this power, the Nunnehi may see into the Upper, Lower or Middle Worlds and discern the true nature of the things she looks at. The rough amount of Medicine or spirit power inherent to a place may also be sensed. When used on an individual, this Art may detect spirit possession, curses or even whether the target is a supernatural being (and what type, if any) if the Nunnehi defeats her target in a Mental Challenge. The Nunnehi must be physically present to sense objects or targets in the Middle World but need not be so for the Upper or Lower Worlds.

Type: Chimerical

Ancestor Speech: By completing a Bunk and spending a Medicine Trait, the Nunnehi may summon tribal ancestors and consult their wisdom regarding a specific matter. These ancestor spirits may only answer questions pertaining to, or provide



visions of, the past up to the moment — in answering, they are limited to their own perspectives and experiences and do not have any special inside knowledge about things. They also cannot see the future or even the present moment; however, the wisdom of the past is quite valuable in itself. Nunnehi spirits may be contacted only if the faerie soul was destroyed, in which case the mortal spirit is available to this Art. Obviously, the Storyteller or a Narrator should roleplay the conversation, and the Nunnehi may ask no more questions than she has permanent Mental Traits.

Type: Chimerical

INTERMEDIATE

Vision Quest: See the Augury Art of Soothsay. (Yes, Nunnehi gain this power more easily.) Storytellers are encouraged to make vision quests as vivid and intense as possible; additionally, the Bunk for this Art is always a traditional vision quest of some kind — fasting, smoke house rituals, etc. — determined by the Narrator according to the tribe of the Nunnehi in question. **Note:** All the rules of live-action conduct still apply to *Vision Quest* — do not actually starve yourself, take peyote or anything else!

Type: Chimerical

Placate: This Art allows the Nunnehi to appease angry spirits and hungry ghosts, acting as a liaison to the spirit world in order to determine what is necessary to placate them. A Bunk and a Mental Trait are required to establish contact with the spirit(s) in question, at which time most gladly tell the Nunnehi what needs to be done in order to satiate their needs. Even the angriest spirits do not usually attack a Nunnehi using this Art, out of respect for his intentions, but woe indeed to the faerie who uses this power and then ignores what the spirits have asked for! Likewise, if the Nunnehi and his tribe abide by what the spirits ask for, the spirits are honor-bound to leave them in peace, a bargain only the most vile spirits would dare break. This Art is a sacred trust to most tribes, and though it gives the faerie no power over the spirits, it is an important step toward establishing a settlement between the two worlds when they are at odds.

Type: Chimerical

ADVANCED

Ghost Dance: This powerful ability allows the Nunnehi to assert control over the spirit world, banish supernatural creatures from the area and otherwise demonstrate mastery of the ethereal plane. This Art costs two Medicine Traits to use and requires a Mental Challenge against the target — spirits and wraiths may be ordered to cease troubling the human world, and those spirits who have inhabited bodies or otherwise snuck onto the mortal coil may be banished back to the Lower World. Supernatural creatures may be forced to leave the area for the rest of the session, though they may resist with a Willpower Trait. Should the Nunnehi fail to banish an especially powerful ghost (Narrator's discretion), however, she must win or tie a Simple Test — failure means that she is drawn into the Lower World herself and must fight her way back. Should she die in the Lower World, her faerie self is destroyed forever. At the Storyteller's discretion, this Art may be used to summon ghosts to aid the Nunnehi or her tribe, but the costs and details of such workings are strictly up to the Storyteller to determine.

Type: Chimerical (could become Wyrd in some cases)

NUNNEHI BUNKS

A complete list of Nunnehi Bunks can be found on pages 178 to 179 of the Player's Guide for *Changeling: The Dreaming*; in general, however, players and



Narrators with Nunnehi characters should try to use Bunks quite different from the ones their Kithain counterparts use. Not all of their Bunks necessarily need to be native rituals of some kind, but they should definitely have a different flavor than typical changeling Bunks to reflect the spiritual ties of the Nunnehi and their different outlook on Glamour in general. Examples of Bunks with that sort of flavor include, blowing smoke from a peace pipe to set the mood for use of the Sovereign Art, wearing a hand-crafted mask when performing a trick of the Chicanery Art or executing the steps of a tribal dance in order to use the Wayfare Art.

NUNNEHI BACKGROUNDS

Nunnehi have several unique Backgrounds to choose from during creation. They may not take the *Remembrance* Background and should secure Storyteller permission before taking *Title*, *Political Connections* or a non-Nunnehi *Patron*.

HOUSEHOLD

This Background denotes a number of human relations who are close to the character; they may or may not know the truth about her faerie nature but are friendly and loyal nonetheless. Of course, they expect the same from the character in return, and they may turn against her if ill-treated. Players should work with the Storyteller to determine who these people are, where they live and what they do for a living. The Storyteller may modify these numbers or even forbid certain levels of this Background if they prove too problematic for the chronicle. The number of Traits spent determines the number of people in the *Household*:

One Trait	Two members
Two Traits	Four members
Three Traits	Eight members
Four Traits	16 members
Five Traits	32 members

SPIRIT COMPANION

See the *Companion* Background, except that the *Companion* is not a chimera but a natural spirit of some kind, like a fire spirit, a wind elemental or a water spirit. In addition to the powers of that Background, the spirit may store additional Medicine or Willpower Traits for the character — the character need only concentrate to will the energy to his *Companion* and can reclaim it at any time. A *Companion* can hold twice as many Medicine Traits as the number of Traits a player puts into the Background.

VISION

This replaces the *Remembrance* Background for Nunnehi, except that any knowledge gained pertains to the Higher Hunting Grounds, Nunnehi families and other appropriate material.

TOTEM

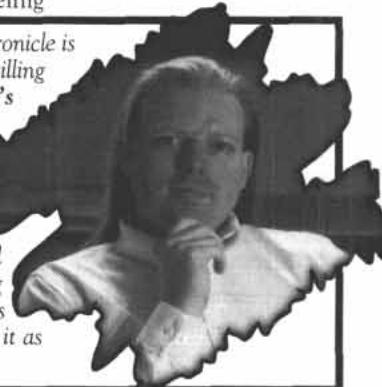
The Nunnehi has a spiritual link to a higher entity, typically a tribal totem or spirit guide of some kind. The number of Traits spent represents the power of the entity involved and the strength of the bond itself. See *Player's Guide for Changeling: The Dreaming* pages 145, 152 and 153 for more details on totems.



RAMPING UP

by Jess Heinig

Putting together a gripping live-action chronicle is more than just a matter of gathering a few willing participants at a random site. Although Mind's Eye Theatre can be used for fun and fulfilling one-shot games, like an evening's venue for a party, the true joy of Storytelling a long-running chronicle cannot be emphasized enough. Character development, plot twists and secret revelations are part and parcel of a well-built chronicle. The trick lies in putting together a chronicle designed to last. In this article, Jess tells us how while demonstrating it as he's no doubt seen and done it in the past.



CORE IDEA

There's more to building longevity than simply deciding, "It's time to run a new live-action game." Indeed, lack of initial design dooms many games to eventual death down the road. Though it may seem an unnecessary effort, there's no substitute for preparedness in running a chronicle, and the first step in proper preparation is isolating the core idea of the game.

A game's core idea defines and guides the chronicle. Although certain themes come naturally to each of the *Mind's Eye Theatre* settings, a prepared Storyteller picks and chooses the ones that he desires to showcase. The idea is to pare down to the essential elements. Start by separating into story elements and mechanical elements, then work up brief lists of desired material.

MECHANICAL ELEMENTS

The first piece of superstructure for a chronicle lies in the game mechanics. Pick the game you plan to run with an eye toward possible themes and players — *Laws of the Wild* explores powerful themes of isolationism and the danger of fanaticism, but it may be difficult to showcase them consistently; *Laws of the Night* games may draw numerous players, but it can be difficult to develop new and unique story elements.

At the start, you need only consider broad story elements. Most games use some variation of the *Mind's Eye Theatre* rules, yet there's no problem in altering the rules to suit the game. Decide how much to alter the rules for the game — rules are only a framework, after all, designed for ease of play. Are manipulation and intrigue going to be paramount? If so, then Influence rules should probably be more heavily detailed. Are the characters supposed to be more experienced and potent than normal? Change the character-creation rules. Play with the framework as necessary, but once the game begins, *don't change the rules unless it's absolutely necessary* — consistency, though the hobgoblin of little minds, is part of the virtue of fairness in play.

STORY ELEMENTS

A chronicle's story elements are the dramatic pieces that the Storyteller wishes to emphasize. For instance, a *Vampire* story may showcase redemption, inhumanity, mystery, romance or even a combination of the above; a *Wraith* story could focus on loss, reconciliation, helplessness and hope. In truth, any venue can support just

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about any story type. The job of the Storyteller here is to decide what themes will be important to the game so that plot elements can build from those themes later. By way of example, if a story focuses on redemption, the players must be given opportunities for their characters to witness or perform horrible deeds so that the later redemption has meaning.

When building story elements, remember that the ultimate point of the game is to have fun. Many Storytellers come up with intriguing plot ideas but become so intent on showcasing their unique creations that the players lose the ability to influence the direction of the game. Once all power of choice has been removed from the players, the game stops being fun. Thus, if a chronicle focuses on helplessness, the Storyteller must balance the players' feelings of inability to affect their environment with the needs of running an entertaining chronicle.

Story elements should just be broad statements in the outline of the game — the actual focus on driving plot pieces comes later. Look at the broad picture of themes for the game, pick a few and write them down. It's important to have more than one story element, because players have varied tastes and not all players want to be involved in every type of story. Similarly, recognize that individual Storytellers have different styles; the Narrators and Storytellers of the game must have plot elements with which they can effectively work. A *Vampire* game of romance, intrigue and betrayal is conceptually great, but it won't last long if the Storytellers and Narrators aren't comfortable running some of the themes or if the players don't want that sort of game.

GROUND UP

With core themes and some basic mechanical tweaking done, it's time to look at the prospective plots for the game and the elements that will allow it to run over the long term. Preparing for a long-running game isn't difficult, but it does require advance planning.

This is the stage at which the Storyteller should set up the backstory and start soliciting players and assistants. Also, any regular live-action game needs a solid meeting place, so this is the phase for picking a location (and alternatives). Other mandatory paperwork — rules updates and the like — needs to be done before the game begins as well.

PLOTTING STORY ARCS

Story arcs come in three types for full chronicles, unsurprisingly divided into short-range, mid-range and long-range ones. A successful chronicle possesses all three and allows them to combine so as to form conflicting elements. After all, without conflict, the players may not feel a sense of accomplishment; the players need to be able to direct the game in some fashion, and they do so through their choices of plot resolution.

The underpinnings of a chronicle play from the *long-range* plot elements. A long-range plot element is really a factor of the story, and it is predicated upon the core theme. Players can and do drive long-range plots, but the Storyteller needs to inject plot elements as well. After all, not every player immediately visualizes goals for her character. The long-range plot elements focus on the chronicle's overall structure and guide the story; they also pull in the players who wish to participate in the overall story. Some sample long-range elements are: The Inconnu bring the hope of Golconda to a deserving Cainite (based on a redemption theme); local Garou become involved in the lives of their Kinfolk and their communities, fighting to defend those parts of human society (based on a romance theme); the local town is

moving on, forcing the ghosts of the city to find ways to cope (based on a theme of loss); an arcane disturbance for which no one has yet found a cause or a cure afflicts the city (based on a theme of mystery).

Mid-range plot elements last several sessions and take some work to resolve. As problems, they play on the driving elements of the game and spin off from the goals of particular players. Indeed, a goal that a player visualizes for a character can form a good mid-range plot. Mid-range plots need to be tracked carefully so that their pieces remain consistent from game to game. Examples of mid-range plots include: A vampire tries to learn an unusual Discipline (such as Necromancy) outside of his clan's specialties (perhaps to further a long-range goal of Golconda or control over a particular element of the city); the Sabbat declares a crusade against the characters' home city, and the siege must be resisted (possibly as part of an ongoing border war between Camarilla and Sabbat in the area); a Hierarchy official/archon/elder Garou visits for a time (perhaps looking for a lost loved one as part of a romance plot); a useful item or person disappears, and several clues and puzzles must be found and understood in order for the thing to be found (perhaps to fulfill some piece of the puzzle in a mystery plot).

A *short-range* plot spans only a single game session or part of it. Such a plot element is usually subordinate to a larger plot device. Short-range plot elements can come in just about anytime with minimal effort; if they aren't planned, though, they can seem odd or cause continuity problems later. The best plan for short-range plots is to look at the causes and effects of the various larger plot elements and play from those. Examples of short-range plot elements: A Sabbat pack attacks some characters and must be repelled (as part of the Sabbat crusade plot); a Nihil opens briefly, disgorging some Spectres (possibly related to the ongoing plot of loss, with the Shadowlands falling to the town's decay); an object is lost or stolen, but the clues point to a rapid recovery (as part of a mystery plot); a diplomatic envoy arrives and delivers a simple message, requiring a simple response (maybe pushing associations with a later romantic interest).

For a good, solid start to a chronicle, pick two story arcs of each length and plot them out. Remember, short-range elements resolve quickly, so new ones may be needed at the next game; however, with luck, the existing mid-range and long-range elements drive the players to make their own goals, thus spinning off some new short-range elements. However, never count on the players to drive the story. Although a player-driven story is generally the most rewarding, the Storyteller must be ready to introduce new random elements and hooks.

REBUILDING THE RULES

The chronicle's been plotted, the goals are in place and the players are enthusiastic. Now it's time to sit down and actually tweak the rules that need modification.

The first section to check out is character creation. The options allowed to players greatly affect the theme and mood of the game. In a game focused on intrigue, for instance, it makes sense to limit the amount of Influence that characters may start with so that they are forced to squabble over it later. A Storyteller running a game set in Germany during the Dark Ages should recommend that the characters take common languages. A game focusing on mystery or the solving of obscure riddles probably needs to limit the use of unusual powers and Merits by the characters, so that they have goals to attain in the course of the game.

Next, look over the Storytelling mechanics themselves. There's almost no reason to change the core bidding system of the game or to mess with the various combat rules; these tend to run equally well for just about any game. However, the use of

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Backgrounds, Influence or special forms of equipment or Abilities might need review. A mystery-intensive chronicle could be derailed by a character with several levels of the *Enigmas* Ability; a game about redemption and romance could turn into a violence-fest if the souped-up equipment from *Laws of the Hunt* comes into play without too much thought. Change or ban elements that don't fit the game's core theme.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Ideally, a live-action game can be held in a large, multi-room, indoor, temperature-controlled regular setting that's absolutely free.

In the real world...

Securing a site before scheduling the game is mandatory! It does no good to schedule a game but then be unable to tell players where to meet. Inclement weather and lack of space can also severely handicap a game, as can lack of a location to perform off-site actions and narration. Keep all these factors in mind when looking for a site.

For locations with good weather, outdoor sites are sometimes possible. Parks and outdoor malls are often completely free, and they usually have plenty of space. However, there is always the risk of weather turning foul. Worse still, such games are not necessarily private — and never (but never) try to draw negative attention from the local populace. Most people don't really have any idea of what live-action roleplaying means, and it's not worth drawing in the police over "strange cult-like activities." Go for a more secluded spot, or at least one where the outrageous behavior that inevitably crops up can go unnoticed.

Some areas provide club buildings or community centers. Such places make excellent venues, but there is often a rental cost. This isn't so bad if the players can be enticed to cough up a couple of bucks each. Still, be sure to check out the rental agreements on such places. Some buildings may require additional deposits or payments to cover possible damage; accidents can and do happen, and \$700 in repair work can spell doom for just about any LARP. Again, most people aren't familiar with live-action roleplaying, and they automatically make negative associations; this ill shadow (as it were) can be a hindrance when filling out the event forms that many locations require.

Of course, the best spot for a game is at someone's house! A large enough house can easily host several dozen players, and if it's not part of an apartment complex, the LARP's noise quotient and occasional odd behavior won't draw any attention. The problem here is in convincing someone to open up a home for two dozen people, all of whom might be carrying and spilling drinks, tromping about in dirty shoes and grabbing scenery objects as part of their character portrayals. When using a house, be sure to set specific ground rules and to make them known before *each and every* event. Doing so saves grief (and cleaning bills) later; players should be penalized for inappropriate behavior. Players can complain about their characters being mistreated, but when their in-game activities cause out-of-game distress, it's time to trim it back. Also, the homeowner should receive some incentive for making the site available; an extra experience point for the session or other game treat is a good compromise, as is forming a volunteer crew to help clean up and to provide food or furnishings necessary for the events.

RECRUITMENT

With a location and a solid game design in mind, it's time to recruit players and assistants. The business of recruitment varies according to the style of game you

desire, though. After all, an invitation-only game has no need for lavish posters all over the place.

Open games generally let just about anyone in. Such games can quickly accumulate many players. The risk is that some of the players may bring along their own quirks and foibles in a way that threatens the enjoyability of the game. Recruiting for an open game is simple: Place some posters at the local game store; run off some flyers with a description of the game's core theme; and use the Internet to set up contacts on newsgroups (like alt.games.whitewolf) and e-mail lists (like Vampire-L).

Restricted games limit their membership in some fashion. The most common type of restricted game is invitation-only; these games generally recruit solely by word of mouth and only under the auspices of the head Storyteller. Certain clubs and organizations like the Camarilla also run games that are available only to club members; recruitment here comes about through club periodicals (like *Requiem*) and e-mail (like One World by Night's OWbN-OOC list).

The first stage of recruiting is finding out whether there's enough demand to run the game! If a game won't attract more than a couple of players, then the long-running plot lines may not have a chance to really shine. Without character interaction, the two players probably won't stick around unless new players are suddenly recruited in the second game session. A good medium is to shoot for at least a dozen players; for one-shots, a handful is fine, but long-running games need enough players to divide into factions.

Once the game is in demand, pick assistants. Remember, though, that not every assistant (Narrator, coordinator, Storyteller, whatever) needs to be competent in all areas of the game. It's possible that someone is great at providing transportation and site logistics but has a tough time with the rules. That's fine—grab people who can do the individual jobs necessary and assign them strict roles. That way, the game gets people who can do particular jobs well instead of running the Storyteller ragged or accepting people who may be multi-skilled but not exceptional in a particular position. It's always good to avoid personality conflicts here; although in theory everyone should be able to get along and do their jobs without conflict, in practice real life sometimes interferes, and so assistants need to be chosen with an eye toward compatibility (with each other, with the Storyteller and with the players). If everyone hates a particular Narrator, it won't help move rules resolution along smoothly; there'll be too many arguments. Conversely, someone who knows the rules perfectly may not be well-suited to handling site logistics; such a person should be placed firmly in a rules-narration position.

THE LONG HAUL

Once players are lined up, the location's been picked out, the rules packets have been distributed, the characters are built and the story begins, how do you keep the game from crashing and burning within three months?

Three major factors tend to contribute most to the death of prospective games, and all of them can be avoided with the right planning.

POLITICS

Face it, although an ideal LARP would have players who could all get along, personal conflicts do arise outside of the game. Too often, these conflicts spill over



into the game itself. Avoiding these conflicts requires direct mediation — politics can't be allowed to simmer. Handle such problems as soon as they come up.

The worst sort of politicking comes from favoritism. Storytellers sometimes feel compelled to give special benefits to their friends and significant others. This can be all right, as long as such benefits fit into the context of the game; picking out specific people to play local Hierarchy officials for an *Oblivion* game, for instance, saves the trouble of filling in with Narrator characters and gives a deliberate power structure to the game. However, the Storyteller must be absolutely firm in decisions of fairness. If the Storyteller chooses to be unfair or to skew the game's rules or points toward certain individuals, this skewing must be solely a result of the game's play, not because of special friendships. A Storyteller thought to play favorites wins no respect and actually loses players. Generally, the best course is to stick to the same rules for everyone. If there's a deliberate imbalance of power, it should be specifically written down so that it can be seen and addressed by all of the players.

Politics also lead to *metagaming* — the practice of using out-of-game knowledge in the course of the game. Metagaming can be difficult to track; if a player knows that a particular character is a diabolist, there's nothing to stop his character from spuriously accusing the diabolist and then claiming that he was "just making it up." Either way, the diabolist gets caught and likely killed; this is no fun at all if the player spent a lot of effort on his activities. The best way to handle metagaming is usually in downtimes. Have each player write a report between games on what his character did and learned at the game (as well as what he intends to do during downtime). If a player uses knowledge that his character shouldn't have, *stop it immediately*. Once metagame knowledge gets out, it has to be traced to every person "infected."

Some players also bring their real-life conflicts with them into the game. If a particular player hates another player, it's possible that the first player may make a series of characters all designed for the specific purpose of killing the hapless victim. In such instances, the best way to deal with the situation is to bring in Narrator characters. Although heavy-handed, this can serve to play up why killing other characters is almost universally frowned on by the higher-ups of just about any World of Darkness group. Also, keeping the players from killing one another in a pointless cycle forces them to direct their energies elsewhere, possibly adding to intrigue and new plots in the game.

CHARACTER IMBALANCE

Character imbalance, a subtle, creeping factor, makes a game difficult to control and hard to enter. At the outset of the game, everyone pretty much runs under the same power levels. Players all build their characters with the same rules, and avoiding favoritism lets everyone get a fair shake at the game. New players can come in a few months down the road with the expectation of getting involved in an already established good game.

The problem of character imbalance starts creeping up after numerous sessions have passed — when players have had a chance to accumulate 50 Experience Traits or more for some of their old-guard characters. These characters move to the forefront, dominating the game. This is natural; ancilla and elder vampires, old gaunt wraiths and the like *should* occupy positions of power. However, these characters can come to completely control the game, shutting out new players with less powerful characters. When these old guard characters can do



everything the new characters can do (and do it better), there are no storylines in which new players can get involved.

Ultimately, there are three good solutions for character imbalance. The first is to build in obsolescence for characters: For every chunk of 25 or 50 Experience Traits spent on a character, increase all costs for later purchases by one Trait. Thus, an elder vampire character who already had 100 Experience Traits spent on powers and Abilities would have to spend an extra two or four Traits on all new purchases. Second, offer build points for characters: New players might get some extra Traits when building their characters so that they can keep up. This tactic invites the worrisome problem of power-escalation, though, causing all characters to become overpowered down the line. Third, build in safeguards to keep certain plots open to new players. If some Narrator characters at the high levels of the game direct plot elements toward the new characters or if you simply ask some of your old guard to step back and allow new players to participate in certain plotlines of your designation, you can avoid the syndrome of helplessness among the new crowd.

SITE CONFLICTS

A well-planned game can always fall to the problems of the real world. Unfortunately, the (perceived) less-than-sterling reputation of the roleplaying game community means that some places may hesitate to allow live-action games in their area. Some games even face harassment from local authorities.

In order to prevent problems with conflicts of this sort, always have a backup site planned. When setting up a location, make sure to have an alternate available, and make sure that everyone knows how to get there as well. Plan for sites at least a month in advance, so that there is enough time to reschedule and try to get a different backup in order if something goes wrong.

Also, as a matter of common sense, *don't antagonize non-players*. Although LARP groups often adopt a siege mentality about the surrounding community and people who don't understand roleplaying, nothing is served by getting in other people's faces. People who don't understand the hobby don't get a favorable impression when MET players treat them with scorn or derision. Always be polite. If locals or law enforcement ask the group to move to a different location, agree to head to an alternate site and ask to discuss the matter later—better than arguing about it in the middle of a game and antagonizing both the players and the non-players. Remember, some LARP groups might be mistaken for gangs, absurd as it seems (after all, local merchants and police have a valid concern about 20 people in black trenchcoats congregating in a public place and making strange hand gestures). Keep matters low-key, and instruct players to direct people to the Storyteller if a problem arises. Although she may be well-meaning, a player in the midst of a challenge or action-filled scene may not make the best diplomat for an outsider to the game; the Storyteller must be able to fill that responsibility outside of the game itself (remember, most non-players feel very uncomfortable discussing matters in the middle of the game, so be sure to go somewhere else to negotiate).

GO GET 'EM!

That's it! Seriously. Setting up a long-running chronicle may seem like a lot of work, but it's rewarding to Storyteller and players alike. Keep a sheet handy to jot down notes about the various steps in this article, and chronicle setup for most open-ended games can be accomplished easily in under a day. And, of course, always remember the most important rule — *have fun*.





A POSITION OF STRENGTH

by Carl Bowen

We intend to include a piece of World of Darkness fiction in every issue of the *Journal*. Fiction dealing with the World of Darkness offers insights into the lives and times of the people (i.e., the characters) who inhabit it, and such insights offer you (as players and Storytellers) flavor and spice to make your *Mind's Eye Theatre* games all the more attractive. *Mind's Eye Theatre* releases should be simultaneously entertaining and useful. This piece, in particular, showcases a way to blend into the background of mortal society while carrying out very specific Kindred business.

A touch on my face awakens me as night comes. For a moment, I believe that the touch is that of a lover's hand, but the ever-present smell of my surroundings breaks through that lie right away. I open my eyes to the darkness, suspecting that the touch was no more than the flicking tail of a rat. The little beasts crawl onto my chest to sleep sometimes, not moving an inch until I begin to stir to life. The skittering, splashing sounds that echo around the dank cavern like the applause of tiny sycophants confirm my theory. I never see the furry things, but I am almost glad of their company. At least they are company.

Standing, I brush gnarled, spotted fingers through the last of my hair, resisting the urge to tear it all out by the roots. Instead, I pass my empty hands over my head like an empress holding elaborate ivory combs, creating an illusion of a thick fall of ebony locks, just as I sported in my youth. An illusory suit of expensive silk comes next, covering the tattered remnants of an out-of-style tweed blazer and blue jeans combination. Finally, I concentrate on the way I used to look before... before it all. I remember my blue eyes and trimmed goatee — my teeth, tarnished from years of smoking a pipe yet still straight and strong. I concentrate on these things, and I know — although I cannot feel it — that I look that way again. I know that the true flesh of my face is safely buried beneath that genial mask. Only when my disguise — the lie that covers who I truly am — is complete do I venture toward the surface. Only the stench of the sewer remains to hint at my identity, but I let that be.

The place I had slept is not far from my point of egress into the dark streets — I have taken to sleeping where I fall lately — and I soon stand above the surface of my home. I step into the shadow of a nearby building and lean against the wall for support. I don't like being above ground; I prefer it even less when I have to be outside.

"You have rat-droppings on your shirt," a smug, faintly amused voice says from across the alley.

I jump and draw a quick breath — more from habit than involuntary reflex. My contact is early. He can see right through my disguise, and he (no doubt) saw where I emerged from the sewers. I will have to change my route to the surface now.

"Bainbridge," I say in a whisper. My voice is not what it used to be. "It is good to see you."

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The elegant fop steps out of the shadows into the light that rolls down the alley. He is decked in ultra-stylish, tight-fitting clothing that somehow manages to please the eye despite the best efforts of the ugly pink-orange tint of the sodium-arc streetlights. He stands with one knee cocked, his arms crossed. A delicately embroidered handkerchief carrying the scent of heavy perfume dangles from his right hand, and he waves it under his nose casually every few moments.

"You're right on time," Alex Bainbridge lilt. "And I see you have your game-face on. That's good."

I bristle and cock an unamused eyebrow.

"You mentioned a job last night, Bainbridge," I whisper. "And a retainer fee. I've no love for bantering in the open like this."

Something passes behind Bainbridge's eyes, and he smiles. "Then come," he says, taking my arm and gesturing expansively. "Let's away to someplace more congenial!" He means his good humor to be infectious, but he spoils the effect by wrinkling his nose slightly at my odor. I give him a sardonic smile — cracked and blistered lips peeling back from crooked, gapped teeth that only he can see — and allow myself to be led.

* * *

He takes me to an expensive nightclub on the far corner of town, and I am surprised that it is not the one he owns, the one he alluded to when he contacted me by phone the night before. The very air pulses and hums with a press of human bodies all shouting and gyrating to music that is almost a physical presence. Lights flicker and flash in time with the music, transforming the mob of dancers into an ever-changing menagerie of sweating, hazy statues. This club is gaudy and juvenile compared with the courtly grace of Bainbridge's own club, the *Bocor*, but it is much better than being outside in the open.

Bainbridge and I take a table on the periphery of the dance floor, wading through the crowd with some effort. When we are seated, we do not try to shout over the din but rather move our mouths as if in speech. Each of us is an accomplished lip-reader — an invaluable skill in the information trade — and the words come as naturally as a pleasant Sunday-afternoon conversation in the park. We may appear slightly odd, conversing amidst all this chaos without any trouble, but we do not fear accidental discovery. The only others who take any note of us are Bainbridge's servants and the employees working at the nightclub. I trust surroundings such as these more than I would isolated booths or dark, forbidding alleyways.

"You almost look overdressed now," Bainbridge jokes, referring to my disguise and still flicking the handkerchief before his nose. His clothes perfectly complement his surroundings and vice versa.

"The job?" I mouth back. It feels good to communicate this way, without the persistent scratching in my throat that started the night I entered this second life, when my throat twisted and cinched up at my first taste of blood.

Bainbridge rolls his eyes theatrically, but he smiles at my forthrightness. "It's more of a tenured position than a single job, really," he says, skipping the banter. "As I mentioned, we are prepared to offer you a substantial retainer fee."

"Go on."



"Assignments for this job may impinge quite seriously on your free time, and you would have to guarantee your continued availability," Bainbridge says, the handkerchief bobbing to the oppressive beat of the music. "You would also be required to pledge a certain assurance of allegiance to my... organization. Would that be a problem?"

"You talk like a lawyer, Bainbridge," I smirk. "It makes this job sound less worthwhile by the moment."

Bainbridge's eyes flash, and a dazzling smile crosses his face. I have been told that I am a handsome man — when I am disguised — but Bainbridge is absolutely beautiful when he smiles.

"Nice words from someone who talks like a Harvard English professor half the time," he says, speaking aloud in his merry amusement. "But do forgive me. I only meant to convince you of how important this job would be to those of my organization. The services we require beg a certain amount of delicacy and provider-loyalty."

"You know how much my loyalty is worth," I tell him, sitting back in my chair. Despite myself, I begin to relax. Bainbridge sounds desperate, and desperate men with favors to ask are much more tractable and trustworthy by nature.

"That I do," Bainbridge mouths, still smiling. "And you should have what you desire."

"Then tell me the job."

Bainbridge looks away for a moment at some voluptuous girl throwing herself about with particular grace on the crowded dance floor — he is so easily distracted — then leans toward me and locks my eyes in his gaze. "My organization needs your particular skills of mediation."

I blink. "Is that it?" I have long availed myself to those of my kind who know to ask.

"It?" Bainbridge mouths, incredulous. Then: "Ah, forgive me again. I forget that you have not had the time to think this through as I have."

"Then do explain," I say. It is often difficult to tell if Bainbridge is deliberately trying to insult me or if he is merely tactless. It is so hard to tell, and with Bainbridge, an accusation of one would likely just bring assurances of the other.

"What I mean to say is that my organization wishes to be your sole patron in the dispensation of your diplomatic ability. We wish to make you a kind of envoy."

"Why?" I can just imagine the endless frippery and decadence I would have to put up with were I to agree. Bainbridge's associates are — like Bainbridge — given to boring, pointless dalliances in art and social maneuvering.

This time, Bainbridge's pause seems more the surprise of an overconfident man who cannot imagine why someone would want to disagree with him.

"Well, primarily," he says after only a short hesitation, "because we can offer you a substantial amount of money, even when you are not on assignment for us. Second, for our own part, my associates and I strive to possess those things that we consider to be the best of their kind. We would be greatly honored to be able to lay claim to your remarkable talent. Simply put, you are the best negotiator in the city, and you would make a valuable asset."

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"Who told you that?" I can't help but let pride creep into my voice despite Bainbridge's condescending tone.

"We are aware of how you handled the problem we had with the logging industry," Bainbridge says. "As well as the treaty violations between ourselves and those, shall we say, 'angry' denizens of the inner city."

I nod thoughtfully at the memory of both incidents. The former involved some unruly servants of others of my kind who sought to put a halt to the logging industry some years back in the name of environmental friendliness without considering the consequences on the local economy. The latter had ended a tense period of hostility between my kind and the area's original residents who had grudgingly welcomed us when we first arrived, but then thought to change their minds. In both cases, I had simply been one voice out of many, yet it had been my ideas that had made the most sense to both sides of the quarrels.

"That all happened some time ago," I say. "Why does your... organization, as you say... want to hire me now?"

Bainbridge glances around at each of his servants briefly, doubtless passing them some signal to be prepared) and says, "Because we have an assignment in mind already, one for which you would be ideally suited."

"What assignment?"

"You understand that by telling you, I am assuming a certain—"

"Yes, yes," I cut in, "I will accept and be discreet, Bainbridge. Enough assurances."

"Very well. Something of a situation has arisen with one of the... guardians... of our kind. He has taken his master hostage, and he makes outrageous threats. He is, however, willing to negotiate."

I sit forward in my chair. This should not be. "How has he taken his own master hostage? I have no servants of my own, but the very nature of those bound—"

"We do not know," Bainbridge sighs. "We know that this servant, Travian is his name, is possessed of great strength. He is also, by the accounts of our messenger, quite insane."

"Then what makes you think that I will be able to negotiate with him at all?"

A faint ghost of a smile touches Bainbridge's face, and he says, "Perhaps I did not make myself clear. I should have said that we only want you to *talk* to this Travian. We have no intention of bargaining with him, but he does have information we need. If you can pry that information from him, we would consider your assignment accomplished. You need not cajole him into complying with you, nor do you need to placate him in any way."

"And why can you not just carry him away somewhere and make him give you the information you desire?"

Bainbridge begins to seethe when I ask him that, and his fist slams down on the table. "Because Travian is sitting at the center table of my club right now! He contacted me through a servant last night before I spoke to you, and he has been there since two hours before dusk waiting for us. He will not leave its safety without causing a scene." He unconsciously wads his handkerchief in his clenched fist, then leaves it crumpled on the table.

"Then why not go to those of our kind higher in authority?" I ask. Bainbridge's voice drops back to subvocal range before he answers. He also casts quick glances



at each of his servants again. I can almost feel them nodding in response, and I sense that I am on decidedly delicate ground.

"Because," he says, "my organization and I are poised to make a rather significant political maneuver in the hierarchy of this town. If we go before the current authorities with a request for assistance in dealing with our servants, we will look weak and lose unimaginable face."

"You risk just that same loss by coming to me," I say. "Either way, you are asking for help in dealing with what should be a strictly internal matter."

"Wrong, friend," Bainbridge says, smiling easily. "We do not come crawling to you begging your help. To all accounts, I am being magnanimous to our erstwhile servant in hopes of preserving decorum in a fragile situation."

"You are negotiating with an insouciant lackey."

"We are employing a masterful negotiator in a holding ploy," Bainbridge corrects me. "Yet on the surface, we are affording great respect to an enemy. We appear both devilishly clever and noble."

"By using me and paying me off for it," I say. "And binding me to your service to fortify your political aspirations."

Again, that self-assured, if somewhat confused, smile crosses Bainbridge's face. To him, I seem to be playing the game of bargaining, but I am putting too much heart into it. My compliance with his wishes should be a foregone conclusion, yet I *actually* seem ill-disposed to give it.

"There is a certain time-sensitive aspect to this assignment," he says, his voice carefully neutral.

"Manipulate someone else," I say, making as if to rise. "I have no desire to bridle a stalking horse just to keep you from looking silly."

Bainbridge sits up a little straighter, the realization that I just might refuse him despite his charms and bribes finally sinking in, and he says, "There is one other thing you may wish to consider."

I lean back and steeple my fingers on top of the table. "And that is?"

"Oh, must I?" he says. His nose wrinkles with distaste, and he says, "I find this part so..."

"Gauche?"

"Clichéd," Bainbridge says, giving me a flat look. "Ah well. The thing you should probably consider is that in turning my offer down, you become a potential liability to my aims. I am no lawyer, but I know that allowing such a thing would be most irresponsible on my part."

Still half standing, I take a moment to really *look* around. Now that I'm paying attention, I see just how many of the random assortment of bystanders (and dancers and club patrons and bouncers...) are looking at me. They all flick their eyes (almost in unison) between me and Bainbridge, tense on the point of action. They may all be servants, but so many would surely be more than I could reasonably handle alone.

"Thus, I say this," Bainbridge says, ignoring everyone but me. "Work for me, or I will look into other options that will leave you and your niche in the information trade obsolete."

I glance again at the circle — the noose — of eyes watching me, then sit back down in defeat. "When do I begin?"

A POSITION OF STRENGTH



The dazzling smile illuminates Bainbridge's face as if it had never faltered, and he retrieves his wrinkled handkerchief.

"Immediately."

*

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The nightclub Bainbridge owns, the Bocor, stands in sharp contrast to *Ban-Haven*, in which he currently cowers. Whereas *Ban-Haven* relies heavily on Gothic-Industrial architecture and pulsing lights and sounds, Bainbridge's own club is much more subtle in style and intent, catering to a more affluent and mature crowd. The lights are dim but constant. The colors lean more toward yellow and dark mahogany here instead of the black and chrome of the other club. The music, while still pervasive and cutting-edge, doesn't make a spectacle of itself. It coils and hums beneath the surface noise, underlying the atmosphere like a serpent's beating heart. The music subtly beckons here rather than pounding at my eardrums.

I drift in through the double doors — translucent glass edged with oak and gold-filigree — and scan the room in one pass. The guards inside, old servants of Bainbridge, have been told to expect me, but they are still tense. The two at the door push back the front-runners of the pack that wants to come in — the social have-nots — and block off the entrance like riot police guarding a barricade. What few outsiders have managed to prove their social worthiness and squeeze through step into the club somewhat doe-eyed. They can tell that something is wrong, even if they have no concept of what that might be.

I, however, am not lucky enough to be so blissfully ignorant. As soon as I cross the threshold into Bainbridge's club, I spot Travian sitting alone in the very center of the room. Even had Bainbridge failed to give me a picture-clear description of the man, my eyes would have been drawn to him. He sits sideways at his circular table, one arm cocked to rest on its surface, the other slung straight down at his side, holding a cigarette a few inches above the floor. This servant is by no means handsome, but he exudes an aura of confidence and power that is difficult to ignore. His knife-thin body seems simultaneously relaxed and poised to spring. The music, however, does not seem to affect him, for outlined against the backdrop of the dance floor, he remains perfectly motionless.

Standing transfixed, I garner the notice of two of Bainbridge's servants who have taken positions inside the club. They recognize me and nod in unison, subtly motioning in Travian's direction as if I didn't know where he is. At this signal, Travian looks up, first at the two servants — who, by their startled reactions, must have thought until that moment that Travian was unaware of their presence — then at me. His movements are slow and precise, like the motions of an owl or a robot. I can feel his gaze like a laying on of hands. Ignoring the two servants, Travian cocks his head and glances purposefully at the empty seat across the table from him.

As with any adversarial contest between unequal opponents, the posturing for dominance begins immediately. Travian has taken a position closest to the door, so I must walk up to and then past him to take my seat. He also remains seated, displaying his greater ease and comfort. As I move to my chair, his eyes remain locked on mine, swiveling to follow my every move. My face is a casual, unreadable mask. I steeple my fingers in front of my chin and lean on my elbows just far enough so that Travian has to turn in his seat to face me.



"Speak," I command him.

"Didn't Bainbridge come with you?" Travian asks, glancing significantly at several people around the room. Each one looks away when Travian makes eye contact. "Enough of his entourage is already here."

"They're just here to make sure you can't leave," I respond, surprising him a bit. "There are also three plants in the line outside and two men watching each of the rear entrances."

Travian glances around again, trying to remain calm despite the rising surge of panic I felt so recently myself. My admissions confuse him and keep him off balance. I have carefully rehearsed what information I can let slip to Travian, as well as how hard he will have to pry and barter to get it.

"Good old Bainbridge," he says at last, taking an unsteady drag from his cigarette. "Ever thorough."

"Who is your master?" I ask, staring insistently through the pall of bluish smoke. Travian blinks.

"Didn't Bainbridge tell you what I told his people to tell him?" he asks, his cigarette dangling in no-man's land. "They should have said—"

"What do you hope to gain from this?" I ask, hoping to keep him off balance and perhaps trick the information out of him.

However, I've gone too far too fast, and I end up sounding like a Monty Python routine. Instead of answering, Travian relaxes, letting a thin, callous smile crawl across his face. Leaning back in his chair, he stubs out his cigarette and rests his palm on the table.

"Not so fast there, slick," he drawls, turning back to the side as he was when I found him. "You don't want to blow your wad before I'm even ready."

I try to maintain dignity and put on a look of patriarchal disapproval. Travian doesn't even look. I doubt he can even smell my sewer-stench through all the smoke that hangs in the air around him.

"So tell me at your pace," I concede, making the offer sound like a benign allowance. "You wanted someone to listen to you, otherwise you wouldn't have gone to all this trouble."

"Soon enough," Travian says. He taps out another cigarette from a wrinkled paper pack and lights it behind his hand. The flickering glow makes the black in his hair dance like an oil spill.

I easily wait Travian out as he smokes the cigarette from end to end in silence. He grows tense with anticipation, pretending to look around at the patrons of Bainbridge's club, though likely scouting possible escape routes. Finally, when he has convinced himself that every avenue out of the room (the building, really) is covered by creatures like himself, he turns to me and begins to speak. Having been feigning disinterest and boredom, I look away from the dance floor and give Travian my attention.

"First, I know who you are," he says, crushing out the last of his coffin nail in the heavy glass ashtray on the table. "I didn't request you specifically, but I knew that Bainbridge would go looking for you when I told him where I'd be tonight."

"Why?"

"Well, I wanted it to be you they sent," he says, looking away briefly. "I heard about how you dealt with some of my people back when they were going all gung-ho greenpeace on us. According to them, you were really fair. You listened."



"And that's what you want now, why you've gone to so much trouble," I ask.
"You want to be heard?"

"Yeah, man," Travian nods with growing excitement. "That's all."

"The logging situation arose out of credible concerns and legitimate differences of opinion," I tell him, my voice growing cold. "You are nothing but a petty terrorist."

"But you have to," Travian says plaintively, feeling his advantage slip away.
"I know things...."

"You know nothing," I interrupt, dropping my hands to the table's surface and leaning forward. "Not if you thought we would deal with a stupid, arrogant servant."

"But I found out—"

"What you found out is irrelevant." My voice stays at a normal level to avoid accidentally revealing anything to the average bystanders, but my eyes blaze. "You betrayed your oath of servitude, and for that, your life is garbage to us."

Travian blinks but reveals no fear. "Not if you knew what I know. Lafonte was into some serious shit before I—"

I know the name and affiliation of every one of my kind in my city, though not those of their servants. Ellen Lafonte — one of Bainbridge's class — is young and weak, and it is no longer such an unreasonable surprise that her servant could have taken her prisoner. There are issues of status that must be addressed, however, "serious shit" notwithstanding.

"Before what?" I lay on. "Before you locked her in her chambers without sustenance?"

"She's not in her chambers, dammit," Travian snaps, struggling to keep his voice as level as mine. "And she's not without—"

"Ah, so you brutalized her and left her for dead somewhere?" Knowing Lafonte, such a claim would not be so unreasonable. If I guess correctly, Travian is her senior in age. Doubtless the same is true for physical prowess as well, which was why Travian was assigned to guard her in the first place. "My authorities will not look kindly on that at all."

"Look, she's fine," Travian growls, leaning across the table at me. "I just drugged her when I brought her food."

"Ah," I smirk sardonically. "So you drugged her and left her for dead?"

Travian slams a fist on the table, drawing several stares and the direct notice of several of Bainbridge's servants. "I told you she's safe at the warehouse where I wo—"

A look of horror crosses Travian's face and he closes his eyes. "Shit!"

Glancing at the nearest of Bainbridge's servants, I nod significantly and give the subtle signal Bainbridge told me to give. Without hesitation, Travian jumps from his seat and reaches for something under his coat. As three of Bainbridge's servants surround Travian — seeming to appear from the very air, they move so fast — I snatch up the heavy glass ashtray from the table and hurl it at Travian's wrist. The bones there crack, Travian yelps and a large black pistol clatters to the ground. Two of Bainbridge's servants grab Travian by the shoulders, and the third scoops up the pistol before anyone notices it. Anyone who cares to look will probably assume that the clatter was that of the ashtray.



"You gotta listen to me," Travian says, struggling against the servants who hold him and cradling his swelling wrist. "Lafonte is into some serious shit, I'm telling you. Stuff even people like *her* aren't supposed to be into."

Bainbridge's servants look questioningly at me, and I only sit back in my chair. My disguise belies no tension or question. "Escort him out."

* * *

Bainbridge meets me not 10 minutes later. He breezes past the line at the front door like it isn't there and sits down opposite me in the chair Travian sat in. I order two drinks from one of Bainbridge's servants and look at my employer with pride.

"That was somewhat easier than I thought, I must admit."

Bainbridge grins at me behind his perfumed handkerchief, making me want to cringe. "One must remember one's place. You did well to remind Travian of his, albeit later than I am sure his master would have appreciated."

"Indeed."

The drinks — two glasses of deep red wine — arrive, and Bainbridge says, "Did Travian tell you anything else as you spoke to him?"

I gulp down the first swallows from my glass before I answer. Bainbridge will have to forgive the breach of culture; I haven't put anything in my stomach since I woke up.

"Nothing regarding his motivation," I tell him. "He would only say that Madame Lafonte had involved herself in some sort of illicit clandestine affair...."

Bainbridge's lip twitches behind his own glass.

"Doubtless a bargaining ploy to buy himself a few more precious moments of life."

"Most likely," I say cautiously. Why did Bainbridge hesitate? "It is odd, however, that he merely took her captive instead of putting her to death."

"Like most servants," Bainbridge says, his mouth still behind the wine glass, "Travian did not understand the nature of our society. Ones such as we are not given to the emotional weakness necessary to give those methods their power."

I don't respond to that. Instead, I drink off the rest of my wine (though more slowly) and sit, watching the dancers on the floor.

"Is something wrong?" Bainbridge asks. I notice that his wine glass is empty also. "You're scowling. That's a truly unattractive look on you, let me assure you."

"Just thinking too much, Bainbridge," I tell him, still looking away. "The unfathomable concerns of our kind, if you will."

"I will not," Bainbridge grins, gesturing roguishly. "We have more pleasant things to talk about. Like your payment and the employment negotiations. You've made a fine start here for us this evening, and it's not even midnight! Let us hope every night is so productive."

I hold up a smile, though the feeling dissolves behind it. "Yes, let us hope so."

(This story appeared previously in the Athens by Night newsletter.)



MAYDAY!

AN OBLIVION ADVENTURE IN THREE PARTS

by Lindsay Woodcock

What good would a magazine devoted to *Mind's Eye Theatre* be without a nod here or there to actual plot? Storytelling is, after all, what these games are all about, and you can't tell a good, evocative, interesting story without a winning plot. If you're just joining us, this is Part Two of *Mayday!*, a three-part adventure for *Oblivion*. Part One, Ambassador, appeared in the March issue of the *Journal* and began the intrigue. So, in an attempt to help you keep your live-action chronicles current with *World of Darkness* continuity, we present....

PART TWO: DEPLOYMENT

Some technical notes before we begin again: No ready-made adventure could possibly account for player creativity, Narrator preference or even pure chance. There are just too many variables at work in a live-action context to make for a single story that will work for everyone. Flexibility is essential. Keeping that in mind, then, each installment of this adventure is broken into individual scenes. The scene descriptions are divided into two sections: Hard Info and Choices.

The Hard Info category presents facts, events and information that must somehow occur or be revealed for the adventure to run as planned. Feel free to use existing social structures, Narrator characters or your favorite plot devices to do so; the *how* is not important as long as the *what* comes across.

The Choices category is, again, just what it might appear. The story's flexibility plays a large part in these sections, as both Narrator and characters develop the plot. As long as the skeleton of the adventure — the Hard Info — is intact, don't worry about forcing the flesh into any particular shape.

Though this adventure is designed for a small to medium size Circle of wraiths, it can easily accommodate a larger troupe. Narrator characters, Spectres and all manner of other characters show up, and all of them need players to make the experience rise to its potential. Again, feel free to use existing characters outside of the central Circle, as having familiar elements introduce or elaborate on new plot threads only increases the dramatic power and believability of the game. Plus, employing existing characters to drive this plot serves as a more direct motivation for the characters to get involved, and it makes the players feel like active participants in the development of the plot, rather than simple agents acting in someone else's story. However, if none of the existing plot-characters in your game seem appropriate to this story, we include our concepts of some of the major players at the end of each installment.

A final note: The three parts of *Mayday!* mix and match with your existing game readily enough. You could wait until the remaining part is released, then play them all together as a stand-alone adventure, or you could play each part as it comes out in the *Journal*, waiting for the next installment before you play again. You could weave each installment into an ongoing game, letting events snowball or leaving loose ends to keep players wondering what's going on. Above all, remember that it's your game, and this adventure works like salt — season to taste.

And players, everything else past this point is Storyteller material, so if you don't want to spoil the surprise, read no further.

MAYDAY!

DEPLOYMENT

Part Two is the most freeform of the adventure's installments. It's also the most dangerous: Inter-wraith relations have a tendency to be volatile, at best. Virtually all of the events that occur are direct results of the characters' actions in Part One — actions that could and should have been influenced by player innovation and character interaction and are therefore unpredictable — so only a few have been detailed for you. Character and roleplaying guided the Circle into the situation it finds itself in at the outset of Part Two, and the way through this chapter is, again, through character and roleplaying.

SUGGESTIONS

This installment has a few more new characters than the first one. The most important character your troupe meets during this game is Joseph Sauvant, a Hierarchy agent assigned to the Circle's case. The Circle has a potentially vital relic — Nakagawa's box of Heretic contacts and plans — and the Hierarchy wants it. If the characters went to the Hierarchy for help in Part One, Sauvant is likely to try to talk the group into handing the box over. If they chose one of the other options, like the Renegades, he might be inclined to use less diplomatic tactics. Other characters the Circle might run into are the two Heretic agents within the Hierarchy who are out to silence the group, Heretic cult members, Renegade leaders and Hierarchs trying to preserve order. If you created any or all of these characters when you played *Ambassador*, it's a good idea to use the same ones again. Of course, if the characters came from a pre-existing chronicle, you can just brief the players and not worry about making any new wraiths.

There aren't many props for this chapter; it's almost entirely based on character interaction rather than the discovery of some new relic. The item cards for the relic box, the *wakizashi* and anything else you used in Part One should be sufficient.

SCENE ONE

Hard Info:

The Hierarchy now knows — either because the wraiths told them voluntarily in Part One or through the Hierarchy information network — about the box and the fact that the Circle has it. If the Hierarchs don't have the relic already, they want it.

The same goes for the Heretics. However, now that their plans have been fouled up (Nakagawa falling into the Harrowing and the box going to the Circle), there are new agents in town. The Heretics listed on the paper in the relic box are members of a cult with branches in almost every city in the Shadowlands and Stygia. That cult is now on the brink of being discovered, and the agents have been sent in for cleanup and ass-covering maneuvers. Though the Heretics who tried to take the Circle out for "knowing too much already" in the first installment of *Mayday!* failed (if your Circle made the choice to approach the Heretics), these new agents are here to finish the job.

What's really going on here? Now is when you, as Storyteller, find out. The Jade Empire has been planning to invade Stygia, with the help of the covert Heretic cult, for some time now. The characters are at ground zero for the invasion of their Necropolis. No matter what the characters do, this attack is going to happen, and it's going to happen on a fixed schedule: one day after the characters first receive the relic box from Nakagawa. This timetable should absolutely not be immediately obvious to the players or the characters. They *should* be able to figure it out — even the radar controllers at Pearl Harbor had all the signs right there at their fingertips, after all — but the Storyteller shouldn't just hand it to them.

Choices:

Characters can attempt to investigate the Heretic cult further. They might try to infiltrate it or pump information from other wraiths, or they might go about spying from a more arcane angle. The amount, nature and veracity of the information they get is up to the Storyteller and Narrators, but keep in mind that the invasion plot is carefully guarded and will not be divulged at all lightly or willingly.

If the characters have already gone to the Hierarchy or if they choose to go to the Hierarchy now, they can attempt to help in the investigation of the cult, assuming they've convinced the legionnaires to mount one in the first place! Various Social challenges and extensive roleplaying should be called for, as the Hierarchy is extremely suspicious of the characters.

The Hierarchy has a few bad apples in its barrel. Two Heretic cult infiltrators have made it into the ranks and they work actively, though subtly, to keep the characters from getting involved. They will do their utmost to quash any investigation the Hierarchy might launch.

Heretic cult agents tail the Circle. The characters have to work extremely hard to find out about the surveillance, much less do anything about it. Characters might attempt to mislead the spies or they might use a more direct approach and confront the agents openly. Of course, the fact that there are cult spies following the Circle makes infiltrating the Heretic cult considerably more difficult.

If the characters chose to take refuge with the Renegades in Part One, they might get in good with the Renegade leadership. Careful prodding and demonstrations of trustworthiness ought to earn the characters some information: Nakagawa's disappearance was not random. The Renegades had enough foreknowledge of the invasion to not only research the Jade wraith's Fetter but to arrange to have one of them — the teacup — destroyed in order to send him into a Harrowing and, with any luck, keep the invasion from happening.

Social and status-related effects of this chapter are potentially profound. Hierarchy-affiliated Circles might gain status and perhaps a more tangible reward for their help. Groups appealing to the Renegades for protection and support might strengthen their alliances



MAYDAY!



and open channels to new sources of support — and gain the severe disapproval of the Hierarchy while they're at it. Clumsy characters could very easily find themselves on the top of *everyone's* shit list!

Don't forget the taint on the *wakizashi* Nakagawa was carrying in his box. Whether in the hands of a player's character or a Narrator, the potential for Catharsis is a strong story line and makes for interesting plot twists.

This chapter should end either one day after the Circle obtained the relic box or when the characters have come to some sort of decision about how to deal with the Jade invasion (if they've found out about it) or the race for the relic box (if they haven't).

So ends this the second installment of Mayday! Look for Part III: Invasion in the December issue of the *Journal*, wherein this thrilling plotline reaches its climax and conclusion, after which the Underworld will never be the same. The following is a "skin and bones" cheat-sheet of suggested Traits and a background sketch for Joseph Sauvant, the Hierarchy agent assigned to retrieve the relic box from the Circle.

THE INVESTIGATOR

THE SKIN

Sauvant was a patient and obedient French soldier, in life. The only thing he lacked was ambition; he never managed to rise above the rank of private even though he had the ability and the raw skill to go much further. His civilian life was quite similar: He loved a woman, but not enough to marry her; he had a few friends, but no special comrades. Only his mediocrity and his desire to do better brought him to the Shadowlands when, long after he had left the army, he was killed by a thief.

Now, Joseph Sauvant is a careful wraith, dedicated to doing his job thoroughly and well. At the moment, his job is to get Nakagawa's relic box and all the information contained in it from the Circle and take it back to the Hierarchy — and he uses whatever means he deems necessary to get that job done. If the characters managed to convince the Hierarchy to listen to them in Part One, they find Sauvant persistent and rational in his attempts to convince them to hand over the box. In any other case, Sauvant demonstrates exactly what made him a good soldier: relentless attention to his task. He might corner the characters and verbally browbeat them. On the other hand, he might corner them and physically browbeat them — hey, whatever works.

THE BONES

PERSONAL INFORMATION

- Name: Joseph Sauvant
- Life: Soldier
- Death: Random violence
- Nature: Follower
- Demeanor: Bravo
- Regret: Never having made anything of himself

S T A T I S T I C S

Mental Traits: Attentive, Determined, Disciplined x 2, Patient, Vigilant
Social Traits: Commanding, Dignified, Genial, Intimidating
Physical Traits: Athletic, Brawny, Enduring, Ferocious x 2, Rugged x 2, Tough
Abilities: Brawl, Bureaucracy, Firearms, Melee, Repair, Stealth

A R C A N O I

Argos (all innates): Enshroud, Phantom Wings, Flicker
Castigate (all innates): Soulsight
Molate (all innates): Sculpt, Martialry

P A S S I O N S

Get Ahead in Hierarchy (Pride)
Always be Right (Vanity)
Protect his Living Home (Love)
Find his Family (Love)

F E T T E R S

Home in Life
French Army Uniform
The Rifle he Carried

B A C K G R O U N D S

Hierarchy Status	3
Artifact	3 (coiled whip made of braided soul material)

S A U V A N T ' S S H A D O W

The Abuser

D A R K P A S S I O N S

Destroy Wraiths of Higher Status (Jealousy)
Drive Everyone Away (Self-Hatred)

T H O R N S

Spectre Prestige
Tainted Relic (military baton)

M A Y D A Y !



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The constant evolution of Mind's Eye Theatre brings new and different questions to the game. This issue, we tackle questions and comments about *The Shining Host*. No one's a greater critic of a writer's work than the writer himself. Thus, when I went looking for a rules update, I turned to the author of *The Shining Host*, Peter Woodworth. He had so much to say that I devoted this entire section to his info.

Send your Mind's Eye Theatre questions to:

White Wolf

Attn: *Mind's Eye Theatre Journal, Frequently Asked Questions*
735 Park North Blvd, Suite 128
Clarkston, GA 30021
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ERRATA, OMISSIONS AND SO FORTH FOR THE SHINING HOST

by Peter Woodworth

KITH

ESHU

Spirit Pathways cards are not cumulative over multiple sessions; only one Spirit Pathways card is issued per session, and unused cards should be returned to a Narrator at the end of the session. (Used cards, of course, are turned in sooner.)

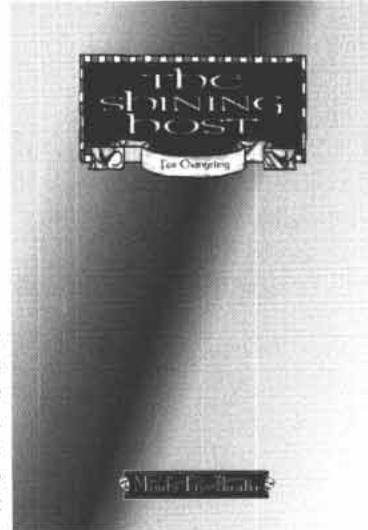
BACKGROUNDS

TITLE

The Social Traits gained from the Title Background do not count toward Trait totals for the purposes of cantrips, except for the Sovereign Art. (Yes, this gives the sidhe a distinct advantage with this Art, but because they use it sparingly and they are the ones who created it and primarily wield it, this shouldn't be a problem.) Characters must declare when they are adding Title Traits to their Social Traits for a challenge, however, since opponents may choose to ignore the Title Traits and force a character to rely on his own Social Traits alone (even in a cantrip situation). However, ignoring a noble's title is a serious insult in Kithain society, and a character who does so had best expect some form of punishment to follow for such an insolent display.

OCCULT INFLUENCE

Yes, I goofed. It should say "Kithain" instead of "Garou."





TRAITS

TRAIT MAXIMUMS

Changelings have the following Trait maximums for their Social, Mental and Physical Trait categories: childlings 10, wilders 12, grumps 16. Please note that any bonus Traits gained from a kith's Birthrights (*sidhe Awe and Beauty*, *troll Titan's Power*, you name it) and *only* their Birthrights may allow them to go over these limits. Thus, it is possible for a grump to have upward of 18 Traits in certain rare circumstances.

WILLPOWER USAGE

This system should be updated in keeping with other games. A Willpower Trait may be spent to gain a retest against (not ignore the results of) a Social or Mental Challenge, including supernatural powers that rely on such challenges where it's appropriate. Willpower may also be used to replenish Traits in one category (Social, Mental, Physical) only once per session.

MERITS & FLAWS

Why were so many Birthrights & Frailties made into Merits & Flaws?

This is one of the most frequently asked questions about the *The Shining Host*. The idea behind this innovation was to show how the various cultures of the world have shared elements of their mythologies over time, and thus how some rare faeries have come to be a blend of different legendary traits. For example, in some cultures, boggans also have sharp hearing and keen eyesight in addition to their craftsmanship ability, and many legends speak of dread redcaps who possess the strength of ogres. These unique Merits & Flaws were thus designed to allow a character to show the gradual evolution of the fae as they spread across the world, not to min-max a character into some mythical Ultimate Changeling.

True Faith (7 Trait Supernatural Merit)

True Faith was accidentally omitted. See *Laws of the Hunt*, page 92, for details on *True Faith*.

(A cautionary note — *True Faith* is rare to begin with and even more rare among the Fair Ones. A player should have a very good explanation to give the Storyteller for how his character came by such an unusual state of mind for the fae.)

Overconfident (1 Trait Personality Flaw)

The Negative Traits indicated in the text of this Flaw are the *Impatient* and *Gullible* Negative Traits, which eshu possess naturally; a character still gains the Trait value of the Flaw, naturally.

Charmed Life (5 Trait Supernatural Merit)

Once per session, the Storyteller may alert the player to a hunch his character has about a particular situation (*You get the sudden impression that going down that alley juuuuuuuust might be a mistake*). In other words, the character gets a spooky feeling before something happens in game, thus giving him the chance to change his mind or rethink his strategy. An important use of this capacity allows the character to negate a combat situation *before it starts* in order to prevent it or make it come out better than it would have if the character were to enter it unaware. If the character initiates the situation anyway, he can't back up events or change his mind if things turn out badly for him, because of a hunch he had about the first outcome. No information is retained about events that did not happen thanks to this Merit, and no one but the *Charmed* character benefits from this Merit.

(Note: This Merit can be extremely powerful, and it should be used no more than once per session, if even that often. Storytellers should retain complete control over this Merit, and characters who overuse it may start receiving false hunches and other erroneous information.)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



ARTS

SOVEREIGN (PROTOCOL)

Please note that this Art means that if the cantrip is successful, the target may not break *Protocol* for the court occasion in any way unless he spends a Willpower Trait. If *Protocol* is cast on an area by using the Scene Realm (as is commonly done at a freehold), any who wish to break *Protocol* within the boundaries of the cantrip must beat the caster in a Static Social Challenge for every disobedient action they wish to perform. Characters may also spend a Willpower Trait to cancel *Protocol* for themselves (but not the rest of those characters present). Note that in either case the caster will know that *Protocol* has been challenged but not necessarily by whom unless the rebellious character makes it obvious.

REALMS

SCENE

As this Realm was constructed for an average-size area of play, such as the ground floor of a house, the numbers for this Realm may need some doctoring to make it useful in larger settings, such as conventions. Feel free to manipulate the numbers to make the Realm work in your game, though Storytellers should take care to maintain game balance (someone crisping everyone in the game with a single *Pyretics* strike tends to make for a lot of unhappy players) and that the numbers won't run the Storyteller herself ragged trying to keep up with the scope of players' magics. When in doubt, use the names of each level of this Realm (*Closet*, *Guest Room*, *Ground Floor*) and your own common sense as your guide. *Changeling* isn't about yardsticks, after all.

BANALITY

USING ACTIVE BANALITY AGAINST CANTRIPS

The phrasing in the rulebook makes it too easy to abuse invoking Banality as a defense against Kithain cantrips. It is therefore recommended that Storytellers limit the characters who are able to actively use Banality in the following ways: First, characters who have been enchanted by a changeling cannot actively invoke their Banality — they've been taken along for the ride, whether they like it or not. Second, characters must be at least vaguely aware that something out of the ordinary is being directed at them — a mortal orderly chasing a pooka may use his Banality if the pooka begins screaming gibberish and pointing at him, but he cannot do so if the pooka simply sits in a corner, staring into space. Finally, some troupes may wish to rule that characters who have invoked their Banality to try to cancel a cantrip and failed may not attempt such a defense for the remainder of the scene, as the characters' disbelief has been shaken too badly to serve them for the time being.

CANTRIPS

RETESTING CANTRIPS

Overbidding is a perfectly legal means of retesting a cantrip — after all, what good are Bunk Traits unless they can help in the possibility of an overbid, too? However, assume no Ability-related retests are possible unless the cantrip specifically allows them — in other words, no "I use *Subterfuge* to retest my Chicanery powers." Advanced troupes may elect to allow Ability retests of cantrips if the player can explain how the Ability directly relates to the cantrip's use. In order to avoid endless retests and other entanglements, it is recommended that beginning troupes restrict retests to overbidding, the House Eiluned Boon and defensive Gremayre uses.

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EVENT HORIZON: UPCOMING LARP EVENTS

Thanks again to the Camarilla for letting me use the dates from the event calendar in the Requiem. Something they don't tell us youngster developers is that you're often working on the second publication in a line before the first one has reached the audience. That being said, I'll re-extend the invitation to everyone out there to mail or e-mail me the dates and specifics of your events to be added to the Journal's calendar.

VAMPIRE EVENTS

NORTHWESTERN US

Ruby Rain Society; Mountlake, WA Every Friday Tracy Soldan, tarot01@juno.com	Dark Salem; Salem, OR First and third Thursday of each month Preston Malone, Coordinatrix@hotmail.com
Dark Necropolis; Kitsap, WA Every Saturday mrdeath@u.washington.edu	Seattle; Seattle, WA Second and third Sunday of each month seattledomain@usa.net
Tacoma; Tacoma, WA Second, third, fourth & fifth Sunday of each month sheperd@darkdestiny.com (253) 581-8728	Outlands; South King County, WA Second Sunday of each month tsigane@wizards.com
Of No Concern; Eugene, OR First Saturday of each month Jmcloud@gladstone.uoregon.edu	Nox ad Infinitum; Fairbanks, AK Every Saturday fsdck@aurora.alaska.edu
Trails End Troup; Oregon City, OR Every Friday TheChylde@aol.com	Ivory Masque; Anchorage, AK Every Monday glitter_boy@hotmail.com
Theatre of Roses; Portland, OR Every Saturday Kewi-Cee Chu, kc@csua.berkeley.edu	Dark Tears; Walla Walla, WA First and third Saturday of each month annapuma@hotmail.com

SOUTHWESTERN U S

Domain of Mountain Shadows; Provo, UT
Every Tuesday
Nikki McCoriston, N.Burton@m.cc.utah.edu
(801) 363-3959

Moonlight Masquerade; Marysville, CA
Every Saturday (8 pm)
Jennifer Young, kaidin@syix.com

Labyrinth of Crying Shadows (Sabbat Game); Sacramento, CA
Every Friday
Adam Abramson, vallombrosa@hotmail.com

NORTHCENTRAL U S

Dominion of Solitude; Topeka, KS Ebon Seraph; Omaha, NE
Second Saturday of each month Last Saturday of each month
Jeffery P. Harrington, davosburgh@aol.com
harri999@geocities.com

Ground Zero; Colorado Springs, CO
Every other Thursday
Travis Page, Darkholme@kktv.com
(719) 328-0605

SOUTHCENTRAL U S

Crimson Tear Society; Jonesboro, AR House of the Eternal Rose; Clear Lake, TX
First and third Saturday of each month Fourth Saturday of each month.
Tom McFarland, prefect@texas.net
thomasmc@fastdata.net
(870) 931-0959

Fourth Tower Falling; Dallas, TX
First Saturday of each month
David Doub, Brujah@gte.net
(972) 788-1895

Garden of Thorns; Clear Lake, TX
First Saturday of each month
wesley_ooc@juno.com

Midnight Rose; Clear Lake, TX
Third Saturday of each month
prefect@texas.net

Legio Noctem; Dallas, TX
Third Saturday of each month
Billy Lucas, williamlucas@juno.com
(972) 788-1895

Kentucky Fried; Dallas, TX
Fourth Saturday of each month
Lance Gillson,
nooneofconsequence@usa.net
(972) 788-1895

Eighth Legion; Dallas, TX
 Fifth Saturday of each month
 James Potter,
 kingsnight@hotmail.com
 (972) 788-1895

Bryan/College Station; B/CS, TX
 Second and fourth Saturday of each month
 Ken Reinertson,
 khr7057@unix.tamu.edu

THE GREAT LAKES

Coterie of the Crimson Night; St. Louis, MO
 Third Saturday of each month
 Jamie Schneider, jaclon@juno.com
 (314) 837-3640

NORTHEAST US

Severed Sun; Boston, MA
 First and third Saturday of each month
 Sean Donnelly
 (617) 656-2891

House of the Crescent Moon; Boston, MA
 Second Saturday of each month
 giovanni@cybercom.net
 (617) 576-1097

EAST CENTRAL US

Das Dae'Mar; State Capitol Complex, WV
 Second and fourth Saturday of each month
 WachuDancR@aol.com

SOUTHEAST US

Shades of Pale Society; Chattanooga, TN
 Second Saturday of each month
 Laura Middleton, shades@larp.com
 (423) 876-4561

Charlestonus Ab Noctum; Charleston, SC
 First two Fridays of every month
 Ian Betts, alistergarle@hotmail.com

House of the Sanguine Moon; Tampa, FL
 First and third Saturday of every month
 Hope Summerall,
 zandria@hotmail.com

Eclipsed Moon; Charleston, SC
 Third Friday of every month
 Ian Betts, alistergarle@hotmail.com

Athens by Night; Athens, GA
 June 12; July 10
 Storyteller List
 abn-st@math.gatech.edu

Kindred of the Shadows; Auburn, AL
 Every Sunday
 boudrej@mail.auburn.edu

Blood Moon; Charleston, SC
 Fourth Saturday of every month
 Ian Betts, alisterlegare@hotmail.com

Shadows of Vulcan; Birmingham, AL
 Second Saturday of each month
 Sarah Riggs,
 coordinator@shadowsofvulcan.com

Libertas Aeterna; Charlotte, NC
 Every other Saturday
 Tim Harris, harrist@cs.wmich.edu

GAROU

NORTHWEST US

Ruby Rain Society; Edmonds, WA
First and third Saturday of each month
Tracy Soldan, tarot01@juno.com

Tacoma; Tacoma, WA
First, third and fifth Saturday of
each month
sheperd@darkdestiny.com
(253) 581-8728

Theatre of Roses; Battleground, WA
Every Sunday
Kwei-Cee Chu, kc@csua.berkeley.edu

Of No Concern; Eugene, OR
Second and fourth Saturday of
each month
Jmcloud@gladstone.uoregon.edu

Seattle; Seattle, WA
Second and fourth Saturday of
each month
seattledomain@usa.net

Olde Guard; Anchorage, AK
Every Sunday
Tom Alexander,
nightstalker@customcpu.com

NORTHCENTRAL US

Knights of Rage; Colorado Springs, CO
Every other Thursday
Dan Page, AllmityBob@aol.com
(719) 447-0399

SOUTHCENTRAL US

Crimson Tear Society; Jonesboro, AR
First and third Saturday of each month
Tom McFarland,
thomasmc@fastdata.net
(870) 931-0959

Bryan/College Station; B/CS, TX
Second and fourth Saturday of
each month
Ken Reinertson,
khr7057@unix.tamu.edu

Fourth Tower Falling; Dallas, TX
First Saturday of each month
Matt Ragan,
matt_ragan@hotmail.com
(972) 788-1895

SOUTHEAST US

House of the Sanguine Moon; Tampa, FL
Second and fourth Saturday of each
month
Hope Summerall,
zandria@hotmail.com

Onyx Illuminatus; Charleston, SC
First and third Sunday of each month
Ian Betts, alisterlegare@hotmail.com

OTHERS (UNSPECIFIED AND MIXED GAMES)

Nox Imperium; Longview, WA
Every Monday of each month
katzmeow@kalama.com

Trails End Troupe; Salem, OR
Second and fourth Saturday of each month
Coordinatrix@hotmail.com

Outlands; South King County, WA
Fourth Saturday of each month
tsigane@wizards.com