

The background of the entire page is a stylized American flag. The stars and stripes are visible on the right side, while the left side is mostly white with scattered red blood splatters and smears. The word 'SINS' is written in a large, dark red, serif font with a distressed, blood-splattered texture. The letters are slightly irregular and have some red liquid dripping from them.

SINS

MANIFEST
DESTINY

FACTION PACK
THORNS: PART 1



"SINS"
CREATED BY
MIQUEL TANKARD

WRITING & DEVELOPMENT TEAM LEAD
SAM SLENEY

WRITING & DEVELOPMENT BY
MIQUEL TANKARD RUSSELL MEADER
SAM SLENEY GAVIN JONES



ILLUSTRATIONS BY
WILL KIRKBY

*"Trees there were, old as trees can be, huge and grasping
with hearts black as sin. Strange trees that some said walked
in the night."*

- Neil Gaiman



Copyright © First Falling Leaf Limited 2013.

Sins, Nemissary, Nemissaries, Brood, Hollow, Aerthir, Risen, Ravagers, Metaforms, and Brood-mothers are

© First Falling Leaf Limited 2013.

FACTION RULES— THE THORNS : PART 1

TIER 1: THE TRIBE

FACTION QUALITY: BEARER OF THE THORN

Your character is part of a larger community within The Thorns. Thought not yet allowed to bear the marks of the Wardens or to Commune directly with the Shards, you have been inducted into the outer secrets of this group. You've seen the Shards, now bound by the ancient power of the earth, and tasted the Ambrosia wrought by the ancient covenant.

Requirements: Your character must have done some great service for The Thorns or spent several years trading with them and helping them as an outsider. The Thorns are extremely slow to trust and will never accept someone until they are certain that no deceit is intended. Nemissaries in particular will find trust hard to earn. Though it's true they can more easily aid the tribe, the Thorns are more aware of most of the dangers of Nemissaries. They are particularly cautious of allowing Nemissaries to dominate their groups and will only accept those that can prove they're willing to see humans as equals, not tools.

Obligations: As expected, a member of the Thorns should never work against their community, but more importantly they must never share its secrets. If it becomes known at any point that a Faction member has spoken to an outsider of any of the inner workings of the Faction, they will almost certainly be exiled. The Thorns are not

interested in second chances, but neither are they usually willing to risk violence to silence a member of this rank.

Benefits: The character will have been brought at some stage before a Shard that the Thorns have "Tamed". There they will find that some form of local flora (most usually a vine or tree) has grown into and around the Shard. Around it grow eerie crystalline flowers, from which senior members of The Thorns produce a liquid they call "Ambrosia". Drinking it silences the influence of that Shard, unless they make direct physical contact with it—something Nemissaries may have need or reason to do.

In humans, there is an additional effect, in that it prevents their resurrection as Broodspawn, and even in death their bodies are little use to the Brood, providing only a third of whatever twisted benefit the Brood would derive from them. Over time, these effects will fade and the Shard's influence will return, so a character will need to partake in another draft of Ambrosia at least once a year.

In addition to the subtle effects of the Ambrosia, and perhaps more importantly, members of this Faction will also be granted access to an unusual form of Voidglass, usually referred to as Thornglass. This form of Voidglass will be provided in limited quantities, either in the defence of the community or if the character can prove that they are working towards the benefits of the Tribe as a whole. For more information on Thornglass, see "Assets of the Thorns" below.

BALANCE

Given the nature of these supplements, it isn't possible to fully playtest rules before they are released. As a result, GMs and players should be cautious of how they integrate the rules in these supplements. Given that they are digital releases, live updates will be made to these rules to reflect any balance changes necessary, and we always appreciate group feedback to help us fine-tune the rules.

FACTION QUALITIES

Faction Qualities are considered to be Background Qualities for the purposes of the Rules. In addition, the "Initiate" Quality always replaces the "Sworn Brothers" Quality. It's simply an expanded version. Remember that as Background Qualities, you can gain them as the result of character actions or the story but they can also be purchased with Character Points or Milestones in downtime. For more information see Sins, page 151.



TIER 2: THOSE WHO KNOW

FACTION QUALITY: OATHBOUND

Your character is amongst the most faithful and trusted, and bears always a manifest proof of that allegiance in the form of a brand or tattoo woven throughout their body. To the eyes of outsiders, this is nothing more than ink or scars, but in truth it binds the character, for good or ill, by their very soul.

Requirements: The character must be human and possess the Quality “Bearer of the Thorns”. They must also partake in the Ritual of Binding. This involves the use of Ambrosia in the application of a tattoo or scarification. The pattern usually resembles vines with thorns and may seem random to an outsider. In reality, the character must voluntarily make a series of oaths and the particular pattern is a physical representation of those vows.

Individual groups within The Thorns vary in exactly what vows are required, but they are no light matter. Only someone both useful and trusted will be offered the position. Part of this is because breaking of these oaths is fatal and the Thorns would rather keep useful individuals at arm's length than allow them to make an oath they can't keep that would result in their destruction, and thus a waste of both resources and talent.

Obligations: Once someone accepts the Binding, they must attempt in good faith to honour their oaths at all times. With that said, communities usually include an Oath which requires the character to keep the secrets of the community, and after that to work always for its benefit. Additional Oaths are nearly always placed subordinate to these two; that way the individual can “twist” the lesser rules somewhat if it's necessary to protect the Tribe.

Benefits: Faction members of this Rank have gained the trust of their community and as a result they will be given access to Thornglass whilst pursuing their own personal agendas and likely will be given access to true Voidglass weaponry in pressing need. They also take part in the Ritual of Binding. This renders the effects of the Ambrosia permanent, and grants them a free Permanent point of Conviction.

In addition, the character cannot be compelled by supernatural means to break their Oaths. Any power which would attempt this automatically fails and non-supernatural attempts to influence the character to break their Oaths have their Difficulty raised by 3.

Note: This applies only to attempts to manipulate, deceive or otherwise persuade a character to break their Oaths.

Drawbacks: The Oaths should be treated with grave seriousness because the consequences of actually breaking an Oath are for a human is unavoidable and painful death as their body twists and writhes, breaking down into ash and leaving only a tiny fragment of Voidglass in place of the heart.



A TRAGIC CONSEQUENCE

For all the benefits it provides, joining the Thorns can be a double edged sword for a Nemissary. The Bindings the Oaths place on their Hollow sometimes lull Nemissaries into a false sense of security. They forget that whilst the Hollow must obey, it does not forgive and whilst it cannot harm their community directly, they tend to become far more systematic and malevolent in their attitude towards everyone else.

Finally, the Nemissary's Spite reduction only applies within their own community, and for some the cold outside world becomes a bitter, painful place. They begin to lose their empathy for outsiders, sometimes becoming unnecessarily cruel and free with the use of Spite based powers—a situation the Hollow is only too happy to push for.

Eventually such Nemissaries can become a danger to the very communities they swore to protect, simply because they draw the ire of other factions, and tragically they can find their Oaths broken and the one good thing that they had turned to a poisonous and hateful memory.

OATHKEEPERS AND CABALS

Nemissaries that take the rank of an Oathkeeper can be problematic in group games. The requirements of their Oaths can greatly limit their freedom of movement and the Thorns in general are unlikely to put their faith in a Nemissary that spends the majority of their time away from the community. This problem can be fixed by a purely Thorns centred game. In any event, the GM and the players should be aware of these problems and plan their campaigns accordingly.

FACTION QUALITY: OATHKEEPER

Your character, though a Nemissary, has earned the respect and trust of a Thorns community and been given the opportunity to bind themselves with the Oaths. For humans, this can be a chain but for many Nemissaries it is often liberating, for the Hollow has no power to compel them to break their Oaths and in this rare case they truly can trust and be trusted in return.

Requirements: The character must be a Nemissary with a Permanent Spite of 3 or less. They must also possess the Quality “Bearer of the Thorns”. Finally they must also have earned the trust and respect of the community, having lived there without serious incident for at least a year. Assuming they meet these criteria, they must undergo the Ritual of Binding.

For Nemissaries the process is similar to that used for humans, but requires the Nemissary’s Aenthir to be exposed whilst the marks are being made. At the culmination of the ritual, the Nemissary must enter the Destroyer Shape, and then speak their Oaths before the community’s Shard. This process will leave the Nemissary with tattoos or scars exactly like a human member of the Thorns and no power can permanently remove them, though they can be temporarily suppressed. The subtlety of these markings ends if the Nemissary enters the Destroyer Shape. There the marks will manifest as a physical indent into the Nemissary’s armour, from which will glow a pale green light with an intensity corresponding to the Nemissary’s Creed.

The Oaths placed upon Nemissaries are similar to the ones for humans as before, but tend to focus on preventing the Nemissary’s Hollow from harming the community. Other than this the Oaths are broadly similar.

Obligations: Just as with a human, a Nemissary must honour their Oaths. An interesting side effect of the Ritual is that their Hollow is also bound to do so, though it should be noted that the Hollow will often take a perverse glee in “misinterpreting” certain commands—though notably they are seemingly incapable of misinterpreting an Oath to do no harm to the community.

Benefits: Like humans, Nemissaries gain an increased access to Thornglass and the Ritual of Binding itself provides various benefits to the Nemissary. While ever they are within their Tribe’s territory or with at least a dozen other Tribe members, their Permanent Spite is considered 1 Rank lower, to a minimum of 0. Furthermore, a Nemissary recovers 1 Light and Dark Anima each night they spend in the company of their Tribe. Finally, they may purchase Faction Arietta in Part 2.

Drawbacks: For a Nemissary, the consequences of breaking an Oath are no less serious than those which apply to humans, but usually less final. Like with a human, the Nemissary’s body begins to break down, resulting in their death exactly as if their Aenthir had been shattered. Assuming that they manage to endure their death, they of course lose any Faction Qualities for The Thorns, though this does not remove any Arietta they have purchased; these powers now have an additional cost of 1 Spite added to them.

Finally, what were subtle marks will be replaced with unnatural looking jagged black scars. The grooves and cracks in the Destroyer Shape will no longer emit a pale green light and are simply left as jagged black recesses. In both cases, these effects are no less permanent than the original subtle markings and mark them forever as an Oathbreaker.

TIER 3: THOSE WHO COMMAND

FACTION QUALITY: SHARD KEEPER

At the heart of every community of The Thorns is an inner circle; a group that are bound by a secret—a power given to them by Nemissaries yet that can only be wielded by a mortal. In them is the knowledge in truth not to live with the Shards, but to reject them—to bind them into the Earth that they so wounded, as the first Shards were bound by the living Earth long ago.

Each community has a handful of such individuals, and they are guides as much as leaders. Their knowledge is too precious to risk and so they rarely if ever leave their communities, bound in a sense to the very Shards which they have tamed.

Requirements: The character must be one of the OathBound with a Permanent Conviction of 6 or higher. They also must possess both the Awakened and Ward Qualities. Aside from this, they can only gain this rank with the approval of at least two other Shard Keepers, something which implies a degree of trust and responsibility that only decades of loyal service can achieve. Assuming all this is true, they will be brought before their community’s Shard and, in a ritual conducted in the presence of the Shard Keepers alone, the vines and thorns which bind the Shard will entangle the character, weaving themselves into their flesh. Whilst it does so, the Oaths the character has formerly made will be stripped from them and the Shard Keepers will ask new Oaths of the character. If they refuse, the vines retract, leaving the original Oath marks. If they accept, the new Oaths are forged into their flesh, and character is left for seven days in a death-like sleep still bound to the Shard. When they emerge—if they emerge—they will find themselves whole and in the prime of life.

Obligations: The character is bound to their new Oaths, and will be expected to serve the community for the rest of their days. Furthermore, they will be expected to push their Tribe to pursue the Thorns’ overall agenda, and will almost certainly be a centre of the community. As a consequence they will find it difficult to have any life outside of The Thorns, even if their Oaths would allow them to do so.

Benefits: The character’s body is reforged, granting them a permanent +1 to Body and Prowess. It also takes on the character’s idealised self-image. They also increase their Anima pool by the lower of their Passion or Conviction. In addition, the character may purchase any of the Faction Meta Qualities in Part 2.

Drawbacks: Like the Oathbound, Shard Keepers are tied to their Oaths, but unlike them their wills are set. Even if they come to regret their Oaths, a part of what made them human is lost forever and with it the ability to truly choose.

FACTION QUALITY: SHARD BEARER

Few Nemissaries are ever trusted enough by The Thorns for them to be considered for a place of leadership. Each Shard Keeper knows in their heart that the Nemissaries were not meant to be a part of this world; no friendship or service can change that, and yet there are those whose service and sacrifice should elevate them beyond an Oathkeeper.

For these rare few, the Shard Keepers can give a true and precious gift; at the price of one of their own lives, they can give the Nemissary the gift of Death, to die one day as mortals do, freed from the Hollow and the threat of the Abyss. For the Nemissary too, this is not without cost. Few have the will and wisdom to set aside immortality, and fewer still will bind themselves to the Oaths that the Shard Keepers demand, but after all such is the price for bearing a Shard as a weapon.

Requirements: The character must be an Oathkeeper of Creed 3 or higher. They must also have served the tribe to the point where one of the Shard Keepers is willing to lay down their life to grant the Nemissary this boon. The Ritual that follows is hardly set in stone; so far it has been performed a handful of times in the world, and each would be unique. The critical step is that the Shard Keeper must remove the crystal at their heart and with it break the Nemissary's Aenthir. If this is done, the Shard Keeper's body begins to crumble though they will show no sign of pain—rather the passing will be marked with a silence that can be broken by no sound.

After a few moments, the Bound Shard will crack and wither. The Nemissary must take what remains of their Aenthir and plunge it into the Shard. The two become one. Whatever will remained in the Shard is broken, its power sustained now by the Nemissary's existence.

Obligations: The Oaths demanded will be dire and like the Shard Keepers, the Nemissary will be unable to willingly break the Oaths once made. At the very least, the Oaths will require the Nemissary to devote their remaining years to the service of their tribe as a leader and as a warrior.

Benefits: First and most importantly, the Nemissary gains the ability to die; that is, if destroyed and facing Judgement, the consequences of failure are simply to end, to find an answer to the mystery all humans must someday face. Because of this, the Nemissary's Hollow is also silenced permanently. It can no longer attempt to take control of the character and is effectively dead.

The Nemissary also begins to age. The process of aging is slow, proceeding at about a third the normal human rate, but from the moment of their Rebirth as a Shard Bearer, their days are numbered. They will live on for as many years as the sacrificed Shard Keeper could have reasonably

"OUR SHARD DIED"

Obviously in the event of a Shard's complete destruction, a Thorns community is in a tricky spot. The Ambrosia and the Oaths that bind them will begin to fail. The community will have a number of weeks equal to the Shard's rank to find and bind a new Shard, a process which will restore both the ability to use Ambrosia and the power of the Oaths.

In the event that they fail to Bind a Shard, those who bear Oaths will suffer effects exactly as if they broke their Oaths. This possibility can lead to truly desperate actions on the part of the Thorns, and is one of the reasons that so few Nemissaries have ever been elevated to the rank of a Shard Bearer.

expected to do so. Given that the Shard Keeper would have been in the prime of their life, this is likely to be somewhere between fifty to sixty years.

Beyond this, the Nemissary is bound forever to the Shard used in the ritual. Its will is broken and the Nemissary has access to any powers that it possessed. Its remains serve as the focal point for these powers and whilst they remain, the Nemissary has a powerful access to all those it has touched. In practical terms, they can gain 1 Neutral Anima for every member of the Tribe each night when they sleep (In practice, this means the Nemissary's Anima should refill for free).

The Nemissary is also considered to have Blood Synergy with every member of their Tribe who has partaken of Ambrosia derived from that Shard, or who has gone through the Ritual of Binding. Whilst in physical contact with the Shard, they gain a number of Automatic Successes on rolls to invoke Arietta equal to the Shard's former rank.

Finally, the Nemissary can temporarily reshape the Shard's remains, either forming it into a Voidglass blade, or use it to sustain the Destroyer Shape. If the Nemissary uses it to forge a blade, it can count as any melee weapon of the Nemissary's choice. It gains the Voidglass trait and when it strikes a target, its Damage is increased by that target's Permanent Spite or Synergy. In addition, if the attack inflicts any Damage, the Nemissary gains 1 Neutral Anima, or 3 Neutral Anima if the attack slays the target.

If they use it to sustain the Destroyer Shape, the normal costs for assuming that form are waived and the Nemissary gains an additional point of both Damage and Resilience. In either case, this effect can be sustained for a number of hours equal to the Nemissary's Conviction. At any point up to and included the limit, the Nemissary can end the effect and re-centre the Shard on a new location, so long as that location is not within the sphere of influence of an existing Shard. If they do not choose a new location by the time the effect wears off, the Nemissary's body will break down and they will re-form at the Shard's original position, losing any Anima they possess, but otherwise taking no ill effects.

In the event of the Nemissary's permanent death, the Shard they bear follows them to the grave; its physical form and that of the Nemissary break down into fragments of true Voidglass.

Drawbacks: Though the Hollow is dead, Spite remains. If the character's Permanent Spite exceeds the Nemissary's Creed, the effects are catastrophic. The Nemissary's consciousness is devoured. In a moment of horror, the fate which they thought they had escaped will claim them and they will begin their fall into endless darkness; worse still, this is only the beginning of the pain they will leave behind.

The Nemissary's mind remains, and it weaves a cocoon of Voidglass around itself. Its Anima, bound in all of its Tribe, becomes a poison; all those that the Shard has touched begin to sicken and die. Those who have merely partaken of the Ambrosia, who are young and strong, have a slim chance of survival. Those who are weak or are old will soon fall, twisting into nightmarish contortions. Those poor souls OathBound to the Shard will likewise begin to decay, but from them something far worse emerges. From within their forms will emerge tendrils of white flesh, and Voidglass will follow.

Soon enough a brood of Hivespawn will tear their way from their flesh, but unlike others that Nemissaries have yet seen, these Hivespawn will begin to act with a coherent purpose; to protect the sleeping nightmare—the Reaper yet unborn...

OUTPOSTS

Scattered across the states, the holdouts and outposts of numerous factions litter the horizon. These bastions of civilisation range from humble townships marked on local maps, to the inconsequential hold-outs and watchtowers of transient forces.

Outposts can provide parties with invaluable rest stops or campaign hubs, or prove worthy challenges for combative groups looking to pillage and plunder the wares of the wasteland. Whether they serve only to provide a port in a storm, or if they stand as local landmarks that shelter hundreds from the perilous wastes, well-developed outposts and settlements are a valuable addition to any style of SINS game.

Each faction has their own distinctive types of outposts and settlements, and these locales vary in style, strength and stature just as much as the individuals who inhabit them. Their existence in the cruel landscape of the Post-Fall world can act as valuable anchors to epic narratives, or provide rich depth to the most sprawling of road-trip adventures.

THORNS OUTPOSTS

Of all the Factions in North America, the Thorns are perhaps the most secretive and least prone to forming large, permanent settlements. The Thorns generally organise themselves into social groups, usually referred to as Tribes,

and place this identity above any particular locational place they inhabit. As a result, it's better to talk of Thorns Outposts in terms of a particular Tribe and their territory, rather than a specific fortress or location.

Suggested Names: Briar-kin, Frosthalm, Long Walkers, Bonekeepers, Hedgekeepers, Stone Wardens, Old Crows, Last River, Salt Takers, Wood Walkers.

Locations: Groups affiliated with The Thorns nearly always claim a large territory, preferably one that is heavily forested and far from other human settlements. The Thorns still need to consider practical necessities and so their territories must include some form of natural resources. In truth, the large territories the Thorns claim are often hard to maintain, and the real reason they choose such large areas is due to the fact that any Thorns community will have a Shard at its heart and they will go to great lengths to conceal this, or at least obfuscate the exact location of the Shard.

Territories normally include at least one obvious or well-marked place in which to trade and meet outsiders. These places are usually situated near Old World landmarks or natural features with good visibility. They generally have few comforts and little in the way of facilities and certainly no shops. The Thorns will happily trade here but a travelling group must arrive and then make arrangements to do so. As the Thorns have no desire to allow people to linger in their territory, they usually respond very quickly and tend to be fair but harsh traders.

Far from prying eyes, The Thorns maintain a semi-nomadic lifestyle, adopting in many cases elements of far older civilisations. They prefer to avoid relying on technology and wherever possible utilise hides and other natural materials, keeping scavenged Old World resources for trade. This shouldn't imply that The Thorns have an aversion to technology; rather, they are very focused on keeping and using technology that can be manufactured or maintained by semi-nomadic groups.

Portable generators are a luxury but not unknown, and outsiders would be surprised to learn that radios are in abundant supply. Simple firearms such as shotguns are also manufactured on-site by the Thorns and are often impressive and beautiful works of craft. In fact, The Thorns take great joy in crafts and learning of all types. Children are encouraged to make their own toys, a skill which eventually is honed into the crafting of practical equipment, the creation of which is an important rite of passage.

Herd animals are common with The Thorns, and like most nomadic or semi-nomadic groups their animals are a precious resource. Some Thorns communities also make good use of horses, though this is by no means universal.

Indeed, the Thorns sometimes give the impression of a supernatural ability to community simply because people make gross assumptions about their access to practical technology.

FORTIFICATIONS

Given the Thorns' lifestyle, they rarely make the kind of fortifications common to other Factions but that shouldn't imply the Thorns are without defences. First and foremost their territory will have a number of well concealed watch-posts and safe-houses. Only some of these places will be manned at any one time, and then only usually for a few weeks. This helps obfuscate the real points of defence at the Thorns' core territory.

A second line of defence lies in the Thorns' hunters. These groups seem small, only one to three individuals, but in practice they are part of a larger patrol group. These groups are made up of numerous small hunting teams and a larger support team with a temporary camp. Each smaller group always carries at least one shotgun, which isn't used for hunting directly. Instead, if they encounter the enemy, they'll fire and then fall back. Since the Thorns never use the shotguns directly, preferring rifles or bows, the entire hunting group will be alerted the danger and have a rough idea of the enemy's position, at which point the group will gather together. If they are capable of defeating the enemy they will do so; otherwise they will fall back, hoping to draw that enemy deeper into their territory and allowing forces stationed at watch-posts to close any path of retreat.

If all other options fail, then the Thorns will resort to the use of their bound Shard. This action is one of desperation as it potentially disables the Shard for some time, not to mention it risks revealing secrets the Thorns would rather keep hidden. All that said, the final effectiveness of this is proved by the fact that no-other factions are yet aware the extent to which the Thorns are capable of harnessing the Shards.

Notable Figures: The Thorns divide their communities primarily by trust. They place little stock in the idea of a single leader and prefer to rely on councils or communal decision making. Not all members are entitled to a say by default but the Thorns are generally quite inclusive. With the exception of outsiders, criminals and small children, all voices will be heard, but only those who have taken their Oaths will usually have a right to vote on important matters.

The Shard Keepers themselves are held in great reverence by their communities but they don't automatically have more votes than anybody else; still, their importance and practical considerations means that communities are reluctant at best to oppose them. As a result of this, Shard Keepers sometimes take Oaths not to take sides in various issues, and on the whole tend to stay out of the day to day politics and decision making of the community, preferring to stay in the role of lore keeper and advisor.

Outside of the Oaths, the Thorns draw few social distinctions, and try—where practical—to rotate the responsibility for various tasks, such as hunting or domestic tasks. Certainly some members of the Thorns are specialists, particularly in the area of craftsmanship, and the Thorns are pragmatic enough to put aside their ideology when it comes to truly skilled individuals.

Outside of the main community, particularly with hunting or herding groups, the communal system is normally put aside as the practical realities of the task require a leader and a formal chain of command. Certainly amongst the hunters there is a hierarchy of experience and groups will have a leader and those groups a captain. These limited titles don't transfer out of their specific use, and once hunters return to the community, their leaders might gain more respect but they have no more right of command than any other.

Population: The number of people in any given Thorns tribe is never that large; their way of life and nature of governance simply renders it impractical. At the small end some tribal groups might as small as fifty individuals, split amongst six or seven extended families. A more typical number would be about three to five hundred people, though this can be deceptive as the entire tribe will almost never gather in one place and the population is distributed into smaller communities, usually of about a hundred individuals each.

The largest Tribes can reach to several thousand individuals, but this is extremely rare and usually only occurs in times of great tumult, when banding together is the only way to achieve safety. Even then, such large Tribes normally split into smaller groups after only a few years. It should be noted that outsiders will almost never be aware of the true population; only a tiny percentage of individuals will be gathered around the Tribe's trading post, and the Thorns work hard to obfuscate their numbers, like most other facts about their existence.

In terms of a Tribe's combatants, the numbers can be surprising. A little over a third of the total population are likely to be equipped and ready to fight at short notice, and an additional third could be mustered to fight in a desperate situation.

Armaments: The Thorns prefer simple, and above all, reliable weapons. They greatly favour bows, of which they are capable producing fairly sophisticated models that, although unable to match Pre-Fall engineering, are nevertheless of extremely high quality and far from the image of a primitive wooden bow.

In actual combat, besides bows the Thorns make extensive use of high powered hunting rifles and generally favour them in confrontations with humans. They make a creative but limited use of shotguns as noted above, and generally have relatively few small arms. When dealing with The Brood, the Thorns fall back on their bows and on one of their greatest resources—Thornglass. This material, though brittle and easily broken, is just as deadly as true Voidglass, and its tendency to shatter is of no disadvantage when used this way.

Amongst these common weapons, the Thorns do keep a surprising reserve of military equipment. Though rarely used, they tend to stockpile what explosives they can, trading away most other heavy weaponry. This means that in the event of a large scale conflict, they can put their abilities with field-craft to devastating effect, and are well prepared to fight a guerrilla war at need.

FACTION ARMOURY

The following items—particularly Thornglass—are only ever willingly given to faction members, and the Thorns will tend to react violently to any outsiders possessing them, and will be generally wary of gifting such items to characters that routinely spend time with non-Faction members.

Thornglass: This precious substance is one of the keys to the Thorns existence. Its shape usually resembles a small leaf-blade. Indeed, it's harvested from the plants that grow around the bound Shard at the heart of a Tribe's territory. The material itself physically resembles Voidglass and is still almost black, but it is very slightly translucent with thin cracks running throughout. When light catches these edges, it emits a faint green light that shifts almost like shafts of light through a forest canopy.

The material seems strong enough, and indeed despite its cracked appearance, it seems quite as resilient as Voidglass. However, when the material is subjected to any violent or sustained use, it will fragment, quickly breaking down into nothing more than a fine dust. This makes the material unsuited for most bladed weapons, and prevents its use in the creation of shotgun shells as the gunpowder triggers the reaction. For an arrowhead however, the material is excellent; it is both light and incredibly deadly, and better still, it unlike true Voidglass, it cannot be then used against you.

NEW EQUIPMENT TRAIT—UNIQUE

SINS: Manifest Destiny introduces a wealth of new gear, ranging from the common and the mundane, to the unique and extremely powerful. Often found in the hands of powerful adversaries or stashed away in well-hidden caches, equipment of Unique Rarity provides GMs with the opportunity to reward players with powerful, one-of-a-kind weapons and armaments.

Unique: Unique Equipment is of the highest rarity. Only one of this item exists, and it is introduced to a campaign at the GM's discretion. Unique Equipment is treated as Impossible Rarity, and is truly unique in its design, craftsmanship and mechanisms. Such equipment cannot be Crafted or Replicated, and Unique Equipment is considered to be of Masterwork Quality for the purposes of repair and maintenance—if the GM decides it could even be repaired at all.

END OF PART 1

For the ease of digital distribution, we've separated the Thorns rules into two packs - this one contains standard Faction pack content, whereas Part 2 contains some brand new Arietta accessible only to the Thorns - include them in your games at your discretion!

Effect: Items made from Thornglass are considered to possess the Voidglass Keyword but will shatter and be destroyed after any substantial impact, such as their use in combat. Bullets and other gunpowder weaponry will fail if made from Thornglass as the initial explosive force of the gunpowder will render the Thornglass inert.

Melee weapons made from Thornglass also possess both the Voidglass and Rending Qualities, but they will shatter the first time they are successfully used in an attack, or the first time the user suffers Damage in a Combat with the weapon drawn

Kinrifle: These handcrafted rifles are often given to those who bear Oaths as a mark of their status. Each is a unique work of art, designed to be rugged and reliable and capable of being folded in the centre for ease of transport. It functions as a rifle with +1 Damage and Compact and Slow-Firing Qualities.

