

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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THE LIVE-ACTION GAMING MAGAZINE



Mind's Eye Theatre
JOURNAL

BECAUSE THE MIND'S EYE NEVER BLINKS



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- Live-action rules for the True Black Hand
- Combination Disciplines
- Master-level Thaumaturgy Rituals

Issue #2

- Live-action Nunnehi rules
- Tips on starting up and maintaining a long-running chronicle
- Articles on the Camarilla organization and One World by Night
- A look at how **Mind's Eye Theatre** has changed and grown over time.



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WELCOME TO THE MIND'S EYE THEATRE JOURNAL!

Hello again, everybody, and welcome to the third issue of the **MET Journal**. 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 you (*If I use modified rules at my game, can I charge admission?*), original World of Darkness fiction and columns from people who've been LARPing or working here at White Wolf (or both) for years.

In this issue, we take a look at the bad guys of the World of Darkness on both sides of the perspective coin, offer some guidelines on dealing with problem players and take a behind-the-scenes advance look at one of the most eagerly anticipated **Mind's Eye Theatre** releases in quite some time. And that's just a sample of what's in store for you here. We'll also take a look at what you've missed in previous issues (if you're joining us late) and what to expect in the future of **Mind's Eye Theatre** and White Wolf in general.

In future issues of the **Journal**, we'll present the conclusion to "Mayday!", a guide to Storytelling Oblivion chronicles that happen in the aftermath of the event described therein—and yes, the event is *that big*—as well as more World of Darkness fiction and **MET** rules conversions.

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 come across in different **MET** publications. Send us horror stories about 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.

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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 issues regarding **Mind's Eye** 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.

(For the readers who aren't clued in to how fast the publishing schedule moves, let this letter column stand as a guide. Only now am I getting to print responses to letters that appeared in the first issue of the *Journal*. For those of you who sent me mail concerning letters in the last issue, fear not — I'm not ignoring you. As of publication of this issue, I simply hadn't received them yet.) For those of you just tuning in, a debate thread concerning two different LARP games appeared in the first issue of the *Journal*. One accused the other of being a juvenile gore-fest that encouraged min-maxing; the other accused the first of being overly complicated, thus hamstringing roleplaying. Our first outside contender, Matt Sullins, weighs in on that issue and others.

Well, Carl, you asked for some personal opinions in the sidebar at the end of ["The Current Thinking" in the first issue of the *Journal*]. You asked, "How far is too far before you lose the roleplaying and Storytelling aspects that make our games what they are?" My only thought here is that as soon as my players and I begin playing a game it is no longer *yours*. There is no such thing as "too far" as long as we enjoy ourselves. The White Wolf Nazi Terror Squad is not going to break down my door and shut down my LARP. There is no reason not to play as the group sees fit. Mind you, I personally stand by the Big 6 rules in all of the **Masquerade** books. (While the White Wolf Nazi Terror Squad might not stop you from breaking these, other groups, like the police, might. Keep that in mind before you go biting some innocent teenager's neck and trying to use "Matt told me it was OK" as a defense.)



Finally, I have a question of my own that I would like to throw into the ring. Do other LARPers feel that their group should organize and encourage charity work? I know that the Camarilla is in favor of this, and I have found it to be a good thing myself. I am just curious as to the opinions of others.

Hugs and Chainsaws,
—Matt Sullins
Head Storyteller
Seraphim Theater Troupe

"Terror squad" indeed. Terror squads are so *pass*. Everyone knows it's all lawyers now. Anyway.

I'll keep this short and sweet. To solve this rules debate [from Issue #1], take *Liber des Goules*, turn to page 16, look for the heading that says, "The Only Rules That Matter," and read.

Aside from that, if your troupe wants to incorporate wereparrots from post-apocalyptic Antarctica, go for it. It's just a (damn great) game.

—Robert Dupuis

Well then. Moving on, we come to Mark Lewis, a guy who (without having seen the second issue of the *Journal*, ironically) has come out with his opinion on the Camarilla organization and One World by Night blazing. He also opines on the varying degrees of LARP maturity, as he sees them.

Before I begin, let me congratulate you on a good first issue. It was entertaining, well presented and didn't suck. My one critique: is starting off with "The True Black Hand" a device I have yet to see regarded as well liked by any of the local LARPs (or the glut of MUSHes I stop in at regularly).

Your questions are interesting. Cam, Independent or WannabeCam (i.e., One World By Night)? Speaking only for the games in my area, that I have had contact with, Indie appears the best. The Camarilla earned itself a bad name back in the early '90s with its - ahem - LARP. Unfortunately, the system of "buff stats for doing Cam organization stuff" placed too much power in the hands of twits. The Storyteller staff felt the need to make each "episode" (episodic nature being a problem unto itself in my view) more grandiose than the last. Why, in the first game I played, our opponent was an Unseelie Fae (a year or two before *The Shining Host*, might I add) who had managed to kidnap the Raccoon Totem. Oh yes, this is the subject of a Vampire LARP. My experience with One World by Night and other "shared universe" groups is just as dismal. The few roleplayers that were present were dwarfed by the Rules Lawyers, Stick Jocks Turned LARPer and Sixteen-Year-Old Cool Kids, none of whom had any idea what was going on. But the "Cam, Indie, Other" classification system doesn't hit the real issues.



It's also not a matter of "more rules," "less rules" or "different rules." I've played WoDLARPs with massive amounts of rules addenda, multi-page FAQs on trivial wording problems in White Wolf books, and constant arguments between Rules Lawyers and Storytellers. I've also seen groups that barely got the whole "Rock-Paper-Scissors" thing once you threw Bomb into the mix. Neither was better or worse than the other on the grounds of rules alone. The matter really doesn't lie here either.

The crux of the matter lies in two questions: One, is this a freshman, sophomore or senior LARP?, and two, is it an open-invite group or an invite-only group?

The first question is, in my opinion, the most important. A freshman LARP will almost always start to suck after a few games. Why? Your Storytellers are new to Storytelling. They want to have big impressive plots that have the pretentiousness of Neil Gaiman and the in-your-face bastardness of Warren Ellis. They believe the LARP to be "Their Game — love it or leave it." "Their



plot" is most important. The players are new to playing. They want to create characters who incorporate every cool little thing they've seen/read/heard/dreamed. They see the letter of the rules and not the spirit. They consider a Clan War to be that cluster-fuck-mass-combat that happens at the end of each and every one of their games because the boredom just has to be stopped. In short, everyone has the drive to play and make a game of it, but they don't yet know the differences between MET LARPing and table top (or boffer weapons for that matter). The combat wombats usually gravitate toward the fringes of the game where no one will interfere with their challenges. The socialites will find a dark corner and grope. The unsure will mill about, occasionally trying something that pops into their heads just to be doing something. And the "good LARPers" hide from everyone for as long as they can in the hopes their well-thought-out character (who even has Flaws meant to build character, rather than to min-max points) can survive the night. This is the game where archons and justicars show up regularly because there "is just no other way to keep control."

The sophomore LARP comes about when the Storytellers or players (or some of both) start to see the Story within the Game. The Storytellers try to make some movement toward a coherent plot line that they hope is new and different. They allow and encourage some player-driven plots, as long as the sanctity of "their plot" remains. They discourage the combat wombats by throwing in some "heavy hitters," designed just for that purpose. They start to provide rumors based on Influences, and they encourage players to research said rumors to find plot. The players, in turn, place some thought into a new character, with the emphasis more on character than min-maxing. The social order starts to develop, and primogen last more than a couple games, but there are still problems. Those one or two players who are better schemers than the Storytellers get stomped on "in the name of plot" *cough - ego-bruised - cough*. The Storyteller's roommate is the antagonist "since he knows everything about the plot anyway". The "fringe players" still can't quite get involved enough, no one gloms on to them as the useful pawns they can be. Things still aren't right.

The senior LARP is a partnership between Storyteller and player. It is a series of joint tales, told by everyone involved. Ego doesn't rear its head much any more, the Storytellers encourage players who manage to outthink them, and they create fluid enough plots to compensate and entertain. Players make characters who need development, so they can find a personal story within that development. Combat is rare, but when it happens it furthers the story, not simply kills an hour and 1/3 of the player base. The Storyteller's plots are subtle and provoke emotion; they promote roleplaying rather than just existing as a thing to "discover and be amazed."

I have yet to see a senior game, and I've been a Storyteller at two separate LARPs. I've seen games come close but they always seem to fail in the end. And it's due to that second question: Is this an invite-only game or open-invite? It's



always that kid who's a friend of a friend of a guy you work with, who shows up with a bunch of friends and who are playing the freshman game, untended and untaught. It's the new Storyteller who, it turns out, has no clue but has to be in charge anyway. It's the random factor of not knowing what new DNA is hitting the gene-pool this month.

So in my mind, the number of rules mean nothing. It's the players and Storytellers that are using the rules that make the difference.

Wow, I really like this soapbox now, don't I?

Later.

—Mark Lewis

Luchadore of Gehenna

He sure does. Can anybody help me out on "luchadore" though? Anyhow, the next two letters jump track a bit from the previous discussion. They deal with possible causes of sexism in roleplaying gaming (as opposed to "sexism in *role-playing*," which is altogether different), from some people who have been on the receiving end. Thanks to the "Conclave" mailing list for sparking this topic of discussion.

Most of the men in gaming have been playing roleplaying games for some time now. They have been doing that playing with men, for the most part. That is the situation they are used to and it is somewhat strange to find themselves playing with women now. But I think another factor could be the difference in styles of roleplaying between men and women.

[Women] tend to play less aggressively (or at least less overtly aggressive) than the guys do. Women also tend to care more about the roleplaying aspects of the game and having interesting in-game conversations than about maxing their points and having a heinous character.

I know that I have been told that I don't build my characters well. I have been told, with my points, I should have bought this and that and that over there just to be a stronger more 'efficiently' built character. This player (and I think most of us may have an idea who might have said this) never considered that I bought what I did for my character because it fit what my character was doing in her life and then un-life. As her situation changed I bought different things to help her not because it was a "good buy."

My point in explaining all of that was that this player, and those like him who believe in having the most solid player possible, do not have much respect for me or my ability as a player when I don't try to min-max.

Unless you have an obviously strong character, you aren't perceived as a threat by the other characters. It's true outside the game as well. Unless you are an obviously strong player, the others don't go out of their way to play with you.



And truthfully, it does get annoying to be treated as though the women in these games are merely there for decoration. This isn't a 'slight diversion,' or a 'cute hobby,' for us, we are there to play and be involved.

On the other hand, I do think that the women don't tend to jump into the game the way the men do. They often hang around the sidelines and wait to be included, whereas the men tend to walk in and demand attention.

And yet, when we do demand attention or stand up in a situation we should be recognized in and they still overlook us, it gets harder to try and take a stand the next time. Or the situation can occur that we try to stand up and get noticed, begin pushing to get noticed, and all the guys will do is think 'bitch' and then make it a point to not interact with our characters.

It just seems harder to strike that balance and gain their respect as a player.

—Luciann Wasson

The problem having been broached, another respondent on the same thread had this to say about where this brand of sexism comes from, as well as a thought on how to stem the tide.

True, most of the guys spent the first formative years of their roleplaying careers in hormonally swamped all-guy groups where the only females were the nefarious NPC succubi who attempted to lure their half-elf paladin fighters away from the treasure caves. Our live-action games are (hopefully) more mature and complicated, and they require more roleplaying skill than perhaps many of us have trained for.

I think that men need the practice of seeing women as varied, three-dimensional fictional characters, and women need the practice of seeing (and expressing) themselves that way. Let me give you a personal example:

In the process of my job search, I talked with a fellow from the Navy who informed me that, with my qualifications, I was eligible for a nuclear physics program that could have me commanding my own nuclear-powered battleship within two decades.

The second most disturbing occurrence that I had to put up with upon revealing this possible opportunity was that *every* male friend I told about it reacted with, "Awwww! Isn't that cute! Although every time you give an order to fire, they'd just pinch your cheeks and pat you on the head!" - or something similar.

The most disturbing thing about it was that I couldn't picture myself in such a job. It would take Xena or Demi Moore from *G.I. Jane* to do that — someone who could handle such a role. Not me. I would just get laughed at and pinched on the cheeks.

I wouldn't call all of this "sexism," however — that label implies more of a deliberate intent. I think that the situation of women in our live-action games is more a result of the habits and social conditioning of both sexes as well



as a side effect of the low numbers of women who participate. Some of this you can cure with good storytelling, some you can't.

—Hannah Curry

FURTHER FUEL

Let me hear from you!

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

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DEADGUY SPEAKS

by Richard E. Dansky

Rich Dansky has been a part of White Wolf since just shortly before Christ crawled from the primordial ocean at Cyprus. He has been the developer for *Mind's Eye Theatre*, the developer for *Wraith: the Oblivion* and the developer for *Vampire: the Dark Ages*. Watch for this column to showcase Rich's unique insight, his wit, his observations on life in general and (should we be so lucky) his view of the development of *Mind's Eye Theatre*.



I WAS A ZOOM! GIRL'S LOVE SLAVE

or

WHY IT'S GOOD TO BE AN ELF IN A BARN

SERIOUSLY.

Before I get into the meat of this issue's column (or the flavored and textured soy, for those of you who are vegetarians in your reading habits), allow me to pass on a little convention-going advice. If, perchance, you discover that the convention you want to attend is being held in a quote-unquote "Agricultural Center," be aware that what they really mean by that is "barn." Actually, what they mean is "really big barn." In the particular instance from which I was able to glean this insight, "Western North Carolina Agricultural Center" was semantically equivalent to "Livestock Auction Building Off to the Side of a Collection of Big Barns." In still other words, "Moo."

Which doesn't prove much of anything, I suppose, but it is good to keep in mind before you traipse off to Asheville, or wherever. Now, where was I?

Oh yes. Elves in barns, and why it's good to be one.

There's been a slow but steady stream of mail into the office about the choice of books we've put out for the *Mind's Eye Theatre* line. These letters are about why some topics have received attention and others haven't, i.e. why *Wraith* got translated early on, why *Apocalypse* went out of print, why we haven't printed one of the approximately four billion *MET Mage* submissions to come in and so on. And yes, all of these questions will be answered in an upcoming column. Honest. There's a method to this madness, and no, it doesn't involve a dart board or flipping a coin.

In any case, a repeated theme in this correspondence is a curiosity about *The Shining Host*. Some folks want to know why we did the book, because changelings are notoriously difficult to integrate into *Vampire* LARP games. After all, they're theoretically shiny and happy, they don't necessarily hang out at art museums after closing or trendy clubs at all, and they have means of kicking a vampire's ass that are both unexpected and very difficult to guard against. Others want to know why we did the book at all, or why we didn't do it sooner, or why there aren't nunnehi rules... well, you get the idea. But mostly, people are a bit thrown off by the fact that *The Shining Host* seems to stand in such opposition to *Masquerade*.

So let's take some time and think about *The Shining Host* and what it's good for.

I admit that the concept of doing *Changeling* for MET was originally a daunting one. Why? Well, for one thing, by the time the *Mind's Eye* schedule got straightened out back then, I had an appallingly short time to actually get the thing written. This is what we in the business of putting games out there call a "panic situation." Roughly, you want to leave at least two months' lead time, preferably more (I try give a writer a month for each 20,000 words of her assignment, although occasionally crises necessitate Herculean efforts to get things in with little or no room to maneuver), before the first draft of a book is due, let alone the final draft that goes into development. On a short book, like a Clanbook, you can fudge things a little bit. On a longer book, you're generally in trouble with less than three months' lead time. On a huge book, like one over 200 pages, you need to set things rolling way in advance or you're liable to end up with a manuscript that is a.) too short, b.) written in fluent Tagalog because your author burned out 47,000 words in and started typing with his nose, or c.) eaten by the cosmic ducks in transit. (**Note:** This third option is a polite yet delightfully whimsical way of saying "never actually got written.")

For those of you playing along with the home game, *The Shining Host* was a big, big book. In other words, I was screwed.

Or at least I would have been, if not for the intrepid, talented and entirely too eager Peter Woodworth, who had read the submissions guidelines for *Mind's Eye* and decided that a good old three-page submission wasn't good enough for him. No, by gum, he was going to send in his entire rules system for live-action *Changeling* for me to look at, and he was going to make sure I read every last word. Lucky for both of us that I was desperate, because the package he finally sent was *huge*.

I mean, I'd never seen a submission with a snow line on it. Acres of trees died to make the paper for this thing. Two interns got hernias lugging it from the mail table. Mules gave up and died in the traces trying to haul it back to my office. I still had an office back then, instead of a cubicle the color of the slime molds running their own little Daytona 500 around the inside of the company fridge, if that tells you how long ago this all was.

And because I was able to scrape the last few pennies out of my karmic piggy bank, the submission was good. Perfect? Naaah — nothing's perfect, as alt.games.whitewolf constantly reminds me. But did it have potential? Certainly. Could it be made universal in the time we had? With a little luck, it could indeed. There was hope after all.

(**Side note:** Peter is the sort of guy who makes me sick. I found out, after calling him up with a contract in hand, that he was all of 17. He'd written the whole kit and caboodle while attending high school, and he'd done it with a good prose style, an eye toward rules balance and a healthy sense of humor. When I was his age, I was composing "Dear Sir, I always thought the letters in your magazine were fiction until that night when I was viciously ambushed by three voluptuous cheerleaders and a dancing bear" letters for publication, and anything longer than four pages was a moral victory. To make matters worse, he's charming, polite, punctual and professional. Disgusting, ain't it?)

So, the long and short of it is that, eventually, we got a book. It went through the usual playtesting, editing, screaming, howling and gibbering phases that every book goes through, and it hit the shelves eventually. That, needless to say, is when the funny stuff started happening.

By funny stuff, I mean "weird even by the standards of this corner of this particularly unbalanced field of literary endeavor," which is to say, pretty darn weird. Oh, there was the usual tug-of-war back and forth on the newsgroups ("I love it!" "I hate it!" "Duck season!" "Wabbit season!") and the usual hail of criticisms (some of which were warranted, and some of which weren't), but there was also a significant undercurrent from folks talking about what they did at their *Changeling* LARPs. They didn't stake the prince in the hallway three times before anyone brought out snacks. They did, however, have a lot of fun dressing to the nines and cutting loose — and they brought their kids.

That was important for me. As much fun as **Vampire LARP** is and as much as I enjoy it, it's not the sort of place I'd ever feel comfortable taking my hypothetical children to hang out. Too much of the underlying dynamic is simply nasty — not in the sense that the gameplay itself is nasty, but let's face it. We're talking about pretending to be a bunch of predators circling the same bloody half-pound of chuck roast in the water. That's not necessarily kid-friendly.

The Shining Host, on the other hand, is about wonder, at least to an extent. Occasionally, the game itself demands that you do something without an agenda, you have some fun, you be creative for a bit. Mind you, it doesn't *have* to be that way — if you want to run a Shadow Court game, more power to you. But it strikes me as a good thing that parents feel good about bringing their small children to **Changeling LARPs** and that those games are perceived as safe, healthy places for those kids to be.

Yeah. Great. Whatever, right? What does that matter in the grand scheme of things? It matters a lot, I think. By allowing folks to bring their kids along for a day of gaming, **The Shining Host** opens up LARPing to people who might otherwise not have been able to do so. It's one hell of a thing to try to find a sitter who'll take care of Vlad Jr. until the local Camarilla game wraps up at 3:28 AM, let me tell you, and on-site vampiric daycare is pretty difficult to come by. (No, this is not a suggestion; the insurance issues alone boggle the mind.) If you ask me, getting more people out there and playing, regardless of system, is a positive thing.

And all of this brings me — by roads as roundabout as the highway that snakes down Mt. Pisgah — to the topic mentioned in the title of the column: namely, why it's good to be an elf in a barn.

Recently, I (along with the inimitable Jess Heinig—Go ahead. Try to nimit him. I dare you.) had the pleasure of attending KarmaCon in Asheville, North Carolina. Yes, it was held in a barn — well, an Agricultural Center — and yes, there was a paint horse show (whatever that is) going on in the corral and large barns across the way. The convention was small, with all of the activities crammed into the livestock auction building. Still, it was an energetic small con, with a healthy gaming track, a friendly and courteous con staff, a surprisingly profitable charity auction and a LARP. Hoo boy, did they have a LARP.

Let me preface this next section by saying that it is not for the faint of heart, the easily offended or anyone who believes that live action roleplaying begins and ends on the end of a clove cigarette. What we're about to dive into, ladies and germs, is the dreaded *Elves In A Barn* game.

(Or, as noted by the inestimable David Bolack, a case of *Barns and Nobles*. Send the hate mail to me, and I'll forward it to him.)

By all rights, the game shouldn't have worked. Included in gameplay were, among other things, a batch of Marauders who thought they were superheroes, a flying saucer, a backwoods hick troll named Clem who worked for another changeling named J.R. (and yes, the poor sumbitch did get shot so that everyone could ask "Who shot J.R.?" If you don't get that joke, you're too young to be reading this.), an over-amorous cow and a six-year old Unseelie princess who got very annoyed when no one came to rescue her at various points during the weekend. In other words, it was a mess. Sitting behind the White Wolf table, gazing down on the action, I could simultaneously see superheroics, high intrigue, down-and-dirty tussling and... errr... umm... what Tom Lehrer once called "animal husbandry." If there was an actual plot, it was well-camouflaged. If there was a method to the madness, it escaped me.

And you know what? The game was a rampaging, rollicking, foot-stomping saucer-landing success. Nothing earthshattering happened, mind you — no Antediluvians woke from slumber, no Bastet Nagaraja Abominations with Mage spheres walked in the door, no

doomsday devices or lost chapters of the Book of Nod or vampiric plagues showed up, and no armies of the Risen dead stormed the castle to get the Whosawhaticon. Folks just got their characters, got hit over the head occasionally with assorted plot developments and had fun.

And that, in the end, is why it's a good thing to be an elf in a barn, or anywhere else, for that matter. Not everyone digs the totally immersive roleplaying experience or needs the pillars of Heaven to shake every time they play Rock-Paper-Scissors. Sometimes the best game for a situation is low powered and freeform, and the hell with all the grand and glorious angst for a while. Come on, seriously, do you really think that a high-powered *Masquerade* game, with elders and Machiavellian plots, would have worked terribly well in a livestock auction building? As good as you, I, or anyone might be at imagining the surroundings to be other than what they are, there are times when you just have to go with what reality gives you — and in this case, reality gave us straw, dirt and a faint, absurd whiff of horse. Trying to overcome the solid reality of the game's surroundings would have taken too much effort, leaving too little energy for the game.

And so, what we had was perfect for what we had. If the surroundings were a little bit wonky (and even the con staff admitted that things were a little goofier than they might have expected), then we got a game that played up that attitude perfectly. Would things have worked half so well were we not playing live action *Changeling*? Of course not — each system has its own strengths, but neither *Laws of the Night*'s nor *Laws of the Wild*'s nor *Oblivion*'s nor anything else's rules play explicitly to the sort of wide-open, over the top freedom that a *Changeling* LARP does.

So what's today's moral? Well, mainly it's some sort of muttering about how picking the right game for the right circumstances generally leads to more fun for all concerned. Religiously strict adherence to a single system, no matter how much you love it, can force you into some awkward gaming situations. Let's face it, do you really want to try to convince the local 900 year old Toreador to try to hang out in a barn for the duration of a weekend? ("What is that I just stepped in, Alfonse?" "Cow poopoo, mistress." "Can we make art out of it?" "Sadly, no, mistress." "Aieeeeeee!") And let's not even think about *Apocalypse*... ("Bad dog! Stay in the barn until you learn how to behave in the house! Stay!").

So, in the end, if the hand you're dealt calls for you to be an elf in a barn (or anywhere else suitable, for that matter), well, take what you're given and run with it. You might surprise yourself by having one hell of a good time, whether you want to or not.

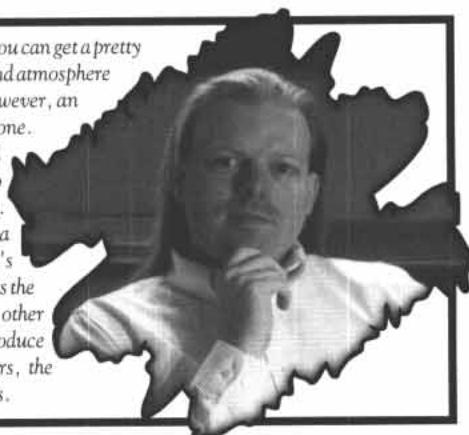
(Oh, and for you filthy-minded souls who read all this way to find out about the ZOOM! Girl, you should be ashamed of yourself. Besides, that's between us, the cheerleaders and the dancing bear. Eat your hearts out.)

- the deadguy -



MET PROFILES

You know the games we make, and you can get a pretty good impression of this company's policy and atmosphere from the way we present our material. However, an aspect that tends to get lost is the personal one. Thus, one of the purposes of the *Journal* is to bring you, the reader, a little closer to the people who make the games you play. The "Deadguy Speaks" column gives you a pretty good impression of Rich Dansky's warped sense of humor, but since his stint as the *Mind's Eye Theatre* developer, two other folks have taken over. Allow me to introduce you to Jess Heinig and Cynthia Summers, the past and present *Mind's Eye* developers.



BIG FISH, SMALL POND

by Jess Heinig

A DEVELOPMENT VIEW OF MIND'S EYE THEATRE

So I had the job for all of three months.

When I first showed up at White Wolf, I was slotted as the *Kindred of the East* developer. The idea at the time was to expand *Kindred of the East* into a full line, covering all of the mysteries of Asiatic vampires. I'd develop four books each year, and I'd also work as a co-developer for *Vampire*, handling maybe two additional core books per year. Since I liked *Vampire*, loved *Kindred of the East* and had a background in martial arts, Japanese history and Chinese culture, the idea seemed perfect at the time.

A few development outlines later, we (meaning White Wolf) came to the conclusion that live-action games needed better treatment. To whit, Rich Dansky had developed the last few *MET* books in addition to his usual development schedule for *Wraith* and anything else that needed the help. Now, Rich is no mere mortal, so he actually managed the Herculean task of pushing out quality *Mind's Eye Theatre* books while working full-time on another line. Still, it had become clear that the live-action game line needed a separate developer, someone to pay attention to the rapidly changing culture and rules.

Silly me. I volunteered.

Well, *Kindred of the East* got shuffled around to keep the books in development, and I wound up with a new hat. Just when I got my business cards all printed with "Kindred of the East Developer," I changed over to working full-time on *Mind's Eye Theatre*. My first job: Salvage the manuscript of *Laws of the Hunt*, which was running late, short and choppy.

"No problem," I thought to myself. "I've always loved live-action, and I ran a game of over 200 players. This can't be any tougher than that."



Silly me twice — shame on me.

A quick look over **Laws of the Hunt** showed me that it had the potential to wreak some serious live-action havoc — but in a good way. However, it needed a little push to fulfill that potential. So I tossed in some advanced True Faith. The old material from **Antagonists** was, frankly, difficult to understand and of limited utility beyond its basic powers, so I brushed up the various groups of hunters, giving them each a distinctive feel and a unique set of advantages. Next came equipment: Here, I pulled in all sorts of new ideas and material that had never been formalized, because hunters need all the combat tools they can get. I converted all of the Numina to a "two Basic, two Intermediate, one Advanced" power format (the uneven power progressions from early **MET** books *really* get on my nerves). I even found time to add to the Merits and Flaws section, sneaking in rules on the creation of ghouls, Kinfolk and kinain characters with detailed character generation guidelines and special powers. ("What the heck," I figured. "*Liber des Goules* didn't have any Experience tables or Trait maxima, so I might as well address that.")

From the base material by John Wick and Alison Young, I managed to draw out a pretty darn good book. I even had a section that allowed games to update to the rules in **Laws of the Hunt**, so that players can avoid oversights from previous editions like the famous "I spend Willpower to automatically win the Simple Test for staking you, Mr. Vampire Elder." I wrote in some controlled Military and Espionage Influence, talked about the very cool Benandanti and managed some long-awaited updates to mass combat, Willpower defense and retesting rules. Not bad for my first **MET** book!

Then, of course, came editing. The book wound up too long. Some of the powers cropped up with problems at the last second. The Dauntain had to go completely because there was no room and no time to develop them (don't worry, they show up in a later **MET** book).

Miracle of miracles, we managed to push the book to 184 pages (Heaven smiles upon our production staff), and it actually got edited and put out on time. The response was overwhelming: We brought 96 copies to a convention, and we sold out of them in an hour and a half. That's a copy a minute. Wearing a big goofy grin, I signed each one.

Well! That wasn't so bad. Pushing up my sleeves, I waded into the next project: **The Savage West** (you'll have seen it now as **Laws of the Wyld West**). I also got handed the opportunity to start up the **Mind's Eye Journal**, and I was looking at future releases — a follow-up to **Laws of the Hunt**, maybe some **Kindred of the East** live-action and even (shudder) live-action **Mage**.

Then, the Crash.

We all knew that the game market had been performing poorly. As a result, White Wolf had to reorganize. Several beloved members of the production, development, marketing and fiction departments wound up moving on to new jobs. All of the development staff was in a frenzy, nobody knew who would get what job and the schedule flew into chaos.

Finally, word came down that the staff had been cut considerably. New positions were to be assigned. I waited, barely able to breathe, for news of my new position. Phil Brucato, developer of **Mage** for five years, had left the company, and he'd picked me to succeed him!



After I got over the initial shock, it was quite cool.

So, all in all, I wound up with only a couple of MET books. I still think that **Laws of the Hunt** is an exceptional piece of work; I enjoyed it a lot and got to rework a lot of old MET rules that needed an update. **Laws of the Wyld West** is chock-full of gunfightin' goodness; my only regret is that the 320-page monstrosity couldn't contain all of the Storytelling advice and setting notes written by the redoubtable Peter Woodworth, even after I cut it in size by a third! And, as this article shows, the **Journal** is off to a good start in the competent care of its current developer.

(I paid him to say that. —Carl.)

The future of **Mind's Eye**? That belongs now to Cynthia Summers. Ironically, Cynthia was one of the first staffers to work on **Mind's Eye Theatre** regularly. I must say, Cynthia has her hands full. The **Laws of the Hunt Players Guide** revisits a lot of material from **Laws of the Hunt**, and it introduces wholly new addenda that couldn't be included the first time around, like the Dauntain. As for the rest of her schedule... I leave that up to her to divulge. I'm the magic man, now, with the battle for reality sitting here on my desktop.

Now that I'm doing **Mage**, what does that bode for a live-action version of said game? Nah. Never happen. After all, there are limits to what true magic can do.

Aren't there?

THE NEW MET DEVELOPER SPEAKS

by Cynthia Summers

Yo.

Normally I can be found slaving away over a hot computer, but they've let me slip my chain for a little bit here, in between all the **Mind's Eye Theatre** projects. What projects, you ask, could possibly keep me so busy that I can't find time to answer every question about live-action rules for a Malkavian-Nuwisha Abomination with Chimerstry and faerie blood? Let's see...

- **Kindred of the East** — This book was shifted and turned around a little bit from its original spot in the schedule (hey, that was *your* idea, folks, though you don't know why yet), but it's still on the stove and will be soup in 2000. It's being written by the wondrously talented Peter Woodworth (**The Shining Host**, **Laws of the Wyld West**).
- **The Camarilla Guide** — New upper-level Disciplines, how to run a trial conclave, exciting uses for the various city posts and all the sorts of the things that make Storytellers' eyes shine (and consequently, makes players tremble...).
- **The Sabbat Guide** — You didn't think the Cammies were going to have all the fun, did you? New *antitribu*, new Paths of Enlightenment and all those extras to give your antagonists that extra edge.
- **The Changing Breeds, Book 1** — The title is still in dispute, but it will be what it claims to be. This book can't have *everything* (unless you want to haul the book





around on a forklift inside a C-130 cargo plane), but we're looking at rules for the Corax, Nuwisha, Bastet and Ratkin. The other critters will get outings in later books.

• **Laws of the Night Revised** — I'll tell you about that elsewhere. [See p. XX, in fact.]

When I'm not developing the games, I'm playing them — I maintain two vampires, a Kinfolk, a mortal, a wraith and a nocker among the various games I play. I've played in independent venues and con games, and I'm a card-carrying member of the Camarilla (I'm also the one who gets to read all those Camarilla chapter reports — so make 'em interesting, folks!). When I'm not playing White Wolf games, I help plot and run a fantasy-themed LARP local to the Southeast called Shattered Isles.

Playing these games gives me a perspective on what's bugging players and Storytellers, what are legitimate gripes (or silly twinkery) and what will work (or won't) when I sit down to develop. And that's why you're not going to find a picture of me here. I not only develop the games, I'm a player, and I find anonymity best suited to such pastimes. There is a collection of pinheads, peahats and other assorted small minds who seem to think that rules-lawyering the developer, lecturing her mid-game about the viability of their own "positively guaranteed to work" *Mage* live-action system or killing her character gives them bragging rights. Beware, fame-seekers — I write your kind into the books for the purposes of killing them in new and interesting ways. So behave — after all, you never know where I may show up.

I'm the sort of player who believes in the statement, "Rules schmules; gimme story!", and I take much the same approach to MET. I'm aware that rules are necessary to keep things running, but I tend to slack off making rules regarding every little detail. Hey, it's your story, after all. I'll seed the books with story ideas and suggestions for all the little peeves I've developed over the years (Tremere costuming does not include a nylon cape with all the wrinkles still in it), but in the end, it's all to make things colorful for players and rife with juicy details for the Storytellers to hang their hats on. I find it far more satisfying (as a player and a Storyteller) to tell someone to look for the treasure after I've locked him in a haunted house and dropped the key down the well.

As both player and Storyteller, I'm the sort who wages continuous war on the lower forms of life that crawl into games occasionally. Having dealt with the press and disapproving public up close and personal on various occasions (such as the Wendorff case) and endured the reign of terror that a single power player wreaked on a chronicle, I want MET to be a game everyone can continue to enjoy. That means I'll do what's necessary to empower Storytellers to put the smackdown on misbehaving players, talk to a curious parent or handle the Weekly World News. And in response to that inevitable question, my mother greets news of my work and leisure with the same bemusement that Buffy's mother does when her daughter goes out slaying for the night.

When I'm not LARPing, I'm sewing (which, nine times out of 10, is some costume for LARPing), birdwatching, studying Middle Eastern dance, reading, cooking, walking or doing something related to my two cats.

And that is what is worth talking about for now.

Take care,
Cynthia Summers



THE SHADOW COURT

by Peter Woodworth

And people say changelings can't be dark. Have you had enough of the bright, shiny, slightly fae? Does the phrase "mercurial pooka trickster" make you want to retch? If so, read on. These fae are the scum underneath the bottom of the barrel, but worse, they don't mind that one bit. They revel in their base, Unseelie nature. Sound like fun? If it does, you're twisted, vile and sick. Welcome, brother!

NOTICE!

The following material is restricted to players and Storytellers who wish to include the twisted members of the Shadow Court, the true embodiment of all that is Unseelie, into their chronicles. All the Dark Arts, Thallain Kith, Unseelie Houses and new Backgrounds required to completely flesh out a Shadow Court character are, therefore, provided. However, the transformation from a mere Unseelie to a member of the Shadow Court is not so easy or so simple as marking a character sheet, and the White Wolf sourcebook **The Shadow Court for Changeling: The Dreaming** should be consulted in detail to fully realize the descent into darkness which accompanies the initiation into and advancement in this mysterious, ancient organization. In many ways, the Shadow Court is the regular Kithain's equivalent of the Sabbat — though that's a loose similarity, at best — and it should only be created when players are ready and able to attempt the radical transition between fantasy and utter nightmare. Again, making a Shadow Court character is not as simple as circling the Unseelie Legacy on your character sheet! Players are therefore advised not to plan on using any of this information, or even necessarily being allowed to read it, in any given chronicle; so unless thou be a Storyteller or have consulted one first, go ye no further. It should be obvious by now that no characters outside the Shadow Court possess any of the following powers or advantages (or are of the Thallain kith), and very, very few outside the Shadow Court have more than the tiniest bit of knowledge concerning any of the material below. If this wasn't obvious before, consider it obvious now. If you have obtained such license, however, please, come in, make yourself at home, and let the nightmares and revelry begin...

THALLAIN KITH

The following changeling types, known as Thallain to the few Unseelie of the Shadow Court who know of them, represent degenerate types of some of the standard kiths. They are believed to have appeared only after the return of the sidhe in 1969, riding the same wave from Arcadia, but from the other side of the tracks. They are physically indistinguishable from regular members of their "parent" kiths — if somewhat disgusting — but they display very different Birthrights and Frailties. They also tend to express shocking thoughts and behavior patterns, even compared to their regular Unseelie counterparts. They are thus used by the Shadow Court as secret weapons and closet allies. They are assigned to cliques for specific and important reasons and they will not in any case be found just wandering around.

Note: Because they are so tainted by Nightmare, Thallain have no Seelie Legacies, and they can never get any. Instead, they have two Unseelie Legacies between which they alternate. (The difficulty is deciding what kind of bastard to be.)



BEASTIES

Like their Kithain pooka counterparts, beasties display animalistic characteristics when in their fae miens. Beasties likewise share the pooka's ability to change into a wholly animal form when out of sight. However, the similarity between beasties and pooka ends there. Rather than any normal animal, beasties transform into horrible creatures that defy description. And yet, these things' terrifying appearance is but the slightest glimmer of the vile, deadly depravity that infests their dark hearts.

Affinity: Nature

Birthrights:

Beastie Form: Like pooka, beasties can change into their monster forms while no one is looking by spending 10 seconds of game time and a point of Glamour. The beastie form, however, does not need to be a real animal; in fact, it's better if it isn't. Players are encouraged to come up with frightening and bizarre beastie forms, but remember that the Storyteller has final say on what is allowed. Also note that even if a beastie can become a six-headed snake dog, this doesn't mean that all the heads can think or attack — the main use for the creature's nightmarish form is to scare the bejesus out of opponents, not necessarily increase fundamental utility. Beasties in their animal form receive a free *Intimidating* Trait and two other Traits of the Storyteller's choosing. They must also take Bestial x 2 and two other Negative Traits of the Storyteller's choosing automatically.

Gaia's Mercy: Within one hour of witnessing beastie violence, mortals will forget what they have seen, remembering only distorted stories of wild animals. This distortion has no effect on Awakened creatures.

Frailties:

The Hunt: All Seelie Kithain have an innate hatred of beasties, and they must make a self-control check (usually a Static Mental or Social Challenge, with its difficulty based on the nature of the scene — harder in times of conflict, easier in peacetime) to avoid attacking one on sight. If the Static Challenge fails, the character may spend a Willpower Trait to avoid attacking, and its effects last for the rest of the scene. (The Seelie may, of course, attack later if he wishes.) However, this hatred applies only if the Seelie Kithain are somehow aware of the beastie's true nature. All beasties receive a permanent Bestial Trait, which can never be bought off.

BOGGARTS

Imagine the worst aspects of a conniving thief combined with the cunning of a rat and the soulless self-absorption of a 1980s businessman. Now imagine what such a thing would be like if it were Unseelie, and you might have an inkling of what makes up a boggart. Sharing the strong boggan work ethic, the boggarts turn a greedy eye toward corporate, political or even illicit hierarchies in modern society. Willing to buy, sell or use anyone and anything necessary, the boggarts do whatever they have to in order to further their own malicious goals.

Affinity: Actor

Birthrights:

Industrial Comrades: Boggarts can perform physical labor in 1/3 the time it would take normally, as long as they remain unseen. Furthermore, boggarts need only sleep two hours per day to remain rested, and as such, they often take two jobs in the mortal world. Boggarts receive a free level of *Finance* Influence to reflect this doubled income, and this Influence can never be traded away permanently. All boggarts have a particular business specialty, and they are two Traits up on all Challenges involving this field. (Pick the *Finance* Skill and take a specific field, such as *Accounting* or *Hostile Takeover*.)

Pack Mentality: Boggarts have a knack for sensing others of their kind, and they will often try to recruit normal boggans away from their Courts to serve them. They can sense an Unseelie boggart with a successful Static Mental Challenge, and a boggart can



call on his friends and recruit a band of his fellows once per story to alter, improve or destroy a given location or situation by spending a Willpower Trait and making some calls. It's up to the Storyteller to decide if and how the other boggarts can help, but the results should be devious and destructive, with an eye to the short term. It is assumed that, in downtime, the boggart is helping his fellows in a similar manner.

Frailties:

Greed: When presented with an unguarded item of wealth, a boggart must make a self-control check (see the beastie Frailty: *The Hunt*) to avoid stealing it. If he fails this check, his fingers become sticky, putting him one Trait up on the Challenge to steal it but also leaving a telltale sign to characters who know of boggarts.

Callousness: Boggarts cannot purchase the Social Trait: *Empathetic*, and they begin play with the Negative Social Trait: *Callous*, which can never be bought off. They do not understand any social dynamics outside the corporate setting (though they understand that one very, very well), and they should act this out as well as possible.

BOGIES

In ultimate disregard for the evolutionary mistake that people represent, bogies appear as sad mockeries of human beings. They are often pale and bedraggled or flabby and pockmarked. In their fae mien, they resemble the worst depths to which a slaugh could fall. However, their feeding habits are even more grotesque than their appearance. Though not necessary for their survival, most bogies have developed a distinct taste for some form of human fluid or secretion (be it sweat, bone marrow or mucus, to name a few). It's rumored that their slaugh cousins hire these Thallain out for particularly despicable jobs, but such claims are unconfirmed at present.

Affinity: Scene

Birthrights:

Spawned In Darkness: Once per session/ day, bogies can vomit up a cloud of foul, inky blackness, which puts them two Traits up on Challenges related to stealth and silence because it disorients foes trapped within it as if they were blind. The cloud moves at the bogie's discretion, about as fast as a human can walk.

Hatred of the Weaver: Bogies can spend a point of Glamour and become invisible to technological devices for one hour of game time. Mundane equipment malfunctions or picks up static, and even bright lights flicker on and off. Magically empowered treasures or fetishes may resist this Birthright with a Static Mental Challenge against the bogie.

Frailties:

Curse of the Weaver: There is an easy way to tell a bogie from a slaugh — bind him. Bogies cannot contort the way slaugh can, and they lose one Health Level for each hour they are so tied, followed by a loss of Physical Traits every half hour. When the character loses his last Physical Trait in this manner, he dies. Bogies cannot stand the thought of being confined, and they screech and cry and lose a Health Level for each day imprisoned. Note: Bogies do not need to whisper, though they can (and often do) in order to impersonate regular slaugh.

GOBLINS

A riddle describing how to tell a goblin *artiste* from an Unseelie nocker:

A: "Knock-knock!"

B: "Who's there?"

A: "Open the door and find out!"

B: "Uh, okay." [B turns the doorknob. The doorjamb snaps closed like a toothy bear trap, maiming B.]

A: "Woo-ha!"



The difference is that goblins have a penchant for creating devices of mayhem and destruction out of physical items scrounged from nearby. Whereas Kithain nockers would use chimerical means to create their masterpieces, goblins display their (misunderstood) genius in whatever medium comes to hand. Such devices (be they exploding, glass-filled teddy bears or fishing rods that double as ranged cattle prods) are inherently flawed in some way, but that makes them no less dangerous.

Affinity: Prop

Birthrights:

Mayhem: At the beginning of each story, a goblin can create a device capable of unleashing mayhem. Doing so requires a Static Mental Challenge with the *Crafts* or *Repair* Ability against a difficulty based on the complexity of the device created, the extent of the mayhem to be caused, whether it will inflict damage (and, if so, how much) and the amount of time or number of tools put into creating it. The Storyteller should always be present at the creation of such a device, not only to determine difficulty but also to arbitrate the nature of the creation and its specific powers and requirements. The Dreaming often hides such nasties in the guise of bizarre devices no one can figure out until the right time is reached.

Note: Groups of goblins can combine their skills (shudder) on the Static Challenge and add one to the total for each extra goblin and for each level of the appropriate Ability being used. Note also that goblin devices can never have constructive results, only destructive ones.

Gremlin Urge: With the expenditure of a point of Glamour and a win or tie result on a Simple Test, a goblin can touch any mechanical device and cause it to malfunction. Self-aware or empowered machines make this test a Social Challenge instead of a Simple Test. If someone is holding the item in question and trying to defend it, the goblin must also win a Physical Challenge in order to use this power.

Frailties:

Destructive Urge: Just like nockers, goblins always create flawed items; however, their flaws tend to be much more violent and destructive, and they sometimes even catch the goblin in their unexpected results. Storytellers are encouraged to make full use of any failed tests when goblins try to create devices, perhaps even convincing the goblin player that the machine was created successfully after all...



Ogres

Ogres are, by nature, the dumbest, meanest and most crude Thallain fae in existence. They respect only physical strength, and they have all the social graces of a drunken half-wit boor at the end of happy hour. Well, almost all. What makes them useful (other than their prodigious strength) is their ability to ferret out Thallain from Kithain and Seelie from Unseelie. What makes them dangerous (aside from the aforementioned strength, their extraordinarily deficient mental capacity and their "crush-kill-destroy" mentality—as if that weren't enough) is the fact that they are all but indistinguishable from Kithain trolls. Ogres don't have much of a hand at infiltration, but an unwise Kithain's first mistaken approach to an ogre ("Noble sir, I seek your aid on a quest for the glory of the noble baron, Geldeward! N oh, do put me down!") could well be his last.

Affinity: Fae

Birthrights:

Smells Like Chicken: Ogres automatically sense the presence of other Thallain characters (the Storyteller should alert the player ahead of time as to who will be playing Thallain and alert the player immediately if another enters later), and they can tell a Seelie from an Unseelie with a successful Simple Test. If they defeat a player in three consecutive Simple Tests, they can ask for a very rough overview of that character's emotional state.

Strong As Oaks: Ogres receive two free *Brawny* Physical Traits that can never be lost, and they receive a free automatic retest on any Challenge that involves a strength-related Trait directly (giving them quite an edge in most combats).

Frailties:

Dumb As Rocks: Ogres are never the brightest chaps, and they face severe restrictions on brainpower. They cannot choose Mental as their primary Trait category, they may not possess more than one Mental Trait pertaining to intelligence and book learning at the time of character creation and they buy any such Traits at twice the regular cost once play begins. Additionally, they must choose two permanent Negative Mental Traits, which can never be bought off, from the following list: *Ignorant*, *Oblivious*, *Violent*, *Shortsighted*, *Predictable*, *Gullible* or *Witless*.

NEW BACKGROUNDS

Though the Shadow Court doesn't recognize regular titles, it does have its own hierarchy, and many of its agents hold titles in the regular Concordian system, making it easier to spy on the Seelie and disrupt their proceedings. Thus, it is very possible to possess a high level of the *Title* Background in the regular court and very little *Prestige* in the Shadow Court or vice versa. The dangers of leading such a double life are obvious if the character is caught, but the rewards can be beyond imagining. And if you can't take risks, what are you doing on the dark side anyway?

PRESTIGE

The Shadow Court doesn't recognize official titles, but it is possible to gain *Prestige* within the court. Trying to hold on to power and responsibility is seen as asking for trouble, but stepping down occasionally is seen as a gesture of humility. A courtier probably doesn't know who stands more than one or two levels above her station, but she'd be foolish to exploit anyone below her. *Prestige* does not last longer than one year; if a changeling doesn't get promoted at Samhain, he loses at least one level of *Prestige* for the next year. In fact, the court is always changing, and there's no guarantee that a changeling can keep this status beyond the first few sessions. It is a good indicator, however, of the level of respect the character commands. Consider it your reputation, for better or worse.

Prestige x 1: *Condemned*. You are firmly entrenched in the Shadow Court and permitted to learn secrets like the Dark Arts. You have forsaken your former life, even given a chance to return. If you do not have this level of the Background when play begins,



you must be given it by an Instigator during Samhain to be a member of the court. Until then, you are merely running with a clique.

Prestige x 2: Guardian. Within your territory, you watch over an important location, anything from a freehold or glen to a gun store or chemical lab. You keep the various needs of local cliques supplied, and in turn, they respect your turf and protect your goods as best they can.

Prestige x 3: Pretender. You hold a title within the Seelie or Unseelie Court, at least that of knight or squire. This title gives you at least one level in the *Title* Background, as well as a possible double life and the risk of being dealt with harshly if you're caught. However, because you're such a valuable informant, even anarchist cliques tend to leave you be, giving you time to gather dirt on those above you as you rise to power in both courts.

Prestige x 4: Mastermind. Certainly not everyone who plots and schemes has this level of Prestige, but changelings who have achieved it have literally made an art out of intrigue, and they tend to be visited often by Instigators in need of information. You are involved in a secret society of at least five members that trades favors freely. This clandestine involvement gives you three free levels of Influence (see Backgrounds) that you can use (primarily *Legal* or *Finance*, but the Storyteller may modify this choice based on the type and power of the society). You also receive regular rumor updates, and thus the Storyteller usually has a few choice bits of dirt, in the form of gossip and other scurrilous sources you know well, for you when you begin a session.

Prestige x 5: Instigator. You recruit others into the Shadow Court, although you cannot condemn them without learning the Advanced *Contempt* Art of *Condemnation*. Slowly, you're learning more about the hidden secrets of the court, and at least two cliques brief you regularly on their activities. When you gather at least five Kithain for rituals, the difficulty for outsiders to observe and discern the nature of the gathering rises by two (a two-Trait penalty on any related Challenges). If captured, you are expected to die rather than divulge secrets, and if you are unwilling to do so, you will either be rescued or killed quickly by your fellows (have a nice afterlife). There are always Instigators more powerful than you, as well, who can overrule your authority, and if you begin to act as if you rule the cliques that come to you, the backlash can be very nasty. As a function of station, you have at least two Masterminds working for and beneath you, although they are not your retainers and they will not tolerate being treated as such.

HOUSES

Although these three Houses are certainly not the only options from which Unseelie fae may choose, they are the true Unseelie bloodlines and the only noble Houses yet found that lie squarely in the Unseelie camp. Being part of the Shadow Court is not necessary for being a member of one of these Houses, but it is strongly recommended, particularly for House Ailil and House Balor. Of course, commoners who are affiliated with the House do not receive either the Boon or the Flaw of the House, just like the Seelie Houses. In no case will a character who is primarily Seelie be from one of these families, although it is not impossible for an Unseelie of one of these Houses to repent and become Seelie later in life.

HOUSE AILIL

The sidhe of House Ailil — The House of Honeyed Words and Serpents' Tongues — are renowned for their Machiavellian plotting and firm belief in their own inherent superiority. They see the time of the Seelie as past, and they believe that only bold, decisive (read: their own) leadership can save the Kithain now. They often promise commoner equality, but they have no intention of pursuing it if their goals are met. Members of this House are known for their dark hair and eyes, their compelling gazes and their choice of attire as black as the midnight lords they serve. In no case will a member of this House ever be a happy underling of someone else; they're always plotting, and frighteningly well at that. If a member of this House isn't in the local



Shadow Court, you can bet she knows who is. Freeholds run by this House tend to be hotbeds of intrigue and politics that would make House Eiluned jealous of the intensity.

Boon: Sidhe of this House are expert manipulators. They receive the Social Trait: Beguiling free, and they receive one free retest on all *Subterfuge* and *Leadership* Challenges.

Flaw: Changelings belonging to House Ailil tend to believe too much in their fitness to rule, and they will take on tasks based on the belief that the virtue of their bloodline will allow them to succeed. They must make a Static Social Challenge to ever admit to doing wrong (difficulty depends on how serious the wrong is), even when it is obvious to all. If they ever back down from a situation in which they have spent Influence, Challenged, cast cantrips, or otherwise become actively involved, they suffer a one-Trait penalty to all Social Challenges until they gain some victory that restores face. They also must take the permanent Negative Social Trait: *Condescending*, which can never be bought off.

HOUSE BALOR

Though others have forgotten, the sidhe of House Balor remember the time when sidhe mixed blood with Fomorians back in the Old Country — they are the descendants of such unions. As such, members of House Balor bear some kind of deformity, be it physical, mental, emotional or spiritual, and they bear bitter hatred toward their perfect cousins of the other houses. House Balor believes that the Endless Winter is almost here and that, if they can bring it on, they will be the ones chosen to lead the others during the dark times. This fatalism leads to many Balor becoming anarchists, but the ones who see beyond such limited actions become dangerous fanatics with almost animal cunning. Changelings of this House also flirt with alliances with such Prodigals as Black Spiral Dancer Garou and the modern day Fomori, and they delight in playing with iron and other things repulsive to changelings in general. Freeholds ruled by those of House Balor tend to be brutal domains in which everyone is out to get their own and keep it safe from the encroachments of others, very similar to the domain of wild animals.

Boon: The sidhe of House Balor do not suffer from *Banality's Curse*, the Frailty of most sidhe. In fact, they can handle cold iron without suffering any penalties, and they lose no Glamour when struck by iron. This Boon allows them to carry and use iron weapons without penalties. If slain by iron, however, their soul is just as destroyed as any other changeling's.

Flaw: All of this House must take some kind of serious deformity or handicap, which cannot be rectified through prosthetics, psychological help, cantrips or treasures. Players are encouraged to work with the Storyteller to come up with strange and bizarre deformities and to think beyond mere physical grossness to the possibilities of having more poetic deformities like being born utterly without a conscience. Unlike the namesake of the House and his evil eye, however, this deformity gives these changelings no special powers. Note: Members of House Balor must take either two permanent Negative Traits or a Derangement of some type, which can never be bought off, related to their deformity. If the deformity is represented by an existing Flaw, they may take the Flaw, but they neither receive compensation for it nor can they buy it off. No member of House Balor can have a Willpower higher than 4 Traits, for any reason, as a result of their savage Fomorian blood.

HOUSE LEANHAUN

This House keeps itself a close secret, for the most part, for the regular society of Concordia carries a noted dislike for them and their Glamour-hungry ways, which sometimes conflict with their powerful need for mortal inspiration. Without Glamour, changelings of House Leanhaun age rapidly, growing one year older per week they spend without Rhapsodizing someone (see *The Shining Host*, p. 195, for details on Rhapsody) and thus also going from childling to wilder to grump in a painfully short period of time.

They are noted artists, and some hold positions such as Court Bard in unsuspecting courts, but their power at causing mortals to create masterpieces, then die, is kept quite



secret from such outsiders. Members of Leanhaun want to be safe from persecution, and they feel justified in the damage they do, as it comes from a need to survive. Many of them, in the greatest tragedy of all, even come to care for the mortals they doom with their touch. Freeholds ruled by this House tend to be places of great art but greater tragedy, with many *avant-garde* forms mixing with traditional works, and the mortals tend to be recycled quite often as the house's infamous Glamour-hunger strikes.

Boon: All members of House Leanhaun receive the Social Trait: *Seductive*, which can never be permanently lost, for free, and they are two Traits up on any Challenge during which they bid a Trait related to appearance or sex appeal. **Flaw:** Leanhaun age at a rate of one year per week unless they engage in Rhapsody at least once during each week. This aging can be reversed and make the sidhe young again, but only with greater and greater infusions of Glamour, which do more and more harm to the mortal being Rhapsodized. They also do not age gracefully and must take a Negative Physical Trait, which can only be bought off by changing back to a younger state, each time they change seemings (childling, wilder, grump).

DARK ARTS

The following powers are Arts known only by members of the Shadow Court; although some have toyed with the idea of allowing outsiders to learn *Contempt* as a way of undermining the sidhe nobility, no one is allowed to take this debate past the realm of theory yet. After all, these Arts are the result of 600 years of secrecy and practice, and the Shadow Court is in no hurry to lose its edge now with a hasty gamble.

CONTEMPT

Though Unseelie nobles have been known to use the *Sovereign Art*, some have chosen instead to counter it using their knowledge of the Art of *Contempt*. Commoners have also found it very useful when avoiding the dictates of the fascist Seelie sidhe, and it is true that this Art counters the effects of *Sovereign* on almost a one-for-one basis (with the exception of *Weaver Ward*, which is countered by *Wayfare* instead), which causes rulers no end of frustration.

Type of Challenge: Mental

Art Note: Though many uses of this Art invoke feelings of bitter resentment and even violence against traditional authority, players must still respect the rules of live-action and not actually harm anyone or anything — the “no touch” rule applies to one and all, even (especially) municipal buildings or classrooms that may be the targets of *Contempt*. In addition, unless the game is taking place in private, where everyone knows what’s going on, remember to keep your voices low and your language clean enough to avoid being given a ticket or the boot from your locale. Finally, no use of *Contempt* can ever make the players revolt out of character against the Storyteller (nice try, guys)!

Basic

Mockery: This Art allows a changeling to directly avert the effects of *Protocol* from either herself or others, as the Realms used dictate. Once the *Protocol* is about to finish its casting, the character casting Mockery must engage in a Mental Challenge with the person casting *Protocol* in addition to performing a Bunk — success indicates immunity to the effects for the duration of the proceedings. The caster is considered a number of Traits up equal to the level of the Bunk. Note that the person Challenged will not necessarily know who is attempting *Mockery* unless the Bunk performed is so obvious that they can put one and one together right away. This Art allows for a wide range of normally unacceptable behavior on the part of the changeling, from immediate duels to grandstanding and interrupting the monarch. However, most fae will not see anything odd in this, as the caster, after all, is almost always publicly Unseelie anyway. If *Mockery* is cast without intent to counter *Protocol*, it becomes instead a twisted version of said magic, allowing for a barbarian court of Unseelie law. Essentially, the ruler is allowed martial law over the changelings present, including Seelie fae and other bystanders.



Realms: You have many different choices when deciding how to disrupt or enforce your own court. Note that a fae can only attempt one of these cantrips at the beginning of the proceedings; any later and the cantrip will fail.

Disobedience: An individual affected by this cantrip will show flagrant disregard for authority for the remainder of the scene. It will not cause anyone affected to assault authority figures physically, but it may result in acts of violence if the individual feels that he is being put down by the Man, so to speak. Once this cantrip has been cast, logical arguments seem hollow, and warnings or dictums against certain behavior seem offensive. Because so many people in the modern world harbor such resentment, the target may only cancel the effect with a Willpower Trait if this cantrip is successfully cast. If a noble is nearby, this cantrip may be used to counteract the Basic Sovereign power, *Dictum* — the character must take his target aside and give her a few choice words of encouragement about her rights (roleplay this out to the fullest), followed by the casting of the cantrip. The level of the Bunk used in the casting is added to the target's Traits for the purposes of resisting *Dictum*, and this power allows the target to spend Willpower to ignore the effects of *Dictum* even if she would not be allowed to do so normally. At the Storyteller's discretion, this cantrip may be used to counter powers of Prodigals (vampiric Presence or certain Garou Gifts, for example) in a similar fashion.

Realms: *Actor* and *Fae* are most useful, but inventive revolutionaries can find ways to utilize the other three.

Intermediate

Insolence: *Insolence* can be used to inspire large groups of people to riot. This power is useful when emotions are already hot and heavy (like raves, rock concerts and lynchings). For each level of Bunk used, one person can be goaded into attacking someone or something else (unfortunately, you can't decide exactly what the target will be!). Anyone targeted can spend a Willpower Trait to enter into a Mental Challenge with the caster (no Traits risked) to avoid these effects. This cantrip can also be used to negate the Sovereign power of *Grandeur*. Only one Shadow Court fae can attempt this per scene, however, and if he fails, you're all screwed. If used to counteract *Grandeur*, the fae must make some remark or take some action that would detract from the seriousness of the noble's power, then cast the cantrip. Each Bunk Trait gained allows one person present to make a Simple Test against the user of *Grandeur*, with success meaning that the target is immune to all uses of *Grandeur* for the rest of the session.

Realms: Determines who will riot or what will be rioted against by the affected parties.

Devil's Advocate: A fae using this magic can convince a crowd of just about anything for one scene, after which the affected parties may realize what has happened to them (though only Awakened beings will realize that anything

occurred). Instead of a normal Bunk, however, the character must make a speech explaining the position he wants the crowd to take. After that, the fae must spend a Willpower Trait and make a Static Mental Challenge against a difficulty equal to one for every two people he wishes to affect. This limit can be made one per every three with the expenditure of an additional Willpower Trait. If the changeling is successful, the crowd can be convinced of almost anything the character desires, and it will remain so convinced for one hour of game time. This magic may also be used to counter a *Geas* cantrip cast by a noble. If the Unseelie is present at such a casting, he may use this Art (once again, with a speech about why the *Geas* should be reconsidered) to try to make the noble reconsider. Doing so doesn't absolutely cancel a *Geas*, but it does at least buy time.

Realms: *Actor* and *Fae* are the only way to use the first part of this magic.

Advanced

Condemnation: This magic is the unholy ritual of the Shadow Court, and it is always used in elaborate ceremony, as it defines an individual's prestige in the Court. At Samhain, only a few people, called Instigators, are considered worthy of learning this magic. Many of these ceremonies are protected by the Mists, and even some of the participants will forget



much of what occurs, remembering only in their subconscious minds what they are and what they have to do. This power can also be used at other times of the year to recognize a clique, cast someone from the Court or recognize someone's worthiness to learn the Dark Arts. The person using the cantrip in this fashion always wears some sort of mystical disguise. Characters to be *Condemned* for the first time must renounce all former ties, perhaps even oaths, and give themselves fully to their Unseelie sides. There is no coming back.

Realms: Determines who is affected by the ritual or its protective Mists.

DELUSION

The Mists themselves have been useful allies of the Shadow Court. Unseelie changelings hide in a fog of doubts and uncertainties, of half-truths and insecurities. Perhaps the world recognizes that there must be a balance to all things and that the great evil of the Shadow Court would tip the already suffering world completely out of balance.

Type of Challenge: Social

Basic

Innocence: Hiding secrets and faces is a valuable ability, and this Art allows the Shadow Court to plant agents with secrets foul and hideous among their ever-trusting Seelie brethren. The simplest way to keep a secret, of course, is to act like you have no knowledge of it whatsoever. This Dark Art masks any outward signs of recognition regarding one particular topic or secret, making it extremely difficult for others to pry this secret from the character or even detect that he has it. The way it works is quite simple — on all Challenges related to keeping the secret, the character is up a number of Traits equal to the number of Bunk Traits gained in the cantrip casting. Thus, if someone is using a *Subterfuge* Challenge to try to break your character with interrogation, and you cast a three Bunk Trait *Innocence* cantrip, you are up three Traits on the Social Test required for the interrogation. This effect lasts for one day or night, and it must be renewed each interval to be effective. Note: The aura of a character using this Art appears innocent to characters using *Aura Perception* and similar powers.

Façade: This Dark Art allows the changeling to adopt a very effective disguise for a period of time, although her actual body doesn't change, merely others' perception of it. You must perform a Bunk related to changing your appearance (like wearing a mask, donning makeup or changing clothes), then spend a Glamour Trait. The result is a disguise that lasts for one hour. This time may be extended by expending an additional Glamour Trait per hour, but no more Glamour Traits may be spent this way than the number of Bunk Traits gained in casting the cantrip. If the disguise isn't exceptionally hard to maintain (ooh, a video store clerk) or doesn't encounter much strenuous activity, this time can be lengthened to one day per Glamour Trait, but at the Storyteller's discretion only. This disguise cannot be broken by powers like *Heightened Senses* (because it fools witnesses' minds, not their physical perceptions); only someone who is actively suspicious of you for some reason or another may attempt to pierce the disguise, and he must defeat you in a Challenge of his Mental Traits against your Social Traits. No matter what, you can never adopt the same *Façade* twice. Other Realms may be used in connection to this cantrip as the caster sees fit. Using the *Prop* Realm might mean the disguise lasts as long as the character holds a particular item, whereas *Scene* would dictate where the disguise can be adopted.

Intermediate

Mists of Memory: The Mists are not always as objective as the Seelie would like them to be. A disreputable fae may manipulate the Mists to cloud the minds of others and banish specific memories, but this Dark Art can never overcome certain things like the loyalty of a troll, the chivalry of a sidhe, an oath, a geas or true love. The caster must engage the target in a Social Challenge that, if successful, allows her to remove a broad area of memory determined by the number of Bunk Traits gained in casting, as determined by the following scale:

1 Trait: memory of what was said in the last 15 minutes

2 Traits: all memory of what happened in the last 15 minutes



3 Traits: memory of what happened in the last hour

4 Traits: memory of what happened in the last session or day

5+ Traits: any one memory, completely.

The Realm used in casting determines who is affected or what the memory concerns.

The Depths of Will: Although difficult to enact, this Dark Art can convince one willing listener to undertake an enterprise that is not directly harmful to him and then forget about that activity afterward. ("You must take this to the duke. It's important.") In addition to any other Bunk used, the cantrip must include an explanation of why the activity is important (this does not need to be true, but it must be believable), which takes at least five minutes of game time. If the listener is still willing, he must do it; if he wishes to resist, he must spend a Willpower Trait to do so. Once the activity is performed, the Mists erase all memory of it from the target's mind (like vampiric Mesmerism from *Laws of the Night*).

Advanced

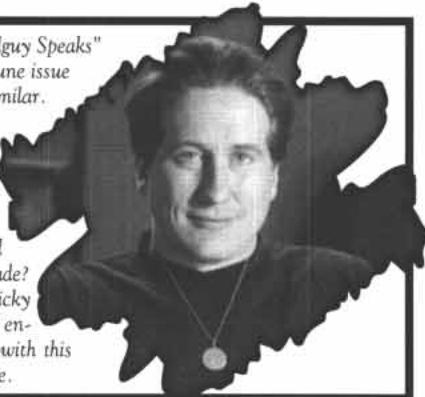
The Darkest Heart: This power is as serious as Geas, and it is not undertaken lightly. Some undertake it of their own free will, whereas others (like weak Seelie) are *Condemned* and forced into it. When a changeling performs an act, willingly or otherwise, that she later regrets, she may come to terms with it by going on a quest, which hides the act in the darkest depths of her heart. She cannot speak of it until the quest is over, and the memory is hidden until the next Samhain comes around. The fae gives herself totally to her Unseelie nature, but she will retain the memories, though hidden, of the incident that drives the quest, and they cannot be taken away by any means. If she repeats the sin, wittingly or not, for which she was questing, she gains a permanent Banality Trait and the quest is over. As long as she doesn't violate that restriction, she may confess to an Instigator at the end of the year. Until that time, she is under a Ban on a particular Realm. If she succeeds at going the year without breaking her Ban or repeating her sin and then confesses to an Instigator, she will lose a permanent point of Banality as the guilt rises from her heart and she is forgiven. This is an epic journey, even if it is one into darkness, and it should be treated accordingly. The Ban a character suffers must be related to a particular Realm that has some relation to her quest, and it should be fairly difficult to uphold: for example, a lecherous fae seeking to undo the damage done by a heartless tryst might be under an Actor Ban not to associate with members of the opposite sex.



CORBALLING PROBLEM PLAYERS

by Charles Bailey

If you keep up with Rich Dansky's "Deadguy Speaks" column, you'll likely note that his piece in the June issue of the *Journal* and this article are rather similar. That's no accident. Whereas Rich raises the interesting (and humorous) question of who these people are and how to identify them, it can be difficult sometimes to know exactly how to deal with these problem players. How do you keep a person who's only trying to have a good time from raining on the other players' parade? Making sure everyone enjoys himself can be a tricky situation, so Charles (another long-time LARP enthusiast who works for White Wolf) steps up with this article to give some suggestions on how it's done.



Everyone has a story about someone who made his playing or Storytelling experience anything from a boring snooze to a hellish nightmare. Sensing a subject for the *MET Journal*, I've been taking notes on the different types of problem players my friends and fellow gamers have encountered, with an eye toward how to mitigate their negative (if unintentional) influence. After many cups of coffee, these categories made the best of the worst.

COMBAT MONSTER

a.k.a. Twink, Chainsaw, Point-and-Click

The Combat Monster tends to be the by far most common type of problem player. The typical goal of a Combat Monster is to build the strongest, fastest and most invulnerable character in the chronicle. In his world, problems are best solved in a flurry of *Celerity* and *Potence*; he has little time for political maneuvering. If left unchecked, the Combat Monster can turn a chronicle into the monster of the week special.

This is not to say that all characters with Physical Traits primary are Combat Monsters; most are not. The distinction lies in how the player portrays his character. If he tends to run roughshod over other players and Storytellers just for the thrill of crushing, breaking and stomping anything in his path, chances are he's a Combat Monster. If you look into the world of a physical character's motivation and find a vast, arid desert, those chances get even better.

There are several ways to handle a Combat Monster. The easiest one is to create opponents who can beat him at the physical game. Doing so has the advantage of showing the player's character that there are things in the World of Darkness that can defeat even him; however, it tends not to teach him (or his player) anything. The Tougher Bad Guys tactic usually backfires when the player decides that he needs to beef up his character's Disciplines or Abilities to defeat this new threat. You're then left with a virtual arms race that has the potential to lay waste to the chronicle's plot (and its characters).



Another way to control on the Combat Monster is to find a way to pair him with a Storyteller character who is primarily a social or political figure. Typically, this trick takes the form of making the physical character a bodyguard for the Storyteller character ("I heard you're the baddest SOB this side of the international date line; I need somebody like that in my organization."), but it's not the only way. Suggesting that he be moved into a position of law enforcement within the game could easily pair him with investigators and judges working to uphold the laws of their society, for instance. This pairing tends to give Combat Monsters interaction with other players without undercutting the player's usefulness as a physical powerhouse.

Finally, a Storyteller can present the Combat Monster with problems that cannot be solved by brute force alone. Making him the target of a mysterious agency with a hidden motive (like a cult, a government operation or a criminal ring) that makes its moves from the shadows, for instance, forces the Twink to examine the situation, determine why he's such a star all of a sudden and possibly seek out assistance from other, less physically intensive characters. Again, this sort of idea redirects the Combat Monster's enthusiasm and keeps the player happy while allowing you to refrain from tossing bad guy after bad guy mindlessly into the chipper-shredder that is his character.

RULES LAWYER

a.k.a. Poindexter, Page Slave, Windbag

Everyone who's played live-action games (or any sort of roleplaying game) more than a few times knows a Rules Lawyer. This is the guy who seems to have memorized every line in the rule book (*any* rule book) and is quite happy to point this fact out when challenged on a call. He will tell anyone who cares to listen (or who is awake) that he understands the letter of the rules and that, if you do not accept his interpretation, you must be mistaken and should reread the rules until you come around. This type of player believes that the most important aspect of the game is strict adherence to the rules. The rules are control. The rules are power. All hail the rules!

For players, the problem with the Rules Lawyer is that he might give rulings that run counter to house exceptions and corollary changes the Storytellers have made to the specific chronicle's rules. Though it's all well and good to have a single source of reference for any game you might go to (like *Laws of the Night*, for instance), expecting every *Mind's Eye Theatre* chronicle to function by the letter of the rules is incredibly idealistic at best.

One way to avoid this particular problem is to provide players with a written set of house rules to cover any areas that differ from the standard





Mind's Eye Theatre rules. Doing so helps cut down on misunderstandings, and it at least gives Rules Lawyers the *right* rules to pore over.

The other problem Rules Lawyers cause is simple social annoyance. Nobody wants to have a fellow gamer breathing down his neck, making sure his actions adhere to what's written on page XX of a book that's been out of print since time untold. Though the **Journal** isn't exactly a resource for dealing with annoying personalities, a helpful bit of advice in dealing with such a person is that it's important to remember that even a Rules Lawyer has his positive side — namely, he knows his stuff. Therefore, this player can actually be an asset to the Storytellers. If he shows that he understands the house rules and can be trusted not to make calls that run counter to them, ask him to assist you in the role of a Narrator. That is, promote him so he's not causing trouble at the grass-roots level and get him on your side. In doing so, you gain someone who understands the rules and can make the game run more smoothly, and the player gets to demonstrate his grasp of the rules by helping to run scenes and challenges.

LOREMMASTER

a.k.a. Knowitall, Guru, Oracle

Whereas the Rules Lawyer seems to know the rules, the complete rules and nothing but the rules, the Loremaster seems to know everything about the setting of the World of Darkness, regardless of whether his character knows anything. This person has probably bought every item ever published by White Wolf (even *Inphobia*), and he is not afraid to let his character use any knowledge contained therein. His character seems to be able to spout off details about creatures, events or Abilities that he has never come across in the course of your chronicle and about which his character history would have revealed nothing. (Alternatively, he could

have an impossibly outlandish character history in which the great secrets of the World of Darkness were revealed to him. You know that Gangrel in your chronicle who knows all about the Black Spiral Dancers, Fomori and Banes just because he "ran with the Garou for years" before coming to your town? That character is probably played by a Loremaster.)

This player presents a problem for any Storyteller who wishes to add a bit of mystery to a chronicle. Let's face it: There is nothing worse than introducing a mystery element (like a True Brujah or Siberakh) and having a character know all about it as soon as it comes into play.

For the players, the Loremaster ruins the game's atmosphere and tension because he robs them of the challenge of finding clues and solving





mysteries during play. How? The Loremaster already knows the answer, and his character shares. Loudly.

The easiest way to handle this problem is to establish a system of *Lore* levels (as Jess Heinig has done on page XX of this issue of the *Journal*) and hold characters to the amount of knowledge each level. Thus, if the Loremaster's character does not have the appropriate *Lore*, the character cannot utilize the player's out of game knowledge.

An interesting way to handle this problem in game is to assign negative Status Traits (like *Insane*) to characters who spouts such unfounded information. If this behavior continues despite the Trait penalty, nothing teaches a loud-mouth Loremaster to keep his "insights" to himself more effectively than having angry representatives of the group whose secrets the character is spreading come calling.

M I N - M A X E R

a.k.a. Calculator, Twink v. 2.0

No matter what name this player goes by, the theory is the same — get the most bang for the smallest Experience buck. She believes that the stats on her sheet are the true measure of her character's growth, usefulness or longevity. If she spent half as much time fleshing out a history as she did with coming up with her stats, she would have a well-rounded character, one she'd probably have loads more fun playing and developing. Although the Min-Maxer's preferred M.O. mimics the Combat Monster — "I need lots of Potence and Celerity so I can do my Malkavian pranks without fear" — you will also find such such derivatives as the Tremere Giga-Ritualist, the Toreador Majesty Maven and the (ever-popular) Former Gangrel Ghoul Recently Embraced by Clan Tremere.

Players may have some problems dealing with Min-Maxers on the roleplaying level because of the Min-Maxer's lack of character depth. There are few things worse than trying to roleplay with a person who cannot tell you anything about her character other than what Abilities she has or how many Traits she can bid.

Storytellers also tend to have problems building plots for the Min-Maxer. It is difficult to create gripping, meaningful situations for a character who does not have any sort of a past or any discernible motivations. The Storyteller can help the player flesh out the character at character creation by requiring some sort of history or offering to help the player develop some goals for the character.

T H E F U D G E R

a.k.a. The Hedger, The Liar

Oh, yes — the Fudger. This player always seems to have the right trait or skill for the job, even if it's not on his character sheet. Fudger is a kind nickname for this type of player; in most arenas he would be called a cheater.

Honest players suffer at the hands of this problem player when they make Challenges because they will take the Fudger at his word about the skills he possesses. After all, it's insulting to ask a fellow player to whip out his character sheet just because he seems to be bidding better than you. The Fudger's usual target is a newbie, because more experienced players tend to recognize when he is fudging.

This type of problem player is the one which the Storyteller should be the most strict. MET is a game system built on trust, and the Fudger violates that trust, damaging the game for everyone involved. Take care in handling this type of player; react too harshly, and you'll lose a player (after all, most Fudgers either fudge by accident or out of a misguided desire to avoid breaking the flow of the story). React

too leniently, however, and your chronicle tumbles out of control. In confronting a Fudger (or any problem player, really), remain calm, present the problem fairly and give him the benefit of the doubt, but make it clear that further incidents of that nature will be dealt with severely.

CLIQUE CLONES

a.k.a. Replicants, The Just-Us League

Whereas most problem players are individuals, this type is a group. Clique Clones tend to design characters that depend upon the pack mentality and sheer numbers to accomplish their goals. Such a concept is not a problem in itself—it can even be an asset if the group works within the system to further the story—things tend to get ugly if the group decides to work against other players or the flow of the game for its own purposes. Rampant Clique Clones are the main ingredients in a recipe for disaster—one that can turn an Elysium into a war zone.

Storytellers should use their power to veto character concepts to control this type of problem. If you have players who insist on linking concepts and histories and have the potential to be Clique Clones, take extra caution in reviewing the characters. Help them develop their personal idiosyncrasies and motivations, and take full advantage of any loopholes in their linked histories. Such loopholes include common enemies, rivalries between members of the clique and exploiting the group mentality by holding the entire group responsible for the indiscretion of a single member. By their very nature, Clique Clones will take up a good bit of a Storyteller's time, as it's likely that they'll encounter the majority of the plot hooks that are presented during a game. A wise Storyteller will realize this fact and try to ensure that players outside the clique have enough to do.

REVENGERS

a.k.a. Inigo Montoyas, O'Barrs

So you lost your last character and you wanna take out the guy who did it, eh? Do you a.) work with friendly Storytellers to use your old contacts to eliminate the culprit, b.) start humming *Que sera, sera* and get a new character concept or c.) Make a character who is the brother, sire or lover of your old character and take the SOB out yourself? Unless you chose B, welcome to your new incarnation as a Revenger.

Revengers cause problems because they tend to have only one goal in their character concept: the destruction of an offending character. When and if he accomplishes this goal, the Revenger often becomes one-dimensional and withdrawn from the chronicle.

The Storyteller's best option is to veto this type of character concept unless there is a story-related reason for the concept—a damn good one that would have existed before the original character's death became an issue. Even in such a case, you might suggest that the revenge plot be handled from the Storyteller side by a Storyteller character played by a Narrator. This plot thread can be used to demonstrate the fact that actions in the World of Darkness have consequences, while at the same time heading off problems with player on player revenge at the same time.

Otherwise, frankly, sometimes it's okay to tell a sour player (one who's likely to turn into a Revenger, that is) that his character died and that he should just get over it. Welcome to Darwin's world, whiner.

(Just be nice about it.)



REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

a.k.a. Freak of the Week, Plot Bomb

There are several types of Rebels. The first, the Freak of the Week, wants to play the Tremere Anarch, the Ronin Get of Fenris or the Renegade Assamite (to name a few choice concepts) not because it is an interesting concept but because it sounds cool. He wants to play something outside the established norm, but he may not be as accustomed to the downside of playing this character type and may not understand why his character is being targeted for destruction by the Tremere or the Assamites (for instance). The Freak of the Week can normally be educated by a Storyteller or fellow player about why he might not want to pursue his concept lightly. A good starting point here is to give the player a copy of the clan/tribe/kith book so he understands the problems with the concept. This can save a player some trouble down the road.



One thing that should be made clear to the Rebel is that actions have consequences. A rogue Tremere apprentice who spreads clan secrets to the entire known world because he doesn't like his superiors' orders or a Brujah neonate who mouths off constantly to an elder may sound like an interesting concept at first. However, when the archon comes to call or the elder puts the neonate in torpor, the player needs to realize that his actions caused the reaction.

The more problematic Rebel is the one who has issues with authority figures in real life and transfers these issues to the game. Examples of this type of character are the ones who gossip about the Storyteller's ability to be fair and impartial in her rulings, attempt to actively undermine the authority of the Storyteller or whine about her decisions even if they are fair.

When dealing with this type of Rebel, it is important to remain impartial and calm. Losing your temper will just give a Rebel fuel for his gossip.

The last type of Rebel is the Plot Bomb. This person's main goal in the chronicle is to break the plot and to wreak as much havoc as he can in doing so. This Rebel is the worst by far, as he will go to any length to make the game unpleasant for the players while he searches for a way to break it. This type of Rebel appears most frequently in one-shot or convention games in which his actions have no real consequences other than ruining others' enjoyment of the game. There are few ways to deal with a Plot Bomb rationally because he does not usually have a logical reason for his behavior. Your best bet is to ask him to stop, then, if he doesn't, ask him to leave.

THE BROKEN RECORD

a.k.a. Reiterators, Version 2.0



"Billy, my Brujah, learned Thamaturgy from a Tremere he saved. I have this great idea for a new character: Glen, a Gangrel who learned Thamaturgy from a Tremere he saved when he..."

The Broken Record's character concept, Abilities and goals may have worked the first time around, but after four incarnations of the same character with a different name each time, things tend to get predictable. Though this situation is not necessarily a problem, it does cry out for someone to help this poor soul get a clue.

The main problem with a Broken Record is that his new character is indistinguishable from its previous incarnations, and, as such, it adds nothing to the chronicle.

One key to stopping a Broken Record is another player or Storyteller who will take the time to sit down and discuss more original (i.e., different) concepts. However, the best way to break a Broken Record of his habit is to let him continue to make the same mistakes until he gets a clue and changes his tune.

CAPTAIN LOOSE-LIPS

a.k.a. *Grapevine, Babbler*

Captain Loose-Lips will tell you anything you want to hear about what his character is up to and many things that you don't. If you try to use the information against him during the course of the game, though, he will complain that he told you only out of character. Your character didn't know that; you were only having an out of game conversation, after all -. The line between player and character can get blurry and confusing; worse yet, it gets annoying.

Captain Loose-Lips also has a counterpart known as the Grapevine. This person takes information he gained out of game and use it to his advantage in game, normally by passing it to someone who does not know the source of the information and thus can't call him on it.

Either of these problem players is an annoyance to the rest of the players because they can never be sure if the information Captain Loose-Lips or the Grapevine gave them was in game or out of game. Confusion like this blows continuity to bits. Asking players to keep from discussing their characters out of game can avoid crossing the blurry line, but how many players can really stand to keep *all* of their best-laid plans a secret? Alternatively, you can make it clear that any information given to your character by any means (aside from reading the sourcebooks) will be considered information that's been garnered in game. This step is usually an effective means of curtailing Captain Loose-Lips.

If the Grapevine leaks plot information (or other sensitive information), however, the Storyteller should address the situation with extreme prejudice. Take care in finding the source of the Grapevine, but once it has been found, consider deducting experience or suspension if the leak was intentional. A carefully chosen example or two will usually shut down problems of this type.

CLOSING WORDS

As you can see, problem players come in many shapes and sizes. Each causes different problems for players and Storytellers. However, if you take the time to understand the problem and work around it, there is a good chance that a problem player can be turned into a productive member of your LARP troupe. In fact, you'll



often find that choices that turn happy players into problem players usually spring from a desire to be productive members in the first place. The most important thing to remember when dealing with problem players is that *all* players are out to have fun, and most of them aren't there to spoil anyone else's fun. Keep your cool and address situations brought up by problem players from a standpoint of doing what's best for the game at large. In most cases, problem players (regardless of type) will come around after the first or second such intervention.

But if they don't — if they seem carelessly or even maliciously intent on causing problems, the game be damned — well, you *do* have a room full of friends and acquaintances there backing you up, right? Nothing says 'conform' like 20 annoyed, like-minded people in trench coats who've been practicing making fists all night....

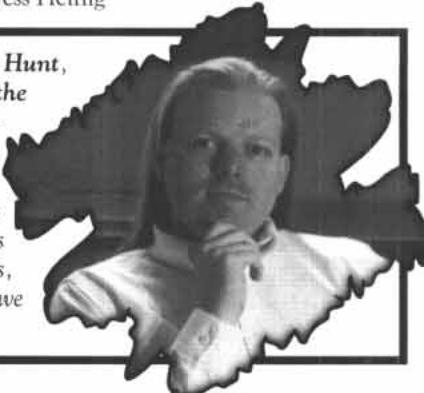
I would like to thank the following people for their input for this article: Glas Durbarow, Nash Bozard, Stacy Whisenant and the players and Storytellers of the Black Dog chapter of the Camarilla for the stories and recommendations presented here.



HUNTING LORES

by Jess Heinig

Following his work on *Laws of the Hunt*, and adding to the material in the *Laws of the Hunt Players Guide*, Jess Heinig provides this piece on various Lores dealing with the supernatural denizens of the World of Darkness. Provided mainly as roleplaying notes for uninitiated humans, these lores represent some of the most popular myths, misconceptions and conjectures humans have about what's "out there" in the night.



VAMPIRE LORE

Doctor Alberton looked up from his dusty volume of European history as Charles came striding into the room, backlit by the setting sun that peered through the Doctor's window. Charles' trenchcoat bulged in various places, and the Doctor could just barely make out the gleam of a golden cross peeking above the nylon bandolier of garlic bulbs Charles had strapped across his chest. The doctor tried not to sigh.

"I think I've tracked the bloodsucker to his lair, Doctor," Charles said, looming over the aging Doctor, even across his desk. "I'm going after him tonight."

"Do you have garlic?" the Doctor asked.

"Yes," Charles said, patting the bandolier.

"Have you a mirror to confirm your suspicions of the killer's nature?"

"In my pocket."

"And Holy Water?"

"That, and I have a van ready to take the beast to the East river."

"Why the river?" the Doctor asked.

"To throw the vampire in after I've knocked him out with the garlic fumes," Charles beamed, clearly proud of his own ingenuity. "Running water dissolves vampire flesh, right?"

The Doctor pinched the bridge of his nose beneath the divots made by his glasses. "Sit down, Charles," he sighed. "You're not ready to go traipsing off after this thing in the Village just yet."

The hidden world of vampires brims with intrigue and secrecy. As a result, few besides the unliving claim any knowledge of the true nature of vampires. With *Vampire Lore*, however, you have discovered some of the legends of vampires, and you may be aware of some of their secrets, powers and capabilities. Without this Ability, you may not even be aware that vampires exist.

Actual vampires (aside from those abandoned or misinformed by their sires) are assumed to possess the equivalent of all levels of this Lore. Characters with full mastery of this Lore (five levels) can discern the deeper secrets of vampires with *Cainite Lore* (sometimes called *Kindred Lore* erroneously, though the term "Kindred" refers only to Camarilla vampires), which deals with the legends of the undead



themselves. More unusual forms of vampires might require specialized Abilities as determined by the Storyteller (such as *Cathayan Lore*).

VAMPIRE LORE X I

You know that vampires are real. Sunlight, silver, fire, wooden stakes through the heart and holy symbols are said to injure them, and the unliving may not approach a bearer of the cross. Garlic wards against vampires, vampires may not cross running water (which disintegrates them if they are immersed in it), and they may not enter a domicile uninvited. Vampires cannot cross holy ground. They may not cast reflections. Vampires must sleep during the day in a coffin lined with fresh grave earth. You know that all vampires are unusually pale and thin, and they often have claws or glowing eyes in addition to fangs.

You believe that most vampires are stronger and faster than humans, and they can control minds, change into bestial forms and see or hear things that humans cannot sense. People who are bitten by vampires become vampires themselves, as may some people who are buried without proper rites and who were sinners in life. A vampire must have its head cut off and its mouth filled with holy wafers or garlic if it is to be killed permanently, or else it must die from exposure to sunlight or running water.

VAMPIRE LORE X II

Sunlight and fire can kill vampires, and crosses, silver and wooden stakes can injure them, though these last may not kill them. Vampires dislike garlic but it does not hurt them. Running water has no adverse effect upon them, but they cannot cross it. A strongly presented cross can force a vampire to stay back, but only for a short time. Vampires cannot tread on holy ground or enter churches uninvited. A vampire must sleep during the day, usually in a coffin or crypt. You know that vampires are pale and often thin, and they have fangs, while a few may have glowing eyes or claws (although these are usually only evident if the vampire is enraged).

You know that vampires are stronger and harder than humans, and are sometimes faster, though not always. All vampires can heal wounds rapidly, so most mortal injuries do not slow them overmuch. Most vampires have some ability to influence minds or emotions in some form. People bitten by vampires may not become vampires themselves, but such victims do die. A vampire, once beaten, can be slain only if it's decapitated.

VAMPIRE LORE X III

You know that fire and sunlight can injure vampires, and prolonged exposure can kill them. Silver has no special effect on most vampires, nor do crucifixes, although priests can harm vampires with crosses, and blessed crosses or holy water are effective. A vampire's body decomposes rapidly upon death. Priests can keep vampires at bay by holding out a cross, but this tactic does not necessarily work for others. Vampires can enter places uninvited, but they can only enter a church if invited by the priest. Running water neither harms nor blocks vampires, and garlic may repulse them briefly but does not injure or stop them. Mirrors have no effect upon vampires, and most vampires cast reflections. All vampires must sleep during the day, though they need not do so in a coffin or crypt, and they don't always need fresh soil. Many vampires have particular quirks, such as feeding only on a few select victims, collecting ancient art of all sorts or evidencing horrific or animalistic features. Vampires are often pallid and sometimes unnaturally lean, and they do not

naturally breathe; they also do not eat or drink. A vampire's fangs are only visible when the vampire feeds.

You know that vampires drink people's blood, but doing so does not always kill the victims, and even those killed by the vampire's thirst do not always come back as vampires. A vampire is usually stronger than a human, and it can always absorb more injury, but it may or may not be faster. Vampires are not always smarter than humans, but old ones are usually quite crafty. All vampires have at least some special powers, though these vary; mind control, speed, sensitivity, concealment and emotional control are common, while more arcane abilities like shapeshifting are more rare. You know that vampires that are related often have similar powers and weaknesses. Vampires sometimes claim certain allegiances, and groups of vampires from different cities may be hostile to one another.

VAMPIRE LORE X 4

Fire and sunlight injure or kill vampires, and the unliving flee from these forces. You know that a wooden stake through the heart immobilizes a vampire but does not kill it. Decapitation will kill a vampire, though. A vampire's body decomposes rapidly upon death, unless the individual became a vampire recently. Crosses and holy objects sometimes hurt or ward against vampires, though not always; most often, they work for priests, but not all priests can use them, and some people who aren't priests can. A vampire can enter a place uninvited, even a church, and it can cross holy ground unless barred by someone using a holy symbol. Running water, mirrors and garlic do not injure or hinder vampires. Most vampires cast reflections. Vampires often sleep deeply during the day, but they can do so in any location away from sunlight. You know that vampires are usually pale and sometimes rather thin, and that they don't generally breathe; they are also cold to the touch, and sometimes have monstrous features (especially when angry).

You've learned that vampires often gather in groups or families, and these families usually share similar powers. You've also heard that many vampires claim descent from Caine, the first murderer from the Bible, though there are some (especially outside of Europe and the Americas) who have different legends of ancestry. Furthermore, most vampires claim allegiance to some sort of political group (though you've probably only heard the name of one of the sects, and you know only that other sects exist). Young vampires have a few powers, while older ones have multiple powers and stronger, stranger abilities. Vampires usually have some sort of weakness, and families often share the same weaknesses, such as a preference for feeding on a certain type of person or a fondness for art. Vampires are not always more physically powerful than humans, but they can often temporarily boost their





strength or speed, and some are always stronger. Old vampires tend to be far, far more powerful than humans or even younger vampires. Vampiric powers include the ability to control animals or people, to sway emotions, to resist injury, to become highly sensitive, to conceal oneself, to shapeshift (a rare power), to cast spells (also rare) or to exhibit incredible strength and speed. A vampire can heal most wounds very rapidly, though only to some degree. You know that vampires sometimes go berserk when very hungry or badly wounded. People bitten by vampires do not always become vampires; the vampire must feed the person some blood first, and then the victim must die. People who drink vampire blood without dying may gain great strength or vampiric powers, and such people often serve the vampire in question. Vampires can retract their fangs to hide them, and they can close the wounds from their bites.

VAMPIRE LORE X 5

You know that vampires are injured or even killed by fire and sunlight, that holy symbols and objects only have an effect if the bearer has faith, and that decapitation kills vampires. A wooden stake through the heart paralyzes a vampire, but does not kill it. You know that running water and garlic bar only a very few vampires at all, and that only some lack reflections. Vampires must sleep during the day, though they can rise (with great difficulty) in times of danger.

You know that vampires organize themselves according to lines of lineage (sometimes called "bloodlines," "families" or "clans"), and that vampires of common lineages often share similar powers and interests. Each of these lineages apparently traces back to a powerful progenitor, and then to Caine, the Biblical murderer cursed with vampirism by God for his deeds. Vampires also divide themselves among certain political allegiances; the "Camarilla" consists of vampires who try to hide their nature from humanity, while the "Sabbat" is populated with vampires who revel in their monstrous natures. Vampires may enter domains freely and without invitation. Many vampires manifest a few different powers, and you know of many of the common abilities (incredible speed, strength, resilience, sensitivity; the ability to control minds [sometimes of people, sometimes of animals], sway emotions, conceal or change shape), but only very old vampires have a great variety of powers. Also, some rare vampires can cast spells, control shadows, shapeshift into animals or control the dead. A vampire passes on the curse by draining the blood of an individual and then feeding that person some blood. Individuals who drink of a vampire's blood may feel a mystical bond of servitude to that vampire; if human, such individuals may gain some vampiric powers. Vampires have a mortal terror of fire and sunlight, both of which may cause them to flee. Vampires can also be goaded into a rage through insult, injury or hunger. A vampire can heal injuries inflicted by normal sources — swords, falls and the like — rapidly. Vampires are usually (but not always) somewhat pallid, and they lose a bit of weight in the process of "dying." The fangs of a vampire only extend when the vampire wishes to feed or is enraged. Furthermore, a vampire can lick a bite wound, causing it to close. Vampires do not breathe naturally, and they are cold, although some vampires can overcome this shortcoming with effort.

WEREWOLF LORE

"My god," Detective Gilder said as he arrived at the gruesome scene. "Did a family of bears go crazy here?"

Gore painted every inch of the wooded clearing, and what wasn't soaked was torn, mangled or broken. The only evidence that this place had once been a campsite (rather than, say, an abattoir) was a circle of stones with some blackened bits of wood in the center.

"Not likely, Detective," one of the officers on the scene responded, picking through a particularly soggy mess with a pen. "We don't get many bears in this part of Connecticut. Besides, bears don't do this."

Gilder swallowed hard (against a shift in the wind) and said, "So what happened?"

"Your call, Detective," the officer said, standing back up, still holding the dripping pen. "We're of the opinion it was some sort of animal attack, but who knows what kind? We found claw and scratch marks on the trees and some of the larger rocks scattered about, but they don't really match any patterns I recognize. I found wolf tracks, but they're farther on, outside of this area."

"Any idea of the victims?" Gilder asked. "Like who they a— were."

"Some sort of survey team, we think," the officer said, moving away from the scene of slaughter. Gilder gladly followed him. "We found smashed survey equipment around the clearing, and the tripod was impaled through one of the more intact bodies we took out earlier. The tripod had the letters 'NTEX' on it. The rest had broken off in the victim's body."

Gilder stopped in his tracks.

"Show me some of the claw marks you found," he said, steeling himself to go back to the scene of the attack. "And think back. When this happened—"

"Two nights ago, most likely."

"—was there a full moon out?"

In the wild places outside of the cities, the werewolves congregate; in the huddles of urban society, they move unnoticed among the ranks of mankind. Their spiritual rites are strange and their many forms terrifying. Only the most stalwart of souls can withstand their fury, and they are a secretive kind indeed — and not above destroying threats to their hidden society.

Your *Werewolf Lore* measures your knowledge of the elusive and horrifying shapeshifters, as well as their culture and ways. Those without this Lore may well believe that werewolves are nothing more than folk tales or myths. You know better — you know that they're real, that they're dangerous, but that they can be fought or (rarely) befriended. Learning *Werewolf Lore* is a difficult undertaking; separating fact from myth is extremely hard when the Delirium makes sure that few hunters ever remember their experiences with werewolves.

Werewolf characters are automatically considered to have the equivalent of all five levels of this Ability; only a lost and untrained cub would not know of the many forms and the dangers of silver, for instance. Further knowledge of the various shapechangers is provided by more specialized *Garou Lore*.

WEREWOLF LORE X I

Much of your knowledge of werewolves comes from fantasy and myth. You believe that werewolves may exist, and that they can be killed by silver bullets and repelled by wolfsbane. Werewolves can be hurt by normal weapons, but do not die from such attacks. You believe that werewolves change shape into hideous man-wolves on the night of the full moon, and then rampage about killing and eating people. Werewolves can supposedly pass on their condition by biting others — be careful while hunting them!



You suspect that werewolves gain some size, strength and speed while rampaging, but that they are unintelligent, slavering monsters while the moon is full. A werewolf can often be discerned by certain markings: a pentagram on the hand, index and middle fingers of the same length, eyebrows that meet in the center of the forehead. Most werewolves are solitary, bestial creatures, just as quick to fight their own kind as to war with vampires or humans.

WEREWOLF LORE X 2

You've learned that silver is quite effective against werewolves and that other attacks can injure them, but not kill them. You suspect that they can change shape any time at night, but they are forced to change by the sight of the full moon. Wolfsbane is repel-

lent to some, but not all, werewolves. When shifted into their animalistic forms, werewolves are powerful predators, but they retain a cunning instinct. You also believe that the bite of a werewolf may be sufficient to pass on its condition, but that this does not always occur. Certain remedies, such as belladonna infusions, may help to delay or prevent the onset of lycanthropy contracted by a werewolf's bite. Of course, such potions are also poisonous.

A werewolf in its animal form is always larger and stronger than normal, and its claws and teeth are capable of rending flesh and bone with nearly equal ease. Werewolves can sometimes be told by specific marks and traits, but not all werewolves exhibit all of those physical aberrations. Werewolves in the city are usually solitary individuals, though some werewolves run in groups or packs — a terrifying notion considering their strengths!

WEREWOLF LORE X 3

You now know that silver and fire can both injure and kill werewolves, and that persistent attacks of other sorts can incapacitate or sometimes kill them. Silver is baneful to werewolves in almost all of their forms, so they avoid it whenever possible. Wolfsbane and other herbs are largely useless against the shape-changers, unfortunately. Werewolves heal from most attacks quite rapidly, but a single overwhelming attack can slow one down long enough for a hunter to escape or to make a final blow.

Werewolves apparently have several different forms, a range between man and wolf. Each werewolf can assume any of these forms, but some are more comfortable with particular forms. In any case, they can shapeshift whenever they want. However, the sight of the moon at night often causes the werewolf to change involuntarily.

It can be difficult to tell werewolves from other people — many are comfortable in their human forms, and they show few telltale signs of their heritage. Some,

though, act more like wolves, and can be spotted because of their primitive unfamiliarity with their human forms. In any case, werewolves retain at least some intelligence in all of their forms, so they can be dangerously clever wolves or predatory humans. They disdain technology, living primitively even among human society. A werewolf is difficult to capture, though, because people often forget when they have seen a werewolf enraged.

You know that werewolves have some means of traveling unseen, and that they sometimes gather in packs or groups. Different packs seem to have territories, and they may fight or work with other packs. Individual werewolves sometimes show specific cultural characteristics. Most werewolves follow some sort of shamanistic tradition.

WEREWOLF LORE X 4

You always carry silver — it burns werewolves except in their most favored forms, and wounds caused to them with silver do not heal easily. Fire is an acceptable weapon, but not as effective as silver. Other attacks must rely on main force to slow a werewolf down, and werewolves are killing machines that can hardly be matched by the toughest of hunters. Thus, you must rely on ambushes and careful planning to fight werewolves.

You know that werewolves refer to themselves as "garou," possibly from the French term "*loup-garou*." Often, they run in packs, but each werewolf may claim allegiance to a specific camp or tribe as well. A few werewolves belong to packs that fight with the others, but most packs work together. The full moon brings out a great fury in werewolves, but it does not force them to change; oddly, different phases of the moon carry significance to different werewolves. Each werewolf also has a favored form — human, wolf or man-wolf. The werewolf is most comfortable in that form, but it does not heal any more rapidly than normal. When in the man-wolf form, werewolves are terrifying berserkers, and most humans are frightened beyond rational thought by their rage. People tend to forget about such encounters, their minds defensively pushing away the experience.

You've learned that werewolves have a sort of spiritual, shamanistic culture, and that they can do some sort of magic based around spirits. Different werewolves have different powers, often related to some sort of status system. Werewolves also seem to have relatives among otherwise normal humans and wolves, though these individuals cannot be told from their counterparts in society. When among human society, the werewolves often disdain technology, and have a particular dislike of big corporations, factories and industry. Stranger still, there seem to be shapechangers capable of taking other forms, but they are even more scarce legends than werewolves.

WEREWOLF LORE X 5

At this level of expertise, you know as much about werewolves as they usually know about themselves. Silver hurts and kills any werewolf, except when it is in its favored form — the form in which it was born. Fire works as well. Anything else simply slows the werewolf down, although toxic waste and radiation may hurt them badly. You know that werewolves are not immune to damage, but that they heal most injuries with incredible rapidity. However, a werewolf in its "breed form," its birth form, does not heal any faster than usual.

All individual Garou, as they call themselves, are part of a particular tribe. Also, they are affiliated with a certain phase of the moon, and they draw anger from it. Certain phases of the moon have specific roles in society — trickster, shaman, mediator, bard,



warrior. Most Garou run in packs with others from different tribes, breeds and auspices. A few packs are composed of the "Black Spiral Dancer" tribe, a group of werewolves that are all evil and corrupt, and these werewolves fight others of their kind.

Garou also have potent spirituality. You know that the garou can enter a magical spirit world, which they call the "Umbra," by stepping into a reflective surface, and that they can step back out through any similar surface. They also make deals with spirits, calling upon them for magical powers. Some packs have a particular patron spirit — a "totem" [sic] — that grants them additional boons.

All werewolves are killing machines when enraged. In their man-wolf forms, they are half again as tall as a human, incredibly fast and strong and deadly with their claws and teeth. However, they remain intelligent, able to call upon both human intelligence and animal instinct. At times, werewolves become terribly furious, and they are then uncontrollably dangerous. They have a particular crusade against the spoils of progress, such as pollution and toxic waste, though not all are total Luddites. You know that werewolves spend most of their time in the wilderness, guarding holy places where they commune with their spirit allies. You also know that they have relatives among both humans and wolves, and that they choose mates from such relatives.

In their man-wolf forms, werewolves cause a reaction that they call "Delirium," causing people to forget the sight of the werewolf or to rationalize it away. This survival instinct causes normal humans to flee in terror or curl into a helpless ball; only the strongest wills remain unbroken. However, the relatives of werewolves are immune to this "Delirium." Aside from human and wolf relatives, there are some shapeshifters that take other forms — great cats, rats, lizards, crows and the like — but you know little of their ways.

WRAITH LORE

"I don't know why the police referred me to you," Lydia said, looking nervous and out of place. "Are you a specialist in stalkers or something?"

Emilio Lorenz considered how much he should tell the distraught housewife about what he actually did for a living, and decided instead to get right to business.

"I'm a special consultant to the police," he said, gesturing for her to sit down in the chair across the desk from him. "Now, I've looked over your report, and I have a few questions."

Lydia sat and nodded dumbly. Something about the Italian man's voice was very reassuring, if not particularly warm or comforting.

"You say that a stranger approached you and began to ask you about personal matters of which he should have had no prior knowledge. Is that correct? That's why you feel you are being stalked?"

"Yes," Lydia said. "He asked me about a manuscript my husband was working on. But my husband died two years ago, and he'd never talked about it in depth to anyone but me. Anyway, this weird man said the title, and asked me if I, of all people, was going to finish it. Then he started asking me how I was doing and what I was thinking. I got so scared I just ran away."

"Understood," Emilio said, marking something on a yellow legal pad. "How exactly did your husband die?"

"A car accident," the woman said, not sure why the strange consultant had brought it up. "It was sudden... he was on his way back from a meeting with his agent when it happened."

"I see. And this manuscript. Was it something your husband had been particularly hard at work on?"



"It was all he talked about before... before it happened," Lydia said, suppressing remembered tears from that horrible time. "Is that relevant to my case?"

"Quite relevant," Emilio said. "I'd wager that you and this manuscript were the two most important things in your late husband's life, were they not?"

"Yes," Lydia said. "But why does that matter? What does that have to do with the weirdo who came up to me on the street?"

"Oh, more than might be immediately apparent," Emilio said, standing and picking up a steel cane from a stand beside his desk. "Do you mind if we take a look at your apartment?"

Humans have searched — mostly in vain — for clues to what lies beyond the veil of death. In many cultures, stories tell of heroes traveling to the lands of the dead and returning, or of the dead passing their wisdom on to the living. Some speak of an age where the dead and living existed together in harmony. Such days, if they ever happened, are long gone. The dead do not deign to commune with the living, or are they unable; the living, in turn, fear the unlit corridors of the afterlife, when they bother to turn to such thoughts at all.

The Restless Dead themselves come into their darkly lit realm with scant knowledge of their condition. Indeed, most are not even aware, blinded and deadened by their Cauls upon death. Only a very few arrive sensible and able to comprehend their surroundings — and no wraith is ever guaranteed a mentor or tutor to learn the skills necessary to exist in the Underworld. The passion to hang on to some memory of existence does not come with any more answers to the mysteries of death. Most ghosts can only discover their own powers and limitations through trial and error, or with the rare advice of another compassionate spirit.

Learning *Wraith Lore* is a difficult and trying task. Finding a teacher capable of instructing one in such secrets is a feat in and of itself; most wraiths learn their limits and capabilities through hard trial and error. A mortal probably needs a wraithly instructor, or talent in areas like the Merit: Medium or the *Ephemera* sorcerous path, in order to gain this knowledge. Wraiths usually manage to puzzle out a small amount after some time in the Underworld, but true understanding may take years, many instructors and several failed ventures. Wraiths going about their business are the most common learners of *Wraith Lore*, of course, though some necromantically-inclined supernatural creatures of other factions develop a small understanding of the dead (most notably: Giovanni, Samedi, Harbinger of Skulls and Nagaraja vampires; Silent Strider Garou; various death-cult wizards; slaugh changelings and, of course, mummies).

WRAITH LORE X I

You know (or at least believe) that ghosts exist, that some people go on to an afterlife. It may be that all the dead congregate in one eternal place, or that they go on to separate unives, or that some do not go at all — you haven't met enough ghosts to know for sure. Some ghosts are just plain nasty, apparently only being reflections of all of their pain, hate or fear in life; others mindlessly repeat their actions from their living days. A few are still sensible and able to talk, though they can freakily change moods with extreme rapidity.

Many wraiths seem to hold on to places or people that were familiar or important to them in life. Not all do so, though. Some even keep ties to special things, strong enough to reach into the living land and affect these subjects.



Occasionally, objects manifest in the ghost world, but you don't really know how they get there or why.

Ghosts seem to manifest a variety of powers, though you're not really sure of the range and versatility of them all. Some wraiths haunt areas through cold spots or lights; others speak in eerie whispers; still others even possess people or objects. There's no telling what powers a particular ghost manifests, though. You do know that ghosts are normally immaterial, but can still see and hear things in the living world. Even if driven off, most wraiths eventually return.

A ghost is supposedly barred by sea salt, according to old tales, and it may also be vulnerable to exorcisms, to strewing an area with rose petals or to threatening the people or objects it holds dear. Swings or blows can affect wraiths, though this really just seems to annoy them, not injure them. However, ghosts can interact with one another.

WRAITH LORE X 2

Apparently, not everybody becomes a ghost on dying, or perhaps some of them go on to a place unable to reach the mortal realm. Whatever the case, ghosts seem to be nothing more or less than the souls of the dead, still clinging to some semblance of life. A few — spectres — are malicious and violent, but most are just a little unstable (doubtless from dying).

You know the term "Fetter." A Fetter is an object, person or place with some significance to a particular wraith. Apparently, wraiths can use them for protection, and they hang around such objects or places due to some spiritual tie. Destroyed Fetters sometimes become "ghost objects," as do other objects with important memories attached, though not under any conditions that you can conclusively repeat.

Wraiths term their special powers Arcanoi and study a wide range of abilities. Some can haunt areas, and some can appear material briefly. You only know of about a half-dozen such powers, but there are supposedly a great many. Aside from that, wraiths have very sharp senses, and they sometimes see images of death or life swirling about things or people. They also are immune to most physical strikes.

A wraith can be exorcised by a skilled priest, or kept out with magical wardings and strong belief (pure sea salt works best). Most wraiths have a very hard time affecting the living world, if at all. Also, they can be disorporated briefly, and if they suffer too much ghostly injury (especially from other wraiths), they disappear for a time — sometimes forever.

There are supposedly "layers" to the deadlands. The Shadowlands refer to the reflection of the mortal world. The Tempest is some sort of eternal storm, but it only rarely rages through parts of the Shadowlands. Also, there are apparently Heaven(s) and Hell(s) in the Underworld, though they are far away and barred to most (you have to be worthy of entry, or something).

WRAITH LORE X 3

Many people can and do become wraiths after death. However, not all retain their sentience, some become quite malevolent and a few just never seem to show up. Regardless, all wraiths share in common strong passions, the desire to *do* something they left unresolved in life. Some items also pass across the Shroud (the barrier between life and death), particularly those with important memories attached to them, but they tend to fade away after time. You've even heard rumors of ghosts who cross back into the living world physically, but aside from some of the



more difficult powers of the Arcanoi, this is probably nonsense. In any case, the Hierarchy — an organization of old, powerful and cynical wraiths — declares it illegal to interfere with the living, though this doesn't stop rebels and cultists from doing so. Sometimes, other creatures come to the deadlands, or so it is said, but they rarely enjoy doing so, and they often leave as quickly as they can. *If they can.*

You know a little bit about Fetters — almost any young wraith has some, and they keep the wraith tied to the living lands. They're all objects important to the wraith in some way, though the wraith may not understand why. A Fetter is more easily influenced by some powers, but conversely, injuring a Fetter is damaging to the wraith, and destroying one can cause serious problems.

Wraiths use Arcanoi to manifest various strange powers, the various "ghost powers" out of stories. You've heard of most of the common Arcanoi, and you know that they were once taught by powerful Guilds, but those Guilds were disbanded. You also know that using an Arcanos to deal with the living lands is apparently illegal. Those who are caught may be turned into slaves or punished by using parts of their bodies to make ghostly objects!

Wraiths do have some weaknesses. Without special powers, they have trouble interacting with the material world. This is most true in areas of disbelief, science and vibrant life — a mundane supermarket is harder to haunt than a run-down abandoned house. Even when a wraith affects the material world, its passage and powers are often remembered incorrectly or forgotten by mortal witnesses entirely. Exorcisms can sometimes bar or send away wraiths, but apparently only a few priests know how to do them properly. Sea salt and those other old wives' tales have no effect at all. Thankfully, a dedicated assault on the area that a ghost occupies can disorporate it, eventually forcing it away or even into a sort of nightmare play where it confronts its worst fears and terrors. This event is called a Harrowing.

You're most familiar with the Shadowlands, the edge of the Underworld nearest the living world. However, you know that the Tempest is a storm-tossed layer somehow "underneath" the Skindlands. Some wraiths go there out of need or desperation, and powerful cities stand in islands within the Tempest itself. Rumor speaks of Far Shores and distant Dark Kingdoms, but you know nothing specific about such matters.

WRAITH LORE X 4

Very few people actually become wraiths — only those with powerful memories, drives and passions, or horribly violent deaths. Some become mindless drones while others keep their consciousness; rumor has it that a few people actually become Spectres (which you understand as "evil" ghosts) immediately upon death. It is those incomplete passions of life that drive a ghost and give it power. However, those very same passions can be turned to dark ends, fueling the dark half of the wraith's persona (or its "Shadow"). It is possible for a ghost to rise from the dead, though such a thing is apparently chancy and random. It is also possible for some creatures, especially vampires, to walk in the Shadowlands, though doing so is exceedingly rare.

Fetters tie a wraith to the material world but also offer succor. When a Fetter is destroyed, it plunges a wraith into a Harrowing. However, wraiths can often home in on their Fetters and use them for shelter. Certain Arcanoi work more easily on Fetters than on other things. Most Fetters are objects that were important to the wraith for some reason, even if the wraith does not know why or denies the



connection. Aside from Fetters, objects of importance in the living world can become Relics when destroyed, passing into the Shadowlands. Most such items disappear as memory of them fades, but some possess an inner power that sustains them; these last are exceedingly valuable. Other objects in the Shadowlands come from soulforging, the process of turning a whole wraith into a simple item.

All of the common Guild Arcanoi are familiar to you. You know that the Guilds once held power in Stygia, the city of the west, but that they were broken apart (although some wraiths still claim secret ties to Guilds). You can recognize most guildmarks in practitioners of particular Arcanoi. However, you do know that there are some Arcanoi that were barred even more severely than others, and some that are native to non-Western wraiths or to those who rise from the grave. What these powers are called and what they can do, you do not know. Spectres also use some Dark Arcanoi; you've heard a few names like Contaminate, though the specifics are sketchy. Aside from that, you are familiar with the usual ghostly powers of insubstantiality, sharp senses, lifesight and deathsight and healing through Pathos. You've become quite familiar with the Hierarchy, its Legions and bureaucracy and the politics thereof, and you can name several different Heretic cults and a few Renegade groups.

You know that ghosts are mostly immune to harm from the living world. Only special magic weapons and spells can really capture, bar or injure them. With the proper Arcanoi, a wraith can also affect the material world, though this usually takes a great deal of effort. Mortals generally don't remember a ghost's interactions with the living realm,

You know the Underworld fairly well. You can locate Stygia's place in the Tempest and navigate about the Shadowlands easily. You know of the Venous Stair, and you could probably get to it if you felt suicidal. You've heard of the Well of Oblivion, but who'd ever want to go far enough into the Tempest to see it? You know many safe Byways in the Tempest, though they are probably a last resort if you don't know Argos. You also know about some of the other major Dark Kingdoms — in Africa and Asia, for instance.

WRAITH LORE X5

You've learned that only very few people, and the rare deceased supernatural creatures with strong passions, become wraiths; most others apparently go on to Transcendence, Oblivion or whatever. A wraith seems to be nothing more than a memory of emotions. Thus, ghosts are motivated only by their strongest passions. Those who have very dark desires can fall prey to the whisperings of their Shadows, the brutal and insidious parts of their personalities, thus becoming Spectres — wraiths who have succumbed to the lure of self-destruction and the desire to wreak it upon others. Lastly, a rare few wraiths actually inhabit their old bodies, striving up from the grave to take matters in hand in the material world once more. These Risen are startlingly tough and can even develop incredible physical powers, but they rapidly fall prey to the Shadow. Rising also requires a modicum of proficiency in several Arcanoi — Inhabit and Puppetry being chief among them. A rare few vampires, werewolves and magicians can visit the Shadowlands, too, but it is dangerous for them.

A wraith's most important connection to the Skinlands is its Fetters. Through the Fetters, the wraith maintains a fragile link to the living world and to its reflection

in the Underworld. Should a wraith's Fetter be destroyed, the ghost plunges into a Harrowing, a bitter parody of the trials that it faced in life; if all of its Fetters are gone, it can no longer come near the Skinlands. Only by resolving a Fetter — putting it behind the shallow semblance of life left over — can the wraith be free of it completely; the rare gaunts who resolve all of their Fetters can travel about, unhindered, between all of the many layers of the Underworld. Incidentally, Fetters are easy to affect with Arcanoi (at least by the Fettered wraith), and they offer shelter to the ghost in particular. Some objects of emotional importance, Fetter or otherwise, become Relics in the deadlands upon their destruction; those with extremely powerful emotional resonance even become Artifacts, objects of power in the Underworld that never fade away as the memories of Relics do.

You've heard of all of the wraithly Arcanoi and associated Guilds — Argos, Inhabit, Usury, whatever; you even know of the rare Arcanoi, such as Mnemosynis, Flux and Intimation, the various spectral Dark Arcanoi (which can be learned by non-Spectres, surprisingly) and the Risen Arcanoi of Fascinate and Serendipity. You have a good idea of how all of these Arcanoi work, you know some of the alternate arts and you can easily recognize most Guilds by their guildmarks. This level of Knowledge, of course, means that you're also at least familiar with the concept of soulforging, and you know about Stygian steel and even the jade and other materials used in various Dark Kingdoms. Since you know about the Guilds and their breaking, you also know that many wraiths still secretly hold some sort of Guild rank, and you know about the other various factions of wraith society — the Hierarchy and its repressive regime, gone mad after the disappearance of Charon; the Heretics and their various cults; the Renegades, those wraiths who refuse to be bound by law or dogma. Furthermore, you're totally familiar with the inherent powers of wraiths — the ability to become intangible by passing through a material object, the heightened sensitivity and special sight available and the ways to use Passion for healing of the corpus.

You're aware that very few things can bar a ghost in the material world. A physical barrier or object can injure a ghost slightly and make it totally immaterial, but otherwise has little effect — wraiths can effectively walk through weapons, walls or whatever. Magical wards can sometimes keep out wraiths. Also, the architecture of the Skinlands, reflecting decayed buildings and places long since gone, is quite "real" and "solid" to wraiths. Specially-constructed weapons, such as Benandanti fennel swords or warded weapons, can also score searing, deadly injury on wraiths.





You know all the territory of the Underworld. You know about the Skinlands, the Tempest, the Labyrinth, the Far Shores and the Venous Stair; you've even heard of the Well of Oblivion and many of the secret hide-outs in various parts of the deadlands. The Dark Kingdoms are known to you, from the deadlands of Jade (Asia) to such obscure places as the Enclave of Wire (Auschwitz) and the Dark Kingdom of Sand (ancient Egypt). Moving about in the Tempest may be dangerous, but at least you can recognize most hazards, including plamics and other non-wraithly - things - that dwell there.

FAERIE LORE

"How are you feeling today, James?" Doctor Nazel said in his usual friendly, distant way.

"Fine, I guess," James said, keeping his voice even, trying to be helpful. Trying to "get with the program" as Nazel has drummed into his head time and again. "How are the test results?"

Nazel consulted his ever-present clipboard and flipped a few neatly typed pages. At last, he looked up over the gray frames of his glasses and said, "Promising. We seem to have tamed your odd allergy to ferrous metal, if nothing else."

"Oh good," James said eagerly. "Do you think we can take my jacket off today, maybe?" He wriggled against the restraining canvas for emphasis.

"I don't think so," the Doctor said, frowning but not meeting James' eyes. "It's still too soon after the incident with Nurse Johnson. You nearly bit her hand off, James."

"I was only trying to scare her a bit," James said slowly, attempting a shrug beneath his straightjacket. "I think. It's so hard to remember. Didn't I eat her thermometer or something?"

"Yes, James," Doctor Nazel sighed. He flipped another page on his clipboard. "Now about these delusions... are you still having those dreams?"

"What dreams?" James said, wrinkling his forehead and blinking in confusion.

"About being a monster," Nazel said. "About serving... let's see... 'the elf king in the mansion at the end of Wildcrest Lane.' The condemned mansion, as I recall. You were quite adamant about all of it when you were first brought here by your parents, James."

"I don't know," James said slowly. "I can't remember...."

Doctor Nazel sighed and turned to go. "Sometimes, James, I swear I just can't understand you."

You believe in faeries? Well, there was that case of the girls who saw some, and there are old folk tales and even the occasional bit of Muse-inspired art that seems to reflect on some otherworldly beauty. Heck, if those people can talk about vampires and ghosts, why not faeries?

Knowledge of *Faerie Lore* refers to the history of the fae, and to the modern changelings that lurk otherwise unnoticed in human society. Of course, someone with this knowledge would never actually refer to them as faeries. With this Ability, you may have some information regarding their arts, their movements and their ways of hiding from humanity. You may even have snippets of memory from a time being enchanted.

Most true changelings are instructed in their faerie natures shortly after the Chrysalis. Indeed, the Chrysalis itself draws other faeries, so the young fae may have many potential mentors waiting for the blessed transformation to a creature of dreams. Unless specifically untutored or otherwise ignorant (perhaps due to exposure

to too much Banality), all changelings are assumed to have knowledge equivalent to all of this *Lore*. Mythlore covers further hidden knowledge of changeling history.

FAERIE LORE X I

Faeries are real! They are ephemeral creatures of beauty and temperament. Your particulars are a little fuzzy, but you're sure that they are out there, gossamer wings and all.

Faerie powers are a mystery to you. According to stories, they can do the work of many men in a night, turn invisible, flow through walls, fly, cast powerful illusions and make people fall in love. On the other hand, they are said to be vulnerable to the touch of iron, the shadow of the Cross, the sound of church bells or rooster crows and to the touch of holy men. Their attention (and ire) is often drawn when they are called "faeries," so you rely on allusions like "Fair Folk" and "Wee Ones." Supposedly, wearing your coat inside-out and walking backwards renders you invisible to them; they seem to have trouble with inversions of human custom. To understand humans, or perhaps just as a trick, they occasionally take humans away for a time, stealing wives or even replacing children.

Faeries have their own society, from mischievous pucks to fair elf maidens, ruled (of course) by Oberon and Titania (according to Shakespeare, anyway). Faeries have strange rules and realms, even entire kingdoms like Avalon hidden away from human eyes. Should you step into a faerie door — a door under a hill, or through a ring of mushrooms or even into a tree — you may find yourself trapped there for a long time, even if it seems only a short while. Also, you should never accept a gift from a faerie, or you may be held enthralled; similarly, offering a gift is seen as an insult, an attempt to indebt the faerie in question.

FAERIE LORE X 2

The faeries of the modern world sure aren't anything like the old faerie tales. For that matter, faeries in the old days probably weren't like that, either. Though they come in many shapes, sizes and forms, they seem to be able to cloak their true appearances, looking like normal people. Even when they decide to show their powers and forms, most people forget it later.

Changelings seem to have a variety of magic spells to trick, confuse and call upon nature. Many also have knacks like performing great amounts of work or turning into mist; there's no real way to tell how much a given faerie can do with his magic. They rarely call upon these powers in the real world, though, content to cast subtle and invisible spells instead.

Magic spells of the right sort can certainly call or banish changelings or faeries, as can such tricks as hanging an iron horseshoe over your door. Church bells and holy ground apparently keep faeries away, but most of the other little tricks from legend don't seem to have any effect (probably the results of faeries playing pranks on people). They do get rather disturbed by the old refrain of "I don't believe in faeries!", though. If you can get a changeling to swear an oath, it's binding, so it is possible to trick them. Since they can get drunk or enraged like anyone else, and often with an even more terrible temper, this tactic may be a decent one to use when a changeling's off-guard.

Experience shows that changelings most often show up at places of natural beauty or art, and they have an irresistible attraction for humans who are beautiful, charismatic and influential, or conversely ignorant, arrogant and pushy. The former they tend to seduce and carry away; the latter, they tease with vicious (and sometimes fatal) pranks.

FAERIE LORE X 3

Despite the numbing effect of the Mists, you are somewhat educated about the ways of the fae — or, at least, their changeling descendants. You've uncovered information about the various kiths, such as the sidhe and the trolls, though you probably don't know all of the European fae (and you've probably never heard of any of the stranger types). You've heard that the faeries are really dream-spirits from another world, given captured human forms. Then again, you've also heard of tiny brownies and sprites, which are obviously ridiculous. Still, faerie tales are sure to be full of errors due to the Mists: most humans fail to see faerie magic, or forget about it later, possibly accounting for those stories of lost time.

Changelings wield powers based on dream and the shaping of imagination. They require the use of some sort of vibrant dream energy, and many changelings cloak their magic in comical guises or games. Changelings draw some sort of magical sustenance from creativity itself, though they can also apparently steal dreams when feeling particularly vicious. Most changeling powers only affect others able to see dreams, though in dire straits a changeling can bring some of her magic across to the material world.

As for weaknesses of the fae, you've discovered (possibly the hard way) that most folk tales are totally wrong. Iron seems to have a deleterious effect upon them, as does the power of disbelief itself. Presumably, they can also be injured by magic. A faerie is also vulnerable to dream-creatures, and can be knocked unconscious by such attacks. Puzzlingly, the Mists can sometimes affect a faerie so injured, causing the changeling to forget all about her heritage. Changelings can also be held to sworn oaths, though only sometimes — the peculiars are unknown to you.

Changelings obviously congregate wherever artists and dreamers gather. However, most still lead some semblance of a normal life, as well. They occasionally refer to ranks of nobility, though these titles may simply be formalities for their courtly dances in their own, strange society. A few rare sites seem to serve as changeling dream-fortresses, called Freeholds, but you know nothing more than that (and, indeed, have probably never seen such a conceptually silly place, in any case).

FAERIE LORE X 4

You've seen or heard of most of the European kiths and understand that changelings are basically fragments of dream instilled into human forms. Each kith wields a few rather spectacular powers and an unusual appearance, although both traits usually only work in the dream-realm that overlaps changeling reality.

The powers of changelings are called Arts, and they affect things through trickery, misdirection, illusion, natural forces and majestic charisma. Most changelings have a modicum of skill with a few Arts, though they have limits on what they can affect, dictated by various Realms of existence. Furthermore, fueling magical powers requires the use of special tricks called Bunks, seemingly random little gestures or games. Changelings harvest the power of creativity from artistic mortals, either by inspiration or by stealing the essence of dreams. This distilled power, Glamour, takes many random forms, but it ultimately ties a changeling to the dream worlds that exist parallel to mundane existence.

Only a few weapons prove truly deadly to changelings. Obviously, their mortal bodies are just as vulnerable to damage as anyone else, but their faerie souls can only be permanently quenched with magic or cold iron. "Cold iron" doesn't necessarily seem

to mean iron that's physically cold, though; it has more to do with impure, natural iron. Dream-beasts and weapons also hurt changelings, though not as badly. A changeling who dies mortally is apparently completely dead; one who dies in dreams falls into a coma, reviving with no memory of changelings.

Changelings tend to gather at places patronized by artists, of course, but they also hold special realms called Freeholds. A Freehold is a faerie fortress, often with its own dream appearance. Mortals tend to avoid such places due to the effects of the Mists. In Freeholds, changelings can replenish their power, and sometimes even call upon new dream allies or treasures.

FAERIE LORE X 5

You know most secrets of faerie and changeling society. Changelings, for instance, are faerie souls in human

bodies, there in an attempt to survive in the mortal realm. True faeries are gone from the world—only their mortal remnants live on now, some even unaware of their true natures. These changelings protect themselves from Banality by hiding in mortal forms, reincarnating into new bodies when their mortal host shells die (except the sidhe—nobody knows what happens to them). The changelings that survive come from various groups, or kiths. Each kith traces its heritage back to a fragment of myth and dream. You can name the various kiths, as well as their common capabilities, and you know about the existence of some unusual types of faeries in Asia and Native American cultures, though particulars are sketchy at best. A rare few humans inherit a little faerie blood but not a true soul; these kinain are valuable relatives, some even possessing a few changeling tricks.

You've learned about the names and effects of various changeling Arts and the corresponding Realms. Furthermore, you're familiar with the different common modes of gaining Glamour—Reverie, Rapture and Ravaging—and you know about Bunks and how to perform them. You're aware of the distinction between the chimerical world and the "real" one, and of chimerical damage, faerie miens and how to influence both. The more esoteric aspects of faerie existence are still sketchy in your experience, though you've heard tales about mighty quests, magical treasures capable of instilling wonder and magic, realms of fantastic legend where youth and hope are restored and paths to immortality and true reconciliation for the fragmentary human and fae souls.

On the flip side, you can also be a danger to the fae: Cold iron, unrefined and in its natural unalloyed iron state, is anathema, capable of inflicting mortal wounds and even destroying a faerie soul completely. As creatures of dream and wonder, faeries are also vulnerable to disbelief and—more terribly—boredom. A changeling can also be injured by dream-weapons or creatures (that is, chimera); this sort



of injury is more likely to render a changeling comatose and without memories due to the Mists, though. Furthermore, you know that changelings can be held to their oaths, if they swear under the old forms, though such oaths can paradoxically grant them the strength of will to fulfill their sworn promises.

Even if you've never been to a Freehold, you know about the existence of these wellsprings of Glamour, their tendency to shift time and space and the balefire hearths that represent their power. The rulers of Freeholds are usually changeling nobles, which generally means one of the sidhe; however, some commoners hold sites, and the titles of nobles (duke, count and so on) vary widely enough to indicate a range of possible possessions and treasures. You also know about the Dreaming, and have heard of the Deep Dreaming. The tales of Arcadia are no stranger to your ears, though you know that it is sadly closed and lost. You've heard the salutary rumors of various gates and doorways to realms of faerie or even to Arcadia itself, though these are nothing but faraway legends, of course.

OTHER LORES

Making up other *Lore Abilities* is a task left to the individual Storyteller. Just about any group or supernatural phenomenon in the World of Darkness could be a subject of a specialized *Lore*. Some examples:

Cainite Lore: Deeper secrets of vampires, covering such things as the Book of Nod, particulars of the Blood Bond, the development of Disciplines, lost bloodlines and the like. (Sometimes mistakenly called *Kindred Lore* — remember, only Camarilla Licks call themselves "Kindred," so that's a misnomer.)

Camarilla or Sabbat Lore: Understanding of the history, policies and influential members of a particular vampire society. Useful for ghouls, revenants and neonate vampires who want to get ahead, or hunters who specialize in dealing with one group's particular tactics.

Clan Lore: The inside scoop on a given clan of vampires. Great for toadying ghouls on a waiting list.

Garou Lore: The particulars of shapeshifter society, including ranks, rites, Gifts, spirit dealings, history, the Silver Record, the Litany and so on. Higher levels may impart some knowledge of other shapeshifter types. Useful for kinfolk.

Hsien Lore: Special knowledge of the hsien, the heavenly messengers of Asia.

Infernal Lore: Knowledge of infernalists and demonologists, their practices, powers and forbidden magic.

Kinfolk Lore: Study into the recessive side of the shifting family, the limits of kinfolk, how their lineages interact with shifters and what sorts of powers they can unlock. Good for kinfolk in general (though they would not automatically have such knowledge) or for garou making a study of their relatives.

Mage Lore: The wiles, Traditions and techniques of powerful willworkers.

Mummy Lore: A bit of experience with the ever-reincarnating Reborn, whether from Egypt or from other versions of the Spell of Life.

Spirit Lore: Congress with and knowledge of the various natural spirits and celestial entities in the Umbra and beyond.

Tribal Lore: An understanding of the tribal secrets and hidden history of a particular family of werewolves. This is a good *Lore* for a kinfolk studying his particular tribe, or someone studying the weaknesses inherent to one tribe.

Wyrm Lore: The black secrets of the Wyrm, the Triatic entity of corruption and thoughtless destruction.

ON REGULATING LORES

Obviously, the learning curve of the average player is going to exceed the Experience-Trait-earning curve of the average player, making the regulation of Lores as purchased in your chronicles somewhat difficult. A player's character might learn more about a particular type of supernatural creature in one night than he'll ever have the Experience Traits to buy the requisite levels of Lore to represent.

If you are running a chronicle, it is important to know when to anticipate this accelerated learning curve. If you are creating a human character for a largely vampire-populated chronicle, for instance, it may be advisable to put a cap on the level of Lore the human may purchase after character creation. After all, if a human enters the game with one level of *Vampire Lore*, and some loose-lipped Ventru historian spills the beans as he understands things, purchasing more levels of *Vampire Lore* is no longer cost-effective. However, you might state that any knowledge an uninitiated character gains about a supernatural creature *must* be purchased in the Lore path, or the character will "forget" what he has learned.

On the whole, however, it is worthwhile to note that these lores are best used as roleplaying notes. If a hunter character has gained only the first level of *Vampire Lore*, make sure he acts on the supposition that vampires are repulsed by the cross, garlic, their own reflection and the barrier of running water. Having a hunter (even a Storyteller character) learn from his mistakes and adapt to the true World of Darkness makes for a much more dramatic story than having someone say, "Okay, this is what I think I know; what's the truth?"

Because, after all, finding out the night's true secrets and surviving to tell the tale of how you learned them is so much more rewarding in the end.





STRING QUARTET

by Richard E. Dansky

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 line with the theme of this issue, gives a glimpse of what it's like to be the bad guy in the *World of Darkness*. A bad guy's motivations are important to any story, but how to play a bad guy is something that gets overlooked. How does one act? What does one do to accomplish his sinister goals? How does one think? Read on to find out.

PART I: THE WEB

There is nothing quite like squeezing through a heating vent to make one lose all appreciation for the dessert tray.

That's what Todd the Grey was thinking, anyway, as he hauled himself out of the duct and turned to place the vent cover where he'd be able to reach it later. One of the screws went skittering across the wooden floor, and with a silent curse Todd retrieved it in his long, chalky fingers. His face a pallid mask of concern, he looked up at the figure snoring on the bed across the room, still blissfully asleep.

Todd grinned. Even on his worst day, he still had it. "Not too shabby still, old man," he hissed to himself, and stalked toward the figure on the bed.

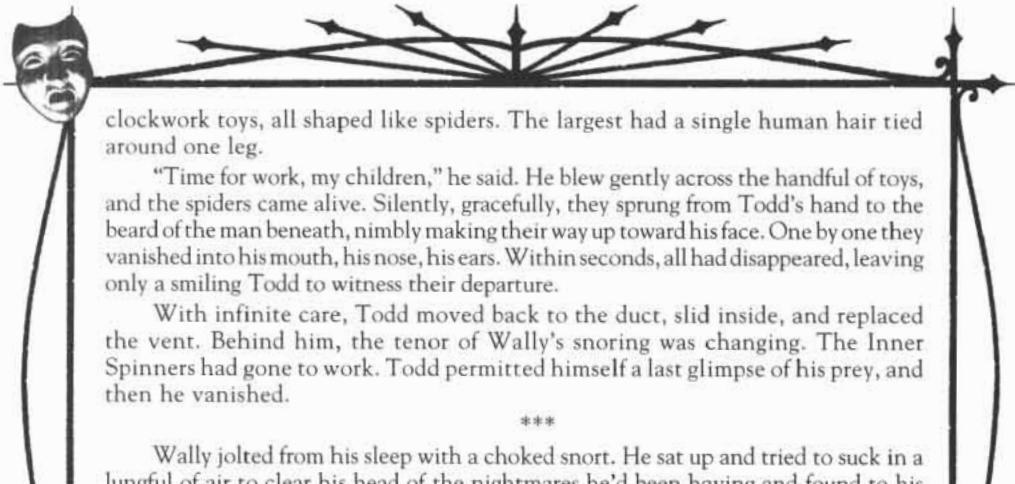
The man lying in the tangle of blankets was huge, at least six and a half feet in height. His barrel chest rose and fell in time with his titanic snores, which were loud enough to be physically painful to Todd's sensitive ears. The man's face was wide, florid and bearded, and his massive hands clenched and unclenched in random, spasmodic motions.

"You look a lot better when you're blue, old man," Todd whispered, studying his target for a moment. Normally Todd knew the man in his other guise, that of a troll knight with the laughable name of Waldo. Tonight, however, he was just plain old Wally Bergen, and plain old Wally didn't have a hope in hell against the subtlest, most infamous and best paid (the last was important, Todd told himself) assassin the slaugh had ever spawned.

Truth be told, Waldo didn't stand much of a chance either. Todd was that good.

Sir Waldo had made a mistake, you see. At court, he'd had a few too many mugs of ale and gotten a little too loud about certain indiscretions other court members had made. Someone had taken offense, someone with a great deal of money to spend on vengeance. That someone had hired Todd the Grey.

As usual, Todd wore his working clothes — black silk, from head to toe, and paper-soled shoes. He eschewed both gloves and mask — he liked neither his vision nor his spidery fingers obstructed when he went to work. As always, he wore a belt of black braided leather, with a single slim dagger and a single black pouch. His fine, long hands paused over the dagger for a moment, then reached into the pouch. He smiled softly as he drew forth a gentle handful of what looked like tiny



clockwork toys, all shaped like spiders. The largest had a single human hair tied around one leg.

"Time for work, my children," he said. He blew gently across the handful of toys, and the spiders came alive. Silently, gracefully, they sprung from Todd's hand to the beard of the man beneath, nimbly making their way up toward his face. One by one they vanished into his mouth, his nose, his ears. Within seconds, all had disappeared, leaving only a smiling Todd to witness their departure.

With infinite care, Todd moved back to the duct, slid inside, and replaced the vent. Behind him, the tenor of Wally's snoring was changing. The Inner Spinners had gone to work. Todd permitted himself a last glimpse of his prey, and then he vanished.

Wally jolted from his sleep with a choked snort. He sat up and tried to suck in a lungful of air to clear his head of the nightmares he'd been having and found to his horror that he couldn't. His mouth and nose were stuffed with something cold and sticky, and he could feel things swarming around inside his mouth. They were crawling, he could feel it, and filling his throat with more of that same sticky stuff. In a panic, he brought his hands to his mouth to try to tear out whatever was in there, but he could only pull away tiny clumps of spiderweb while the creatures inside kept on spinning more and more of it and the terrible pressure in his chest kept on building.

The last thing Sir Waldo, for he had returned to his fae mien in desperation, saw was one of the Inner Spinners taking a leisurely walk across his left eye. Thankfully, after that, he saw no more.

It was nearly dawn when the spiders finished marching themselves home. Todd had been up waiting, sharpening his knives impatiently and otherwise engaging in all the rituals of a worried parent. "There you are at last," he said with relief when the first clumped its way onto his windowsill. "It certainly took you long enough." The column of spiders halted and wobbled uncertainly. "Yes, I know what took you so long — he had a big, big mouth, didn't he? That's why you had to go pay him a visit. Now sit yourselves down and rest. You'll need your strength."

One by one, the clockwork spiders nestled themselves up so that Todd could sweep them, gently, back into his pouch. As the last one vanished into its dark confines, Todd smiled the smile of a gently loving father. After all, they were his children in a sense, and they'd just helped him carry on the family business.

PART II: CAT'S CRADLE

Slander always thought it was in poor taste for any wraith to sing "Maxwell's Silver Hammer," much less an Artificer. Unfortunately, the wraith in question was a potential client, and as poor as his taste might be, it would be infinitely worse form for Slander to turn him into a tasteful desk accessory. So Slander just made do with various idle defenestration fantasies as he tailed the Artificer to the previously arranged meeting point.

It didn't make the trip any more pleasant, Slander noted, that the bastard couldn't carry a tune in a bucket.

Eventually the Artificer, a short, squat man in painfully anachronistic overalls and work boots, ducked into a nondescript shop off the agora. Slander, wearing the face he'd once seen on a coin of Imperial Roman vintage, waited what might once have been three heartbeats, then followed the client in. It was a trap, of course. These sorts of situations were always traps. The clients in these cases always had a particular flavor of nervousness that gave them away instantly. Still, the question of for whom the trap had been set remained open.



It was no surprise when the outer door slammed shut, though the utter darkness that resulted was startling. There was no light, no light at all. Slander could see nothing, and the assassin's brief glimpse of the room wasn't enough to allow recollection of anything more than the haziest details.

And then, in the darkness, there came a sound. It was a soft sound and regular, the sound of a rocking chair. Slander stopped and tried to track the sound. It came from everywhere and nowhere, and every time Slander made a move toward it the sound faded. Eventually, the assassin shrugged, gave up the fruitless chase, and stood perfectly still, waiting.

"Three minutes, Slander. I'm disappointed," came the voice of the wraith Slander had presumed was the client. "I'd been led to expect that you'd come to your current conclusion much more quickly, and with fewer bumps on the shins."

"Who are you?" Slander asked, not expecting an answer.

"I'm with the *Magisterium Veritatis*, Slander, though my name is unimportant at the moment. What is important is that you've been a rather spectacular thorn in the *Magisterium's* side. However, you've got some very powerful friends, so I wanted to talk to you."

"Talk?"

"Talk. Honestly, Slander, I have enough from just our dealings to get you hammered into a wind chime to hang off the weathervane on the Onyx Tower, but really, I just want to talk."

Slander shrugged invisibly. "Then why all of the rigmarole? Why the blackout?"

"You can't see me, you can't take out your disappointment on me. For my part, I was blind from birth until death, so this places me at a distinct advantage. I'm used to this. And in the meantime, this gives me enough of an edge that you'll talk instead of trying anything, at least for a little while."

"So what do you want to know?" Slander's tone was neutral, guarded.

"Names of clients, names of targets, methods by which you can be contacted, your connection to the Masquers' Guild."

"The Guild doesn't exist."

"And my name is Charon, Imperator of this Golden Age of Stygia. Tell you what, Slander. Why don't we pretend that I've asked the first round of questions, and you've made your categorical denials about client confidentiality and so on. Honor and form have been satisfied, now we can get down to brass tacks. Who's next, and why? I won't interfere, but I want to know who, when, why and how."

"What's it to you?"

The invisible voice made sounds like its owner was shifting in its chair. "Because something big is coming, Slander, and I want to understand it. I want to know why so many Anacreons and old-time wraiths throw roadblocks in my way every time I try to go after you or anyone like you, and I want to know where you fit in. So, now it's your turn for an answer. Who's next?"

Slander spoke quickly, but without emotion. "Szandor Holzy is my next target. He's in the Grim Legion, relatively high up, and he's annoyed a consortium of Gaunts from the Emerald and Skeletal Legions, apparently over a matter of allocating space at the shipyards. Grim ships are getting precedence over the ones belonging to other Legions, and Holzy's going to be made an example. One would assume that the fact that dockyard refit space has suddenly become a hot issue is enough of a clue as to what's going on for you, yes?"

"Certainly interesting, yes. Do you have anything else for me?"

"One more tidbit you might find of interest."

"Oh?"



"You've been set up. Those Domens and Gaunts you mentioned earlier have decided that you're a nuisance. Unfortunately, Holzy isn't quite the next one on my list. You are."

Slander picked up the sound of the figure launching itself across the room, the noise of the chair swinging empty. "Interesting. I think I'll be leaving now."

"I think you won't," Slander said. "The wraiths on your team are involved. Hand-picked. As for the darkness, well..." A moment of concentration was all it took before a soft yellow glow spilled from Slander's perfectly still form. "One of the first tricks we teach youngsters in the Guild, centurion. I'm surprised you didn't know that. Now don't struggle, and I'll make it so it doesn't hurt."

From the sounds of the screams the guards outside the sealed building heard, it was obvious that the poor fool inside had indeed struggled. They nodded knowingly to one another, and then they guarded the building some more. It was what they were paid to do, after all.

In the end, there was silence inside, except for the sound of a rocking chair. It creaked slowly and steadily as the wraith sitting in the chair rocked back and forth, back and forth. Slander was in no hurry, after all. His attention wasn't on the furnishings, the walls or even the door.

Slander was paying very close attention to the game of cat's cradle he was playing, instead. After all, snapping the wraith you were playing with was said to be bad luck, very bad luck indeed.

PART III: BED TAPE

It was an office park, much like any other office park. All of the buildings were a single story, with flat roofs guaranteed to resonate like bass drums during a hard rainstorm. Each building was some variation on a basic blocky rectangle, with tall windows and glass doors and white lettering over each doorway proclaiming proudly that TechStar Consultants or some equivalent laired within.

In one of these mundane buildings, behind an equally mundane glass door, rested the offices of Proac Environmental Consultants, a firm devoted to helping companies deal with the ever-changing complexities of EPA regulations. Today's perfectly legal barrel of solvent was tomorrow's \$100,000 fine waiting to happen, and smart firms hired someone like PEC to help them stay one step ahead of the government officials. It was part of doing business, after all — paying a little up front to clean things up could save millions in fines on the back end. Proac (or some firm very much like it) was just the company to help businesses over that particular hump.

On this particular afternoon (64 degrees and partially cloudy, with the light coming down in bored curtains of chiaroscuro through the gaps in the clouds), a meeting of singular importance was taking place in Proac's offices. Seated in the small conference room that housed all of the firm's good office chairs were a woman and two men, one of whom was of singular appearance. The man in question was all of five and a half feet tall and grossly fat. His chin, such as it was, sagged down until it was indistinguishable from the cavernous folds of his neck. He was bald, with a wrinkled pate and a broad, flat nose that turned up in a way that reminded observers of either an ancient prizefighter or a young hog. He wore a suit of greenish-gray fabric and a yellow shirt, and his massive hands spilled from jacket cuffs that were an inch too short to hide his thick wrists.

The other two, oddly enough, were thrilled to see him.

"We are very, very happy that you're interested in joining us here, Mr. Sheldon," said the woman. She was tall and angular and thin, with faded blonde hair and a severe blue suit. "We know that you're moving from the other side of



the fence, as it were — Magadon is not exactly known for its adherence to environmental regulations — but we really look forward to the expertise you can bring to our operations. And you come very, very highly recommended." Beside her, a small man with brown hair and mannerisms that would have fit better on a sparrow, nodded nervously and repeated the phrase "highly recommended" two or three times before fading into a humiliated silence.

The man on the other side of the table smiled a wide, wide smile, showing perhaps a few more teeth than most people would consider appropriate for a business meeting. "Honestly, it's my pleasure, Miss — it is Miss, yes — Schiller. I've been part of the problem, as it were, long enough. Now it's time to be part of the solution. I'm very much looking forward to being part of your team. When can I start?"

"Ahem." The nervous little man, Schiller's assistant, cleared his throat, nervously, of course. "There is the matter of compensation, which we still haven't ironed out yet. Now the figures you've provided as your acceptable range—"

"If they're too high, I'm open to negotiation." Sheldon spread his big, soft hands in a gesture of magnanimity. "Really, that's only an initial range."

The little man, who went by the name of Keenan, shook his head vehemently, almost dislodging his carefully combed-over hair from his forehead. "Nonononono. Actually, I was going to say that your numbers were well below what we were expecting. We were going to come in with an offer substantially higher than the range you proposed, which, frankly, I find a little puzzling when it comes to dealing with someone with your (of course) superb qualifications."

Sheldon placed his hands on the table, palms down, and actually managed to look embarrassed. "Well, I have a confession to make. I more or less lowballed myself."

"Why?"

"Well, because I really want the position. Call it the guilt discount for some of the things that I worked on at Magadon. Though if you feel compelled to pay me more, how about this as a compromise: Give me a net point on all the new business that I bring in through my contacts for the next twelve months, and then we can talk about adding another point or going to straight additional compensation. But honestly, all that is secondary." Keenan had already tuned him out and was scribbling figures frantically on the yellow pad in front of him. Schiller leaned forward, interested.

"Secondary? That may be a first, frankly. Usually we have to cut these interviews short when the interviewee decides that we can't pay enough."

Sheldon smiled that too-wide smile again. "Look, Miss Schiller, let me level with you. I want to work here, and I've done my research. I know you, and I know your company, and I know you're not doing anywhere near as well as you could be. There are a lot of companies out there who'd rather gamble with the EPA than pay you to straighten their acts out. They all lose in the end," he paused and shrugged, as if he knew that fact all too well, "but try telling them that until the time the government inspectors show up on their doorsteps with plastic bags and notepads. So, we need to find a way to get them to listen to you, even when they don't want to listen. We've got to find a way to trick them, essentially, into buying what you're selling. And that's where I come in. These men don't want to hear about how they can *obey* the law. Sad but true, they want to hear how they can *beat* it, hypercompetitive bastards that they are. So we reposition Proac's approach. We still provide the same product, but we sell it as a way to get around the EPA, a way to buy some time for compliance so it doesn't cost as much. Let them think they're getting away with something and they'll pay through the nose for it; give them honest value and they'll go looking for a bargain. Hell, if any of them had any sense of responsibility in the first place, this company wouldn't exist, right? So let me pitch it to you straight: I'll take point. I'll go in to the



oil companies and the petrochem boys and the paint manufacturers and I'll let them think that I'm on their side. After all, I've got the Magadon credentials, right? I can't possibly be one of those naughty environmentalists. And then I give them the presentation on how they can 'work around' the EPA, when really what we're doing is just stringing out their cleanup so that it looks like a money saver. They think they're getting away with something, we get increased business and the EPA gets what it wants, eventually. It's just this way the bad guys aren't so inclined to dig their heels in and fight tooth and nail."

Schiller uncrossed her arms and leaned forward. She smiled. "I'd be very interested in seeing your proposed presentation, Mr. Sheldon. Robert?" she called to Keenan, still scribbling away, "I think Mr. Sheldon's proposal is very intriguing. Think you can work out the contract language?"

"Ofcourse," Keenan sounded hurt. "I'll have it ready for the lawyers to look at by three."

"Excellent." Internally, Sheldon was laughing. Schiller was clearly hooked, and Keenan was a nonentity. The woman had clearly caught the smell of money and she'd follow it off the path of her principles. Soon delays in conforming would turn into workarounds and avoidance, and she'd justify each step to herself. Honestly, if she were half as smart as she thought, she never would have fallen for the lowball technique. Clearly, she wanted to believe he'd come work for her nickel and dime outfit out of the goodness of his heart, and that was her weakness. She'd profit by it in one sense, but not without paying the price. Proac would be diverted from its original purposes, and so profitably that no one could gainsay the slow change. God help any actual environmentalists on board, because no one in management was going to.

"Mr. Sheldon," she said. "for a former oil company executive, you are remarkably," and she laughed, "green."

Sheldon joined in her laughter. "My dear Miss Schiller," said the Toad, "you have no idea of just how green I really am. No idea at all."

PART IV: LOOSE THREADS

Three and three they flew, three above and three below. Seen from the proper angle, Murder's Daughters formed a perfect diamond. Seen from another, they were just another unkindness of ravens riding a cold, angry wind.

The land they flew over was brown with dead leaves and gray with asphalt; it was a place of square white houses with square mown lawns. It was a place where nothing extraordinary would be allowed to happen, where good and evil would both be kept at bay by the desire of the residents for normalcy above all else.

Good tended to respect this desire. Unfortunately, evil didn't.

The six ravens swooped over the neighborhood once, twice, three times, then found their target and dove for it. One by one they swooped through an open window on the second floor of an otherwise utterly ordinary house, landing one by one in an utterly ordinary computer room that just happened to have a corpse on the floor.

The dead man was of median height, with a florid face and eyes that stared unseeing in death. He wore a white dress shirt, strained a bit across his belly, and navy slacks. He wore no shoes, and there was a hole in the heel of one of his hideous argyle socks. There was no blood, no sign of violence, but he was quite dead.

"So," said the eldest of Murder's Daughters (for where there had been three plus three ravens now sat six women with hair as black as coal, "anyone know why this one called so strongly?"

"Not I," said the next in age. "But we all heard it." The others all nodded.

"Perhaps we could ask him?" said the youngest. "Surely he would know why his death called us here."



The third and fourth nodded in agreement, while the fifth, who was jealous of the youngest, said "Hmph!" and turned away. The eldest pondered a moment, and said, "An excellent idea. Gwen, will you grant me the privilege?" The youngest flushed and nodded wordless approval. The eldest smiled, and shifted, and where there had been a woman was a raven. The raven stepped gingerly onto the corpse and peered at his eyes hungrily, then cocked her head at a curious angle. She stood that way for a long minute, while her five companions watched anxiously. Then, suddenly, she flew to the top of the monitor on the desk against the far wall and perched, agitatedly.

"He's not giving permission," said the eldest, for Murder's Daughters can understand the tongue of ravens while in woman's form. "I'm not allowed."

"Just take it," said the fifth oldest, anxious to outshine the youngest. "He's dead. It's not as if he can stop you."

The second oldest fixed her with an angry stare. "We must always ask. Even before we drink the eyes of the worst, the lowest, the foulest, we must ask. Raven taught us thus, and so we follow his teachings. To do otherwise is to invite disaster." And the four eldest turned their back on their younger sibling, who blushed red with shame and anger.

"Perhaps I should try," said the third eldest, who knelt before the dead man and whispered imploring words to him. She knelt as long as the eldest had waited, then shook her head as well and stood. "He wants nothing from us but abandonment."

The youngest stood when she heard this. The others all looked at her, save the nearest to her in age, who turned to stare pointedly out the still-open window. "Perhaps I could try?"

"Two of us have already spoken to him, girl," said the second oldest. "What can you say that they have not?"

The youngest said nothing to this, but only asked, "Please?" So the oldest and the second oldest looked at each other, and nodded assent, and the youngest changed herself into the form Raven had given her mother's mother's mother.

And so, as a bird the youngest stood near the man's face and asked the spirit of the dead man if he'd give up his eye to her. Wordlessly, she felt his assent, though she felt sorrow as well. And so she drank deep of his right eye, to see what he had seen in his last moments of life. The others watched in silence and respect and waited for the youngest to speak in her own time.

She changed first, and this was something unprecedented amongst Murder's Daughters. Always one spoke of one's visions of the dead while in raven form, out of custom.

"Girl, what did you see?" The eldest's tone was ice, for she had a long respect for the way things had always been done.

"Butcher the body," said the youngest, in a voice colder still. "Tear out his other eye. Make strings of his guts. Kill him all over again." She turned to where the dead man lay on the floor and spat on his now-bloody face. Then, eschewing raven form, she walked out the door into the house, and thus made her way out.

It was the one who was now the youngest who made the first cut, using a knife of bone that she'd taken from a dead man. After a second's hesitation, the others joined in. By the time five ravens flew away from the house, the room was an abattoir, the corpse a bloody ruin.

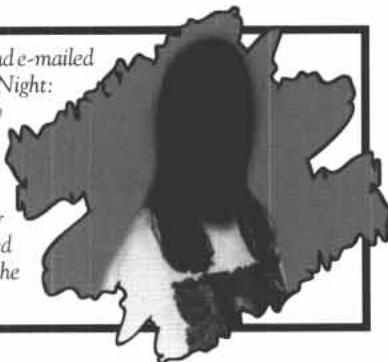
And the sixth? She stood on the sidewalk outside her father's house and tried to forget what she had seen through his eyes, something that made it kinder to make it look as if he'd been murdered than to allow the truth to be found. For three hours and three more she stood there. Then, when the last red rays of the setting sun struck her, she changed to raven form and flew off to the west. Someone was waiting there for her, she was sure of it. And nothing waited for her in that house any more.



MET PREVIEW

by Cynthia Summers

You've heard about it, speculated about it and e-mailed us about it. You saw the "Laws of the Final Night: 1999" ad in the first issue of the Journal. By now it's all you can think about. When's it due out? What issues will it address? How will it change my game? Now, just a month before your questions are to be answered, you get the chance to hear about what it was like to create this long-awaited addition to the Mind's Eye Theatre line from the mouths of the people who put it together.



LAWS OF THE NIGHT REDUX

Why? Because it needed doing.

Now that that's out of the way, let's get into the other stuff.

After writing for and editing the revised edition of *Vampire*, I realized that *Laws of the Night* wasn't going to hold up to the sudden influx of new material coming in. The World of Darkness was reinventing itself, and ye olde faithful *Laws of the Night*, as it stood, just wasn't up to the challenge. Sure enough, the questions about a new edition of *Laws of the Night* started to pour in as soon as the news about VRev hit the press. I decided to bump the incipient *Kindred of the East* translation back somewhat on the schedule and prepare for a second edition of *Laws of the Night*. I did all this juggling within a few hours of suddenly receiving the job of MET developer — a scheduling feat something like watching the gates come down when one is in the middle of the railroad crossing.

The writers I hunted down are some of MET's best, bringing their experience as players and Storytellers to the task at hand. They include:

- Peter Woodworth — After auditioning with *The Shining Host* and further displaying his talents with *Laws of the Wyld West*, Peter was entrusted with the monumental task of writing up the sections on rules and drama, and also the allies and antagonists. In addition to all this, he's going to school and is becoming a heckuva swing dancer.
- Jason Carl — Jason wrote the Storytelling chapters for *Laws of Elysium* and *The Long Night*, largely from his own experiences. I told him to write as if he were getting the chance to sit down with every Storyteller new to LARPing and every grizzled veteran who thinks there's nothing new to learn — I hope you agree with me that he delivered as promised.
- Jess Heinig — The Mage developer comes with a long history of playing and Storytelling in California, and I gave him the monstrous chore of re-creating character creation, the clans and the Disciplines. A hefty task, one he was up to in spades.



Now, the next big question on everyone's minds — what's been changed? Why should Joe Vampire go pick this new edition up and set aside his faithful, ragged *Laws of the Night*?

For starters, I've sought to make this book user-friendly for everyone, whether the person picking it up is a longtime player getting the latest edition or someone extremely new to LARPing (or even the world of *Vampire*). Anyone can pick it up and start playing with a minimum of effort, and a new player can read the intro to get a sense of what's happening. A new Storyteller has everything he needs to start a small chronicle in his living room, whereas a veteran can pick up some tricks to make his life easier when the new players arrive.

The biggest effort came in when I incorporated a number of changes that come not only from *Vampire* but also from some five years of steady LARPing experience in various styles and venues. Consider that the *real* playtest — years of rugged wear and tear to see what lasts and what becomes the bane of existences. For example, spending a Willpower now allows you only to retest on a Social or Mental Challenge, not to ignore it. This proviso eliminates the problem of some cheese-weasel thinking he can blow through an elder's *Majesty* or using Willpower to avoid being trapped by a social Discipline so he can mulch someone else. Likewise, Humanity, Paths of Enlightenment and Virtue came under hard scrutiny — how "human" is a vampire with two Beast Traits, and how do you roleplay that? How do these nifty new Paths of Enlightenment fit into the grand scheme of things? From *Vampire*, I brought in things that I had worked on during the book's creation and editing, such as the problem of Malkavians in fuzzy slippers (grrr...) or how to roleplay the tightening hold of a blood bond.

Another major change to LotN2 is that the MET storyline has been advanced along with the tabletop storyline. The Assamites have broken their blood curse (and *Quietus* suddenly has some sinister new uses), the Gangrel have abandoned the sinking ship called the Camarilla and the entire clan of Malkav's get has been infected with *Dementation*. These changes don't mean you have to chuck your entire storyline to start marching along with our drumbeat — these developments occurred very much in secret (at this stage, even I don't know how some of this stuff happened), and you may choose to have your game touched by them only peripherally (for example, as strange rumors from the East Coast).

One question I've been hearing a lot is, "What happens to our old characters?" Don't fret; they don't have to be retired. After all, it can be a lot of fun to work through the mysteries of why the tetched Malkavian has suddenly become *really* tetchy or what happens to city dynamics when the Gangrel as a whole tell the Camarilla to go jump in a lake. A section on updating characters has been included, so chronicles can continue without missing a beat.

And that is just some of what's in store — hey, I can't tell you everything (that would ruin the surprises)! So, if you're new to *Mind's Eye Theatre* and have been looking for a place to jump in, come on in. If you're a battle-scarred trooper who thinks there's nothing new under the moon, this book is for you too.

Welcome to the World of Darkness — The Final Nights are upon us.

Now that you know — or think you know — what's in the new edition of Laws of the Night, let's take a look at what went into it from the writers' perspectives.



My own vision of **Vampire** centers around a deep love of its ancient politics and the highly delicate interactions between characters; happily enough, both are key elements to good live-action play. I believe the best stories for **Masquerade** games are modeled after such influences as *The Usual Suspects*, tales in which hard facts are concealed behind ever-shifting layers of personalities and deceit, and trust of any kind is a rare and often dangerous commodity. Unlike many Storytellers I have observed in the past, I don't encourage total free-for-all backstabbing. Players tend to feel frustrated and have a lot of out-of-character disputes when they think *absolutely no one can be ever trusted*. What true allies you do acquire in a **Vampire** game had better be ready to stand by you come hell or high water, though. Supernatural powers are the icing on this decidedly deadly cake, an element that forces characters to adapt and innovate constantly lest they fall prey to a vampire who has mastered more of her arts. Indeed, many of the basic Disciplines simply exaggerate existing human traits to a supernatural degree; therefore, it is little surprise that vampires are often overblown representations of what we dread we might become ourselves, from debauched artists to callous financiers to killers in the night. Imagine the paranoia a miserly millionaire feels when guarding his treasures then imagine the fear that comes when he knows his foes can sway emotions, change shape or even read his mind!

Above all, the most persistent thought that came to me while I was working on this book was just how many people play **Vampire** in its live-action incarnation. The notion that what I was writing would have an impact on so many different games just staggered me. It felt a little like taking the stage on opening night after months of rehearsals or being called up to the big leagues for the first time after doing a season in the minors. It's exhilarating, sure, but more than a little scary, too, when you realize that not only will so many people be reading your work but that they'll be testing it constantly for things like fairness and playability as well. Add to that the fact that many dissatisfied souls will register their opinions of your work, your writing ability and your family tree on the Web, and you've got yourself a genuine writer's Maalox moment. Fortunately, my trusty troupe pulled me through the worst early jitters, and I acquired a whole new appreciation for a game I had thought I'd gotten to know top to bottom over the last six years.

Vampire turned the gaming world on its ear when it was released; **Masquerade** did it again with the introduction of live-action gaming on a large scale. Now the revised **Vampire** is turning heads and rocking worlds, and I hope that **Laws of the Night 2nd Edition** can carry on that proud tradition. *Semper Vitae!*

— Peter Woodworth

I started preparing to write the Storytelling chapter of this book long before Cynthia asked me to contribute. Of course, I just didn't know that I was preparing for it. Isn't that the way these things often happen? My primary source of ideas was the stack of Storytelling notes I'd been compiling since discovering **MET** some six years ago. Before I actually wrote anything, I forced myself to wade through this morass of half-finished thoughts, lengthy polemics and nuggets of genuinely useful wisdom. The notes reminded me of an old adage: I learned a hell of lot more from my failures than from my successes. My most useful ideas were the results of Storytelling experiences that didn't turn out quite the way I expected or hoped, but it was clear that most of my errors could have been remedied with some frank and solid advice from more experienced Storytellers. So that's what I decided I wanted to contribute to this book: In addition to providing novice and experienced Storytellers alike the basic tools of the trade, I wanted to offer some straight talk about what it really means to tell stories for this game.



However, I didn't want to ignore the things that a Storyteller really needs to know in order to run a successful game. I tried to pay particular attention to those aspects of the game that have evolved most dramatically and rapidly. For example, the first edition of the game presumed that Storytellers would run relatively small-scale games of limited duration. These nights, it's not uncommon for Storytellers to work with groups of fifty players or more and devise plots that endure for years of continuous play — both of these considerations demand a change in the way Storytellers approach the game. Likewise, greater access to the Internet and the World Wide Web has changed the way Storytellers operate. The game no longer ends when the players go home, and tonight's Storyteller must take this extended access into account or be drowned in a flood of e-mail.

The actual writing process is rather a blur in my memory, which, I suppose, is a mercy of sorts. I do recall that I was sometimes frustrated in my attempts to provide adequate information to the reader without straying too far from my core concept. I also remember struggling with the right way to express certain ideas as clearly as possible without over-burdening the reader with unnecessary detail. Fortunately, Cynthia offered plenty of direction, and that helped me stay focused — Thanks, Cynthia! I think it's appropriate that I also thank Melissa, my wonderful and beloved wife, for her steadfast support and for ignoring the constant sound of breaking glass that accompanies my writing efforts.

If I could add anything to the manuscript I submitted, it would be a few more words to Storytellers present and future: You're an indispensable part of this game we all enjoy with such fervor, and, whether or not we take the time to tell you, we value what you do.

Thank you!

— Jason Carl

So there I was, playing an eighth-generation Tzimisce and getting pummeled severely by a 13th generation Lasombra who'd been created only minutes before. As his *Obfuscated* cohort escaped (defeating my Advanced *Auspex*, no less) I buckled under the force of the *Potence*-backed blows and thought, "This is seriously screwed up."

Having just participated in the writing for the *Guide to the Sabbat*, I knew that a lot of our existing *Vampire* material was sorely out of date, and *Laws of the Night* was no exception. *Laws of the Night* had been compiled as an attempt to put together a lot of out-of-print rules and to make accessible everything one needed to play live-action *Vampire*, all in an easy-to-carry format. It proved a smashing success, but many of the rules that it used originally had been taken from older material in *The Masquerade Second Edition* or, more decrepit still, the halcyon days of *The Masquerade Players Kit*. The book tried to reconcile the differences between the first and second editions only halfheartedly; the idea was to make everything accessible, not necessarily to rewrite all of the rules. Furthermore, the material had always been geared toward small groups playing a few times. With the predominance of larger, longer-running games — and clubs like the Camarilla, boasting thousands of players in a global continuity — this approach just didn't work. *Laws of the Night* was showing its seams, and the material was pretty worn, too.

So, in my brief tenure as the *Mind's Eye Theatre* developer, I settled on pushing up the schedule for a revised edition of *Laws of the Night*. The sooner, the better, I thought; besides, we wanted to address all of the changes in the revised



Vampire quickly. That rush moved the book up to a year after the release of *Vampire Revised*. Even after I moved over to the Mage line and Cynthia Summers stepped up to **Mind's Eye Theatre**, the book stayed on schedule. However, the increased pace meant writing a lot of material very fast, and we had only a few writers lined up for live-action. So, a large chunk of the book's writing fell to me.

"No problem," I thought (as I often do when beginning daunting projects), "I have a handle on writing live-action material. I wrote stuff for **Laws of the Hunt** and I play enough to know what to fix, what works and what to change."

If ever there was proof that a game developer can be wrong in his estimation of his own material. Nonetheless, I pressed on, making a list of what needed to be addressed.

First: Fix the Disciplines. The idea of Disciplines with widely varying numbers of powers just appalled me and seemed unfair. I wanted to put everything back to five levels of power.

Second: More detailed character creation. Specifically, Backgrounds had been included in a lot of other MET books since **Laws of the Night**; why leave them out of **Vampire**? The Beast Trait system also seemed to miss some of the points of **Vampire** — vampires who don't fear fire or sunlight or don't feel hunger? Time to change that.

Third: Clan write-ups that don't explain the clan are of limited use to the players. Admittedly, a lot of the original live-action material depended on players who were familiar with the tabletop game, so describing the clans seemed redundant. The prevalence of silly Malkavians, absurd Ravnos and gangster Giovanni showed that a lot of people either weren't reading the tabletop books or hadn't been exposed to them. Many first-time players found the clans confusing and hard to differentiate from one another. It was time to fix that, so expanded write-ups and notes on how to play each clan seemed like a good idea.

...so I was sitting in front of the computer 50,000 words later, and it still wasn't done. I had waiting playtesters, an overly-patient developer and a headache.

The most important thing I learned from writing for **Laws of the Night**? The Devil's in the details.

In tabletop games, a lot can be left to interpretation. Small groups of five or six players can decide on their own variants of rules, and Storytellers can use what makes sense for their games.

In live-action, the game often has 15 or more players (some even number in the *hundreds*), and it has to run for several hours without a hitch. Nobody can afford to stop and argue about rules for two hours. Every eventuality must be covered, from what happens when two people Summon the same victim at the same time (the subject goes to the summoner with the best generation) to whether it's better to compress Blood Traits for ease of play (you wanna carry around 14 cards saying "vitae" and try to keep track of them all?) at the risk of skewing some of the systems. Then, we had to include the changes to Merits and Flaws, the new Influences introduced in **Laws of the Hunt**, specializations, conversions from previous editions, the new Necromancy and Thaumaturgy paths all in the greatest detail possible, while staying concise enough to fit in a trade-size book.

I hope you like what you're getting. Now that all is said and done, it's hard to look at the book we've produced and judge it impartially. So we leave it to you to decide, but not without saying this: You're sure getting your money's worth!

—Jess Heinig

**IS YOUR
Mind's Eye Theatre®
LIBRARY COMPLETE?**

— The Masquerade —

This classic includes everything you need to enter the world of the Kindred. In this game, you no longer simply play a vampire — you *are* the vampire.

— Laws of the Night —

The quick and easy pocket-reference to Mind's Eye Theatre. It allows you to concentrate on the game by putting the rules right in your hands.

— Laws of Elysium —

This resource is the complete guide to creating, maintaining and running a vampire elder. It also contains extended Disciplines for The Long Night.

— Liber des Goules: The Book of Ghouls —

Sure, there are plenty of things to do when you're dead, but here you find what you can do when you're not *quite* dead.

— Laws of the Hunt —

Mortals are the playthings and puppets of the World of Darkness — until they decide to fight back. Take back the night with Laws of the Hunt.

— The Long Night —

The Long Night takes you into the Dark Medieval world of the 12th century and makes your Kindred character the undisputed master of the night.

— Laws of the Wild —

Completely revised in a handy pocket-sized edition, this book brings the rules of Werewolf: The Apocalypse to the live-action stage.

— Oblivion —

"Live"-action roleplaying in the lands of the dead, Oblivion takes the passion and horror of Wraith: The Oblivion and translates it into the Mind's Eye Theatre setting.

— The Shining Host —

A complete Mind's Eye Theatre rulebook on the world of glamour, enchantment and age-old mystery — the world of Changeling: The Dreaming.

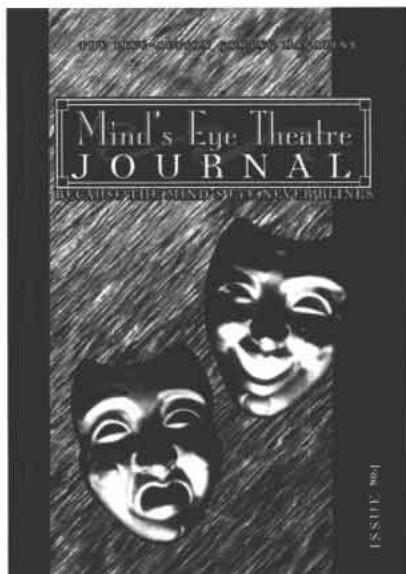
Getting In The Mood

Vampire's Book of Nod and Revelations of the Dark Mother are "in-character" tomes that tell of the birth of vampires, which can be used as actual props in your Masquerade and Long Night games!



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The constant evolution of *Mind's Eye Theatre* brings new and different questions to the game. In this issue, however, I tackle some questions and issues about the world of LARPing in general, as well as some guidelines for the *Journal* itself.



How do I get my LARP event listed in the MET Journal?

This one's pretty straightforward, though I've never put the guidelines down in an official format. Basically, what I'm looking for are World of Darkness LARP events that occur with at least monthly frequency. Your game doesn't have to be a Camarilla game or part of a large association, but it does have to be a *Mind's Eye Theatre* World of Darkness game. Just e-mail submissions to me (carl@white-wolf.com) in the following format, and I'll add you to the growing list:

Your LARP's Geographic Region

Your LARP's Title; the City and State you play in

Your LARP's Frequency (Avoid specific dates, as the *Journal* gets written months before you see it in stores.)

Your Contact Person's Name and an e-mail Contact Address

Your Contact Person's Phone Number

(Oh, and put "MET Journal Event Horizon" in the subject line of your e-mail so my mail filters don't choke or send it off to oblivion.)

(How do I/can I) submit articles, stories and columns for publication in the MET Journal?

I get this one a lot, and I must say I'm proud of the enthusiasm this little quarterly's garnered already. If you want to pitch me an idea for a future article, here's what you do. First, check out the White Wolf web site (www.white-wolf.com)



wolf.com), go to the "Games" link and scroll down to the "Writer's Guidelines" link. Read through the part about submissions to find the Non-Disclosure Agreement. Print out a copy of that form, fill it out, sign it and mail it in. Without this completed form, I've got to toss your submission in the recycle bin, so don't forget it.

Then, when you're pretty sure I've gotten your NDA form, send me an e-mail with the title "**MET Journal Article Query**" or just "**MET Journal Article**," and pitch me your idea. You can also snail-mail the submission, along with your NDA, to the address listed on the first page of the **Journal** if you like.

It's best to send a query for article submissions first ("Hey, I had a great idea about werebats in **MET**"), because I might have a similar idea already in the works, or I just might not be ready to place your piece yet. In either case, it's better to ask first rather than send me a completed article only to find I can't use it.

As far as specifics go, that's pretty much it. I look for articles that convert rules from our tabletop books into live-action (please, query about these first) rather than completely new rule sets. I also seek out articles on the state of LARPing in general, outside the game. And, of course, you've noticed that I print letters and event-listings as well, so if you want to see your name in print, by all means, get my attention.

What can I do to get my LARP sanctioned by White Wolf? If I'm using a variation of MET rules, can I still play? When is it okay to charge admission to my LARP?

I put these questions together because I hear them all the time, and they're usually asked in packs like that. And because I'm sure you want to know, I'll make the official pronouncement:

You can charge legally for a White Wolf LARP if you are using official White Wolf rules, books and item cards, and the only things you can photocopy and distribute to players are the character sheets. Adhering to these guidelines won't make a game an "approved White Wolf story-line" or anything like that. That's done through the Camarilla. These standards simply allow you to charge money for your events without violating our trademarks.

Does this statement mean you can't run your game "based on White Wolf's World of Darkness" with its streamlined system or its house rules (or Mage rules or werewombats)? Nope; that's not what it means at all. It just means that you can't charge folks an admission fee legally. So don't panic. We won't slay you.

EVENT HORIZON: UPCOMING LARP EVENTS

PROPS AGAIN TO THE REQUIEM AND TO ALL OF YOU WHO SUBMITTED SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON YOUR OWN LARPs. KEEP THEM COMING, AND I'LL ADD THEM IN.

VAMPIRE EVENTS

NORTHWESTERN US

Blood Moon Social Club; Las Vegas, NV
 Every Saturday Night
www.bloodmoonsocialclub.com
 (702) 877-1813

Ruby Rain Society; Mountlake, WA
 Every Friday
 Tracy Soldan, tarot01@juno.com

Dark Necropolis; Kitsap, WA
 Every Saturday
mrdeath@u.washington.edu

Tacoma; Tacoma, WA
 Second, third, fourth & fifth Sunday of each month
sheperd@darkdestiny.com
 (253) 581-8728

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

Trails End Troup; Oregon City, OR
 Every Friday
TheChylde@aol.com

SOUTHWESTERN US

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

Theatre of Roses; Portland, OR
 Every Saturday
 Kewi-Cee Chu, kc@csua.berkely.edu

Dark Salem; Salem, OR
 First and third Thursday of each month
 Preston Malone, Coordinatrix@hotmail.com

Seattle; Seattle, WA
 Second and third Sunday of each month
seattledomain@usa.net

Outlands; South King County, WA
 Second Sunday of each month
tsigane@wizards.com

Nox ad Infinitum; Fairbanks, AK
 Every Saturday
fsdck@aurora.alaska.edu

Ivory Masque; Anchorage, AK
 Every Monday
glitter_boy@hotmail.com

Dark Tears; Walla Walla, WA
 First and third Saturday of each month
annapuma@hotmail.com

EVENT HORIZON: UPCOMING LARP EVENTS

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

NORTH CENTRAL US

Dominion of Solitude; Topeka, KS
Second Saturday of each month
Jeffery P. Harrington,
harri999@geocities.com

Ebon Seraph; Omaha, NE
Last Saturday of each month
davosburgh@aol.com

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

SOUTH CENTRAL US

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

House of the Eternal Rose; Clear Lake, TX
Fourth Saturday of each month
prefect@texas.net

THE GREAT LAKES

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

Impiorum Pecatta ("Sins of the Damned"); Warrensburg, MO
First Saturday of each month
Storyteller: Jason Hibdon, eugee@cyberjunkie.com
Web Site: <http://www.cyberjunkie.com/eugee>

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

A Stake in the Heartland II; All of Northeast Ohio
Two events every month
Ryan S. Cope, cedric@neo.rr.com
(330) 923-4483

House of the Unknown; Pittsburgh, PA
Alternate Saturdays
cam@andrew.cmu.edu
Mudge Lounge; Pittsburgh, PA
Alternate Saturdays
cam@andrew.cmu.edu

SOUTHEAST US

Club Seraphim; Norfolk, VA
Game dates vary
<http://www.angelfire.com/va/>
ClubSeraphim
club_seraphim@hotmail.com

Athens by Night; Athens, GA
First Saturday of each month.
Storyteller List abn-st@math.gatech.edu

Seraphim Saloon; Norfolk, VA
First and third Saturday of each month
<http://www.angelfire.com/va/>
ClubSeraphim
club_seraphim@hotmail.com

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

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

Charletonus Ab Noctum; Charleston, SC
First two Fridays of each month
Ian Betts, alisterlegare@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 each month
Ian Betts, alisterlegare@hotmail.com

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

EVENT HORIZON: UPCOMING LARP EVENTS

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.winthrop.edu

GABOU

NORTHWEST US

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

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

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

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

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

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)

Fortress of the Mind's Eye; Lansing, MI
 Every Saturday
 Aaron Ledger,
 ledgeraa@pilot.msu.edu
 (517) 372-1452

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

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

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

GAMES AROUND THE WORLD

Vampire LARP; Cambridge, England
 Fourth Saturday of each month
 Scott Sommerville,
 some@globalnet.co.uk

Mage LARP; Darlington, England
 Second weekend of each month
 Jonnikiss@hotmail.com

Garou LARP; Darlington, England
 Second weekend of each month
 Jonnikiss@hotmail.com

Martin Lloyd,
 martin@shadowgallery.freeserve.co.uk

Vampire LARP; Reading, England
 Fourth Saturday of each month
 Robert Baker-Self, Robert@fiddlers-green.demon.co.uk

Changeling LARP; Reading, England
 Fourth Sunday of each month
 Robert Baker-Self, Robert@fiddlers-green.demon.co.uk

Vampire LARP; Stafford, England
 Fourth Saturday of each month
 Ian Dickson, ian.dickson@gecm.com

Vampire, LARP; Stoke, England
 First Sunday of each month
 Alan Brumpton, Finn@mcmail.com

Garou LARP; Stoke, England
 Second Sunday of each month
 Alan Brumpton, Finn@mcmail.com

Changeling LARP; Stoke, England
 Third Sunday of each month
 Alan Brumpton, Finn@mcmail.com

Mage LARP; Stoke, England
 Fourth Sunday of each month
 Alan Brumpton, Finn@mcmail.com

Vampire LARP; Wakefield, England
 Every fourth Saturday
 Josie Murtagh,
 Josie@imhome.freeserve.co.uk

Vampire LARP; Weston-super-Mare, England
 First Saturday of each month
 Alex Sinclair,
 alex@random-thought.freeserve.co.uk

THE NETHERLANDS

An up-to-date Calendar of all Dutch games
 (and the (inter)national ones of other Europe Camarilla games) can be found at
<http://www.troy.demon.nl/vampire>