

The first thing he notices when he takes her hand is just how cold she is. Not merely chilly, but unnaturally cold, like a statue cut from Arctic ice. He shudders noticeably. She offers a sad half-smile.

"I'm sorry about that, but I want you to know what you're dealing with here, so that there are no misunderstandings." He nods once in reply. She slowly withdraws her hand, but her posture remains tense as she continues. "As agreed, I've brought one of the Files for you; something that I think you can use. I make no guarantees, though."

He accepts the parcel from her and opens it, right there, on the booth's battered old Formica tabletop. He sets aside the CD in its case and instead concentrates on the printed pages and the photos, marveling at the details. After a long moment, he looks back up, warm hazel eyes meeting glacial blue ones, and asks, "Why are you doing this, really?"

She sighs softly. "Because a good man dared to care about me even when he knew it was a stupid thing to do. He braved a terrible fate in order to save me from what I deserved. He made me feel warm, even if only for a little while, and you have no idea how much that means to me. I just want to try to help finish the work he left behind."

The hunter nods once more as she starts to walk away, only to pause a few paces off and glance back over her shoulder. "Whatever you might accomplish with that File, remember that it's because of Bryan."

He notices, as the diner's door closes behind her, that things do feel a little warmer now and he wonders if it's due to more than just her leaving.

COLLECTION

OF

HORRORS

MEETING THE FROSTBITE GIRL

A Storytelling Adventure System anthology for Hunter: The Vigil

WHITE WOLF PUBLISHING, INC.
2075 WEST PARK PLACE
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Special thanks to our voice actors for giving up a Saturday to help us out:
Anna Albano, Nathan Binder, David Bounds, Natasha Bryant-Raible, Priscilla Kim, Vincent Lombardo, Orrin Loria, Weston Reid, Rich Thomas, Michelle Webb

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Check out White Wolf online at <http://www.white-wolf.com>

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Meeting the Frostbite Girl

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL •••

SOCIAL ••

Overview

Making use of the resources that she pilfered from the late Bryan Rafferty (a hunter and her lover), the changeling known as Shakes (pp. 309-10 of **Hunter: The Vigil**) is in the process of establishing an identity for herself as a benefactor to those hunters who accept her assistance. She's determined to see that Bryan's work finished before she figures out the next phase of her life. She has set up a blog with the intention of distributing information to those hunters who come calling. If the cell decides to bite, Shakes is willing to exchange correspondence, figure out a file that might be of some use to the cell and set up a meeting to hand the relevant information over to them. Unfortunately, someone from Shakes' past — a pursuer that she no longer remembers — has also taken note of her new activities and intends to use the characters' meeting with her as an opportunity to either bring her "home" to his master or to kill her.

During this scene, the characters meet with Shakes at a mutually agreed-upon location. Shakes is open to either a public location or a more private one; whatever works best for your story and your players. She has the file on her (a compact disc containing Bryan's voice recordings, as well as transcripts, photos, phone numbers or whatever else you might want to include), carried inside a small, cheap backpack.

Depending upon the needs of your chronicle, the set-up for the meeting between Shakes and the cell may be handled as a few brief conversations and some dice rolls, or it may be a more protracted, cloak-and-dagger affair. Whatever the case, the characters manage to arrange a rendezvous, unaware of the monstrous foe that hounds Shakes' steps.

No matter where the drop-off takes place, Thomas Creeker attacks, unsure as to whether or not he'll ever get another shot at Shakes. He attempts to latch a collar around her neck; some-

thing that looks like interwoven strands of luminous ice, narrow as a wire. Should Thomas manage to secure the collar around Shakes' neck (requiring him to first successfully grapple her and then succeed in a Strength + Athletics roll, contested by Shakes' Dexterity + Athletics), then she is forced to comply with his wishes: namely, to fight against any characters that try to save her (though she is free to say whatever she likes while bound by the collar) and then to accompany Thomas back to her old master's frozen demesne.

When Creeker gets the collar on Shakes or is otherwise in a position to drag her back, he goes to a nearby tree to open his portal. Depending upon the needs of your story and the location chosen, this may be a matter of Creeker's running a few paces with a hand clamped around Shakes' wrist, or it might involve a more extended foot chase (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, pp. 65-66) with him carrying her unconscious form. His first priority, in any case, will be to get away with Shakes in tow; if this proves impossible, he will not fight to the death unless he has no other alternative, and he will appeal to the characters for pity as much as possible. (Thomas Creeker is in something of a pitiable situation, even if he is a monster.)

Description

The meeting place is just as you expect, and Shakes glances up from her seat, instantly taking notice of your approach. Her eyes have a haunted, hunted look about them, subtly marring her otherworldly beauty. She smiles slightly in greeting, but she isn't fooling anyone. As you draw nearer, you can actually feel the chill that emanates from her.

After the hunters have some time to negotiate with Shakes:

Just as she opens her mouth to speak, Shakes is overcome by the sense that something is terribly wrong. Her expression changes to one of anger and betrayal, but then she looks past you, toward something approaching from an entirely different direction. She's clearly beginning to panic.

Storyteller Goals

Your primary goal for this scene is simple: get one of Bryan Rafferty's case files into the characters' hands, something that can help them to move onto the next investigation or to reach a resolution to a current one. Because of Rafferty's extensive interactions with other hunters, both in person and online, his files can encompass information about anything that you want them to.

Another important goal is to illustrate the uncertainty of a hunter's life. The attack at the meeting isn't even directed at the characters (though they can certainly get hurt in the crossfire), but this is a first-hand glimpse at some of the forces aligned against the Vigil as a whole. Whether or not Shakes survives and walks away from this encounter safely, it's clear that she's put a lot on the line for the sake of seeing Rafferty's work continue. Can the hunters themselves do any less?

Lastly, this is a chance to show a human side to the monsters that hunters pursue. Shakes is flawed, to be certain, and she's made some terrible decisions, but who hasn't? Her choices aren't malevolent, just imperfect and selfish like anyone else's. Developing a degree of empathy for Shakes and her awful situation may be the little thing that pulls a hunter back from the brink... or drives him over the edge.

Character Goals

The primary character goal in this scene is to acquire one of Bryan Rafferty's case files from Shakes. Some characters might want to get a better sense of Shakes (to verify her trustworthiness, if nothing else), while others might want to get *all* of Rafferty's files or just kill Shakes or otherwise take her out of the picture. When the attack comes, the characters may try to prevent Creeker from kidnapping or killing Shakes (using whatever level of force the feel is appropriate), or they may simply stand by and allow it to happen.

Actions

Sensing the Ambush

Dice Pool: Wits + Composure vs. Creeker's Dexterity + Stealth (dice pool 6; 7 in wilderness environments)

Action: Reflexive and contested

Characters that overcome Creeker's roll to remain concealed notice the impending ambush on the turn before it takes place, allowing such a char-

acter to maintain her Defense and to call out a warning, draw a weapon or perform some other instant action in preparation for the coming conflict.

Hindrances: The meeting takes place in a wilderness area (-2), the meeting takes place at night or somewhere dark (-1)

Help: The meeting's location is a wide-open space (+2), the characters establish some sort of organized perimeter when approaching the meeting (+1)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character fails to notice Creeker sneaking up and is not only surprised on the initial turn of the encounter, but also loses her next turn to shock and indecision.

Failure: The character fails to notice Creeker's approach and is surprised during the initial turn of the confrontation.

Success: The character notices Creeker and is not surprised by him.

Exceptional Success: As above, but the character also gains a +2 bonus to her Initiative for the scene.

Consequences

The characters now have one of Bryan Rafferty's case files. Unless they act to help her when she's ambushed, Shakes is almost certainly either dead or taken back to her old master's icy domain. If they *do* act to help Shakes, then one of more of the hunters might be dead. Perhaps Creeker settles for taking one of the cell in Shakes' stead, but the most likely outcome is that Creeker is killed or driven off, and the cell has one more headache to deal with. Helping Shakes will go a long way to building a rapport with her, if the cell is interested in going that route. She may be willing to break her "one file" policy for them in the future. Likely, they'll have to do some manner of clean-up to gloss over any violence that ensued when Thomas came looking for his master's wayward prize. If they didn't help Shakes, they'll be left with no further leads on how to acquire the rest of Bryan Rafferty's information.

If Creeker survives but Shakes eludes him, he may well go after the cell again. His logic is that the characters are an excellent backup plan in case of Shakes' escape, as these curious and lively mortals are sure to capture the master's attention (and shield Creeker from the master's wrath at his failure).

If Creeker succeeds in trapping Shakes with the collar (but she manages to avoid passing through his doorway), she is freed from its influence when Thomas is driven off or killed. To remove the collar, someone must sacrifice the heat of their body to melt the unearthly ice, inflicting three Health points of aggravated damage on Shakes' rescuer.

Thomas Creeker, Otherworldly Hunter

Quotes: "I'm just here for the girl."

(Intimidation) "Leave her with me and you won't get hurt."

(Persuasion) "If I don't bring her back, my master will do far worse than to kill me. Please, you must try to understand."

Virtue: Fortitude. Stand fast. Endure. There's no end in sight and there never will be.

Vice: Lust. While you can't admit it — not even to yourself

— you get off on the sensation of these soft, precious, screaming things, dragged back to the master by your gnarled claws.

Background: He was someone, once, but that was long ago. Now, he is merely an extension of the master's will. For far too many years to count, he has hunted for the master, finding new playthings and tracking down the old ones when they go astray. Creeker was chosen for this work, the master told him, because he was so very good at it even when he was a mortal man. For the life of him, though, Creeker can't remember why he feels a pang of guilt when he recovers these lost girls for the beast to whom he kneels, rather than bringing them home safely.

Description: Thomas Creeker looks like nothing so much as a human-shaped tree, blasted bare and withered by frost. His pale grayish skin is leathery and chapped, stretched tight over his tall, gangly frame. His facial features are craggy and twisted into harsh angles. His beady eyes are set deep in his hard, unsmiling face, while long, tangled strands of sparse white beard hang limply from Thomas' chin like icicles. A light dusting of hair clings to his scalp like hoarfrost. When he speaks, it is in a croaking rasp that slips only reluctantly past jagged teeth and through cracked lips. He dresses like a shabby vagrant, often hiding his unusual appearance under bulky layers of clothing and a voluminous hood.

HUNTER THE VIGIL

Name: Thomas Creeker
Concept: Otherworldly Hunter

Virtue: Fortitude
Vice: Lust

Profession:
Compact:
Conspiracy:

Intelligence	●●●●●	Strength	●●●●●	Presence	●●●●●
Wits	●●●●●	Dexterity	●●●●●	Manipulation	●●●●●
Resolve	●●●●●	Stamina	●●●●●	Composure	●●●●●

SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Crafts	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigation	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> Occult	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> Athletics	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> Brawl	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> Larceny	●●●●●
Stealth	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> (Wilderness)	●●●●●
Survival	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> (Tracking)	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Ken	●●●●●
Intimidation	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> (Simple Threats)	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> Persuasion	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> Streetwise	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/>	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/>	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/>	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/>	○○○○○

MERITS

Danger Sense	●●●●●
Direction Sense	●●●●●
Mentor	●●●●●
(The Master)	●●●●●
Strong Back	●●●●●
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
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	○○○○○
	○○○○○
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	○○○○○

FLAWS

	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

HEALTH

●●●●●●●●●●○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●●○○○
□□□□□□□□

TACTICS

Morality	3
Size	5
Speed	12
Defense	3
Initiative Mod	6
Armor	

NOTES

Dread Powers: Crushing Blow, Dread Attack 2 (Thorny claws), Shadow Harvest (Withered white gourd), Strange Form 2 (Bark-covered skin and long, bough-like limbs, +2 Stamina, +2 Strength)

Frozen Passage: By spending a point of Willpower as an instant action, Creeker can open a portal through any tree trunk wider than his body, revealing an alien woodland of searing cold and endless blizzards. No matter the weather or the health of the tree, it begins to die as though from frost thereafter. Thomas can drag another through this portal, but he cannot be pursued through such a door against his will.

Weapons/Attacks:	Type	Damage	Dice Pool
	Thorny talons	2(L)	10
	Grapple	N/A	8

Storytelling Hints: Creeker is a bounty hunter for the icy angel that stole Shakes when she was twelve, and he's grown to love his terrible duty. He projects an air of inevitability in his actions, as though he is merely an instrument of divine will. This helps to demoralize his quarry and make him feel like he's just the messenger — a simple pawn that can't make a stand even if he wanted to. Thomas is patient, but he doesn't waste time with idle chatter. He knows the price of failure and fears nothing in this world when compared against his master's fury.

Audio Prop

My name isn't really important. You can call me Shakes. He called me Shakes... Bryan, I mean. I told him to. I tell everyone to. It'd make sense if you met me and, no, I'm not a junkie.

Bryan used to keep accounts of the things that he did. He had a digital recorder and he made transcripts of all of his recordings, so I'm doing the same. I don't know what happened to him, but I'm sure that he's dead, now. Whoever you are that tried to get his recordings: I've got them, along with all of the written records that you didn't manage to steal. I know that you people keep tabs on each other and that you've got all sorts of connections. Maybe you'll come looking for Bryan's stuff and maybe you won't, but something a hell of a lot scarier than you has been on my trail for years, so you're welcome to take a shot at me if you like.

Some of you out there are doing what Bryan did — what he gave his life to do — and I know that I'm one of the monsters you people hunt, but his work was important enough for me to risk this. I want to get these documents into the right hands, to the people who'll use them to stop the things out there. That's why I put this site together and why I'm taking the chance that the one who's looking for me will use it to find me. Like I said, it's that important.

If you have any clue what any of this is about, you can follow the links to send me an email and I'll tell you when and where to meet me. I can't guarantee that you won't try to kill me, but I owe a debt and it has to be repaid. Also, I'll try to kill you right back and I might just be better at it than you are, so keep that in mind. I don't want anything in return for the file that I give you, but you're only getting one. Bryan told me that a lot of people don't survive long in the life that you've chosen — or the one that was chosen for you, like it was for him — and I need to be sure that all of his work gets finished, so you only get one of his documents.

I'm okay with whatever precautions you feel you need to take if we manage to arrange a meeting: I wouldn't trust me if I were you. Bryan knew lots of people and kept an eye out for a lot of weird shit, so I might just have something for you, regardless of where you're from. Worst case, I'll either tell you that I've got nothing for you or you won't hear back from me, at all.

Good luck and good hunting. And, if you believe in that sort of thing, light a candle for Bryan Rafferty.

To listen to the audio prop of Shake's blog on Bryan's Files double click the poster.

Once you start the recording you will not be able to stop it until it reaches the end without closing the pdf.

