

BLOOD OF THE WOLF™

the World of Darkness

WEREWOLF
THE FORSAKEN™

BRUNNEN

*"Within all of us is the spirit, true.
But it lies within the meat. It pulses in the blood.
It caresses the bone and coils around the heart.
They tell you the spirit is what we were,
that it defines what we can be.
But listen to your own breath and your own heartbeat,
feel the heat that rises in you
and you know that everything you are now
is the flesh and the blood.
You are a beast of mortal flesh and natural hunger. Live."*

—Mgelika Tusiev, Hunter in Darkness

this book includes:

- A look into the physiology of werewolves, from the ramifications of their regenerative powers and shapeshifting to explorations of health, mating and old age
- An extensive look at how werewolves survive in the world around them, from the urban jungles of human civilization to the far reaches of the wilderness
- An in-depth treatment of wolf-blooded humans, both as supporting cast and as playable characters



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WEREWOLF
THE FORSAKEN™

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BLOOD OF THE WOLFTM



BY MATTHEW MCFARLAND, WAYNE PEACOCK AND PETER SCHAEFER
WORLD OF DARKNESS CREATED BY MARK REIN-HAGEN

Like God

The diner wasn't a place that you'd stop into randomly, just passing by and feeling peckish. It wasn't the sort of place you'd pick out of a phone book, either. If the diner had ever had a real name, that name had been buried under cigarette ash, tied up in varicose veins and erased along with Tuesday's lunch specials. It was just "the diner." It didn't warrant capitalization. It didn't attract business so much as accept it, the way a drain accepts garbage and dirty water.

The diner squatted between a porno theater and a burned-out tenement like a bum taking a shit in an alley. The employees, those who drove to work, parked their cars in the theater's lot. Arliss, the theater manager, took his payment for this privilege in free coffee and sandwiches, stumbling into the diner late at night reeking of mildew and beer.

Joel bussed tables at the diner. He was just out of college, but he had pulled out too soon. He was barely 19 and had received enough schooling to know how to write an essay but not enough to know why he should. He worked at the diner because, on night shifts, the owner paid the staff minimum wage instead of making them work for tips.

The day crew wasn't extensive, but the night crew was truly skeletal. Joel — tall, thin and sallow, his hair tied into cornrows that were now growing wild — bussed the tables and washed the dishes. Naomi worked the counter — she was a "waitress," but she rarely went over to people's tables. She'd call to them across the diner, and make Joel bring people's food out to them. Naomi was nearly 10 years older than Joel and might at one time have been pretty. The first night Joel worked with her, she jerked him off in the dry stockroom and then, wiping her hands on her apron, glared at him and informed him that "this never happened." Joel hadn't had any idea why it had happened in the first place, so the notion that it never had was easy enough to accept.

Milo worked the kitchen, the arthritis in his hands never getting quite bad enough to stop him from flipping burgers and chopping tomatoes. He was on probation or parole, or he was wanted by the police or something. Naomi had a different story every few weeks, and she always told Joel in a hushed, harsh voice while Milo was making the coffee or frying an egg. She denied ever changing the story, and Joel didn't make an issue of it. Milo never said much, anyway. The one and only time he had initiated conversation with Joel outside of "Order up!" was when he'd clapped Joel on the back and said, "Today, I'm sixty-six years old." Joel had just smiled, and Milo walked away nodding, as if he'd outsmarted someone.

If the staff was skeletal, the customers were zombies — a little more meat and a little hungrier, but still not living people. The customers didn't walk up to the diner and

enter it. They snuck up on it, as though they were afraid it would bite like a rabid dog if it saw them before they got in the door. They sat and ordered their food, ate, grimaced at the dirty grease covering everything, paid (sometimes) and left. Anyone who ate there more than once was a regular, but, even by that generous standard, there weren't many.

• • •

Joel was standing in the dry stockroom trying to reach the last roll of paper towels for the bathroom. He was looking at the spot where Naomi had been standing while she stroked him, her face twisted into a look halfway between lust and bitterness. Joel wondered if it had really happened or if he had thought it up. It didn't seem like his kind of fantasy. He didn't really like white girls.

The diner was busy, but, of course, that was relative. Four customers had slunk into the diner within a few minutes of each other. Naomi had actually come out from behind the counter to wait on them, popping her gum and glancing back at the cash register every few seconds. Once she had taken the orders, though, she planted herself behind the counter and half-heartedly began to clean. That left Joel to bring the customers' food out.

The first order to come up belonged to a heavysset man in torn blue jeans and a greasy white shirt. He ordered a hamburger and when Joel brought it to him, he picked it up and ate it so languidly that bits of the bread stuck to his lips like soft white blisters. Joel didn't go back to the man's booth to ask if everything was OK. He didn't want to watch that man.

Two of the other patrons were sitting together, talking. Two women, one perhaps eight or 10 years older than the other. Joel walked by their table on his way back to the kitchen and heard the older one saying, "God doesn't want us to be like ourselves. He wants us to be like Him. That's what being made in His image means."

Joel thought about that as he nudged the swinging door to the kitchen open. He didn't go to church anymore. He felt it was for kids and old people. He picked up the women's food — a soggy grilled cheese sandwich and an omelet with tomato — and walked back toward the table.

The fourth customer was sitting near the two women. He had actually arrived first, but had ordered a steak and so was still waiting for his food when Joel brought the church-women theirs. The man was white, maybe light-skinned Mexican, Joel thought. Homeless or crazy, maybe both. The guy didn't *smell* homeless, though. Most bums smelled like piss and garbage, but this guy didn't have that reek. He definitely had an odor

— and Joel didn't find it pleasing — but it didn't make him want to retch like the smell of most bums.

Joel realized he was staring at the guy and looked away. He set the church-women's food down and asked if they needed anything else. The older one looked up at him and asked him if he was saved. Joel cocked his head at her. She had stains on her teeth, and her breath smelled like old food and coffee. The other woman with her looked politely bored. Joel wanted to ask them why they were in a diner at 3 A.M. if God loved them so much, but couldn't think how to phrase the question.

He didn't get a chance to answer. The homeless man reached over and tugged on Joel's apron. "Where's my steak, huh?"

"Comin' up, sir." Joel backed away from the table and walked back to the kitchen. Naomi followed him.

"What was that about?"

Joel shrugged. "Got some strange folk in here tonight. Them two women was talking about God wanting us to be like Him, not theyselves."

The stove sizzled as Milo flipped the man's steak. "Us?"

Joel turned to him. "You know. Everybody. And then they asked me if I was saved, and that guy asked where his steak was at."

Milo flipped it onto a plate. "Right here. Rare, right?"

Naomi nodded. "That's what the man said." She put a steak knife on the plate and handed it to Joel.

Joel took the plate out to the homeless man. The man picked up the steak knife and stared at it as though looking for dirt, then set it down next to the plate. He picked up the table knife instead and jammed his fork into the meat, sawing off large hunks and stuffing them into his mouth.

"Umm, anything else?" Joel asked. He was feeling queasy. The man grunted and waved Joel away. Joel backed off and glanced over at the two women, who were staring at the man with utter revulsion. "Y'all finished?" he asked.

"I am now," said the younger one. She pushed her plate, which still contained most of her sandwich, toward Joel. The older woman said nothing, but nodded at what remained of her omelet.

Joel took the plates back toward the kitchen. The fat man had finished his hamburger and was counting crumpled dollar bills onto the table. He stood up and nodded at Joel. "I'll just leave money here, OK?" Joel nodded back at him and backed into the kitchen.

"Damn, you should see that fucker eat." Joel scraped the food in the garbage and set the plates in the wash basin.

Milo didn't move, but Naomi leaned out the door and snuck a glance. "Yuck. He's got almost that whole steak on the fork."

"God's image."

"Huh?" Joel turned to Milo, who was scraping the steak juices off the stove.

"What you said before about how God wants us to be like Him, not like us. Guess that guy's still like himself, not God." Milo smirked. "'Leastways, I hope so."

Naomi rolled her eyes. She didn't believe in God. "I'm gonna go get those ladies their check."

Joel leaned on the wall. "God's image," he muttered. "What the hell does that mean?"

Milo shrugged. "I ain't a preacher."

"My mama used to tell me that God couldn't be seen or felt, just loved and worshipped. If He can't be seen, how are we made in his image?" Milo probably wouldn't have answered anyway, but a gasp from the diner caught their attention.

Joel rushed out and found Naomi holding the steak knife that she had placed on the man's plate. The knife's blade was covered in blood. The man was gone, but a \$20 bill lay in a puddle of steak juice. The two church-women were staring at the door, shocked. Joel saw the man walking away from the diner toward the porno theater.

Joel pointed at the blood. "What the hell is that?"

The older of the church women spoke up. "He finished eating... and then starting cleaning under his fingernails with the knife. I thought that was strange, but then I saw blood on his fingers."

The younger one nodded. "He was cutting himself, smearing it over the knife blade, but he wasn't hurt. He just looked..."

"Like he was about to light a cigarette, if you know what I mean," the older one finished. Naomi nodded. It took Joel a second to figure out what she meant. Joel didn't smoke.

• • •

Joel got halfway home that morning before he remembered he'd left his house keys in his apron. Cursing to himself, he got off the bus and started walking back. He didn't have enough change to take the bus back to work and then home.

It was still dark when he passed in the front of the porno theater. The door opened and Arliss walked out, glanced at him and muttered a greeting. Joel could hear moans coming from inside the building. As he did every time he passed by the place, he thought about going in and watching the show. He never did. It was probably too expensive.

He walked just behind Arliss as they approached the diner. Arliss was short enough that Joel could just about see over the top of the man's head. Arliss' thinning hair stuck up a bit around the edges, and to Joel it looked like weeds. "Time for your coffee, Arliss?" Joel asked.

Arliss looked back at him. "Yeah," he chuckled. "Thought about getting an omelet, too. Milo gone home already?"

"Yeah, man. Milo's off same time's me."

"Shit, that's too bad. Man makes good omelets." They paused. Joel wasn't used to talking with people, and Arliss always seemed nervous. "So, where is everyone?"

"Huh?"

"Well, I saw Naomi leave. You said Milo's off, but I ain't seen the day people come in yet. Doesn't that one fat girl always park in my lot?"

Joel nodded. He could never remember that girl's name, either. "I don't know. They should be here."

Arliss pointed to the diner's windows. "Lights are out. Somebody's in the back, though, it looks like." Joel squinted. Arliss was right. All of the lights in the diner were out, which was strange, because it was supposed to be open 24 hours. But Joel could see someone inside, not in the kitchen, but rummaging around in the restaurant. As the two men got closer, Joel recognized the man.

"Motherfucker," he whispered.

"What?"

"That guy was in here earlier this evening, man. Crazy fucker ordered a raw steak and then cut on his own fingers with the knife." They crept up and stared in the window. It was the homeless guy, no doubt about it. He was pawing through the cash register. "Fucker's robbing us."

Arliss pulled a small black revolver from his jacket. "So let's get him. There's two of us. We'll tie him up or something and call the cops."

Joel turned to stare first at the gun, then at Arliss. He couldn't believe Arliss had the balls to pack a piece. "What the fuck do I care?"

"I care," said Arliss. "What if he robs me next week? Anyway, it's the right thing to do. 'Thou shalt not steal,' right?"

"God's own image," muttered Joel. "All right."

They snuck around to the back door and found it had been forced. The lock on the door was rusty and old. It wouldn't have taken much.

Joel slipped in first, crossed the kitchen and listened. He heard the man tearing the money from the register, and waved Arliss in. Arliss moved slowly, trying to open the door just enough to get in without making noise. Joel was listening to the crazy man. He was muttering under his breath. "Arliss," hissed Joel.

Arliss cocked his head and mouthed, "What?"

"What the hell language is that?"

They both listened. The man was talking at full speaking volume now, but neither one of them understood a word. "German?" whispered Arliss.

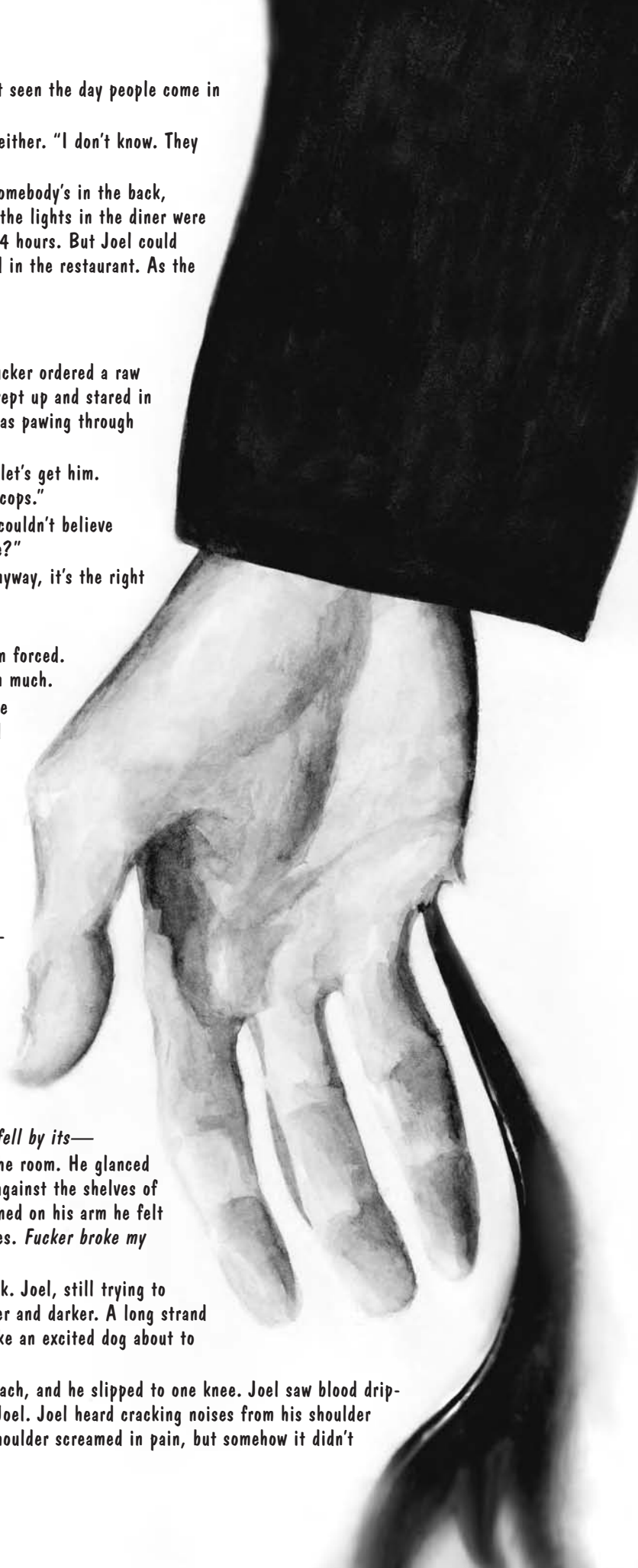
"Maybe French?" Joel was squatting on the balls of his feet and overbalanced. His right hand shot out to steady himself, and a pan fell to the floor.

Joel would have expected the man to curse or yelp in surprise. Instead, everything grew very quiet for a few seconds. Arliss cocked his pistol and backed away from the kitchen door. *Maybe, thought Joel, he just thinks something fell by its—*

The kitchen door swung inward, and the man leapt into the room. He glanced down at Joel and kicked at his chest. The blow knocked Joel against the shelves of pans and steel containers. He tried to stand, but when he leaned on his arm he felt pain shoot through his upper body and tears well up in his eyes. *Fucker broke my collarbone*, he thought.

Arliss fired the pistol, and the man's shoulder pulled back. Joel, still trying to stand, noticed that the man seemed bigger now, his hair longer and darker. A long strand of drool leaked from the man's mouth, and he hunched over like an excited dog about to pounce at a visitor.

Arliss fired again. The bullet struck the man in the stomach, and he slipped to one knee. Joel saw blood dripping from the wound. The man turned his head and glared at Joel. Joel heard cracking noises from his shoulder and realized he was crab-walking away from the man. Joel's shoulder screamed in pain, but somehow it didn't



• • •

Hungry,
Joel thought.

When the police arrived, Joel was still staring at his hand. They held a bloody steak knife and asked if it's what had cut off his finger. Joel nodded. He distinctly remembered someone saying that this had never happened. He wasn't sure what "this" meant, though.

The police asked about the man they had seen running away, whether Joel knew who he was or why he had done this. They asked if he had killed Arliss because he ran the porno shop. They asked where the day employees were. They asked why Joel was still at the diner.

Joel didn't have much to say to them, even after they took him out of the hospital. The police blamed the junkies and the shock, and although Joel told them something very important about the man, they didn't even write it down.

"He's not himself," Joel said. "God doesn't want us to be like ourselves. He wants us to be like him. But I don't think that guy was like himself."

What's that like God, then, one part of Joel wanted to know?

Hungry, Joel thought.

Burger
SERVED WITH LETTUCE, TOMATO
Hamburger
Cheeseburger
Bacon Burger
Bacon Cheeseburger
Pizza Burger
California Burger
Turkey Burger
Veggie Burger
True Bleu Burger
topped with Mushrooms & Bleu Cheese Dressing
Cajun Burger
with Spicy Cajun Seasonings & American Cheese

Super
Super
with Bacon

Hot Open Faced Sandwiches
SERVED WITH CHOICE OF BREAD, GRAVY & ONE VEGETABLE
Your Choice \$5.95
HOT TURKEY
HOT ROAST BEEF
HOT VIRGINIA HAM
HOT MEATLOAF
HOT HAMBURGERS (2)

Side Orders
French Fries 1.25
Home Fries 1.25
Home Fries with Onions 1.50
Rice 1.25
Corn 1.25
Cole Slaw 1.25
Pickled 1.25
Applesauce 1.25
Potato Salad 1.25

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To Michael Herman, for sharing his understanding of animals.



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BLOOD OF THE WOLF™

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INTRODUCTION

"IN THE MIDDLE AGES IT WAS OFTEN BELIEVED THAT IF ANY PERSON HAD BEEN DENOUNCED FROM THE ALTAR AND REMAINED IMPENITENT, REFUSING TO MAKE RESTITUTION AND CONFESS, THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF FELL UPON HIM."

—MONTAGUE SUMMERS, THE WEREWOLF IN LORE AND LEGEND

For a while, forget the word "Uratha." Let's talk instead about werewolves.

The characters you portray in **Werewolf: The Forsaken** are both, of course. A werewolf, in the most basic use of the term, is a person who turns into a wolf. Leaving aside any notions of bargains with the Devil, Gypsy curses, inherited madness or unfortunate encounters with infectious lycanthropes, a werewolf is a human being who becomes a canine predator.

An *Uratha*, of course, is another term entirely. Our word for "werewolf" carries with it notions of tribal culture, religion, ethics and morals and spirituality. The culture for *Uratha* that exists within the game is rich, immersive and entirely fabricated for purposes of the game.

This is not a bad thing, of course. Werewolves in most legends control their actions by a very slim margin, if at all. Roleplaying a mindless beast gets old very quickly, and so some cultural framework is necessary in order for werewolves to be playable characters. And yet, one of the complaints that occasionally arises about the *Uratha* is that they don't feel like the werewolves in literature and movies.

Blood of the Wolf aims to prove otherwise.

DEFINING WEREWOLVES

Werewolf: The Forsaken discusses what it means to be *Uratha* and touches on some of the more common myths about werewolves and how the myths relate to the game. Let's consider some of the defining points about being a werewolf, without the context that the game provides.

First, as stated previously, werewolves are shape-shifters. Most commonly, they are humans who become wolves, although once in a while in literature a wolf becomes a human instead. A werewolf's control over his or her shapeshifting is usually a crucial part of a werewolf story. Some lycanthropes can change at will, like the *Uratha* of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**. Some werewolves change involuntarily under certain

conditions, while others can normally change shape as they please but are forced to do so in a given situation. Some werewolves must don a wolf-skin cloak or belt in order to induce the change (commonly those who sell their souls or otherwise make demonic pacts for the power).

Second, werewolves are commonly portrayed as cursed beings. Whether the "ability" to change shape comes from an actual curse from an angered party or an unfortunate happenstance such as being bitten by another werewolf, being a lycanthrope is not considered a fortunate turn of events (why this is the case is discussed presently). Even werewolves who choose their lot or come by their condition honestly through heredity (again, like the *Uratha*) don't have an easy time of it. In short, the transition from human to werewolf isn't a comic-book origin wherein the protagonist discovers his super-powers. It's a nightmare.

The curse of lycanthropy normally hinges on the werewolf eating the flesh of humans. In werewolf legend, a man would become a werewolf and then hunt down his neighbors for his gruesome feast. This isn't so surprising; the wolf was believed to attack humans and finds association with gluttony in literature and lore. The werewolf as a font of unquenchable rage is probably a newer idea than the notion of ravenous hunger, but these ideas both hinge on the same basic premise: when the man becomes the wolf, he is uncontrollable. Viewed in this way, the "curse" inherent to the lycanthropic condition is easy enough to understand. It robs the victim of his free will and makes him a monster.

And that, in fact, is another defining point about werewolves: they *are* monsters. Only comparatively recently has any creature previously defined as a monster taken the position of "sympathetic protagonist," much less "hero," in literature, media or even roleplaying. (As a side note, if vampires and werewolves are metaphorical representations of murder and brutality, is it a coincidence that modern film and literature portrays ordinary human brutes and

even serial killers in quasi-sympathetic lights?) The best a monster can hope for in most literature is to die heroically, and, depending on the form and era of literature in question, the monster often remains incontrovertibly vicious.

THE WEREWOLF IN ROLEPLAYING GAMES

Most of the above points tend to be present in roleplaying-game lycanthropes, or at least have some fairly clear analogs — for instance, Uratha gain Essence by eating human flesh, but it is taboo to do so. In addition, the roleplaying game adds a few more common wrinkles to werewolves.

Werewolves tend to be extremely dangerous in combat. Combat is a staple of roleplaying games (not surprisingly, as they evolved from war games), and good opponents are an absolute necessity. The classics (dragons, vampires, werewolves, zombies) never go out of style for good reason — people have been and remain terrified by them. Plus, for a long time, all of those creatures were seen as evil in Western cultures, or at least inextricably antagonistic toward humanity. A werewolf, then, is a fast, tough, brutal opponent that a character (and thus his player) need have no compunctions about killing.

And yet, since werewolves are usually born of humanity, killing one also involves killing the human inside. Since lycanthropy is a curse, it's easy to see killing a werewolf as a mercy killing rather than as murder, or as a preventative measure (since a dead werewolf isn't going to be eating anyone's children). Curing a werewolf is also possible, but this is usually only undertaken in roleplaying games when a player's character or someone important to a player's character somehow becomes a werewolf. Either way, lycanthropy and those who suffer from it are dangerous enemies.

Finally, werewolves are almost always nearly impossible to kill. Different games simulate this in different ways. Sometimes only silver even harms a werewolf, sometimes a werewolf suffers damage normally but is simply hard to hit (due to great speed or thick hide). Probably the most common method of simulating a werewolf's supernatural toughness is regeneration — you can shoot a werewolf, but the flesh mends itself quickly.

THE FORSAKEN

So what does all of this mean in terms of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, and specifically this book? We began this Introduction by noting the criticism that Uratha don't conform to "traditional" werewolf

stories. In truth, though, this game does make use of most of the conventions of lycanthropy in one way or another. Werewolves *are* cursed, both by their condition and within it. Uratha have difficulty coping with the stresses of everyday life, but if a werewolf loses her temper, she runs the risk of killing everyone around her. Even inside Uratha society, werewolves labor under the sin of their ancestors (and thus a werewolf who shuns humanity still cannot escape the tragedy of her condition).

Uratha are not gluttonous or evil by default, but, from humanity's perspective, Uratha are most certainly monsters. That's an important thing to note when comparing werewolf legend and movies to **Werewolf: The Forsaken** — how many of the legends portray lycanthropes as having their own language, laws and culture? Viewing the Uratha's actions without understanding their society (without putting those actions in some kind of context), the Uratha behave very much like the werewolves of legend (perhaps without *quite* so much emphasis on eating human flesh). The opening fiction in this book, in fact, portrays normal human beings seeing a werewolf in the course of actions which, while brutal, are perfectly understandable to other Uratha.

The Uratha, then, *are* the werewolves of legend. The Uratha are simply being allowed to tell their own stories from their own perspectives. Participating in such stories isn't necessarily going to result in rousing tales of heroism and derring-do so much as dark accounts of blood and horror, but that's the point.

It's easy, though, to become caught up in the admittedly vast and immersive world of spirits, Hosts, Ridden, Pure Tribes and other features concocted specifically for the game. Even when using these features, though, your troupe need not lose sight of the inherent horror of lycanthropes. That, in part, is what this book is for.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Blood of the Wolf explores the practical concerns of being Uratha in the World of Darkness. Herein, you'll find information on the physiology of being a werewolf (as we've presented it), the problems with living among humans, the tricks and problems with simple survival and the special problems that those related to werewolves — the wolf-blooded — endure.

This sourcebook isn't meant to expand on the societal concerns of the Uratha (though other books certainly will). **Blood of the Wolf** is meant to examine the phenomenon of being a *werewolf*. This has



the following three main benefits for you and your troupe:

- A chronicle that begins with the characters as mortals and takes them through the First Change and the transition from human to werewolf to Uratha must necessarily focus, at least somewhat, on the basic details of lycanthropy. This book focuses on just that, without emphasis on the particular of tribes, auspices and other Forsaken-specific details to cloud the issue.
- Even a chronicle that begins with all of the characters settled into their roles as Uratha benefits from knowing the basics. Simple questions of physiology can make or break a story (the classic image of finding human fingers in a werewolf's vomit after a night of uncontrolled feasting, for instance), and so it behooves the troupe to know the details. Likewise, no matter what tribe or auspice, a werewolf in the woods has much the same concerns as any other werewolf in the woods, and this sourcebook can address such matters without worrying that only players of Hunters in Darkness (for example) will see them.
- Finally, a Storyteller might decide that she loves certain aspects of **Werewolf: The Forsaken** but dislikes others. For instance, you might like the tribal

culture of the Uratha but wish to exclude the spirit world entirely (which, by the way, doesn't negate the Uratha's belief — human beings believe and worship things that they don't see and touch on a regular basis with no dearth of fervor). This sourcebook focuses on the details upon which our werewolves are built, rather than the more complex window-dressing of their society. If **Werewolf: The Forsaken** were a soup, this sourcebook would be the "stock."

CHAPTER BY CHAPTER

As mentioned, the **Prologue** presents a werewolf interacting with normal humans in the manner that literature normally portrays — a hellish predator. Consider this story if you start to feel that your character's actions are "heroic" or "noble."

Chapter One: Flesh and Blood covers the physiology of werewolves: the cycle of the First Change, the particulars of regeneration and shapeshifting, the problems Uratha face when conceiving children and even eating as well as the ravages of age on the body and mind of the werewolves all receive attention.

Chapter Two: Sheep's Clothing deals with werewolves interacting with humanity, and how this interaction differs in big cities, small towns and rural

areas. This chapter also discusses the Oath of the Moon and how those tenets conflict with the realities of life in the World of Darkness.

Chapter Three: The Wild Hunt shows the problems and benefits of werewolves in the wilderness. In addition to notes on survival in the woods, you'll find discussions of deserts, jungles and other areas that wolves and humans alike find inhospitable, but into which a pack of werewolves might conceivably venture.

Finally, **Chapter Four: The Wolf-Blooded** presents an in-depth examination of those humans who share werewolf blood but not the capacity to change shape. This chapter presents rules for creating wolf-blooded characters, an expansion of the Wolf-Blooded Merit and a discussion of the Storytelling possibilities these folks open up.





CHAPTER 1

FLESH AND BLOOD

In a way, it was like trying to hold on as long as possible during sex. Every part of his body wanted to be done with it, and he had to fight against it because it would certainly win if he let it. The difference was that sex was actually easier.

One finger at a time. Who knew it would be so hard? The smallest finger thickening, stretching, burning with such slow and intense heat, and it was all he could do to keep the others from shifting as well. One goes, and the rest want to follow.

He had to know. There wasn't any other reason to fight so hard against his own flesh. He just had to know how far he could push himself. Since the time of the Change, he'd always felt that he was at odds with his own body, and he couldn't accept that. He had to see that he could control it.

Three fingers done, the fourth coming — nails thickening, bringing an unexpected thought of the talons of Gauru, and with that, fear. The wolf-human form was waking up inside him. He had to beat it back down, to prove he could change slowly, and stop at any time.

I can do this, he thought. It's so hard, but I can . . .

I can . . .

I can't . . .

NO!

A volcanic rush powered through his body, burning away his thoughts in the fever. The meat and blood and bone had broken free, free to take the form of hatred, free to kill.

MY GREAT RELIGION IS A BELIEF IN THE BLOOD, THE FLESH,
AS BEING WISER THAN THE INTELLECT.
WE CAN GO WRONG IN OUR MINDS. BUT WHAT OUR BLOOD FEELS AND BELIEVES AND SAYS,
IS ALWAYS TRUE. THE INTELLECT IS ONLY A BIT AND A BRIDLE.
— D. H. LAWRENCE

The Uratha are more than wolf and more than human. The blood that flows through their veins is said to carry a legacy of responsibility, inherited from Father Wolf. The priests and prophets of the Forsaken say that by the very nature of their blood, the People are tasked with protecting the physical world against the incursions of the spirit, and vice versa. It is the People's luck, the blessing of the Forsaken, that they inherited a measure of their parents' power as well. Father Wolf was a spirit of great cunning, strength and fortitude. Luna is a creature of change and flexibility, loss and regrowth. The Forsaken were born with some measure of all these qualities. Legend states that their capability first allowed the werewolves to assist their father. Later, it gave them the ability to replace him.

From the first moment of a werewolf's First Change, she becomes something greater than anything she has ever known. She gains incredible healing, so powerful that she can even regenerate damaged nerve tissue and repair injuries without scarring. Her immune system becomes nearly invulnerable to the efforts of the most deadly diseases, and her reactions to various drugs lessen dramatically. She ages more slowly, gaining a long life with few mortal complications. Most important of all, she becomes a werewolf, able to change into the shape of a wolf or a massive creature built for war.

But these boons come with balances. In order to maintain her regeneration, she must eat more than she did as a human. Regeneration also serves to set her apart from humanity, a potential tell that would reveal the existence of the People. Silver is anathema to her. She becomes unable to carelessly consume the drugs she used to, for fear of the unpredictable results with her various biologies. Age will eventually separate her from those mortals she once knew. And pregnancy becomes a dangerous period of incapability in the midst of a werewolf's life.

Over the millennia, as human sciences grew more inquisitive and precise, so did the werewolf community. In the last two or three centuries, some Forsaken (mostly Iron Masters) began performing experiments in the fashion of Hooke, Boyle, Newton and other great minds of the day to construct a body of knowledge on the Uratha physiology. Although the contemporary methods were crude, they have grown more sophisticated since. Much of what the Forsaken have learned has not yet become common knowledge among the People, since the First Change often leaves a werewolf with goals other than learning the intricacies of biology.

THE FIRST CHANGE

The only experience that all Uratha share, the First Change is at once common and unique. Each and every werewolf in a pack can empathize with the bewilderment and anger that someone fresh from the Change feels, though not all will. Very few can understand what the experience really means to him. His life may be growing more insane by the day, but it's insane in a very personal way.

The First Change, under the cub's auspice moon, is the culmination of a series of events that serve not only to prepare the *nuzusul* for his new life, but also serve to prepare the world for the new werewolf. Life first begins to get weird anywhere from two to four weeks before the Change, but never so early that the cub will see his auspice in the sky again before the Change is upon him. The Rahu boast that it is to test their courage and their stamina that some of their number endure a full month of madness; the Elodoth sometimes consider that the madness is a punishment for sins already committed, and that those who suffer longer are destined to do great things. In the end, most of the People give the duration little meaning. After all, the longer it is, the more time the cub has to get used to it before the main event.

Nightmares are the most common beginning, memories passed down through the cub's genetics and interpreted by his personality and, some say, his fate. The next time the *nuzusul* goes to sleep, a potent dream grips him. It gives him no rest but refuses to let him wake. The most common visions are scenes of what some believe to be the Border Marches.

The ground is cracked, dry, grey. Its fragile edges crumble with the touch of a foot. And the ground stretches on and on and on into the colorless twilight. In the other direction, it stretches the same. But to the left, the sky eventually blues, and the ground becomes fertile and kind. It is peaceful and naïve. Opposite, the distance promises something else. The sky there is purple and green and hungry, and the ground is dark, shadowed. Lightning strikes the ground a hundred yards away; there are answering bolts from the distance. The air carries the smell of an intruder.

Many of the Forsaken share the memory of this imagery, but that is where the similarity disappears. The events that occur on the forsaken plains of the borderlands are individual. Some Forsaken find themselves at war with a sea of madly shaped spirits, all bound out of the spirit world. Other Forsaken hound humans and other creatures back into their physical realm. A dreamer may tear the throat from the father he knew or imagined in the life he

is about to leave, or he may dance with his mother and go to bed with her. *Nuzusul* becoming Cahalith often have more portentous dreams. The images, whatever they are, are invariably meaningful — and private. The Uratha find it generally in poor taste and little sympathy to inquire about a cub's first nightmares.

Obviously, the nightmares are more than bad dreams. They are echoes from the past, carried through the ages by the strength of the People's blood. The impressions these dreams make on the *nuzusul* are powerful enough to have an immediate impact on the local spirit world. If the young cub is *very* lucky, none of the spirits there who notice the change will bear the Uratha any real ill will; they will only trade the information to spirits who do, which could take several days. The unlucky ones begin the weeks leading up to the First Change near a powerful spirit with a grudge or, worse, a plan.

The nightmares signal the very first change in the *nuzusul*, a slight burgeoning of the spirit. This effectively gives the werewolf some of the magical benefits full werewolves have, but without any conscious control. After a couple of nightmare-ridden nights, this change causes strange things to happen. Some can be explained (*after* the Change, of course) by the growing influence of instincts on the person's actions: catching a fly with a blinding, thoughtless speed and, shocked, devouring it; growling under one's breath; smelling people, despite that they smell no worse or better than usual. There are more potential causes for supernatural events: opening one door simultaneously opens every door for a block; a spider's web spells out a message, which no one else can see; taking a step while looking into a reflection puts one in the Shadow Realm, in a maze constructed from the *nuzusul*'s own mind. These occurrences may be the unconscious expression of Gifts that the werewolf's ancestors favored, though they will never become deliberately useful unless the werewolf manages to learn them for himself. These experiences may be one or many of the werewolf's ancestors themselves, attracted by the spiritual impact of his first nightmares — though whether they are acting to ward off troublesome spirits or trouble the young cub themselves is rarely, if ever, explained. Some experiences may be the result of the werewolf accidentally stepping across the Gauntlet. Finally, spirits cause a great deal of the trouble experienced by cubs during these difficult weeks.

Any spirit that has a grudge against the Uratha is a potential tormenter of the *nuzusul* during these confusing weeks. The least spirits rarely have the nerve to do anything unless commanded by a more powerful companion. Greater Gafflings, knowing that their victim will soon be their equal, usually restrict themselves to playing reasonably harmless tricks and pranks. A spirit of higher Rank might do anything, especially if it feels it has been wronged by the werewolf community some time in the past. A most daring spirit may attempt to possess or Urge the *nuzusul*; this action requires a particularly deep reserve

of chutzpah, since every spirit knows the Forsaken will not suffer such an offender to live. More clever spirits may concentrate on learning the new cub's foibles and weaknesses, making it easier to manipulate the werewolf she becomes. For each cub who speaks to internal illusions of her parents or friends, another is actually pouring his heart out to a disguised spirit. It is a small comfort that werewolves already on the one-way path toward the First Change are slightly more resistant to such invasion than humans: once the original nightmares have passed, treat the *nuzusul* as though she has a Primal Urge rating of one for the purpose of resisting supernatural conflicts.

The day of the First Change goes by no differently than any other day of the past week — that is to say, quite strangely. But once the cub's auspice moon rises in the sky, the troubled cub finds himself drawn out, into the open. Nothing can prevent him from bathing in the pale moonlight. Then, everything changes for the last time, and the new werewolf changes for the first time. This is the moment when the werewolf is *nuzusul* no longer; his Primal Urge is violently released from the depths of his soul. His body changes forever, beginning to heal at an incredible rate, and his spirit explosively blossoms into a creature of its own, creating the duality that all the People must endure. From this point on, he is physically and spiritually one of the Uratha.

WHERE'S THE BITE?

The werewolf bite that comes before transformation, although a fundamental part of werewolf legend and the People's *modus operandi* for recovering new werewolves during their First Changes, is not a necessary step in the *nuzusul*'s experience. If the bite is missing, the First Change does not halt; if the bite is present, the First Change is no different than if the bite were missing. This being a largely technical account of the process, the traditional bite is omitted.

It is not, as movies suggest, the sight of the moon but the fundamental transformation that fills the cub with madness, something quite like the uncontrollable rage depicted in movies. In the moment of moon-blindness as the werewolf gazes up at Luna, his new instincts surge to full strength for the very first time. Simultaneously, his sight and smell grow sharper, giving him a taste of just one of the new worlds that will be revealed to him as one of the Forsaken. Then, his instincts take him for a ride — some of the werewolf's many new urges relate to mental muscles and exertions that he has never before tried to access, and he has no idea how to control them. But his instincts know how. The first ability they exercise is that of changing form. Knowing no better, the cub often tries to fight the strange things that his mind is doing. This



results in the partial transformations common to the night of the First Change. After he actually manages to change form, his enhanced sense of smell triggers other new instincts and almost completely take over. The werewolf's wild night truly begins. Later, when the new werewolf has grown accustomed to his newfound instincts and their effect on him, his actions on the night of her First Change will make more sense.

PSYCHOLOGICAL (AND PSYCHOLOGISTS') CONCERNS

The First Change is, without exception, a mind-blowing experience. Most werewolves have the mental fortitude to survive the harrowing event until the revelation of their heritage is complete. Despite the unexpected journeys through the *Hisil*, animals' reactions, the appearance of strange spirits and other odd occurrences, when the Change is complete, the werewolf is suddenly in a position to look back and *understand*. The First Change is certainly frightening, but the transformation from *nuzusul* to werewolf comes with an ability to cope with the madness — one of the many instincts that help a werewolf survive.

Humans aren't so well-equipped. Most events that surround a werewolf during the period preceding her First Change are accompanied by a minor, Lunacy-like effect. Mortals just shrug it off as a weird *something*, don't remember or think about what they saw and go on with their lives. It's an internal "Move along, nothing to see here" that the Forsaken attribute to the efforts of the Lunes. Unfortunately, some mortals can't avoid being overexposed to the pre-Change werewolf and end up seeing more than their minds can hide from them. If a mortal can no longer deny what he sees, he tends to get involved in some fashion. Since the Uratha firmly believe that the world does not need any more werewolf hunters or sorcerers trying to pierce the Gauntlet, local packs aware of an impending First Change may act to prevent mortals from seeing too much — if the packs can manage to find the cub in time.

Consult the Lunacy chart in **Werewolf: The Forsaken** (p. 176) to determine whether one of these minor events is ignored by onlookers, complete with the Intelligence + Composure rolls at appropriate penalties. For each such event that an individual observes, add one dot to his Willpower when determining the level of his response. An onlooker who manages to "remember with perfect clarity" sees exactly what is going on.

People who know the *nuzusul* and interact with her regularly are going to see significant changes in her and her routine. A person close to her may see her react to the presence of spirits or phantasms that he cannot detect. He may observe some of the supernatural phenomena that affect her — e.g., falling from the second story of a building to the first without damaging or disturbing the intervening floor — and construct some wildly outlandish behavior for his friend when rationalizing the event to himself. When that sort of thing happens repeatedly, the

nascent werewolf's friends and relatives react in expected, if unpleasant, ways. Some register the *nuzusul* at a drug rehabilitation center and are fought all the way. Others try to hospitalize her at a mental institution — and the werewolf-to-be isn't always so certain that *that* isn't the right choice.

REGENERATION

Merde, thought Cliff Walker. Merde, merde, merde! He had been far enough from the initial explosion that his survival wasn't completely infeasible, though several of the passengers near him had been killed by shrapnel. The problem was that he had taken one piece in the chest and one in the leg. His blood was everywhere; he couldn't pretend that he was all right at this point. And he couldn't run away without healing his leg. If he had reacted more quickly, perhaps he could have healed his leg, pretended the blood belonged to someone else and run away. If, if, if!

It had been just over 20 minutes since the bomb exploded, and he was one of the most seriously injured survivors, so he was getting a lot of attention. That would have been fine for anyone who'd needed it, but he would be fine regardless — and significantly happier without the attention. Worse, he had several minor cuts, scratches and bruises from the tossing about he'd taken as the train shook, and some of them had still been there when someone started treating him.

Every minute that passed made it harder for him not to just relax and let his body fix itself, healing those minor injuries in seconds. If he hadn't been in public, his leg would be fine by this point. But he had been forcing his body to ignore the injuries since he realized he was under observation. At times, he found himself holding his breath at the same time, and it was becoming more and more difficult to separate the two subconscious actions. He groaned. He thought he heard someone say, "He's in pain!" and another respond, "Here, give him this." What? No. Whatever it is, I don't want it. He felt the prick of a needle in his arm, and then — nothing.

For a second, Cliff Walker thought he was dreaming the entire scenario, and his body was actually whole and in bed. It only took that second for a several minor cuts to disappear, and his bruises to turn from angry black and blue to old yellow. "What was that stuff?" someone asked from — somewhere. Cliff tried to step on his regeneration again, wanting it to stop so he could just hurt and look normal. "Just morphine" came out of nowhere. He felt someone dragging a finger along the spot where a cut had been just moments before.

Merde, merde, merde.

One of the Forsaken's strongest advantages over humans is the Forsaken's ability to recover from any injury; their incredible healing can return them even from the brink of death. Over the centuries, especially since the Renaissance, werewolves with more inquiring minds have done their best to analyze the nature of this regeneration to better and more fully understand themselves. They believe they have identified the cause and method of regeneration and have identified several repeatable phenomena,

but contemporary students of the People's healing ability continue to find unexplainable occurrences.

The werewolf body takes advantage of the Uratha ability to manipulate Essence on a subconscious level. The body draws miniscule amounts of Essence from the physical and spiritual worlds around it and uses the Essence to trigger the cells of the werewolf's body to multiply. This energy is directed to the cells that need it most, allowing the cells of skin and muscle surrounding an injury to duplicate at a prodigious rate, increasing the speed of the healing process many times over. This ability is an incredibly efficient use of Essence, and explains how werewolves may increase their rates of regeneration: feeding a full point of Essence into the "spiritual metabolism" supercharges it, allowing the werewolf to recover incredibly quickly.

What the regenerative process "chooses" to heal follows something occasionally referred to as the *priority of restoration*. The body repairs the small contusions and lacerations it has suffered before it moves on to the larger troubles, such as missing flesh and broken bones. The regenerative process does this in order to keep the werewolf in fighting trim as long as possible. This is why bashing damage heals first; it keeps the werewolf on his feet for at least the next few seconds. If the werewolf's regenerative ability focused instead on healing more lethal damage, it would take more time and might see the werewolf defeated in combat.

Priority of restoration applies in the larger context of healing mortal injuries as well. Skin is the first priority — growing over a gaping wound or the stump of a finger or arm in scant minutes. This eliminates the simple job of repairing the epidermis even while it stems blood loss and is the first defense against infection. Muscle is replaced next, its relatively simple structure requiring more energy because of the sheer mass of the flesh being created. Muscle can grow back in a half-hour to an hour, less if the werewolf is devoting additional Essence to the effort. Nerves are replaced when appropriate: it would be absurd to regenerate lost parts of the peripheral nervous system when there is nothing there for it to fill. It is equally pointless to repair a muscle without connecting it to the nervous system. Their regeneration times are largely incorporated into those of the body parts they support. Last to regenerate is bone. The density of the material requires significant energy consumption, and the complex structure of the bone also makes it more time intensive. Repairing a clean break can take as little as an hour; returning a shattered bone to perfect functionality takes several hours.

Expending Essence can increase any healing rate by approximately 300 times, but only for one minute — five hours of normal healing. Werewolves with the Quick Healer Merit (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 113) regenerate body parts proportionally quickly, but do not heal even faster when they spend Essence. Spending Essence essentially "redlines" the regenerative process, and the Merit does not give the ability a higher tolerance for processing Essence into blood and bone.

Healing a lost limb or organ (including fingers, legs, livers, lungs and eyes) requires special effort. First, the werewolf must be willing and able to spend a draining amount of effort to regrow the lost part. In some cases, such as living without a lung, the choice is obvious, but, to some, the cost may be too dear for a simple hand or eye that can be done without. To begin the healing, the werewolf must sacrifice a *dot* of Willpower. He then begins an extended healing action, with a dice pool of his Resolve, made at intervals of six hours. This interval can be reduced to one hour by spending a point of Essence, but an additional point must be spent for each period of increased healing. The number of successes required depends on the severity of the wound. A lost finger requires three successes, an arm severed at the elbow costs 15, a leg at the hip needs 40. Losing an eye takes a great deal of complicated nerves with it and requires 10 successes to heal; spleens, livers and most other organs only require seven or eight successes to completely regrow. During this time, the werewolf must remain relatively inactive; he can eat (and may have to), but cannot fight or engage in strenuous activity.

If the extended action is interrupted for any reason, the healing ceases where it is and has generally completed an amount of healing proportional to the number of successes required. For example, a werewolf has accumulated 15 successes in her attempt to regenerate her lost leg when a mortal SWAT team locates and attacks her. Because of the interruption, she must begin the healing process again, but she will need to accumulate only 25 more successes to complete the regrowth. Additionally, the regenerated part bears witness to its injury. A limb bears severe scars at the point where it was removed, and, down to the tip of the fingers or toes, the skin looks just slightly too new for several weeks. An eye heals thickly and may sometimes ache or an internal organ does its job somewhat less efficiently. A werewolf with the time and inclination may spend extra time to heal the injury perfectly, as if the limb or organ were never gone, by adding five successes to the number needed to heal. If he takes this route, the healing moves more slowly. It is only complete when the adjusted total number of successes has been met.

These priorities are not set in stone. The body is flexible enough to judge and heal whatever will most quickly get the werewolf back on his feet. A bone broken cleanly can be healed quickly and allow the werewolf to walk or fight; this clean break will be healed before most organs. Similarly, while a werewolf could live without some of his organs for at least a day, a werewolf with two punctured lungs can't breathe, causing the priority of restoration to heal the puncture and re-inflate the lungs before the restoration moves on to other chores. Similarly, when healing long-term injuries (or what counts as long-term among the Uratha), the body regenerates in a manner that does not obstruct future regeneration. The regeneration will not grow back the skin of a missing hand before

the muscles regrow, nor will muscle be replaced before the bone has been replaced. Instead, the skin first grows over the wound, then — once the priority of restoration comes to replacing the bone — the werewolf's ability will begin to replace the missing bone, the muscle around it and the skin. The entire process is very like a computer's multi-tasking: the priority of restoration works on all three in sequence, repairing a small amount of bone and covering it with the appropriate muscle and skin as the regeneration goes along.

However, even the great healing powers given the Forsaken by their ancestry have limits. The Forsaken may be able to recover in full from the loss of limbs and organs but having one section of the torso separated from the other — being cut in half, in other words — means death for any being, werewolves included. The werewolf's heart doesn't *need* to be beating in order for regeneration to take place, so a cut straight to the heart isn't *necessarily* fatal, but once it stops for more than a minute or so, he is officially dead and regeneration stops. A werewolf in a coma caused by brain damage will eventually wake up as his body repairs the damage, but he can't regenerate if his brainstem or upper spinal cord is completely destroyed, and he can't regrow more than a fraction of his brain. Losing the brainstem or more than one-tenth of the rest of the brain is not a recoverable state. As a final note, if a piece of the brain is lost and regrown, the werewolf may be forced to relearn certain things — possibly including skills, the ability to speak at all, the ability to shapeshift or Gifts. He may or may not lose memories, depending on what section of the brain was lost.

REGENERATION AND THE FIRST CHANGE

Nuzusul are hardier than other humans and typically suffer few, if any, illnesses. However, a *nuzusul* cannot regenerate until the moment of her First Change is upon her. Still, there is no reason a *nuzusul* cannot get hit by a car and lose a leg or drink her liver into submission and need a replacement. Once the werewolf experiences the First Change and her healing processes are supercharged, what happens?

Wounds that are fresh will be healed. The cut on her forehead from just a couple hours ago seals right up. The broken leg that was set in a cast only two days ago begins the process of knitting at incredible speed. Injuries that are somewhat less fresh, but not fully healed, will also heal at the werewolf's new rate. It is the old injuries that remain troublesome. A missing leg cannot be regrown, because the body believes the healing there is done. It is the same with a long-lost eye or a removed lung. In the case of a transplanted liver, as mentioned above, the pre-First Change body accepted the organ as its own and let the flesh graft together. The post-Change body is much more exacting when it comes to foreign biological objects in the body — this is why the Uratha are immune to disease.

(For that matter, *nuzusul*'s bodies are similarly stringent, though not to the same degree, so an accepted transplant is rather rare.) After the Change, the werewolf body rejects the transplant. The body's immune system tears the foreign organ apart, using the useful parts and disposing of the rest. As a result, the body creates a fresh wound at the points where the transplanted liver connected to the rest of the body; it then heals this wound by regenerating a new liver.

THE PRICE — METABOLISM

The People's increased healing comes paired with a faster metabolism. As with humans, metabolic rate can differ between individuals but is relatively stable for each person, at least until they reach a certain age. On average, werewolves need to eat more and more frequently than humans do, amounting to about four meals a day or a normal complement of food supplemented by some substantial snacks. Werewolves have no special dietary restrictions, though the Uratha tend to have a narrower

palate than many mortals. Most Uratha prefer to eat meat, especially on the rare side, and it's sometimes an effort not to skimp on the vegetables and starches that make up a complete diet. Still, nothing requires werewolves to eat that way, and they are certainly able to eat mashed potatoes and applesauce when the occasion warrants it. Some Iron Masters manage to survive on a vegetarian or vegan diet, though their fellows are less than sympathetic, and the process is more than a little stressful. A werewolf who does not eat meat is like an addict trying to give up nicotine or narcotics, always haunted by instinctual need — only it never really gets easier. The wolf demands meat, and cannot be starved into submission.

A werewolf in another form often has a wider range of food choices. Wolf diets are heavy with protein and fat, but available fruits and roots are as likely to get eaten. Wolves in the wild can eat meat that has lain out for several days without a problem, and the People can, with some acclimatization, achieve the same flexibility. Domesticated wolves or werewolves unused to eating meat-heavy



meals need to spend several days making their palates accustomed to such habits by daily increasing the amounts of meat in their diets. For werewolves, this is rarely necessary except for cubs fresh from their First Change and those few Uratha who choose not to eat meat.

Although old meats can serve as a source of nourishment for a werewolf in a pinch, the werewolf in question had better keep to his wolf and near-wolf forms. Human stomachs are less able to handle old meat. If much more than an hour is spent digesting bad meat in Hishu form, the werewolf is likely to become sick and will soon vomit up the contents of his stomach. Once the body has decided to be sick, returning to a lupine form will not save him. There are no other, more dangerous, consequences. Werewolves who suffer from bulimia sometimes abuse the effects of food on different stomachs in order to manipulate their diet and weight gain. In the other direction, werewolves in human form are better off eating trim cuts of meat. Wolves' prey tend to be more muscle than fat, and the wolf form digests fat less well than the human form. This problem is not nearly as serious as depositing bad meat into a human stomach, but eating a lot of fat can eventually lead to health issues. In general, the near-human form shares its food concerns with the human form, and the near-wolf form shares its food concerns with the wolf form. The Gauru form doesn't care what's in the stomach; it can consume just about anything organic without issue, but it doesn't get a chance to digest very much unless the werewolf has entered Death Rage, and, at that point, the werewolf has other concerns. (As a note, the Iron Stomach Merit is particularly appropriate for werewolves, and tends to represent a werewolf who benefits from the hardiness of his wolf blood.)

A werewolf who spends more of his time in the larger near-human or near-wolf forms needs to eat correspondingly more, sometimes as much as twice as much as a werewolf who spends most of his time in Hishu. A werewolf who frequents Urhan needs to eat somewhat less, perhaps the equivalent of two to three full (human-sized) meals a day. However, werewolves who spend more time in the wolf-based forms tend to lead more active lives than their more human-aspected cousins.

When the werewolf is injured, his regeneration rate begins to move more quickly than it can draw the necessary energy from the ambient Essence. That energy ends up being drawn from the werewolf's inner reserves, and it needs to be replaced. Healing bashing damage over the course of a combat doesn't measurably increase a werewolf's appetite unless the battle is of prodigious length. Healing one lethal damage over the natural course of 15 minutes is enough to make the werewolf's stomach growl loudly — his metabolism kicks up a notch to provide the required energy. A convalescent werewolf needs to consume half again as much food as he usually does. Thanks to a common and pervasive myth among the Uratha, many werewolves recovering from severe injuries



do not feel sated until they have consumed the appropriate part from a human or wolf. Many injured werewolves refuse to begin the difficult process of healing a limb or organ without first eating the part they are trying to heal, which most believe must come from a living specimen. When a point of Essence is spent to encourage healing, the Essence provides all the energy needed and does not increase the werewolf's metabolism. Aggravated wounds heal without the aid of the People's increased healing; werewolves recuperating from such wounds don't need to eat any more than usual.

REGENERATIVE NODULES

Called "regenerative nodules" among the medically minded Uratha, there is a word for it in the First Tongue: *taghae*. The problem has existed as long as the Forsaken themselves, though some Forsaken claim that *taghae* are just another part of the curse they all suffer. A regenerative nodule forms when a werewolf body tries to heal an injury, but the rapidly splitting cells near the wound fail to bond to the right place. The cells form *around* the wound instead, creating a small nodule of flesh that insulates the injury from proper healing. The body fails to recognize that the injury is out of its reach, and continues to trigger healing in the surrounding tissue. The nodule continues to grow until regeneration stops or the nodule is removed, at which point the original injury usually heals correctly.

Taghae are similar to human cancer, and mortal doctors who encounter them invariably make that diagnosis. Samples removed to determine malignancy always fail, since the sample has no ability to grow without the werewolf's regeneration. The injuries or defects that cause nodules are usually quite small, almost negligible to the werewolf's health; a character may be in otherwise perfect health and still develop this problem. The nodules are hard to detect until they grow large enough to be serious problems, especially since the Uratha rarely undergo MRIs or CAT scans. The nodules are usually only noticed once they grow large enough to cause many of the same problems cancer does. *Taghae* are removed by a werewolf willing and able to cut into the victim's body and forcibly remove the central nodule. Because packs and tribes are often spread across significant distances, the victim must often wait until a properly skilled Uratha healer can visit. Until then, the victim must suffer pain, permanently lost health levels or other health complications.

IN A CHRONICLE

From a rules perspective, *taghae* are essentially a werewolf-specific ailment that is best used sparingly; just as there's no system to determine whether a human character will develop cancer, there's no system to decide if a werewolf becomes afflicted with this problem. An affliction of *taghae* is best used as an introduction to the differences between werewolf and human physiology to point out how regeneration isn't entirely a blessing. There probably isn't any reason to devote more than one storyline to the dif-

ficulties a werewolf is having with *taghae*; the ailment isn't so common that it needs to show up more frequently in the name of probability, and one well-handled story should be enough to explore the dramatic possibilities.

SCARS AND SELF-CONTROL

Apart from the miraculous recovery of nerve tissue and lost limbs, the normal regeneration process is simply healing accomplished in the blink of an eye; the regeneration is otherwise no different than a mortal's month-long convalescence. The new skin may look normal, but it still stretches and thickens to form scar tissue where it was originally cut. The knee may be healed, but there is still an uncomfortable buildup of cartilage that causes the victim to limp. Such deformities *can* be repaired — some through conventional surgery and some through the extreme option of removing the offending section and letting it regrow with a clean slate. Because of the status bestowed by scars bravely won, and the pride an older wolf may take in having a limp but still besting her children, few take the opportunity to repair these kinds of deformities. Though werewolves regenerate lost limbs, amputations from before the First Change do not regenerate; they can be given the chance to regrow using this method.

When Essence is spent, the werewolf's regenerative ability is blessed with an overabundance of fuel. The ability ends up with more fuel, really, than it needs to complete its given task. That being the case, the healing is a great deal more complete. The additional energy gives the werewolf body the vigor it needs to heal everything perfectly. There are no scars, no limbs and no lasting trouble from a lethal or bashing wound healed in this fashion — a fact that upsets some warriors of the People. When a fierce Rahu chooses to enhance her powers of healing in the middle of a fight, it doesn't mean she wants to lose the status that a scar would have afforded her, or the memento of the battle. (Aggravated damage, though, naturally leaves scars, as it is too powerful for regeneration to overcome with its usual efficiency.)

A werewolf can exert a certain amount of conscious control over her natural regeneration. Just as a human can stop breathing (normally an unconscious activity), a werewolf can stop her supernatural healing. This requires a conscious effort and is hard to maintain. While no roll is necessary to begin, stopping healing is something like holding one's breath: as time passes, it becomes harder and harder to keep that small cut from closing up as it wants to. Furthermore, a werewolf with serious injuries is going to have a more difficult time preventing the healing process from beginning, because the natural urge is that much stronger. A werewolf can consciously end an Essence-enhanced regeneration just before it finishes, resulting in the creation of a normal scar. The concentration necessary imposes a -1 penalty on all actions in that turn. Some werewolves consider this practice all but required, in order to remember the enemy. Others consider it foolish,

as one is taking a measured risk to gain a memento — and if the battle was worth remembering, one wouldn't dare take that risk. But if the enemy was not worth the effort, it should not have been necessary to enhance one's healing... The subject is a common matter of debate, obviously among the Rahu and the Blood Talons, but especially among the Cahalith, who argue about how to tell some tales and remember certain duels.

RESISTING REGENERATION

Dice Pool: Resolve

Action: Reflexive

A werewolf can prevent herself from regenerating for a duration based on her Resolve dots, as follows:

Resolve	Time*
•	One minute
••	Two minutes
•••	Four minutes
••••	Eight minutes
•••••	15 minutes
••••••	30 minutes
•••••••	One hour

* If your character is in combat, she can put her regeneration on hold for two *turns* per Resolve dot.

While she is preventing her body from healing, she suffers a –1 penalty to all actions due to distraction. When she has reached her normal limit, a Resolve roll is made to continue. Each success grants one additional minute (or two extra turns in combat). When she can no longer stifle her body's natural process, she begins to regenerate. If she wishes to resist regeneration twice within one scene, she may automatically do so if she has not used her full duration. If she has failed to continue preventing her body from repairing itself, she may make another Resolve roll; each successive Resolve roll is half as effective as the last. Some Gifts, such as *Playing Possum* (see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 113), can enable the werewolf to cease healing by inhibiting the magical aspect instead of the subconscious. Such Gifts do not require the werewolf to concentrate on resisting regeneration or affect the length of time she can submerge her body's natural regeneration with pure will in a scene.

Sometimes it is necessary for a werewolf to defy the priority of restoration. She may need to regenerate the nose torn from her face before the ligament ripped from her knee in order to appear whole. When another function overrides the basic need to regain her ability to fight, a werewolf can concentrate to direct her regeneration instead of stopping it. As long as she remains focused, she can direct her body to ignore its natural priorities and heal itself as she sees fit. She can heal a damaged pancreas before basic skin, if she wishes. Use the table above to determine how long she can keep the healing up. All healing for the duration applies to the repair of her target injury; deduct this time from the time necessary to heal that type of wound (i.e., hours for organs, hours to days for bones).

NEW MERIT: HEAL LIKE STONE (••)

Effect: Your werewolf is skilled at subduing his regenerative ability. He might fall into a meditative trance or just have a particular aptitude for grinning and bearing it.

When determining how long your character can resist (or control) his regeneration, add two to Resolve when referencing the Resisting Regeneration chart. For example, if your werewolf's Resolve is 1, he can stop himself from regenerating for four minutes before you need to make a roll.

Only werewolves may take this Merit.

WOUNDS OF SILVER

When a werewolf is injured by silver, the flesh surrounding the wound steams, cracks and blisters. Physically, silver causes the werewolf's blood to boil instantly. Spiritually, the silver causes all the nearby Essence in the werewolf's potent blood to combust, evoking a great heat that causes the visible effects. The silver turns the area around the wound (flesh, capillaries and all) into a zone completely void of the werewolf's spiritual energy, preventing healing. Even after the wound is healed, whether by time or the Rite of Healing, the area that was wounded often remains an angry red color until the next new moon. Some Cahalith say that before Luna eased her curse, such wounds would never heal. Some Forsaken also suggest that since Luna could not lift the curse entirely, she instead found a loophole that allowed the mark of silver's touch to disappear while her face was turned away. Silver objects can make werewolves uncomfortable during contact because of the proximity between silver and blood, but they do not typically cause aggravated damage unless they contact the blood directly or strike hard enough to bruise. It is said that the Pure Tribes suffer egregious burns simply from the touch of silver.

Despite the seriousness of any silver wound, some wounds end up being little more than nuisances. A long cut along the arm may take weeks to heal, but it will not restrict the werewolf's movement overmuch. On the other hand, if a silver bullet passes through a werewolf's liver, she has little more than a day or two before not having a liver is going to give her serious problems. A limb or digit lost to silver is much, much harder to regenerate, and only a few werewolves manage to succeed. Though the healers have tried to repair even these extreme cases, the Uratha who study such phenomena have so far been stumped. In game terms, regenerating a limb or organ lost to a silver weapon requires the expenditure of two dots of Willpower, rather than one.

Despite the bans, some werewolves still make use of silver for limited purposes — tattooing or piercing the body for jewelry. Some werewolves, most notably the Ir-raka and Iron Masters, hold that carrying and using silver for this cause is not a sin; others, especially the old-fashioned, disagree. Because regeneration is not magically complete unless fueled with Essence, silver isn't necessary to create such works of art, but it can make the process cleaner or simpler. Werewolves' healing makes tattoos

come out slightly differently than imagined, though werewolf artists have long since learned how to account for the difference, and it can be an exercise in frustration to pierce a werewolf and *then* insert the stud. Werewolves just jam the stud through, though they only need to leave it there a few minutes before the ear has healed around it.

To a mortal doctor, a silver wound looks like a wound surrounded by a serious burn, as if the wound were instantly or subsequently exposed to great heat. The People regularly suffer questions like, did you try to cauterize this yourself? and was the knife white-hot? Werewolves tend to avoid going to human physicians for this sort of injury. If the werewolves have no choice, they often change doctors afterward, since the werewolves' medical files begin to acquire notes like "Self-mutilation?" and "Fascination with fire; recommend psychotherapy."

In the spirit world, suffering or having suffered damage from silver holds another danger: the damage acts as a beacon. Until the burn mark from silver completely heals, it throbs a deep, cruel red in the Shadow Realm, representing the nature of a wound made with the aid of Luna's curse. Spirits can easily see the glow and understand what it means — the werewolf is wounded. Some spirits may see this signal and join the werewolf, lending their aid in hopes of receiving some sort of favor in return. The great majority of spirits will see a weakness and move to exploit it.

DRUGS

"Shit, I think Stormfather was serious when he told us to stay out of his territory."

"Yeah, I totally know he was. He just doesn't want us coming round and messing things up when everything's so close for Rosie, man."

"So you think he'll let us come back?" Erin Oleac asked. She was in

her human form, lying on the bank of a creek that the city mortals here tended.

"Yeah. Give it a week, no problem. He's just all tense right now. Not like us," Longtooth giggled. He was also in human form, but he was playing with his finger, changing its end back and forth between the useless human nail and the wicked Gauru claw. "Shit," he said, looking into the creek. "What's that?"

"What's what?" Erin focused on the object floating down the stream. "I dunno, looks like . . . a broken briefcase with some plastic bags in it. Stop it, will you?"

"Sure." Longtooth pushed himself into a crouching position and moved closer to the water. He reached out to get a hold on the floating briefcase. "Damn, I'm gonna . . . got it!" He snagged it and pulled it closer to shore, then hefted it onto the bank between them. His friend took one of the opaque baggies and opened it.

"Goddamn," Erin's mouth was open and she was staring into the case. "Our stash just grew, like, two hundred percent."

"No way."

"Look!" She tilted the bag toward him.

"Holy shit." He lay back on the bank. "Well, stuff it in your backpack, huh?"

We shouldn't just leave that lying around."

"No kidding." She grabbed the large bags and shoved them in her backpack.

They sat there, contemplating the find for several minutes.

"Hey, Erin. Y'know why they call me Longtooth? Really, its got nothing to do with the size of my tee — " He stopped when a Caucasian man wearing a gold cross on a chain above his Metallica T-shirt appeared above him. "Uh, hey man," Longtooth smiled. "What's up?"

Erin propped herself up on her elbow. Their new company was sweating profusely and breathing heavily, and he didn't look happy. "Give it back," he said.

“Woah, man, we didn’t steal nothing. You just tell me what you lost, and we’ll help you find it, eh?”

“What was in the briefcase.” The fellow looked around quickly. “Give it back or I’ll kill you.”

“Hey, Mac, you lost it, we found it, you ain’t getting it. Maybe if you ask nice we’ll share.” Longtooth’s tone lowered. “But if you wanna fight, you’re gonna be in for a trip.”

“Long — ” Erin began, then the dealer reached behind his back for a hidden weapon. Longtooth also reached for a “hidden weapon.”

The next thing Erin knew, the white guy had dropped a gun on the grass and was running at top speed. “Brilliant, Longtooth. Just flash Gauru in the middle of the — ” She stopped. “Longtooth?”

Her friend was lying on the ground. His wolf-like eyes were completely dilated, he was breathing sporadically and he wasn’t moving at all — except for one finger, which kept twitching back and forth between human and Gauru.

A human can take a dose of aspirin, an inoculation or a tab of acid with the certainty that the results will be predictable — or, with the acid, relatively predictable. The Uratha must be somewhat more careful with what they consume: medications remain in the werewolf’s system when she shifts forms, and some drugs affect human and wolf biologies differently, making transformations while under the influence risky at best. Luckily, werewolves resist infections and disease completely and can generally avoid complicating their lives with the medicines humans use. The immunity to disease is a function of the werewolves’ regeneration: the white blood cells re-appear and multiply at such tremendous rates that no wholly mortal disease can avoid destruction at the cells’ “hands.” The People’s improved resistance to drugs is explained by the race’s increased metabolism: werewolf livers work overtime, cleansing toxins and foreign substances from the bloodstream — they gain two dice when rolling the resistance to a drug or toxin. Still, the liver can’t get everything.

The manners in which drugs will affect a werewolf’s different forms vary by the form and the drug. The most common (and logical) difference is that of potency. The Dalu and Urshul shapes are close enough to the root human and wolf that medicines cause, almost universally, the same reactions with them. But each form has significantly more mass than the Hishu or Urhan forms, reducing the effectiveness of any chemicals taken proportionately. As a rule of thumb, a werewolf can expect the duration of the drug’s results to diminish by 25–50%, depending on her original body mass. The number of dice gained or lost through use of the drug is reduced by one or two, again depending on her previous mass.

The second difference is simple reaction to the biology. Anti-inflammatory drugs (aspirin, ibuprofen, Tylenol) cannot be processed as quickly by the lupine system. In the short term, this results in gastro-intestinal bleeding. In the long term, it may cause liver and kidney failure. In general, the Uratha have little to fear from these effects:

their powerful regenerative abilities counter both short- and long-term effects. Taking on the Urshul or Urhan forms while under the influence of such a drug causes significant discomfort for the werewolf, resulting in a –1 penalty to all actions for a half-hour per dose. The werewolf may spend an Essence point to regenerate the internal damage immediately, eliminating the penalties but gaining no other benefit from spending the Essence. While other over-the-counter medications are generally safe (as long as they don’t contain anti-inflammatories), the wolf-forms of the Forsaken suffer severe reactions to methylxanthines: theophylline, caffeine and chocolate. Theophylline is used in controlling chronic breathing problems; since werewolves usually suffer much more *interesting* diseases, if any at all, this is not an issue. But caffeine is ubiquitous in modern human society, and chocolate nearly so. If a werewolf changes to the wolf or near-wolf form within an hour of consuming any more than a single dose of either, she will suffer serious problems. Her heart rate will increase and become irregular, and she may suffer a seizure, enter a coma or both. Treat the caffeine in one cup of coffee or the amount of chocolate in one candy bar as one dose. If she never leaves the human or near-human forms, she has no problem, but fate does not conspire to leave a werewolf in peace while she digests a breakfast at the local coffee shop. A werewolf who is forced into such an unfortunate situation must make a Stamina + Resolve roll at a penalty of one per dose consumed in the past hour. If she has taken one or two doses and fails, she suffers a seizure and is unable to do more than writhe for one half-hour per dose. If she has taken three or more doses, she enters a coma for six hours per dose taken. After the allotted time, her natural abilities have eliminated the problem; as with normal drugs (see below), the werewolf may spend one point of Essence to “burn out” one dose of a drug, even while unconscious.



A werewolf suffering for drinking coffee or soda or eating a chocolate birthday cake and changing form may seem excessive, but it is somewhat realistic (as far as *that* goes). Still, this should not be used simply to incapacitate characters or penalize players for forgetting a minor bit of werewolf lore. Most of the time, characters can eat and drink what they like; the Storyteller should warn players, or at least make sure they are aware of the danger, if he wants to make use of these rules. The consumption of such drugs and the danger thereof can be used for intricately enjoyable social scenes. A dinner party with a suspected *Hithimu* who offers the werewolf a cup of his special coffee blend — is it innocent, or is the spirit trying to gain an edge?

If you do choose to apply these rules to your game, it might be a good idea to play it

somewhat more fast-and-loose than the rules above suggest. Use them as a guideline for how dangerous trying to live fully in the human world can be for a werewolf, but don't spend your time counting doses of chocolate and caffeine. Hit the players with this rule if they overdo it, or if it's dramatically appropriate. Besides, it's much more interesting counting the doses of cocaine.

The Gauru form is the wildcard. When the Uratha are near-humans or near-wolves, their forms are still well-grounded in the logical, scientifically understood biology of either the human or the wolf. But pharmacologists have never designed a chemical with the war form in mind. First, the amount of drug taken is rarely sufficient to affect the Gauru form. The wolf-human form doubles most anyone's body mass, and is simultaneously more resistant to foreign drugs than the original form. Most Uratha would be forced to overdose the human form in order to get the drug to register in the Gauru; in fact, in the rare event when a werewolf overdoses on something, his friends may make an effort to goad him into Gauru form, bringing the drug to safe levels in his changed system at some risk to themselves. Second, the Gauru form "runs hot." It requires a great deal of energy, has an incredibly active metabolism and tends to burn through drugs in one-tenth to one-twentieth of their usual durations.

Third, and this is the most dangerous, drugs tend to react unpredictably with the Gauru form. Some drugs affect human and wolf forms differently, and any Uratha who use chemicals should take these differences into account. But the Gauru form combines the two forms in strange ways, with hormones and enzymes that would make a biochemist blink. It's worth repeating: it is *dangerous* for a werewolf to have drugs in her Gauru bloodstream. The drugs can blind, paralyze, maim and even kill. Many reactions continue even though the werewolf automatically reverts to another form. Some drugs provide great presence of mind, blinding speed or insane strength, but these effects are the exception to the rule. Determining ahead of time what a drug or drug combination may do to Gauru form is an extended Science roll. The rolls are made at -3 dice (more if the werewolf lacks the proper lab equipment) and take place 30 minutes apart. The number of successes the werewolf must accumulate ranges from 15 to 50, depending on the complexity of the drug.

It's a small blessing that the most adverse reactions only occur with 10-15% of human drugs. But the most innocuous combinations can cause interactions that no teaching hospital ever warned its interns about. Quinine and ethyl alcohol, for example, cause a werewolf in the Gauru form to be dizzy and see hallucinations, losing three dice from all actions. This is probably why were-



wolves drink gin and tonics only when in complete safety, or as gestures of great confidence.

These dangers discourage most sensible Uratha from using drugs to enhance the werewolves' abilities in battle. An aged werewolf is unlikely to say to a new member of his tribe, "Take this; it will aid you in battle." More likely, he would say, "This dulled my pain and sharpened my wits, but it killed Jordan Bearskin when *Kuruth* took her. Keep away from it." Most werewolves learn not to depend on drugs the first time taking a painkiller (something the Uratha often have great need for), when the drug gives them no benefit in Dalu form; they learn not to experiment when it renders them immobile in Gauru form. Of all the werewolves, only the Iron Masters remain dedicated to combining the use of medications with their lifestyles, and not all of them are still so sure: the Lodge of Chemics is the shelter for those who wish to pursue the odd interactions between mind- or body-altering chemicals and the physical duality of the Uratha.



The strange and small Lodge of Chemics seeks to understand the unexplainable or, failing that, to catalogue its effects. The lodge's members search for enlightenment as to their state in the unpredictable occurrences of a fresh cub's First Change and in the stranger parts of the *Hisil*. The lodge treats the world as a mishmash of interacting mysteries that all mean something about life as Forsaken while believing that they can't really know enough about any given interaction without trying it. To the lodge, this principle is embodied in the reactions of Gauru forms with untested chemicals and combinations. Take some aspirin, some ibuprofen and a hit of marijuana, go someplace safe and test it in the other forms. *Especially* the Gauru form.

Named by the founders (whose primary interest was in chemicals), the lodge has since attracted those werewolves intrigued by the lodge philosophy, which encourages members to treat life similarly. When a werewolf's regeneration isn't responding as expected, a Chemic tests the boundaries of the known by giving the subject bruises and cuts that should quickly disappear or testing what happens if the subject should taste blood. If a Gift causes an unfamiliar effect, the Lodge of Chemics recommends activating Gifts of the same type that call upon the same spirits or that were taught by a single spirit, not to mention activating the same Gift at different times or places. The Chemics aren't insane; if the problem is recognizable enough that it has a known solution, one that predictably works, then that's obviously the right choice. Similarly, if a tested combination of drugs and Gauru would

save the day, then it's better to use that combination than something potentially foolish. It's only when there's a serious unknown, when there's no regular response to fall back on, that it's time to experiment and, in the process, learn more about what it means to be a werewolf.

The Lodge of Chemics follows the way of Feral Cat. Feral Cat is perfectly content to live as her ancestors did when it is the right way. When that way is in question, however, Feral Cat tests, tries and experiments until she finds out what works. And when she makes a mistake, well, she meant to. Though she encourages temperance, some Chemics take the spirit of experimentation to extremes. Such Uratha are rarely part of any pack not made up of other Chemics. They are so dedicated to their ideas and energetic in their explorations that any other pack would have trouble putting up with them.

Prerequisites: Cunning •, Science •• (Specialty: Chemistry), Medicine ••

Membership: The Lodge of Chemics is open to anyone, as its patron and its members are interested to learn how the lodge will evolve when it includes Uratha of other tribes. To date, however, its limited membership still contains only Iron Masters.

Joining is simple, if not necessarily easy. First, the candidate must test and record the effects of a drug or combination of drugs on all his forms in the presence of two or more members. This test must increase the boundaries of the Chemics' knowledge of chemical-Uratha interactions in some way. Second, because the Lodge of Chemics has a reputation for doing little more than dangerously testing medicines, the candidate must provide some proof of an occasion when he found a previously unknown solution to a real-life problem through trial and error. If Feral Cat approves — and she may turn the candidate down explicitly because she feels he should have responded in a time-tested manner — he is accepted.

Benefits: Members of the Lodge of Chemics add one die to any roll to resist the adverse effects of a drug. Additionally, the lodge offers excellent training, much of it based on personal experience, in Medicine and Science, reducing the costs of raising those two skills from new dots x3 to new dots x2.



Regardless of the drug or the form, a werewolf adds two dice to all attempts to fight off or ignore its effects. A werewolf may spend an Essence point to momentarily supercharge the *natural* chemicals in her system, overwhelming and eliminating one dose of a drug she has consumed. This immediately cancels the drug's effects.

• **Alcohol:** The werewolf subtracts one die from Dexterity-, Intelligence- and Wits-based pools for every *two*

drinks he consumes in excess of his Stamina. Assuming Gauru form burns the alcohol out of his system instantly, as Rage accelerates the metabolism to unbelievable speeds.

- **Marijuana:** Cannabis is nearly completely ineffective on werewolves, though enough of it will manage to produce a bit of a buzz. Reduce Dexterity-, Intelligence-, Resolve- and Wits-based pools by one die for every three joint or bong hits taken in a single hour. A werewolf in Gauru form divides the dice penalty by six (round down).

- **Hallucinogens:** This is the only class of drug that affects werewolves normally. The natural resistance of the Uratha is offset by their fierce passion for life, which tends to reinforce the phantom sights, sounds and feelings. The drugs wear off twice as quickly. The effects on Gauru form are unpredictable at best; this class of drug causes dangerous reactions more often than others.

- **Cocaine/crack/speed:** Werewolves are often able to better process these drugs than their human counterparts. The werewolves invariably gain a die to Strength- and Stamina-based rolls for the duration, at least when in human or wolf forms. Gauru form is already too strong and pumping too much adrenaline to gain any benefit from these drugs. While the pure forms are “safe” when combined with Gauru form, these drugs are commonly mixed with other substances on the streets, making Uratha’s reactions incredibly varied and usually unpleasant.

- **Heroin/morphine/barbiturates:** Because the Uratha feel their pain more keenly than humans, these drugs can only dull the signs of injury, not damp them entirely. Reduce wound penalties by half (round down). Werewolves don’t become as dreamy as humans might, but the Uratha still tend to react to events less strongly than usual when under the influence, which lasts for (8 minus Stamina) hours. All dice pools and Resistance traits such as Defense are reduced by one for the duration. In Gauru form, heroin halves the user’s Dexterity pools. Morphine has absolutely no effect. Other barbiturates and impure heroin can have unknown effects.

PREGNANCY

Rosebud was alone. She had a couple of weeks, but her time was near enough that she couldn’t run with the pack. And somehow, the magus Vacca had gotten the idea that an unborn werewolf fetus would give him the power to change his own shape. Maybe he wanted to smoke it. When Rosebud’s pack first heard the rumors on the streets, they were concerned but not enough to do more than secretly move Rosie to a secret location in their territory. Vacca was a talented mage, and he had an uncomfortable amount of influence with the spirits in the city.

Then, a few days ago, Claw Sondheim caught a strange scent about Marco, a journalist who trawled through the pack’s territory and was usually a dependable informant. He was not to become Hithimu; it was something else. Neil followed the scent beyond the boundary of the pack’s territory to *Le Club Fantastique*. Vacca’s haunt.

That was enough to sober even Claw, and it worried Stormfather enough that he led the pack’s hunts near those borders every other day. This morning, Stormfather came to Rosebud and told her he was leading the pack on a raid. Vacca was getting dangerously ambitious, and if they didn’t put him down now, they’d have to when he started stripping away the pack’s authority over their territory. And so they went, and Rosebud stayed.

Ten minutes ago, a local traffic-spirit that owed the pack a favor appeared to warn Rosebud that trouble was coming before the spirit fled. Then, only silence. Now, there were barbarians at the gates and footsteps on the stairs. Rosebud knew that the lock would not hold, just as she knew that Hishu form wouldn’t be strong enough. She could feel the red-hot anger welling up within her, fury that the pitiful warlock imagined he could kill one of the Uratha and live long enough to do more than exult over his fleeting victory. Breathing heavily, Rosebud knew she couldn’t control herself for long, not in the face of her death and her child’s. The door into her room rippled upward once, like a sail catching a gust of wind, and began to sag. By then, she had already made her decision: if her baby had to die, Vacca would regret his transgression. When the door disappeared into another dimension, Rosebud was 400 pounds and waiting. And weeping, even while she proceeded to tear the surprised wizard apart.

Though the Uratha are creatures of both worlds, their children are not. For male Uratha, this presents little difficulty: the child is within a human female and, though the fetus may be fated to one day experience the First Change, it is perfectly ordinary while being carried to term. No extra care, beyond that necessary for any conception, is necessary for a safe birth. Female Uratha, though they have no choice but to bear their own children, can at least decide whether or not they want to have one in the first place.

Several methods are available to the female werewolf. Some Uratha use human contraceptives in order to prevent unwanted pregnancies. Condoms and diaphragms work as well in werewolves as they do in humans, though less so for Uratha who may shapeshift during intercourse. Hormonal contraceptives (pills, patches, subdermal implants, etc.) function properly as long as they primarily use estrogen and/or progesterone. Contraceptives based on other hormones are likely to degrade in effectiveness every time the werewolf dons the wolf or near-wolf form. Any form of hormonal contraceptive is likely to degrade if the werewolf assumes Gauru form, due to increased metabolism. Careful werewolves refuse to rely on such methods, but if the werewolves are unable to access the Bar to Birth rite, human options are decent backups.

Estrogen- and progesterone-based contraceptives will also prevent a female werewolf from becoming pregnant through intercourse with a male wolf, though few Uratha ever realize this advantage. Any werewolf who makes the unpopular decision to mate with a true wolf and forgets this defense may be in for an unfortunate experience. If she becomes pregnant, the infant inevitably dies before

the end of the first trimester. In the reverse, there is no reliable method of protecting a female wolf from impregnation at the hands of a male werewolf. And while such practice does not produce an abomination — only a regular wolf-litter — it is still bestiality in the minds of most werewolves, and few view the practice with something other than distaste.



NEW RITE: BAR TO BIRTH (..)

Because an inconvenient pregnancy can make life difficult for a female werewolf, some packs have learned how to lay a ward over the womb and prevent any new life from taking root there. Though useful, this rite is not common. Some Uratha do not consider it a worthwhile expenditure of effort; others feel that it is a sign of weakness to avoid pregnancy at all.

Performing the Rite: The moon must be in the sky and the subject menstruating when this rite is performed. The ritemaster takes a dab of the subject's menstrual blood and writes Luna's First Tongue name above the subject's womb. If the rite is successful, the blood evaporates. A ritemaster who knows this rite also knows how to lift the ward, which requires a simple incantation and the willingness of the subject.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Instant

Roll results

Dramatic Failure: The rite fails, and cannot be used again until the subject next menstruates.

Failure: The rite fails, and cannot be used again that night.

Success: The subject of the rite cannot become pregnant due to intercourse with a human. This rite offers no protection against the conception of a Ghost Child. This condition lasts for one lunar month.

Exceptional Success: The effects of the rite last three times as long.



GO FORTH AND MULTITRY

Whatever female Uratha's conscious desires, these werewolves like humans and other animals, have an instinctual drive to bear young in order to propagate the species. It is a rare werewolf who feels no such urge. Still, many of the People are strong and independently minded and have no wish to be tethered to a child while the rest of their packs discharge their duties. Such women arrange their own pregnancies in order to minimize the drain on their own time and effort. Fostering the children with human families is a common practice, and some Uratha plan so far ahead

as to "ensure" that a female among them will have been a recent mother, therefore being able to produce milk.

When a child is conceived and a female werewolf becomes pregnant, she will quickly notice some changes. First, the werewolf feels a subtle, instinctive resistance to any effort to change shape. The minor mental block is simple enough to overcome, but that niggling feeling is enough to alert a properly educated Uratha to her condition. Additionally, the womb in most of her forms alters itself slightly to be the proper shape for a human child. This means that the child, whether destined to remain human or become Uratha, will survive without complication, but a small amount of the werewolf's disguise has been compromised: a thorough examination of a pregnant werewolf in Urhan form will reveal some discrepancies in the womb. Still, the child will be safe as long as the mother-to-be takes the following proper precautions: she must not shapeshift too quickly, and she must not assume Gauru form. Werewolves are also advised to avoid habits that adversely affect human pregnancies, including using drugs and alcohol. In the third trimester, the fetus is so large that it cannot be comfortably carried within the womb of the wolf form; changing to Urhan form in that period requires a successful Willpower roll and has the potential to harm the child.

If the werewolf changes her shape as a reflexive action, as she can do either with an exceptional success on the shapeshifting roll, by expending a point of Essence or while the moon is in her auspice, the change will act too violently on the womb and the fetus, potentially damaging it. It is possible that the child will survive, but few Uratha wish to risk the child's health by changing more quickly. The Uratha's instincts strain against rapid changes, forcing the werewolf to succeed at a Resolve + Composure roll if she wishes to make a reflexive change.

Taking on the Gauru form during pregnancy is extremely dangerous. A shape designed for strength, speed and resilience, the war form is so named for a reason. There is little room in such an efficient battle machine for the fostering of an unborn child. The same instincts that kick in when the werewolf tries to shapeshift reflexively operate here: she must succeed at a Resolve + Composure roll to overcome them and take the Gauru form (with the exception of entering Death Rage, which overrides all protective instincts). The Gauru form doesn't mean instant death for the child. A pregnant Uratha in Gauru who suffers no injury may — may — leave the form with a healthy fetus. But almost any damage is enough to directly cause the child irreparable harm, not to mention developmental damage from the immensely powerful (and scientifically unknown) endogenous opioids released when a werewolf in Gauru is wounded.

The Gauru form is doubly dangerous because it increases the risk of succumbing to Death Rage. Anger and death energy suffuses the werewolf's spirit, flooding her senses and drowning her control. It is the energy that

escapes her, leaking from the imperfect vessel of her body, that leaves a trail in the spirit world and upsets the local spirits. The strength of the Forsaken that gives her the ability to claw her way back from the abyss to control her body again is not present in the fetus; the unborn child's spirit is overwhelmed, and the *Kuruth* snuffs it out. When the Rage drains from the werewolf, the child's spirit is drawn with it. Physically, it's a miscarriage. But the werewolf always knows the reason.

Pregnant Uratha often carry at least one Mercy Gem. This fetish is the most common gift given to a pregnant werewolf, usually by her pack or her tribe elders.

Rumor has it that, occasionally, the crushed soul of the unborn child is caught by a spirit before the soul dissipates. Some spirits know how to nurture such things, and those spirits that do can transform the lost child's essence into a self-aware spirit, something like a Ghost Child. These proto-*uni*har, if they indeed exist, have been intentionally nursed and instructed; the spirit that would undertake such an effort cannot mean well for the Uratha. The truth is unknown, but Ithaeur steeped in the lore of their people find little reason to believe it's impossible....

An Uratha female remains fit and active until the child nears birth; it is only in the last month that the werewolf begins to show her state more than a little, at which point she suffers a -1 penalty to her Dexterity and an additional -1 to all Athletics rolls for the last month. Her senses dull somewhat as her attention invariably turns inward, and she loses one die from her Perception rolls. During this period it is even more dangerous — though still not necessarily fatal — to don the Gauru form. If the fetus survives to term (rarer for werewolves only because of their dangerous lifestyles), labor proceeds as normal for a human with one exception. The muscle contractions common to any birth are accompanied by an instinctive shapechange into Hishu form, if the werewolf isn't already wearing it. These impulses begin weakly and are easy to ignore, but they quickly become irresistible. If a mother-to-be wants to wear another form, she must repeatedly shift back to it after each contraction forces her into human shape. Only when the contractions are coming every five minutes or less does the mother lose the ability to shape-shift at all. This instinct insures that there are no birth complications caused by a human child passing through a birth canal not at all prepared or appropriate for the event.

Finally, the mother must be careful not to be trapped in the Shadow Realm during the birth. She may visit it all she likes or needs to while with child — a fetus is part of her body and would *never* be left behind when traveling to the spirit world — but most pregnant Uratha avoid it during the last month or so. This is usually a simple matter of not crossing the Gauntlet as labor approaches, but a pregnant werewolf often refuses to let her other duties relax until the last moment, and some of these duties may take her into the *Hisil*. When that is the case, the closer the birth is, the more likely some or all of her pack will

accompany her, regardless of her wishes, on her journeys beyond the curtain. If the child is born in the spirit world, the dangers are twofold. First, the emotion and energy of a birth will attract all manner of spirits, and their presence is *much* more likely to be threatening than helpful — especially since the spirits are being called to the birth of what may become another of the hated Uratha. Though most werewolves accept extenuating circumstances that bring the event to pass, birthing the child in the spirit world also breaks the Oath of the Moon, allowing what is essentially a mortal into the *Hisil*. Secondly, the experience of birth is exciting and emotional for the child. In the Shadow Realm, such an attitude — especially held by a completely untrained and undisciplined mind — has unpredictable results. The local spirit landscape reacts violently and sometimes causes injuries to those around the child, though never the infant or the mother. A child born across the veil inescapably becomes a flighty, distant, preoccupied child, and she typically goes on to one of two fates. She either experiences the First Change herself (wherein things seem to make much more sense than the rest of her life has) and proceeds to become a renowned expert on some aspect of the Shadow Realm (whatever her auspice), or she *doesn't*. Those children who don't experience the First Change only grow more and more apart from the realities of the physical world and eventually end up in a hospital or on the streets. The latter is more common. Most pregnant werewolves whose duties take them into the spirit world are told a horror story about a spirit world birth, and most heed the warning.

NUZUSUL CHILDREN

Children of werewolves who sired or birthed them before the First Change have an unfortunate history of developing abnormal personalities. Those children whose parent changes before their first birthdays have it easiest, as do those whose parent's behavior is no different before or after. For most children, the parent has an odd month — and then changes radically. The post-*nuzusul*'s parenting techniques tend to be remarkably different than the *nuzusul*'s. If the change occurs beyond a point early in the child's development, the child could potentially develop various disorders. A parent who raises a child for several years before the Change may find another home for the child, whether to dispose of the effort or to protect the child. Such "abandonment" is often emotionally similar to the death of the parent, and can eventually result in clinical depression.

FIRST CHANGE... WITH CHILD

This experience is rare, but more than once a werewolf has experienced the First Change while with child. This is dangerous for the child, especially considering the period of uncontrolled shapeshifting on the night of the First Change. Considering the great stresses that child-birth places upon the body, some Forsaken theorize that the rarity of such a change is perhaps by design. Some

think that the natural processes that govern the timing of the Change are biased against such an occurrence, postulating that a woman who is carrying a child when the trial before her First Change would normally begin suffers no such thing. The hormones that accompany a fetus prevent the Change until the child has been safely born and at least partially weaned. Others say that Luna, in some aspect that remembers the birth of her own children, chooses not to mark any but the most unlucky or cursed with the Change during the latter part of pregnancy. Whether either theory has some truth to it or they are both wishful thinking, few can say.

If there are any safeguards, they do not apply to a werewolf-to-be if she conceives *after* the nightmares heralding the Change begin — once the process starts, nothing can stop it. So many unpredictable and undeniably dangerous events occur during the time preceding the First Change — and the night of the Change itself — that infants *in vivo* have an alarmingly low survival rate. A child who experiences his mother's First Change from the womb *and survives* is born normally, but he has a somewhat higher chance of experiencing the First Change for himself some day. Werewolf savants are unsure why this is, but precious few advocate pursuing the matter in a scientific fashion. Even if it weren't nearly impossible to find women who have had their first nightmares, the sacrifice would simply be too great.

ABORTIONS AND MISCARRIAGES

Uratha mothers suffer fewer natural complications while carrying a child to term, almost as if the werewolves' enhanced healing and immune system lend the fetuses strength. Therefore, when an Uratha decides that she needs an abortion, the choice is sure to be heavy with necessity and emotion. Some of the Forsaken look down upon those who choose to take this step; Storm Lords often fall into this camp, because they feel it is their duty to see every member of their packs safe and whole, and an abortion feels like a failure. Many Uratha are understanding of whatever circumstances drive the mother to abort the pregnancy and lend their support.

Methods that work for humans work equally well for werewolves, who usually have to visit mortal doctors if they want to take advantage of modern techniques. Aborting the child a werewolf carries sometimes causes difficulties afterward. Some mothers' bodies are unusually connected to the fetus in the womb, which is slightly more common after miscarriages. Though rare, this connection can result in the body trying to regenerate what, for a few months after the miscarriage, it thinks should be there: the baby. Over the next month, maybe two, the body tries to regrow *something* in the womb. Of course, this recreation is a failure and is eventually evacuated during the next menstrual cycle. There is no danger in this attempt at regeneration beyond the recurring, painful reminder of a lost child. Young werewolves sometimes tell each other horror stories about a monster being birthed in such a

fashion, but such tales are not typically told in polite company, and especially not among women who have suffered such a tragedy. Werewolf-sired children carried by human women have no innate supernatural nature, and thus have no special resistance to abortion or any disturbing potential side effects. As noted below, Ghost Child conceptions cannot be aborted.

THE BLACK BIRTH

Unlike natural pregnancies, no instinct suddenly appears to prevent the werewolf from taking unsafe forms when one of the Uratha has conceived a Ghost Child. Her first warning will be when she fails to menstruate; werewolves using hormonal contraceptives may not notice until the morning sickness begins. Regardless, the condition is recognizable as the forerunner of a black birth. Those who know how to interpret the signs of a normal pregnancy are most likely to realize the truth, given that most of those signs are absent.

Unihar fetuses cannot be aborted. Physical methods will not touch the creature's spirit flesh, and hormonal alterations deadly to a natural child have no effect. In fact, something in the mother's body more strongly corrects for the presence of those extra hormones, protecting the Ghost Child against dangerous fluctuations. Some of the Forsaken take this as an indication that the Ghost Child is meant to be born: it is a punishment laid upon the mother and father for their transgression, and cannot be escaped. Even the last resort of cutting the living womb from the mother's body cannot stop the fetus' development. When the womb regenerates, it will again be host to the growing *unihar*. If the operation is undertaken in the days before the expected birth, in hopes that there will be nothing from which the Ghost Child can spring, the spirit is born prematurely, weak but well enough to run to the edges of the spirit world and grow strong. In addition, there no rites that can destroy the spiritual fetus, though some of the Forsaken continue to search for them.

The effectiveness of these methods are not all generally known, but one of the tribe storytellers should know enough to warn against such attempts at removing the Ghost Child. Only the premature death of the mother will kill the unnatural child early. Most Uratha consider such an "escape" cowardly — living with the shame is a more appropriate punishment for breaking the Oath than death.

Werewolves bearing Ghost Children should *not* travel into the spirit world. Even at conception, the *unihar* is a spirit of notable influence and has a considerable negative presence. The sheer hate of the creature within the mother's womb can warp the spirit landscape into something ugly, hurtful and dangerous. The creature's presence calls like-minded spirits to it from across the *Hisil*. Such is the Ghost Child's hatred of its mother that its own death is acceptable in the event that its mother also perishes. Entering the spirit world while carrying a Ghost Child is dangerous for all werewolves, but some have duties that re-

quire they go. These werewolves are in for a difficult nine months, and tribe elders and pack alphas are not likely to look well on a request for change of duty or additional aid when carrying a Ghost Child is the reason. Moreover, it is impossible to hide what sort of child is due when traveling in the Shadow Realm. Unless one's packmates don't know even a modicum of lore, they will recognize the signs.

AGING

Gavin Holmes stopped at the door as he finished reading the files. This woman was found outside the bank when the robbers were making their getaway, and, though they were waving pistols around, she hadn't moved or even appeared scared. Apparently, her answers hadn't satisfied the officers on the scene, so they'd brought her down here. And Sgt. Greer hadn't gotten anything out of her, so now it was Gavin's turn. The woman had agreed to a polygraph. He smiled. A polygraph was usually enough to scare the truth out of people. He looked at the copy of her driver's license in his file: she had straight, dirty-blond hair and looked tired. He thought she might look better if she just smiled. He opened the door and went in.

"Hello there, Sara. My name is Detective Holmes. Are you aware that this discussion is going to be recorded?" She nodded. "And you know that the polygraph is designed to detect whether you're lying or telling the truth?" She nodded again. "All right, then. We're going to start with a couple of easy questions to calibrate the machine. I'm going to ask you to answer verbally, okay? Good. First question: is your name Sara Daniels?"

"Yes."

Gavin blinked. He turned to the polygraph operator. "John?"

"It looks good, sir."

"Okay," Gavin said. "Is your name George Washington?"

"No."

"John?"

"Right answer."

"Sara, I want you to answer my next question with a lie. Can you do that?"

"No."

"Goddamn — "

"The machine says it's a lie, Gavin." The corner of the woman's mouth quirked upwards, for just a second. Gavin thought he might be imagining it.

"Answer yes to this question: are you a man?"

"Yes."

"John?"

"A lie."

"Okay, good. Moving on. How old are you?"

"Seventy-two."

"What? John?" He turned to the operator.

"It looks like she's telling the truth."

"Shit," said John. "Let's try it again. Sara, how old are you?"

"Seventy-two."

"What? Unhook her, John, she's clearly — "

"She's telling the truth, sir."

"Then she's beaten the polygraph — "

"I've never been on one of these before in my life," the suspect said.

Gavin took a deep breath. Then another. The captain wanted him to get something useful out of this woman, because the bank robbery was a high-priority case. Lots of people wanted a lead here, especially lots of rich people, and, from what Gavin knew, the police didn't have much more than her.

"Look, Sara," Gavin took out his copy of her license. "Is that you?"

"Yes."

"What does the date say, right there?"

"Oh-two, oh-nine, sixty-three."

"And that means you're forty-one years old."

"I'm seventy-two."

"Gavin? It's — "

"I know what it is. Get her off this machine. It's broken, or she broke it."

The People's regenerative ability does more than repair the cuts and scrapes they seem to get all too often. It also efficiently cleanses their bodies of arterial plaque, maintains bone density and prevents arthritis, among other things. Their bodies defy the difficulties of aging, remaining healthy and strong long past the point where mortals begin to slow and sag. This also affords the Uratha long lifespans. Age rarely has any effect on a werewolf until she reaches 90 or 100, and she tends to look no more than half her advanced age. The oldest known werewolves reached their 110s before they died, and they didn't die in bed.

Despite these records, the Forsaken still feel many of the effects of age that plague mortals — *eventually*. The Forsaken's reflexes begin to slow and their senses dull, even those of their keenest-nosed forms. Metabolisms slow — not a problem for those werewolves with active lifestyles (who no doubt often wished that they could get away with eating less or less often) but sometimes an issue for the more sedate Uratha. At the same time, regeneration slows to one lethal wound every 20 minutes; the regeneration of other injuries increases proportionally. These changes can be seen in werewolves as young as 80, but only among those who eschew the healthy, active lifestyles common to the Uratha and some few who have unfortunate genetics. More commonly, werewolves begin to feel the effects of their age some time after the age of 95.

Age is visible in all the werewolf's forms: the Hishu and Dalu forms grey and wrinkle in the same places, though wrinkles are harder to see in the latter. The Dalu form's extra body hair greys in a manner similar to that of a very hairy older human. The Urhan and Urshul forms grey, but this may be hard to discern, depending on the wolf form's natural coloration. Fur becomes coarser and thins somewhat, especially near the muzzle. Teeth may

chip and yellow. The Gauru form exhibits a mix of all these characteristics. Just as a human can look at another and guess at his age, the People are able to estimate age from a look.

Becoming a werewolf doesn't reverse the effects of mortal aging or change the way a werewolf looks. A werewolf who experiences the First Change at age 18 doesn't suddenly look nine. One who experiences it at age 60 neither appears 30 nor regains mobility lost to aging joints. The aid that regeneration lends to aging doesn't go back and purge the body of problems; regeneration helps prevent the problems from occurring in the first place. Similarly, every year experienced as a mortal counts as a full year experienced as a werewolf. The first werewolf has anywhere from 80 to 100 years ahead of her. The second might have 40, if he's lucky.

High Primal Urge seems to further retard aging. As a werewolf begins to hold more Essence in his body, becoming more a primal thing of spirit, his flesh is more effectively preserved. Some of the People even say that the real, true werewolves never die of old age. Legends persist of hidden caves where primal monsters have slumbered for centuries, even millennia — ancestors who never succumbed to old age, but who have instead fallen into hibernation, waiting for the right time to wake and hunt again.

The Uratha's slow aging is another reason that werewolves are inevitably forced to leave the society into which they were born. Just as regeneration can set them apart and raise uncomfortable questions, it is difficult to attend a 30-year high school reunion and still appear to be in one's mid-20s. Iron Masters thank whatever deities they choose that plastic surgery and age-defying medications are becoming popular and effective enough to let the Forsaken remain in the public eye longer without betraying their true natures. The Forsaken only have to pretend to be vain.

AGE AND CHILDREN

One benefit of such a long life is the ability to watch one's children grow up and, should any undergo the First Change, be there for them after the event. Many elder Uratha take great pleasure when they see their progeny join the same tribe or lodge that they once did. Some also take advantage of their great lifespans to play the part of patron to the people that are their blood. For those wolf-blooded families that know something of their ancestry, a patron may be able to appear to as many as three or four different generations while maintaining the mystery of the People.

A less pleasant effect of aging, which even werewolves cannot escape, is menopause. The women of the People go through this transformation within a few years of turning 90. On top of the well-known hot flashes and cold flashes, the passionate Uratha suffer more intense mood swings than mortals do. To a human psychologist, a werewolf undergoing menopause might resemble someone who is bipolar, cycling from mania to depression, but unbeliev-

ably quickly — over the course of weeks, if not days. The Uratha experience another effect, unique to the People: the werewolf's dual nature acts strangely, and, at random times, she is struck with vision into the local Shadow Realm, as if she had activated Two-World Eyes (see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 104). If she possesses that Gift, she quickly learns that it does not always function when activated, though it usually does. The effects of menopause tend to even out over the course of a year or so, but do not fully go away for two or three. Some Uratha continue to suffer its effects well into their 100s. After menopause, female Uratha are no longer able to bear children.

Post-menopausal Uratha lose the instinct to mate and bear children. That instinct does not simply fade away; it replaces itself with a drive more abstract but no less real. The most common replacement instinct is for the woman to protect her progeny or, failing that, her extended family and tribe. Werewolves without significant bonds to their relatives or tribes devote themselves further to another ideal: their lodges or their duties, or something more abstract, such as transforming the overall tone and emotion of the *Hisil* or eliminating the Pure Tribes. Whatever the Uratha's additional focus, she seems to have an unlimited amount of energy and patience and boundless strength when something gets in her way. Add one die to *all* rolls dealing specifically with accomplishing the werewolf's new devotion.

As unfair a phenomenon to the Uratha as it is to mortals, menopause and transformation are not suffered by men. Men never cease being able to sire children.

ONE MIND, MANY BODIES — SHAPESHIFTING

The People carry with them all of their forms at all times. When the People are wearing one shape, the other forms lie within them in essence, flesh and bone translated into spirit as a werewolf's body is when he steps sideways into the Shadow Realm. Within his aura, the werewolf contains the essence of all his forms, and he may draw that essence around him, when needed, turning the ephemeral spirit energy into a form that he wears. When a Forsaken dons another form, he shifts its energy out of his spirit and into his flesh. His greater spiritual being rides within him, like a spirit riding within a host, but much more tightly and elegantly connected. The larger the form he dons, the less he stores within him; to those who can see spiritual auras, the brightness of the aura varies in proportion to the amount and complexity of the werewolf's ephemeral mass. A werewolf's aura is dimmest in Gauru form, though at that point he is evident in other ways.

Visually, a portion of the first body, usually a patch of skin, a hand, a foot or the head, is replaced by the analogous part of the new body, and the change quickly spreads outward from there. The changes in flesh and, especially, bone can cause harmless cracks and snaps as bones thicken



or form completely new joints. Reflexive changes can make these changes alarmingly loud, though they generally aren't noticeable beyond of five or 10 feet. Which body part changes first isn't at all set — it depends on the manner in which the werewolf flexes the muscles that let him don the new form. Individual werewolves tend to “lead” with the same body part each time, because that's the way they learned to do it, but nothing about this aspect of the transformation is set in stone. If a change is reflexive, for whatever reason, the werewolf changes too quickly to see the details: one moment, a human, the next, a wolf.

The sensation that werewolves experience while changing forms is difficult to describe. It is something like a wave of those prickles that come just before and after a leg or arm “falls asleep” because there isn't enough blood flow to the area. The sensation ripples along the edge of transformation because, for just a moment, the body doesn't understand what information to send to the brain. As the shift progresses through the inside of the werewolf's body, the muscle and bone stretches or compacts; changing to a larger form often feels freeing, while shifting into a smaller form sometimes makes a werewolf feel cramped. When the change is reflexive, the feelings pass almost too quickly to notice. During the First Change, cubs often experience partial transformations because their intense, new instincts are driving them to use mental muscles they've never before practiced and are still struggling with; they don't completely take a new body before it begins slipping away or they begin to pull another one in its place. This technique is one quickly forgotten when the basic skill becomes stable; it is one of Mother Luna's Gifts to relearn.

Despite instincts and desires to the contrary, the easiest form for a werewolf to wear is still human. Additionally, the other four forms are all originally crafted from the burst of spiritual energy at the culmination of the werewolf's First Change; they gravitate ever-so-slightly toward the Shadow Realm. A negligible but present effort to remain in any other form is required, which is why a dead or unconscious werewolf becomes human again — whatever other form he wore falls back into the *Hisil*. Some Uratha believe that if the human form is long-ignored, it will become attuned to the spirit and whatever form replaces it will become the default; the People who spend most of their time in wolf form return conflicting reports on the matter.

THE LODGE OF LUNA'S DEVOTEES (ANY)

More commonly referred to as the Lodge of Forms, this Lodge is a loose-knit group of werewolves united by their common interest in seeking the ability to don additional forms. These werewolves use many different methods: some search for new uses for Mother Luna's Gifts, some spend their entire lives trying to worm and

wheelde a new Gift for shapeshifting out of the Lunar Choirs and others inspect the pocket in the *Hisil* where a werewolf's other forms wait, trying to add forms to that spiritual storage.

The Lodge of Luna's Devotees claims as its spirit totem, of all spirits, Luna. Few werewolves, even members, take this claim seriously because there is no record of any lodge interaction with the Celestine, let alone of any guidance. Still, as the face-changer, the lodge's members give her extra reverence under the theory that every little bit helps.

The Lodge of Forms has little influence over its members' actions, but it does try to hold them to a couple of basic principles: never let the search for forms interfere with one's duties, and share what is learned about achieving additional forms with others. The members who treat the matter with the most gravity are constantly worried that someone will make a breakthrough and suffer some horrible fate before the information can be shared.

Prerequisites: Cunning •, the desire to seek other forms

Membership: The Lodge of Forms is limited neither by tribe nor by auspice, but Irraka and Ithaeur dominate its ranks as the werewolves who most often interest themselves in this matter. There are hundreds of members worldwide, but most are simple "tinkerers" with the forms and do not consider their membership seriously, or often. Other lodges do not consider it a betrayal of loyalty to be a member of the Lodge of Forms, since membership is often announced by the lodge rather than sought by the member. Similarly, the elders of the Lodge of Forms do not hold periphery members to a strict standard of sharing information; only someone dedicated to the idea of additional forms is expected to belong only to this lodge. The core group of werewolves extends membership to everyone with a moderate amount of interest in the topic to ensure that no potential breakthrough is lost.

Benefits: The peripheral members of the Lodge of Luna's Devotees gain nothing — yet another reason for outsiders to look upon the lodge with scorn. Yet the devoted members do gain a little something from their shared knowledge. Each member gains a specialty relevant to her search for additional forms. If she treats her examination of the shadow-pocket as a science, she gains a specialty for that skill. If she treats her examination as an examination of the occult, she gains the specialty there. The specialty can apply outside finding more forms, depending on how the werewolf seeks them, but only rarely.

Although the werewolf's shapes are five different bodies, they are bound together by one spirit. The four shapes that are stored in spirit form are susceptible to changes made to the currently active body. The primary evidence for this is the transference of wounds. Injury done to one body carries over to every other; a bullet hole in one is a bullet hole in another. Every werewolf is intimately familiar with this principle and practiced in judging the state of her health, a necessary skill to avoid changing from Urshul to Hishu and passing out. Correspondingly, the effects of regeneration or natural healing are transferred, as are the discolorations caused by wounds from silver — mortals seeing a human and a wolf with analogous cuts and burn scars is a feasible point of concern for the People. Long-term injuries also carry over. A werewolf with a bum leg will limp as a human or a wolf. A werewolf missing a thumb will have a pad missing from one of his forepaws. All forms age at the same rate, regardless of how often they see use, and all suffer the effects of age identically. A werewolf who has slowed with age will be equally slow in all forms, and all forms display weakened vision if one does.

Objects foreign to the werewolf's body remain in the physical world, unless they are bound by the Rite of Dedication, in which case they either alter size to fit the new shape or are treated as a part of the flesh, translated into a spiritual equivalent and stored in the werewolf's aura. Items implanted or embedded in the werewolf's flesh remain in the physical world, but the new shape forms around them. In most cases, such things end up occupying the same place in the new body, but the radical changes in body type that the People undergo sometimes cause mishaps. For example, the image displayed by a tattoo in human form may look somewhat different if seen in the near-human form. If one were to shave the wolf form, it would be greatly distorted. Tattoo fetishes are an exception; they look however they are intended to look in each form and work appropriately. Piercings, like scars and wounds, are transferred between forms, but the studs and earrings put through the piercings may not survive the shapeshifting. Depending on the individual's manner of donning forms — the way in which he *pulls* at the new form — piercing jewelry may remain in all shapes or be "popped off" by the transformation. Chemicals from medications and other drugs in the werewolf's system remain in the werewolf's system, translated effectively from one bloodstream to another. How the chemicals are treated in the new form varies. Chemicals natural to the werewolf's body disappear with that body; the new body does not have to contend with hormones natural to another species in its bloodstream.

Items inside the werewolf's stomach when he changes form merit special consideration. If the stomach of the new form is larger than that of the old form, everything in the stomach remains in the physical world. Transformations from Hishu to Dalu or Urshul pose no difficulty; changing from Urshul to Hishu might, especially if the near-wolf has just had a full meal. If a larger form's stomach is full and the

werewolf changes to a smaller form, the smaller form will end up being full of the same dinner, and any excess food is transformed into internalized spiritstuff with the other form. As soon as a larger form is called back, the excess food comes with it, though food “stored” via shapeshifting disappears rather quickly; after a day or so of stasis, the food is likely to be almost completely gone. This effect only applies to comestibles; any object not recognized by the body as food (such status requires that the body be currently gaining some form of nourishment from the item) will not be translated into the spirit world. Non-comestibles remain physical and in the werewolf’s belly. For reference, this means that a werewolf cannot become a perfect smuggling machine by consuming something valuable and restricted, then changing into the human form and absorbing the object along with the excess mass. Really, werewolves who want to smuggle should be able to find a better way than that. Still, that doesn’t stop some young werewolves from trying it, nor does it stop some of them from hiding so much non-comestible in a large stomach that changing to a smaller stomach does them an injury.

CONSERVATION OF WHAT?

In a world in which a person can disappear from the physical plane without releasing an apocalypse-worth of pure energy, the law of conservation of mass is obviously suspect. It remains valid in situations in which magic and the supernatural are not involved, but scientists are going to have harder times deducing the truth when they get too close to a werewolf or a mage. If a werewolf stepping to or from the *Hisil* isn’t destroying or creating matter, then there might well be a conservation law that includes both sides of the Gauntlet. Of course, figuring out what *passes* for mass there, in a world in which intent and thought can be more important than action, would be a necessary first step in developing such a law. Thus far, the Uratha have not taken enough of an interest in the matter to expend much effort investigating it and have prevented any mortals so inclined from doing so.

DIFFERENT SHAPE, DIFFERENT PURPOSE

Certain forms are better suited to certain tasks. The First Change may sharpen the human form’s senses to some degree, but this form can’t compare to the abilities of a werewolf in her other, more lupine forms. The Hishu form is similarly deficient when it comes to expressing itself in the ancient First Tongue. Different forms also cause different instincts to take hold in the werewolf.

HUMAN

Small ears, small nose. Hishu form is, as the People measure, nearly deaf and *naestu* — a First Tongue word that describes a condition wherein one cannot smell or taste.

The human mouth is too round to give the First Tongue its proper inflections, the vocal cords cannot produce sounds deep enough (not that the human ears can hear them) and the throat is too short to give the language the right amount of reverberation. Still, the human form can speak enough of an approximation of the language to get the point across.

In this form, the primary instincts influence the werewolf to alter forms as necessary. The instincts provides urges to don the Urhan form when there is an interesting but weak scent in the air or to change to Urshul when threatened.

The human form is most useful as a disguise and as a tool for acclimatizing cubs to the facts of their natures — youths fresh from their First Changes need time to grow comfortable with what they have become. The human form is also used for those times when it is necessary to communicate at a level above the simple concepts that “wolf-speak” gets across. Technically, werewolves can exchange ideas as effectively, with as much innuendo and connotation in Dalu form, but many prefer Hishu simply out of familiarity. In regions where the People are relatively safe from humanity, the only other reason to wear Hishu is as the proper form for bearing young.

NEAR-HUMAN

In Dalu form, the ears elongate approximately an inch upward and grow more concave to better channel sound, and the eardrums become more sensitive. The ear canal also widens, changing to amplify sounds across a wider range of pitches; a werewolf in this form can hear dog whistles. The top of the nose lowers slightly and becomes harder to separate from the upper lip, and the nose itself gains three or four inches in length and around two in width. The nasal passages increase significantly in volume, dramatically increasing the werewolf’s sensitivity to odors. Also, the vomeronasal organ increases slightly in size, making the werewolf more responsive to both wolf and human pheromones. The lowering nose accommodates the eyes, which increase in dimension by about 25%. The pupils grow correspondingly larger. This provides a very small amount of increased visual perception, not nearly as drastic a change as the olfactory and auditory increases. The larger pupils also make the near-human form proportionally more sensitive to light and easier to blind; though the werewolf’s regenerative abilities will prevent bright light from causing any lasting harm, loss of sight can be a deadly weakness. The irises also grow and gain a slight gold tint, and the whites of the eyes become somewhat darker. The body hair present in this form is similar to the hair color of the werewolf’s human form, not the wolf form.



The werewolf's arms gain between two and four inches in length. Fingertips elongate an almost unnoticeable amount. More importantly, the keratin of the nails themselves thickens noticeably, making them harder to break. This doesn't allow them to do lethal damage, but an open-handed slap can drag cruel furrows down a person's cheek. The nails of the toes change similarly.

The Dalu form is somewhat more proficient at speaking the First Tongue, though still imperfect, and the ears can hear all the ranges used in the ancient language. This form also introduces new problems for communication: the near-human's false vocal cords cannot help but vibrate somewhat when the werewolf tries to say something using the true vocal cords, introducing an unmistakable growl to anything she tries to say. With a successful Manipulation + Expression roll, this growl can be passed off (to mortals) as a very husky voice, something caused by an illness or the influence of a foreign upbringing.

The werewolf's instincts, already strong, grow stronger. She is more likely to take a direct approach to solving a problem, making use of her increased strength. She also becomes more reactive to her senses, mostly because her smell and hearing are so greatly improved. This *might* cause the werewolf to strike out at the sound of a footstep behind her or eat without regard for the consequences when presented with a fragrant meal, but only if she is already leaning in that direction. The temptations only become more tempting, not controlling. Food-related instincts are similar to those of a human-form werewolf; that is, the werewolf still does not desire overly aged meat or purely raw food.

If, for whatever reason, a werewolf chooses not to wear the human form at all, Dalu form is the necessary choice for communicating complex ideas or messages. This form is also the obvious choice for inflicting serious damage (or surviving serious injury) while remaining a hominid but avoiding the dangers and collateral damage of Gauru.

WOLF-HUMAN

In Gauru form, the ears gain another three or four inches in length beyond those of the Dalu form, but the inner ear does not change; this increases auditory sensitivity only slightly. The ears, unlike those of wolves, face only forward. The nose merges completely with the mouth and grows to form a snout equal in length to that of the near-wolf form, creating the war form's vicious jaws combined with a more sensitive nose. The throat becomes broader and makes a much smoother transition from the chin (now a part of the muzzle) to the chest, which grows larger to accommodate a reinforced ribcage. The werewolf's eyes do not grow (and visual acuity does not increase significantly), but the eyes are more sensitive to motion and less sensitive to stationary objects, to a greater degree than that of the wolf form. This makes it easier for a werewolf in Gauru form to be aware of events and aspects of combat, at the expense of other vision. In this form, the eyes of the werewolf

have an unmistakably bestial aspect, not to mention the Rage visible deep within. The vomeronasal organ is fully developed at this point, and provides a very useful reference: enemies and “friendlies” emit very different pheromones, making it easier for the werewolf to instantly tell friend from foe in the heat of battle. The fully developed vomeronasal organ also makes it more difficult to trick the werewolf with regards to one’s loyalty — which means that if one is hiding ulterior motives, it is a good idea not to be nearby a dupe in Gauru form. “Betrayal pheromones” can sometimes be hidden among the scents of other, more obvious enemies, but it is a risky proposition. The wolf-human form is not used as a means of testing loyalty because of the dangers and lack of control associated with it, and because those particular scents are rarely emitted except during the vigor of combat.

Usually, at least half of the height gained entering Gauru form is from the elongation of the legs. This is also the form in which the legs make the transition from plantigrade to digitigrade. The war form takes advantage of the longer, digitigrade legs to move both more quickly — the war form makes it almost impossible to do anything but run — and more quietly. The werewolf’s arms grow several inches, as do the length of the fingers, providing a reach advantage over other (unarmed) opponents. The “fingernails” become full claws at this point, with uniquely overgrown nail beds to prevent the nails from tearing out when used in battle. The werewolf gains equally strong claws on her paw-like feet, preventing her from slipping when pushing off to leap into battle, even on rain-soaked pavement. In this form, the werewolf’s metabolism increases several times in speed. This change cannot be laid at the feet of a physical change, and some interested Uratha claim that Rage forces the metabolic processes into overdrive. This increased metabolism has the dual effect of reducing the lifetimes of drugs in the body and causing the werewolf to be hungry when the rigors of Rage force him out of Gauru.

The vocal cords in this form can cross the entire range of pitches necessary to fluently speak the First Tongue, and the throat and mouth in Gauru are the perfect shapes to properly inflect and enunciate the First Tongue; unfortunately, werewolves are rarely in a position to make use of this advantage. Savants among the People can only hypothesize that this was the preferred form before their downfall. The werewolf speaks human tongues with pronounced growls and guttural additions, but well enough to be understood.

A werewolf in Gauru form is ruled by instinct. She feels irresistible urges that govern her actions, causing her to take the most immediate and direct solutions to any problem that presents itself. An enemy is to be destroyed with application of force, a stuck door is to be destroyed with application of force, an unsalvageable game of chess is to be destroyed with application of force, a bad movie... When she smells a familiar scent, she moves to hurt it if

it’s a recognized enemy, or ignore it otherwise. A sound that *might* be suspicious or dangerous elicits a deadly reaction. If an ally whose motives are suspect changes to a more dangerous form — especially Gauru — he probably becomes an immediate candidate for attack. The most powerful instinct of this form is one instilled in the People’s spirits, commonly called Rage, which forces the werewolf to exert herself to her fullest extent. Rage gives her strength and speed born of perfect desperation, and affects her other instincts somewhat — but it is also extraordinarily draining. When the werewolf no longer has the energy to maintain this exertion, incontrovertible instinct drives her to revert to another form. Werewolves *can* exert some control in Gauru form, but the control is very little and very difficult. When in a werewolf is in this form, *everything* looks like food; werewolves spend a great deal of effort preventing themselves from devouring human-, wolf- or werewolf-flesh while in this form. Some werewolves take the wise precaution of ensuring that they are reasonably well-fed.

Clearly, the human-wolf form is chosen only when the direct approach is desirable, and one believes the risks and collateral damage are worth the results. Or, as the Forsaken know too well, when taken by *Kuruth*.

NEAR-WOLF

Urshul form completes the transition from human to wolf. In most respects, Urshul form is the same as the Urhan form, just bigger. The muzzle is outsized and dominated by teeth, reducing the volume available for the nasal passages. The ears are actually somewhat smaller than those of the wolf form — or at least not as greatly enlarged as the rest of its body — and end up being no more acute than those of Gauru form. To a very limited degree (something like a 10-degree arc), they can point themselves toward important sounds. The eyes are somewhat larger than those of the wolf form, but afford little advantage. Urshul is the first form in which the eyes are fully lupine, including the tapetum lucidum. The vomeronasal organ is somewhat larger, and consequently more sensitive, in this form than it is in the wolf form. Werewolves in this form are better able to pick out the scents that make up a large part of wolves’ communication even while the werewolves are less able to express themselves through the scents.

The near-wolf form’s legs are outlandishly muscled, especially the hind, giving Urshul the edge it needs to dash at incredible speeds and the stamina necessary to continue the chase for hours. The neck muscles are similarly large, providing the strength to rip flesh from hamstrings and throats. The collar bones, ribs and spine are reinforced in order to give the leverage necessary for tearing with the mouth and for a small amount of additional protection. The claws, like those of Gauru form, are perfectly suited for giving good purchase in nearly any terrain.

Communication is difficult in the near-wolf form. It cannot speak human languages at all, and its ability to use the First Tongue is about as limited as that of the near-

human form, though differently impaired. The near-wolf cannot form the words well enough to let them be affected by the properly shaped throat and mouth cavity, but the near-wolf form can clearly understand the language. Urshul form is similarly crippled when communicating with other wolves. Only those wolves who are exceedingly familiar can make more than basic sense of the form's awkward scents and posturing. Real wolves can become this familiar with a werewolf, but strange wolves, already intimidated by the form, would be severely confused if a werewolf in Urshul tried to communicate with them.

Instincts are strong in the Urshul form. They carry the same feelings of direct resolution and immediate confrontation as those of the near-human form, but the urges are more powerful. A werewolf in Urshul form is likely to openly growl and snap at those she perceives as enemies, and she feels territorial disputes incredibly keenly. Part of the reason that the Urshul form is poor at communicating with other wolves is because the form's instincts are devoted to very specific ideas, like combat; the form lacks the reflexive gestures available in the wolf form. Still, a werewolf with a great deal of experience communicating with a pack in Urhan form can, with effort, consciously carry these motions over and make her intentions clearer — but only to a point. The near-wolf desires the same foods as the wolf: meat, preferably still bleeding and hot from the chase.

The near-human is still a form for hiding and for deliberation, but the near-wolf is a form worn to resolve physical conflict quickly and in the open. The near-wolf form is also of good use during the hunt; though Urhan form is a better tracker, Urshul form has the speed advantage when it is time to run the prey into the ground.

WOLF

Werewolves' Urhan forms reflect their human forms: bulky, strong Uratha warriors will be big specimens whatever species they wear, and small, slim humans will be wolves of similarly slight build. Meant to blend in, a werewolf's Urhan form comes from the fauna local to where she was born. In an area without wolves, prominent local canids replace the wolf as the Urhan form. The form is always a wild beast, never domesticated. This does not mean that a werewolf's Urhan form changes as she travels from one location to another. Instead, the species of her Urhan form is dictated by the fauna local to the biological home of her mortal parent — whatever place shaped the majority of the person's heritage is present in the parent's germ cells and determines the child's (potential) wolf form.

The Urhan form is the pinnacle of the People's awareness. The ears are huge, sensitive and have the capability to swivel around a limited arc, improving their ability to capture sound from multiple directions. The nose is one of the most sensitive known to humankind. And, unlike the Urshul form, the teeth are a believable size, while so much of the muzzle's volume is devoted to giving the wolf form

its incredible sense of smell. The vomeronasal organ and scent glands are fully developed, allowing the werewolf to convey and interpret the full range of lupine pheromonal messages, unlike the near-wolf's inability to express itself through scent. Only the sense of sight is less sensitive than that of the human counterpart, though still better at night. Wolves see distinctly less well than humans and detect mobile objects better than stationary, but the tapetum lucidum, a natural mirror in the back of the eye, allows the wolves to catch more light. As long as there is a faint source of light, a wolf at night can see the world as if it were dusk.

Use of the First Tongue is limited by the vocal cords. It takes concentration to abuse them in order to form the words of that ancient language. Communication with other wolves is natural, if the werewolf can keep her higher consciousness out of the way. The wolf has a full complement of scents for giving and leaving messages, including demarcation of territorial boundaries the "natural" way.

Urhan instincts are many and varied, but they are not overpowering, as in Gauru form, or even as influential as in the near-human and near-wolf forms. The instincts are all there, but the werewolf maintains her purely conscious control of the body without effort. The difficulty is, instead, submerging one's conscious mind beneath the instincts in order to let them do their job. Instincts include the impulse and ability to track and pursue prey, the ability to communicate with other wolves and several natural urges that enable her to survive in the wild with minimal effort.

It is this form that the werewolf uses to communicate with wolves, which many Forsaken consider pleasant and relaxing, not to mention occasionally useful. The wolf form is also, like the human form, a near-perfect disguise, though out of place in the company of humans. And while Urshul form may have the speed and the chase, Urhan form is truly unsurpassed when it comes to the senses of smell and hearing, making it the form of choice for long-term tracking. The Uratha can engage in intercourse in the wolf form, but do not enter heat as bitches do and cannot become pregnant from or impregnate wolves. This is an admitted weakness of the disguise, but one that can only be proven after several months of observation. In order to attract a wolf of the opposite sex, a werewolf must consciously choose to emit the proper seasonal pheromones. A female werewolf does not menstruate in wolf form. When she returns to human form, the menstrual cycle resumes from the point at which it was left. A female werewolf may avoid the cycle entirely by remaining in wolf form or near-wolf form indefinitely, but doing so disrupts her Harmony.

PARTIAL TRANSFORMATIONS

When a werewolf first mastered the technique necessary to bring only *part* of a form out from within (see "Partial Change," in **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 128), it

raised additional questions about the nature of the Uratha and their connections with different bodies. Though a body partially in use is still connected, in essence, to the rest of the same body currently in the *Hisil*, in the physical realm the body is (functionally) connected to whatever other body the werewolf is using. Blood and hormones from one body get into the other body; they are usually successfully dealt with, but there are occasional mishaps that result in minor fevers and slight inflammation, usually less, never more.

Partial transformation has some innate limits. Most reflect the usefulness of the transformation, but some are in place to prevent catastrophe. For example, changing a human hand to the war form claw is useful for combat but doesn't transfer any of the great strength contained in the Gauru's arm. Were the werewolf to transform his entire arm, however, he would lack the height and the leverage to wield that arm and strength effectively; he would also run the risk of tearing the muscles out of his less-developed back when he tried, since upper arm strength depends in part on the deltoids. He could, however, give himself a crushing grip by changing just his hand and forearm, since that requires little additional leverage. A werewolf who needs speed but must remain humanoid could transform his legs into the powerful tools for striding and jumping that are the legs of the Gauru form. He would never take the legs of the near-wolf, the fastest form, because they cannot fit a human shape. He *could* take those legs in Urhan form; they would unbalance the form somewhat, but they connect properly and could provide exceptional leaps.

When taking on a different hand for claws or for grasping strength, the Gauru form is the obvious choice. A werewolf who needs a different nose in order to track should clearly choose the muzzle of his wolf-form. A need for speed in the human form demands the legs of the Gauru, with the strength and structure that would put an Olympic sprinter to shame. Unlike when the werewolf changes to Gauru form in full, a partial transformation that does not include the head does not trigger Rage and can be maintained indefinitely.

Serious difficulties in partial changes occur in two ways: instinctual and hormonal. Both of these end up centering around the brain. Any time the brain does not match the main abdomen, trouble begins to mount. The brain depends on different types of signals to properly function and govern the body. One type are the neural signals carried at high speeds by the bodies' nerves. These connect reasonably well between different forms, which is necessary to control the movement of that Dalu claw or interpret the signals being sent by the too-large muzzle

on one's face. Also important to the brain are hormonal signals generated throughout the body, especially across the abdomen. These signals travel more slowly. When the head does not match the body, the brain begins to receive the wrong signals after a short while, on the order of 10 to 15 minutes, and reacts poorly. The body begins to experience curious sensations: odd hunger pangs, a rush of adrenaline at the strangest times, the feeling of soreness in muscles that don't currently exist and headaches ranging in severity from mild to splitting. If the werewolf does not return to wearing the appropriate head for the body after approximately double this time, he can fall into a coma. When this happens, of course, he returns to full human form, and the problem begins to correct itself.

The form of the head and brain also determines which set of instincts is active. Apart from all the instincts mentioned above, more subtle, basic instincts take what the werewolf wants to do — walking, manipulating objects or other physical tasks — and contract or expand the proper muscles and redistribute weight in the most effective manner. When the instincts don't match the body, the werewolf executes his actions less smoothly, with a difficulty imposed by the body receiving signals from the head that don't quite make sense. In such a situation, all the werewolf's actions suffer a -2 penalty. Small changes, like a human body and mind controlling a near-human hand and forearm, aren't affected enough to impinge on their use. The more noticeable instincts are also in force: a werewolf in Hishu form but wearing the Dalu form's head is likely to take a more direct approach to problems. A werewolf who dons the head of the Gauru form suffers the onset of Rage and related instincts. He gains one point of increased Strength as Rage redlines his body and ignores wound penalties, but he also gains all related penalties: -3 to all Manipulation rolls, a Resolve + Composure roll in order to take any non-violent action and all others. He is also at a -3 to resist Death Rage. If *Kuruth* takes him, he immediately dons the full Gauru form.

Partial transformation of the head also brings with it the dietary instincts of the head's form. A human head on a wolf body will want to eat rare steak and a smattering of starches or vegetables. The wolf head on a human body will want to eat raw meat fresh from a kill. This is only a concern because werewolves who give into hunger while partially transformed may find their gastrointestinal processes disagreeing with their culinary choices and giving the food back, unpleasant in any situation.

A partial transformation does not obviate the need to shapeshift at least once every three days in order to satisfy the werewolf hierarchy of sins.



CHAPTER II

SHEEP'S CLOTHING

"It's time to go, Daniel."

"What? Oh, something up? Is it the old bridge again? Them rats back? Umm . . . Carol won't be back for an hour or so, shouldn't leave Brian here alone."

The man peered into darkness beyond the trailer's front door as if he expected others to be following the woman.

She saw him looking, and she closed the door. The man looked puzzled. "I came alone. No, Daniel. It's time for you to leave here. I'd hoped you'd figure it out for yourself. But you haven't."

"You can't stay with them. The humans. You're gonna' fuck things up worse stayin', than going. So you are going to go. Tonight."

Daniel stood up, finally realizing what this was about and squared his jaw. "Listen, Lucy. We've had this talk already. I'm not leaving my kid. Not like my piece of shit dad."

His voice dropped an octave. "I'll follow your lead in a fight, I understand now, but I'm not...."

Luce felt his anger grow along with her own. She could keep hers a low boil. Dan wasn't as used to the heat. "Listen, we are talking. You don't want more than that, Dan. You Dalu on me, Daniel, and I wipe your redneck ass all over this trailer."

He glared at her for moment.

She held his gaze until he looked away and sat back down. "Have you hurt him yet? Squeezed a little too hard? They bruise easy."

"Brian? Fuck, no."

"Have you hit her?"

"None of your fucking business, Luce."

"I'll take that for a yes."

"That was before the Change, Luce. Only once, and not since. I swear."

She saw him look at holes in the wall. "But you've wanted to, Daniel. Taking it out on the trailer won't work for long. Listen, I know the pain, Daniel. And I won't lie to you. Some of us, some few of us, can stay with our families. But most can't. It ain't worth it. It ain't shameful. I couldn't. You can't either."

She crossed over to the couch and sat down, but away from him. "I've been there. I've had to fix an accidentally dislocated shoulder. I know what it is to see the love in the eyes of your child turn to fear. I've given up my own babies, man. I've watched my children's arms around other women's necks. I've seen men I've hungered for reach out to others in the night. I've howled out my pain. I've eaten it. It's bitter meat."

"It's not easier for us because we aren't human. It's harder – and they will never understand. We can smell the promise of life in a woman's belly. We can hear the heartbeats that match our own. We can see the fragile spirits of joy, of hope, that feed in the Shadow of a good home. We pay a price in both worlds."

"But, we also know the fuckers from this world and the other who want to tear us down and what we build. We see the world as it is."

"It's time you do, too."

...

An hour later an old Fiesta pulled up next to the trailer. Two monsters watched from the bank of rhododendron on the other side of the hill. The woman got out of the car and walked over to the door, unlocked it and went inside.

"Let's go," said Luce.

"No, a few more minutes."

The door opened up, and the woman came back out. In one hand she had the note; in the other was a flashlight.

Her voice was breaking "Dan! DAN!"

The flashlight played over the yard, down the road and frantically searched the hill across the road. Still, her weak human eyes could not see the two semi-bestial figures behind the blooming rhododendron. Dan and Luce had no trouble seeing her bright eyes, smelling her fear, seeing the signs of the rush of adrenaline in her veins.

"You bastard! You left Brian alone! Get the hell back here ... " She repeated her curses until her voice faded into sobs. After a while the baby started to cry again.

THERE IS A WOLF IN ME ... FANGS POINTED FOR TEARING GASPS...
A RED TONGUE FOR RAW MEAT ... AND THE HOT LAPPING OF BLOOD — I KEEP THIS WOLF BECAUSE
THE WILDERNESS GAVE IT TO ME AND THE WILDERNESS WILL NOT LET IT GO.
— CARL SANDBURG, "WILDERNESS"

CONFRONTING THE WOLF

Living in the world of man is complex and demanding for the Uratha. Caught between the realization that they are *other*, that childhood friends might turn into prey, and the knowledge that they are also still the children of humankind, products of society, and bound to it by vows and blood. Yet from the moment of the Change, the Uratha are never quite human again. As time moves on, it becomes harder and harder for them to relate to the static-formed, scent-blind creatures they once were. Yet most werewolves learn to at least pay lip service to the laws of humans in order to stay true to the oaths sworn to moon, tribe and pack.

THE ANCIENT LANGUAGE OF FEAR

Uratha are predators — and they pay a price for this heritage. Maybe there is some primal memory of the taste of human blood hiding under their tongue, on their breath. Perhaps there is a vision of a human hunt lurking behind their human-seeming eyes. Maybe it's something in the Uratha's smell, or the way they move around humans, an echo of a howl in their voice — something sends out a silent warning to humans that violence is always a possibility with Uratha, that they aren't *quite* human.

Fortunately for the day-to-day existence of werewolves, most humans are so ill-practiced at listening to this antique code, so locked into the tyranny of their frontal lobes, that they ignore the wolf in human skin next to them, at least consciously.

Subconsciously they still react. There is an earlier language, one of reflex, one spawned by the oldest parts of the human brain that becomes harder and harder for the Uratha to mask as they grow in power. Humans communicate this unease most often in nonverbal ways, even when they would never admit to their fears.

This unease, while ever-present, can be over-used. It isn't Lunacy — the unease has everything to do with the werewolves' predatory nature, not with their supernatural ties to the moon. A predatory spirit might inspire the same unease. In terms of strength, it is to Lunacy what a distant rumble is to a hurricane. Humans don't wet themselves whenever a werewolf in human skin walks into the room. There are Uratha who, despite this social handicap, have learned how to deal well enough with humans. Some werewolves even manage to become dynamic business leaders, accomplished bosses, good healthcare workers, competent psychologists or educators. Other Uratha have learned to turn this unsettling vibe to their advantage in the world of humans, becoming "wolves" in their business

practices or becoming societal wolves, preying on human foibles of lust and avarice for their own gain.

PLAYING ANTISOCIAL BASTARDS WITH ANGER MANAGEMENT ISSUES

As with so many stereotypes, there is a grain of truth in this generalization. It is the norm. Werewolves tend to come off poorly in social situations because the Uratha seem to have such a loose rein on their emotions — especially anger. Humans have no idea *what* the Uratha are holding back, nor know how tightly werewolves grip the reins.

While anger may be the most common face for this urge, that emotion masks a dreadful hunger. Uratha can't help the fact that in a moment of weakness, when the reins are loosened a bit, the werewolves can look at the people around them and think "food." Perhaps something ancient stirs in the brains of humans who catch that predatory stare, something that remembers being chased over a primordial plain. And, just as suddenly, it's over. The beast is back under control, and the human remnant of an Uratha's psyche is often flooded with horror, guilt and shame at its own unquenched desires.

Roleplaying a bunch of angry young men and women can get old fast. And it is certainly not the case that all Uratha have exactly the same demeanor. Of course, communicating this disadvantage "in game" when dealing with humans without falling into a rut can be difficult for the players.

A Storyteller should not expect players always to roleplay this vibe — shouting or growling at every cab driver or convenience store clerk becomes downright boring and does not accurately represent the fact that this predatory aura is as involuntary on the Uratha's part as is the reaction it engenders in humans (hence the game mechanics). So, even if the player is trying to be debonair and witty, the character may seem quite different to the humans he's trying to interact with.

Players, of course, should come to terms with the idea that a werewolf character can't really ever conquer this handicap, can't fix it with "magic" or game mechanics. He may be able to compensate enough to overcome this handicap, but he can't remove it. In many roleplaying games, a character always gets better in every way. That's not the case in Werewolf. As Primal Urge increases, the Uratha's ability to relate to humans decreases. Again, it's the price of being a monster.

One way to handle this is to think about *how* a particular character's personality flavors this aura. It does not

always have to come off as a lift of James Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause* or Vin Diesel's "Riddick". Perhaps the Rahu has a habit of appearing to normal humans as overly imposing? Maybe the pack's alpha tends to seem authoritarian or even patronizing to others. The Irraka may seem strangely cold and disconnected, looking at humans as if he were examining an interesting bug.

Naturally, one of the rewards of being a player is the entertainment value of building a character's personality, and this should be no different. A social disadvantage offers just as many interesting roleplaying possibilities as a social advantage would. Look at the character's background and draw inspiration from her tribe, auspice, Virtues and Vices. Coming up with a description of just how this particular werewolf's predatory aura manifests gives the Storyteller something extra to work with, and can lead to excellent roleplaying chemistry.

AD-LIBBING REACTIONS

Portraying the way humans react to the innate predatory vibe that Uratha cannot help but give off can become troublesome for a Storyteller as well. What he does not want to do is constantly repeat himself. "They look scared" gets old real quick. Here are a few quick-and-dirty suggestions to help stay out of that rut.

At the risk of becoming a mere thesaurus, here's a hodge-podge of *general* terms a Storyteller can use to describe the negative effects of Primal Urge on a human: afraid, aghast, antsy, apprehensive, anxious, basket case, bugged, clutched, concerned, disconcerted, disquieted, distressed, disturbed, dreading, fearful, fidgety, flustered, fretful, hacked, hyper, ill at ease, jittery, jumpy, nervous, overwrought, restless, shaky, shivery, shook up, spooked, strung out, sweating bullets, taut, tense, troubled, uneasy, unglued, unquiet, upset, uptight, watchful, wired, worried, worried sick or wrecked.

It also helps if the Storyteller has an arsenal of canned descriptions of nonverbal responses to the Primal Urge aura of the characters. To that end, here are some somewhat subtle ways to portray the unconscious reactions of humans to the unnerving and visceral presence of Uratha.

Note, too, that these aren't just for the Storyteller's use! These mannerisms can also spice up roleplaying even for werewolf characters, who themselves can feel socially uncomfortable — perhaps when off their own territory or confronted with a werewolf of superior status or obvious power.

- *Crossing arms:* While crossing one's arms behind the back is a symbol of power, crossing arms in front is defensive.
- *Exaggerated personal space:* A person may send signs that he or she wants to avoid contact or disengage by moving away from the Uratha and/or turning himself or herself at an angle, rather than facing the character head-on.
- *Facial coloring:* Those experiencing fear grow pale; those experiencing anger or embarrassment often flush red.

- *Facial cutoff:* Turning the face away to break eye contact because looking another in the eye can be a challenging, aggressive act. Glancing away is often a sign of being afraid by wishing to conceal the face or eyes from the aggressor. This reaction is most common in very young children.

- *Hand ticks:* Nervous persons often tap their fingers or fidget with something in their hands such as wringing their hands, tapping fingers, etc.

- *Increased blinking/narrowing the eyes:* When being startled or threatened, people often blink frequently or narrow their eyes.

- *Mouth gestures:* Children often pout as a sign of frustration at their powerlessness; adults often show "tense-mouth" when likewise angry or frustrated. Adults also tend to purse their lips as a sign of dissonance. Some persons confronting a moderately tense situation unconsciously yawn.

- *Palm-up gestures:* It is thought that hand gestures with fingers extended and palms up sometimes represent humility, pleading or uncertainty.

- *Shrugging:* Exaggerated shrugs communicate powerlessness or submission.

- *Squirming:* Shuffling positions is an easy way to communicate that the person is uncomfortable and lacks control in the situation.

- *Standing up:* Most persons' flight responses dictate that they would rather stand than sit in face of something dangerous. If feeling completely intimidated, the person may physically draw inward by sitting, lowering her head, etc.

- *Sweating:* Many people begin to sweat as part of a "flight or fight" response, sometimes producing sweat in the palms — causing them to wring their hands or wipe their palms on their clothes.

- *Throat-clearing:* Consciously done, this often is meant to interrupt or announce one's presence, but when done involuntarily communicates tension and possibly deception.

If the Storyteller mixes and matches between the two lists, he'll get a near-infinite variety of responses. It's not a bad idea to come up with a couple of these beforehand and have a few notes written on the side as reminders. Of course, many of these nonverbal responses can be acted out by the Storyteller at the table.

Let's say the Storyteller knows the pack is going to be hunting for a Ridden in the food court of the mall. He picks "flustered" and "watchful" from the general list and then picks a few specific behaviors for people to exhibit as the pack moves through the food court. He decides that one of the food court workers will clear his throat a lot if he is questioned by one of the players. Patrons will appear flustered by fiddling too much with their food. Perhaps a group of pre-teens will blush and giggle uncomfortably if the group gets too near them.



NONVERBAL INTIMIDATION

Werewolves tend to become very good at nonverbal coercion as they learn the ways of Uratha society and grow in Primal Urge. (A player may even want to take “nonverbal intimidation” as a specialty of the Intimidation skill.) In any case, the Storyteller should award a bonus to players who describe their body language when attempting to intimidate someone nonverbally (Presence + Intimidation). Players can get some ideas from the list above, but may also want to try these tricks. The basic idea here is to put the character in a dominant position without overt threats such as slamming a fist against a desk, throwing something or yelling.

- *Height:* Speaking and looking down on someone gives a subtle clue that one is superior to the other. You don’t have to be physically taller — you might manipulate someone into standing below you on the stairs during a conversation, for example.

- *Eye contact:* Looking into someone’s eyes can be briefly reassuring, but also challenging if the stare is held too long.

- *Arm sweep:* Putting one’s arm around another and moving that person, even while walking, puts one in the roll of the “director.” Some people do this by holding a person’s elbow or forearm, rather than embracing.

- *Stance:* Persons good at intimidation want to loom large. They tend to stand square-on to the persons they are addressing, and move in close.

CRYING WOLF

Living, fighting and dying around humans means that eventually some humans are going to see werewolves in their nonhuman forms. Lunacy provides some protection against discovery in Gauru and Urshul form. Uratha in Dalu can often pass as human, but being spotted in Urhan form can risk fallout in the chronicle. The wolf form is a big temptation since it improves Speed and increases Perception. Moreover, the wolf form’s natural stealth ability may lure players into believing that traveling in Urhan form is safe.

The ramifications of having the authorities believe that a wolf is on the loose can create a very sticky situation for the pack. What packmembers want to avoid is being harassed by local police and ASPCA officers due to “wolf” sightings in their territory. Getting to this juncture requires a fair amount of bad luck and poor decision making on the part of the characters. While a human with a net or mundane wild-animal traps aren’t a direct threat to the Uratha, public scrutiny can severely hamper the pack’s efforts in their territory — a nuisance that could lead to more serious problems.

When used judiciously, the wolf form is fairly safe even in urban environments.

So, how do humans handle seeing the Uratha in the Urshul form? How does the Storyteller reasonably adjudi-

cate the humans' reactions without grinding the action of the chronicle to a halt?

First of all, a human witness must actually get a good look at the animal. Don't forget that the Urhan has the ability to move in low cover or that those witnesses may suffer environmental perception modifiers (see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 173 and **World of Darkness**, p. 45). Moreover, the heightened perceptions of a werewolf in Urhan form means that, normally, the wolf has a very good chance of spotting the human first, and reacting accordingly.

Second, the person seeing the wolf has to correctly identify it — see "Wolf Spotting" below.

The Uratha's next best defense is that even if a witness is convinced that he or she saw a wolf, the witness likely will have great difficulty in convincing the authorities of this fact. The system *may* dismiss a single report of a wolf in Philadelphia or Copenhagen. But what if the witness has some authority? What if the sighting is corroborated by others or by physical evidence, such as photographs or videos? Experienced urban wolves often give the cubs in their packs some words of advice (such as the following) about traveling in Urhan form:

Assume you will be seen. When you are on the move, you can't know what's around every corner. Use cover, especially low cover, to hide yourself.

Don't be predictable. Don't make a habit of traveling in wolf form in a particular area — even if you think it is safe. Doing so only increases the chances that you will be spotted and reported to the authorities.

Presume you may be tracked. A good tracker also knows how to cover a trail.

Shift smart. Don't shift in places where it's questionable as to what happened. If you are spotted moving into a blind alley in one form and then you leave in another, it's dangerous — even if the observer does not know what happened.

Use your nose. If you don't know what's out there, they will know you.

WOLF SPOTTING

This system assumes that the witness actually saw the werewolf in Urhan form; this system isn't an alternate way to contest a Stealth roll or to make a Perception roll.

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Wits or a relevant Skill in place of Wits (Survival or Animal Ken)

Action: Reflexive

Most of the time the Storyteller should simply decide if a witness to a werewolf in Urhan form correctly or incorrectly identifies it as a "wolf." This simply depends upon how well the person saw the wolf, the witness' exposure to wolves and any relevant skills the witness has. While many people might be able to identify a wolf at close proximity, it's more common in a game that a person might see a character in Urhan form at a distance, or in less than ideal circumstances.

Another factor is what the werewolf looks like in Urhan form. Rocky Mountain grey wolves and timber wolves have been featured so much in the media that Uratha who resemble them — with brownish and blue-grey pelt patterns — are much more likely to be identified. Remember that the color of a wolf's pelt may range from pure black to pure white, with any shade of grey, tan, cream, ochre (yellow-gold), sienna (reddish brown) and brown between. Many of the other species, such as red wolves, are harder for individuals to pick out at a distance or more obscure subspecies of grey wolves are harder for the masses to identify.

Persons who live near wolf habitats and who spend time outdoors are much more likely to identify wolves correctly (Survival). Animal trainers or zoo workers also have a eye for the differences (Animal Ken). Of course, depending upon the city, there are persons who cannot differentiate between a cow and a horse. Distinguishing between a wolf and a dog, especially at any distance, is simply beyond some city-dwellers.

The more the citizenry is likely to see both wolves and dogs, the more likely the citizenry is to be able to identify these species at a distance. In the United States, there are wolf populations in small parts of the following states: Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, North Carolina, Wisconsin and Wyoming. Still, even in these areas, knowledge of wolves is fairly low. Northern Michigan, Wisconsin and the areas around Yellowstone are the only places with seemingly viable wild populations of grey wolves that humans may actually interact with in the wild.

European wolves exist in fairly high numbers, but most exist in the mountainous areas of the eastern countries. France, Spain and Germany only have isolated populations.

Note, of course, that even if a person mistakes a werewolf in wolf form for a dog, that doesn't mean the werewolf is off the hook — many people are still afraid of large dogs and naturally presume wild dogs to be rabid or aggressive. With so many of these people having cell phones or other easy communication at hand, werewolves are well-advised to trust to stealth first and human confusion a very distant second.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The witness makes a completely wild assumption about what was seen, perhaps one that may even be dangerous.

Failure: The witness believes the wolf was merely a dog or perhaps a coyote, if appropriate to the area.

Success: The witness is positive he or she saw a wolf.

Exceptional Success: Your character not only recognizes the animal as a wolf, but also notices some evidence to corroborate the sighting: prints, other witnesses, a nearby security camera, etc.

Suggested Equipment: Hopped-up on caffeine (+1), field glasses (+2)

Possible Penalties: Dark (-3), obscuring weather (-1 to -3), distracting circumstances (-1 to -3), lack of exposure to real wolves (-1 to -2)

LIFE IN A HUMAN WORLD

There are some basic needs that are universal to werewolves no matter where they live among humans. Werewolves need food and a place to live, and, to some extent, they need income as well, or at least some means of gathering resources. It's not hard to find story opportunities in the details of the characters' lives; even a mundane question such as, where do you get your money from? can have the start of an excellent story buried within.

Players and their Storytellers will have to make the final decisions about how much these everyday concerns impact their game. What you will find here will range from those players who don't really want to go into any more detail than listing a job that makes sense for their character to those players who want to use the character's work as one possible story hook, or three.

GET A JOB

Most people's lives revolve around their jobs even if the jobs isn't their highest priority. Jobs dictate where they live, their standards of living and the amount of time they have for family or friends. Most Uratha, on the other hand, have several more layers of responsibility. Normally pack and territorial concerns dominate their lives — family, jobs and so on are further down on the list.

The imperatives of an Uratha's life make looking for and retaining employment rather tricky. The best jobs generally have the following qualities:

- **Anonymity:** Most Uratha find it best not to call attention to their endeavors in the world of humans. Professional fame tends to attract unwanted attention to the other, more visceral parts of the Uratha's life. There are a few Uratha who manage to hide at the top — after all, if you own the company, you can do pretty much as you like. Most Uratha prefer places at the bottom or in the mass at the middle of an organization.

- **Flexible schedules:** Nine to five jobs really don't work for the Uratha. For most Uratha, jobs are necessities, not careers as humans would think. While most werewolves are pro-active in that they regularly patrol their territory, the vagaries of the spirit world mean that they have little actual control over their schedules — who controls when the latest menace from the Shadow will reveal itself?

- **People-less jobs:** Few Uratha are comfortable in any job that requires extended face-to-face contact with normal humans, especially if the job could lead to any kind of confrontation. Customer service jobs are usually on an Uratha's short list since many have such a short fuse and have difficulty relating to normal humans. Most werewolves either just don't like these jobs and won't take them

or have a fear of letting their predatory nature get the best of them. Not worth the hassle or the risk.



New Merit: ANONYMITY (•• TO ••••)

It is becoming harder and harder to be anonymous in today's world as our personal information swells government and business databases. Many Uratha become increasingly worried about Big Brother always looking over their shoulders and prying into their business. Some Uratha even go so far as to disconnect themselves from many of society's conveniences in an attempt to shut out its prying camera eye. This Merit reflects the special abilities and knowledge it takes to do so.

Prerequisites: Resolve •• and Larceny •• or Subterfuge ••

Effect: Your character manages to stay off the radar of most government and financial databases via an assortment of methods. At two dots, it is assumed that the character uses nearly every *legal* means at his disposal: dealing in cash, not having credit cards, not having a driver's license, de-listing phone numbers, not having a phone, having no permanent address (other than possibly a PO box) and so on. At higher levels, he must employ some *illegal* methods to keep himself secret: creating false identities, stealing others' identities, seeking to actively destroy data gathered by others and so on.

Each dot subtracts one from Investigation rolls made to discover information about the character.

Drawbacks: A character with Anonymity may not purchase Fame. Furthermore, he should have trouble spending Resources more than once a month since it is assumed that he does not have ready access to electronic banking, credit cards and so on. Anonymity may also influence the types of Status allowed by a Storyteller, because many organizations are not going to allow persons who cannot prove their identities to join their ranks. It is possible to lose the effects of the Anonymity Merit if the character is arrested, although the character can manage to regain the effects by having his criminal record erased one way or another.



JOBS BY AUSPICE

Any listing by auspice can only be thought of as a mere generality and fully dives into the deep end of the stereotype pool. Also any list of jobs is going to be filled with exceptions and cross-posting. Feel free to file off the category names and mix-and-match based on a particular character or a campaign.

Moreover, the discussions below also try to give both explicit examples of jobs and some hints as to how to use these professions as assets to a Storyteller's chronicle, rather than existing as mere notations on a character sheet.

RAHU: FULL MOON, WARRIOR

Since most Rahu have at least some need to keep in good physical condition, they tend to gravitate to jobs in which their physicality is a benefit. This does not mean that they must settle for boring careers in which they stand around and look imposing or hit things. A Rahu's determination, which in some comes across as a monomaniacal drive for perfection, can serve him well in private business pursuits. Many Rahu had military or paramilitary training before their Change, and, in this age of increased security awareness, they can often turn this knowledge and their increased abilities into lucrative careers. Other Rahu become professional athletes, but rarely in team sports — instead sticking to extreme sports or things like motocross, racing, target shooting, for example.

Possible jobs: bouncer, bail bondsman, bounty hunter, bartender, construction worker, security guard, mercenary, bodyguard, private security consultant, professional athlete

CAHALITH: GIBBOUS MOON, VISIONARY

The Cahalith's drive for expression makes an artistic career an easy choice. Fine artists such as painters or sculptors don't have to lead a nine to five lifestyle. Even the Uratha's rather volatile personality quirks are often written off as mere "artistic temperament." Other Uratha find new media for their urges; some become filmmakers, novelists or computer artists, while others return to the roots of their gift, becoming storytellers or singer-songwriters. A very few Uratha have taken their innate talents to inspire to become aggressive self-improvement speakers, con artists, even traveling preachers.

It's wise to pay attention to the outpourings of the Cahalith's lunar muses. Often there are hints of things to come in their art — they can never be sure if the art they produce is mere fancy or physical manifestations of their prophetic dreams.

Possible jobs: musician, fine artist, entrepreneur, psychic, con artist, salesman

ELODOTH: HALF-MOON, JUDGE

Elodoths' typical interest in the law and morality often draw them to careers in which they have to grapple with these questions on a day-to-day basis. Uratha of this auspice often spend time on both sides of human law. More than one technically skilled Elodoth has worn both the black and the white hats of a computer hacker — selling his or her skills as an information thief and as a security consultant.

Elodoths' tendency to involve themselves in fringe, anti-establishment groups can lead to some trouble either by provoking the authorities or by having elements of

these groups beseeching them for aid at inopportune times. At the same time, the Elodoths' ties to many different groups are often a good source of information.

Possible jobs: bounty hunter, legal consultant, professional arbiter, hacker, psychoanalyst, negotiator, ethicist

ITHAEUR: CRESCENT MOON, SECRET MASTER

Pre-Change, many Ithaeur are often drawn to scholarship and/or religion. Although the life of full-time teacher or priest does not mesh well with the demands of the Uratha, many Ithaeur turn to part-time teaching, private tutoring or writing to engage their minds and talents. Others look for niche jobs buying and selling rare collectibles, especially books.

An Ithaeur's quiet pursuits can lead to innumerable story hooks (and red herrings). She could stumble across some bit of lore or a forgotten fetish that either leads the pack to some discovery or leads others to seek out the pack. Perhaps even more interestingly, the Ithaeur's mundane job might lead her into a story not normally fodder for a werewolf chronicle, such as the pursuit of a valuable museum piece or involvement in a ghost's anchor.

Possible jobs: writer, local historian, herbalist, bookstore owner, local historian, numismatist, antiquarian

IRRAKA: NEW MOON, STALKER

More than any other auspice, these Uratha are likely to have jobs that call for a lot of human contact. The Irraka's often-duplicious natures attracts them to criminal activity, especially anything that involves grifting (especially other criminals) — the greater the challenge and reward, the more it appeals to the Irraka. Most Irraka embrace change, and they often have many small jobs at the same time and/or become professional temporary workers.

The Irraka's ease with which they can move into areas of human society normally troublesome for other auspices allow the New Moons to be one of the best sources for information on the human threats to a pack's interests. The Irraka's tendency to explore often means that they are the first to make contact with other supernaturals in an area — usually through their agents in the world of humans (ghouls and acolytes, for example).

Possible jobs: wilderness guide, con artist, salesperson, temp worker, card sharp, pool shark, fixer, information broker, handyman

TRIBAL INTERESTS AND CONNECTIONS

There's an old Estonian proverb that says, a wolf does not kill another wolf. In other words, like helps like: rich tend to help the rich, Republicans help Republicans, club members help each other and so on. This holds true in the tribal world of the Uratha. While the tribes do not hold much sway in the day-to-day life of their members, just like many human clubs or religions there are networks of members who still favor fellow tribemates with job opportunities. Moreover, members of the same tribe often find

themselves in the same line of work and, therefore, often communicate on that level — exchanging leads, warning each other of trouble, even acting as mentors.

The examples given below for tribes and lodges are just that. While members of the Lodge of Death may include crime scene investigators, it certainly does not follow that every Uratha CSI investigator is a member of the Lodge of Death or even a Bone Shadow.

BLOOD TALONS

As the tribe most likely to include entire families, Blood Talons often have family businesses too. In the '20s and '30s, the McLarens of Chicago ran a successful protection racket. Several others now run small construction firms or elite counter-terrorism schools and security details. These businesses in particular are thought to be the largely the work of the Lodge of Garm.

Individual Blood Talons put their warrior talents to good use as martial-arts or self-defense instructors. More cerebral Talons often get a rush out of the life and death struggles of an ER surgeon or combat medic — one of the medical professions in which bedside manner is little valued. Those Talons who enjoy life on the edge of society, or simply beyond the law, may become bloodsport trainers and organizers.

The Lodge of Swords is known to have several rather ruthless political campaign managers in its membership. Their ranks are also home to a few investigative reporters and at least one independent producer of documentaries.

Bands of Wendigo hire themselves out to other Blood Talon-dominated packs as supernatural assassin/terrorists — tearing apart supernatural threats, even other werewolf packs if the price and the cause are right. The Silver Door Band out of Edinburgh specializes in hunting down magath, but the Silver Door's price is high.

BONE SHADOWS

The Bone Shadows have as many religious leaders as they do physicists. Myth, religion and string theory have much appeal to the seekers of all things hidden. Traditionally, Bone Shadows would interact with the humans around them as tribal medicine men, hermits, soothsayers, herbalists and apothecaries. In the modern world, a few Bone Shadows hide in plain sight as palm readers, astrologers, soothsayers and the like; while most of the Bone Shadows' prophecies (for human clients) have no supernatural foundation, these jobs do provide these Uratha with income and allows them to monitor the spiritual ebb and flow within their territory.

Quite a few Irraka Bone Shadows are involved in the urban exploration movement — some are even able to parlay this interest into a career. They conduct tours of abandoned manufacturing sites, steam tunnels and the like, using their human contacts to learn more about truly mysterious places, like the man-made industrial wasteland of "battleship island," Gunkanjima, off the coast of Japan.

Academicians of the Bone Shadows are important resources for obtaining information and referrals for work as instructors, researchers and so on. Many of these Bone Shadows make their livings as writers of local history or historical fiction or as college professors.

The Lodge of Prophecy offers their members practical advice and, rarely, some seed funds to set members up in the modern soothsaying business. Some of the more cutting-edge members of the Lodge of Prophecy have begun to make their livings off the "freak" or "weird" subculture. Some lodge members create websites and travel guides touting local-color strangeness, such as haunted houses, derelict structures, urban legends, roadside attractions, UFO cultists, cemeteries, ghost tours or locomotive graveyards.

Members of the Lodge of Death often associate with the death business, as morticians or graveyard vergers. A welcome few members work within law enforcement as crime scene investigators or coroners. They often help out local packs by informing them of "messy" investigations that could lead to trouble. These Bone Shadows and the information-spirits they control often help smooth over investigations that come too close to the truth about the People.

HUNTERS IN DARKNESS

The Hunters in Darkness' mission to restore and protect the sacred places of the world has led them in direct conflict with many human interests, especially human businesses. Members of this tribe have learned the hard way that direct confrontation often leads to failure in the long run. As such, they have learned how to deal with (and often manipulate) environmental protection and historical preservation organizations.

Not surprisingly, many Hunters seek employment as wildlife biologists, game wardens, nature guides or wilderness survival instructors. With the growth in extreme sports and eco-exploration vacations, some Hunters have been able to use their skills to land very lucrative jobs that also afford them time to themselves and the financial resources to scout and acquire new territories.

The Lodge of Harmony encourages its members to retain any professional ties that might be of use to the tribe's goals. They actively support members who have law degrees to help with their causes. Next to the Iron Masters, this lodge of the Hunters in Darkness probably has the highest percentage of lawyers and other legal professionals.

The membership of the Lodge of Seasons includes many artists, poets and songwriters who have not quite given up on humanity entirely. Even when not quite at home in their human skins, they know the power of human emotion and how well art can influence it. These numbers also include wildlife documentarians who have been able to sway public opinion toward the goals of the Hunters.

Uratha of the Lodge of Wrath often have connections with more radical environmental groups like the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) or more moderate but well-funded groups like Greenpeace. These lodge members have no compunction about learning from these groups or even feeding them information. Ironically, even PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) is a good resource for more crafty and duplicitous members of this lodge, who have managed to direct PETA's ire (and substantial resources) at overweening agribusinesses, such as the dairy industry.

IRON MASTERS

Not surprisingly, Iron Masters are the most likely to hold down jobs in human society, a move that reflects the tribe's emphasis on adapting to the world around them. Red Wolf encourages them to watch and learn from the ever-shifting human society that surrounds them, and Iron Masters might further that goal by studying sociology, doing social work or becoming freelance journalists or private investigators. Iron Masters are also, on average, more likely to work in technical fields. Many Iron Masters prefer jobs that allow them to telecommute or work as freelancers in the technical sphere. The major risk factor of late has been this economy's volatility. Iron Masters often look out for each other, letting each other know of job opportunities, subcontracting work out to fellow tribemates and so on.

Since these werewolves are the most adept and at home in the cities of humans, Iron Masters often have human contacts who can help them out with employment and sometimes contact with other supernaturals of the city, namely vampires. Experienced Iron Masters warn younger members of the dangers of playing in the vamps' sandbox though. While potentially lucrative, you always want a contractual "out," lest you get caught in their webs.

The impetuous Uratha attracted to the Lodge of Lightning are, not surprisingly, attracted to dangerous professions, such as high-wire acrobats, daredevils and extreme sports trainers. But the lodge's membership includes not only adrenaline junkies but also scientists and inventors of all kinds of strange (and often dangerous) bits of gadgetry. Several members are leaders in urban/corporate spy hardware.

A fair number of Uratha in the Lodge of Metal still maintain themselves as modern-day blacksmiths, though the majority of the lodge focuses their efforts on perfecting modern mechanical skills. Some members have moved into the artistic realms of metalworking and glasswork. Other members have turned their desire for perfection and technical acumen into careers as both "black hat" and "white hat" hackers — selling their eye for imperfect code to the highest bidder.

Classically, members of the Lodge of Scrolls often find work as librarians, archivists, historians and journalists. Some newer factions are made up of database program-

mers or miners. Those members with more independent streaks are at the forefront of the online democracy efforts, such as Wiki adherents, open-source software users, Linux users and such.

STORM LORDS

A Storm Lord's mundane career interest is often related to the individual's defining purpose, whatever that is. If the alpha of a pack has the ability to gift jobs to his packmates, he normally will do so, as long as those jobs don't interfere with his packmates' ability to serve the pack and its interests. If it fits the needs of one Storm Lord to help another, he will.

Storm Lords normally seek to lead any organization that they join. Members of the Lodge of Thunder are more open in this desire, either starting their own businesses or aiming for the CEO seat, while others prefer to lead from behind the scenes.

Their desires to lead, coupled with the disturbing, predatory aura surrounding all werewolves, drives many Storm Lords into criminal careers. While the image of the all-Uratha street gang isn't without foundation, many Lords maintain packs outside their day-to-day criminal livelihood. Some seed their packmates within a larger criminal organization to better exercise control. The Lodge of Crows has its claws into several organized crime syndicates over the world. While their members rarely go hungry, they are constantly in debt to older Storm Lords.

More than any other tribe, the Storm Lords also have members who make their living off ecologies foreign to most Uratha — including steppes, deserts and even the sea. Storm Lords' affinity for weather Gifts allows them a great advantage on the open ocean, while the enormity of the world's oceans gives them the freedom and anonymity that many werewolves crave. Some of these seagoing Uratha make their livelihood as simple fishermen, short-haul shippers, while others turn again to crime — smuggling or worse. While the idea of a piratical "sea wolf" might seem anachronistic to European- and American-born Uratha, it is deadly serious in the waters off Indonesia and the Philippines where lives are lost every week to the most vicious of men. Even the "civilized" waters of the Mediterranean are good hunting grounds to these predators — some of whom are made up of the People.

Of course, some Storm Lords make their livelihoods on the "right" side of the law as bounty hunters or small town sheriffs. These positions offer them the power they need to control their territory and a wealth of information to keep them on top of situations likely to cast long shadows in the *Hisil*.

GOING WITHOUT

Naturally, werewolves don't have to hold down day (or night) jobs to survive; the Uratha have the power to take what they need to survive. A Storyteller shouldn't require characters to hold down jobs if they have feasible plans for getting what they need; the World of Darkness is

such that the characters should be able to find an abandoned building for shelter, hunt feral animals for food or simply steal what they need, for example. A job should only be necessary if a character has the Resources Merit, and, even then, it depends on how the player defines the Resources. Of course, if werewolves decide simply to take what they need, other problems may result . . .

THE LAWS OF HUMANS

Werewolves' physical prowess and their arsenal of magical powers would seem to make a life of crime a natural choice. Still, this is not all universal. Perhaps this is due to the latent humanity of werewolves — old habits die hard for the newly changed. Grizzled veterans learn the hard way to respect the power of the herd when it acts *collectively* against the Uratha. Some still choose a life of crime, but there are some definite drawbacks to this decision — not the least of which is an often lethal confrontation with the law. Of course, killing one cop is easy for a werewolf. Killing the 10 who come after you for that murder is harder. Killing the hundreds of cops and federal agents sure to come after that is near impossible. Killing the other Forsaken who might come after you for breaking the last Oath of the Moon — well, the list goes on.

Of course, less than half of the murders are solved in the West of our reality, and the rate of success in the World of Darkness is even worse. While this grim statistic by no means grants werewolves "plot immunity," it does mean that the Storyteller doesn't always have to bring the full force of the law to bear and certainly shouldn't be surprised if the characters manage to elude their pursuers. The characters will have to deal with the consequences of their actions, but those consequences can be more spiritual in nature than social.

Still, it's not the risk of one werewolf getting caught or killed that makes most Forsaken wary of the law. Rather, it's the dangers posed to their territory by being viewed as criminals by the community. This is the hazard that Uratha must weigh. Being driven from your territory because run-ins with the law are spiraling out of control is not an uncommon fate for many young packs convinced of their superiority over "the herd." That arrogance and stupidity forces Forsaken into situations in which they can break multiple tenets of the Oath of the Moon in just a few moments. Humans are slain accidentally in fights, the dark spirits grow strong on the turmoil, territory is stripped away by humans' legal system and the existence of the People could be compromised the mayhem that results.

In simple terms: the higher the body count, the harder it will become to maintain a territory.

Again, this is not to say that werewolves who choose to stay on the "right" side of the law are paragons of human virtue. Their take on criminality — or on any of the laws of humans — is informed by their primary concerns for pack and territory. Putting those in danger for a quick

buck is just stupid to these Uratha. So, saying that most Forsaken *obey* the law is not correct. Most merely avoid it.

Some werewolves choose to live off "The Man's" radar, dealing only in cash or barter, not having a permanent legal residence, maybe only having a PO box. This can make fingering an Uratha difficult, but without a residence, without tax forms, it is very difficult to obtain a driver's license. These Uratha are often driven to black market IDs (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 86). Of course, many Uratha don't care and risk getting caught without one.

FORENSIC EVIDENCE

The existence of werewolves is protected to a great degree by the fact that their blood, hair and tissue always register as that of a normal human no matter the werewolves' form. Also, dead werewolf tissue is just dead human tissue: head, hand or corpse. It's still important to remember this, but individual Uratha have no such protections. The cops might not know that Val Bloodmuzzle carved up a Claimed kidnapper, but they got hair and blood samples from Valerie Boyton anyway. Talens like Decay Dust make this kind of cleanup easier, but the strength of forensic science makes this a growing problem for the Uratha. (And for the record, Claimed also revert to their original human form once slain and the inhabiting spirit is freed. Claimed DNA evidence usually is that of the base human. The werewolf who kills a Spirit-Claimed murderer in a child's body is left with the dilemma of what to do with the torn corpse of a human child.)

Of course, the scientists must have a sample with which to compare their evidence. If the characters have kept their noses relatively clean, and left no other evidence to tie them to a crime, they still have a good chance of escaping detection. Moreover, changes in size can sometimes conceal their involvement. The increase in size between Hishu and Dalu forms distort bite marks and fingerprints — Gauru prints have little in common with human whorls and curls. (The flipside of this is that technologies that rely on biometrics, such as retinal scans and fingerprints, only work in human form as well.)

Another worry for werewolves is fiber evidence. Shredded, undedicated clothes could be traced back to their owner — especially if pockets contain other evidence (wallets, notes, etc.) Strangely, dedicated clothes can be even more dangerous — leaving fiber evidence at multiple crime scenes. Cautious Uratha regularly destroy their old clothing and rededicate new outfits to prevent them being tracked back to the Uratha.

Bioinformatics technologies pose a new threat. Governments and businesses may begin collecting DNA samples of ordinary citizens — to increase the chances of finding matches to DNA samples from unsolved crimes. Although these databases are currently fragmented and private policy groups are arrayed against these uses, the threat remains. Who knows which groups might be strug-

gling for these resources in the World of Darkness?

Living in a world dominated by fears of terrorism, there is a real chance that far more rigorous forms of identification than driver's licenses may come into being — perhaps ones based on biometrics or even DNA signatures.

Supernatural elements undoubtedly move against this tide of forensics. It's not in the interests of any of the supernaturals that exist in the World of Darkness to have humanity begin hunting them down — even their enemies. There is no need for a worldwide shadow-government of supernaturals to see this. It's not cooperation, it's motivated by self-preservation. Certainly werewolves would rather *they* investigate most of the likely supernatural crimes in their area. If another supernatural is causing an issue, they don't want police handling it. Why hand over that power to them? Certainly the Oath of the Moon itself points to this fundamental need for secrecy.

Moreover, money, or the lack thereof, means that no CSI department can afford to throw its resources behind *every* crime. Many departments are hopelessly backed up and understaffed. Again, many supernatural agents might also subtly affect this inefficiency — information-spirits can corrupt databases, evidence can disappear, witnesses can be tampered with.

OUTLAW WOLVES

Unlike in many “legal” organizations, violence, intimidation and a temper are assets in many criminal pursuits. Many

werewolves decide that human laws have no hold on them and chose a path of crime to get what they need. Other werewolves are driven to lives of crime as the only means to stay one step ahead of the law and still protect what's important to them, be it territory, pack, family or merely their own hides.

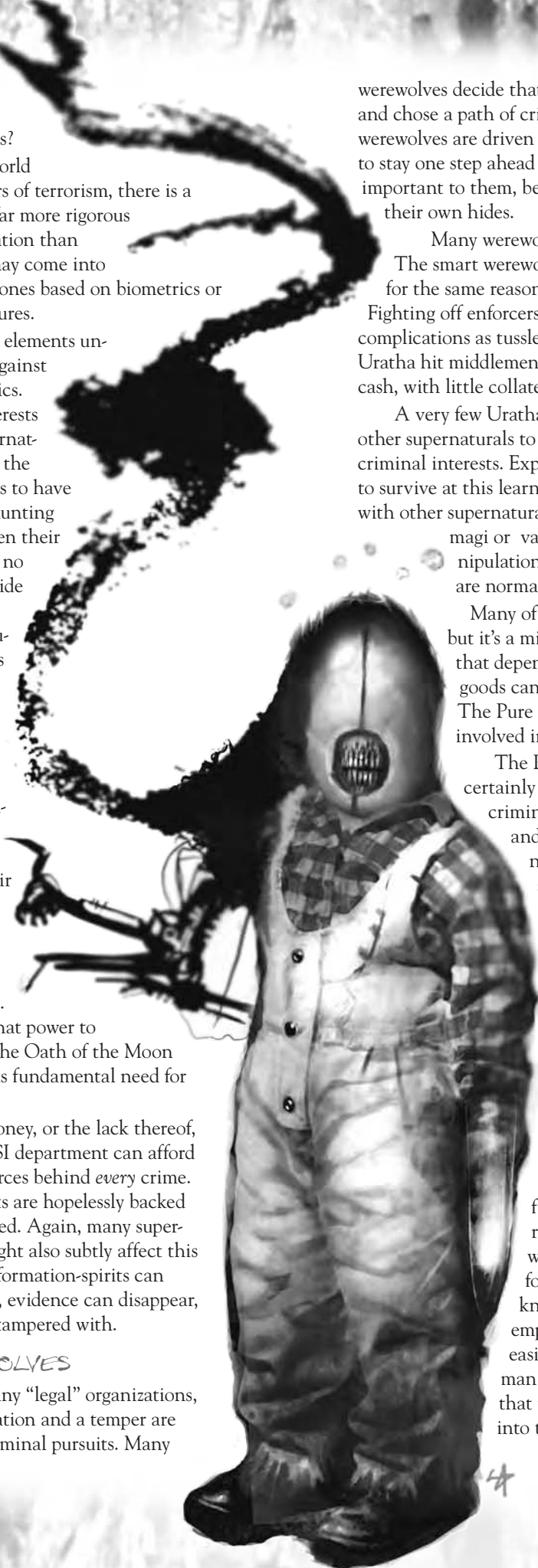
Many werewolves choose to prey on criminals. The smart werewolves don't prey on organized crime for the same reasons they stay away from the cops. Fighting off enforcers and hitmen can lead to the same complications as tussles with the law. More often, these Uratha hit middlemen and drug mules — rich supplies of cash, with little collateral damage and fallout.

A very few Uratha have even formed alliances with other supernaturals to act as enforcers — often over their criminal interests. Experienced werewolves who manage to survive at this learn to clearly spell out their dealings with other supernaturals. Playing politics with unreadable magi or vampires, the masters of social manipulation, is extremely tricky — and Uratha are normally at a disadvantage.

Many of these criminals are Ghost Wolves, but it's a mistake to believe that all are. Packs that depend upon crime for their worldly goods can have members of any of the tribes. The Pure are more likely than any to be involved in flaunting human laws to get by.

The Pure and other werewolves are certainly involved in the darkest of human criminal endeavors, such a murder for hire and slavery. Rumors abound of organizations spanning America, Asia and Africa that truck in Ridden slavery and pit fighting — organizations that take advantage of the Uratha's special abilities to track down and control spirits for others' pleasure and the werewolves' profit. Indeed, many *Zi'ir* who are not destroyed by their ex-packmates are said to end up in these places, as permanent attractions, sold by less scrupulous Uratha.

It is also believed that powerful spirits, magath and Maeljin, also recruit Uratha to their causes. Some werewolves who join criminal groups for easy money underestimate the knowledge and intentions of their true employers — thinking that they can easily escape the clutches of their human bosses and only discovering too late that their employer's reach easily extends into the Shadow and beyond.





DENS

Uratha often have multiple places to rest, partially due to security but also for convenience's sake, for werewolves tend to nap rather than indulge in long sleeps. Second, they need a few places in the territory to go to if they are in trouble and can't risk going home — you don't want to bring your troubles back to your bed, or have them follow you there.

Ideally, each packmember will have a “human” residence, a legal residence, where the werewolf tries to never appear as anything but human. A werewolf might also have a secondary residence, usually much lower on the socioeconomic scale. This is a fall-back place where the werewolf can go and sleep or recuperate — a place with some means for the werewolf to enter, or at least approach, in Urhan form, a place where the werewolf have some anonymity and where questions won't be asked.

Some packs choose to live together. Newly changed werewolves often find the pack bond so strong that this seems like the best solution. The pack bonds can be so strong that an entire pack sleeps in the same room, even the same “bed.” This may cause trouble for effectively posing as humans, of course, and a werewolf striving to live a fully human life with a spouse and children can't logically stay with his packmates.

The pack itself will have at least one place where they can gather clandestinely. Sometimes this is near a locus,

often it is a place especially convenient to the alpha. In addition, the pack will also have a few gathering places where the pack can meet in case of emergency — a pack “safe house” — a hidden location easy to approach, a place to heal up, gather Essence from stored touchstones, find some ready cash, phone, food, etc.

Iron Masters may choose to have modern security measures installed to protect their dens. Others, especially Hunters in Darkness, prefer rather low-tech booby traps — these are extremely effective in areas without electricity. Walls can be made to collapse, for example. Ithaeur often create more subtle traps using bound spirits or awakened objects to warn them or the pack's totem of intruders. Of course, not all intruders know what they are stumbling upon, which can create sticky situations for a pack if, say, a group of building inspectors for the city gets caught by such a trap in an abandoned tenement.

STORYTELLING DEMOGRAPHICS

The basic guidelines to werewolf population given in the **Werewolf: The Forsaken** book are purposefully vague — meant to really only deliver two key concepts for the Storyteller:

- Uratha are pretty rare; there are fewer than half a million of them in the whole world.

- The Forsaken are at a disadvantage in their struggles with the Pure since there are more Pure than there are Forsaken.

How you choose to define these concepts in your game will affect it greatly. You may choose a *laissez-faire* approach, in which you really do not worry about exact numbers, which is fine. Sometimes though, this can lead to conceptual problems with the players when they say things like, “Wow, if there are 30 Forsaken here in Deer Branch, there must be millions of them in New York City!” Suddenly the tone of the campaign has shifted in ways the Storyteller did not predict. Ret-conning the game is something that often risks shattering its mood.

Our advice is to figure out, in rough terms, what the population breakdown will be for your story as part of your preparation — you can always make exceptions. In fact, an *exception* can lead you to a really strong story element. Why do the Pure exist in higher numbers in the eastern part of the state? Sounds like a mystery for the players . . .

For example, a Storyteller could choose to make the numerical advantage of the Pure truly overwhelming, such as 2:1 or more. That’s a big difference. Your game is likely to involve a lot of interaction between the two groups. That also means that you should be doing a lot of work developing the Pure Tribe packs in your area. How will you differentiate them all?

You need to think about how these overwhelming numbers actually play out on the table. Consider a fight between the players’ pack and a pack with twice the number of werewolves. That wouldn’t be much of a fight, even if your characters are experienced. Furthermore, if that’s the case in your setting, why don’t the Pure just wipe out the Forsaken packs? You’ll need to develop a rationale for that too. Granted, you don’t want to make *every* consideration based on mere game mechanics, but, for the most part, since the Storyteller is asking the characters to live by the mechanics, he should consider them as well.

Clearly, even a modest numerical advantage is huge in **Werewolf**. It may not be necessary to give the Pure that much an advantage and still preserve the innate fear that most Forsaken have for the Pure. A pack of six Forsaken versus a pack of eight Pure is clearly in a hell of a lot of trouble. But, that kind of advantage isn’t really as overwhelming as 2:1 odds.

At the same time, numbers should be a *loose* framework for your imagination. To give you a working example, let’s say you pick a fairly high number for the total number of Uratha, say 485,000 in the world. With a world population of over 6,271,698,000, the number of Uratha only amounts to something like 0.0000773315% of the world’s population.

To put those numbers in more concrete terms, let’s pick a state like Georgia. That percentage gives the Storyteller a rough total of about 672 Uratha in the state. Say 35% are Forsaken, we’re down to 235. That’s still a lot of Forsaken. That gives you a lot to think about. (Remember,

35% isn’t that generous. In some places, the Forsaken can even outnumber the Pure, like in the central areas of the Rockies.)

Where would they live?

If you follow the numbers further though, you might find yourself getting into trouble. Most of the population of Georgia is concentrated in metro Atlanta. Based on that alone, we are talking about 198 Pure and around 115 members of Tribes of the Moon crowded into about five to 10 of Georgia’s tiny counties. That’s ridiculous. Assuming our overall numbers are about right, and we slavishly follow them, there’s no way that 300-odd Uratha are covering the other 149+ counties. Due to population dynamics in Georgia, there are very few other counties that could support enough total Uratha to form a single viable pack.

So, what you should take from this is that Atlanta’s huge population *may* spawn a lot of Uratha, but the Uratha’s territoriality is working against the tide of human dynamics. Clearly, werewolves would leave the capitol of the South to search out their territory elsewhere. That could make an interesting game as the new pack has to run a gauntlet through other packs’ territory clustered around the city — picking up information, friends and foes along the way. To the established packs in Atlanta, this is familiar territory; they are glad to bring new blood into their tribes, and just as glad that the newcomers won’t be crowding them for long.

What the numbers might be more useful for in this instance is saying that, in this test case, there are about four Uratha per county in Georgia. That number does not differentiate between any factions in the People’s culture. In areas of high population, there will probably be a lot more. In several counties, there might not be any Uratha. The Storyteller might decide that the Pure tend to stick to the more rural parts of Georgia, nearer the wilderness areas and concentrate their numbers there, for example. The point is, the Storyteller doesn’t need to map everything out by the numbers. Instead, he or she should use them to have some rough numbers to fall back on and build off.

Establishing some rough numbers for your chronicle can give you a starting point and some story hooks and help you establish some continuity. A little work with a calculator can even show you some natural trends important to your area, which should be more than enough to get you started.

SEX AND MATES

Newly changed Uratha tend to regard sex in the same fashion that they did when human. They often try to hang on to those old relationships, but only a very few manage to do so — it certainly helps if they had already been tied to an established wolf-blooded line or if they have werewolf relatives with prior experience who are able to step in and help out some of the growing problems. Even this level of support, rare as it is, does not guarantee reconciliation.

Unattached cubs, especially ones previously inexperienced or unsure of their sexuality and flush with the new sensations running through their bodies, can go through a sexual rebirth. Of course, the opposite is true — a werewolf might lose much of his sexual confidence (if he had any to begin with) now that he realizes that he's become a monster, and may be terrified that sexual contact will trigger the violent beast inside him.

Eventually, usually after being burned a few times, Uratha may become more circumspect about sexual partners, even if the werewolves are still rather promiscuous. Others become jaded — sex becomes just another itch to scratch — and so on.

As werewolves grow in power, they often grow more possessive of their mates and more concerned with progeny. This does not necessarily lead to long-term relationships, but it can lead to more trouble for humans who stumble into the werewolves' webs of relationships.

Uratha's concern for their children rarely manifests in overt displays. Uratha often quietly monitor their children's habits, tracking their movements and, of course, looking for signs of their having a share of wolf-blood or perhaps Changing. Some werewolves believe that all their progeny should know something of their parents' ways. A few parents instruct their young in self-defense, wilderness training and so on. This attention often comes off as half-hearted or ill-intentioned to their children. Only those very few progeny who Change ever appreciate that which

distances parent from child. Some Uratha brush this off as being another factor of their existence, but, for many, this distance becomes the central curse of their existence.

Sex, lust and love are of course a great resource for stories. There are already plenty of potential inspirations for such — only about a few thousand years' worth of stories about such topics. For instance, the Romeo and Juliet classic of two feuding houses goes well with rival packs or tribes, but there are further ways to complicate a romance in uniquely **Werewolf** fashion. What if a character falls in love (or lust) with a person in another pack's territory? The rival pack may figure that they have breeding rights for their territory, and see any such wooing as a potential poaching of their resources. Even if they're not prone to look on potential mates as property, they still might take poorly to a werewolf crossing their borders repeatedly with the pretext of wooing.

Members of the Lodge of the Shepherd have the most accurate records of the wolf-blooded in their area, but are loath to pass this information on to any Uratha who might endanger them or announce the lodge's presence. Certainly, this lodge's members have an innate advantage in finding wolf-blooded to form relationships with. See p. 106 of this book to find out more about this Lodge.

BIG BAD WOLF?

As anti-social as werewolves tend to be, there is one stereotype of the outlaw that could prove to make an



interesting story element for one of the packmembers — a variation on the old story of the good girl who falls for bad boys. Some people are attracted to the somewhat foul tempered, dark nature of the Uratha, despite all the warning signs. Westerns, film noir and modern movies are full of women who are sure they can redeem the outlaw and men attracted to the wild women they really can't handle — and so, for that matter, is real life. Most people can think of at least one person whose inner demons make him or her repeat one doomed relationship after another. It does not matter how negative a vibe the object of his or her affection naturally (or supernaturally) gives off — they are moths drawn to the flame.

Of course, this plotline should not be over-used since it really flies in the face of one of the major flaws of the Uratha: werewolves frighten people, and are at a handicap in social situations. This plotline can also cheapen the chronicle if it recurs with each packmember, one after another.

The Storyteller can turn up the dial a notch or two with the correct character as the target — have the lover become completely obsessed by the character. While the idea of a normal human stalking an Uratha may seem laughable, what if the obsessed lover is connected to powerful forces — a senator's wife, the son of a crime boss, a local celebrity? Suddenly this could become a real predicament — one from which sharp claws cannot help extricate the character. Add to this the fact that the would-be lover could become a constant threat of revelation, and the Herd Must Not Know, and the predicament can be more than a simple evening's worth of throwaway subplot.

And, of course, a human lover can have supernatural connections of his own, should it fit the rest of the chronicle. Even without adding the complications of say, having the person be related to one of the Pure or the son of a ghoul, for example, this kind of circumstance can end up testing the players' commitment to the Oath of the Moon, their pack and the bounds of their Harmony. It makes for good fodder for the chronicle.

FOOD

After the Change, werewolves undergo a certain shift in palate. All processed foods begin to lose their appeal. Eventually, meat becomes the Uratha sole food of choice, superseded by rare meat. As they grow in power, even the flesh of domesticated animals lacks that certain fulfilling quality that truly quells their hunger pangs. Game meat becomes the preferred food. For the most powerful werewolves, the only fulfilling meal is one they hunt, kill and eat themselves.

These natural inclinations are, of course, a great difficulty to many Uratha in the cities. Meat is easy to come by, but quite often unfulfilling. Some werewolves make up for this by either buying game meat or hunting and storing their kills. A few Uratha fulfill their desires by installing eating rooms, abattoir-like rooms where they can enjoy

their food in any of their forms without the human pretenses of cleaning and cooking their food. Then the mess can easily be washed down the drain.

Humans end up on the menu from time to time despite the risks to Harmony. Ghost Wolves who reject the old oaths or risk them anyway for the thrill of the ultimate hunt eat and feed upon humans more than any other definable group among the Forsaken, but Ghost Wolves are not the only ones.

Of course, the Pure are more accepting of this behavior than the Forsaken. Again, except for possibly the newly Changed, it's not the act of killing that keeps the Tribes of the Moon from condoning human hunts — it's the overwhelming temptation to eat what you have killed and risk your self-control. Furthermore, the dangers that human law enforcement pose to the Uratha's greater goals of maintaining territory keep most Forsaken from hunting and killing humans — even if the Forsaken feel the human deserves death.

Sometimes the combination of the human's sins against the Forsaken and a desperate need for food — either Essence, material or both — drives a werewolf to eat human beings. The horrible truth for even the repentant is that nothing ever tastes as fulfilling as human flesh.

Werewolves struggling to live within the highest bounds of Harmony must also avoid the "sin" of not obtaining their own food. Most werewolves at this level of Harmony maintain it by hunting game. A single taste of other kinds of food is not enough to force a degeneration roll; it is a matter of dependence. An Uratha who regularly hunts and then feasts on his kills as a staple of his diet can avoid degeneration. But in the realm of pack and tribal politics, this is often not enough. It becomes a point of pride to many to live by the strictest possible interpretation of this "sin" — to avoid it with panache. These Uratha restrict themselves to eating kills only they have hunted — they eat nothing else.

This, along with certain spillovers from wolf feeding habits, has colored much of pack society and custom — often choosing to ignore the fact that "real" wolves are also opportunistic feeders. Still, members of some tribes or packs do not eat before the alpha has taken his share, following the pecking order down to the lowliest omega.

LIFE UNDER PRESSURE

Traffic, rudeness, standing in lines, work hassles, noisy neighbors, lack of personal space, lack of privacy, sensory overload via a cacophony of unnatural sounds and smells — it's enough to set many human nerves on edge. A thousand-fold more pressures are shouldered by the Uratha: having to inhabit their near-deaf and scent-blind forms for days at a time, having to hold their Rage in check, having to clean up spiritual attacks only they can see and having to deal with the repercussions of human excesses in the Shadow. It's enough to wear down the hardest souls over time.

Due to the stresses of life in the city, low Harmony Uratha find it very difficult to hold off *Kuruth* for long. What's worse is that in the pressure-cooker atmosphere of the urban World of Darkness, one instance of Death Rage can start a cycle of Rage after Rage, losing more Harmony until the Uratha's soul is broken and he becomes *Zi'ir*.

Movies like *Falling Down* and *Taxi Driver* might inspire a Storyteller to require Rage tests (Resolve + Composure) if the players merely gets caught in traffic, are soiled by pigeons or feel the ire of some jaded convenience store clerk. If these situations can set off a normal human, it does make sense that they could set off an Uratha's often hair-trigger temper, especially when you take into consideration the extra dose of anxiety delivered in the World of Darkness.

Although Uratha erupting out of their SUVs after the second hour caught in gridlock might make an interesting element of a character's background or a piece of flavor fiction, it's up to the Storyteller to decide if that would make a good *game*. The two aren't synonymous. Many players would resent having their characters railroaded into a circumstance where they lost control of the characters — some players might feel as if their characters or the players themselves were being punished.

Of course, lack of control is the central tragic element of a werewolf's existence. Still, players are more likely to understand the possibility of failing a roll and watching their characters lose control in combat or in another dramatic situation rather than when merely confronted with the mundane frustrations of modern life. Raging after the death of a close friend or after being shot with a silver bullet seems a lot more heroic and palatable than losing it in line because of a long wait at the DMV office.

Storytellers who want to represent the gradual drain on a werewolf's self-control by the stresses of modern life can assign a -1 or -2 penalty to any Resolve + Composure rolls made to resist Death Rage, representing mental exhaustion. This is usually appropriate only when the werewolf has truly been through the Day From Hell, and the stressors have been consistent. One or two nasty moments of stress shouldn't be enough to do it; after all, the life-endangering threats that besiege a werewolf are presumably more stressful.

UNIVERSAL AND PERSONAL STRESSORS

Everyone has had days in which one instance of bad luck seems to lead to another. How do you incorporate such repeated stressors in a game without focusing totally on one character or derailing pacing? A Storyteller has two basic options. One is to incorporate the stressors into the storyline, by placing them as obstacles in the path of the pack. Be careful that you don't unnecessarily frustrate the *players*, though. For example, having a chase end with the characters caught in traffic in the middle of the day, unable to shift forms to pursue a foe, would indeed stress out the werewolves. But it also would frustrate the

players to have an exciting chase scene suddenly cut short through no fault of their own. Another option is to begin the game *in media res*. Detail the crappy day the characters have been having when the events of game begin to unfold.

Typical Modern Stressors: standing in line, rudeness/disrespect, being accosted by panhandlers, traffic accidents, sleeplessness, minor theft, vandalism, parking/traffic tickets, pollution, loneliness, court summons, threats, phone solicitations, utility outages, crowds, constant noise, light pollution, money problems, debt, telemarketers, alienation, cell phones, neighbors, poor food

VICES AS STRESSORS

When characters indulge their vices during a scene, they fulfill a dark impulse central to their true nature. Although characters may regret succumbing to these base desires, thwarted temptation can easily lead to more stress — an itch that grows worse without scratching.

Envy: The triumphal success of enemies and friends or the wretchedness of the character's condition compared to others might inspire a Harmony-destroying flood of envy.

- A character may be bucking for the alpha's spot, only to hear a rival's achievements praised by other pack-members.
- An ambitious pack leader might be forced to watch a rival pack ascend to more power in the area, perhaps at the cost of his pack's territory?
- A lower-ranking werewolf may be forced to honor elders who seem so much more powerful.
- Why should others have all the luck? Some unforeseen bounty that comes into another's life can gall an envious Uratha.

Gluttony: Werewolves are blessed with a suite of senses that go beyond human limitations and appetites that exceed human mores. Sensuality is a common foible in all of the werewolf forms.

- Seeing others who can indulge in the character's vice without overindulging may cause stress to the character, such as an alcoholic who watches another order a drink and not finish it.
- Missing a meal thanks to a sudden incursion in the local territory, and having no choice but to dwell on an empty belly even as the hunt plays out.
- A character may harbor a secret desire for human flesh, only to be goaded by the feeding of local vampires — why should they get away with it?
- Should the rewards of eating human flesh be ignored if the death was accidental or, more importantly, *deserved*?

Greed: Avarice seems the foundation of this pampered, modern world. There's so much to want, and werewolves have the means to take it. Some would say it is their right.

- Having to give up or give back something that another was too weak or too stupid to protect.
- Not taking from others when opportunity presents itself.
- Being forced to obey a weak alpha who has forbidden taking an opportunity to increase territory.
- Having to acknowledge the generosity of some idiot who does not know the importance of keeping what is yours.

Lust: Resisting opportunities to slake one's lust always cause strain. Werewolves suffer from these problems more than mere humans. Werewolves' sensuality and their ability to mix pain and pleasure make most human forms of lovemaking pale in comparison. Werewolves know that there is only one partner who can truly appreciate the rewards that fulfilling their lusts can give, who would allow them to take the Dalu form and exult in its physicality and increased senses — the only partner that they cannot have, another werewolf. Reining in these lusts is a constant struggle.

- The character is hit on by another werewolf or perhaps a packmate's spouse.
- Simply being in a situation in which the werewolf has no means, however tame, to indulge herself.
- Perhaps the Pure offer a way around *Uratha Safal Thil Lu'u*?
- Having someone talk the character out of fulfilling her lusts when a perfect opportunity exists to slake them.

Pride: Werewolves are magnificent creatures, far above the shackles of humankind's morality or the limita-

tions of their weak physical shells. It is natural for Uratha to have the utmost confidence in their superhuman abilities. Some call this vanity, but it is the truth.

- Having to swallow their pride in order to preserve the Oath can cause prideful Uratha a lot of stress — such as when an “uppity” sheriff decides to push them around in public.
- “Honoring” elder Uratha who are incompetent is maddening.
- A superior who chooses not to praise your achievements.
- Having to agree with an alpha who ignores your counsel.

Sloth: Blessed with nearly effortless health and physical fitness, why should an Uratha be in any kind of hurry to do those mundane tasks that only humans care about? Why take on the extra burdens of trying to achieve higher Harmony when those ideals are so unrealistic?

- Having to do demeaning, pointless labor, *especially* when there are more rewarding experiences to be had.
- Being forced to punch a clock and “tote the bail” to pass as a human is frustrating.
- Regular patrols of the character's territory can become tedious in those too-brief moments of peace. So what if a spirit slips through? It happens all the time, and the world hasn't fallen apart yet.
- Being asked to participate in a long and complicated rite is an irritatingly prolonged effort, particularly if there's a chance the rite might fail.



Wrath: This one is too easy for the stereotypical angry Uratha. What differentiates this impulse from the ramifications of Primal Urge is that Wrath is not predatory. It's out of proportion — in that way somewhat like Rage. This anger does not stem from the primordial sources of Father Wolf and Mother Moon, but from human foibles. As such, the anger is closer to the surface, quicker to boil over.

- Any time the character is prevented from using physical or implied physical violence to get what the character desires can cause stress for a wrathful character.
- Not avenging a slight, especially one given by a human in public can cause wrathful stress.
- Not finishing off an enemy when he's down. This does not have to mean killing, but letting someone walk away when he could be carried away.

COOLING DOWN

If the Storyteller chooses to apply a penalty to Death Rage checks due to stressors, the penalty is likely to continue until the werewolf does something to alleviate the stress. Of course, the simplest way is to give in — but succumbing to *Kuruth* should always be the last resort.

In order to maintain Harmony in a stressful modern environment, a werewolf needs come up with ways to vent her frustrations. She may sleep or tear things apart, but she can also realign herself in a more active fashion by embracing her true heritage as Uratha — by doing what comes natural to werewolves. This often means that werewolves may have to suddenly break with daily routines to go and exorcise their demons — leading many humans, such as their employers, to regard them as irresponsible, moody and perhaps unemployed.

Sleep: Like natural wolves, Uratha become opportunistic sleepers after the First Change. While many like to sleep eight hours a day, werewolves can subsist on a series of naps during that time. Uratha can do this indefinitely, without the ill effects that many humans face. Sleep is not always an option, though, as it can be hard to fall asleep while still angry unless absolutely exhausted as well.

Shapechange: Werewolves feel an instinctive need to experience extended periods in each of their forms. A few minutes are not enough to reset a werewolf's tolerance — hours are normally needed.

Rage on: Even the Gauru form is natural to werewolves, it just not something that they risk for extended periods of time. The Gauru form can make them feel better, if they have the opportunity to take their frustrations out on something (or someone), but it's a risky way to exorcise those inner demons.

Hunting: Time spent hunting game or spirits is the most certain and fulfilling way of restoring peace of mind. Hunting soothes the instincts, telling the werewolf yes, *this is what you were born to do*. The hunt need not be successful, but must last for several hours.

URATHA ADVANTAGES

Werewolves lack the social prowess and connections of vampires, and even compared to normal humans, they tend to be at a disadvantage socially in the mundane world. The one true advantage werewolves have comes from the spirit world. Commonly, this is through the application of their Gifts, but they have to still preserve the Oath of the Moon, so many of their visually obvious Gifts are of little use. While spirits are used much more commonly by Pure Tribes, the Forsaken also use spirits to influence this world. Even though a small favor here or there may cost dearly, but it can often allow Uratha clandestine ways to affect the world. Wise Uratha call in favors sparingly, only after much thought into the possible ramifications. Any dealings with spirits have the potential to backfire on the werewolf and his cause. The costs might be higher than the rewards.

The favors described below concentrate upon artificial spirits, but desperate Forsaken and the Pure are often much less subtle — sometimes using spirits to possess humans the werewolves wish to use.

The favors are listed in three degrees of difficulty: minor, moderate and major. These are grouped by the level of Influence needed by a spirit (and hence the spirit's rank) and by the likelihood that a given spirit might agree to the favors. The effects generated by these favors are most often temporary. Use the explanation of the Influence ability to dictate exact duration and so on (see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 274).

VEHICLE-SPIRITS FAVORS

Vehicle-spirits are quite useful, especially to urban werewolves. Most awakened vehicle-spirits do not have the ability to repair themselves permanently so relatively simple acts of maintenance can be used for chiminage. Some vehicle-spirits might grant minor services for minor repairs or maintenance — although a vehicle's real owner might question the player's motives. Moderate favors may require major bodywork and augmentation. Major favors might require the Uratha to get rid of an offensive owner or rival spirit and should absolutely be difficult tasks in and of themselves.

Although vehicle-spirits might go in for random acts of vandalism, or subterfuge, against their earthly kin, asking a vehicle-spirit to destroy "innocent" vehicles doesn't automatically incline it to agree. Even powerful vehicle-spirits for whom it would be easy, for example, to destroy the car of an Uratha's enemy as it speeds over a bridge, would demand a heavy price from an Uratha to act in this way, even if provided with a good reason. Remember, spirits do not do *anything* for free. Ever.

This listing assumes that the characters have encountered or summoned a vehicle-spirit.

Minor Favors (Influence •, 2–3 Essence)

- Make a vehicle faster

- Fix a flat
- Make an engine stop by adjusting the timing

Moderate Favors (Influence •• or •••, 4–6 Essence)

- Call a vehicle to the Uratha's location (spiritually hailing a cab)

- Cause a blowout
- Fix a more serious problem
- Make a junkyard car run anyway

Major Favors (Influence •••• or •••••, 8–12 Essence)

- Alter the route of public transit
- Repair a near-totaled vehicle
- Create a vehicle from parts at hand (usually usable only in a junkyard)

TOOL-SPIRIT FAVORS

In limited circumstances, tool-spirits are by far one of the easiest descants to deal with. After all, their mere use generates Essence of the appropriate resonance. Tool-spirits do have their drawbacks since these spirits tend to be rather narrowly focused and jealous of other, especially more useful, tools. To a hammer-spirit, everything appears to be a nail...

Minor Favors (Influence •, 2–3 Essence)

- Open a simple lock
- Sharpen a knife

Moderate Favors (Influence •• or •••, 4–6 Essence)

- Open a complex lock
- Seal a doorway
- Operate an electronic gate

Major Favors (Influence •••• or •••••, 8–12 Essence)

- Create a tool or a set of tools

INFORMATION-SPIRITS FAVORS

Information-spirits are tricky to deal with since they normally require information for their services — a character often has to know something the spirit wants (and does not already know) or can deliver some service that will either preserve a secret or increase the spread of the spirit's particular kind of knowledge.

Minor Favors (Influence •, 2–3 Essence)

- Turn off a cell phone
- Change a street sign or license plate

Moderate Favors (Influence •• or •••, 4–6 Essence)

- Translate a passage in a book
- Alter the information coming out of a radio or TV
- Alter/destroy information on some magnetic memory

- Give up a low-encryption password

Major Favors (Influence •••• or •••••, 8–12 Essence)

- Locate a cell phone carrier wave (even while it is off)
- Alter information in multiple databases

URBAN WOLVES

Urban environments make one of the most exciting and challenging settings for a **Werewolf** game. They offer a dynamism that is unparalleled for those characters who learn to embrace change. Werewolves who cannot learn the ways of the city run the risk of being ground up in its cogs, but those werewolves who survive can become predators of concrete and glass, primeval beasts who are not afraid to stalk humans in the heart of civilization.

ADVANTAGES OF CITY LIFE

Many predators are most comfortable in the midst of their prey or at least camouflaged amongst them. In the same way, the high population density of cities provides a lot of cover for werewolves. They find it easier to melt into the masses of humanity.

The high population also means a wide variety of mates to choose from and a better chance of running into a wolf-blooded. Werewolves simply looking for sexual release can hunt the same bars and clubs that humans do.

A city's wealth of employment opportunities makes this location very favorable since werewolves' temperaments often have them moving from job to job. In many ways, a life on the other side of the law is also easier in the city due to the large population and the concentration of wealth. Many werewolves find themselves in need of certain black-market services that are easily found in cities — including false driver's licenses, false visas or fences for stolen goods.

Urban chronicles often offer Storytellers a wealth of antagonists that rural chronicles do not. Groups interested in crossover games with multiple vampires need to be in high population centers, since the undead need to stick to their food supply. Certain magi also gravitate toward the cities, where the magi can pursue their learning among the tides of humanity.

CONSEQUENCES OF CITY LIFE

Cities do have their drawbacks. Primarily, this has to do with the same frustrations that many humans have with city life: crowded living conditions, lack of natural surroundings, pollution, sensory overload and so on. Unfortunately, the nature of Uratha makes many of these same pressures far more acute. Urban werewolves often find maintaining the balance between their spiritual and physical selves much more difficult in the urban pressure cooker.

What some call dynamism others call maelstrom. City territories are incredibly high-maintenance affairs. The shifting mass of humanity and their problems can turn a stable territory into a war zone overnight: ethnic tensions can suddenly flare, fires can cause much damage, construction projects can rile the courts of artificial spirits and the like. Cataclysmic events like bombings or four-alarm fires do more than devastate human lives and material structures: these events also blight the Shadow as well, sometimes opening up holes for older horrors to exploit.

Some changes in the Shadow are less dramatic but represent a tide of negative spiritual energy that is nearly impossible to throw back. The slow festering of poverty and crime bring a spiritual sickness in their wake, one that in turn engenders more poverty and crime. Once entrenched, the natural ecology of the Shadow is self-perpetuating.

Since cities also attract other supernaturals — namely mages and vampires — werewolves also risk crossing paths with these entities' schemes and desires. It is certainly the case that a werewolf's territory may easily overlap the territory of vampires or the neighborhood a mage looks over without concerning any of the parties. But, the predations of vampires and the plots of the magi may unwittingly ripple into the Shadow, and provoke confrontations with a pack.

In the same way, a pack's efforts to stabilize their territory may negatively impact the plans of other supernaturals. Although it is less common for vampires to actually perceive what is going on, they often have the social resources to figure out who is likely responsible. Magi, on the other hand, have uncanny perception. While some of their groups may find the work of the Uratha either of no consequence or even beneficial, other magi might find the werewolves' influence inimical and react accordingly.

Other supernaturals can also cause problems for each other just out of curiosity — all of the groups have secrets that need to be kept. Finally, there's just old-fashioned dislike and prejudice. It's just as likely that any supernatural just doesn't like a particular character — and reacts with an insult, poor behavior, bad manners. While most supernaturals reject the label "human," they certainly seem to have many of the same foibles of their human nature and often quite a few more tacked on as part of their supernatural transformation.

The Beshilu are a constant threat in an urban environment since their vector, rats, is a given in any large urban area. Other monsters, some not normally encountered by the Uratha but hinted at in urban legends, make their homes in the cities. Storytellers should consider the information provided in *Antagonists* to provide some story ideas and mechanics for their chronicles.



DEFINITION OF TERMS

The words "urban," "rural" and "suburban" call up clear images in our heads, but more precise definitions are a lot more difficult. Any town, neighborhood or village with a population of greater than 2,500 is technically an "urban" environment according to the current US Census definitions. European definitions, due to overall higher population density, are even more arcane. For the purposes of our discussion, we will use the admittedly subjective definitions described below. Still, the final call is with the Storyteller and should be based on what seems to be an

adequate definition for the group and the needs of the chronicle.

Urban: Large cities and industrial areas.

The distinguishing feature is lack of contiguous green space — the majority of ground instead is covered in concrete and blacktop. The natural topography of urban areas is nearly hidden by development as hills are flattened and streams are channeled and covered over. Landmarks become buildings rather than natural formations, and most dwellings are multi-family (apartments, condos, etc.). More technically, an urban environment is a heavily built-up, contiguous region with around 50,000 or more persons and a relatively high population density. In the **World of Darkness**, urban areas are often the scenes of social decay and industrial blight.

Popular Archetypes: New York, London, Paris, Bangkok, Madrid, etc.

Suburban: Suburban areas are less densely settled areas that normally abut urban areas. Suburbia is distinguished by often-crowded housing developments and urban sprawl: strip malls, fast-food corridors, supercenters, etc. Normally, these areas also contain parks and may still have significant green space. Many small towns within one to two hours' commute of more urbanized areas actually could be labeled "suburban," since the towns are essentially bedroom communities of larger cities and suffer from the same suburban sprawl of larger communities. In this setting, suburbia is a plastic veneer of contentment and prosperity, covering a spiritual wasteland.

Popular Archetypes: *American Beauty*, *Repo Man*, *Poltergeist*, *The Graduate*, *The Ice Storm*

Rural: Rural places include small towns identified by low population density, distance from urban areas and close proximity to wilderness and/or farms. If a person sees working fields and livestock on her way into town, it's a rural environment. It's a mistake to assume that the sins of more urban scenes are vacant from these Mayberry-like settings. Small towns have their secrets. In the World of Darkness, they are almost always secrets best left undisturbed.

Popular Archetypes: Arkham (H. P. Lovecraft), Castle Rock (Stephen King), Salem's Lot (King), Royston Vasey (The League of Gentlemen), *Deliverance*

Useful Links

- **English Portal for the European Union:** http://europa.eu.int/index_en.htm
 - **National Statistics Online — home of official UK statistics:** <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/>
 - **United Nations Population Information Network:** <http://www.un.org/popin/>
 - **US Census Bureau:** <http://www.census.gov/>
- 

TRANSPORTATION IN THE CITY

Without a license and a vehicle, a character is forced to either walk, risk moving about in wolf form or ride public transportation. Most werewolves find the prospect of spending hours crowded next to humans distasteful — to put it mildly. For many werewolves living in a city, public transportation is their only choice when they need to travel quickly from place to place since the opportunities to travel in wolf form are few and far between.

There is another option, although it may strain the disbelief of Storytellers and players. There are plenty of urban fantasy tales in which it seems like huge and well-maintained sewers lead to every part of the city — where buildings are awash in poorly secured, yet conveniently human-sized air conditioning ducts that lead to any room. That level of fantasy may be palatable for some Storytellers and players. Others reason that traveling in a sewer — even if it actually leads anywhere you want to go — naturally means that one *smells* like a sewer, and, if it smells bad to a human, it's unbelievably repulsive to the Uratha. Still, the World of Darkness draws some inspiration from movies as well as real life, and so cinematic environmental conditions aren't out of place.

URBAN SET-PIECES AND STAGES

Set-pieces are the big budget scenes in the movie — usually reserved for the climax or denouement of the film. For **Werewolf**, these are also iconic locations that identify a city, the urban stages on which players *expect* to play out their chronicle's drama. A Storyteller should use these settings wisely to project an urban mood and add excitement without resorting to Jerry Bruckheimer-like action overload. A confrontation with Beshilu on the rainy streets of Little Korea, followed by a chase scene over the rooftops sounds great; adding helicopters with searchlights, exploding cars, an animated Statue of Liberty and a chorus line derails the urban horror theme of a chronicle.

Don't forget the weather. Rain, thunderstorms, sweltering heat, snowdrifts, stars washed from the skies by city lights, fog, smog, neon reflecting in rainwater — all of these add flavor to the places you might use in your chronicle. Interject weather changes in the skyline once in awhile. It will make a difference.

TRANSPORTATION STAGES

These places are, of course, built for chase scenes, but can also be a set for a show-down with major antagonists. Places such as Grand Central Station have been used to great dramatic effect in film, and would serve just as well in a chronicle.

Examples: airports, alleys, crowded streets, dead-ends, bridges, harbors, subways and elevated trains, parking garages, the waterfront (seedy backwaters, cruise ship stations), train or bus stations, tunnels

BUILDINGS

Buildings are one of the iconic urban locations, whether famous buildings like the Flatiron Building or construction/demolition sites and the Shadowy ravages of the local crack houses.

Examples: apartment buildings (hallways, stairways, fire escapes, roofs), banks, bars, factories, hotels (from *no-tell* motels to the Ritz), office buildings (from Dilbertville to classy, modern swank) mansions, restaurants, ruined buildings, stores (the corner market to Harrods), tenements, vacant lots, warehouses

PUBLIC VENUES

Public venues include urban monuments like the Eiffel Tower, government buildings like the local courthouse or even holy sites (churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, some cult's shrine).

Examples: city dump, college campuses (dorm rooms, classrooms, the student center, steam tunnels, quads), emergency rooms, graveyards, monuments, memorials (from a local ad-hoc shrine of candles and pictures to the Lincoln Memorial), museums, police stations, prisons, public schools (playgrounds, classrooms, auditoriums)

EVENT LOCATIONS

Event locations include resorts, fairs and areas of local color such as traditional ethnic neighborhoods (Chinatown, Little Korea, Little Italy).

Examples: casinos, outdoor markets, parades, parks (art or music festivals), sports venues (Yankee Stadium), theater district

URBAN CHASE SCENES

There are tons of possible settings for interesting chase scenes: running rooftop battles between the Pure, automobile chases through city streets, hairpin turns underneath elevated train tracks, racing through parking garages, slogging through sewers after the Beshilu or fighting the Azlu on rickety tenement fire escapes.

Remember that the increased Strength and size of the Urshul, Gauru and, to a lesser extent, Dalu forms means that werewolves are more proficient jumpers and deadly at the chase. A werewolf in Urshul form has a damn good chance of catching someone attempting to speed off in a car or SUV, assuming that the car begins at a dead stop.

Optional Rule: The standard rules for chasing down a vehicle are on p. 71 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook** take into account the Speed of the participants. If this chase depicts a werewolf in Urshul form versus a human in an SUV, we assume 0 in all skills and 2 in all base stats. The SUV has an acceleration of 13, while the Uratha has a Speed of 11, a difference of 2 — that equates to no acceleration modifier on the first turn. In the second turn, the SUV driver will get + 5 dice for acceleration, +8 the second, + 13 on the third, etc.

This gives the SUV driver a dice pool of 1 on the first turn (2 Dexterity + 0 Drive + 0 Handling – 1 no Skill + 0

Acceleration bonus). The driver needs to get 11 successes (the Uratha's speed) to get away. It's clearly going to take the driver several turns to get away.

The Uratha only needs to beat the number of *current* successes of his quarry. His dice pool should be at least 3 (4 Stamina + 0 Athletics – 1 unskilled). So, the Uratha's got a good chance of getting the SUV driver in the first two turns — especially if the player judiciously spends Willpower to help with the chase.



NEW MERIT: DEMOLISHER (• TO ••)

Prerequisites: Strength ••• or Intelligence •••

Effect: The character has an innate feel for the weak points in objects. When attempting to damage an object, he ignores one point of the object's durability gained via reinforcement per dot in this Merit.



LIVING CITY

Werewolf adds another dimension to urban set-pieces. The set-pieces can be more than a mere stage: they can become actors in the play. They can be alive. You can take all of the places listed and add "awakened" in front of their description, and the whole nature of set-pieces changes.

Imagine the possibilities of an awakened amusement park, nearly forgotten, eking out an existence on some sagging waterfront boardwalk. What would the amusement park want? For example, an amusement park probably feeds off both the positive and negative emotions generated in its environment.



MORE STUFF TO BREAK

Desk (Flimsy): Durability 1 (reinforced to 2), Size 5, Structure 7, Damage 1

Desk (Sturdy): Durability 1 (reinforced to 2), Size 6, Structure 8, Damage 2

Framed Wall Section (Interior, weak): Durability 1, Size 4, Structure 5

Framed Wall Section (Interior, strong): Durability 1 (reinforced to 2), Size 4, Structure 6

Vinyl-Sided Wall Section (Exterior): Durability 1 (reinforced to 3), Size 4, Structure 7

Brick Wall Section (Exterior): Durability 2 (reinforced to 4), Size 4, Structure 8



URBAN GIFTS

Like Nature Gifts, the Gifts of the urban world focus on creatures and spirits of a particular environment, in this case the cities of humans. While useful even in small towns, Gifts are of the most benefit in large cities. Urban Gifts are an affinity Gift list for Iron Masters.

Artificial-spirits and animal-spirits adapted to the world of humans, such as rats, roaches and pigeons, can teach this list of Gifts.

CONCRETE BOLT-HOLE (•)

Uratha often need a speedy exit from a messy scene or a place to conceal themselves for a quick change of skins. In the city, this is can be hard to come by. Strip malls and supercenters are crowded and sometimes electronically monitored. This Gift directs the werewolf toward the nearest adequate place to conceal oneself for a scene. This Gift functions only in cities.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Wits + Subterfuge + Cunning

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The bolt-hole turns out to be automatically compromised in some way. The dumpster is filled with rot-liquefied fish; the alley is full of cops making a drug bust, etc.

Failure: No hiding place is apparent.

Success: The nearest useful bolt-hole is discovered. The character receives a +2 bonus to any Stealth rolls made to enter the hiding place without being detected.

Exceptional Success: The bolt-hole might be large enough for the whole pack, or contain something the character needs or have some added benefit, such as a secondary means of egress.

FOOT IN THE DOOR (••)

Even the most well-connected Uratha runs dry of associates after a while; this Gift can open new doors for her. When the character is in a situation in which she needs the services of a certain kind of professional, she can use this Gift to contact the professional. The character enacts the Gift and then uses some form of communication to contact the person. This may be done via phone, email, IM, letter, smoke signal — whatever form of long-distance communication the Uratha has at hand and knows how to use. This Gift does not speed up the communication, or make a broken cell phone work. In essence, the Uratha is asking a communication-spirit for help in the form of a connection to the resource she needs.

The Gift does not reward the Uratha with a name or introduction of any sort, just a means to communicate with whomever she needs via a ring tone or a fortuitously delivered piece of mail. The Gift cannot make a broken cell phone work or otherwise create a miraculous line of contact; a means of communication must be at hand before the Gift can be used.

The Gift can't be used to contact a particular professional. A character can't use it to contact "the hitman who killed Mayor Franklin," although she could use it to contact a contract killer. Nor could she contact "the mayor," but she could state "someone with the ability to stop Proposition 82." Of course, the person on the other end is not any way predisposed to work for you, nor are you provided with a ready explanation as to how you got the number.

For example, a character's sister gets shot in a strange part of town, and he needs to quickly contact a back-alley doctor to fix her up without alerting the authorities. The Uratha could enact this Gift, asking for "the best black-market doctor available in the city," and then hit the dial button on his cell phone. If successful, this Gift will dial the appropriate person. It's up to the character from there.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Presence + Streetwise + Glory

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Gift contacts an enemy, the police or in some other way provokes the authorities.

Failure: The communication fails — a wrong number, busy signal, out of service area, unexpected network delay, dead letter office or similar result.

Success: The number of successes indicates the dots in the particular Skill that governs the profession of the person contacted, up to the normal maximums.

Exceptional Success: The person contacted may have some reason to need a job, or may have otherwise been in a generous mood when contacted.

WINDFALL (•••)

Some Uratha are forced by circumstance, or perhaps by choice, into a state of near-poverty. Rather than resort to a dangerous spree of petty theft, the Uratha can use this Gift to receive a mundane item or modern convenience that the werewolf needs for a short period of time.

This Gift calls upon powerful spirits of money and good fortune to put something in the Uratha's hands for a brief period of time. The Uratha cannot ask for fetishes or cash, although she could ask for the key to a hotel room with a well-stocked mini-bar, for example. The Uratha cannot ask for something that is practically impossible or obviously supernatural.

It is up to the Storyteller to provide the item. Small items might be found in a trash can; larger items could be found just around the corner from the Uratha's location.

There is a huge catch to this Gift; no matter what, the item cannot be retained for longer than the time asked for. The werewolf who breaks this ban suffers a penalty (-4) to use this gift until a Rite of Contrition is performed, and she gives away enough funds or property as an act of chiminage to permanently reduce her Resources by one.





This Gift cannot be used to gain more than one item at a time.

Cost: 1 Essence and 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion + Honor

Action: Standard

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The item produced is defective, often dangerously so.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The Uratha must achieve a number of successes equal to the Resources normally necessary to purchase the item (the monthly rating, not the total assets). For instance, three successes could temporarily call up an item worth up to \$1,000. Fewer successes produce a similar item of inferior quality. For instance, if the werewolf has “requested” a van, the Storyteller would determine that a used van would go for about \$10,000, and thus require four successes. When the player achieves two successes on the roll, the resulting van is a clunker worth only about \$1,000 — it’ll run, but it lacks amenities and is in real danger of breaking down.

Exceptional Success: No particular bonus apart from the higher wealth limit.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier Situation

- | | |
|----|--|
| -4 | The character has previously kept an item gained from this Gift longer than the allowed time span. |
| 0 | Use of the item for a scene (a couple of hours). |
| -2 | Use of the item for a day. |
| -4 | Use of the item for a week. |

URBAN AWARENESS (....)

This Gift allows the werewolf to commune with the spirit of the city itself — gathering information about the state of the neighborhood in her immediate area. The Uratha can see through the eyes of the local fauna, feel the rhythm of the street and sense any presence that is out of the ordinary and/or dangerous. Remember that the perspective is that of the current urban landscape, not the Uratha. Most likely, the area will consider the Uratha a stranger unless the character is a local.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Streetwise + Wisdom

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character is overcome by the riotous sounds and smells of the city and suffers a -1 to all Wits rolls for the remainder of the scene.

Failure: The city-spirit ignores the character.

Success: As with Forest Communion, the character slips into a trancelike state. Successful activation of the Urban Awareness Gift allows basic information (presence of strangers, potential threats to the area, such as police, gangs, etc.) up to 500 yards from the werewolf. Each additional success increases the radius by an additional 100

yards and increases the detail of information learned. One success could tell the presence of strangers, while three successes could reveal the species and gender of those intruders. The Gift lasts as long as the user remains in the trance, but she is unaware of and cannot react to the outside world, nor can she relay her findings while the Gift is active. This Gift doesn't function in a wilderness environment.

Exceptional Success: No additional effect apart from greater range and increased information.

VERMIN RIOT (.....)

This Gift wakens the lowliest of lifeforms that have embraced the urban environment to defend it. The streets darken with hordes of rats, lice, cockroaches, ants or termites, or the skies are filled with flocks of swallows or pigeons or clouds of flying insects. These swarms of the city's vermin attack the Uratha's foes.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Animal Ken + Purity

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Gift runs out of control; the vermin are stirred up into frenzied activity, but swarm erratically rather than attacking a given foe. The Gift cannot be used again for the duration of the scene.

Failure: The city's parasites ignore the werewolf's pleas.

Success: Each success fills 25 square yards with ever-renewing hordes of vermin deemed appropriate to the location by the Storyteller — pigeons aren't likely to appear in the subway, for instance.

The swarm can be guided to attack anyone caught within its mass; the werewolf may nominate a target as a reflexive action. This attack has three effects. First, the Speed of anyone targeted with this is automatically reduced by -2. In addition, anyone caught within the swarm suffers one point of bashing damage per turn. Finally, anyone caught in the swarm is at a -2 penalty to any Skill use due to pain, distraction and/or obscured vision.

The swarm lasts for two turns per success, or until the werewolf dismisses it.

Exceptional Success: No additional effect apart from increased duration.

URBAN FETISHES

WOLF IN DOG'S CLOTHING (..)

This fetish resembles a dog collar, although the styles vary as long as the necklace is tight fitting. When activated, this fetish changes the normal appearance of the Urhan form into a domestic mutt of the same mass for a scene. The Uratha does not need to re-activate the fetish if she slips back and forth within that scene, although the exact look and form of the breed cannot be controlled when the form is taken. So, she might appear to be a mastiff before shifting into Urshul form, and when the Uratha

shifts back she appears to be a German shepherd mix. The character's Attributes are unchanged.

A dog-spirit must empower this fetish.

WOLF-SOLE TATTOOS (..)

These wolf-print tattoos are normally applied at the ankles or sometimes on the tops of the character's feet. When activated, the tattoos grant an Uratha in Hishu or Dalu form +2 Speed and +2 to jump tests for a scene.

A dog- or coyote-spirit empowers this fetish.

EVERYMAN HOOD (...)

The Hood is something that the Hunters in Darkness developed when they, for the first time, found their hunts leading them increasingly into the cities. Many of the early Hunters had a very hard time dealing with the mass and press of humanity crowded in the streets, and the Hunters' reactions, in turn, tended to give them away. The hood, originally part of a cape or overcoat, is now made part of jogging shoes or sweatshirts — any piece of clothing with a hood.

By pulling up the hood and activating the fetish, the Uratha begins to blend into any crowd of five or more. Attempts to shadow or track the werewolf suffer a -2 penalty for the duration of the scene or until the werewolf spends more than five minutes away from a similar crowd.

Action: Contested

TRANSPORTATION KEYS (... to)

Transportation Key Fetishes were first created by Iron Masters to aid them in traveling quickly and securely within or even between cities. These fetishes are made with the power of at least Jaggling spirits within specific transportation-spirit descants (car, bus, plane, train, etc.). So one Uratha may have a ... Plane Key Fetish, while another may have a Train Key Fetish.

Each key can be used a number of times a month equal to the fetish's dots. The fetishes only work on public transportation vehicles and networks. So an automobile key fetish only works on cabs, not private cars; train keys work on commuter trains, not freight trains.

The fetishes do not generate tickets, passports or identification for their users and can often lead to very sticky situations. The fetishes are always made from very ornamental keys — skeleton keys are traditional — although some Iron Masters now make the keys out of plastic swipe key cards.

Action: Instant

Dramatic Failure: The spirit of the vehicle deposits the Uratha in a random location, and the fetish refuses to work for one day.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The werewolf activates the fetish stating a specific destination or direction and steps onto the public transport appropriate to the fetish. She may then instantly emerge from any of those transports within five miles per dot in the fetish.

The werewolf cannot control the exact place or vehicle from which she will emerge — the Storyteller places her as close as possible.

Exceptional Success: The maximum distance is tripled.

Example: March needs to get downtown fast. He sees a human who has hailed a cab so he burns a point of Essence to activate his ●●● Automobile Key Fetish and pushes the startled human out of the way. He sits down in the cab and finds himself in another cab about ten miles away — within a few blocks of his destination. A woman with a very puzzled look on her face is holding the door, having just stepped out of the cab herself.

March says, “Thanks, lady” and gets out of the taxi as the cabbie screams about not splitting fares. March hurries into the crowd on the street, leaving the two to argue and wonder what happened.

SUBURBAN HELL

The suburbs are a very challenging place for Uratha and for Storytellers. The veneer of the normalcy or even banality of suburban existence may suit Storytellers and players in search of a chronicle that examines the assumptions of suburban existence and turns them on their head. Certainly movies like *Poltergeist* and *Ginger Snaps* prove that suburbia is as viable a setting for a horror story as the depths of the urban jungle or some tale of gothic horror set in a small town.

Perhaps suburbia is too normal, too sterile for some Uratha. It's a glimpse of what many of them grew up with (or grew up wanting) and now it's almost totally out of reach. For those born in the suburbs, the pain of the loss of their old life or the ideals of a “perfect life” is too much to handle. To live in suburbia yet not be a part of humanity, of what “normal” people have, is just too painful for some werewolves to bear.

Still, the dichotomies of suburban existence pose some interesting fodder for games. Suburbs became popular due to the assumption that cities were becoming too dangerous. Yet the suburbs have proven to be the main hunting grounds for many serial killers and major players in the drug industry. The suburbs are thought of as family-oriented, yet the suburbs of Los Angeles are the birthplace and home of the modern pornography industry.

Rather than fight against the popular stereotypes of suburbia, **Werewolf** can revel in them. Look at some of the common stereotypes of suburbia: that it represents some kind of insidious generic world order of proscribed uniformity, that it fosters depression and mental distress — miles and miles of half-acre lots with cheaply built-houses, pill-popping housewives and cheating husbands (or the reverse). The Shadow may be eerily still, even sterile-seeming, its denizens sliding quietly from food source to food source. In a game that makes peering beneath the

veneer of normalcy one of its themes, the suburbs have quite a bit to offer.

The Pure probably have a much more difficult time operating in suburbia than the Forsaken, so this gives a Storyteller an opportunity to focus on other threats. Perhaps the predations from the Shadow have attracted the Azlu to the suburbs to stabilize things, gather and/or shut down loci. Most importantly, the relatively high population density means food isn't going to be an issue for the Spider Hosts. In many ways, suburbia is their perfect playground.

PROBLEMS OF SUBURBAN LIFE

Lack of anonymity is a huge difficulty. Living in housing developments poses several problems for Uratha. First, neighbors tend to check up on each other. Even if neighbors are not close friends or even acquaintances, they are curious and concerned for their property values, children, pets or the like. Neighbors tend to want to know their neighbors' habits, names, places of work and so on. Strange goings on may be ignored for a while, but then they tend to be reported. Once a cycle of calls to authorities begins, it is hard to stop.

Werewolves have problems moving around in suburbs. Those who choose not to have or somehow lack driver's licenses find the lack of public transportation annoying. Even walking is often not much of an option due to a lack of sidewalks and the risks of being harassed by suburbanites for trespassing or loitering.

Moreover, a neighborhood with a few dogs makes traveling in any form but Hishu risky. While many modern housing developments have green spaces, they are often cut off from one another — rarely do they provide safe corridors where the Urshul form has much use. Sewage systems are most likely merely buried pipes for storm water runoff (lacking maintenance tunnels), and rainwater systems are fragmented. While the sewers might provide a bolt hole for the Uratha (or their prey), the pipes normally only lead from street drains to a local creek.

Patrons of the suburbs are often quite obsessive about security. Stores and parking lots have 24/7 security patrols. Even if the rent-a-cops aren't much of a threat, cameras and state-of-the-art security systems are.

Finding and holding onto a job in suburbia can also be a challenge. Characteristically, most suburban jobs are service-oriented, which are remarkably unsuited for the werewolf temperament. Of course, this can be somewhat of an advantage since normal humans don't last long in these jobs either, meaning that McJobs are as easy to come by as they are to lose. Skilled and unskilled manual labor is often another solution for werewolves who take on jobs as cash-only handymen or learn to hang with illegal immigrant work gangs. (This is a surprisingly good way to both stay off the radar and keep track of what is going on in the area.)

“Successful” werewolves in the suburbs might have telecommuting jobs or other jobs that allow them to work out of their homes. Of course, the expectations of the commute can cover a lot of other activity for the Uratha.

BENEFITS TO A SUBURBAN PACK

If you can manage to stay off the humans’ radar, there is a relative amount of security to be found in suburbia. As already mentioned, the Pure tend to stay out of suburbia. Most other supernaturals also find it less appealing. It certainly isn’t the place one would think to start looking for werewolves.

Suburbia might offer at least a temporary refuge to a pack that was dealing with larger issues in a neighboring city or in the surrounding countryside. Or to turn this on its head, some antagonist might also have reasoned out the difficulty that the Uratha have in dealing with suburbia and may be using that to his advantage.

Successful, established suburban packs tend to have, by their nature, extensive contacts in the human and spirit world. If the packs didn’t, they wouldn’t survive. This tends to make their territories extremely hard to penetrate.

Quite often, game isn’t a problem depending upon where the werewolves live. White-tailed deer do amazingly well in suburban environments that have at least some connection to a sizeable wood — even if the woodlands are in a park, for example. Since Uratha can hunt quietly and learn to clean up their messes, suburban werewolves are often as well-sated as their rural brothers. Other Uratha take out their needs for on stray animals.

SUBURBAN STAGES

They aren’t as overtly cool as cathedrals or suspension bridges, but suburbia has some set-pieces of its own that can make for interesting story elements. Certainly, any chronicle in suburbia needs to incorporate these elements eventually.

Housing Developments: Housing developments and their winding dead-end roads actually make for interesting chase scenes if nothing else, both in and out of the car. Classically, these chases involve speeding through access roads, and often develop into foot chases through backyards, over fences and through homes.

The Mall: Traditional closed malls, strip malls and megacenters provide excellent metaphors for crass commercialization. Think of how horror movies have used malls to great effect. How about an awakened mall or the Shadow of a store selling “Rides” to spirits in the spirit world? On a more physical level, malls offer great settings for action scenes — plenty of areas for interesting chase scenes, plenty of props, hostages and so on.

McFood: A true icon of suburbia, fast-food chains offer many of the same opportunities for action and storylines as malls. Some restaurant chains might have a certain reputation for attracting eccentric customers,

particularly the 24-hour establishments. As with malls, fast-food restaurants are great places for action sequences — hot grease, grills, microwaves, freezers, knives and other implements of destruction at the ready. What more does one need?

NEW RITE: SHADOW PLAY (....)

Many suburban packs become quite adept at reading the spiritual imprint of a place as a result of the often turbulent Shadow reflection of their home.

This costly rite calls upon the reflection of a location to replay a portion of its spiritual lifespan. With this rite, ritualists can often learn of events or times when a particular place had a different resonance or of tragedies that occurred there in the past. Though the rite has the power to reach back for centuries, it levies a terrible cost to do so.

Because of the allegorical nature of the Shadow, it doesn’t give definitive answers to questions like, who burned down the old Phillips house? Such a question would be answered only if the arsonists somehow struck from the Shadow — such as using a fire elemental to commit the crime from the other side of the Gauntlet — and, even then, only the fire elemental might be revealed.

What the rite does show is how the place’s reflection has changed over time in the Shadow.

Performing the Rite: The performance of this rite must take place in the reflection of a location in the Shadow. The ritualist first demarks the boundary of the area she wishes to perform the shadow play for her — leaving chiminage to the local spirits at key points. Then she performs a ritual howl and lapses into a trance. While others in the spirit world begin to see strange bands of distortion, they do not see the shadow play itself — the vision is only granted to the ritualist.

Note: If the area is awakened (i.e., it is a location spirit), this ritual may only be performed with the spirit’s acquiescence.

Cost: 1 Essence per success

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (1 to 100 successes, depending on Essence spent). Each roll represents five minutes.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Spirits in the location become openly hostile to the Uratha’s intentions. Rites in this area performed by the Uratha suffer a –2 penalty for a lunar month.

Failure: The ritual ends.

Success: Successes are gained. Each success allows the ritualist to replay five years of change in roughly five minutes at the cost of one Essence. This is not like a CD playback in which the user has full control to stop, start, search and pause the shadow play once it starts. While she can attempt to search for particularly significant events (ones that would have generated Essence flavored with a

particular resonance, for example), it is very difficult to control precisely.

Exceptional Success: An exceptional success replays 50 years of past occurrences for merely one Essence.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+2	Chiminage is very valuable to local spirits and/or connected to the events the ritemaster is interested in.
+1	The area has some connection to the ritemaster, such as within her territory.
+1	The area has a particularly strong reflection in the spirit world.
+1	The ritualist is a Cahalith.
+1	Chiminage is valuable to local spirits.
+0	The area is equivalent to a large room.
-1	The area is equivalent to a house.
-2	The ritemaster is attempting to locate a particular event.
-2	The area is equivalent to a building.
-4	The area is equivalent to a city block.

RURAL LIFE

Rural settings are at the heart of the classic werewolf story. This is where the world of humans and the world of nature are their closest. There's a thematic affinity there in having a setting that is part wild and part civilized, just as the protagonists are part human and part wolf.

Of course, in many areas what was once thought of as rural has begun to resemble the suburbia of the '70s and '80s. Hours spent commuting to work in more urban areas are now a small price to pay for the opportunity of living beyond the sprawl, and living in twice the house that you could normally afford. Of course, this also means that the ones fleeing the city and the 'burbs are merely bringing the sprawl with them. In some cases, the small downtowns killed off by the dual pressures of the flights toward the cities and then the arrival of the parasitic megamarts are now the stomping grounds of baristas and boutiques as many suburbanites flee the sprawl.

PROBLEMS OF A RURAL LIFE

One of the difficulties of a rural setting is that this setting often seems more static. While cities and suburbia are hotbeds of change, most folks assume that change in a small town is slow — most of the people and critters that need or want to live in a small town are already there. To a large degree this is true. Werewolves who move into a small community come under the same kind of scrutiny that any stranger would, and they have many more secrets to keep.

Uratha find the same problems with a rural existence that humans do, namely, the lack of employment. Many werewolves prefer to work a string of temporary jobs rather than settle, but the economies of most rural areas make this difficult. Starting any kind of agricultural business

takes resources that most Uratha lack, so many are forced into low-wage manual labor jobs.

The other problem with a low-population area is that it's difficult for newly settled packs to find mates. Locals tend to keep track of their own family members so casual partners are difficult to come by without the possibility of stirring up some trouble. Wolf-blooded locals who live in rural areas often have one or more associated packs that don't take kindly to others horning in on their breeding rites.

Run-ins with the Pure are more common in rural areas as many Pure, particularly the Predator Kings, prefer to live in less-populated regions. Many of the territories lost by the Forsaken to the Pure in the wake of the Brethren War were in rural areas, and the territories' locations have been lost to the Tribes of the Moon. Newly formed packs looking for unclaimed territory often find that a prime spot is already claimed by the Pure. They are expert at hiding their presence from the Forsaken, until it's too late.

BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Country life means it is much easier to obtain property where the Uratha won't have to worry overmuch about nosy neighbors actually seeing what is going on. Werewolves can conduct many of their rituals in the open air, which seems much more fitting to the Uratha.

The simple fact that there is more natural space in rural settings and that Uratha can find areas away from human eyes means that werewolves can spend time in all of their forms much more easily in the country than in cities and suburbs. This is most important for maintaining Harmony, but also has other important benefits. First, it allows them many more choices for patrolling a territory since they can move about in wolf form much more freely. If they are lucky enough to live near active wolf colonies, they can spend time getting to know the other, distant half of their heritage. Even so, one hazard of rural life is that the natives are likely exposed to wild canines as well, meaning locals are also much more likely to shoot what they perceive to be a trespassing wild dog, coyote or wolf.

The growth of the information networks is also fueling something of a high-tech renaissance in the country as businesses and independent contractors find that they can operate their businesses much more cheaply in rural areas. Some of the high-tech support jobs lost to foreign countries are now moving to call centers in small towns. Some small communities are installing wired and wireless connections in their areas to promote these new business opportunities.

CRIME IN THE COUNTRY

Many of the criminal activities that some werewolves choose to deal in or prey upon are centered in rural settings. Many people assume that rural life is idyllic, forgetting that the overwhelming majority of methamphetamine labs are found in rural areas, as are clandestine airstrips for drug shipments and secret docks for smugglers' speedboats.



The Uratha's heartiness and keen senses are huge advantages to those criminal pursuits that involve spending long periods of time in wild, inhospitable areas. For example, some werewolves make a living as coyotes, guiding illegal workers across borders in the Southwest or smuggling heroin out of Afghanistan into the former Soviet Union.

Werewolf biker gangs are not uncommon in rural areas either. These gangs have unusual territories in that they are concentrated on roads — often not patrolling the area that their “territory” may surround but merely the roadway and a few adjacent places, usually well-hidden loci and their dens. These gangs, like human gangs, are often mixed criminal organizations — depending upon drugs, prostitution and protection schemes to stay in business.

Some of these gangs may contain more than one pack, all operating in loose cooperation, with the evitable flare-ups to establish dominance. Some gangs have several layers to their organizations; the pack is where the leadership and real muscle of the gang is concentrated, with ancillary human biker gangs screening the pack's existence.

RURAL STAGES

While an urban setting often seems placid on the surface, the Uratha realize that the Shadow of the countryside is often the frontline in struggles between various spirit courts — artificial, natural, animal, elemental. All of these factions vie for dominance beneath the veneer of pastoral calm.

Of course, the countryside has long been fodder for horror and mystery stories, and still is: “The Hound of the

Baskervilles,” *The Wolf Man*, *The Ring*, *The Blair Witch Project* are all examples. A chronicle can use some of the set-pieces from stories like these to great effect.

The Dark Wood: A haunted forest is the classic rural horror setting. Of course, werewolves are normally the ones doing the chasing, but with the Pure as antagonists, a Storyteller could reverse the roles and have the pack hunted. Perhaps the wood itself is the hunter — a predator that forces the Pure and the Forsaken to combine efforts to bring it to heel?

The Graveyard: The rural turn on this set-piece is the number of forgotten cemeteries that dot the lands between established communities. What lies beneath? What waits for the tread of Uratha feet to wake it? What spirits may slumber here?

The Ancient Shrine: Many native holy sites exist on private and public lands in the countryside that may have import in the Shadow or to as-yet hidden cults. Some sites may be or may have been loci. If nothing else, the spiritual reflection of these places may hint at the fate of those who have come before and perhaps provide wisdom and mysteries for the future.

Haunted House: Classically a forgotten Victorian mansion, the actual haunting presence in *Werewolf* might be a collection of human ghosts or the awakened house itself, or perhaps a combination of the two.

Environment: Often the environment itself suggests encounters and stories for a chronicle. Certainly, in a werewolf chronicle set in the countryside, the environment should be a primary concern for the pack. The fact

that swamps, hidden mountain coves, abandoned mines, caves and an ancient stand of trees can harbor untapped loci or can be awakened spirits with their own agendas.

The Farm: Modern agribusinesses in the World of Darkness may have less than savory means of achieving their business goals, and the often-inhumane, and environmentally unsound, modern farming methods may have spiritual ramifications. What is the spiritual reflection of a veal ranch or a chicken-processing plant? What do the Pure use to fertilize their fields? Why do their farm animals often take on feral appearances?

On a more prosaic level, a farm also offers an interesting battleground with plenty of cover and implements of destruction: pitchforks, silo tops, tractors, combines, cornfields, domestic animals, for example.

Chthonian Eugenics: Critters from the dark places of the world or Shadow may have fully inculcated themselves in a rural setting. Families with ugly secrets, servants of the idigam or dark werewolf cults that follow their own motives are fodder for many rural chronicles.

The Hidden Lab: Many of the world's most secretive military intelligence and research labs are not found in cities but in the countryside. Supernatural groups may be using these labs to promote their own agendas, or the dark purposes of the scientists may have unwittingly attracted the attention of forces from the Shadow. The scientists may, in fact, be puppets for some entity.

OATH OF THE MOON

The Oath has a very serious purpose within the lives of the Uratha. Most importantly, the Oath keeps them on the narrow tightrope that they must maintain or risk Death Rage and, eventually, devolution into *Zi'ir*. The Oath guides the Tribes of the Moon, teaches the young what they are to do, shows how they are to live their lives and also serves to differentiate the Forsaken from the monomaniacal Pure Tribes.

Some Forsaken can't take the strain of living up to the Oath's tenets or mistakenly reject the Oath as a social construction. A few Forsaken fall into insanity or join the fringe groups of the Uratha to escape the Oath. Many chose an easier path, that of the Pure, that which seemingly holds to a much simpler ideology: death to the Forsaken.

Truly mastering the Oath requires sacrifice, attention and judgment. What if trying to uphold one tenet of the Oath breaks another? Is it okay to kill a human to protect some other oath? These are some of the questions this section will address.

A Storyteller should encourage the discussion of these grey areas and exceptions. Simple answers are for the Pure. The Forsaken are forced by their nature and their Oath to make difficult decisions. Sometimes they have a price.

Sometimes they have unforeseen consequences. Sometimes the Oath demands a choice of the lesser of two evils.

THE WOLF MUST HUNT

UKUM DA TAKUS

This tenet of the Oath seems the most clear on the surface. Uratha are required to hunt the Hosts, rogue spirits in the physical world. The Oath also requires Uratha to deal with other threats to their territory. This is the aspect that most often causes controversy — sometimes between packmates or between packs. A threat that seems to come from the world of humans is especially difficult to adjudicate. What happens if the politics of the human world plan to re-zone an area of the pack's territory, in some way negatively affecting the Shadow or even merely affecting the home of one of the packmates? Prevention seems to be the key here and points out one of the strengths the Forsaken have over many Pure. That is, that packs that attempt to divorce themselves from the world of the humans risk being caught in such situations. If a pack has time, they have an arsenal of powers to bring to bear. Beyond Gifts and rites, packs have their abilities to manipulate the spirit world by coercing specific spirits into or out of an area, which can subtly (if not so controllably) shift the mood and feelings of powerful humans. A few packs have resorted to allowing spirits to Ride humans to influence votes or decisions — consciously bending or breaking one tenet in order to produce a greater good.

What if the act of hunting might risk breaking another tenet such as revealing the presence of the Uratha? This might come into play when the pack is forced to bring down a Ridden who holds some influence in the world of humans. Knocking off the police chief or mayor is always going to require a lot of finesse and risks some serious repercussions. Faced with this kind of situation, some packs might try their best to cover their tracks or try to re-direct blame on to some other party. Other packs might choose to control the situation rather than act overtly. For example, if the damage has already been done — for example, the person is Claimed — a pack might choose to merely bring the Claimed under their power, neutralizing its affect on the Shadow or the chance of propagating more of its own. Basically, many Uratha would argue that to hunt is not necessarily to kill, rather it has to do with control and awareness. Sometimes that is enough.

THE PEOPLE DO NOT MURDER THE PEOPLE

IMRU NU FIR IMRU

All Uratha know the meaning of this tenet is the most argued over and, therefore, the most violated. Wise alphas bring this tenet up with the pack and make sure that there is agreement about its interpretation — most keenly, does it apply to the Pure and to the wolf-blooded?

This saves discussion or hesitation in the heat of the moment and can save (or end) lives.

The killing of anything, even animals, can lead to questions, evidence and the endangering of other tenets. Killing humans is much more risky; killing Uratha and wolf-blooded has those same inherent dangers and raises the risks to the pack even higher. Blood feuds, in-pack wars and widespread Pure hunts make the fallout from an Uratha's death much more severe. A war between packs is sure to disrupt the ability to hide among humans, though this may be a secondary concern to surviving such a war in the first place.

Storytellers have a larger problem. Say the players debate the issue and decide to interpret this tenet very narrowly. The pack rules that "murder" applies: they cannot ambush and slay another Pure Tribe werewolf or slay any helpless Uratha, other than Zi'ir. Here's the rub — when it comes to making Harmony rolls, the Storyteller does not have to abide by their decision. Seem unfair? It's not.

The act of killing, justified or not, always has some impact on our psyches — especially killing our own species. Look at the suicide rate among soldiers, even in our "just" wars. The complete circumstances and psyches are never fully developed in a **Werewolf** game, hence the random resolution of Harmony loss. Slaying another Uratha should almost always result in a degradation roll for a character of appropriate Harmony (see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, pp. 181–183).

THE LOW HONOR THE HIGH;
THE HIGH RESPECT THE LOW
SIA SEHE MAK; MAK NE SIA

Another common mistake is to assume that all werewolves want to be alphas. That's not it at all. Like wolves, werewolves have an innate *need* for social order, not only in their pack but in their life outside. So, not every Uratha involved in a business is the CEO — but they probably learn the chain of command, and their place in it, more quickly than humans. Once this is sorted out, the series of obligations defined in this tenet comes into play.

It is natural for young Uratha to chafe under this tenet, especially in a poorly run pack. The famous sled-dog aphorism often applies to cubs: "Unless you are the lead dog, the scenery never changes." While seemingly powerless, pack omegas also have little to worry about unless they cannot keep their place. This is most likely the case with newly changed Uratha who violate this tenet out of latent human habits or because they feel that they can challenge a werewolf higher up the order. These issues tend to sort themselves out as the newcomers best their elders or, as is more often the case, get a little ass-whuppin' to put them in their places.

Honoring the social order of the pack does not normally entail blind obedience to one's superiors, or that alphas may not at times be harsh taskmasters. In the end,

it merely points out the necessity that everyone know their places, know their strengths and know that in times of stress there is some kind of order they can depend upon.

This tenet of the Oath causes an inordinate amount of friction with human society, even though the tenet, in part, could be said to discourage such friction. Werewolves expect the honor that is their due, and humans don't always recognize that. It can be very hard for a werewolf to quietly endure patronization or orders from a mere human, regardless of the human's position of authority. Ignorance of the Oath is not a sufficient excuse, not where instinct is concerned. Some argue that this tenet of the Oath doesn't apply to humans at all, that they are outside the hierarchy of lupine rank. Though this does provide a good argument for being forgiving of humans who fail to "honor the High," it also implies that the werewolves have no reason to "respect the Low." Humans, to this way of thinking, aren't "the Low." They're prey.

RESPECT YOUR PREY

NE DAAA

One of the hardest lessons for newly changed Uratha to learn is to not judge the spirit world. Spirits of murder and violence are easy to hate, but wise Uratha know that these spirits are no different really than spirits of flowers and joy. Respect in this case does not mean becoming an arbitrator of what should or should not exist. "Balance" is one of the themes of the Uratha's existence, and this applies especially to spirits. Spirits are alien creatures whose loyalty is only to their natures. Riding humans or other animals is a natural behavior, and this "problem" does not have to be settled with claws every time. Bargaining should become a respected and useful tool in the packs' repertoire. It's up to the players to learn to do this, and the Storyteller should not construe every encounter with the spirit world to hinge upon combat.

Humans are often the prey of the Tribes of the Moon. Sometimes killing humans is the only way to stop some behavior that threatens to send the Shadow out of balance or preserve some key aspect of the pack's territory, such as a safe house or the position of a locus.

Respect in this case means kill as a last resort, kill as humanely as possible and don't endanger your territory or the existence of the Uratha when you must kill. Killing for pleasure, for some human sense of "justice," for expediency, "because you can" and for material gain are all serious sins against harmony.

Storytellers again may find themselves at odds with players over what kind of reasons make the killing of a human justifiable. If a player is having a hard time justifying the kill to other players or finds the need to come up with a long explanation — that's a damn good clue that the killing isn't really justified. Simply put, if there is a question in your mind, have the player make the degradation roll.

THE URATHA SHALL CLEAVE TO THE HUMAN URATHA SAAAL TELL LU'U

Again, this is a time when an alpha must show true leadership. It is best to address this often-murky tenet of the Oath openly. Some packs forbid any sexual relations of any kind between Uratha. Other packs try to be more tolerant, looking at procreation as the only true crime.

The problems that can result from a more lenient outlook are so dire that most packs simply forbid sexual relations between Uratha. While *unihar* and a Ghost pregnancy can be avoided like a normal pregnancy, the psychological damage to the pack itself is much more immediate and insidious.

We have all heard the term “just sex, nothing more.” We all know that most of the time, when considering both parties, it simply does not work that way — especially over time. Uratha are passionate beings — in general, far more volatile than humans. The sexual act is as loaded with emotional fallout for Uratha as any humans. While bending or breaking this taboo might produce a rush, it often creates situation that divides packs, humiliates alphas and exposes soft underbellies that the packs' enemies can exploit.

This tenet more than any other assures that the world of humans cannot be abandoned entirely. This tenet speaks of the unbreakable tie between werewolves and humans, reminding the Uratha that they were all born to human parents and can only have proper children of their own by taking human mates. Without this tenet, and the biological necessity it alludes to, werewolves would have become true beasts long ago.

As werewolves grow in power and spend more time in the Urhan form, what may begin to be unthinkable, sexual attraction to wolves, becomes a possibility. Again, this can destroy the werewolf's pack and the wolf pack as well. Uratha are less “mouth smart” than wolves. A fight for dominance and mating rites within a wolf pack rarely results in death. When an Uratha is involved, a fight for dominance almost always does, often leading to breaking the next tenet.

DO NOT EAT THE FLESH OF HUMAN OR WOLF NU HU UZU EREN

Wolf and human meat are the sweetest to the Uratha's palate. Nothing ever tastes better. Once Uratha have taken their first electric taste of this blood, they are haunted by its memory, the sheer power that comes with the eating of one's own.

This tenet is essential for werewolves who choose to live among humans. Devouring a human is likely to set off a number of potential hunts for the criminal (depending on how circumspect the werewolf is), but this is a lesser

concern. The true difficulty is that the werewolf who lives among humans and has succumbed to temptation must live with further temptation every day of his life. The walk to the mailbox takes him across the paths of potential prey. He lies awake in bed at night, haunted by the scent of humanity that creeps into his bedroom. If a werewolf lives in the heart of civilization, one simple little mistake may be very, very hard not to repeat.

STORYTELLER OPTION: BLOOD-INSPIRED DEATH RAGE

Storytellers who wish to play up the awesome desire that wells up in werewolves when they taste a human or wolf-blooded may add the following to the list of stimuli that can cause Death Rage (see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 173):

- the *first* time a character deals damage from a bite attack to a human or wolf
- any time the character's bite attack does five or more levels of damage to a human or wolf

Be aware of the ramifications of using this in your game. Characters are likely to be more hesitant to bite humans or wolves, relying on less effective claw attacks. Therefore, the overall combat efficiency of the pack will likely drop a fraction *and* the instances of Death Rage will increase if you use this option. This may, of course, be just what you're looking for.

STORYTELLER OPTION: RAGE FEASTING

The inevitable has happened, and a character has entered Rage and killed a human. Does the Gauru eat? Although some Storytellers may decide that feeding is natural in this kind of situation, others may want a simple system for resolving the issue. The psychological and in-game ramifications of this issue make this rule optional as well for obvious reasons.

Uratha in the throes of Rage without apparent foes and presented with fresh human or wolf meat or seemingly helpless prey often begin to feed rather than fight. Being Essence-hungry or being a Ghost Wolf who chooses not to abide by *Nu Hu Uzu Eren* makes the situation even more likely.

Werewolves like freshly killed meat because of the special properties that allow Uratha to derive Essence from their kills. This trait fades as the spirit's connection with its corpse degrades — normally within minutes.

If the character is in Death Rage, this system cannot apply. The character is no longer in control of his actions — he may eat if there are no other moving bodies to tear apart, and he gets no roll to resist.

Dice Pool: Resolve + Composure

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character begins to feed and cannot roll to end his Rage for two rounds.

Failure: The character begins to feed, but may continue to roll to gain composure as the Storyteller sees fit. (No more than once a round).

Success: The character does not feed and begins moving away from the temptation as quickly as possible.

Exceptional Success: The character, confronted by his sinful desires, may choose to immediately shift out of Gauru into a form of his choosing.

Possible Penalties: Ghost Wolves who have not sworn the *Nu Hu Uzu Eren* tenet of the Oath (-1), the character has taken lethal damage from his likely "food" (-1), the character has taken aggravated damage from his likely "food" (-2), the character is at less than half of his maximum Essence (-1), the character is at 0 Essence (-2)

THE HERD MUST NOT KNOW

NU BATH GETHUL

This tenet has left a lot of dead Forsaken, wolf-blooded and humans in its wake. This tenet is the hardest for newly changed Uratha to fully understand and one of the most difficult to police. It is impossible for any of the pack or tribal leaders to keep up with, much less keep tabs on, all of their members. Still, it behooves the Uratha to look into any reports of werewolves in the media and even within fiction — sometimes a loose tongue is the source.

While reports of werewolves are still (for the most part) ridiculed, the propagation of the Uratha's vulnerability to silver in human folklore is a case in point — that even what may be seen as a myth, if widespread, can be lethal to the People. Wise elders, when instructing cubs, make sure that they know the unfortunate outcome of spreading the truth to any human. The humans most likely to die under the claws of the Uratha — wolf-blooded or not — are the ones who know the truth.

Uratha break many human laws as a matter of course, even when the werewolves are attempting to get along in human society. Eventually, some Uratha end up behind bars. Incarceration is viewed as a death sentence to many Uratha. Beyond the crushing loss of freedom, most do not think they will be able to maintain the Oath, much less hold onto their Harmony in that kind of environment.

A pack with a member headed to prison will feel a lot of pressure to somehow silence their packmate. This may come from other packs in the area, local tribal elders, even the Pure. Some may not give the pack a chance at rectify-

ing the situation and try to kill the Uratha themselves, or may send to the Lodge of the Wendigo to preserve the Oath by eliminating the likely offender (or sometimes the pack).

The pack has few choices in this situation as the security of the People becomes their burden. Most packs try desperately to clear their packmate of the charges, venturing from legal means to less savory methods. Some packs risk other tenets by contracting Ridden to implicate another human, setting up someone as a sacrificial goat to free their packmate. Other packs simply kill the offender, jeopardizing their Harmony for the good of all Uratha.

Elders of the Hunters in Darkness speak of another option — calling upon the enigmatic members of the Lodge of Silence. They are said to have means to protect or silence Uratha inside the prison system. Sometimes this lodge seems to already know, somehow, of the troubles.

THE LODGE OF SILENCE

Chains Make Us Free

Here's the story, bitch. Back in the day, 1802, two brother wolves by the name of Malcolm and Absalom Carter were thrown in the guts of the Moriah. It was called a hulk, a rotten prison ship permanently anchored in some salt-marsh in England. The wood of the ship was falling apart, eaten by worms and rot, but the chains were new steel. Still, no prison had held them for long, and neither would this. So they thought.

Try as they might, they could not break the chains — and each brother was in turn chained to seven other men and all fixed to thick iron bands laid into the decks. No privacy, no meat, no hope. After two weeks, Absalom, the youngest of the brothers, frenzied, but the manacles still held, breaking his wrists. He drove most of the humans on the decks mad with his howls and killed most all of his chain-mates, but the next morning the wardens merely added seven more cons and washed out the gore with hoses. Those were hard days.

Malcolm watched his brother fall in the depths of the hulk, as seven, then 14 and then 21 men were slaughtered. Finally, the butchery could not be covered up by the wardens, and two judges and Redcoat soldiers were brought on board to find the beast that was doing the killin'.

Luckily, Malcolm was finally chained next to Absalom, and the two brother wolves and the mad humans gibbered and waited for night. But, as the sun set and Malcolm saw the first signs of the Change, he leapt up and threw his chains around his own brother's neck and strangled the life out of Absalom. Some of the soldiers swore Malcolm was strangling a dog, but only his brother's body hit the floor.

Dead but free.



Malcolm hung the next day from the broken bowsprit of the Moriah, still in chains. But he did not pass beyond the Shadow — he's still over there. And he has friends on this side, in this cell in fact. He watches every wolf who enters the pen. If you talk, if you crack, if you hint at what you are, we'll make you free.

*You understand the rules now, punk?
Thought so.*

This organization exists primarily within correctional institutions. It offers protection to its members and, indeed, territory; it is a lodge for those who choose to remain, not those who wish to escape. Its mandate is simple — maintain the secret of the Uratha's existence within prisons, and identify those inmates likely to Change. Eliminate those who might compromise the Uratha due to the stresses of prison.

The fearsome totem of this lodge is called the Fettered Wolf who appears as a grey wolf, its coat matted black with dried blood and filth. A huge steel collar chafes its neck, and its huge head lolls at an odd angle. The collar has fittings for seven chains that trail behind the wolf and likewise are stained black. Some guess that the Fettered Wolf is the spirit of Malcolm of the *Moriah*; some call it a shade of Death Wolf, others claim it is not a wolf at all but the spirit of all the manacles that have ever killed a human. The Fettered Wolf never tells.

The Lodge of Silence has several mottos, but the one they teach first is "No pack but Us behind these bars." Members may also belong to other prison gangs, but the Lodge of Silence remains their paramount commitment. Many bear chain tattoos — often wolf or human skulls gagged with chain.

Ghost Wolves willing to live by *Nu Bath Githul* and the oaths to Fettered Wolf may freely join this lodge. Membership extends to life outside, but most Uratha return to older loyalties after they gain their freedom. The teachings of the lodge are not shared — once bound to the Lodge, one is bound for life.

Something is listening, after all.

Prerequisites: The Uratha has to have been imprisoned for an extended period of time. This could be for some felony-level offense or incarcerated for political views and so on.

Benefits: The Uratha learns methods for channeling his Rage when confronted by the pressures of incarceration and life inside. He or she gains +2 to resist Death Rage outside of combat, +2 to resist Intimidation and +1 to all Grapple checks.

TRIBAL VOWS

The burden of most Uratha does not end with the Oath of the Moon, but continues with their tribal bans as well.

BLOOD TALONS: OFFER NO SURRENDER THAT YOU WOULD NOT ACCEPT

Blood Talons are loath to allow foes to live that they think likely to betray them, which can often lead to controversy within a pack. Perhaps a vampire, helpless under the Uratha's claws, wishes to strike a deal with the pack. What if the Blood Talon does not accept the surrender? Some Blood Talons realize that others in the pack may have a greater ability to read a foe, or are far more devious than they. In these cases, the Blood Talon may release a foe, but not without warning the prey that her justice will be swift if betrayed. Other times, for the greater good of the pack, she will finish off the foe once and for all.

This ban extends to human foes as well, especially when a Blood Talon thinks that *Nu Bath Githul* may be violated by letting a human live. To many Blood Talons, these kinds of killings are a form of respect. If the Blood Talons were human FBI agents, they would not let the possible existence of the werewolves alone.

BONE SHADOWS: PAY EACH SECRET IN KIND

A spirit that crosses a Bone Shadow, while seemingly passive in many things, has made an implacable foe, for Kamduis' oath is one of appeasement, but also retribution. Bone Shadows greet the Shadow with open arms, but also with open eyes. Bone Shadows know that the spirits do not play by the same rules as humans or Uratha.

Bone Shadows can be sticklers about living up to agreements made to the spirits, but are also realists. Packmates who attempt to welsh on a deal will be confronted. Bone Shadows learn quickly that most spirits do not care about the intent of an agreement, but only the details.

HUNTERS IN DARKNESS: LET NO SACRED PLACE IN YOUR TERRITORY BE VIOLATED

"Sacred" does not equate to a locus. While loci are always valuable to werewolves and always protected, the loci may or may not be sacred to the Hunters in Darkness. The "sacredness" of a spot is hard to define, but, to most Hunters in Darkness, sacredness comes down to the place's purity — how true it is to itself. An ancient grotto of trees is sacred in the same way that the Brooklyn Bridge is sacred. The Hunters' desire for simplicity and clarity can often cause friction in a pack as a pack discusses how their territory should be transformed — or not. Hunters in Darkness generally believe that change should be measured and deliberative.

The term "violation," especially in terms of human involvement, sparks controversy as well. Some Hunters would have any trespassing or involvement of humanity be a despoiling of the Hunter's territory, but these Hunt-

ers are zealots. Others point out that the true hubris of humanity is its desire to remove itself from the natural world. Many Hunters refuse this line of reasoning. They'd no more kill a human for trespassing than kill a squirrel for the same; the human is part of the territory. It is such a concept that allows these Hunters to see eye to eye with the Iron Masters.

IRON MASTERS: HONOR YOUR TERRITORY IN ALL THINGS

Iron Masters' call to put territorial concerns above others can bring them into conflict with fellow packmembers. Iron Masters tend to address each new piece of information, each new pack asset, in terms of how they can use it to expand or improve their territory. This tribal vow is why, for millennia, the Iron Masters have been the tribe most inclined to concern themselves with human affairs and why that isn't likely to change.

It is the nature of "improvement" that most often fuels problems with Hunters in Darkness, for example. While Hunters take the long view or look at their territory in a more aesthetic, holistic fashion, Iron Masters embrace change — sometimes change for change's sake. They also are more tempted than most others to look at the benefits to humankind in the pack's efforts. Of course, some Iron Masters also decide that certain humans are not doing right by their territory, and take steps to change that. Being the tribe most active with humans and their concerns does not always imply taking the humans' side.

STORM LORDS: ALLOW NO ONE TO WITNESS OR TEND YOUR WEAKNESS

Storm Lords heartily support the aphorism that "three can keep a secret if two are dead." A Storm Lord packmember is often the staunchest advocate of keeping a totem's ban — not only zealous in guarding it themselves, but also watchful for others' temptations to even hint to it.

Silence is a power to Storm Lords. Sometimes this natural tendency can get the better of them. They can be too zealous in persecuting the loose-lipped or too tight-lipped themselves with valuable information. Immature Storm Lords can overreact, bringing lethal force to bear in questions of honor or secrecy, sometimes setting off a chain of events they did not intend.

The Lords' tribal ban can cause particular concerns in dealing with humans when the Storm Lord must seek medical attention or human aid. Some Storm Lords feel that humans "don't count" as potential witnesses to their weakness, that the weakness of a werewolf is still stronger than what a human might muster — but they're a minority. Most Lords feel that showing weakness to a human is just as shameful as showing weakness to another werewolf, or even more so. A Storm Lord might even be compelled to kill a potential witness just to keep to his tribal ban — a harsh judgment indeed.



CHAPTER III

THE WILD HUNT

One month.

Hard to believe that's all it's been. One month ago, my feet were splitting open on sharp rocks, because I'd had to throw my shoes away. One month ago, I thought I was dying of hunger because I hadn't eaten for an entire day. One month ago, I was shivering in the rain at night, wishing with all my heart I were home in bed and that none of this had ever happened.

Somewhere along the way, I lost track of time — and somewhere along the way, I found it again. I thought the ordeal lasted a lifetime. But it was only three weeks.

The blood's gone. My skin has healed, stronger than it ever was. I don't miss those shoes, I'm content with the bellyful of meat I took this morning and, although a warm bed would be nice, I don't need one.

I think I want to go back into town again; a hot shower might be nice, and it would be interesting to eat at a restaurant again. Maybe I should contact my folks. Maybe that's a bad idea. Maybe I should try to see Paul. Maybe I should never see him again. I don't know.

Yes, I'll go into town again. But not now. I'm not done here yet.

*"WHEN THE CATTLE-MEN CAME IN THEY SOON PERCEIVED IN THE WOLVES THEIR NATURAL FOES,
AND FOLLOWED THEM UNRELENTINGLY."*

— THEODORE ROOSEVELT, HUNTING TIPS OF A RANGAMAN

Deep within the soul of humans, buried under eons of evolution and, more importantly, decades of social conditioning, is the small portion that hears the call of the outdoors. The call is the urge to retreat from the structure of modern society, and enter a world and a mindset that is less complex, more direct, more wild. A few humans choose to answer this call, and they become the hermits, codgers and coots who live an hour (by car) from the nearest 12-person town and visit once a year or less. They remove themselves from "normal" human society because they cannot stay near and live as they like.

In werewolves, the call is closer to the surface. And the People are stronger than mortals. The People are able to live as they wish in and among the average human society, carving a territory out of the asphalt and steel and prowling among the many prey of the cities. But not all werewolves can be satisfied by that lifestyle. For whatever reason, the urge to delve into the wild is still strong within many. Some werewolves desire more animal prey beyond the feral cats and sewer rats. Other werewolves feel the instincts of their wolf forms more sharply, always tasting the need for trees and animal scents in the back of their minds. For those Uratha who will not or cannot choose to live forever in the midst of human life, there are the wilds.

Some werewolves claim territories in the cities but quell these cravings with regular forays into state parks or national wildlife preserves. This is a dangerous choice, because it leaves a pack's territory undefended or weak while the werewolf, or the entire pack, is out enjoying the wilderness. This is an option chosen periodically by the Elodoth, among others, who find that it helps them balance themselves between their animal and human, civilized and primordial, aspects. Many more of the Uratha who want the great outdoors choose to lay their territories there, finding themselves packmates with others of a similar bent. These werewolves, often Hunters in Darkness, manage to enjoy the wild and the hunt without potentially compromising their ancestral duties and often spend extended periods of time living as wolves.

This chapter describes the methods of survival in the wild for humans, then explains the many advantages the People have over the mortals with whom the People share the world.

MAKING IT THROUGH THE WILDERNESS

Emmett winced as another branch snapped beneath his feet, echoing through the silent forest. Fearing punishment, he

looked up at old Redshanks, whom her other pupils of the Pacific Northwest knew as old One-Eye. But One-Eye ignored the infraction and just kept plodding along through the underbrush. Emmett's heart sank, fearing that the ancient outdoorswoman no longer considered him worth teaching. He tried not to make any sound as he followed her through the maze of trees.

A few minutes later, One-Eye stopped so suddenly that Emmett bumped into her, so intent was he on avoiding the noise-traps on the ground. He looked into his mentor's eye and almost stammered out an apology. Before he could finish the first syllable, she spoke. "Why have you not been punished?"

Emmett thought before he spoke, something he hadn't always had the presence of mind to do. One-Eye was a harsh teacher, and, after three months, Emmett was no stranger to the back of her hand — or the rake of her claws. If he hadn't been punished for making too much noise, than it wasn't important that he not make noise. He decided to go for the simple answer. "I have not been punished because I have done nothing wrong, teacher."

"Wiseass," she said, and hit him on the side of the head hard enough to ring his ear. He'd learned early on that trying to avoid her blows would only earn a more thorough drubbing, a lesson in why he shouldn't try to escape his punishment. "Tell me why I didn't hit you when you stepped on that branch. The woods were so quiet, anything could have heard you." She smiled just a little.

The Cahalith frowned. One-Eye didn't smile. There was some kind of trick implicit — or a hint. "The woods were so quiet..." he said, "that nothing would have cared. The animals are already hiding from something." One-Eye nodded, and Emmett relaxed. But she kept staring at him, with a clear blue eye and a dead curtain of an eyelid. He started to look around, hoping to find a clue to what she wanted. She hit him.

"They have sought shelter before the coming storm. When I recognized this, I consulted the spirits, and they showed me what comes." She paused for effect. "A tornado."

Her protégé stopped, shocked. "But... but tornadoes don't happen here. They just don't. What should we do? How do —" A close-handed slap stopped him from falling into gibberish.

"The tornado is not of natural manufacture. But it is still only wind. We go underground." She pointed to a hole in the ground that Emmett hadn't yet noticed. "I have bruised my hand enough today, so I will not ask if you had seen that." With that, she changed into Urhan, displaying the coloration that gave her her name, and trotted into the safety of the wolf den. Still assimilating the situation, Emmett followed suit.

Before any werewolf can enjoy the solitude and nature of the outdoors, he must first know how to survive and thrive without the infrastructure common to most First

World nations. Survival depends on the availability of sustenance and shelter. A werewolf in the wild must be able to find enough food to properly nourish himself. He can live on roots and leaves if he needs to, but he needs to know what is edible. A werewolf is much better suited to the hunt, stalking and chasing prey for both exercise and fresh meat. He must also know when and how to seek shelter against the cold of night, the stark heat of day or deadly storms.

TRAVELING EQUIPPED, AND WHY YOU DON'T HAVE TO

Some proud, rugged survivalists and solitary mountain men choose to enter the wilderness without such thorough planning and preparation. Some fugitives are forced to do so. And, although there are some tools that not even a hardcore survivalist can do without, the Uratha are able to walk away from civilization secure in the knowledge that the wisdom and ability necessary to survive are buried in their blood. Some Uratha even consider it an issue of Purity. A werewolf who is less interested in maintaining that strict level of bare essentials will instead leave the city carrying everything necessary to make a wilderness excursion less deadly and less of a pain, but, for the People, the tools are never *necessary*.

CLOTHING

Werewolves may find clothing a nuisance when forced to assume other forms, but it is essential to pick clothes wisely when traveling. From the bottom up, an outdoor traveler's socks should keep the feet warm and dry. A light under-sock combined with a thicker, usually wool, over-sock will suffice. Some prefer one-piece combination socks, and others go with costly, 100% waterproof socks. Boots should provide good, stiff ankle support and good cushioning between the feet and the ground without sacrificing comfort. For those who want to feel the wind on their feet, there are hiking sandals available, but they should only be used in warm climates. In colder or snowy climates, heavier winter boots should be worn.

Almost any clothing will do in warm weather, though a good pair of jeans and a long-sleeved shirt will help keep the mosquitoes and ticks off; both are carriers of disease in certain areas of the world. In winter weather, more careful dress is necessary. Layering is the word of the day, and a human should wear as many as three layers when traveling in cold weather. The first, the innermost, layer fits closely and is porous enough to let moisture through into the outer layers. The second layer traps heat while breathing well and can be used as an outer layer on warmer winter days. The third, usually outermost, layer serves to protect the traveler from wind and precipitation.

Good leather gloves protect a traveler's hands while he chops wood, builds fires or pushes spiny plants out of his path. In the cold, liners can fit beneath a good pair of leather gloves to preserve heat, but a good pair of mittens, with liners, will keep hands much warmer than any pair

of gloves and can still be taken off before any undertaking that requires manual dexterity. Lined leather is still one of the warmest and most rugged materials available.

In cold weather, some form of headgear becomes desirable. Anything from an earband or light hat to a heavy balaclava is appropriate, depending on the temperature, wind and level of exertion the traveler expects.

Going Without

As mentioned above, a survivalist in warmer climes can travel without carefully selecting her clothes, especially if she is unworried about ticks and mosquitoes. One who has spent a great, great deal of time wandering mountain paths and gravel driveways barefoot can develop such calluses that walking just about anywhere presents no trouble, at least to her feet. Similar calluses can form on a survivalist's hands, after enough rough work. In the winter, however, even the hardest survivalist has no choice but to find several layers of warm clothing or hole up in a very secure shelter for the cold parts of the year. Frostbite can occur at any temperature below freezing, and hypothermia can affect people unprotected at temperatures as high as 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10 degrees Celsius).

Thanks to their regenerative talents, werewolves can form calluses at high speeds. The small nicks and beatings that a survivalist must give to her feet can't come any faster, but a werewolf's foot heals such minor damage in moments. The repeated applications of the rough treatment for creating thick calluses can take place seconds after one another, instead of days. At such a rate, a werewolf can have feet that would give a pedicurist nightmares in weeks. Of course, some werewolves never bother: the wolf and near-wolf forms have pads on their feet that are made for loping through the rough forests, mountains and plains.

While a werewolf who wants to spend time in her human form will still need to wear warm clothing during the winter, one who doesn't care can ignore that cardinal rule. Just as the wolf forms are appropriate for travel through the wilderness without man-made accoutrements, so are the forms perfect for surviving cold winters. A werewolf can easily spend most of the winter making good use of the wolf forms' two coats of fur, made to trap air next to the wolf's body and insulate it against the cold. A werewolf will still need to find a den of some sort for sleeping at night and will need to keep moving most of the day, but surviving the season should not be an onerous ordeal. A werewolf who wants to be able to change into her Hishu or Dalu forms during the winter more than briefly, or in any comfort whatsoever, should seriously consider using the Rite of Dedication (see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 150) on a set of warm winter clothes.

NAVIGATION GEAR

A compass is an essential part of any traveler's navigation gear. Only someone secure in her natural sense of direction should attempt to travel into the wilderness without such an aid.



Every traveler needs a map, unless he is intimately familiar with the area and its landmarks. Maps help a traveler find the best path through the wilderness to his destination and provide a record of where he has gone. A map can help pinpoint local landmarks and assist in finding a sense of direction. Maps are important defenses against getting lost, but not all maps are created equal. The minimum is the sort of map picked up at a gas station. Better maps can be found at libraries, bookstores or local chambers of commerce. The best maps are topographical governmental surveys and can be mail-ordered from the proper bureaucratic office. A map for use “on the road” should be laminated to protect it from rivers and rainwater.

The last element necessary to keep a traveler safely aware of his location is a pace counter. This device is made up of two collections of beads, threaded tightly on a thick cord or strip of leather. Each collection is separated from the other and prevented from falling off the counter by knots in the cord. A pace counter can be made for measuring kilometers or miles. An experienced traveler learns how many steps take him about the right distance — usually 100 yards or meters — and has a feel for how long that takes him. Every time he walks that distance, the traveler slides a bead in the larger collection from “up” to “down,” indicating that 100 yards or meters have been traveled. When all the beads from that collection have been pushed down (17 beads for miles, nine for kilometers), the next time the traveler would push one down he instead pushes them all back up and pushes one from the second collection down, indicating that a full mile or kilometer has been traveled. Repeat. When he runs out of mile or kilometer beads, it is a good time to stop and mark his position on a map.

Global Positioning System units represent the new, technological way to prevent getting lost in the wilderness. Still, no hardened outdoorsman will replace his compass and map with GPS. They cannot always maintain satellite connections when traveling through forests with thick canopies and may not be waterproof. The units also tend to have battery lives of no more than two or three days.

A compass, map and pace counter act as a full wilderness navigation kit and provide a +3 equipment bonus to Survival rolls to plot a path or figure out where a traveler is. Using a GPS unit will do the same thing until it runs out of juice.

Going Without

A survivalist may eschew use of maps, believing (perhaps correctly) that she knows the area well enough to recognize local landmarks and use them to ascertain her location. She might even go so far as to ignore a compass, relying on her ability to figure out the direction from the path of the sun, further use of landmarks and her understanding of local conditions. For example, although moss does not always grow on one side of a tree, in areas that suffer winter, the tallest trees will have the buds of young branches killed by cold winds on the north side, so the branches will point south; in North America, prevailing winds are generally

west to east, and winds in some other parts of the world are equally predictable. If a survivalist has given up map and compass, she will surely not bother with a pace counter or, heaven forbid, a GPS unit. Someone who spends much of her time in the same area is likely to have the Territorial Familiarity Merit (see p. 99) at one or three dots.

While a werewolf has no natural advantage when determining direction or reckoning position from landmarks, she can take the Urhan form and track her own scent (or scents, if she changed form along the way) back to her starting position. When tracking herself in this manner, a werewolf gains one extra die for the roll from memories of where she has been. Werewolves, as naturally territorial animals, can also purchase Territorial Familiarity more cheaply than mortals.

UTILITY GEAR

Knives are humanity's response to the animals' claws and talons. In the wild, knives have myriad uses and are truly indispensable to a traveler's survival, and the real survivalist will have several: survival, folding and camp knives. The ideal survival knife is thick enough for prying, weighty enough for light chopping work, of good steel that will keep its edge and still light enough that it doesn't feel unwieldy. The best knives also have a row of sawteeth along the back for cutting grooves in wood, a good grip and a solid butt for pounding. The lighter folding knife isn't meant for harsh use; dealing with food and whittling is more its style. Sometimes, a pocketknife also finds a place in a traveler's pack, but the folding knife can often cut the rope and cardboard that the pocketknife would have. Camp knives are larger and heavier than survival knives, to the point where some camp knives are almost (or simply *are*) machetes, and they see a lot of the same use. They hack, chop and dig when the survival knife doesn't have the length or weight to do the job, and can be lashed onto packs during travel.

Fire is one of the most valuable tools a traveler can have at his disposal. Although a good survivalist can make fire without special tools, it's not always easy, and the conditions that make fires necessary often make them that much harder to build. For that reason, a good fire starter is an essential part of a traveler's pack. A fire starter can make fire-building much easier and faster, eliminating the time necessary to construct a bow-and-drill setup. If a modern fire starter isn't available, the old-fashioned flint and steel can replace it, and even cheap, disposable butane lighters will get the job done when the material isn't too wet.

A portable water purifier can allow a traveler to drink from the local streams and lakes while ensuring that he doesn't catch any parasites from them. Though the filters need to be occasionally changed, a good purifier gets rid of 99.99% of everything that isn't water by pumping it through the filter at high pressure. A purifier can clean between 100 and 200 gallons of water before the filter needs to be replaced.

Shelter and sleeping bags are important for keeping a wilderness traveler warm at night. While a good, durable

wool blanket can contain body heat through all sorts of weather, the blanket will also be heavy. Commercial sleeping bags keep heat in just as well while consisting of lightweight fabricated insulation. If the weight isn't a concern, a traveler can go cheap without concern. Regardless of the bag or blanket used, the earth absorbs heat like a sponge and can quickly reduce someone to shivers without an additional layer of insulation. Old survivalists would sleep on small branches to separate themselves from the chilling ground, filling in the gaps with leaves, ferns and anything else. Today's campers can purchase a good, lightweight insulating sleeping pad for the same purpose and benefit from added comfort. A proper tent should be lightweight, waterproof, able to keep the bugs out and able to remain erect without needing tent stakes. Modern tents almost all share these qualities. A traveler who doesn't want to bring a tent could construct his own shelters instead. Winter tents should be heavier and double-walled to provide more insulation.

Going Without

No one used to surviving in the wild with minimal equipment will deny the pure usefulness of a knife. She might argue the virtues and flaws of different knives vociferously, but she will undoubtedly have been saved by hers several times. The survivalist may keep several, in which case she will probably have different kinds, as detailed above, or she may keep only one favorite. In this case, she probably uses a survival knife, the kind of knife named for what she does and designed to be as useful as possible in as many situations as possible.

Useful though a fire starter may be in wet weather, someone who can't start a fire using the bow-and-drill method at any time shouldn't be out in the wilderness. Making the bow, drill, handle and fireboard is just one of the many uses a survivalist will find for her survival knife. Since a fire can be used to purify water, make signals, keep out the deadly cold and cook food, no one should enter the wild without a basic idea of how to build one without unnecessary tools. Still, considering how cheap, small and fast a fire starter is, a survivalist may still carry one on her treks, secure in the knowledge that she doesn't *really* need it.

Someone who refuses to use a modern water purifier can use one of the old ways: she can boil the water or dose it with iodine. Either method kills most living things, and straining the water through cloth will eliminate the sediment from the water afterward. Neither method, however, eliminates poisonous chemicals, like pesticides or fertilizers, which purifiers do. Better, and still cheaper than a purifier, is to build a small water still. It can be put together with nothing more than an old gasoline can and a hose. Boiling the water in the can and letting the steam condense again in the hose, to drip into a cup or canteen, gets rid of everything but the water. It might be slower than a pump purifier, but it's definitely cheaper, more self-sufficient and, to some, more satisfying. A still may be hard for the light-packing survivalist to construct, but most survivalists will have at least a pot for boiling. Bring-

ing iodine tablets is also something a hardcore survivalist would find distasteful.

Sleeping out in the open is something that only a fair-weather survivalist can manage. Therefore, most survivalists will still carry a sleeping roll, even if it is more likely to be thick wool and heavy rather than the lightweight synthetics used by campers. But a survivalist will rarely carry her own shelter. She prefers to build her own, and then only if she really needs one to make it through the night. If she brings a cheap drop cloth of plastic and a cord, she can create her own tent with little effort. She can do without a cord if she builds a wooden frame. If she is a purist, she may ignore these man-made materials altogether and construct a simple lean-to. The lean-to is only sufficient for mild weather. Its cousin, the debris hut, is closed on all sides and covered in local materials that serve to keep the wind and rain out. In wintertime, when surviving in areas with several feet of hard, packed snow, the snow dugout is ideal: Dig through the snow down to the ground, then dig under the snow and hollow out an area sufficient for one person. Shore up the “ceiling” with branches and cement them there with snow. Place a layer of insulation on the ground, then huddle up under the roof while letting the fire burn in the area that’s open to the sky. The snow dugout protects from the wind and reflects a fire’s heat quite well. Done properly, the dugout can be quite comfortable and keep a survivalist safe and warm for days.

For the most part, a werewolf has no need of any of these things. Humans use knives to make up for their lack of sharp claws or teeth, and a werewolf has no shortage of teeth. None of the People’s forms have utilizable claws except for Gauru, and no werewolf is going to attempt to put those to constructive use. Still, sharp incisors and canines cannot do everything that a solid survival knife can. They cannot drill a hole for making a bow-and-drill fire, for example, and they cannot dig well at all. Unless the werewolf can use Partial Change (see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 128) to summon the claws of the Gauru form, she would be better off to bring a survival knife, possibly even dedicating it. If she can use Partial Change between her wolf teeth and her Gauru claws, she may be all right. Having an actual knife, though, may be reassuring to some werewolf survivalists, even old hands.

Werewolves do not need to worry about purifying water, for the most part. The parasites and other organic nasties killed by boiling or iodine are of no concern to a werewolf’s superior immune system. The chemicals that are present in some streams and lakes due to runoff can sometimes cause harm to a werewolf, but the People’s systems tend to eliminate the pesticides quickly and without incident. A werewolf in the wild, therefore, can drink from natural water sources as she likes.

Just as wolf form presents an alternative to wearing bulky clothing, wolf form is also the choice for those werewolf survivalists who would rather not spend time building complex shelters. Though a wolf still needs some shelter, she needs little more than a dry den and her own fur.

Again, a werewolf who wants to take her human aspects from time to time should consider spending the effort to make a shelter that can support a human.

OTHER USEFUL TIDBITS

Radios are a great way to get advance warning of inclement weather, giving an outdoorsman more time to construct or find a more sturdy shelter. Two-way radios are of great use for keeping traveling partners or groups in contact, especially when at least one explorer is unfamiliar with the territory. Most campers know not to wander around in the dark, but a flashlight is handy when it’s unavoidable. Finally, a pair of decent binoculars can help a traveler triangulate by distant landmarks or just look into the distance.

Doing Without

Knowing the weather ahead of time is nice, but a survivalist doesn’t need the radio for *that*. Someone familiar with the habits of animals can make a nice short-term prediction. The common brown ant changes the form of its anthill to channel water away from the hole when rain is coming. Fish feed prodigiously when air from a coming storm causes the insects to hover closer to the water. Birds also feast as the air calms and makes their aerobatics that much easier. Cloud patterns also offer easy answers: high, thin clouds are bringing cold air; big cotton balls come with warm weather and fair skies; dark clouds are obvious warnings of bad weather; and seeing storm clouds moving in different directions in the same skies may herald tornadoes.

Survivalists are mostly loners, obviating the need for a two-way handset. Those survivalists who aren’t may work up different methods for keeping in touch: imitating an animal foreign to the region can be a close-range signal and sending up plumes of white smoke serves as a long-range signal.

A flashlight is unnecessary because the survivalist either knows better than to move around when she can’t see and knows enough to have constructed shelter by then, or because she knows the area like a lover’s bare back and could navigate it blindfolded.

Werewolves largely abide by the same restrictions as a human survivalist when it comes to predicting weather and flashlights. For intra-party communication, werewolves make use of their natural howls. Some werewolves possess Gifts that allow them to predict or manipulate the weather.

CARRYING EVERYTHING

A good backpack is the key to a good traveling experience. For long trips, a backpack with a strong internal or external frame can carry everything the traveler needs for the journey and distribute the weight across the shoulders, back and hips. In the winter, when a traveler might need more equipment than he can carry only on his back, an equipment saucer or sled can be towed behind over the snow. The only other item necessary is the knowledge of how to best pack everything – but that’s an acquired skill.

Doing Without

A survivalist may still use a backpack to carry anything she wants to bring with her, but it will likely be an

over-the-shoulder rucksack rather than a hiker's framed pack. If she's really traveling light, she'll have little more than a knife on her belt and maybe a small bag with some high-energy snacks.

A werewolf can travel even lighter. She can literally walk into the forest naked and do just fine, assuming she has the experience.

PAYING FOR IT

Good hiking boots can range from \$100 to \$300 in price. Proper layered winter clothing begins in the low hundreds for a set and can hit a maximum of \$400–500. Good knives can run between \$25 and six times that. GPS units cost several hundred dollars, sometimes as much as \$1,000. Water purifiers average around \$70. Good tents can go as high as \$400 but can be had for as little as \$200. Radios (both kinds) can run into the mid-hundreds. People who want to spend some time in the serious wilderness should consider the more expensive goods. Most other equipment can be purchased on a month's salary, even for a Resources • character. Someone inclined to acquire the equipment illegally will only have to break into one or two outdoors stores before finding everything she needs, or shoplift from several.

GIFTS IN THE WILD

Werewolves have an additional benefit beyond the natural immunities and advantages of their other forms: Gifts. Werewolf Gifts are varied in function, but several see a great deal of use among the Forsaken who prefer to spend their time in the wild. The Nature and Elemental Gifts are obvious choices, but several others also have good applications in the great outdoors.

Elemental Gifts, as mentioned, see a great deal of use: Call Water is useful when the local streams are so laden with chemical runoff from orchards or pastures that the water is poisonous even to the Uratha. The alternate, Call Fire, is exceptionally useful, since it allows a werewolf to create a fire instantly, without the need to carry or keep a fire starter or build a bow and drill. Manipulate Earth is fantastic for quickly creating a shelter, whether a wolf's den or something more appropriate to the human form. An alternate, Manipulate Water, can simplify the construction of a snow dugout shelter, detailed above. Command Fire is an excellent Gift for limiting a campfire that's grown out of control, though curtailing a campfire is something survivalists learn early in life. The later Elemental Gifts are less useful, though an enterprising werewolf could probably think of something to do with them.

Of the Nature Gifts, only one is not of immediate use to a survivalist werewolf. Speak with Beasts means that the werewolf doesn't need to rely on interpreting the actions of the animals because she can ask them directly. Plant Growth can be important, not just to manipulating a territory, but surviving. Plants that can serve as sustenance or that make good poultices can be enlarged and maintained for repeated use, especially if the plants are rare in the

region. Forest Communion detects intruders and danger, but a friend to one creature can be a stranger to another. A mouse may signal a hawk's shadow as an intruder, and a deer may mark a bobcat as dangerous. Clever werewolves can use this Gift to determine which creatures are within range doing the detecting. Sometimes, a survivalist needs a good supply of food, because she is currently starving or because she needs to lay in food for winter. Beast Ride can be used to follow a rabbit back to its burrow or a deer back to its herd. Nature's Vengeance, while useful in battle, has little use for the practical and peaceful survivalist.

The Shaping Gifts have many applications in the wild, especially for those werewolves who refuse to carry tools or equipment. Straighten can aid greatly in building a drill for making a fire or in building a sturdy shelter from branches. Sculpt makes building shelters significantly easier, and Shatter helps destroy packed snow or dirt to quickly make insulated shelters or dens. Condense or Expand can strengthen large branches used in building, expand a log to make it burn faster or condense firewood to make it burn longer.

Weather Gifts see less use among survival-oriented werewolves. A survivalist respects the force of the weather and rarely wishes to call down its wrath, especially on the region she currently inhabits. She prefers Gifts that can disperse rainstorms, prevent her prey from going to ground or keep her camp dry through the night. Of the more common Gifts, Call the Breeze can be used on hot days to cool a hiker off, and werewolves in arid regions may use Deluge to provide substantial amounts of water for themselves and the local flora and fauna.

Other Gifts have assorted uses in the wilderness: Two World Eyes can be useful for judging the spirit of a land; if the spirit is ill, the land is often more dangerous. The first of Father Wolf's Gifts is important to those werewolves who wish to spend their time in the wild among their kin, the pure wolves. The later Knowledge Gifts can apply to the outdoors easily enough. Sagacity can make a traveler more at home there, and Know the Path can help an explorer find her way to where she is going or, if lost, back to camp. Communion with the Land is incredibly useful in the wild; at the Storyteller's discretion, an exceptional success when using this Gift can provide the one-dot version of Territorial Familiarity for the Gift's duration. Most prey run from wolves when they detect these predators; Mother Luna's Gift of Anybeast provides the werewolf with a way to travel among animals other than wolves without being discovered or disturbing the creatures. The Irraka can use their Slip Away Gift to get out of disasters that most survivalists would escape: being trapped beneath a fallen tree, collapsed shelter or small rockfall is no longer a worry for a werewolf with this Gift. Blend In, another New Moon Gift, can make stalking prey during the hunt significantly easier. All the Stealth Gifts but Shadow Flesh provide great aid to werewolves who are hunting. Ward Versus Predators is often used by Uratha who make their

territories in the wild, where other aggressive carnivores are more common. A werewolf who spends her time with a pack of natural wolves simply makes certain that her wolf pack is within the borders of the ward when she makes it.

HALCYON GIFTS

These weather-controlling Gifts call on the spirits of sky and wind to show mercy, appeasing them to quiet a storm or quell heat. Designed to keep the weather calm, placid, safe and, moreover, appropriate to wilderness travelers and survivalists, these Gifts are taught by sky-spirits or spirits that represent smaller species of birds. The Storm Lords have affinity with this Gift list, but few are interested in its ways — most *Iminir* feel a certain level of contempt for those who would seek to still the wind instead of standing proud amid the gales.

SCENT OF THE WIND (•)

Letting the air fill his nostrils, the werewolf tastes the condition of the local climate. He learns what the weather is like for miles around him and can safely predict what the weather will be in a short time.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Perception + Survival + Wisdom

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf develops an incorrect picture of the local weather. Attempts to divine the weather automatically fail until one full day has passed.

Failure: The weather is unknowable.

Success: The werewolf knows the weather of the region around him. Within a radius of five miles per success, he knows if it is sunny, cloudy, raining, hailing, assailed by fierce storms, beset by tornadoes or any other sort of weather. If there is a wind blowing toward him, double the distance for that direction. He can predict the weather that will affect him directly in advance, by one half-hour per success.

Exceptional Success: Nothing, apart from increased distance.

CLOUD COVER (••)

The local spirits of wind communicate with their more-distant brethren to find clouds within several miles, sometimes beyond the visible horizon. If the spirits succeed, they collaborate to blow the clouds over the werewolf's current location. This can serve simply as shadow from the sun or as protection from detection by high-flying planes and satellites.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: This power requires no roll.

Action: Instant

Cloud Cover remains as long as it normally would in prevailing wind conditions, though the werewolf can use the Gift repeatedly to call the clouds back. The spirits only look so far for the werewolf's clouds, however: if there are no clouds whatsoever within 20 miles per dot of

Primal Urge, the spirits find none and the Gift is wasted. If there are too few clouds to effectively cover the area surrounding the werewolf, the spirits bring what there is, and, if there are many clouds, the spirits bring only what is necessary. Use of this Gift can sometimes increase the chance of inclement weather in the region.

RAISING DOLDRUMS (•••)

No wind can continue moving when one of the Forsaken levels this Gift upon the local weather. All local winds cease, abruptly and completely; the region becomes a zone of dead air. This Gift stops tornadoes completely and takes much of the sting out of rainstorms or snowstorms. Chill due to wind disappears completely.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Resolve + Survival

Action: Extended (25 successes; one turn passes per roll)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The wind-spirits are incited to a frenzy instead of lulled into sleep. Local winds increase in strength immensely, becoming half again as fast as they were before.

Failure: The winds do not change.

Success: All wind within one mile of the werewolf immediately slows by half, and all winds within one half-mile stop dead. Winds that blow in from outside the mile boundary begin to slow down, and wind that breezes into the half-mile boundary also stops. Areas downwind of the affected region are treated, for the duration, as though they were on the leeward side of a large, immobile object; they are sheltered from the wind. This condition continues as long as the werewolf concentrates on the effect. When the werewolf stops focusing on holding the wind steady, new winds that enter the area cease to be affected, and the local winds slowly begin to move again. Some strong localized winds, such as tornadoes, never regain their old momentum. It takes one half-hour per dot of Primal Urge for the effect to completely dissipate; until then, the wind will be sluggish within what was originally the null zone.

Exceptional Success: Nothing, apart from gaining more successes.

LIGHTNING WARD (••••)

The werewolf asks the spirits to provide respite from the danger of lightning strikes during a storm. Simply put, this Gift prevents lightning from striking anywhere within several dozen yards. Lightning Ward can also be learned as a Warding Gift from the spirits that teach those.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

For five hours, the spirits of wind, storm and lightning bend the strikes away from a point chosen by the werewolf. No lightning will strike any closer to that point than 10 yards per dot of Primal Urge.

THE WILL OF THE WINDS (.....)

There are many times and many ways that the weather may be tampered with. This Gift empowers the local spirits to take charge of the winds and precipitation and restore them to the way they were before any supernatural powers came into play. The Will of the Winds causes all supernatural weather effects cease, and whatever weather pattern would have existed if not for their interference is put up in their place. Any being that has placed a supernatural weather effect on the region affected by this Gift makes a contested roll against the werewolf's single roll; only the highest of his opponent's rolls is considered.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Presence + Survival + Purity versus Resolve + Primal Urge

Action: Contested; resistance is reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The weather-spirits rebuke the werewolf; he is unable to use Weather Gifts for one full day.

Failure: If the user's roll fails or the victim's contested roll nets as many or more successes than the user's, nothing changes. All present supernatural effects remain.

Success: The most successes are rolled for the Gift user. All supernatural weather effects within one mile per point of Primal Urge cease immediately, replaced with the weather that would have been there if no one had interfered.

Exceptional Success: The most successes are rolled for the Gift user, and five or more are achieved. The

weather cannot be affected by supernatural means for a period of one hour per point of Primal Urge.

TRAIL HAZARDS

There are a number of things a traveler, whether survivalist or day hiker, should keep in mind when distancing himself from civilization. A good survivalist should know how to be safe from all of these hazards, from dangerous insects and plants to severely inclement weather.

INSECTS

Wasps and bees are little more than a nuisance on their own, but a swarm rarely does less than ruin an excursion and can sometimes kill. Wasps are the more dangerous of the two, despite the dangerous reputation of the "killer bees," because wasps can bite a victim many times, whereas a bee dies immediately upon stinging. Wasps usually nest low to or under the ground, in old tree stumps or sections of hollowed-out ground, and are most likely to attack if their nest is disturbed. Nests are rarely found near well-maintained trails because the rangers remove any they find to protect visitors to the national park; many trails common to people who prefer to rough it are not similarly guarded. An experienced traveler knows that when she finds small gouges, made without teeth marks, in local fruits and berries, a wasps' nest can't be far away. The nest itself is conspicuous, once she knows to look for it, as the insects are usually busily coming and going.





A swarm of angry wasps or bees inflicts one point of bashing damage on anyone caught within the swarm. (If the victim is badly allergic, the damage may be counted as lethal.) A traveler whose body is at least 70% covered by clothing takes one point every two rounds. Someone wearing beekeeper's gear can escape unharmed, but the insects can find their way inside of anything less complete than that. Each point of damage represents one to two dozen stings. Luckily, a swarm's purpose is only to defend the nest; the wasps won't follow an intruder more than 100 yards from where they were originally agitated, making them easy to escape. An experienced survivalist will simply run flat-out as soon as she realizes she's roused the hive.

Some ants can present a similar danger. "Killer ants" is a term given to any type of ant that has been known to prey upon larger animals. Such ants, though of different species, can be found in any region of the world. Like bees and wasps, ants swarm in defense of their hives. Hundreds of ants may descend upon a large, potentially human food source, if it is found, but any rational person would move along the trail or shift camp as soon as the first exploring ant bit her to find out whether she was food. Though ants do occasionally kill, infants and the inebriated are ants' usual victims. If an unsuspecting hiker trips and crushes an anthill or performs some other swarm-inciting act, killer-type ants inflict the same damage as wasps, with the same reductions due to clothing, though a beekeeper's suit won't help. Ants, however, are significantly easier to flee. They don't fly. Someone unfortunate enough to be covered in biting ants makes an extended Dexterity + Survival roll to sweep the insects off. Once she reaches five successes, she is free of ants; until then, she suffers damage each turn as if engulfed in the swarm. Depending on the number of ants, the extended roll may require more or fewer total successes.

Mosquitoes can be a pain in the ass, but they are rarely deadly. It is only when an unprotected traveler is caught in one of their breeding grounds that the insects can ruin an excursion into the wild. Travelers can fend mosquitoes off with a combination of tactics: Wearing loose-fitting clothing allows air circulation (keeping the traveler cool) while presenting the insects with a sliding surface that prevents them from getting a chance to puncture the skin through the clothes. Using a commercial insect repellent with deet keeps the majority of insects off, but only with a high concentration of deet in the repellent. Finally, for people with serious issues with bugs, travelers can treat their clothing with pyrethrin, a naturally occurring toxin that kills insects on contact. Pyrethrin is too toxic for direct contact with human skin, but if sprayed on clothing and left to dry, the insecticide can protect the wearer for a day or two. A survivalist who has spent a lifetime going in and out of bloodsucker-infested wilderness may be able to ignore these precautions: after a few million bites, these people have earned a respite from the mosquitoes. Still, even the most hard-bitten survivalists tend to use repellants. No one can ever be sure that a mosquito won't bite

her, and the diseases some such insects carry — malaria, yellow fever and others — are well known.

Werewolves don't need to pay much heed to these creatures. Uratha heal beastings and ant-bites quickly. A mortal survivalist may be forced to return to civilization after an unlucky encounter with angry wasps; a werewolf should sit and take an hour's breather. Mosquitoes are not a bother to werewolves; mosquitoes bites heal within a minute, if that, and werewolves are immune to any diseases the insects may carry.

PLANTS

Poison oak and poison ivy also have the potential to make a trip miserable. These plants are infamous enough that almost anyone who spends spare time hiking knows how to recognize and avoid them; experienced survivalists can spot them instantly. Still, if a traveler somehow ends up touching the plants' oil, urushiol, she can expect to suffer: skin contact with urushiol causes an incredibly itchy rash and, in severe cases, small, fluid-filled blisters. Rashes appear approximately 24 hours after contact and can last up to one or two weeks, but cleaning the affected area with soap and water early can reduce severity. Treat urushiol as a touch toxin that inflicts one point of bashing damage every 15 minutes until the area is healed; the effect weakens after half the rash's duration has passed, then inflicts one point every half-hour. At the Storyteller's discretion, the affliction can weaken further as it nears its end, becoming little more than a nuisance. Until the rash is gone, a victim also suffers a -1 penalty to all actions due to painful distraction. This effectively means that a mortal character afflicted with poison ivy will be constantly down by one bashing health level. At the Storyteller's discretion, particularly bad cases may inflict more damage per turn or cause a greater distraction penalty. Urushiol will never do lethal damage, even when additional bashing damage might roll over into lethal. An application of jewelweed, a plant familiar to all survivalists who operate in regions with poison oak or ivy, can sooth the rash. This reduces the damage to one bashing every half-hour for an hour per application. Thankfully, poison oak and poison ivy are only common to North America.

The People have paired advantages and disadvantages when dealing with poison oak and poison ivy. First, wolves are not allergic to urushiol as humans are, so a werewolf in wolf or near-wolf form is safe. If she needs to, a werewolf affected in human form can change into wolf form in order to limit the damage. Any burns already suffered carry over, but the respite from active generation of the rash gives the werewolf a chance to heal. The oil remains on her skin, so she should refrain from returning to human or near-human form until a friend has cleaned her off. Gauru form is also unaffected by urushiol.

The disadvantage that the Uratha suffer is based on the way urushiol affects humans: it binds to skin cells, making them unrecognizable to the body's immune system, which then attacks them as foreign objects. Because

a werewolf's immune system is significantly stronger and more on the ball than a human's, the reaction to urushiol is proportionally more severe and faster. Once the werewolf's bare skin contacts the oil, she will feel the effects after one minute, instead of 24 hours. A werewolf affected by poison oak or poison ivy suffers one point of bashing damage each *turn* until about one hour after the oil is completely removed, effectively keeping her down one Health point until the situation is repaired. Soap and water can remove the oil completely. If that isn't an option, wiping the affected area with an absorbent cloth once or twice removes enough of the oil to ensure that the effect ends after about a day; this method also spreads the effect somewhat, but is still partially effective. Werewolves' reactions are also more painful than humans'; a werewolf suffers -2 to all actions from distraction caused by the pain. A werewolf's rashes last for one or two days.

If a werewolf can manage to subdue her regenerative process (see "Resisting Regeneration," p. 22) before the urushiol begins torturing her and can maintain the control until she washes the toxin off, she can reduce her suffering considerably.

Another plant that people in the wilderness should be aware of is the stinging nettle. It can grow as tall as a man, and it protects itself from animals by tipping the tiny hairs along its length and leaves with an organic acid. Stinging nettle inflicts one point of bashing damage, more if the unfortunate explorer runs headlong into a plant. The wheals caused by touching the plant remain for one or two days, hurting and itching.

Werewolves have little to fear from nettles. The damage heals quickly, and the discomfort fades within the hour.

ANIMALS

Creatures of the wilderness are motivated by only three needs: the need for food, the need to survive and the need to procreate. All animals' interactions with hikers and survivalists can be predicted on the basis of these needs — usually, just survival. Few wild animals see humans as viable prey, and no animals are sexually attracted to humans.

Snakes are a common fear of many outdoors travelers, but that fear is usually misplaced. As creatures that rarely mass more than one or two pounds and can slither along at no more than three or four miles per hour, snakes have a much more rational fear of humans. Moreover, most snakes are venomous, and many are even toothless. In the end, snakes only threaten humans when the snakes believe the humans threaten them or their territories. The more aggressive a snake is, in fact, the less likely it is to be venomous. Some water snakes imitate the coloring of various pit snakes, the only North American venomous snakes, and can be unusually aggressive, but the bites of water snakes can do no more than draw blood (and they can't even do that through leather gloves or thick jeans). The best way to defuse a confrontation with a snake, venomous or not, is to take one or two steps backward when the creature becomes

threatening. The snake ceases to feel threatened and moves along, and the human can go about her business.

One should always be careful when going to bed at camp. Snakes (and other creatures) seek out warm places to spend the nights and may end up in travelers' sleeping rolls. When away from camp, it is best to fold one's bag in order to make it more difficult to access, and it is still wise to shake it out before laying down to rest. If bitten, one can expect a protracted battle between the venom and the immune system. Though the toxicities of different venoms vary, treat snake venom as a toxicity three injection poison that inflicts lethal damage once per four hours over the course of a day. For more or less dangerous snakes, shift the toxicity level up or down.

Snakes react to werewolves much in the same way that the snakes react to humans, sometimes more so, since some instinct deep within recognizes the Uratha as the ultimate predators. Still, the techniques to avoid dangerous conflict still work: take a step away from the threatened snake, shake out the bedroll and continue on. The Forsaken are somewhat less susceptible to venom than mortals, but some snake venoms can still lay Uratha out for several days if they happen to get bitten.

Birds, squirrels and other small, tree-borne animals don't get directly in the way of people that threaten them, but these animals can still affect a traveler's passage through the wild. They are the unofficial sentries of the animal kingdom, and, when they see a predator, they trill, chirp or call out however they do, letting all the nearby animals know that danger is near. This is obviously not foolproof, or the world's carnivores would never find their dinners, but it is still effective. Humans, unsurprisingly, usually evince the same characteristics as a classic hunter: constantly testing the breeze, looking around for potential prey, moving quietly and carefully between places of concealment and repeating the process. These signals trigger the animals of the forest, making it easier for those who know what they're looking for to more easily tell if someone's attempting to hide among the trees. A successful Wits + Survival roll enables a person to determine whether the local animals are agitated, at ease or too quiet.

An experienced animal photographer or someone with similar skills can emulate the attitude of a prey animal or a satiated predator: alert to the surroundings, as animals usually are, but not looking upward and moving along without rush or rhythm. Ignoring the animals in the trees or bushes and traveling like there's really no place she is trying to go will let a traveler pass largely unmolested by the tattletales. A successful Presence + Survival roll allows a character to emulate this sort of animal, eliminating the bonus described above.

Werewolves usually have greater difficulty passing the sentries without trace — instincts make it harder for the werewolves to adopt the necessary postures. Uratha lose two dice on the above Presence + Survival roll, but some Stealth Gifts can make the roll entirely unnecessary.

Bears, despite their fearsome reputation among city folk and day hikers, represent little threat to the knowledgeable survivalist. Bears are staunch omnivores, and eat much more in the way of fruits and vegetables than they do meats; during some parts of the year, bears end up eating *only* vegetarian meals. Bears don't hunt large creatures, either. Deer, elk and moose *young* are the largest creatures that bears hunt. This means that humans are relatively safe from bears, especially if the humans know how to behave when they encounter one. Such an encounter is rare in the first place, since most bears leave the area when they pick up a human's scent. One species of bear or another can be found in most regions of the world apart from Australia. The black bear and brown bear are the most common species in North America; Kodiak and grizzly bears are subspecies of the brown bear.

The first key is not to surprise a bear. Though bears' noses are as sensitive as those of many wild creatures, bears still cannot smell someone who is downwind of them. Bears have poor hearing (for a wild creature — it is little better than man's) and distinctly poor eyesight, so even a bear that is looking directly at an explorer may not be aware the human is there. When there is any chance that a bear might not be aware of a traveler, she should refrain from approaching. When a traveler does end up face-to-face with a bear, the first thing *not* to do is run. Running indicates to the bear that she is prey, and may rouse the beast's hunting instinct and trigger a chase. Instead, the experienced traveler knows to stand her ground, backing away from the bear slowly while maintaining an erect posture, never turning her back until she is at least 100 yards away. This is meant to convince the bear that she is a dangerous opponent, but one willing to withdraw without conflict. It is wise not to meet the bear's gaze while doing so, the bear may interpret that as an indication of aggression and willingness to fight. A successful Presence + Survival roll can allow a character in the wilderness to successfully and safely leave the presence of a wary bear.

While these techniques work equally well for the Uratha, Luna's children have more options available to them. A physically powerful werewolf in Urshul form may be able to handle a black or brown bear in combat, should the need arise, and she will definitely be capable of such a feat in Gauru form. Still, a werewolf who would rather respect the creatures of nature than destroy them will probably back away. If she needs to secure the area in some way but does not want to fight, she can assume Urshul form and try to cow the bear into leaving; unfortunately, any bear standing its ground is likely defending something, whether food or children, and this tactic may result in a necessary fight, potentially to death.

BEAR

Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 2, Resolve 4, Strength 5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4, Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 4

Skills: Athletics (Climbing) 3, Brawl 4, Intimidation 3, Survival 3

Willpower: 5
Initiative: 6
Defense: 2
Speed: 13 (species factor 6)
Size: 7

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Dice Pool
Bite	3 (L)	7
Claw	1 (L)	9

Health: 11

Wild canids are even less of a danger to humans than bears. Just as a werewolf does not consider humans prey (except in exceptional circumstances), neither does the natural wolf. Though a wolf may occasionally stalk a human due to its poor eyesight, once scent reveals to it the true nature of its “prey,” the wolf lets the human alone. A human may occasionally be able to attract a pack of wolves or coyotes to his general area, but they will never come close. Wild dogs range nearly everywhere across the globe, though they are incredibly rare in some areas due to centuries of being hunted by man. The most common North American canids are grey wolves, coyotes and a couple of species of fox.

This is different for werewolves. Wild dogs of all kinds, but especially those of the *Canis*, *Cuon* and *Lycaon* genera, are attracted to the People, even those in human form. Something about the attitude or the posture of a werewolf that makes wild dogs trust her. In wolf form, a werewolf is looked up as the ultimate alpha of the canids’ pack. If there is a werewolf pack present, these “honorary members” of the werewolf pack treat that member as the alpha, and none other. Regardless, the wild dogs treat the new alpha as the primary leader of the pack and their old alpha as secondary; the old alpha continues to reap all benefits, except where it contradicts the new alpha’s desires. This doesn’t mean that a werewolf in the wild will gather hordes of wild dogs about her. It only means that, as long as a pack of canids is in the same area as the werewolf or the werewolf pack and no pressing need takes them away, the wild dogs show the werewolves a great deal of respect. The alpha does not have the authority to command or punish others in the canids’ pack; being considered the alpha is the pinnacle of the pecking order and an admission of ability, not a position of domination. Werewolves understand this instinctively, but some, especially those who rarely visit the wild, forget this in the face of wild packs’ respect.

WOLF

Use the Dog Statistics on p. 203 of the *World of Darkness Rulebook*; add one point to Survival and Stealth.

FOX

Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 4, Resolve 3, Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2, Presence 2, Manipulation 1, Composure 3

Skills: Athletics (Running) 4, Brawl 3, Intimidation 1, Stealth 3, Survival (Tracking) 3

Willpower: 5
Initiative: 7
Defense: 4
Speed: 13 (species factor 7)
Size: 3

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Dice Pool
Bite	1 (L)	5

Health: 5

Wild cats are a different matter. They have excellent hearing and sharp vision but, compared to the wolf and the bear, poor senses of smell. Like bears and wolves, wild cats would rather avoid humans than attack them. All animals have a sense of what is prey and what isn’t, and most great cats consider humans too large and dangerous to be safe hunting. However, some big cats, notably the mountain lion of North America (one of the largest of the continent’s wild cats) will attack humans small-framed enough to fit into their limited concept of prey. Those mountain lions (or other great cats) that do attack humans are usually old or infirm, too slow or weak to wait and find other prey. Apart from these exceptions, an encounter with a wild cat should be treated by the same traveler the same way she treats one with a bear: retreating slowly and not turning her back until she is at least 100 yards away. If forced into confrontation, wild cats are extremely dangerous. They are fast and strong, and they have powerful claws and sharp teeth. The most common North American wild cats are the bobcat, mountain lion and the long-legged lynx.

Werewolves have few additional options. Some wild cats may recognize the presence of a predator-spirit greater than their own and leave the werewolf alone, but that pleasant reaction is not dependable. In general, a werewolf must treat an encounter with a great cat the same way a mortal does; a werewolf is just more likely to survive should the cat attack.

GREAT CAT

Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 4, Resolve 4, Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 3

Skills: Athletics (Climbing) 4, Brawl 4, Intimidation 3, Stealth 3, Survival (Tracking) 3

Willpower: 7

Initiative: 8

Defense: 4

Speed: 16 (species factor 8)

Size: 5

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Dice Pool
Bite	3 (L)	10
Claw	2 (L)	11

Health: 8

Rabies (from a Latin word meaning *rage*) can sometimes be present in wild animals. The disease causes encephalitis and makes the animal unnaturally aggressive.

Such animals may not act as the species' normal behavior predicts. Although foaming at the mouth, the classic indication of the disease, only occurs in the final stages, affected creatures can be recognized by their unusual traits: the animal has no fear, acts confused and may have let its hygiene lapse, resulting in matted, greasy-looking fur. A survivalist knows to keep away from any animal she thinks may have rabies.

Forsaken have little to fear from such creatures. The Forsaken can usually fend off the attacks of an animal with rabies, and, even if bitten, they cannot contract the disease. Werewolves who spend their time in the wilderness may have a vested interest in putting a creature so afflicted to rest and disposing of the body so that the disease does not spread; such werewolves are often aware that rabies can sometimes be spontaneously generated as a side effect of an unwell Shadow Realm.

WEATHER

A perfect day for hiking is one with a moderate amount of sun and a light breeze, warm enough to walk with light clothing but not so calm that a little sweat won't calm the hiker down. Unfortunately, nature isn't always so gracious to provide such ideal weather. Day hikers can choose to stay home when the climate turns capricious. Not everyone has that luxury.

Sunstroke, also called heatstroke, is caused by excessive exposure to heat. A survivalist can best avoid this condition by maintaining herself at a moderate temperature. Keeping to the shade and staying hydrated are the best ways to accomplish this. When traveling through hot regions without shade, a survivalist should wear light-colored fabrics, dressing to cover most of the body from the sun while letting air circulate, and she should keep her water supply handy. In most regions where the heat is so terrible and the shade is scarce, water is life. The first recognizable symptom of sunstroke is that the victim ceases to sweat, losing her method for regulating body temperature downward and causing her core temperature to rise quickly thereafter. Victims become confused and often hostile, a state that may be confused for drunkenness, and eventually suffer seizures as the brain overheats and begins to shut down. Treatment involves removing the victim to a cool, shaded place, rehydrating her and using any available means to lower her temperature. Sunstroke becomes very dangerous very quickly, inflicting one point of bashing damage every 10 minutes after onset. This damage does not heal until — and if — the victim recovers. If the condition is treated, this rate can slow or cease. When sunstroke continues long enough for the bashing damage to roll over into lethal, the victim often suffers brain damage.

Sunstroke is not a disease, and werewolves' immunities give Uratha no aid. Even the efforts of their bodies to regenerate the damage caused by rising internal temperatures cannot render Uratha immune, only hardier. A werewolf suffers the same symptoms as a mortal, but

the bashing damage she suffers from sunstroke can be healed as lethal damage instead of not at all. Although a werewolf's best options are the same as a human's, the Uratha's additional forms give the werewolf an advantage. Donning her wolf form isn't a perfect solution; wolves, too, can suffer this condition. They are simply wise enough to hunt during dawn and dusk and stay in the shade during the heat of noon. But a dip in a pool can cool a werewolf somewhat, and the insulation provided by fur will help keep her cool for a short while. Additionally, Dalu form, larger than Hishu, provides more surface area from which heat can dissipate, and using the near-man form can often help the werewolf reach a healthy equilibrium with a hot environment. Because wolves do not sweat, Urshul form provides no such advantage.

Hypothermia could be called sunstroke's opposite. When it's too cold out, a traveler needs to make an effort to keep warm. Keeping on the move can do this for a while, but eventually a traveler needs a rest. Failure to arrange a proper shelter or otherwise preserve body heat results in this condition. A person is suffering from hypothermia if her core body temperature drops by only five degrees Fahrenheit; outer temperature will be substantially colder. Like sunstroke, hypothermia causes a person to become confused, have less motor control and generally resemble someone who is drunk, except that drinking increases blood flow and body temperature, and someone suffering from hypothermia will be very, very cold. Proper treatment is to give the victim food and warm water, make certain that she moves about and let her warm herself by the fire. If this is not enough, she should be put in a "hypothermia wrap": placed on a thick blanket or sleeping bag that is on a tarp of some kind, with hot water bottles near key points of blood flow and rolled completely up, leaving only a hole for breathing. If at all possible, medical authorities should have been contacted by this point. This condition inflicts damage every half-hour; hypothermia is otherwise identical to the mechanical effects of sunstroke. When damage begins to roll over into lethal, the victim is suffering *frostbite* even while her hypothermia gets worse.

Frostbite is, in a way, the body writing off an extremity, like a finger or a foot, because trying to keep it warm would be a danger to the rest of the body. It cuts off blood flow to the area to prevent the overly chilled blood from cooling down the vital organs. The affected area looks pale, feels cold and may hurt. As the condition progresses, the skin hardens and darkens. Light cases of frostbite can be treated by warming the area quickly. More serious cases must be seen to by medical professionals. Even then, amputations are common results. Frostbite can occur separately from hypothermia when only an extremity is allowed to grow cold.

Werewolves must be as careful of hypothermia as they are of sunstroke. They should dress appropriately when out in the cold, but, when that isn't an option, donning the furred wolf or near-wolf forms is a good second choice.

A werewolf suffers damage from hypothermia only once every hour, but “cold” is harder for her healing to repair than the potential brain damage from overheating. Like a mortal, this damage cannot be healed until the condition is remedied. Thankfully, werewolves have little to fear from frostbite. Any form has better insulation than the human form, so deciding to trot along as a wolf can keep a werewolf going for hours longer than she would have managed otherwise. Even the Dalu form, prodigiously hairy for a human, can keep in enough heat to make donning it worthwhile, though the werewolf must take care to avoid sweating, which will drop her body temperature like a brick. And when all else fails, Gauru form “runs hot,” and a few moments in the war form is enough to bring someone back from the edge of hypothermia. Few werewolves wish to risk Death Rage and their friends’ health, so using Gauru form for heat is a last result.

Rain can cause a few difficulties. First, water is greedy for heat and makes everything cooler, including the person trying to survive the storm. A traveler should prepare for a temperature 15 to 20 degrees Fahrenheit below what she would otherwise expect when rain is predicted; to do otherwise is to invite hypothermia, or at least discomfort. Second, rain should affect the decision of where to make camp. Low points in the region will collect water, and an experienced camper or survivalist should be able to determine where the runoff will flow and avoid those areas. Regions that have a lot of hard rock or that are already saturated can suffer flash floods. Third, rain affects visibility as the raindrops obscure vision and the cloudy sky provides less light, making navigation difficult. Fourth, rain can make travel difficult in some areas by turning dry stone slippery, fields into ponds and dirt into mud. In some regions, mudslides are common during the rainy seasons. Lastly, rainstorms may be accompanied by lightning.

Lightning *will* strike twice, if that unfortunate target is the electrical path of least resistance. The best choice for someone stuck outside during a thunderstorm is to make sure there are plenty of other, hopefully more attractive, targets nearby. Air is a worse conductor than just about anything on the ground, so almost anything taller than a werewolf a decent target. The exception is when there is only one such target — when the only tree on the plain is struck by lightning, everything nearby is going to get a bit of a jolt as the electricity courses through the tree and the surrounding earth. It’s better to lie down and try to be less attractive than *everything* around than only one thing. This is why a thunderstorm over a forest is less of a concern; a struck tree may split and fall, potentially on a camper, but the storm still has hundreds of trees to choose from. It is the perversity of nature that the ideal place for a campsite in a rainstorm (a high place) becomes the worst place to camp with the first peal of thunder. Someone trying to hole up during a thunderstorm should find a *local* high point, something that is higher than its immediate surroundings so the rainwater flows around it but lower

than the extended surroundings so that it’s a less tempting target. Still, if the choice must be made, it’s better to be wet than shocked.

None of the Uratha’s uniquely supernatural qualities make them able to ignore the dangers of rain or lightning. Their regeneration makes them more likely to fully recover from a dangerous fall or a lightning strike, but the drop in temperature, the uncomfortable and cold camping, increased difficulty traveling and lower visibility all apply equally to werewolves and mortals. Even though a werewolf may conserve her heat by changing to another form, the weather will still be damp and unpleasant.

Snow can be dangerous, making travel just as difficult as rain, if not more. Apart from the dangers of the cold that accompany such weather, already discussed, snow can reduce visibility and impair navigation just as rain does, but snow goes further. It piles up on the ground, obscuring any path the traveler may have been following, and snow is difficult to walk through. Especially when the snow is deep or partially frozen, slogging through it can exhaust even the most practiced hiker. Layers of snow can form atop pitfalls or hang over ledges, making travel treacherous unless the hiker moves slowly and cautiously. Having a good walking stick could save her life. In such a situation, even a few miles from warmth and safety is enough to drain a survivalist of all her energy and effectively strand her. Wintertime travelers should be careful to always have a pair of snowshoes. Winter survivalists ignore this, but only because they know how to construct a pair out of branches and some cord. Snow can affect the choice of campsite, just as rain does: when warm weather follows a heavy snowfall, there can be a great deal of runoff, sometimes enough to cause small floods.

There are additional dangers: snow blindness and sunburn. The white snow reflects sunlight quite well, complete with the ultraviolet component that causes sunburn and injures the cornea. Apart from the surprising brightness of a sunlit world blanketed with snow, a traveler who leaves her eyes unprotected can suffer the same temporary blindness as someone who decides to stare at the sun. Repeated cases of snow blindness increase the chance of later suffering cataracts. Light cases of sunburn are irritating, and large cases can be quite serious. Repeated sunburns increase a person’s chance of developing skin cancer.

When in the snow, werewolves have some small advantages over mortals. Though there’s nothing one of the People can do about the visibility or temporary snow blindness, her regeneration allows her to ignore sunburn and the long-term effects of snow blindness, which both heal more quickly and, in the case of blindness, more completely than they do for mortals. A greater advantage is the wolf shape. When her human form is too heavy to walk on snow without crunching through and expending extra energy with each step, she can take on her Urhan form and decrease her body weight in order to trot along the snow’s crust. Snow weak enough that even the wolf

punctures its surface is probably soft enough that treading through it is not significantly more difficult than simply hiking.

Wind can be a terrible force, as anyone who lives in hurricane or tornado zones is aware. In the forests, even a moderate wind can snap old, dead branches or treetops and send them hurtling to the ground. It's rare that there is someone under them, but it can be deadly when there is. When strong winds are blowing, lowland forests are the safest places to be. Higher surrounding ground and thick growth break the wind enough to make being out in the weather safer. Still, travelers should keep away from the tallest trees; these are the ones that pierce the local canopy and can be recognized by the swaying caused by the wind. Trees taller than their surroundings routinely snap, sometimes only a few yards from the ground, bringing a ton or more of wood smashing down. Birches, poplars and aspens are all brittle trees that are more likely to break than others. When a traveler hears the *snap* of a tree breaking in the wind, the safest place to be is as close to the trunk of a strong, low-branching tree as possible. The strong, living branches there protect anyone under them from falling objects.

When the wind takes it to the next level and becomes a tornado, the danger ratchets upward. The primary danger is no longer being crushed by falling branches; it is now being crushed by a flying tree or hurled like a rag doll into one. Tornadoes follow paths of least resistance, and, while these paths may not always be recognizable to someone who cannot detect high- and low-temperature fronts with the naked eye, to some degree these paths follow the obvious routes. It is easier for a whirlwind to follow a logging road or riverbed than to tear its way through trees, and easier to go between two hills than over one. The first step to avoiding a tornado is to get away from these danger zones. A traveler trapped out in the open should also avoid getting trapped inside a building or a tent, both objects with large cross sections that are easier for the wind to grab. A cellar is, of course, ideal, but the ideal often isn't available in the wilderness. Instead, a traveler should take cover below the surrounding terrain, in a depression small enough that the mini-twisters that tornadoes shed while they move can't penetrate. In the woods, a small but deep hollow is a traveler's best bet. Being in a depression lets the worst of the winds howl over her, and the trees fall across instead of on top of her.

Some measure of preparation, including time to find the safest location to wait out the winds, aids survival immensely. Travelers who listen to their weather radios should have little trouble, but survivalists and others who eschew such advantages need to look for other signs. When a warm rain suddenly turns cold, sometimes turning to sleet or hail, a survivalist is right on the combination of fronts where a tornado might form. When the rain changes from falling vertically to being driven horizontally, the whirlwind is only moments away.

In deserts and other dry regions, strong winds cause sandstorms. Also called dust storms, these phenomena lower visibility to nearly nothing and can inhibit breathing with the sheer volume of particles in the air. To a degree, the friction of having dust or sand blasted past travelers can cause harm to those not sufficiently protected. Clothing that covers the entire body is enough, though someone in the desert should use a mask of some kind to protect the sensitive eyes and prevent sand and dust from interfering with respiration. A character insufficiently protected suffers one die of bashing damage every 10 minutes, more often if she is wearing very little.

The wind can be fierce, but the Uratha's advantages can help keep them whole. Beyond being better able to survive or recover from the crushing blow from a falling branch or tree or the scouring force of a sandstorm, they also have a Gift that can help them predict dangerous weather before it's too late. Additionally, in regions with wolves or other canids, werewolves can don the wolf form and hopefully find a den that provides shelter against even the fiercest winds. When a werewolf survives being picked up by a tornado, she is just as lucky as when it happens to a mortal.

HUNTING

The scent was strong, almost overpowering, but Sings-Under-Clouds held himself in check. He could leap from cover now and claim one of the deer for himself. The chase would be brief. His prey would barely have a chance to run before his teeth bit deep into its flank and made it lame. He could almost taste the blood on his tongue and feel it steaming from his teeth into the cold night. But Sings-Under-Clouds waited. Only a minute more, and he would be able to herd the weakest of the group directly toward the two youths he was here to teach.

The time passed slowly, drawn out by his urge to send the large family of beasts running. The deer were moving slowly, and the largest buck was carefully watching his surroundings and smelling the air. Sings-Under-Clouds was upwind and well-hidden, so he wasn't worried that he might be detected, but the animals' wary manner made him think there might be something he'd forgotten. He ran over everything in his head: He had detected the deer before they entered the woods heading for a familiar game trail. Keeping to their lee, he had led his students to the near end of a clearing and told them to chase the last deer that came through. Then, he arranged to give the deer a real fright before they reached that clearing, ensuring that the students would latch onto the slowest and still get a workout. That was when he smelled it.

Garret Silverton. Unfortunate name for a werewolf, but it would remain until the cub realized it for himself. The young Rahu had run out of patience and stupidly tried to approach the deer with the wind at his back. Hungry for glory? Or just hungry? Sings-Under-Clouds smiled a lazy wolf grin. He was going to have fun teaching this one. Then Garret burst out of the underbrush and dove into the middle of the deer, sending the family scattering in all directions and chasing after the



buck. Glory. The mentor could hear his other student running to join the hunt and leapt out himself, going after them both and hoping he got there in time to see the buck gore one of them.

The urge to hunt is as much a part of the People as the ability to change shape. The glory of a successful hunt suffuses a werewolf, filling him with pride, satisfaction and an eagerness to again experience the rhythm of the chase and the tug of teeth on flesh. Species memories as old as time reinforce these emotions, hailing back to the days when the first litter ran alongside Father Wolf in pursuit of wayward spirits. Today, the werewolves still chase those who disturb the natural order of things, whether spirits or humans, by crossing the Gauntlet. But just as the werewolves maintain a balance between things of the flesh and the spirit, they maintain a personal balance between the aspect of the human and the wolf. That means hunting animals, using nose and ears and teeth, for sustenance.

Hunting can be more than mere spiritual maintenance. For those werewolves who live away from the consumer infrastructure of the cities, hunting becomes a necessary source of food and nutrients. Hunting also provides a great deal of exercise for the mind and body, serving to hone not just the muscle but also a werewolf's focus and willpower. Those who live in bountiful regions may use hunting as a relaxing pastime, something to take

their minds off the ever-encroaching dangers that they deal with daily. Some might even use their hunting prowess as a method of making money, taking advantage of the high prices commanded by "hand-crafted" jerky or steak from certain animals from tourists and city folk.

Whatever the reason, when the People hunt the wilderness for mundane prey, they do it as the wolves do.

HUNTING TACTICS AND THE PACK

Unlike Gauru and Urshul forms, Urhan form is not made for killing prey quickly. The teeth of Urhan form are designed not to crush, but to nip, tear or hold. Where a great cat has the jaw strength to crush a spine or rip out a throat in minutes, ending the hunt immediately, a wolf needs to harry its prey, chasing it and tearing at its skin to tire it and overload it with pain. A wolf can only kill small prey quickly by grasping it tightly and shaking it to snap the neck. It is harder for a wolf to kill prey equal or larger in size. This is where the tactics of the hunt and the pack come in.

Though wolves and werewolves are certainly capable of stealth, stealth isn't at the heart of the wolf's hunting instinct. Instead, wolves wander through their territories as they like, either aimlessly or in pursuit of other goals. When the wolves detect prey, something they can do at significant range with their sensitive noses and ears, they

postpone what they are doing and begin pursuit. A wolf has few obligations beyond the safety and survival of the pack, so a wolf can spend hours simply prowling through its territory. Wolves are not ignorant of the significance of game trails, and a pack's path may parallel a popular trail for part of the hunt. A werewolf is able to put a little more thought into his hunt, but it doesn't always result in an advantage. A werewolf's life is more complicated. Most Uratha are occupied by disciplining spirits, defending against the Pure and maintaining the pack's territory, so his hunting time can be limited. Though a werewolf certainly has the wherewithal to conceal himself and watch a well-trod trail as some mortal hunters do, he may have a better success rate if he takes his time and emulates the wolf. A werewolf in Urhan form can cover a great deal of ground and, unless the land is nearly barren, find a substantial amount of food. Still, the process takes several hours. A werewolf can pull off a focused hunt when necessary by locking on to any potential prey he detects. To speed the effort, creative use of some Gifts can sometimes aid the werewolf in finding prey, and, when the chips are down, a werewolf can make use of the powerful Urshul form to outrun and overpower most natural prey.

Once a wolf or pack locates potential prey, they begins stalking to close the distance between themselves and the prey before the chase. Sometimes, the wolf may follow a target stealthily for some time, hoping to find an easier choice. A pack uses this time for its members to fan out, the better to cut off other avenues of escape and ensure the kill. The moment when the prey notices the predator is the moment that the chase begins. The creature being hunted tries to make its way to safety, which can be a den, a path where the wolves can't follow, the company of its herd or, in rare cases, advantageous ground from which it can defend itself. The hunters try to restrict the prey from reaching any such safety, but if it does, the wolves call off the hunt and start again. Werewolves, infinitely varied in personality, may not always have the temperament necessary to fold so quickly. Most who spend significant portions of their time away from civilization are willing to let a crafty elk go in favor of easier prey, but there are always exceptions.

By humanitarian standards, a wolf kills cruelly, as prey often take long, painful hours to die. The bloody standards of Nature, on the other hand, deem such a kill expedient, and some werewolves argue that it's even necessary. The duration of the hunt is a test, of sorts. If a deer runs in the wrong direction, doesn't detect the approaching hunters until it is too late or turns to defend itself but fails, it is thinned from the herd. A deer strong enough to endure the tiny bites and blood loss to eventually escape the pack is one that *deserves* to escape, and to breed. Such a deer will strengthen the herd, which will then survive to be thinned by the pack in the future. The wolves only take the weakest. This isn't an altruistic instinct — taking the easiest prey means that the wolves get

their food for less effort, and a stronger herd will survive harsher winters, ensuring that the wolves do not inadvertently deprive themselves of prey. Werewolves follow this example, though with more recognition of their efforts' greater impact.

This is also one reason why wolves developed pack tactics. When werewolves hunt together, they drastically increase the chance for any given hunt to succeed. A lone wolf may follow and lose as many as 20 separate targets before bringing one down, and the prey will be limited to only those species the wolf could successfully hunt on its own. As the pack grows, the number of failed attempts shrinks and the variety of potential prey increases. A wider range of viable prey also makes it more likely that the pack will find something to pursue. A large elk may be able to feed a single wolf for several days, but the wolf will have to fend off many opportunistic predators, including other wolves and coyotes, in order to make it last that long. The wolf will also have to eat the kill before the meat spoils too much and the insects take over. So wolves hunt in groups not just to make the hunt easier, but also ensure that as much of the food as possible is used.

After a successful kill, the alpha male and female eat first, affirming their positions in the social hierarchy. Sometimes, this triggers a social struggle between the alphas and other wolves who want the privileges afforded to those at the top of the pack's social ladder. Such struggles rarely take more than one or two minutes, and are usually composed of growling, raised hackles and other posturing. Only in the rare instances when one wolf (often the challenger) refuses to back down do the wolves actually fight, and never to the death. After the alphas get the chance to fill their bellies, the rest of the wolves can have their fills.

This principle extends to the hunting of wayward spirits. Only when the defeat of a specific spirit is crucial to the continued existence of the pack will werewolves concentrate on eliminating that threat to the exclusion of all else. In less demanding situations, a pack will tread their territory without direction, hunting spirits that transgress only as the pack detects them and, if the chase demands too much in the way of resources, calling it off. The Forsaken do not forget prey that they let go, of course. A wise pack remembers them and keeps an eye on them, and there will come a time when the Forsaken will choose to hunt a specific prey. The spirits aren't completely ignorant of this fact, and some of them make good use of the maxim "I don't need to outrun the lion; I only need to outrun *you*." Not all werewolves hunt spirits the same way wolves hunt their prey, but most of those werewolves who share territories and prey with natural wolves do, and many other rural wolves besides. After a successful hunt, the alpha decides what to do with the chastised spirit. Changes in alpha often occur when another werewolf in the pack doesn't agree with the alpha's decision and challenges it.

HUNTING SPECIFIC ENVIRONS

The above section describes the methods that wolves and werewolves most often use to hunt, but these tactics developed in response to the wolf's environment. The grey wolf's habitat encompasses nearly all of Europe and Asia and the greater part of North America. Combined with other canid species (such as the African wild dog, the dhole, the coyote and the dingo), there is almost no place on earth left untouched by the wolf and its relatives. There is some variation in the way different species hunt, but these instincts are relative to the environment in which the species lives. They almost all hunt in packs when pursuing larger prey and otherwise restrict themselves to eating smaller creatures and edible fruits and vegetables for their sustenance. There are some specific regions where hunting differs notably from the general state above.

URBAN OUTSKIRTS

Though prey animals become more common the farther one gets from "civilization," inverting a map of human population density does not represent an accurate map of the animal population. As the malls and developments of the growing human population continue to intrude upon what was once pristine (or at least sparsely populated) wilderness, the animals that live there cannot always relocate. Instead, some adapt, learning to live in the thinned and tended woods and to supplement their meals with what humans throw away. This means that a werewolf can even find good hunting in the outskirts of a city, but the method for hunting changes. First, wolves

and other such predators are common targets of human aggression — perhaps less so now than in the past couple of centuries — but the average human tolerance for predators still isn't high. Being seen in Urban form, the most common form for hunting, can trigger panic and increased vigilance on the outskirts of urban areas. Packs of wolves are even harder to hide and cause greater concern, so the number of werewolves necessary for a good hunt increases the danger significantly. Luckily, there's a balance. Animals grown accustomed to the presence of humans are commensurately easier for a human to hunt. These animals are used to human odors in a way that their instincts will never let them grow used to the scent of a wolf. In the end, werewolves can avoid alerting the community while taking advantage of the local creatures' weaknesses by hunting in Hishu form. Of course, some werewolves will always show disdain for this method, but those who value Cunning over Glory have little issue with it.

AFRICAN AND SOUTH AMERICAN SAVANNA

There are savannas all over the world, but the savanna in Africa has an abundance of predators. The African lions and leopards, hyenas, jackals and even crocodiles will not hesitate to take advantage of any source of fresh food they find, and the savanna is flat and open. Predators can see quite far, and both sounds and smells carry well. When a pack makes a kill, they must eat it quickly and be gone before uninvited guests arrive. The pack makes do without any of the social rituals surrounding wolves' kills in North America or Europe, where predators are fewer



and less competitive. All the members of the pack eat at once, and quickly, and then depart.

The Shadow Realm has rough equivalents to the African savanna: places where the spirit-scape allows inhabitants to detect others and events at great range and where there are a great many predatory spirits around. When a pack's pursuit of a spirit ends in such a place or in the physical realm with unguarded loci to such a place, the pack must deal with the spirit quickly and leave. Werewolves should recognize that there is no time for argument or conflict there, because waiting too long will bring powerful spirits that wish to deal with the hunted spirit — and the Uratha — in their own fashion.

DESERTS

Lacking sufficient rainfall for the region to flourish and grow, deserts are more common than most people believe. Many deserts do not resemble the classic images of the deep Sahara, instead looking more like those in Arizona. Deserts develop some of the most diverse and complex variations on plant life in the world, all finding a way to hoard water or find the precious liquid for themselves. An animal must be hardy to survive the dry environment, and the scarcity of water naturally lowers the animal population. Hunting is scarce. And the animals that live there are often smaller and better able to survive on the smaller sources of sustenance; hunting in the deserts produces birds, rabbits and rodents, more often than not. This discourages the pack social structure, as it is easier for canids to survive by hunting for themselves without regard for an alpha. The tundra is similar. Though it is dry because of the cold, the same sort of plants and animals thrive there.

The classic desert, where there is little or no water, few animals and several tons of sand, makes for poor hunting. The best chance for survival in the desert is to be certain of a water supply and to live off the vegetation while there. It may not be a pleasant prospect for most werewolves, but it is one of the best.

The *Hisil* also has a spiritual analog for deserts and tundra. These are places where Essence flows less freely, making them less attractive habitats for spirits. Powerful spirits have the clout to make their homes where they like and avoid such areas, unless the areas resonate with a flavor of Essence that can be found there but is otherwise rare. Thus, spiritual deserts are populated by weaker spirits that can satisfy themselves with the meager sources of Essence. Such regions also have fewer connections to the physical world, making them still less desirable and less likely that the People will have to deal with such places or their inhabitants. Deep spirit deserts are areas that are utterly devoid of any spiritual energy or imprint from the physical realm, and are very rare.

WILDERNESS TERRITORIES

It was the oldest tree in the redwood forest, and the tallest. Its branches spread out above the Sierra Nevada proudly.

Deservedly, too, for much of the surrounding forest had been seeded by that very tree. Grand Sequoia stood at its base, so wide it could not be encompassed by a score of grown men holding hands, and glowed with satisfaction. His tree was a powerful locus for the Essence of nature, and he was happy to be involved with a pack of the Uratha again, after so many years of neglect. Over 3,200 years old, Grand Sequoia was no longer a sapling, and he looked forward to being able to rest while the sons and daughters of Father Wolf defended the region from the ravages of presumptive spirits and the zealous Pure. Grand Sequoia felt his aged and cracked skin, sending several slivers of bark falling to the ground as he did so. He would sit and rest. Perhaps, when he awoke, Thundering Tom would be back.

From a mile away, an enormous man watched the guardian close its eyes. A hand gesture sent others, dressed in dark clothing and equipped with earpieces and microphones, dashing across the wooded hills that separated them from the giant tree. Each carried an identical iron box, unadorned except for a few symbols scratched in an unknown language and the brown stain of old blood.

Grand Sequoia woke up hazily. He smelled something that he hadn't encountered in some time. Clearing the fog from his mind and stretching his roots took some time. Small. Blood. Ink? No. Other liquid. Many legs. He reached out into the *Hisil* to aid his recovery, and that shocked his slow, thick blood to a frantic pace. The locus was closing. Azlu! He stood to his great 10-foot height and turned to confront the ancient menace. He could remember the stories of when they were first shattered, and he would break them again. Then he saw the werewolves. They were arrayed around him in a circle and appeared unafraid of his great strength. The werewolf standing in front of him in *Dalu* form stretched out a hand that rippled to become a vicious, furred claw. Grand Sequoia blinked, then a handful of flame appeared in the werewolf's open palm. He could sense his potential retreat closing behind him when the werewolf spoke. "They are Forsaken for a reason, spirit. You will not live to obey your new masters."

When the park rangers arrived, only a blackened trunk remained.

A werewolf pack that claims a territory away from civilization has certain advantages. Their territories are inevitably bigger than those of urban werewolves for a couple of reasons. First, there are many fewer claims on the wilderness area than in cities. Humans want to buy and sell buildings and lots and build malls and office buildings. Humans want to own pieces of the city and control it, a concept counter to some werewolves' philosophies of hunting and maintaining one's territory but not begrudging other creatures their presence. Preserving a territory in a place like New York or Houston is harder, forcing werewolves to claim smaller areas until the werewolves reach a size they can handle. Cities are exercises in increasing population density, and werewolf populations increase similarly, creating greater demand for territory. Because of the competition for space, urban

territorial boundaries shrink significantly. In the wild, there are many more animals than there are humans, and animals are less concerned with boundaries and the possession of land. Other wolves or werewolves make up more of the pack's neighbors than humans, and the animals are more likely to respect the pack's boundaries. Werewolves also aren't forced into close proximity to each other, so while they can and do still fight for prime territory, there's always more space to go around.

There are fewer loci in the wilderness because there is less emotional impact so far from the centers of human population. Essence flows change like the weather, at least those based on emotional resonance. Wilderness loci may form after the death of a lost hiker or an entire herd, a particularly bountiful year for vegetation or local animals, a wildfire or a particularly savage storm. Common loci might be the bones of a dead creature, the tallest and most ancient tree in the forest or a stone at the base of a thundering waterfall. The rarity of loci contributes to the security of wilderness territories; a pack that settles its territory around one locus will be far enough from the next locus and its pack that confrontations are kept to a minimum. Additionally, loci form less frequently in the wilderness. While a string of thefts or the loss of a longtime den of iniquity may spawn a new locus in an urban environment, there are fewer such events in the wild, providing troublemaking spirits fewer opportunities to sneak through the Gauntlet unobserved.

Members of a pack in the wild have less need to hide their identities as werewolves. The People have wandered the world for ages. The birds and the beasts are used to the werewolves as much as animals are used to any predator. Changing form is a natural thing that does not upset the creatures of the wilderness, and they are not affected by Lunacy. Animals of the city, especially domesticated animals, have often lost the aspect of themselves that recognizes this. Many city creatures have been changed enough by humans that, even if to a miniscule degree, the changing frightens the creatures and the Lunacy sets them on edge. A werewolf in the wilderness is freer to change form in the open and use his power to his greatest advantage. There are few or no legal authorities in the wild, and encounters with forest rangers and other official caretakers can easily be kept to a minimum.

Werewolves who claim territory far from urban centers often have the Territorial Familiarity Merit (see p. 99), making it easier for them to survive in their chosen regions. Those who live in cities or towns may also have this Merit, but it is less common: things change rapidly enough there that it can be difficult to acquire such a strong familiarity with an area.

Of course, living in the wild can bring disadvantages as well. Though the Forsaken who choose



to live there may have larger territories, the werewolves are correspondingly more alone. Instead of a distance of a couple of miles or several blocks to reach the next pack, it may be as much as 20 or 40 miles. Portable radios have a limited range, cell phones often have no service so far out and even howls can rarely travel farther than seven or eight miles. A pack that needs to stay in immediate touch with its neighbors must rely on the Tremulous Howl (see below) or satellite phones. Since many werewolves who choose to live far from concentrated humanity also eschew technology — or at least do not wish to be bound to a source of batteries — the former is the most common option. A pack that cannot call upon its neighbors for aid is forced to deal with all of its trouble alone, or to leave its territory subject to the ravages of the enemy while the pack races to ask for help.

For urban werewolves, being able to call for help is only one option that makes a difficult life potentially easier. Another option is the acquisition of food. A werewolf in the city may *prefer* to hunt his own food, but, when an emergency comes down the line, he can put aside his desires and buy chicken and steak from the local grocery. A werewolf living in the wilderness has no such backup. When her duties become a severe time sink, she cannot simplify the rest of her life by letting others find food for her. She must continue to spend time hunting for her food or starve. She can stock up on successful kills and smoke or salt them, but that requires her to have free time for additional hunting in the first place *and* to have a stable den or cabin of some sort, which not all werewolves have.

rites of the wild

There are several rites known to the People that are most commonly used by those werewolves whose territories comprise wilderness largely uninhabited by humanity. Most of these rites serve to duplicate the advantage of some modern amenity not available so far from the city, but a werewolf who knows them does not necessarily use them thus. In most cases, the rite existed long before the amenity. These rites are used as last resorts — efforts to survive when mere survival is the best result. At other times, there is no reason to use these rites. One of the People can do without.

THE TREMULOUS HOWL (•)

The Tremulous Howl is a werewolf's cry for aid at a time when all other options are forfeit. The Tremulous Howl is no little thing for a fully grown werewolf to evoke. A ritemaster who performs this rite can be certain that those who hear it will remember her and the call for help. It admits weakness and may bring a degree of shame on the werewolf, her pack and, sometimes, her tribe. Those who respond will always know (or believe) they saved her, and those who hear of the event will become uncertain that she can adequately perform her duties. Those who desire to accumulate Glory Renown will think twice before allowing this howl to be performed. Still, it requires

a certain knowledge of self to know that one needs help. Using this rite when hope is truly lost and through no fault of one's own can be seen as an act of Wisdom.

Performing the Rite: This ritual can be performed in moments. The ritualist need do no more than nick her throat enough to draw a trickle of blood, then throw her arms and legs wide to reveal her vulnerable belly. Then, she howls.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Instant

The howl can be heard at a distance of 20 miles per dot of Primal Urge. A werewolf who hears it knows instantly who is in trouble and where, but not the nature of the trouble. This rite does not compel any werewolf to go to the source of the howl, but it infallibly alerts all within range that something serious is going on. Some spirits, especially wolf- and aid-spirits, can discern the same information from the howl as a werewolf. The Pure can interpret the Tremulous Howl as well as the Forsaken, and some Pure may choose to follow the howl to its source in order to make things *more* difficult for those who need aid. For this reason alone, almost all werewolves who hear a Tremulous Howl will drop everything in order to help. Most will go simply because this howl is so serious, and no werewolf wants to be the one who caused disaster when he didn't lend a hand.

rite of winter's anguish (••)

Cold is an insidious foe. It can never be fully defeated, only escaped for a time. A werewolf does not always have the leisure to don his warmest form and spend the duration of a cold snap in a snug den. Some werewolves are even forced to endure cold weather in the vulnerable human form. When this is the case, sometimes even the best mundane efforts won't help the werewolf survive the sapping low temperatures. The Rite of Winter's Anguish abjures the spirits of the snow, air and cold to leave the werewolf be. Even the kindest spirits have limited patience, however, and they return their attentions to the werewolf after a short time.

Performing the Rite: The subject of the ritual must be completely bared to the unkind elements. No physical or magical protections that might separate him from the cold may remain on his body, though jewelry and fetishes that in no way offer him such aid may remain. He is then subjected to the coldest thing possible, be it snow or a steel bar left out in below-zero weather. So humbled before the spirits, they give the ritual their blessing.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (10 successes; each roll represents 10 seconds)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes are lost. The spirits are affronted. For the next 24 hours, the subject of the ritual and the ritualist both suffer twice as much damage from cold.

Failure: No successes are added. If the ritual ends before it is successfully completed, the subject may already be well on his way to hypothermia.

Success: Some successes are gained. If 10 are accumulated, the subject becomes completely immune to natural cold for one hour per dot of the ritemaster's Primal Urge. The subject need not worry about hypothermia, frostbite or any other adverse effects from lack of warmth. Magical cold effects leveled against the subject suffer a -4 to relevant dice pools.

Exceptional Success: Considerable successes are gained. If 15 successes are accumulated when the ritual concludes, the effects of the rite last for twice the normal duration.

SUBDUING HUNGERS RITE (•••)

There are many ways to die when alone in the wilderness. Dying of thirst and hunger are two of the most unpleasant, not least of all for the sheer length of time they take. While most Uratha have little difficulty finding an amount of food and water sufficient to keep them functioning, werewolves get into all manner of predicaments. One can find herself in the middle of a desert, in the arid arctic or stuck in the middle of the ocean. That is when the Subduing Hungers Rite becomes necessary. It allows the werewolf to continue to function as if fed and watered for a few extra days, sometimes just enough to ensure that she lives.

Performing the Rite: This rite can be performed on any werewolf, but it is usually performed by the ritemaster on herself. She bites her tongue or lip, or cuts herself and licks the wound, then ingests the blood. She then burns each of her feet just enough to raise light blisters, though these quickly heal. If the spirits hear her, she ceases to feel the urges to eat or drink. At this point, the werewolf expends at least one Essence to empower the rite.

Cost: 1 or more Essence

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (25 successes; each roll represents one minute's worth of effort)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes are lost, as is any Essence spent.

Failure: No successes are gained at this time.

Success: Successes are gained, and, if the total is accumulated, the werewolf will not need to eat or drink for a number of days equal to the number of Essence points spent. Not only does she not feel any urge to do so, her body does not react to the lack of sustenance until the

ritual's effects ends. When the effects of the ritual dissipate, the werewolf's body suddenly notices what it has been missing. A werewolf who lacks food but has water, or vice versa, should consume what she has although she feels no need, reducing the harsh backlash at the end of the ritual.

Exceptional Success: No additional effect beyond the extra successes gained.

NEW MERIT: TERRITORIAL FAMILIARITY (• TO •••)

Effect: Your character has spent a great deal of time in a specific area and has a preternatural familiarity with the area. He has a detailed map in his head, never loses his sense of direction, always knows how and where to find food in his "territory" and can evade unwanted attention there for an almost unlimited length of time. He adds a +2 to all Survival rolls made while in the chosen region.

One dot in this Merit means your character's territory is the size of one or two city blocks. Three dots (or two for werewolves) expands the radius to several square miles.

Though this Merit is included in a chapter on life in the wilderness, it is of equal utility in urban settings. A bum who has been sleeping on the same street corner for years or a youth who knows exactly which yards to cut through near his house might have a one-dot version; a cop who's been on the same beat for 20 years or an architect who designed every last piece of a sprawling mall over the last 10 years might have the Merit at three dots. When the region denoted by this Merit is altered significantly, the quality of Territorial Familiarity can be reduced (if possessed at three dots) or lost altogether (in either case). A teenager who returns from his scholarship at college to learn that the tenements where he grew up have been replaced by a strip mall would lose his Merit. A park ranger whose park was ravaged by a wildfire might have the Merit reduced or lost. In the latter case, the Merit might return as the forest recovered.

Werewolves, naturally territorial creatures, purchase the three-dot version of Territorial Familiarity at a reduced cost of two dots.



CHAPTER III

THE MOLF-BLOODED

They locked me up.

I felt the Change coming, and I told them so. They had my aunt and uncle to visit, and told them that I was going to Change. My aunt crossed herself and said that this evil couldn't stand, not for a second longer, and they grabbed me and locked me here in the basement.

No moonlight, no windows, no fresh air, only food through the laundry chute. I have seen no spirits. I miss their torments. There must be spirits there, but now I cannot feel them. No eyes peer out of my shadow at me. The spiders once refused to make their webs in any room I'd slept in. Now I see their tiny legs dance by the pale light of the bare bulb. Did the spirits do this? Raise my hopes and then abandon me to this fate? Did they know what my family would do?

I pray nightly that I'm wrong, that all I need it is the moonlight on my face and I will Change, and my sister will come to me with her pack. And then my parents and my aunt and my uncle will lie in this basement, cold and still, and I shall never think of them again.

"DO YOU THINK I WANTED TO BE PART OF THIS FUCKED-UP FAMILY?
DO YOU THINK I WANTED TO RUN WITH THE PACK?"

— MEGAN, DOG SOLDIERS

Any human being who spends time around a werewolf is in mortal danger. A man who accidentally spills coffee on a passerby might, without knowing, have sealed his own fate. It's not particularly *likely* that a werewolf would deliberately kill for such a slight, nor are most werewolves so out of touch with themselves that they would fly into a murderous rage in public over it. But it does happen. Blood stains the street, the papers run a story about a mad dog, the werewolf probably receives censure from his pack for endangering the secrecy of the Uratha and life goes on. Much more probably, the werewolf simply glares and snarls at the man, and that man might well see those feral eyes in his nightmares. In either case, the meeting is brief.

For the wolf-blooded, that meeting is not a chance encounter, a momentary brush with death. For many of these people, it is an ongoing, lifelong concern. For them, werewolves are not just monsters lurking in the city's shadows or just out of the moonlight in the country. The ancient word for these wolf-blooded people is *uragarum*.

This chapter discusses the wolf-blooded in depth. It explores what it's like to grow up near a werewolf (or a pack of werewolves), how much the wolf-blooded generally know about their lupine relatives, what the various tribes look for in breeding partners and how the werewolves treat the wolf-blooded as well as a few of the wolf-blooded families that have been around long enough to carve out a place in the World of Darkness.

We then examine the process of creating and playing wolf-blooded characters, their roles in chronicles and, of course, what happens when the wolf-blooded becomes the wolf.

RAISED BY WOLVES

As stated in **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, a person related to a werewolf might be wolf-blooded. It's not as simple as tracing a blood connection to one of the Uratha, though. A distant cousin of a werewolf might find that the spiritual line of the wolf runs strong in her veins, while the son of another might be meek and fearful all his life. The "blessing" of *Urfarah* is fickle, and is more a matter of spirit than genetics. As such, a child born *uragarum* can't necessarily expect understanding from her family, for they might not share her status. Add this to the fact that just as many wolf-blooded are completely ignorant of their condition as not, and it's no wonder that most of these souls grow up deeply troubled.

GROWING UP WOLF-BLOODED

What is childhood like for the *uragarum*? While no wolf-blood's life is entirely normal, the answer depends in large part on the circumstances of her upbringing. Some wolf-blooded are children of werewolves, and the Uratha rarely try to raise their children for very long, if at all. This flies in the face of instinct for both sexes, but the simple fact is that werewolves

are dangerous to their children. Normal human beings sometimes lose their tempers with crying babies, and the Uratha are much more volatile than any human. Knowing this, they usually either abandon the child's human parent or arrange for the child to be taken in with extended family. Sometimes, the child is put up for adoption or into foster care.

In any of these cases, the *uragarum* child faces the same sorts of issues that human children in their situations face. Children growing up in single-parent homes wonder about their missing parents, often have more responsibility at younger ages than those in dual-parent homes and sometimes take out their aggression on toys, pets and peers. Adopted children might wonder about their "real" parents, imagining their lives to be more interesting and exciting (in this case, of course, the children are right).

On rare occasions, a werewolf does raise her own children. (This happens with male werewolves as well as female, but males raising children is even more uncommon). To have any chance of success, however, the werewolf needs a support system outside of her pack. Other wolf-blooded, of course, are ideal, but they aren't exactly common. The desire to stay close to one's children but be able to run off to hunt at a moment's notice (or flee when the Death Rage threatens) is the main reason that wolf-blood families exist. They provide a community in which a werewolf can interact with at least *some* understanding from those around her. These families are discussed in detail on p. 113.

A werewolf trying to raise a child with only her pack is probably doomed to tragedy. Human beings are fragile, children extremely so, and all it takes is one lapse in judgment for a werewolf to lose the most precious thing in her life. Losing a child is devastating enough, but no werewolf ever truly recovers from accidentally destroying her own offspring. Uratha society recognizes the probability of this happening, and considers it a serious sin. Apart from occasional periods of ostracism, however, punishment for this sin is uncommon. This crime — called *Ama-Er*, "Mother's Tears," in the First Tongue — is considered punishment in itself.

More commonly, the werewolf parent remains a part of her child's life, but distant. Some Uratha pose as aunts, uncles or cousins and claim that their work keeps them away from the family for extended periods of time (with the advent of online communication, such werewolves can keep abreast of their offspring's lives with minimal hassle). Other werewolves refuse to have anything to do with their children until and unless those children undergo the First Change. Such werewolves claim they stay away to protect their children, both from the parents' own berserk rages and from any enemies of their packs who might wish to strike through the *uragarum*. Other, more honest Uratha admit that they stay away because they cannot bear to be only half-involved in their children's lives.

Wolf-blooded children pass through the same stages of development as normal human children, and are just as shaped by their environment. It's important to note, though, that *uragarum* have an extra intrinsic factor to consider. Just as a genius child raised in a loving, supportive family probably grows up with a desire to use her intellect for humankind's betterment (or at least, to use that intellect constructively) while an intelligent youngster who is abused might use her intelligence to manipulate those around her, how a wolf-blood copes with the inherent strangeness of her condition depends on her upbringing. One of the very first questions that must be answered, then, is, does the wolf-blood know what she truly is?

WOLF-BLOOD MERIT: STATIC VS. SCALEABLE

At the end of this chapter, you'll find an optional system for the Wolf-Blooded Merit. Although this Merit is listed as a four-dot trait on p. 79 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, not all *uragarum* receive Father Wolf's blessing in the same intensity. The Merit is therefore presented as a two- to five-dot trait, on p. 126 of this chapter.

The rest of this chapter refers to various degrees of "wolf-bloodedness." We don't mention specific dot ratings except when expressly talking about game mechanics, however. The characters themselves, after all, have no concrete way of

measuring how close to the surface the wolf's blood runs, and it's all a trained and perceptive werewolf can do to say that one *uragarum*'s blood is "stronger" or "weaker" than another's.

If you choose to ignore the scaleable Wolf-Blooded Merit, then assume that characters who are without the Merit but who have werewolf relatives (i.e., would have a lower dot rating in Wolf-Blooded) don't gain *any* of its benefits, or at least not reliably. Likewise, while the characters might suffer for their association with the Uratha, the drawbacks to the Merit shouldn't be as frequent or as obvious.

IGNORANCE

As mentioned in **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, few Uratha tell their relatives the truth. The reasons for this silence are more complex than they might seem, and vary from werewolf to werewolf.

Obviously, the Oath of the Moon is a major concern. *The Herd Must Not Know*, the Oath states, and thus the debate is: do the wolf-blooded count as part of the "herd?" Uratha engage in this debate quite frequently, though typically only *after* a breach has already come back to bite the offending werewolf. (If the wolf-blood in question can keep his mouth shut, there's no problem. The truth tends to leak



out, though.) However, no easy answer to this debate has ever been reached, and practices vary from place to place. A pack new to an area would be well-advised to make sure, before revealing themselves even to *uragarum*, that the other werewolves of the area won't take offense (or that the pack is strong enough not to fear reprisal).

Safety is also a concern. "Three can keep a secret if two of them are dead," said Ben Franklin. Telling a child the truth takes so many chances that many werewolves choose not to take the risk. A child who knows that her mother (or aunt or cousin) is a werewolf might unthinkingly blurt it out to her friends. This in itself is unlikely to cause a problem, but, if a passerby hears it and repeats it to a coworker as an amusing anecdote, the secret is one step closer to whatever Pure Uratha, Azlu or other menace might be listening.

Finally, some werewolves look down on the *uragarum*, whether out of arrogance, contempt for a weaker species or jealousy. These Uratha are the most likely to leave the wolf-blooded alone entirely, often not even leaping to their protection if they are threatened. This attitude may seem cruel, but such werewolves are quick to point out that they are responsible for their packs, not humanity, and that wolf-blooded, despite their somewhat special status, are still human. The obvious counter to that argument is that any wolf-blooded could conceivably be a werewolf waiting to undergo the First Change. But werewolves inclined to keep their families in the dark aren't typically willing to let this slim chance influence them.

The vast majority of wolf-blooded who grow up not knowing anything about the Uratha, the spirit world or any of the other strange facts of their ancestry are in for confusing childhoods. Such children are often plagued by nightmares and bogeymen as spirits occasionally torment these *uragarum*. Depending on the strength of the wolf in a child's blood, she might sometimes be able to see spirits, instinctively communicate with wolves or dogs or even heal wounds more quickly than seems natural.

The vast majority of wolf-blooded share anger management issues, and *uragarum* who don't know the truth of their heritage find these problems all the more frustrating. Wolf-bloods are prone to temper tantrums as children and violent outbursts as teens. Neither of these things is particularly rare, of course, and most adults probably just assume the child is spoiled or maladjusted. Some wolf-bloods learn strategies to cope with their emotional volatility, others end up medicated or institutionalized.



NEW FLAW — CONFLICTED

Human society admonishes us to "work through" our anger, count to 10, avoid feeling angry or displace the anger by hitting pillows or walls rather than people. Wolf-bloods, cursed as they are with a small measure of a werewolf's rage, often end up receiving at least a few lectures, and sometimes years of therapy, on the subject.

What happens, then, when an *uragarum* who has been told for years that his anger is destructive and, in a word, wrong, becomes a werewolf who must sometimes rely on that rage to survive?

Some Uratha make that change gracefully, letting their wolf instinct guide them. Some, however, find that they cannot use their anger effectively. They must either remain in control or fly into Death Rage. This makes Gauru form extremely difficult to use well, as gut instinct conflicts with learned coping technique.

As a Flaw, Conflicted affects a character's ability to resist Death Rage. The Resolve + Composure roll to avoid *Kuruth* when not in combat suffers a -3 modifier. If the character is in combat, the roll is made at a -5 penalty.



HINTS OF A DARKER WORLD

A wolf-blood might know that something about her or her family is strange or even mystical without the word "werewolf" ever being mentioned. Some wolf-blood families, like the Doirons (see p. 113), maintain a strong blood connection to their lycanthropic heritage but have completely erroneous ideas about what their condition really denotes.

Such *uragarum* typically know very few facts about their status. The defining factor between ignorance and partial knowledge, though, isn't fact but belief — the character knows and accepts that supernatural forces exist in the world and that she is caught up in them. This realization is not comforting in the slightest, of course, because by itself it is horrifying. No human faith gives any satisfying context for what wolf-bloods experience, and some half-aware *uragarum* believe they are haunted or possessed. Indeed, adult wolf-blooded have been occasional targets for spirit predations and torment for so long that they often enter professions that allow them to discuss and study paranormal and spiritual phenomena, simply because the wolf-bloods are too out of touch with the normal segments of society to function well within it. And yet, these wolf-bloods have only a bare glimmer of the truth, not nearly enough to draw any real conclusions about the World of Darkness.

Wolf-bloods who recognize their spiritual significance and vulnerability often leap to whatever conclusions are convenient. Hauntings and possessions, as stated, are common jumps in logic, but some *uragarum* believe that they are feeling the urges of their past lives, that they hear the voice of God or angels or that they are in some way "chosen" for supernatural attention. Some wolf-bloods attempt to solve the mysteries with research, but this becomes problematic. No human culture holds the truth about a wolf-blood's condition, and, therefore, even a patient scholar will never find the whole truth. This tends not to matter, though, because most such wolf-bloods stop researching when they find an explanation they like. One might find *uragarum* who believe they are cursed by demons, blessed by pagan gods, are powerful conjurers of spirits or are vessels for divine or cosmic power. These theories, by themselves, might seem pathetic or even laughable, but remember that spirits *do* exist and they sometimes play along with a human's delusions. If the spirit itself buys into the wolf-blood's theories, that wolf-blood might even become Ridden.

Consider, too, that other supernatural forces besides werewolves lurk in the night, and those forces have no way to know that the wolf-blood claiming to be a sorcerer (whatever that word means to the wolf-blood in question) is anything other than what she says. A perceptive mage might sense mystical power or spiritual activity around a wolf-blood, and decide to take this budding spellcaster under his wing. Or, he might decide the energies the wolf-blood wields are too primal and chaotic, and elect instead to kill her or strip her of her power. Any of these actions can lead to conflict between the mage and Uratha, with the hapless *uragarum* caught in the middle.

WELL, DUH

A person has a bad temper, a rapport with wolves and an instinctive sense about nature? Surely it doesn't take a great deal of intelligence to put those things together and get "werewolf?"

Well, not for someone reading a sourcebook for a Storytelling game called **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, no. But, for the average person, who receives his spiritual education through a church community and his literary education from the "classics" taught in public schools, the word "werewolf" is a little far from the lips. Most people, asked what a "werewolf" is, say "a guy who turns into a wolf and eats people, right?" (The Introduction to this book, in fact, discusses the essentials of the werewolf legend.) Relatives who experi-

ence strange spiritual phenomena don't usually enter into it, to say nothing of the fact that most *uragarum* never have a chance to discover that their affinity for dogs extends to wolves as well. Unless a wolf-blood is categorically told that her heritage has something to do with werewolves, she isn't likely to come up with it on her own.

The Uratha know this, and those who wish to keep the truth a secret would be well-advised to avoid howling, snarling, shapeshifting or any other obvious werewolf activity in any circumstance where this tiny, but crucial, piece of information might filter back to the *uragarum*.

If the wolf-blood knows that she is descended of werewolves but has never had this fact put in the context of the Uratha and their heritage, she might constantly watch herself for signs of changing during the full moon. She might be very careful to avoid transmitting the "curse" to others, and is probably afraid of having children, lest they become monsters. On the other hand, some *uragarum* with exactly the same amount of information eagerly wait for their feral relatives to come and claim them, and these *uragarum* use their "heritage" as an excuse for giving in to rage, lust or whatever particular base urge drives them.



FULL DISCLOSURE

Some Uratha feel that the best way to protect the wolf-blooded is to give them enough information to protect themselves. These Uratha therefore explain the truth: the *uragarum* are relatives of werewolves, and, on any given night, the wolf-blooded could become monsters themselves or be devoured by the werewolves.

This sobering explanation normally serves to terrify the wolf-bloods, but it's true. While various rites exist to determine whether a given person will undergo the Change, there's no way to *know*. Since the Change can strike at any time during a person's life, Uratha cannot breathe a sigh of relief (or regret) when a son, daughter or sibling escapes puberty unscathed or completes any other rite of passage without becoming a werewolf. Indeed, some Uratha discover, to their shock, that one of their *parents* has become a werewolf, far into adult life. Due to this uncertainty, and to the danger inherent in being Uratha, some werewolves feel it's in the wolf-blood's best interest to let them know the truth.

This attitude isn't very common, though. It requires a great deal of trust on the part of the werewolf, and werewolves are aware of exactly how frail human beings, even *uragarum*, are. Every piece of information in a wolf-blood's mind is an asset that an enemy could wrench free and potentially use against the Uratha. Some werewolves get around this by explaining the truth in very general terms — telling the wolf-blood that she is descended from werewolves and that they have a culture and a loose society, but that she can never be part of it. By keeping the information true, but non-specific, the Uratha keep anything too sensitive from escaping. Of course, the fact that the wolf-blood can identify specific werewolves on sight and any werewolf by gut instinct is enough for most enemies to take drastic steps.

Complete honesty is typically reserved for wolf-bloods intended to take an active role in their relatives' lives — by helping to maintain territory, breed to produce new Uratha or raise a werewolf's children. In these instances, it's better to risk an *uragarum* spilling a secret than making a mistake that might anger the local spirits or scar a potential werewolf. One faction of Uratha makes a point of educating the wolf-bloods, however. The Lodge of the Shepherd (see sidebar) comes under fire for this practice, but maintains that their actions are perfectly in keeping with the Oath.



THE LODGE OF THE SHEPHERD

The bonds of the pack are among the strongest that any werewolf experiences. But the bonds of family, of blood, hold the Uratha as well. While some werewolves look down upon the *uragarum*, the Shepherds assert that the proper thing to do is to honor and protect them, for they are related by blood to werewolves and, therefore, *Imru*.

The Lodge of the Shepherd is a young and very small lodge, but its members claim that it has always existed in one form or another, as certain werewolves have always been willing to protect the wolf-blooded. A lesser wolf spirit called Sibath-

Ur ("Herding Wolf") acts as totem for this lodge, although the many detractors of the lodge call the spirit Kuluh-Ur ("Trembling Wolf"). Sibath demands that his followers treat each *uragarum* as a potential *nuzusul*, and this means that all portions of the Oath of the Moon extend to the wolf-blooded. According to the lodge's precepts, wolf-blooded are both human and Uratha, and therefore enjoy the respect due both. The Shepherds recognize, however, that the *uragarum* do not have the strength of the Uratha, and require protection. The members assert that neither should the wolf-bloods feel shame over this nor should Uratha lord their power over their kin. Every wolf-blood is but a child, and a true adult doesn't lord over a child simply because he is bigger and stronger. By the same token, the Shepherds expect the *uragarum* to follow the Oath, including respecting those above them (which naturally includes the Uratha). Although the wolf-bloods enjoy the protection and love of the lodge, that love is functional rather than tender, and the protection is very much contingent on the *uragarum* behaving appropriately.

All Shepherds are sworn to protect the wolf-blooded from harm, to be honest with them about their condition and about Uratha culture and to help the wolf-blooded cope with the trials they face because of their nature. Different werewolves behave in different ways, of course. Some Shepherds are nurturing and compassionate, while others treat wolf-bloods almost as roughly as they do other werewolves. One thing remains constant, however. The Shepherds do not treat *uragarum* who violate the tenets of the Oath — especially *The Herd Must Not Know* — with mercy. The Shepherds feel that if the wolf-bloods know their place in Uratha society, they should be responsible for their actions. Shepherds do not announce their membership to other Uratha, but do not deny membership if asked. Members recognize each other through Herding Wolf's blessing (see below), but wear no other indicator of their allegiance.

Prerequisites: Herding Wolf asks little of prospective members, only that they have a true regard for the wolf-blooded and a healthy respect for the Oath (in game terms, Shepherds must have Purity • and maintain a Harmony rating of 7 or more).

Membership: The Lodge of the Shepherd is open to Uratha of all five tribes. Herding Wolf does not accept Ghost Wolves, feeling that any werewolf unwilling to commit to a greater family has no place in the lodge. (Likewise, he does not accept werewolves who have never belonged to a pack, though he will admit those who have left or lost a pack, provided they meet the other requirements.)

Members find each other through word of mouth. A prospective member need only approach a current member and ask for Sibath's blessing. The member then performs a special rite to call up Herding Wolf. The spirit judges the prospective member. If the member truly loves, or at least

respects, the *uragarum*, he is granted membership. If not, he is rejected, and may not try again until he has gained a dot of Purity Renown.

Benefits: Members can recognize each other and wolf-bloods on sight, without a need for a roll. Also, they can learn the following rites at a decreased cost: Banish Human, Shared Scent (for tracking wolf-bloods), Banish Spirit, Fortify the Border Marches and Rite of Moon's Love. These rites cost a number of experience points equal to the level of the rite, rather than the level of the rite x 2. Ithaeur apply their usual price break and then subtract one, and so pay (level of rite - 1) in total, a minimum of one experience point.



ADULT LIFE

A wolf-blood's early life might be traumatic, fraught with supernatural strangeness or simply uneventful. The spirits might take notice of her as a baby or not until she reaches adulthood. (In general, the more powerful the connection to her werewolf relatives, the sooner the supernatural intrudes.) When the *uragarum* grows up, however, she suddenly becomes a potential mate for the Uratha, and this can change her entire life. Werewolves pay her more attention, and therefore the spirits do as well. Where a young wolf-blood might only have seen glimpses of the spirit world (tiny reminders that the shadows house secrets that humankind cannot fathom), an adult *uragarum* can expect such trauma much more regularly.

Wolf-bloods cannot recognize each other on sight. Most don't know what they are or that werewolves exist at all. A wolf-blood *might* be able to talk about her strange experiences with family, if other members of her family share her condition (many wolf-bloods are adopted, though, which doesn't help matters any). Many *uragarum* wind up in therapy for controlling their anger and coping with delusions caused by spirit intrusion. Others talk to spiritual leaders or other mentor figures, trying to make sense of their lives. Wolf-bloods, like werewolves, are social creatures who function best in a group of their peers. Unlike werewolves, wolf-bloods have no society of their peers to find and educate them, so most wolf-bloods are alone, trying vainly to make sense of the twists their lives take.

COPING WITH THE UNSEEN

All wolf-blooded encounter the supernatural at some point in their lives. Some wolf-blooded know what they are and are better equipped to cope with the horrors they might see. Most wolf-bloods have only the barest frame of reference, and must draw their own conclusions. What conclusions they draw color the rest of their lives. Human beings have a remarkable ability to ignore whatever they don't want to see. Wolf-bloods are no different, but they do come into contact with disturbing events more often than the average human. As such, *uragarum* either grow accustomed to the strange events of the World of Darkness to the point that such events seem commonplace, learn to ignore said events entirely or immerse themselves in the supernatural.

Unless the wolf-blood in question has regular contact with werewolves, growing inured to the supernatural is the easiest response. Yes, the wolf-blood's hands might begin itching every time the moon waxes full, or the water in his shower might smell of blood at odd intervals (which, though he doesn't realize it, coincide with his werewolf brother's successful hunts), but neither of those things stop the wolf-blood from doing his job or relating to other humans. On the occasions when the manifestations grow too overt for him to cope, he treats it like having a cold — it might require him to take time off work or avoid human contact for a while. The problem with being this blasé about the supernatural, of course, is that spiritual intrusion can be dangerous. Some spirits are malicious and preface truly violent or deadly attacks with smaller incursions. But if the wolf-blood has learned to cope with such events for the sake of his own sanity, he might find that the manifestations grow more overt until he is forced to take action — or until another being notices the activity.

Ignoring the supernatural produces much the same results, and holds the same dangers, as simply coping with it. The difference is that the wolf-blood either does not acknowledge the events or comes up with a rational excuse for them. Sounds in the walls? Probably mice, easily fixed with a few traps. Scratches on the front door? A neighborhood dog must have slipped its leash and tried to get in. Pointing out to the wolf-blood that the sounds in the walls coincide with a particular song coming on the radio or that the scratches on the front door always seem to happen on the new moon only elicits a response of "coincidence." Such wolf-bloods aren't being thick or stubborn, though. Their self-induced blindness is a human survival mechanism. In addition to the problems of possible escalation, as mentioned above, once presented with incontrovertible evidence of the supernatural and its place in the wolf-blood's life, he tends to fall apart rather spectacularly.

An *uragarum* who decides to embrace the supernatural rather than shun it is taking her life into her own hands. Deciding to pursue the things that hunt in the night doesn't make them any happier to be caught or witnessed. The supernatural does not reward curiosity. Library and academic research is safer, but it yields false conclusions. A wolf-blood might search through tomes both modern and ancient her entire life but never see the words "*uragarum*" or "Uratha" in print. Even making the connection between her condition and werewolves is a difficult leap. Researching the strange phenomena of a wolf-blood's life, however, can open the door to other supernatural beings. Some vampires take a keen interest in magic — and obviously mages do as well. Cults worship all manner of supernatural beings, though many don't truly understand the nature of the creature they revere. A wolf-blood looking into why she sometimes leaves an extra set of footprints might come to the conclusion that she is a witch and begin experimenting with her "power" or looking for others like her. If she is lucky, she will find others who are actually like her — other *uragarum*. The odds, however, are much greater that she will find people who are simply delusional, but that is still better than finding a cult looking for a sacrifice or a vampire looking for a dupe (or a meal).

WOLF-BLOODED AND LUNACY

Uragarum are not immune to the Lunacy, although they do not suffer it to nearly the same extent that others do. This isn't because wolf-bloods are necessarily stronger-willed than normal humans, but because their werewolf blood conflicts with Luna's curse of madness. Therefore, although the *uragarum* aren't likely to slip into a catatonic state or forget an experience with a werewolf, they are by no means unaffected. Their human minds *want* to forget, to slip into the terrified numbness of the Lunacy, but some part of them identifies with the ravaging beasts and recognizes them as family. This familiarity battles the Lunacy, forcing the wolf-blood's conscious, human mind to witness the full horror of the Uratha enraged. Is it any wonder that the wolf-blooded often go mad?

This experience is even worse for wolf-bloods who do not know of their heritage. An *uragarum* who witnesses a werewolf in Gauru form may find that she is the only one in a crowd of people with any clear idea of what happened. When the authorities question her, she remembers the huge, slaving beast that no one else acknowledges existed. Worse yet, even when the physical evidence points to something other than a pack of wild dogs (or some other equally convenient, yet ludicrous, explanation), the police don't want to see or accept the facts. The only conclusion the wolf-blood can come to is that she is losing her mind.

MEETING AND MATING

Many Uratha see *uragarum* as a valuable resource for various reasons. Some werewolves note the wolf-blooded's reduced susceptibility to Lunacy and use them to help the Uratha remain hidden, urging other humans to remember incidents in the least damning way possible to the People. Other werewolves use the wolf-blooded as "lightning rods," since spirit turbulence tends to gravitate toward them. The most common use for wolf-bloods, however, is as mates.

Werewolves cannot mate with each other, not without endangering their Harmony and risking the creation of a spiritual abomination. While mating with any human being has a chance of producing a werewolf child, mating with a wolf-blood increases those chances considerably (see "Breeding Odds," p. 124). More than that, however, werewolves find they have a natural chemistry with wolf-bloods. Normal humans are never at ease around werewolves, and, while some humans become aroused by the feeling of danger that the Uratha exude, most people have no interest in becoming sexually intimate with a person they find threatening. Wolf-bloods, however, respond to werewolves in an entirely different way. Many of the *uragarum* feel a strong attraction when approached by a werewolf of the appropriate gender, and this need transcends age and "type." This phenomenon is not supernatural in origin, and in no way forces a wolf-blood into anything; an *uragarum* who is married and isn't inclined to cheat on her spouse won't fall into bed with just anyone, werewolf or not (though she may well fantasize). It's an attraction that's pheromonal in nature, and the wolf-blood may well have no real idea why she finds the stranger so attractive — a classic case of "he's not ordinarily my type." Even a werewolf with no desire to have a child might long for a companion who doesn't shy away from his intensity, for a relationship without the ever-present undercurrent of fear. (Of course, wolf-bloods have

just as much to fear from a sudden loss of temper as any human does; they just don't feel afraid of werewolves by instinct.)

Uratha rarely make committed partners. Wolves form packs around a strong mating bond, but Uratha are not wolves. It isn't that werewolves don't have parental instincts, but most Uratha are much more focused on their own needs and those of their packs. Adding a mate and offspring provides distraction and liability that werewolves can ill afford. (And, as has been mentioned, a werewolf pack is not an ideal "village" in which to raise a child.) Werewolves occasionally lament this fact and some even attempt to hold down families as well as live their lives as Uratha, but those situations seldom work out. Wolf-bloods, despite their special qualities, are *not* werewolves. No matter how much a werewolf might love an *uragarum* partner, he finds himself saying "you wouldn't understand" far too often. Any committed relationship requires a measure of common ground, and for werewolves and humans — even wolf-bloods — there simply isn't enough of it.

From the wolf-blood's perspective, this means that the best she can hope for is an occasional visit and honest conversation. More often, at least when dealing with a werewolf who has a direct interest in having children of his own, a wolf-blood is simply seduced and kept on as a mate for a short period of time (long enough to become pregnant or impregnate the werewolf) and then abandoned. Some werewolves make up explanations, some even fake their own deaths, but most don't bother. The world is cruel, after all, but people cope with abandonment and betrayal far better than they do with the truth.

The modern age has made things difficult on such Uratha, however. Not only are people much easier to find (if they maintain anything like a normal human identity, which many werewolves do), but, especially in Western countries, a woman with an unwanted pregnancy can easily and legally terminate it. Male werewolves might remain with their mates for the duration of the pregnancy to protect their unborn offspring from external threats, but some males leave after conception and keep careful watch on their mates, making sure they don't do anything destructive.

Some werewolves, rather than enter the wolf-blood's lives directly, try to arrange for two *uragarum* to meet and (hopefully) mate. This carries only a slim chance of conceiving a werewolf, but it does make for the beginnings of a wolf-blooded bloodline, which can, in turn, make for a ready supply of mates for future generations. Not many werewolves exhibit this kind of foresight (and many modern Uratha find the practice distasteful), but it does happen. Sometimes, a pack of werewolves is interested in setting down roots in an area and tries to form a wolf-blooded family to support their claims in human circles. This kind of behavior is more common among werewolves who place strong emphasis on bloodline — Ivory Claws, of course, but all five of the Forsaken tribes have members who fit this description. Other times, a pre-arranged mating might be the result of an accord between two packs, a Cahalith's prophecy or simply the desire of a hidebound Uratha that his children "marry well."

Cleaving to another *uragarum* is advantageous for a wolf-blood. The most significant benefit, of course, is finding another person who understands what the wolf-blood



goes through. The temper, the strange occurrences, the mental trauma — it's easier to bear with someone who can empathize rather than just sympathize. Of course, the problem is that both people suffer from the same problems, and those problems are made worse by the proximity. Two wolf-bloods are likely to have rousing fights as their tempers flare at the smallest things. The spirits see them *both* as targets and can draw strength from their combined presence (see p. 134). If the two wolf-bloods can draw strength from each other, though, and find a way to cope with spirit intrusions and manage their anger, they can face the World of Darkness with a much steadier gaze than others of their kind.

THE FIRST CHANGE

Werewolves are more likely to be born of wolf-blooded families than just appear randomly in the general population. But not all, or even most, *uragarum* know about their true heritage, and very few established bloodlines of *uragarum* exist. Werewolves can watch those few they know of (and these families are discussed on p. 113), and can also keep an eye out for any wolf-bloods they know of in their area.

But what is the First Change like for a wolf-blood? It depends upon the wolf-blood in question, of course. Some *uragarum* have been experiencing spiritual intrusions in their lives for years, and a sudden upswing in spiritual activity might not alarm them too much (or, at least, not lead them to believe

that the spirits are responding to them personally). Others might notice their tempers flaring more often or animals fleeing and wonder if their "condition" (with whatever theory they have devised) is somehow worsening. For the most part, though, the onset of the First Change isn't any different than for any other *nuzusul*.

If the wolf-blood *knows* about her heritage, however, the surge in spirit activity that precedes a First Change can be exciting, worrisome or terrifying. In a wolf-blooded family in which the members know the truth about their relatives, the knowledge or suspicion that one of their own is going to join this mysterious society might be met with pride and hope. Some of these families have been raised to see the Uratha as heroes, unseen and unnoticed, keeping a spiritual balance to the world. (Their sources for these stories are, of course, the Uratha themselves.) Other families know only that once a family member becomes a werewolf, she is gone — her pack and, to a lesser extent, her tribe are all the family she needs now. With this in mind, some parents try to lock a child on the verge of a First Change away, try to forestall the transformation by keeping her out of moonlight or by other esoteric means, or, in some extreme cases, slaying her before she can become a monster.

The game mechanics involved in a wolf-blood undergoing the First Change are explained on p. 125.

WOLF-BLOODED AND SPIRITS

Some wolf-bloods can sense spirits, but all wolf-blooded enable spirits to interact with the physical world by their very presence. This doesn't necessarily mean that a wolf-blood, especially one whose connection to Father Wolf isn't strong enough to sense spirits, ever actually sees these beings. Spirits are capable of all sorts of strange actions when interacting with the material world, simply because the natural laws are different here than in the Shadow. Most of the time, of course, spirits can't cross the Gauntlet, but, in the presence of an *uragarum*, they can often make their presence felt.

Although many spirits distrust or even hate and fear the Uratha, spirits don't always feel the same way about wolf-bloods. True, any wolf-blood could conceivably be a werewolf, but the spirits don't usually perceive potential. They see things as they are (indeed, the notion of fundamental change is somewhat alien to most spirits). So, instead of looking at an *uragarum* and seeing "potential werewolf," they see "human being around whom the Gauntlet is weak." What the spirit does then depends on the being in question.

Some spirits are curious, and extend themselves into the physical world just a bit to satisfy that curiosity. This might result in objects falling or doors shutting, a sudden gust of cold air or the sound of rodent paws skittering across the floor. To the wolf-blood, of course, these events can be frightening, but the spirit's intent isn't to scare or harm the *uragarum*. Indeed, the spirit might not even identify the wolf-blood as the source of the Gauntlet's weakness. (Although, if the wolf-blood leaves the room, most spirits are intelligent enough to note that the Gauntlet changes and make the connection.)

Not all spirits are so benign, however. Predatory spirits or spirits of concepts such as fear, jealousy or hate can also slip into the material world in the shallow created by a wolf-blood, following whatever instinct drives them. Spirits looking for prey sometimes turn on the *uragarum*, but most such spirits can see the predator present in the wolf-blood's heritage and don't attack. This doesn't stop them from attacking pets or relatives of the wolf-blood, however. Conceptual spirits don't have any such compunctions, and are quite willing to saturate the area around a wolf-blood in whatever resonance they favor, taking advantage of the thinner Gauntlet. A wolf-blood, therefore, might infuse everyone around her with rage, lust, greed or pain without ever seeming to experience these emotions herself. Perhaps her handshake feels like touching stinging nettles, or making eye contact with her makes others wince as though slapped.

How do wolf-bloods perceive spirits? Most of the time, wolf-bloods don't. *Uragarum* have no intrinsic ability to look across the Gauntlet, and many of them can't even sense spirits. Often, the wolf-bloods don't see the strange events that happen around them as actions performed by other beings but as spontaneous occurrences or evidence that the wolf-bloods are cursed. For instance, consider the previous example of the wolf-blood whose handshake feels like nettles. The effect is actually caused by pain-spirits lurking around the *uragarum*, but, as far as she knows, it is her hands that cause the pain. She might avoid shaking hands entirely (which might frustrate the pain-spirit enough to make it leave, or, more probably, change tactics) or develop rituals such as touching a charm or wetting

her hand before offering it to others. If she somehow hits on the spirit's ban, she might drive the spirit away, but, even then, she ascribes intrinsic and general power to the action itself, and never considers that an outside entity might be involved.

Those wolf-bloods who do understand that spirits exist often live in a state of constant paranoia. Any remotely strange experience could be evidence of a *hithim* creeping across the Gauntlet, and who knows what such a being might do? Such wolf-bloods often bedeck themselves with jewelry, stones and apparel designed to ward off evil, decorate their houses with tiny guardian statues, and avoid saying anything aloud they don't want the spirits to hear. This behavior might seem extreme, but the truth is that the wolf-blood's paranoia often pays off. Spirits that face such constant vigilance move on to find other targets. Of course, the wolf-blood never knows when she achieves such a victory.

THE TRIBES AND THE WOLF-BLOODED

The Forsaken tribes look for different things in their mates. Of course, the child of a Blood Talon, for example, doesn't necessarily grow up to join the *Suthar Anzuth*, even if she does become a werewolf, but the same mentality that led an Uratha to join one tribe or another probably leads him to choose a mate with certain qualities. In areas where a particular tribe has a strong presence, a given family line with a large number of wolf-blood might become known as "kin to the Bone Shadows" or "blood of the *Mennina*," but these titles are exactly as meaningful as saying that a given geographical area "belongs" to a given pack or tribe. The wolf-blooded are "kin" to the tribe to the extent that the tribe can enforce that claim.



Claiming a territory isn't the same as claiming a *person*, as the astute reader will no doubt realize. Even if a tribe claims exclusive breeding rights with a given family, how can the tribe hope to enforce this claim, especially in a society in which premarital sex is commonplace and people are mobile and elusive? If a young man of the family decides to wed a woman who doesn't meet with the tribe's approval, the Uratha don't visit her in the dead of night and slaughter her, do they?

Well — sometimes, yes. It all depends on the Uratha in question. Since werewolves are born of humans, Uratha *usually* see this kind of behavior as abhorrent. Most werewolves remember their human lives well enough to respect their kin's freedom to choose a mate, or at least to introduce a potential mate gently rather than forcibly removing the competition. But the Change doesn't settle in so loosely with all Uratha. Some werewolves see themselves as above humanity from the very moment of their First Change, and see nothing at all wrong with deciding who a given wolf-blood should mate with.

What is the difference between a werewolf who takes part in this kind of behavior and a family that forces its children into marriage? What separates an Uratha pack willing to murder a young suitor wooing a wolf-blooded cousin from a white

family beating a black man to death for the crime of dating one of their daughters? Absolutely nothing. Consider that when creating your characters.

With all of that in mind, it's possible to draw some commonality between the wolf-bloods favored by the tribes.

- **Blood Talons:** The *Suthar Anzuth*, warriors all, have difficulty choosing mates worthy of them. Modern society, especially in the West, has a strange relationship with violence — most people are unused to seeing it in any other form but entertainment, and therefore it only takes a good hard slap to render many adults cowed and insensate. This, to the Blood Talons, is unacceptable. This isn't to say that all Blood Talons must be warriors, or even trained and able to fight. They must, however, be able to complement the *Suthar Anzuth*, and that means being able to cope with seeing and experiencing violence. If a Blood Talon wishes to take a wolf-blooded mate, he first makes sure that his mate is strong enough to handle the pain of childbirth and, often, the stigma of raising that child alone. The Talons make no qualms about their lifestyle: it requires them to be warriors first and foremost. Being parents requires a degree of compassion and patience that many Talons can't afford, and so they very often leave their mates once the child has been born. Some *Suthar Anzuth* tell their wolf-blood mates the truth about themselves, some don't, but all make sure that those mates and their children are protected and provided for before they leave. If that means occasionally patrolling the area with their packs or cleansing the territory thoroughly before the child arrives, so be it. The Blood Talons don't expect their children to be warriors, and woe to the coward who would threaten them.

Some Blood Talons return to their children once those children reach adolescence and teach them how to fight. This training isn't typically extensive (as the werewolves don't have the months necessary to truly hone the teen's martial prowess); the training is meant more to impart a basic understanding of how to fight and *when* to fight. Not all Blood Talons focus on fisticuffs, either. Some teach their children how to handle blades, while others focus on marksmanship and gun safety. In any case, the Uratha try to impart an appreciation for deadly force and an understanding of what entering combat, especially with a weapon, really means.

Example: A pack of Blood Talons in southern California watches the prisons very carefully. *Uragarum* released on parole (or who escape) are often ambushed and taken by these werewolves, and told that while society will never fully forgive them they can make a place among those who respect their strength and the lessons they have learned. These parolees sometimes reject the Talons' offer (in which case they are simply released back to their lives, usually after the Talons inflict the Lunacy on them), but, more often, the *uragarum* do as their strange new patrons ask. Sometimes, that involves becoming the mate of a werewolf; other times, the Talons have more immediate tasks in mind.

- **Bone Shadows:** The *Hirfathra Hissu* know that wolf-bloods are in danger from the very moment of their births. The spirits hate the Uratha and their kin, and even if the spirits don't

actually attack the wolf-blooded, they certainly make life difficult for them. Werewolves who elect to become Bone Shadows are often the ones who had the strangest experiences before the First Change; when the Shadows choose mates, they find wolf-bloods who have had their difficulties with the unseen and have come out stronger for it (or at least wiser). Bone Shadows shun *uragarum* who stick their heads in the sand when confronted with the supernatural. After all, the *Hirfathra Hissu* assert, spirits have lived alongside humanity since time began. It's a failing of the modern world, *not* of humanity in general, that spiritual phenomena seem so terrifying and alien now. To be a target of the spirits is the birthright of the *uragarum*. To learn to cope with and even understand those spirits, though, is the mark of wisdom, and this is what the Bone Shadows value. As a result, the Bone Shadows often take note of a wolf-blood's hometown and whether it contains a greater-than-usual number of loci or experiences a disproportionate amount of spiritual activity. Such locales often produce *uragarum* with interesting life experiences. (Indeed, if they have the means, Bone Shadows induce their chosen mates to live in such places, reasoning that the wolf-bloods who survive intact are wise indeed.)

Bone Shadows aren't inclined, for the most part, to explain the truth of things to their mates. The Bone Shadows might give hints or explain the nature of the spirits that come to plague the wolf-bloods, but they don't mention werewolves. They feel that fear paralyzes knowledge, and humanity must, of necessity, fear the Uratha. Spirits, however, have their bans and codes to which they are bound, and if the wolf-blooded can understand and use those codes, they are truly worthy of the Bone Shadows' attention.

Example: A pack of Bone Shadows has been breeding with the inhabitants of a small town in Kentucky for years now. The practice has outlasted the pack's original membership, which chose the town because of a spiritual disturbance they found fascinating. That disturbance is gone, but the attention of a pack of werewolves and the slightly greater number of wolf-bloods in the town has ensured that the spirittscape remains strange and dangerous. The Bone Shadows thus perpetuate the kind of environment they'd prefer their mates come from.

- **Hunters in Darkness:** Traditionally, the *Mennina* do not spend much of their lives with their mates. The actual process of finding a partner tends to go on instinct alone; the Hunter finds a human (wolf-blood if possible) whom she feels drawn to, whose natural chemistry meshes with her own. The relationship goes on until successful conception (which can range anywhere from a single night to several months), after which the werewolf leaves without fanfare. Stringing out the process only makes for more heartache than necessary, and the *Mennina* feel the pull of their territory.

It follows, then, that the Hunters in Darkness do not tell their offspring much, if anything, about their condition. There are two reasons. First, reasoning that that world must be the children's teacher, the Hunters simply don't stay around long enough to school their children. (And that world is no more or less dangerous a mentor than a werewolf, in any case.) Second, for the most part, the people who choose the Hunters in Darkness are those who made their own ways before the Change. Giving

the wolf-bloods too much information, then, would taint their ability to fend for themselves well and make for weaker *Mennina*.

Another mentality within the tribe, though, looks at that Hunters' tribal imperative and sees the *uragarum* as sacred. The Lodge of the Shepherd's core membership, in fact, is in part made up of Hunters who see the wolf-blooded as belonging to the People. These Hunters defend their chosen mates just as fiercely as they would anything else they treasure, but most of them still avoid regular contact. They couldn't bear to destroy something they cherish, and the ever-present threat of Death Rage makes them shy away.

Example: A Hunter belonging to a mixed pack in Germany discovered an *uragarum* in Berlin who had married and born several children. Father Wolf runs weakly in the bloodline, though, a fact that the *Mennina* has vowed to improve. Every month, during the full moon, he hunts the family for three nights, growling at them from the shadows and leaving his mark near their home. Whether or not it's actually true, he believes that he can "improve" their connection to the Uratha in this manner.

• **Iron Masters:** As might be expected, the *Farsil Luhal* maintain the strongest ties, of any tribe, with their wolf-blooded kin. The Iron Masters appreciate humanity and what it has wrought, and throughout history one of the most important aspects of humanity has been community. Werewolves don't have a community, per se — the pack is more like a single family, and multiple packs don't get along consistently enough to earn the title of "community." The closest the Uratha can come, therefore, is with *uragarum* and Uratha working together to defend territory, teaching the young (an essential part of territory defense, because the old might fall at any time) and keeping the spirits appeased.

This approach to dealing with wolf-bloods has its advantages, of course. An Iron Master in an area where werewolf/wolf-blood relations are strong and open can easily find a mate or at least a friendly place to stay for a time. Wolf-bloods have an easier time with human society than any werewolves, *Farsil Luhal* included, and so, in territories where they work with the Iron Masters, the spirit wilds tend to be well-maintained and problems easily identified.

The main disadvantage, of course, is that for this arrangement to work, ideally the wolf-bloods must know what they and the Uratha truly are as well as understand the nature of the spirits. Most Iron Masters aren't willing to go that far. Ignoring the fact that this is a lot to ask of any human, wolf-blood or no, most werewolves, whether Iron Masters or not, don't always take kindly to the *uragarum* knowing so much. It's not unknown for packs to sneak into territories where the wolf-blooded "know too much" and kill everyone over a certain age, or inflict the Lunacy on them to the point that they spend the next few days in a gibbering comatose state. While some Iron Masters argue for the defense and even empowerment of their human relatives, others state that Red Wolf charges the tribe to adapt to the world around them, not to expect the world and the People to adapt to their needs. *The Herd Must Not Know*.

Example: An Iron Master pack, looking for a territory in rural Ohio, stumbled across a locus in the church of a small town. One of the pack members, while not an ordained minister, was well schooled enough to fake it, and, after the old preacher "unexpectedly" died in a fall, the pack moved in and

took over the spiritual direction of the town. To their delight, they found several *uragarum* among the townsfolk, but the mindset of the citizens was so dogmatically Christian that the wolf-bloods wouldn't be able to accept the truth. As such, the pack has begun introducing their own more primal mores and practices through church functions. Picnics now incorporate a "hunt" where the children chase each other through the woods, and Bible study incorporates time to reflect on the "angels and demons all around us." The Iron Masters reason that within a year or two, the citizens of this town, wolf-blood and otherwise, might be ready to see the wolves among them.

• **Storm Lords:** The Storm Lords would prefer to take an active role in the lives of their children and their mates. After all, their entire tribal philosophy centers around responsibility and leading by example. Their mates don't normally allow them the chance, though. Storm Lords are frighteningly intense, even more so than other werewolves. As one *uragarum* put it upon leaving her Storm Lord lover, "I love walking in the rain, but I wouldn't have my roof removed."

The *Iminir* don't always take "no" for an answer, though. Among all the Forsaken tribes, they are the most likely to arrange marriages (or at least mating) between wolf-bloods and Uratha to the best advantage of the tribe. It's not unknown for Storm Lords to trade desirable mates (usually those with a direct blood relation and who know about the Uratha and their own condition) with other tribes in return for favors.

The Lords look for *uragarum* with a strong sense of personal responsibility, leadership potential and a healthy dose of ambition. Obviously, physical health is also a must. The *Iminir* refuse to breed weakness into their tribe. The Lords usually avoid telling their relatives the truth about werewolves and the spirit world (except, of course, when using them as commodities), reasoning that survival as an ignorant *uragarum* is a superb test of mettle. A wolf-blood who can cope with trauma before gaining access to the power that the First Change brings is worthy of the *Iminir*, and some Lords stalk such wolf-bloods just to see their responses to being hunted. Of course, those wolf-bloods who don't wind up undergoing the Change take nothing away from this experience except nightmares, but the Lords reckon that if the wolf-blood breaks, he wasn't worthy to breed anyway.

Example: A recent divorcee underwent the Change and joined the Storm Lords. Reveling in the power and freedom that being Uratha brings, she couldn't help but wonder if her ex-husband had sensed what she was and broken off their marriage because of it. She has taken to stalking him, and in so doing discovered that he was *uragarum*. Her sense of loss and inadequacy only intensified, as she reasoned that if he were wolf-blood he should have no problem being married to a werewolf. She wants her husband back, and fully intends to show him the meaning of "mating for life," no matter who she has to hunt down and kill in the meantime.

WOLF-BLOODED AND THE PURE

The Pure Tribes, like the Forsaken, are born of humanity (rumors of wolf-born Predator Kings notwithstanding). Also like the Forsaken, the Pure must leave that humanity behind the moment the First Change strikes. The Tribes of the Moon, however, retain a connection to humans through the *uragarum*. The Pure Uratha, for the most part, teach a

philosophy of contempt toward the lesser beings that raised them, and don't distinguish between wolf-blood and human.

In a sense, this is understandable. The Pure Tribes' culture is one of hate, hate so vicious and consuming that it drives the Pure to an agenda of genocide. A wolf-blooded human is an ignorant reminder of everything the Pure Tribes hate — the Fall of Pangaea, the dereliction of their duties, the death of Father Wolf — because that human reminds the Pure that the world no longer belongs to them. The *Anshega* do not hate humanity with the same fervor that they reserve for their Forsaken cousins, as humans as a species did not commit the sins that the other werewolves did. But humanity has certainly overstepped its boundaries, and the Pure think nothing of killing a few humans when possible.

Beyond this, however, the Pure recognize that every *uragarum* is a potential werewolf. It's not unknown for the Fire-Touched to steal young wolf-bloods away and raise them to understand their condition. Wolf-bloods, some *Izidakh* note, make decent assassins against the Forsaken because the *uragarum* are resistant to Lunacy and can use silver weapons. Of course, a wolf-blood who successfully kills a werewolf probably doesn't live to see the next dawn, but the Fire-Touched are willing to make that sacrifice.

The Ivory Claws have a different relationship with the wolf-bloods. This tribe is obsessed with Purity, including purity of blood. As such, the *Tzumfin* have established several *uragarum* families throughout the world, some of which are aware of their roles as breeding stock to the tribe. Indeed, the Ríos family (see p. 117) was once thoroughly brainwashed into accepting their roles as studs and broodmares for the Ivory Claws, until the Iron Masters took over.

The Predator Kings, though, don't establish ties with wolf-bloods. They breed with whom they choose, and allow Dire Wolf to guide any *nuzusul* to the tribe that he chooses. Beyond that, a wolf-blood might just as well be any other human.

WOLF-BLOODED FAMILIES

The blessing of Father Wolf normally dies out in a generation or two. That is, a wolf-blood who breeds with a normal human *might* have a wolf-blooded child, but that child's offspring probably won't be *uragarum*, and the original wolf-blood's great-grandchildren stand almost no chance of being wolf-blooded. In some families, however, the wolf's blood runs strong. Those families often become associated with one tribe or another, as a tribe's members marry into the family (or at least breed with it) and prevent other werewolves from doing the same.

The following section details three such families. The Storyteller can use these families as plot points for her chronicle or as inspiration for creating her own wolf-blood lineages. Likewise, a player might wish to create a character who hails from one of these families.



MECHANICS

What, the players might wonder, is the mechanical benefit to belonging to such a family? The answer: none, unless the Storyteller decides other-

wise. Belonging to a family provides a convenient excuse for a wolf-blood character to possess high levels of the Wolf-Blooded or Watched Merits. *Uragarum* and *Uratha* characters who hail from one of these families might possess Allies, Contacts or Mentors of the family. A fetish might be a treasured family heirloom. Also, defending these families can be a good source of Honor Renown.

If the Storyteller wishes a further mechanical benefit, we recommend a price break on Merits involving family members (one or two points off the experience point cost should be sufficient). These families are meant more as story hooks than as power-ups, however.



THE DOIRON'S

The Doirons aren't rich, but they are respected. They've been a cornerstone of their hometown in Tennessee ever since the first of them, Albert Doiron, opened his butcher shop there in the late 1960s. He married a local woman and together they had eight children (six sons, two daughters), most of whom stayed local after marrying and beginning families of their own. Doiron later served as a city councilman and, although he no longer works in that capacity, remains a well-respected figure in town, an honest, hardworking family man.

The family has another side, though — one that only spouses and, when they are of age, children witness. Albert Doiron considers his clan to be modern-day prophets and crusaders, touched by God and cursed by Satan. Unfortunately, God seldom gives clear instructions to His chosen, but Albert doesn't let that stop him. Each and every person who bears Doiron blood, as far as he's concerned, is consecrated to God at the moment of birth.

What no one, not even Albert, knows is that some members of his family are werewolves. The Doirons have carried the blessing of Father Wolf for centuries, when a French ancestor of Albert's became pregnant by an unknown *Uratha*. In all that time, though, the strength of the wolf's blood hasn't lessened, and — in all that time — only those Doirons who become werewolves ever learn the truth about the family.

Albert Doiron was born in North Carolina, and learned his father's trade. When Albert was 20, however, the two had a falling out, and Albert left the state to make his own way. Taking his savings, he bought a small storefront in Tennessee.

But Albert wasn't alone when he left his hometown. A pack of Hunters in Darkness had noticed the spirits that congregated around the Doiron Meat Market, and realized that Albert and his father were both wolf-blooded. As the pack had grown too large for the territory, some of the Hunters split from the pack to follow Albert.

The journey to Tennessee was harrowing for the Hunters in Darkness. The city in which Albert Doiron settled didn't have a resident pack claiming territory, but the Fire-Touched patrolled the area around the town. The Hunters weren't prepared for the Pure *Uratha*'s aggression when the pack arrived, and lost two members before escaping. The Hunters did

eventually slip by the *Izidakh*, but agreed that Doiron should never know his significance, lest the Fire-Touched discover it and kill or suborn his family for their own needs.

However, Albert Doiron didn't require an explanation for the strange events that surround his family. He recognizes that members of his family tend to be hot-blooded, but doesn't consider the "Doiron temper" indicative of anything out of the ordinary, and the family's rapport with and love for dogs hardly raises eyebrows. The spirit visitations, however, fall outside the scope of normal experience, as do his kin's ability to sense such beings. He explains these occurrences as angelic messages (or, when they are obviously maleficent, demonic torments). The falling out that Albert had with his father, in fact, was over this very phenomenon. Albert confronted his father with the truth as he saw it — that God was at work in the Doirons' lives and had been for a long time. Albert, in researching the family history in an attempt to find the root of his visions, discovered that the family had been experiencing such things since before coming to America. Digging deeper, he found letters that a cousin in France had written to the Pope, but never sent, detailing his own experiences and belief that God was testing him. The letters were never sent, Albert discovered, because the cousin had simply disappeared one day.

After even more research, Albert found that occasionally members of the Doiron family would simply vanish, seldom to be heard from again. On the rare occasions that one of these individuals did contact their families, it was in the form of a terse note stating that everything was fine and there was no need to go looking. To Albert's mind, there was only one explanation: these people had been taken up, or at least called to do God's will directly.

Since moving to Tennessee, Albert has watched as several members of his family line have received "the call" at different ages. He notes that the disappearance is usually precipitated by violence or a swell in angelic events, and, when the family member is gone, Albert gathers the clan and holds vigil. He also tries to keep law enforcement from tracking the missing people down. As Albert explains to his family, the missing family members are with God now.

The Hunters in Darkness pack continues to watch over the family, and, while not every Doiron to experience the First Change has joined the *Mennina*, most of them have. The religious fervor present in the family tends to persist, and, as the pack falls more heavily under the influence of the Doiron-born



Hunters, they begin casting vengeful glances at the *Izidakh* in the hills. Perhaps a reckoning is coming.

DOIRON STORY HOOKS

- **Origins:** Why do the Doiron carry the wolf blood so strongly? Who was the first werewolf to breed with the line? One of the characters (of any tribe) starts having dreams in which he romances a human woman in what appears to be 18th century France. The dreams indicate that the character is a descendant of that woman's child and that he has some destiny to fulfill. The problem is, that destiny involves removing the last remaining traces of wolf blood from the Doiron family line, which would involve extensive murder of both humans and Uratha. Are the dreams real, or a spirit trick? If they are real, why does the Doiron line suddenly need to be extinguished?

- **Miracles:** Five members of the Doiron family undergo their First Changes during the same month, one member filling each auspice. These new Uratha initially show interest in joining the Hunters in Darkness, but then meet up with a Fire-Touched werewolf whose fervor impresses them. If these young Uratha join with the Pure, the secret of the Doiron family will be forfeit. The local Hunters, knowing that they will lose their territory and probably their lives if this happens, contact the characters' pack for help. Alternately, word of the pack spreads, as Ithæur hear of the strange First Changes; the story by itself might attract the pack's attention.

- **Patriarch Lost:** Albert Doiron enters his First Change under the full moon. He kills nearly a dozen people before finally regaining control of himself. As his faith and his worldview come crashing down around him, he "realizes" that it has not been God who has guided his life, but Satan. Albert flees the city, trying to find some way to cure his "curse." Doiron is a respected man and a good leader, and would make a superb Rahu, if someone could teach him. In his present state, however, he'd be very susceptible to the blandishments of the Pure Tribes or, worse, the Bale Hounds. What then would happen to his family?

THE PICKERINGS

As mentioned on p. 304 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, the Pickering family has offshoots across America and England. Any territory with a Pickering presence also invariably boasts a strong Bone Shadow presence, as the tribe has bred with the family for more than two centuries. Unlike the Doirons, many Pickerings are fully aware of their heritage as *uragarum*, and, in fact, some senior Pickerings are privy to information about the Lodge of Death that even other *Hirfathra Hissu* aren't, simply by the Pickerings' proximity to members of the lodge.

As a case in point, take the Pickerings of Syracuse, New York. Even those family members who exhibit only the barest glimmer of connection to Father Wolf know that there are werewolves in the family and that those werewolves have a deep and abiding fascination with death. As these Pickerings grow older, they discover that their feral relatives have plans for them. The *uragarum* of the Syracuse Pickerings find work as spies, researchers and simple laborers when the Uratha of the family require. (Although the Syracuse Bone Shadows don't have quite the same reputation and financial standing as those in Colorado, the Syracuse Bone Shadows are still active in the Lodge of Death, and sometimes this requires work that hunting and calling down spirits can't accomplish.) In return, the werewolves defend their relatives from the spirit world by means of a powerful rite called *Zif Kamduis-Ur* — Mark of the Death Wolf.

It's only when the *uragarum* die that they discover the true purpose of the rite. Any wolf-blood who dies with Kamduis' mark becomes a ghost after death. Although the rite does not compel service from these shades, enough loyalty to the family usually lingers that they continue to act in the Pickerings' interests. Of course, the ghosts also aren't normally *told* that they only linger because of a rite.

This practice makes the Syracuse Pickerings extremely well-informed about goings-on in their territory. Ghosts make superb spies, when they retain enough of their intelligence and personality to do so. Even when this doesn't happen, the Bone Shadows can study the capabilities and behavior of the wraiths in an attempt to learn what death means to *uragarum* as opposed to normal humans and Uratha. Likewise, an enemy who doesn't rate death but needs to be taught a lesson sometimes finds himself with an angry ghost in his home (the ghost's anchor hidden in the walls of the home, safely out of sight).

MARK OF THE DEATH WOLF (....)

As stated in the text, this rite ensures that a wolf-blood will become a ghost upon dying. The Pickerings claim that Death Wolf taught one of their ancestors this rite centuries ago, but this is little more than oral legend. Whatever the rite's origin, it has no effect on werewolves or normal humans. Only *uragarum* may benefit from it.

If a wolf-blood who has received the Mark of the Death Wolf undergoes the First Change, the spiritual mark the rite creates (see below) fades, but leaves a patch of darkened skin in Hishu form, visible in other forms as a patch of stark white fur.

Performing the Rite: This rite is a somber affair. It must be performed at night, and is traditionally performed as the moon wanes. (The phase is irrelevant.) The subject is laid out on a stone slab, and her forehead anointed with fresh blood. Traditionally, the blood comes from a relative, but the rite functions regardless of the blood's source. The ritemaster then speaks a prayer to Death Wolf to mark the subject — that her soul be cloven to the Bone Shadows after her

body falls away. (This prayer, of course, is spoken in the First Tongue, so the *uragarum* usually has no idea what is actually being said.) After the rite concludes, the blood vanishes but from the *Hisil* a symbol is visible on the wolf-blood's forehead, much like the Renown tattoos visible on Uratha.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Death Wolf claims the subject immediately. The wolf-blood spasms and dies in terrible pain. The ritemaster must immediately check for Harmony loss. (The player rolls three dice.)

Failure: The rite fails. The ritemaster may try again the following night.

Success: The wolf-blood will become a ghost upon death. For every two successes (rounded up) on the Harmony roll, the ritemaster may assign one anchor to the future ghost. The ritemaster usually chooses personal effects belonging to the subject and lays them around her body during the rite, but can choose places or living beings as anchors as well. If the subject outlives her intended anchors, however, new ones may not be chosen.

In addition, this rite provides some protection from spirits while the subject is alive. Spirits receive a -1 modifier to pierce the Gauntlet around the wolf-blood. If the Storyteller is using

the revised Wolf-Blooded Merit (see p. 126), the drawbacks associated with spirits are reduced by one (so spirits near an *uragarum* with Wolf-Blooded ••• receives a +1 modifier to affect the physical world around her, not +2) as well.

Exceptional Success: Besides having more potential anchors to assign to the ghost, spirits receive a -2 modifier to pierce the Gauntlet around the wolf-blood. If using the revised Wolf-Blooded Merit, the drawbacks associated with spirits are reduced by two.



What the Pickering Uratha of the area have discovered, though, is that ghosts “created” by their rite seem to degenerate over time. Lacking true passion keeping them bound to the world of the living, the ghosts begin to fade within a year or so of death (unless, of course, the ghost in question actually *had* something strong keeping him present after death, in which case the rite has no detrimental effect). Interestingly, the stronger an *uragarum*'s connection to Father Wolf, the more quickly wolf-blood's ghost seems to deteriorate. Speculation among the Ithaeur of the area is that such wolf-bloods' souls are already partially claimed by the Shadow, and even the powerful Mark of the Death Wolf can't keep them bound to the physical world for long.



PICKERING STORY SEEDS

• **Haunting Howls:** An *uragarum* dies in a fire and becomes a ghost, having received the Mark of the Death Wolf in life. Her Uratha lover was one of the anchors named during the rite, but the others were destroyed in the fire. Now, the wolf-blood must remain close to her lover until she can pass on. Unfortunately, the horror of her death has left her a bit unhinged, and she can use the Possession Numen (p. 212 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**) on her lover. The werewolf sometimes wakes in the morning, drenched in blood — with no memory of what he did the night before. What is he hunting? What drives his dead love to these acts of murder?

• **Retribution:** During the course of a Death Rage, one of the characters kills a Pickering who has received the *Zif Kamduis-Ur*. The wolf-blood in question, though, knew a crucial bit of information that the Bone Shadows require, and was on the way to deliver it when he met his untimely end. Now, he has refused to give up this information unless the *Hirfathra Hissu* take revenge on the offending character, and possibly his pack. What does the ghost know, and how far are the Bone Shadows willing to go to retrieve it?

• **Messages from Beyond:** While passing through Syracuse, the characters accept a favor from the Pickering Bone Shadows. In return, the Pickerings ask the characters to deliver a “fetish” to Obadiah Pickering in Colorado. En route, the characters discover that a human ghost has somehow been bound into the object, and the ghost speaks to them at night, begging them not to turn the fetish over to Obadiah but to simply smash it so the spirit will be free. It claims that Obadiah is a monster who enslaved the soul of his own wife. Is the ghost lying? If the characters wait to find out, will they defy so powerful an Uratha as Obadiah Pickering to free the ghost?

THE RÍOS

The Ríos are a Spanish family that relocated to Mexico in the 1980s. Wealthy and prosperous, the head of the family, Miguel Ríos, took a job in Puerto Vallarta and brought his wife, children and sisters with him. Within a year of becoming established in the area, his younger sister Maria had married. While Miguel wasn't enthused by the fact that her husband was of Mexican rather than Spanish descent, Miguel had to admit that the young man had a very regal air about him, a kind of nobility that Miguel simply couldn't place. After a period of adjustment, Miguel welcomed Huetzin, his new brother-in-law, to the family.

Miguel didn't realize, however, that Huetzin had a very good reason for his noble bearing and for choosing Maria as his bride. Huetzin was an Ivory Claw, and recognized much of the family as *uragarum*. He researched their family and was impressed by their accomplishments and breeding, and decided to claim the family for his tribe.

Huetzin replaced Miguel as head of the family inside of a year, murdering him and throwing his body into the sea. Huetzin took the Ríos name — his own human surname meant little to him, and he craved the status of the Ríos. By the end of the next year, Huetzin had arranged for Miguel's widow and two sisters to marry other *Tzuumfin*. All of these women were expected to produce children and very little else. With Miguel's money, Huetzin purchased a sprawling estate outside of Puerto Vallarta and forbade the women to leave it. The pack used this estate as their staging ground for attacks on the Forsaken and for gatherings involving other Pure Uratha (during which the humans were admonished not to leave the main house, lest they be slaughtered by visitors).

This process went on for years. Some of the Ríos children became werewolves and were initiated into the Ivory Claws. Male children who did not undergo the Change by the age of 18 were killed, and female children were educated to roughly the fourth-grade level and then kept at home until they could be mated. (This resulted, of course, in women having more time to undergo the First Change, since the 18th birthday is by no means a good measure of whether a person is a wolf-blood or a *nuzusul*. It's likely that many a potential werewolf died young for the sin of being male, but the Ríos Ivory Claws stuck rigidly to their strange practices all the same.) The once-proud Ríos family had been reduced to breeding slaves, and they remained thus until three years ago, when one of them escaped.

On the evening before his 18th birthday, Tayauh Ríos realized that the following night would be his last. He decided that, unlike his brothers and cousins, he wasn't going to wait around for the werewolves to murder him. He fled the estate, running into the hills. No moon shone that night, but he found his way unerringly over the rough terrain, making his way toward a destination he couldn't name. Hours before dawn, he crossed into the territory of a pack of Iron Masters, and did so exhausted — but wearing Urhan form.

Tayauh explained to the Uratha what was happening, and begged for their help. With his aid, they were able to penetrate the *Tzuumfin*'s defenses and slay the werewolves before the Ivory Claws could mount a significant defense. Tayauh himself, now an Irraka of the Iron Masters, tore the aging Huetzin's throat out.

The Iron Masters took the territory and began working to help the Ríos family regain its dignity and freedom, but it hasn't been easy. Old habits die hard, and the outside world frightens many of the women in the family. (The men were allowed slightly more freedom, but even they don't have much familiarity with society.) The pack of Iron Masters also has to split its attention between the estate, which faces the constant possibility of attack by Pure Uratha, and their own territory, several hours' run away. If they are to nurse this family back to health, they will need help.

RÍOS STORY HOOKS

- **Dupes:** Tayauh arranges a gathering with the pack, and brags about his territory — the pristine spiritscape, the comfortable distance from the city, the beautiful land and so on. He says that he could use a pack to help maintain it, and even offers up some of his female relatives as potential mates to sweeten the deal. Of course, what he doesn't mention is that any Forsaken Uratha who enter the estate are probably marked for death by the Ivory Claws, but he figures that good Uratha should be willing to fight the *Tzuumfin* anyway.

- **The Old Country:** A few Ríos Ivory Claws still live. They venture to Spain to find any vestiges of the family still living, in an attempt to wipe them out from sheer spite. Characters in Spain (or anywhere the Storyteller wishes to place a family related to the Ríos) see an increase in violence as the Pure go on the hunt. Once the characters find out the reasons for this violence, do they feel compelled to take action? What if a

pack of Iron Masters from Mexico is also trying to find the Ríos family, in order to save them?

- **Mexican Standoff:** The characters are Ríos *uragarum*, trapped at the estate when a band of Mexican gangsters, led by one of the few surviving Ríos *Tzuumfin*, invade. Although the gangsters only have one werewolf among them, they are heavily armed and have the estate completely surrounded. Tayauh is present, but takes a silver bullet to the stomach early in the assault and cannot fight. Can the characters make it through the night? Will one of them undergo the First Change beneath the bloated Mexican moon?

THE MOON-PUPPETS

Luna is fickle. The Uratha call her *Amahan Iduth*, “Mother Moon,” and view her with reverence and worship, but also a little fear. She is the force that gave the werewolves their auspices and rage, as well as the Lunacy and their vulnerability to silver. Her Lunes watch over the Uratha at



all times, a fact that drives some Ithaeur mad with paranoia. If Lunes grow too close to werewolves, the lunar choirs can drive the Uratha mad in a more literal sense, as the Uratha sometimes discover, to their horror (see p. 190 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). As Uratha grow more experienced in dealing with Lunes, most werewolves learn that some blessings should be accepted and others refused. Many Uratha feel that knowing as little as possible about Luna's servitors is the safest bet. For the lunar choirs, the truth is madness. Occasionally, the wolf-blooded discover this firsthand.

Lunes do not normally Ride humans. When Lunes do, it is usually for the purpose of watching a werewolf in an area where the *Hisil* is unstable or unsafe for them, and they typically release their hosts when their jobs are complete. Sometimes, however, a Lune creates a *Hithimu* out of a wolf-blood. The Lunes only possess such Ridden for a single night, hopefully long enough to accomplish one task. *Uragarum* subjected to this process are called *Iduth Zana* — Moon-Puppets.

THE PROCESS OF PUPPETRY

Very few werewolves know about the Moon-Puppets. Those werewolves who do know don't understand why Lunes would ever take a direct hand in affairs of the flesh rather than request that the Uratha handle them. Some werewolves believe that Luna Herself instructs her servants in this manner; other werewolves feel that the Lunes that indulge in this behavior are acting on insane whims or possibly at the behest of some greater or corrupt power in the spirit world. The fact that Lunes are so unknowable to begin with doesn't help matters, and so, on the rare occasions that an *Iduth Zana* appears in a pack's territory, the pack has very little reliable information on which to base a decision — once they've identified the Moon-Puppet as a Ridden rather than a werewolf, of course; see below. Whatever the reasons, the process of becoming a Moon-Puppet follows some distinct guidelines:

- Only *uragarum* characters with Wolf-Blooded ••• or more can become Moon-Puppets. Normal humans are ineligible. This restriction is another reason why these beings are so rare.
- The Lune in question must successfully use the Possession Numen on the wolf-blood. The Lune only has one opportunity to do so. Sometimes, the Lune simply appears and explains its desires to the wolf-blood, asking if she wishes to experience this "honor." If the wolf-blood refuses, the Lune can still attempt to force possession.
- If possession is successful, the *uragarum* becomes a Moon-Puppet until the next sunrise. During this time, the Moon-Puppet uses its human intellect and newfound spirit's understanding of the world to accomplish a particular task. The phase of the moon restricts the nature of this task.
- The Lune can forcibly change the wolf-blood's form on a limited basis. During the night, the *Iduth Zana* can take two of the four forms (besides Hishu, obviously) available to werewolves. Which form taken depends on the nature of the task the Lune undertakes, but Gauru is always unavailable. With one exception, once the Lune initiates the change from human form, the Moon-Puppet cannot change back until the task is completed or until sunrise.
- After completion of the task or at dawn's first light (if the task goes unfinished), the *uragarum* falls into a deep sleep and

regains his human shape. The wolf-blood doesn't simply fall over where he stands. Instead, he finds a quiet, dark place and curls up, slowly changing back to his natural form. The Lunacy clouds the wolf-blood's mind, affecting his memory as though his Will-power score was three points *lower* than it actually is.

TASKS AND FORMS

The nature of the task a Moon-Puppet undertakes and the form into which he can change depend on the phase of the moon.

- **Full Moon:** Under the full moon, as might be expected, Moon-Puppets are warriors. The Ralunim possess people who are strong, healthy and skilled in combat, for the express purpose of violence. Full moon *Iduth Zana* don't bother with subtlety. They assume either Dalu or Urshul form and tear into whatever enemies the Lune has designated. The task is completed when the chosen enemies are rent to pieces. Although no Moon-Puppet can assume Gauru form, a Moon-Puppet possessed on the full moon is considered to be in a state of Death Rage from the instant he changes shape.

Sometimes, a Ralunim possesses a wolf-blood and send him on a rampage, killing anyone and anything he meets for a certain period of time (sometimes for the entire night, but more often until the full moon starts to descend). Those few Uratha who know about the Moon-Puppets try to understand what the Lunes are trying to accomplish here, and hope that the Lunes are correcting some spiritual imbalance by their actions. However, these Uratha quietly suspect that the violence of the full moon *Hisil* simply drives the Lunes mad sometimes.

- **Gibbous Moon:** These Moon-Puppets are created to bring nightmares. They might choose a target and herd him across the city, leaping from shadows and biting at his legs, or smash into a target's home and sniff hungrily at his family, leaving only after the family is well and truly terrified. A gibbous moon *Iduth Zana* can take either Urshul or Dalu form, depending on what kind of "inspiration" her guiding Lune requires her to impart.

These are the Moon-Puppets most likely to come into contact with other Uratha, as some Lunes take Urshul form and howl, loud and long, sending chills down the spines of any werewolf who hears. The Moon-Puppet does this to lead the Uratha somewhere, sometimes to witness an omen or a spiritual event, sometimes merely to make them lift their heads to the sky to listen.

- **Half-Moon:** The Elunim create Moon-Puppets when something in the area needs judgment, and the Uratha are unwilling, unable or too ignorant of the subject matter to take on the role (or, just possibly, when the Lune feels that they have already passed judgment and come to the wrong conclusion). Such *Iduth Zana* can assume Urhan and Urshul forms, depending on how dangerous the matter or being is that requires judgment.

It's important to note, though, that the Moon-Puppets that hunt under the half-moon are judges, not executioners. If the judgment is a foregone conclusion, one of the Ralunim or Ithalunim is more likely to possess a hapless wolf-blood than one of the Cloven Choir. Therefore, a person under the Lune's judgment might hear the wolf paws just outside his field of vision or feel the wolf's breath on his neck for a split second as he wakes

up. If the *Iduth Zana* comes to a decision before sunrise, the Moon-Puppet enacts it. If not, the Lune normally pays a visit to a pack of Uratha the next night.

- **Crescent Moon:** The creation of a Moon-Puppet is never a commonplace or insignificant occurrence. If the Lunes have become involved in a situation to the degree of possessing a human being, that situation has progressed beyond the ability of the local Uratha to handle it (or the Lunes think so, anyway).

That said, the creation of a crescent moon *Iduth Zana* is a matter of special concern. If an Ithalunim possesses a wolf-blood, a serious situation involving spirits and the physical world has gone unnoticed. Of course, what constitutes a “serious situation” to a Lune doesn’t always resonate with human (or even werewolf) sensibilities. A crescent moon *Iduth Zana* might appear to enter a cemetery, dig up a corpse and remove a necklace from it as part of some arcane spiritual process. (The wolf-blood, of course, only knows that in the morning his hands are stained with grave earth, and he is wearing a necklace he’s never seen before.)

These Moon-Puppets can assume Dalu form only, because their function is not to fight or flee, but to appease the spirits with chiminage or break them down by enacting their bans. Unlike other Moon-Puppets, crescent moon *Iduth Zana* can step sideways at will (roll the Lune’s Power + the wolf-blood’s Resolve, with modifiers as described on pp. 250–251 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**), and usually need to alternate between the physical world and the *Hisil* in the course of their duties.

Moon-Puppets created by Ithalunim seldom survive the experience intact. The wolf-blood’s mind, opened to the immensity of the spirit world and the power that Lunes command under the crescent moon, usually cracks, leaving the *uragarum* catatonic for the rest of his life. Even this assumes that the wolf-blood’s body isn’t forfeited in accordance with a bargain made with a hungry spirit.

- **New Moon:** When the Silent Choir create Moon-Puppets, no one finds out. The most powerful and deadly of the *Iduth Zana* are those created when no moon shines at all, when the Irralunim decide (or are ordered — again, no one truly knows) to meddle in the minds of the wolf-blooded. The reason for the possession might be an assassination, theft or anything else best undertaken in complete darkness.

MOONLESS NIGHT

“I’m only telling you this because I don’t think you’ll believe it. But screw you if you don’t. It happened. It was about six months ago, and I remember there was no moon out. Everybody was edgy, but me especially. You know how it is.

“I got separated from my pack. I’m faster than they are, and I admit I’m exuberant. I ran ahead after what we thought was a Ridden, and turned down a blind alley. Out of the shadows steps this woman, and I swear to god it was my packmate’s little sister. She says to me, ‘Shut up and listen. You need to learn something, and I’ve got only a minute to teach you.’

“Did I mention she was speaking the *Uremehir*? Like, perfectly, not even that weird breathy kind of way that we do it in Hishu form. She sounded like a spirit.

“Next thing I know, she’s gone, my pack-mates have caught up and, for some reason, I know how to hurt ghosts. That’s not something us Hunters usually learn, and I’m thinking that some weird spirit just screwed with my head. At least, I thought that until the next week, when that ghost beat the shit out of us down there by the quarry until I got close enough to hurt it.

“Yeah, I asked my buddy’s sister. She doesn’t remember a thing, and her boyfriend says that she was with him *all night*.”

New moon *Iduth Zana* are unique in that they can assume any form (except Gauru) and can switch back and forth from those forms to human form as often as they like. This flexibility has a price, however. Every change beyond the first inflicts one point of lethal damage to the wolf-blood. This damage manifests as bruising and internal injury, and becomes evident when the Moon-Puppet returns to human form at sunrise. For purposes of calculating this damage, one “change” means a switch to Dalu, Urshul or Urhan form. For example, if a Moon-Puppet changes from Hishu to Dalu to confront a werewolf and then to Urhan to flee, this counts as two changes. If she had changed back to Hishu form rather than changing to Urhan, this would only count as one change.

USING THE MOON-PUPPETS

Moon-Puppets are intended to showcase the potential of any wolf-blood to become a werewolf, and to demonstrate the inherent connection to the spirit world that even a relative of a werewolf possesses. More to the point, they are meant to show that while *uragarum* are, in many ways, apart from their fellow humans, wolf-blood don’t have any control over what sets them apart, and it doesn’t make their lives any easier. Indeed, to be an *uragarum* is to be exposed to the World of Darkness, and the possibility of becoming a Moon-Puppet is actually one of the more benign things that can happen to a wolf-blood.

Also, Moon-Puppets create the potential of a classic werewolf story. Although Lunes normally only possess a person once in his life, the spirits do this so rarely that stating with any degree of certainty what “usually” happens is a bit dicey. Suppose a Lune possesses one particular wolf-blood every month during the gibbous moon, just to experience life as Uratha do for a little while? Or a group of Lunes take turns possessing a wolf-blood throughout the course of a lunar month? (This would require a serious spiritual problem in the area, since half moon and crescent moon *Iduth Zana*, in particular, emerge to deal with specific issues.)

If the chronicle is comprised of human characters with one or more wolf-bloods, having an *uragarum* character wake up covered in blood following the full moon is a superb way to lead the players to believe that the character has undergone a First Change. (And, of course, this could well be the case, but with

the possibility of a Moon-Puppet available, you don't have to immediately commit to the character being a werewolf.) When the wolf-blooded character's werewolf relatives come to visit, however, (having seen him tearing through a group of people the night before and probably assuming that he's now a werewolf himself), that something else is happening rapidly becomes apparent. The werewolves probably don't have any explanation — *Iduth Zana* are rarer than hen's teeth, and *Lunes* aren't terribly cooperative about explaining themselves to the *Uratha* — so the characters are free to leap to any conclusions they like.

How do the *Uratha* perceive Moon-Puppets? Visually, they appear little different from other humans (or wolves or werewolves, depending on their current form). Moon-Puppets' scent is strange, however. The usual scent of a werewolf is present, but the Moon-Puppet also carries a subtle odor that many werewolves state reminds them of the first time they stepped into the *Hisil*. Some werewolves compare the scent to rain, earth or even blood, while others say it reminds them of the crisp bite of frigid winter air. Whatever the exact scent, the smell of a Moon-Puppet makes werewolves uncomfortable, as it reminds them unconsciously that *Luna's* blessings are hers to bestow or take away as she sees fit.

Moon-Puppets are capable of speaking the First Tongue fluently. How they interact with *Uratha*, however, depends on their purpose. Gibbous moon and half moon Moon-Pup-

pets are the most likely to converse with werewolves, while crescent moons are strictly focused on their tasks to the point of ignoring all else around them and full moons are typically lost in *Death Rage* (so while they will “interact” with werewolves, the interaction tends to be bloody). No moon *Iduth Zana* might interact with werewolves if their tasks require it, but if the tasks do not, the *Uratha* probably never see them.

WOLF-BLOODED CHARACTERS

In this section, we examine the process of creating *uragarum* characters, the special Merits they can purchase, the game systems associated with being related to werewolves and the process of undergoing the First Change from a wolf-blood's (and the game's) perspective.

CHARACTER CREATION

The process of creating a wolf-blood character is much like that of creating a normal mortal character, as described in the **World of Darkness Rulebook**. The first step is the one that differs the most, and even that simply demands answers to different questions rather than any actual change of procedure.

STEP ONE: CHARACTER CONCEPT

As you develop your character's background and history, consider the information in this chapter and try to pinpoint



where the supernatural has intruded upon the character, as well as her reactions and frame of reference to it. When creating your wolf-blooded character, consider the following questions and conceptual points:

- **What does the character know?** As discussed in the earlier part of this chapter, most *uragarum* are unaware of their condition and what it means. What does your character know about herself and her family? Is she aware that werewolf blood runs in her veins? Does she acknowledge the supernatural at all, or has she simply learned to explain and ignore the strange phenomena around her? Come to that, has anything overtly supernatural ever actually happened to her, or have the spirits thus far been merciful? Have they simply not noticed her?

Your answers to these questions can influence purchases of Skills. A character with a long history of spiritual intrusions might have a high Occult rating or have specialties in Luck Charms or Protections. A character who has been relatively free of supernatural influence might have had better luck at leading a normal life and, therefore, have more advantages such as higher Resources. Likewise, your character's level of knowledge should influence your portrayal of that character. A wolf-blood who is completely ignorant of her heritage might break down when confronted with the supernatural or might be shocked and frightened at how natural and obvious the fact that spirits and werewolves exist seems to her.

- **Does your character belong to a wolf-blood family?** The three families presented earlier in the chapter provide examples of how these families can manifest, but such bloodlines don't have to be nearly as extensive as the Doirons, the Pickerings or the Ríos. The family line might only extend back one generation (your character's parents, perhaps), or it might be centuries old but a closely guarded secret. Perhaps once the character undergoes a certain rite of passage — first menstrual period, 18th birthday, getting into a fight in which blood is spilled and so on — the family secret is revealed.

The player should consider this question whether or not the character knows anything about her condition. A wolf-blood might belong to a family but not have been told of her heritage — perhaps because she has yet to pass some required test or rite of passage, perhaps because her family wishes her to avoid the “curse” it labors under and have a normal life.

- **Does your character know any werewolves?** Even a character who belongs to an established wolf-blood family might not have ever actually met a werewolf. Has your character? If so, who was the werewolf? A sibling? A parent? A distant cousin? What were your character's impressions? Did she witness a family member in the throes of Death Rage, or did she see her Ithaeur brother in Dalu form, snarling warnings in the First Tongue to a hostile spirit? No matter what the character witnessed, she should come away from the experience with a healthy dose of fear and respect for the Uratha, but jealousy, admiration or even hatred wouldn't necessarily be amiss, either.

As a corollary to this question, consider whether your character *knows* whether he has met a werewolf. Not only is this quite likely (if the werewolf was at all circumspect), but it adds an intriguing level of tension you wouldn't get from a character who had “the big reveal” before the actual game has started. What if the character met a werewolf but had no

means to identify her? Would he see her as a threat? Develop an instant crush? Perhaps he has vague memories of seeing someone on a moonlit night many years ago, a woman whom he thought was just a dream. How would he react if that “dream” arrived at his door, bleeding from a silver bullet wound and spitting out the flesh of her foes?

If your character has never met a werewolf, does she really believe in them or does she see them as a kind of bogeyman, a spook story that her older relatives like to tell? Consider these answers when your character eventually *does* come into contact with the Uratha and realizes that the stories are all true.

Note, by the way, that a wolf-blood who knows that she is related to werewolves and knows that they exist doesn't necessarily have any facts about the Uratha. She might live in perpetual fear of becoming a cannibalistic monster and carry silver on her at all times, hoping to ward off what she might see as the inevitable slide into depravity and evil. Such characters are, of course, ripe for manipulation by any number of enemies of the Uratha, but that can make for an exciting story. Likewise, a character who knows about werewolves and despises them can become a truly dogged foe for the Uratha (see “Wolf-Blooded as Antagonists,” p. 140).

If your character has met werewolves, think about what tribes they might represent. Or, better yet, consider what she has seen and allow the Storyteller to make the decisions about tribes, lodges, auspices and other particulars. Your character might have seen a pack of werewolves howling to the sky as lightning danced across the clouds, which, to a **Werewolf** player, would suggest Storm Lords. But those werewolves might just as well be Iron Masters belonging to the Lodge of Lightning or Fire-Touched howling out curses and condemnation to the *Iminir*. There is no reason that a wolf-blood should know these details, so it might make for a more interesting story to leave them up the Storyteller and discover them along with your character.

- **What does having a wolf-blooded character mean for the chronicle?** This question is best answered by the entire troupe, including the Storyteller. Having one wolf-blooded character in a chronicle in which everyone else is playing werewolves presents a very different dynamic than a chronicle in which all of the characters are *uragarum* or normal mortals. How these different dynamics might play out is discussed further under “Storytelling” (p. 132).

- **How does being wolf-blooded change the character's concept?** A “street hustler” concept suddenly gains a very different twist if the hustler in question is *uragarum*. That hustler might scare away potential clients but not understand why, or might be known for seeing things that aren't actually there (spirits, of course) or simply being “creepy.” Adding a Merit such as Lunatic Glare or Watched makes even more of a change to an otherwise straightforward concept.

A wolf-blooded character concept can, of course, be based around the character's heritage. “Inter-tribal matchmaker” and “Pickering ghost-hunter” are both valid concepts for wolf-blooded characters; they simply focus on the character's relationship with werewolves rather than his relationship with the rest of humanity. Whether or not that sort of concept is

appropriate for the chronicle should have been addressed by the answer to the preceding question.

- **Does your character want to be a werewolf?** Wolf-bloods who know about their condition are sometimes also aware that the First Change might descend upon them at any time. If your character is appropriately knowledgeable, does she wish to become a werewolf? Does she have a family member among the People who tells her horror stories about the menace of the *Hisil* or the thrill of hunting down prey? Is she terrified of the notion of becoming a monster, or does she eagerly (and perhaps ignorantly) look to the skies every moonrise, waiting to find her calling?

STEPS TWO THROUGH FOUR

Selection of Attributes, Skills and Skill Specialties does not change for wolf-blooded characters. Attributes receive the same 5/4/3 spread as ordinary humans; Skills receive 11/7/4. Wolf-blooded characters receive three Skill Specialties.

STEP FIVE: SUPERNATURAL TEMPLATE

Wolf-blooded characters do not have a true supernatural template to apply. Any special traits or bonuses stem from Merits, and so no modification to the character's traits needs to be made during this stage.

STEP SIX: MERITS

Obviously, to be a wolf-blood, the character must have the Wolf-Blooded Merit. If your Storyteller is allowing the scaled version of the Merit presented here, you have a great deal more flexibility in deciding how closely related your *uragarum* character is to her animalistic kin. We present other Merits here that are only available to wolf-bloods. Clear any such purchases with your Storyteller, however — if he intends to run a chronicle in which the wolf-blood characters are several degrees removed from their Uratha family and know nothing about them at the start of the story, the Watched Merit might not be appropriate, especially at high levels.

It might also be wise to jot down the effects of any Merits particular to the wolf-blooded condition. For instance, add the free Animal Ken Specialty to your character sheet at this point.

STEP SEVEN: DETERMINE ADVANTAGES

Advantages for *uragarum* characters are calculated in the same way as for mortal characters.

GAME SYSTEMS AND NEW TRAITS

For the most part, wolf-blooded characters use the same game mechanics as other mortal



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characters. Their relationships to werewolves, however, enable the characters in some ways and endanger them in others. The following sections explain how the wolf-bloods differ from normal humans and werewolves, and how the rules of the game are affected by those differences.

FETISHES AND THE WOLF-BLOODED

Most fetishes are useless to anyone except a werewolf. Fetishes require communion with a spirit to activate, and, without that communion, they are nothing but objects. Some werewolves, however, craft fetishes that are useful to wolf-bloods as well as werewolves. The process of doing so is difficult, levying a -2 penalty on all rolls involved in creating the fetish. What the werewolf must do in creating such a fetish is bind a spirit with a simple ban and a specific effect: namely, if the ban is enacted, the spirit must provide a given effect. The werewolf must then instruct the wolf-blood in using the fetish; since the *uragarum* cannot activate the fetish normally, she must enact the spirit's ban in order to gain the fetish's benefits.

In effect, this means that this sort of fetish is *always* active, which is dangerous. *Uragarum* with Wolf-Blooded •••• or higher can detect such fetishes with their Unseen Sense (as can any mortal with an appropriate focus for the Unseen Sense Merit). Werewolves receive a reflexive Wits + Occult roll to sense these fetishes in their immediate area (Irraka receive a +2 modifier to this roll). Also, spirits of any stripe can see these fetishes automatically, which sometimes invites retribution as a spirit of the same choir or descant as the imprisoned one lashes out at the fetish's owner. Why, given these dangers, would a werewolf fashion a fetish for a wolf-blood? Most often, the Uratha in question is overprotective of his relative and confident that having the fetish is better than not having it. Such fetishes are often designed to be alarms to call Uratha to a wolf-blood's aid or repellents that act against spirits and other supernatural threats. Very few Uratha would ever take on the task of making a fetish, however.

STORY HOOK — UNCLEAN FETISHES

Even if you don't intend to let wolf-bloods use fetishes or have no call for such an occurrence, don't overlook the utility of a fetish that is "always on." Bale Hounds might create such things as traps. A curious Irraka might track down such a fetish, but so might a pack's totem. Likewise, if a wolf-blood knows that werewolves exist but little else, what's to stop a Bale Hound from giving the *uragarum* a "gift," ostensibly from extended family?

Also, werewolves are not the only beings in the World of Darkness who can create fetishes. Mages can do so as well, and their magical items, like the fetishes discussed here, might be used by normal humans and carry great risks to their wielders.

In order to use a fetish, the wolf-blooded must enact the spirit's ban, which can be as simple as sprinkling some salt

on the fetish or as complex as reciting a phrase in the First Tongue. The player then rolls Resolve + Occult.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The spirit wrenches itself free of the fetish, which is promptly rendered useless. The spirit is hostile to the wolf-blood, but doesn't necessarily attack. (In fact, Uratha who create fetishes for *uragarum* typically don't use predatory or powerful spirits, just in case the spirit does free itself.) The spirit might well alert other, more dangerous beings to the wolf-blood's presence, depending on how well the *uragarum* and the werewolf who created the fetish treated the spirit.

Failure: The wolf-blood performs the ban incorrectly, and the fetish doesn't work. Any subsequent attempts to activate it during the same scene incur a cumulative -1 penalty.

Success: The fetish works as described.

Exceptional Success: The spirit in the fetish looks favorably on the wolf-blood. The next attempt to activate it receives a +1 bonus.

BREEDING ODDS

Werewolves are particularly interested in the wolf-blooded as mates. This interest comes not from some cosmological imperative to breed but as a simple matter of natural selection. Just as wolves fight for the most desirable mates, werewolves with an interest in passing on their blood and traits to a new generation must seek out those who can produce Uratha children. By breeding with an *uragarum*, the chances of a child eventually undergoing a First Change increase considerably.

If a werewolf mates with a normal (non-wolf-blooded) human, the child has a 20% chance of being a werewolf. The child is wolf-blooded, in any case, though to what degree depends on a number of factors. These factors include, but are not limited to, the following: the Primal Urge of the werewolf parent (the higher the Primal Urge, the stronger the child's connection to the Wolf), the Harmony of the werewolf parent (higher Harmony produces a stronger connection), the number of medical interventions during the pregnancy (the more natural the pregnancy and birth, the stronger the connection) and whether or not the Uratha was born to a family of *uragarum* going back more than one generation. There is no game system for determining an *uragarum*'s rating in the Wolf-Blooded Merit. The Storyteller should simply consider those factors and any others she considers relevant.

When a werewolf mates with a wolf-blood, the base chance to produce an Uratha child begins at 25%. For every dot of the Wolf-Blooded Merit the *uragarum* parent possesses, this chance increases by 5%, meaning that for those rare few wolf-bloods with Wolf-Blooded ••••, breeding with a werewolf has a 45% chance of bearing a werewolf. (If you are not using the scaled Wolf-Blooded Merit, the chance is 40%.) If the child is not a werewolf, she is always a wolf-blood.

The child of two *uragarum* has a chance of being a werewolf equal to 2 x the total of the parents' Wolf-Blooded ratings. For example, a mother with Wolf-Blooded • and a father with Wolf-Blooded ••• have an 8% chance of having a werewolf child. If the child is *not* a werewolf, the chance of the child being wolf-blooded is 1.5 x the chance of being a werewolf (12% in the previous example).

Finally, a wolf-blood and a normal human have a slim chance of having a werewolf child and a slightly better chance of bearing an *uragarum*. The chance is equal to (the *uragarum*'s Wolf-Blooded rating)% to have an Uratha child and (the *uragarum*'s Wolf-Blooded rating x 3)% to bear a wolf-blooded child.

LUNACY

As stated on p. 81 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, a wolf-blood's Willpower rating is considered two higher when resisting the Lunacy. (If you are using the scaled Wolf-Blooded Merit presented on p. 126, the character needs at least Wolf-Blooded ••• to gain this benefit.) This modifier is in addition to the bonuses to seeing a werewolf in Dalu or Urshul form. Therefore, an *uragarum* with a Willpower rating of 5 who sees a werewolf in Dalu form reacts as though his Willpower rating were 9.

The Lunacy otherwise affects wolf-blooded normally, except for one small but significant difference. While most people forget their encounters with Uratha and must consciously attempt to remember the creatures that triggered the Lunacy, a wolf-blood's mind is not so quick to let go of the memory. The *uragarum*'s Lunacy-addled mind conflicts with her bestial heritage, forcing her to remember what she would sooner forget. The Intelligence + Composure roll detailed on p. 176 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken** is *mandatory* for wolf-bloods, provided that the character's effective Willpower at the time of exposure allowed the roll (that is, 5 or greater). The modifiers for this roll listed on the same page still apply to wolf-bloods.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The wolf-blood's mind collapses from the stress. The player must now roll Resolve + Composure with a -1 penalty (-2 if the character has Wolf-Blooded •••••). Failure indicates the character gains a derangement.

Failure: The character remembers nothing about the experience, but cannot rationalize it, either. She draws a complete blank. If she wishes to try to remember, further Intelligence + Composure rolls incur a -1 penalty.

Success: The character remembers a hazy version of what happened and has nightmares about it for the next month or so.

Exceptional Success: The character remembers what happened with perfect clarity and cannot forget no matter how much she might wish to.

THE FIRST CHANGE

Any wolf-blood could, in theory, be a werewolf. The First Change can strike at any time, which is one reason that some Uratha advocate being tolerant and patient with *uragarum* — any wolf-blood might be a packmate some day.

The First Change, from a story perspective, is discussed later. In terms of game mechanics, the process of converting a wolf-blood to a werewolf is fairly simple.

- The character loses the Wolf-Blooded Merit and all benefits and drawbacks thereof, including the Animal Ken Specialty. Merits such as Lunatic Glare and Watched also disappear (though dots in Watched might easily be traded for dots in Allies or Contacts, representing the same werewolves). These Merit dots are not regained.

- Apply the werewolf template (p. 63 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). Obviously, the process of joining a tribe and learning Gifts doesn't happen overnight, and so these events might occur over the course of a story. Alternately, the Storyteller might decide to skip over the process of tribal initiation or have the player write it out rather than playing through it in a chapter. In any case, the character eventually gains the benefits of auspice and tribe (unless, of course, he becomes a Ghost Wolf), including Renown, Gifts and the free Skill Specialty from auspice.

- The wolf-blood's Morality becomes Harmony. Because the Uratha operate by such a different moral compass than humans, however, a wolf-blood with a low Morality rating might still begin with a Harmony rating of 7. If, at the Storyteller's discretion, the acts the character committed that lowered his Morality rating would *not* be considered sins against Harmony, the character may begin his life as a werewolf with Harmony 7. But this is a touchy matter and depends very much on the Storyteller's interpretation of events. If you wish to avoid the entire issue, simply translate the character's Morality rating directly to Harmony.

THE WOLF-BLOODED AND THE SUPERNATURAL

Uragarum can become mages, ghouls or vampires, but lose the Wolf-Blooded Merit and any associated benefits by doing so. The vampiric Embrace kills the wolf-blood in the process, naturally, and so the spiritual connection to Father Wolf is lost. Consuming enough vampire blood to become a ghoul places the wolf-blood in a kind of stasis, halting the *uragarum*'s life in its tracks. The spirits, therefore, stop seeing the wolf-blood as a living being, and, over the course of a month or so, the character loses any connection to her lycanthropic heritage (but does gain the dubious supernatural benefits of a ghoul).

The Awakening is a different kind of spiritual realignment, but is still potent enough to sever the character's ties with Father Wolf. When the character's soul is Awakened and her name inscribed on a Watchtower, the Supernal Realms "claim" her, mind and spirit, forever. Such mages might show a predilection toward Spirit magic, but even this is hardly universal.

MERITS

Players can choose any of the Merits from Chapter Five of the **World of Darkness Rulebook** for wolf-blooded characters. In addition, we've listed some *uragarum*-specific Merits here.

FETISH (• TO •••)

Prerequisites: Wolf-Blooded; any rating

Effects: This Merit allows the character to begin play with a talen or a fetish. Wolf-blood characters cannot begin play with a fetish rated higher than ••, however. One dot of this Merit indicates that the wolf-blood owns two copies of the same talen, two dots translates to a level-one fetish and three dots means the character owns a level-two fetish. Some examples of fetishes that are applicable and useful to wolf-bloods can be found on p. 127, and the rules for creating such fetishes (for werewolves) and using them (for *uragarum*) can be found on the previous page.

LUNATIC GLARE (••)

Prerequisites: Wolf-Blooded ••• or more

Effects: Your character inherited a small measure of the Predator's Menace, and can inflict the Lunacy on others. Doing so, however, is draining, and runs the risk of backfiring

terribly — humans are *not* the fearsome predators that werewolves are, even humans related to werewolves.

Most of the time, the wolf-blood has no idea what he is doing, and is simply defending himself or trying to pick a fight for whatever reason. Sometimes, however, a person that the wolf-blood is trying to intimidate screams in terror or backs away, wide-eyed, leaving the *uragarum* wondering what he did to induce such fear.

Use of this Merit requires the *uragarum* to glare at his target, making eye contact and exhibiting some sort of threatening behavior (baring one's teeth is enough). The player spends a Willpower point and rolls Presence + Intimidation (receiving no bonus dice for the Willpower point).

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately attacks the wolf-blood, perceiving him to be a monster and a threat. Others in the area might well join in, instinctively seeing the character as dangerous.

Failure: The target is not intimidated and not affected by the Lunacy.

Success: The target suffers the Lunacy, but with a +5 to his effective Willpower. Any others uses of this Merit in the same scene require another Willpower point from the *uragarum*.

Exceptional Success: As above, but the wolf-blood can use the Lunatic Glare on others in the same scene without spending a Willpower point, provided that they witnessed the effects of the Lunacy on the first victim.

Targets affected by this Merit do *not* suffer any memory impairment, only the fear.

Drawbacks: The wolf-blood does not actually control when this Merit activates. The player can decide that the wolf-blood might be angry or defensive enough to initiate the Merit — but so can the Storyteller.

If the wolf-blood ever becomes a werewolf, this Merit disappears.

WATCHED (• to •••••)

Prerequisites: Wolf-Blooded (any rating)

Effects: The character is important to a werewolf or a pack of werewolves. This is usually because the character is a direct relation, but sometimes Uratha ask their packmates to watch over their children or siblings, should the werewolf die prematurely. In any case, the character has a sort of feral guardian angel.

The degree to which the *uragarum* is protected depends on the number of points spent on this Merit. One dot means that the werewolf or pack isn't local or is busy with other concerns, and only checks in on the character once a month or so. Unless the character knows about her protectors (at the player's and Storyteller's discretion), she has no protection from immediate threats unless the werewolf happens to be in the area when something unfortunate occurs. Alternately, one dot could indicate that the character's protector is young, weak, stupid, elderly or is in some other way sub-par, or that he simply doesn't care about the wolf-blood all that much.

Two dots indicates that the protector takes his responsibility seriously, and looks in on the wolf-blood at least twice a month. Again, this is better protection against an ongoing

threat than an enemy who simply appears one night, fangs glistening, but it's certainly better than nothing.

A three-dot Watcher visits the wolf-blood once a week or so. This level indicates either a pack of young or mostly disinterested werewolves or a single but experienced or dedicated Uratha. The werewolf might even give the *uragarum* a method of contacting him should anything urgent arise (but Uratha take an *extremely* dim view of "crying wolf" and wasting the protector's time often results in a lowering of this Merit's rating or in the Merit disappearing altogether).

For four dots, the wolf-blood enjoys the dedicated protection of a pack or a seasoned and loyal warrior. This level of devotion usually indicates a parent-child relationship. The wolf-blood probably has a way to contact the werewolf, and if the Uratha is sufficiently talented, it might even take the form of a Running Rabbit talen. Woe unto anyone who crosses the wolf-blood with this level of Watched.

Finally, for five dots the *uragarum* enjoys the protection of the Lodge of the Shepherd (p. 106). The members of the lodge look in on the character at least once a week, normally more frequently, and she probably has some sort of spiritual protection in her home (whether she knows about it or not).

Drawbacks: The major advantage of this Merit is also its biggest drawback — the character is periodically in close proximity to werewolves. The Uratha might mean well, but one bad day can lead to an unfortunate incidence of Death Rage, and the wolf-blooded always come out the losers in such instances. Also, enemies of the Watcher might follow him right to the wolf-blood's door (although a werewolf willing to put in the effort to watch over a human is usually conscientious enough to avoid such mishaps).

If the wolf-blood ever becomes a werewolf, this Merit disappears. Traditionally, the Merit dots spent are lost, although the Storyteller may choose to allow the player to retain and reassign one or more of the Merit dots spent to a new Merit such as Allies or Contacts (representing the same werewolves).

WOLF-BLOODED (•• to •••••)

Note: This version of Wolf-Blooded is optional, meant primarily for chronicles in which multiple players portray *uragarum* characters and for Storyteller characters that don't need to be quite as "blessed" as most wolf-bloods. If the Storyteller does not wish to make use of this Merit, she is under no obligation to do so.

Effects: Your character has a blood relationship with a werewolf. She might be a member of a wolf-blooded line such as the Pickerings or might be the only wolf-blood in her immediate family. She might not even know the truth of what she is. Those details are up to the player and the Storyteller. This Merit does not measure how much the character knows, nor does it measure a character's relationship with her Uratha family. (Merits like Watched and Allies on p. 114 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook** are better indicators of that.) This Merit simply charts a character's semi-mystical, semi-genetic connection to the Uratha, and what benefits (and drawbacks) the character receives. Dots in this Merit purchase special traits and effects similar to a werewolf's natural abilities. The effects of this Merit are cumulative: a character with Wolf-Blooded ••••• receives all of the benefits listed

below. This Merit cannot increase in rating with experience points and cannot be purchased after character creation. A character is either wolf-blooded or he isn't.

Wolves' Rapport (••): The character possesses an instinctive understanding of canine body language and other cues. While she can't communicate with wolves and dogs fully (lacking the ability to pick up on cues based on scent), she can usually guess at a wolf's or dog's mood and general temperament. The character gains a free Specialty in Animal Ken (Wolves/Dogs).

Lunacy Mitigation (•••): The character is slightly resistant to the Lunacy. Treat the character's Willpower as if it were 2 points higher when determining the effects of the Lunacy. (Also see p. 125 of this chapter for information on how the Lunacy affects the wolf-blooded.)

Unseen Sense (••••): The character can sense werewolves and spirits. This power functions exactly like the Unseen Sense Merit described on p. 109 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**. See "Wolf-Blooded and Spirits" (p. 110) for more on *uragarum* perception of spirits.

Lesser Regeneration (•••••): The truly blessed wolf-bloods can heal damage much more quickly than their fellow mortals, though nothing on the level of the Uratha. This power functions exactly like the Quick Healer Merit (p. 113 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**), except that Lesser Regeneration grants no bonus to healing aggravated damage. A character with both this level of Wolf-Blooded *and* the Quick Healer heals a point of bashing damage in four minutes, a point of lethal damage in 12 hours and a point of aggravated damage in four days. (Note that aggravated damage benefits only from the Quick Healer Merit.)

Drawbacks: Aside from the unfortunate circumstance of being related to monsters with hair-trigger tempers and ruthless, inhuman enemies, the Wolf-Blooded Merit carries three intrinsic disadvantages. First, as stated on p. 80 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, the *uragarum*'s mind can only handle the strangeness of the World of Darkness for so long before the mind begins to crack, and the barrage of spirit activity only worsens matters. Any time a wolf-blooded character might receive a derangement due to mental stress or any use of a supernatural or spiritual power, the player receives a -1 penalty to the Resolve + Composure roll. If the character has Wolf-Blooded •••••, the penalty is -2.

Attractiveness to spirits is the second major disadvantage. *Uragarum* create slight weak spots in the Gauntlet, allowing spirits to exert their influence more easily in the wolf-blooded's presences. At Wolf-Blooded ••, spirits gain a +1 bonus on any attempt to affect the physical world in the wolf-blood's presence but must have Numina that allow them to do so. At Wolf-Blooded •••, this bonus rises to +2. At Wolf-Blooded ••••, a spirit of rank 2 or higher can use the Reaching Numen in the wolf-blood's presence, even if the spirit doesn't actually know that Numen. At Wolf-Blooded •••••, the spirit can cross the Gauntlet as though the wolf-blood were a level-one locus. If more than one wolf-blood is in the area, spirits can take advantage of the highest rating represented, with one exception. Unless an *uragarum* with Wolf-Blooded ••••• is present, spirits cannot cross the Gauntlet without using a Numen (though they

can use Reaching as described for Wolf-Blooded •••••). See the sidebar on p. 127 for an optional system on this matter.

Finally, wolf-bloods suffer a much lessened form of the Rage that grips their werewolf relatives. At Wolf-Blooded ••• or higher, when the character is severely frustrated, humiliated or angered the player must roll Resolve + Composure. If this roll fails, the character lashes out. This outburst might be nothing more than a shouted word or a raised hand, but multiple failed rolls within a given scene should carry increasingly intense responses. At Wolf-Blooded •••• and •••••, this roll receives a -1 and -2 penalty, respectively.

FETISHES

As stated on p. 124, even creating a fetish usable by a wolf-blood is difficult and risky. Uratha do occasionally craft such items, however. These fetishes do not have the same degree of utility that normal ones do, partially because the spirits inhabiting them tend to be weak and partially because the risk increases along with the power of the fetish.

Following are four examples of fetishes crafted for *uragarum*. They could also, of course, be crafted as normal fetishes and used by Uratha characters.

RUNNING RABBIT (TALEN)

These talens resemble small, thin chips of wood, glass or any other easily breakable material. To create one, a werewolf must bind the spirit of a rabbit or some other small, swift-moving prey animal into the object. The werewolf also retains a part of the animal (usually its tail or an ear). To activate the talen, the *uragarum* breaks it in half. The spirit is then released, but before it is truly free it must reclaim the part of itself that the talen's creator still holds. The spirit, therefore, seeks out the werewolf in all haste (which, in turn, lets the Uratha know that the wolf-blood needs her).

Action: Instant

WOLF'S NOSE (TALEN)

This balm is made from the creator's urine. A small dab of it underneath the wolf-blood's nose makes her sense of smell almost as acute as a wolf's. Uratha occasionally fashion this talen for *uragarum* so that they can perceive territorial boundaries. This can be especially important in areas where competing packs' territories border one another, and wolf-bloods are considered part of a territory. Any spirit with a keen sense of smell can empower the balm, but rodents are the most common choice. The balm must be kept covered and sealed when not in use, partially because it will lose its potency in an hour if left open and partially because it smells horrible.

To activate the talen, the wolf-blood's player makes the standard roll. If successful, the wolf-blood receives a +2 modifier to any rolls involving scent for the next hour.

Action: Instant

SHRILL SKULL (•)

This fetish is designed to ward off baleful spirits, making it extremely useful to *uragarum* strong enough to use it. To create this fetish, a werewolf must bind the spirit of a watchful and preferably loud animal into a chunk of bone (usually an animal's skull, though any bone works equally well). Spirits of rabbits, cats and loons have all been used in Shrill Skulls. To

activate the fetish, the *uragarum* must be afraid for her immediate safety. Strong fear enacts the spirit's ban — some spirits also require the user to scream in fear, tap on the skull rapidly or back into a corner — and, in response, the spirit emits a loud, piercing shriek, which temporarily drives away any other spirit in the area. Roll each offending spirit's Resistance in a contested roll against the activation successes for the fetish. If the wolf-blood wins, the spirit flees in pain from the terrible sound. If the spirit wins, it resists the shriek and may act normally. In either case, any werewolf with a number of miles equal to the activation successes has a chance to hear the shriek. Roll the werewolf's Wits + Occult (+2 for Irraka, +2 if the Uratha is in the *Hisil* at the time). If the roll succeeds, the werewolf hears the spiritual shriek and can follow the sound.

HUNGRY MASK (••)

Sometimes, hiding is the only recourse for the wolf-blooded. The creatures they most often have to hide from, however, are often werewolves and spirits — and both of these creatures can easily detect the *uragarum*. Knowing this, werewolves of the Lodge of the Shepherd occasionally fashion Hungry Masks for their charges. Only the most skilled ritemasters can make the fetishes correctly, and making one incorrectly is a death sentence to any wolf-blood who uses it.

A Hungry Mask is a strip of fabric or leather with two sharp teeth attached. To use the fetish, the *uragarum* punctures his own flesh with the teeth, drawing blood. The spirit inside the fetish (always a predatory or parasitic spirit — leeches, lampreys and bats are common choices) drinks the *uragarum*'s blood, but also drains away part of his spirit, thus masking him from any spiritual detection method. The successes on the activation roll act as a negative modifier to any attempt to mystically detect the wolf-blood as anything other than a normal human. Mundane methods of detecting the character still function normally, so the Hungry Mask works best to avoid enemies that don't know what the character looks like.

The Hungry Mask only functions for three turns, and inflicts one level of bashing damage per turn. After that, the fetish falls off like a bloated tick and does not work again for 12 hours.

Action: Instant

DERANGEMENTS

Wolf-blooded characters come into contact with the supernatural much more often than normal denizens of the World of Darkness, and have their sanities tested more frequently. Some wolf-blooded are strong enough to stand against the creatures from beyond human ken, others fall into the grip of madness. The following derangements can afflict anyone, but are especially appropriate to *uragarum* characters.

Dehumanization (mild): The character sees people as frail, weak and ultimately disposable. This hinders his ability to relate to and interact with other people. This derangement can be triggered any time the character is inconvenienced or frustrated by other people's perceived weakness or stupidity. When this happens, make a Resolve + Composure roll.

Effect: If the roll fails, all Social rolls (except those involving Intimidation) suffer a -2 penalty. The character is brusque,

impatient and crass with others, belittling them and, if necessary, shoving them out of the way to get to his goals.

Loss of Compassion (severe): The character ceases to see other human beings as meaningful. He doesn't kill at will (necessarily), but only because he realizes the penalties for this sort of action. He has come to believe that human beings are not the most important species on the planet, and, in fact, they are utterly insignificant in the grand scheme of things.

Effect: Whenever the character commits a sin against Morality that directly involves doing harm to another person, the player rolls *one fewer die*. For instance, if the character assaults another person, the player would normally roll two dice to avoid losing a dot of Morality. With this derangement, the player rolls only one. The roll to avoid gaining more derangements is unaffected.

Spirit Placation (mild): Whether or not the character is aware of the truth of spirits, he knows that the supernatural exists and seems to take an interest in him. He is, therefore, obsessed with keeping "them" happy. In effect, the character constantly tries to offer chiminage, but rarely has any clear idea of how to do it. The character might intone a prayer to the appropriate spirits, sprinkle salt around, offer up a few drops of blood or any other spiritual aid the player can think of.

Effect: Whenever the character suffers a setback (a failed roll, a bad turn of fate, even a traffic jam), the player must roll Resolve + Composure. If the roll fails, the character must placate the spirits at the next opportunity (that is, the character need not stop in the middle of a fight to do so, but must immediately after the fight is over).

Spontaneous Lunacy (severe): The character is so terrified of displeasing the spirits that whenever he senses a spiritual or werewolf presence (or believes he does), he slips into Lunacy.

Effect: When the character uses the Unseen Sense effect of the Wolf-Blooded Merit or perceives or believes he perceives spirits in any other way, the player must roll Resolve + Composure. Failure means the character undergoes the Lunacy, with the usual +2 bonus to Willpower. The character suffers the usual memory loss and other effects of the Lunacy, but this behavior is entirely psychological — the wolf-blood believes that he should fear the spirits and that they should trigger the same terror as raging Uratha. As such, supernatural powers that affect memory can be used to retrieve information "forgotten" due to this derangement.

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

The following characters are examples of *uragarum* that can act as inspiration for your own characters, family for werewolf characters, antagonists, allies or any other function you and your troupe can come up with. We've also listed the dot ratings for each character, just to provide a yardstick for what level of the Retainer Merit would be appropriate for wolf-bloods (see p. 116 of the *World of Darkness Rulebook*).

JOHN BARCOMB, THE LURE

Background: John Barcomb has been a target for spirits since he was six. He's not really sure what it was that happened that night, over three decades ago. He suspects, though he isn't sure why, that it had something to do with his Aunt Stacy

and the reason she disappeared. He remembers the half-moon shining in his window, and he stood there, watching as little flecks of color rode the moonlight into his room. Once there, though, all the beauty vanished. They swirled together like a swarm of locusts, they bit and stung him and, over his own screams, he heard what sounded like a howl.

And for 30 years after that, not a night goes by that John doesn't see the spirits of his city.

It took a while for him to realize what they were, of course. Sometimes they look like animals, sometimes they look like people, sometimes he can't find words to describe them. He thought he was crazy for a while, but he's seen so many therapists and shrinks that he's almost qualified to psychoanalyze people himself by now. He's tried taking medication, but nothing helps the visions. He's tried religion, but every holy man he's talked to seems quite willing to entertain the possibility of demons and so on until someone actually reports *seeing* them, at which point they start recommending therapy.

So John has learned to cope. He's made lists of spirits, written down the ones he's seen and even correctly guessed a few bans. The spirits have never actually harmed him (outside of the painful bites he received as a child), and he's willing to live with a bit of nuisance.

One of the most frightening bits of nuisance, though, is that John sometimes sleepwalks. He wakes up in strange, often frightening locales with no memory of how or why he came to be there. Often, when he wakes up, he feels a glimmer of spirit activity, but the place is eerily quiet.

What John doesn't realize is that his Aunt Stacy is alive and well, and a proud member of the Storm Lords. Her pack, noting the interest that spirits take in John, has been using him for decades to pinpoint aggressive spirits, those on the verge of possessing humans or attacking Uratha. The pack often uses the Call Human rite to force John into suspected problem areas. (The rite doesn't always call him, of course, but they typically wait until he falls asleep, and, of course, being wolf-blooded makes him more susceptible and then quickly deals with the spirits present before he awakens.)

Stacy has always prevented the pack from sending her nephew into a truly dangerous area. She doesn't want to see him hurt — or, worse, Ridden. She's aging, though, and her younger packmates look hungrily at John, wondering what horrors their lure could hook.

Description: John is a tall, thin man in his late 30s. His black hair is thinning, but he wears a full beard and mous-





tache. John runs an animal shelter, and is usually covered in cat and dog hair and wearing old clothes that he doesn't mind being soiled.

Storytelling Hints: Barcomb is an example of a wolf-blood who is ignorant of his condition and the particulars, but who has learned to accept the presence of the supernatural in his life. Of course, without a pack of werewolves looking out for him, he probably would not have survived this long.

John has been lucky so far, but his constant contact with spirits has left him open to possession. If he becomes Ridden, the werewolves of the area will surely suffer (starting with his aunt's pack). The Storyteller could introduce John through the pack (perhaps they wish to brag about their superb lightning rod), during the course of an investigation (maybe the characters notice the spiritual activity he attracts just as the Storm Lords arrive on the scene) or after he his luck has run out (John becomes Ridden or accidentally frees a truly dangerous spirit).

John is a four-dot Retainer, but requires a great deal of patience and care. If he were to discover the truth about the world and his place in it, he might well lose his sanity.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Academics (Religion) 2, Computer 2, Crafts 1, Investigation 1, Medicine (Veterinary) 1, Occult 2, Science 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Drive 2, Survival 1

Social Skills: Animal Ken (Wolves/Dogs) 4, Empathy 1, Intimidation (Icy Glare) 1, Socialize 1

Merits: Watched 5, Wolf-Blooded 5

Willpower: 5

Morality: 7

Virtue: Prudence. John hasn't survived this long by giving himself over to God or even by being particularly strong-willed. He's survived because he's smart and logical, able to recognize a problem he can solve and one that he must simply accept.

Vice: Wrath. John has anger issues. He knows it, his coworkers know it. He's had to back away from people who come into his animal shelter more than once, because he knows that they aren't going to really care for the animals they adopt.

Health: 7

Initiative: 5

Defense: 2

Speed: 10

NEIL KIMBERLIN, THE SILVERSMITH

Background: Neil Kimberlin is a locksmith by trade, but his real passion is metalworking. Specifically, Kimberlin enjoys working with silver. He doesn't know exactly what the fascination is, but he does know that silver just seems to feel right next to his skin, and he's skilled enough to make a bit of money on the side making silver jewelry.

Or at least, he *was* making silver jewelry until a few months ago. Now, Neil spends most of his time in his workshop making silver weapons. He's made weapons before — mostly daggers, and always ceremonial — but three months ago a woman approached him and said she'd heard of the work he did. The woman, who said her name was Helena, wanted a sturdy dagger with a silver blade, and she was willing to pay top dollar for it.

Neil, confused but interested, set his mind to the challenge of fashioning a workable dagger from a soft metal. It took him some time, but he finally completed it and called Helena. She showed up at his apartment within 15 minutes of his call, gave him a crumpled handful of bills as payment and took the dagger. Counting the money, Neil realized that the bills were bloodstained. Later, he also realized that he had never told Helena where he lived.

He never saw her again, but the next day a man calling himself Aaron approached Neil, asking for a dagger "like the one you made for Helena." Neil obliged him, and after that job was complete, more orders rolled in for silver weapons. Most recently, a woman contacted him via telephone to ask for silver *bullets*.

Neil is *uragarum*, but the Wolf runs weakly in his blood. He is beginning to suspect that something far beyond coincidence is happening, but he has had no direct experience with the supernatural and the word "werewolf" didn't occur to him until he told a friend about the order for the bullets. They laughed about it at the time, but Neil is beginning to wonder, and to notice things he hadn't before. Like the paw prints in the ground outside his apartment, and the strange hairs he finds on his car seat in the morning . . .

Description: Neil is in his mid-20s. He is tall and muscular, but has remarkably deft hands for such a large man. He usually wears blue jeans and sweatshirts, but switches to a turtleneck if he needs to dress up.



Storytelling Hints: Neil is in over his head, but doesn't realize it yet. He is a character with a specific and unusual skill being exploited by the supernatural. He also represents temptation — using silver weapons is a sin against Harmony, but it is easily the most effective way to rid oneself of competition or an Uratha enemy.

The question, then, is who are Neil's clients? This has been left for the Storyteller. They might be members of rival packs whose battles have escalated into the equivalent of chemical warfare. Perhaps they are the sole survivors of attrition from the Pure Tribes or Bale Hounds, and are now looking to take revenge by any means necessary.

Alternately, perhaps Helena simply told another Uratha (Aaron) for whatever reason, and he approached Neil for his own reasons. Likewise, nothing says his clients have to be werewolves. Other creatures abroad in the World of Darkness bear grudges against the Uratha, after all.

As a Retainer, Neil is worth three points. He's skilled, but his greatest skill also makes him something of a target (and thus a liability).

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Academics 1, Crafts (Metalworking) 4, Science (Metallurgy) 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 1, Firearms 1, Larceny (Picking Locks) 2, Stealth 1, Survival 2, Weaponry 1

Social Skills: Animal Ken (Wolves/Dogs) 1, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 1

Merits: Fast Reflexes 1, Resources 1, Strong Back, Watched 2, Wolf-Blooded 2

Willpower: 4

Morality: 7

Virtue: Fortitude. Neil is patient and steadfast, and not easily distracted, all traits developed by working with heated and sharpened metal.

Vice: Greed. Neil loves precious metals, silver especially, and the fact that creating these weapons pays well has thus far deterred him from questioning his buyers' motives.

Health: 7

Initiative: 6 (with Fast Reflexes)

Defense: 2

Speed: 11

REGINA LANNIER, THE LAST SURVIVOR

Background: Regina Lannier had found her niche, she thought. She had a decent job selling clothes at a nice little boutique. She was paid on commission, of course, but that just motivated her to come in on cold mornings. She had supportive family in the persons of her father and brother (her mother had died when she was very young) and she sang in the choir at her church.

In fact, the only real sticking point in her life were occasional anxiety attacks. She'd had them ever since she was about eight years old, and although she'd seen several therapists over the years, she could never figure out where they came from or why. She hadn't been abused or molested or anything like that. All but one of her therapists seemed to think her problem was chemical. The one who didn't tried to hypnotize her into remembering whatever her "latent trauma" was, but the second he told to "think back" she found herself in an attack so severe that she hyperventilated until she passed out. She finally found a medication that seemed to work, and all was well.

All was well, anyway, until about six weeks ago. Regina was on her way home and decided to walk. It was unseasonably warm that day, and the notion of getting on the bus just didn't appeal. As she walked, she realized it was taking her much longer than it should have. The sun was setting too fast, and she could see the swollen, nearly full moon rising above the buildings. She tried walking faster, but the landscape seemed to crawl by.

And then, as she turned the corner onto her street, she saw the wolves. They were not, could not be dogs. They were huge black and brown things, and Regina could only think *I thought wolves were gray* as they bounded toward her. And then the air seemed to split around her, as though she was surrounded by a movie screen that was now tearing. Something was coming through the tears....

Regina remembers nothing after that. She woke up curled into a ball in an alleyway about 20 feet from where she last remembers standing. She was untouched, but three people lay dead in the street. The concrete was cracked as though something huge had been slammed against it repeatedly, but the police could not piece together what had happened. Regina had anxiety attacks the rest of that night. Trying to calm her nerves, she took the following day off from work. Since then, she's managed to keep herself under control, but has doubled her dosage and has become jumpy and withdrawn. Sometime horrible happened that night, and although she doesn't know why, she's sure it was in some way connected to why she's always had these attacks. Stranger still, since the incident, she remembers her mother's face, which she never could before.

Recently, though, her nerves have taken more punishment. She's been receiving letters — not in the mail, but *taped to her front door* — asking “What happened?” She knows, somehow, that the question refers to the incident in the street, but she doesn't know who is sending the letters. The last letter appeared at the store at which she works, taped to the inside of the door when she unlocked the boutique one morning. Someone knows her, and Regina, reading the two simple words in the strangely familiar handwriting over and over again, wonders if her mother is truly dead.

Description: Regina is an attractive black woman in her late 20s. She dresses in expensive clothes from the store where she works, and usually wears a pleasant smile. Since the incident, however, she only smiles when she remembers to do so.

Storytelling Hints: Regina Lannier is living proof that *uragarum* are not immune to Lunacy. Her anxiety, of course, stems from a Lunacy-induced bout of amnesia early in life, involving her mother, but she can't put the pieces together in any meaningful way. Now that the Lunacy has been triggered again, her memories are starting to return.

Regina witnessed a battle between an Uratha pack and a spirit (or possibly one of the Hosts or whatever the Storyteller needs). During that battle, something happened that could aid other werewolves in resolving the problem, but the only survivor was Regina. The fact that she's wolf-blooded gives her a better chance of remembering the battle, but she'll need help, and bullying her only makes her repress the memories further. As Storyteller, you can use Regina as a way to introduce new werewolves (through her mother), a spirit

problem or a turf war between werewolves. Another consideration here is why Regina was spared by whatever the pack was fighting. Did it just not notice her? Is it watching her, waiting for other Uratha to step out of hiding? Depending on the nature of the being, it might have possessed her and is now waiting to spring out whenever the time seems right.

Regina wouldn't make an especially useful Retainer; one or two dots at best.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 1

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Academics (Poetry) 1, Computer 2, Crafts 2, Medicine 1, Politics 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Drive 1, Stealth 1

Social Skills: Animal Ken (Wolves/Dogs) 1, Empathy 1, Expression 2, Persuasion (Sales) 2, Socialize (Fashion) 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1

Merits: Allies (Family) 2, Fleet of Foot 1, Wolf-Blooded 3, Resources 1

Willpower: 3

Morality: 7

Virtue: Faith. Regina finds her strength and solace in prayer and singing at her church. She feels safe surrounded by others who believe as she does.

Vice: Pride. Regina has not told her family or the police about the letters. She considers herself a strong person, and doesn't want to admit how terrified she really is.

Health: 7

Initiative: 5

Defense: 2

Speed: 11 (with Fleet of Foot)

STORYTELLING

The rest of this chapter concerns itself with using wolf-bloods in the chronicle. We will discuss *uragarum* as player-controlled characters, as Allies, Contacts, Mentors, Retainers and, of course, as antagonists. We will also examine the conflicts wolf-bloods are likely to face in a **Werewolf: The Forsaken** chronicle and how the Storyteller can best use these characters.

The *uragarum* can be good additions to a chronicle when you need a character who is touched by or involved with the supernatural but who doesn't take much benefit from it. Indeed, wolf-blooded don't wield any true power from their condition. Any advantage they take from their condition is reactive rather than pro-active, and far outweighed by the disadvantages.

On the other hand, wolf-blooded characters have the potential, at least, to know a little more of the truth of the World of Darkness than the average person. That, in itself, makes them viable as characters for players.

In the next few sections, we present a myriad of ideas and suggestions on how best to use wolf-blooded characters. Two variables must be considered with all of these suggestions, however. The first is whether or not your Storyteller is using the scaled Wolf-Blooded Merit presented in this chapter. If an idea refers to a wolf-blood having a lessened susceptibility to the Lunacy, obviously it only applies to characters with Wolf-Blooded ••• or more. As Storyteller, you may, of course, deign



to give characters an automatic rating in the Wolf-Blooded Merit (without even telling the player, if you like), especially if in so doing you open the chronicle up to more diverse stories.

The second variable is the degree of knowledge that a wolf-blood has. We devote a great deal of attention to this variable in the beginning of this chapter, and in the interest of saving space, we won't repeat those ideas here. Just bear in mind as you read that not every wolf-blood has any clue what she truly is, that werewolves exist, that spirits exist or that her skill in training dogs is anything other than a knack.

WOLF-BLOODED AS PLAYERS' CHARACTERS

Uragarum can make for interesting and rewarding characters in a World of Darkness game. A major advantage to wolf-bloods is that they are normal humans with a slight hint of the supernatural, a kind of midway point between a mortal and a supernatural template (vampire, werewolf or mage). To what extent the supernatural figures into a given wolf-blood's life (and thus, how much the supernatural figures into the chronicle) depends upon the other characters in the story.

WOLF-BLOODS AND NORMAL HUMANS

Wolf-bloods can fit into chronicles as player-controlled characters just as easily as any other mortal. Indeed, the fact that a wolf-blood character is related to werewolves need not be revealed until an appropriate point in the chronicle. (This can take the form of a dramatic revelation or a dark secret, at your and your troupe's pleasure.) Remember that wolf-bloods are not detectable as having any relationship to werewolves except by the Uratha, and so an *uragarum* in a group of normal mortals is nothing but a person who has strange experiences. In a **World of Darkness** chronicle, that should probably apply to the whole group.

Of course, a wolf-blood might also be able to sense when strange things are in the offing via the Unseen Sense portion of the Wolf-Blooded Merit, but all this allows the wolf-blood to do is sense spirit- and werewolf-related phenomena. Put another way, a wolf-blood might look at a Ridden, a werewolf (Pure or Forsaken), a Host hiding in a human's skin or a materialized spirit and see them as other than human, but not see any difference between them (not through the Merit, anyway, though normal methods of perception would certainly show some other details). As the character learns the truth about herself and the world, she might gain a greater degree of acuity with the Unseen Sense at the Storyteller's discretion, but uncertainty is important for maintaining an atmosphere of horror and risk.

Or, alternately, what if the wolf-blood knows full well what she is and falls in with a group of normal humans who then become involved with the supernatural? The wolf-blood then has to consider not only her own safety, but that of the people around her who have no defense against the supernatural. Of course, the wolf-blood isn't really empowered as far as protecting people goes, but the wolf-blood can serve as a superb method of frightening the other players. As Storyteller, you can pass the wolf-blood's player notes that indicate what she feels or sees as a result of her sensitivity. The player, then, can have fun portraying the character responding to the fluctuations of the spirits that only her character can perceive.

MYSTERY

If everyone builds their characters together, then everyone knows who the wolf-blood in the group is. This is fair, but it's not as much fun as having a little mystery. How can you, as Storyteller, include an *uragarum* character and keep the fact backstage but still keep things fair and aboveboard?

First step: forget the "fair and aboveboard" bit. If your chronicle requires someone who can sense (or simply *be sensed* by) spirits or if you wish to involve the Uratha in either a sympathetic or antagonistic role or if you want to progress from a mortals chronicle to a **Werewolf** chronicle, then including a wolf-blood is a perfectly legitimate technique. Keeping the wolf-blood secret is Storyteller fiat. Don't worry about "game balance" — the Wolf-Blooded Merit isn't enough of an advantage to cause any kind of disparity between players' power levels (and hopefully, your players are more interested in discovering and experiencing the World of Darkness than comparing dots, anyway). Second step: consider the following options.

- You can give everyone three extra Merit dots. This allows a player to buy Wolf-Blooded to a respectable level without crippling his character in other arenas. (Alternately, you can just give everyone some extra experience, but the first option cuts down on math.)
- Take a player aside, tell her that you'd like her character to be wolf-blooded, explain what this means and give her the Merit (to whatever degree you want her to have it) free. The character is a built-in plot device, and when and if the character undergoes her First Change, she'll lose those dots anyway.

- Give the character the Merit, but don't tell the player. When the characters are attacked by guard dogs, describe how they avoid the wolf-blooded character as though afraid of her. Make rolls for Unseen Sense in secret, and vary the manifestations of spirits so that it's obvious that beings of different stripes take an interest in the wolf-blood.

Whatever you decide, make sure the other, non-*uragarum* characters have a chance to take center stage as well. That's more important in terms of "game balance" than making sure everyone has the same number of dots.

Of course, once the truth is revealed to the group as a whole, the other characters might well feel threatened by the fact that one of their number is related to werewolves. Depending on how much information is available to them, the other characters might be afraid of more than just the character's relatives dropping by. If the fact that any wolf-blood might experience the First Change becomes common knowledge, the other characters might insist on the wolf-blood being chained up at night (or at least on nights of

the full moon), just to be safe. The wolf-blood might even instigate such a policy herself, depending on how much she knows.

This fear isn't exactly unfounded, of course. Any wolf-blood *can* become a werewolf, and Uratha in the throes of the First Change aren't safe to be around, no matter the moon's phase.

STORY HOOK — BLOODBATH

This story works nicely for troupes who wish to go into great detail for their preludes. If one character is a wolf-blood and the rest are not, it might be interesting to play through the days leading up to the wolf-blood's First Change as a mortals-centered story. The characters should be part of the wolf-blood's life somehow — family, friends, etc. — and they become involved with the supernatural events common to the last few nights of a *nuzusul's* human life. Indeed, the characters might witness a werewolf attacking and biting the wolf-blood, which of course makes for a more classic werewolf story (with the Change following the bite).

At the end of the story, of course, the wolf-blood changes and probably flies into Death Rage, which, in turn, likely results in the other characters' deaths. The reason for the Change, though, depends on the auspice moon, which in turn should drive the story. A simple "enemy attacks and must be destroyed" works well for a nascent Rahu, but what if the other characters are all deficient in some way? An Elodoth might feel compelled to kill them, seeing them as weak, flawed or unbalanced. Likewise, a spiritual disturbance in the area might lead to an Ithaeur's Change, but the new crescent moon might accidentally release dangerous spirits — which then take out their aggression on the other characters.

This story is unabashedly centered around one particular character, true, but the story can be a good way to introduce a new player to roleplaying games, allow experienced players to have fun with temporary supporting roles and showcase the horror of **Werewolf: The Forsaken** before anyone starts worrying about form modifiers, First Tongue pronunciations or dealing with the Pure Tribes. And, of course, you can run similarly tailored preludes for the rest of the characters, if you wish.

ALL WOLF-BLOODS

A chronicle made up entirely of wolf-blood characters would require some special circumstances, since *uragarum* aren't very common. But it's not at all impossible, especially for a smaller troupe, for a number of wolf-bloods to congregate. The easiest explanation, of course, is for the characters to be related. The three families described earlier in this chapter can provide inspiration for these kinds of stories, but the characters needn't belong to a long-standing *uragarum* bloodline for such a chronicle to work. The characters could simply be siblings in a large

family or could meet up at a family reunion or wedding (either of which might make interesting settings for werewolf stories).

If the characters aren't family, they might come together by instinct, almost like a pack. Although wolf-bloods don't trigger each other's Unseen Sense, normally, it wouldn't be out of the question for people of similar spiritual aptitude to gravitate toward one another. Then again, since *uragarum* in the same city deal with the same spiritual landscape, they are likely to have similar experiences and might meet up in the course of coping with whatever those spirits put them through. A support group could conceivably play host to several wolf-bloods. A therapist might develop a reputation for helping people deal with hallucinations about hauntings and other paranormal phenomena.

The characters might also come together by design rather than by accident. Werewolves in the city might find it easier to keep an eye on *uragarum* if they are part of the same circles and herd their kin together. The Uratha might do this subtly or blatantly, depending on how much time and effort they wish to devote to the matter. If the territory contains a member of the Lodge of the Shepherd (see p. 106), then the *uragarum* are likely to know about each other and about their true natures.

OPTIONAL RULE — COLLECTIVE SPIRIT SENSITIVITY

All wolf-bloods are easy targets to spirits.

Normally, if more than one wolf-blood is in the immediate area, all spirits take the bonus of the highest level of the Wolf-Blooded Merit represented. For example, if three *uragarum*, with Wolf-Blooded ratings of ••, ••• and ••••• are together, any spirit wishing to affect the physical world gains the bonuses associated with Wolf-Blooded •••••. If the Storyteller wishes to allow spirits an even greater advantage around a group of wolf-bloods, however, she can use the following optional system.

Total the number of dots of the Wolf-Blooded Merit represented within the immediate area (the same room or the same 25' radius or so) and compare it to the chart below.

Total Wolf-Blooded Dots	Effect
1 to 5	As described under the Wolf-Blooded Merit (p. 126)
Six to 10	Spirits can cross the Gauntlet at will, and are visible to the wolf-bloods if they do so. +1 on all rolls to affect the <i>uragarum</i> .
11 to 15	As above, but the spirits can Materialize (as the Numen) for one turn per point of Power.
16 to 20	As above, but the bonus to affect wolf-bloods rises to +2 and the spirits can stay Materialized as long as they are in the presence of the wolf-bloods.

An all-*uragarum* chronicle is potentially much more dangerous to the characters than a wolf-blood/mortal game, because all of the characters are targets for hostile spirits and other enemies of the Uratha. Likewise, the characters don't necessarily have any idea what they are and why they seem prone to supernatural mischief. The advantage that they do have, however, is that because they are all of the same ancestry (whether they know it or not), they have a common frame of reference when the strangeness starts. If all of the characters are resistant to the Lunacy, they can help each other remember (or forget) in the aftermath of an incident.

If the characters in such a chronicle know what they are, the threat of a First Change should always be hanging in the air. Every time the full moon rises, the characters should be afraid to meet, lest one of them enter the Death Rage and finally realize his heritage. Every time spirit activity swells around one of the characters, the rest should get a sinking feeling — *Is this it?* It is, of course, possible that all of the characters undergo the Change and become werewolves (and probably a pack), but there's no reason all of the Changes need to happen at once, or even within the same year. Consider a story in which all of the characters are wolf-bloods that ends when one character undergoes the First Change. Skip

forward in time a few years, running a few chapters detailing the First Changes of the other characters (perhaps as solo sessions or perhaps involving the still-*uragarum* characters) until all of them have become Uratha. What tribes do they choose? If they joined different tribes, are they still compatible or does loyalty to their tribal totem and ideology outweigh loyalty to old friends? How do they cope with their roles as werewolves? Are they still friends, or does the fact that these people knew them as normal humans embarrass some of them? What if two of the characters were lovers before the Change? The fact that they cannot express their feelings in the same way might lead to tension — or a violation of the Oath.

STORY HOOK — OLD FRIENDS

The characters were a group of *uragarum* who all became Uratha, as described in the text. Include a Storyteller character in the mix who lost track of the characters as more of them became werewolves. After all of the characters have undergone the Change and formed a pack,



they discover that their missing member (the character you controlled) has joined the Fire-Touched. What will the pack do? Their first hunt as a pack might be to track down and kill their former friend. In any case, he almost certainly has a pack of his own — and he knows where the characters live, their families' names and enough about them to make their lives Hell.



WOLF-BLOODS AND WEREWOLVES

A chronicle that includes both werewolves and *uragarum* as player-controlled characters is a challenge for players and Storytellers alike. The major concern, of course, is that because **Werewolf** is a game of savage horror, bloodshed and violence are fairly common. Werewolves are capable of absorbing damage that would kill a human being several times over and then recovering after only a little time of letting their natural regeneration abilities do their work. Wolf-bloods, of course, have no such recourse. A bullet, silver or otherwise, is usually fatal to a wolf-blood, so, obviously, are the claws and fangs of werewolves, vampires and any of the other horrors — such a group meeting in the shadows can end an *uragarum* easily. The Storyteller must consider how lethal the challenges in such a chronicle are going to be. The werewolves should be the yardstick by which combat-oriented threats are measured, meaning that, all else being equal, in a mixed group the wolf-bloods should be in mortal danger long before the Uratha.

One way to confront this problem is by simply explaining to any players of wolf-bloods that the players might well lose their characters if the group enters combat. This should always be a concern regardless of character type, of course — in a fight, people get hurt, and the World of Darkness is a horror setting, meaning that the “heroes” aren’t at all immune to the nasty effects of combat. But the issue in a mixed group is one of scaling the combat appropriately, and if the players understand that the werewolves, not the *uragarum*, are the measuring stick for opponents’ combat capabilities, hopefully the players will be less likely to have their characters simply charge headlong into a fight.

Perhaps a better concern than simple game balance, though, is one of troupe dynamics. A “group” of werewolves is a pack — sometimes bonded by a common totem, sometimes not, but always joined by the instinct to run and hunt together. Packmates might dislike each other as people, but they would die for each other as werewolves. Indeed, the most heinous sin against Harmony, worse than hunting humans for food or murdering a fellow Uratha, is betrayal of the pack.

A human being, no matter how closely related to werewolves he may be, no matter what kind of regard or even love he might feel for his Uratha kin, no matter how educated he becomes in the ways of the werewolves, can *never* be part of the pack. The minute a wolf-blood undergoes the First Change, he gains new respect in the eyes of the Uratha. This isn’t simple elitism from the werewolves’ point of view, either. *Uragarum* cannot sense the things that werewolves can, and the wolf-blooded’s relationship with the spirit world is, for the most part,

limited to reacting to the Shadow rather than changing it. Werewolves can reshape the spirit world as they fit, given the time and resources do so, and can therefore be pro-active when dealing with the Shadow. Uratha can smell their enemies’ fear on the frightened foes’ brows and track them across the world with a taste of blood. Wolf-bloods often have trouble with the concept of *having* enemies or at least have trouble attaching enough meaning to enemies to want to kill them.

At the core, werewolves are predators and hunters. Humans are gatherers and scavengers. Whether humans were ever true predators is a matter of debate for scientists and philosophers, but, to the werewolves’ minds (and more important, instincts), a human being is *other*. Another werewolf is *kin*.

All of that in mind, are there compelling stories to be told including both Uratha and *uragarum* characters? Of course. These stories are simply fraught with conflict — which is necessary for a good story, anyway. As Storyteller, consider the following points when running a chronicle that includes both werewolves and wolf-bloods:

- **Why?** Why is it necessary to have a mixed group? If the answer is “Because my players came up with character concepts that are dynamic, compelling and cool,” then your players are doing most of the hard work for you. Ask a lot of questions about the characters and their group dynamic, run scenes that allow them to interact without the threat of being eaten by Beshilu and the like and find out where the greatest points of conflict are. Don’t worry too much about the wolf-bloods dying in a fight, because if the players have put the extra time and effort into designing their characters, the players will probably put the time and effort into preserving the characters.

However, if the answer to the question is that one player wants to play a wolf-blood while the rest play werewolves, tread carefully. It could be that this player simply has a good concept that works best as an *uragarum*, but it could also be that he doesn’t understand the appeal of playing a werewolf, is intimidated by the setting of the game (finding it too complex, perhaps) or just wants to be different so as to command the Storyteller’s attention. The first three are legitimate concerns. If the player has a valid concept, that’s fine. Just make sure the rest of the players understand what it means to have a (mostly) normal human in the group; they might decide to add rites such as Banish Human to their characters, just in case. If the player doesn’t understand the setting of **Werewolf** or the appeal of playing a bloodthirsty shapeshifter (entirely understandable), then playing a wolf-blood might be perfect — the player can experience watching these monsters at work right along with his character and experience the horror of knowing that he is one moonbeam away from becoming one himself. Playing a wolf-blood can also be a good “warm-up” to playing an Uratha, which can happen either when the *uragarum* character experiences the First Change or leaves the group for some other reason (insanity, death, etc.) and the player creates a werewolf character to join the pack, possibly a relative of the first character.

If the player is just seeking attention, though, you have a potential problem. Some players equate “unique and dynamic character” with “something different from the rest of the group.” This isn’t a problem by itself, but the underlying idea of

playing something apart from the group can be damaging later in the chronicle, as the player avoids group harmony in favor of always splitting the party, causing trouble and generally making the story all about his character. This kind of attitude also leads to questions of creating mages or vampires who are also wolf-bloods. This problem is discussed in the sidebar.

LET'S GET IT STRAIGHT

The authors and developers are not saying that **Werewolf: The Forsaken** shouldn't ever mix with **Vampire: The Requiem** or **Mage: The Awakening**. All of the creatures from these games inhabit the same World of Darkness, the rules of the games have been written to coincide and balance with one another, and, although each of these games maintains different moods and themes, the games aren't so dissimilar that they can't intersect. A mixed group means more work for everyone, but it can be just as rewarding as an all-werewolf (or all-vampire or all-mage) group.

The problem comes not when a player wants to play a wolf-blood (or a vampire or a mage) in a **Werewolf** chronicle, but when the player wants to play such a character *because* you're running a **Werewolf** chronicle. If a player falls back on something obviously different than the rest of the group just to make him feel that his character is unique, he is overlooking the thousands of possible character concepts available just with the five tribes and auspices of the Uratha. Don't make fun of players like this. Simply schedule some one-on-one time to fashion a character that the player will enjoy and that will fit into the game. We recommend a character with direct, strong ties to another player's character (preferably a player who knows and gets along with the "problem player"). With a focus for his creative energy, the player can be a cementing force to the chronicle, rather than a destructive one.

The Storyteller might wish to have a mixed group for her own reasons, of course. The first story might involve the First Changes of the wolf-blood characters, for instance — acting as a kind of group prelude. Likewise, the wolf-blooded characters might possess skills or knowledge that none of the werewolves do, meaning that the werewolves need to keep the wolf-bloods intact so that these skills can become useful. If you have an idea for a story that requires wolf-bloods as well as werewolves and your players are willing to trust you to run this sort of story, you shouldn't have any problem keeping it interesting and fun. Just remember: humans die easily when faced with werewolves, and one badly timed Death Rage can derail your chronicle badly.

• **Morality:** Werewolves have a very different moral compass from humans. The basic precept of morality is simi-

lar. (Although a werewolf's spirituality is different from "morality," for game purposes her morality and spirituality are the same because they use the same mechanics.) A werewolf's spiritual obligation is to create balance, and that obligation is just as much for the werewolf's own personal benefit as a human being's obligation to remain within acceptable moral boundaries. For humans, violation of Morality leads eventually to derangements and probably to societal punishments as well. For werewolves, violations of Harmony lead to madness, bloodlust and eventually a pitiable fate as one of the Zi'ir.

The differences between Morality and Harmony can't be ignored, though. A human being who stalks and kills another human is committing a terrible sin, is likely to face punishments from the law and, in any case, loses a little bit of her mind. A werewolf who stalks and kills a human being faces, perhaps, the possibility of harassment from law enforcement, but not if he is careful. Hunting and killing is a werewolf's prerogative — indeed, the Hunt is a moral imperative. (Hunting humans for *food*, of course, is a different story.)

So, if a wolf-blood, who is bound to the rules of morality as dictated by human society (and the rules of Morality as expressed on p. 91 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**), accompanies a werewolf on a hunt for another human being, does that wolf-blood risk madness and moral degeneration?

Under the rules of the game, yes. Morality doesn't change until a supernatural template is added, and when that happens, the wolf-blood is, one way or another, not a wolf-blood (and not fully human) anymore. Does that mean that a wolf-blooded character can't try to behave like a werewolf in moral terms? No, but the consequences for this sort of behavior are many and severe. Two new derangements included in this chapter (dehumanization and lack of compassion) are included largely for wolf-bloods who have ceased to live as though they are human and have started trying to behave like werewolves.

Consider, too, that revealing the existence of the Uratha to humanity is a fairly serious sin against Harmony. Under the rules of **Werewolf**, revealing the existence of the Uratha to a wolf-blood is not a sin, but, if that wolf-blood then tells other people, the sin falls on the head of the werewolf, not the wolf-blooded (though an extremely moral wolf-blood might lose Morality for breaking a promise of secrecy). The context in which the werewolf reveals herself makes a difference, too. If a werewolf reveals herself to a group of people and the only one who remembers the encounter is an *uragarum* (due to the lessened effect of the Lunacy), the werewolf should still be required to check for Harmony loss because her actions were irresponsible and could have spelled disaster for her pack.

How stringent the Storyteller wishes to be with Harmony, Morality and the ways in which they intersect and conflict is a matter for her to decide (hopefully with some input from the players). Regardless, wolf-bloods and werewolves have their own moral codes and should be held accountable for those codes, not those of their lycanthropic or human relatives.

• **First Change:** We mentioned earlier that a mixed group of *uragarum* and Uratha can be a good way to introduce new werewolves. The wolf-bloods simply experience their First Changes during the course of the story (more information on the First Change and how it alters a wolf-blood's perspective

appears earlier in this chapter). One way of handling this kind of story is for the werewolves to stalk the wolf-bloods, keeping them safe from external harm until the Change hits. This is really only applicable for *nuzusul* right on the cusp of the Change. It probably makes more sense for the story to focus on something other than the First Change but for the Change can play a decisive role in the events of the story.

For instance, if the wolf-blooded character is meant to Change under the full moon, becoming a Rahu, the obvious choice is for the Change to happen during a fight or another dangerous situation in which the pack needs a bit of extra killing power. If the pack is confronted by a powerful spirit that could kill the werewolves, the *uragarum* might become an Elodoth and instinctively show respect to the spirit. As far as the Uratha are concerned, Luna in Her wisdom decides their auspices, meaning that a werewolf who Changes seemingly in direct response to a pack's hour of need is going to be accorded a great deal of respect and admiration or will at least be seen as significant (which isn't always a blessing). The pack's totem might even make a show of favor to the new Uratha, which, in turn, may lead the rest of the pack to conclude that the totem asked Luna for direct intercession. (Is this even possible? The Uratha don't know for certain, but they can believe in miracles just as humans can.)

If multiple wolf-bloods become werewolves on the same night, of course, they would all fall under the same auspice. Other Uratha would likely see such an occurrence as an injunction from Luna that one of her roles is not being performed or is being performed ineptly in the area. For instance, if three people become Ithaeur on the same night, the Crescent Moons of the area would do well to examine their tactics and actions of the last few months, as the Ithalunim may have observed conduct unbecoming of the Ithaeur.

STORY HOOK — CASUALTIES

A small pack of werewolves is escorting a couple of wolf-bloods through an enemy pack's territory. En route, they are attacked, either by the enemy pack or by something unrelated. The werewolves aren't badly hurt, but the *uragarum* are gravely injured. The werewolves need to get the wolf-bloods some medical attention, but their wounds need explanations. Can the werewolves provide good reasons for bite and claw wounds? Even gunshot wounds require a police report, and the *uragarum* are in no condition to think up convincing lies. And the pack that attacked the characters might not be dead. The pack might simply have withdrawn to strike later, after the wounded have weakened a bit.

For an interesting twist, reverse the roles. Maybe the werewolves are wounded with silver bullets and are bleeding to death, while the *uragarum* suffered no injury. This puts a much greater emphasis on finding help (perhaps a Uratha ally who knows the Rite of Healing) before the enemy can regroup. If the characters

take the werewolves to a hospital, of course, they have some very strange questions to answer.

WOLF-BLOODED AS SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

In a **Werewolf** chronicle, *uragarum* make for superb supporting characters. A werewolf can only interact with a normal human being up to a certain point before the fundamental difference of being a werewolf obstructs further intercourse. This still happens with wolf-blood/werewolf relations, of course, but the bar is set very differently because wolf-bloods are equipped to handle such staggering truths as spirits, Ridden and the werewolves themselves before the minds of the wolf-bloods crack. Of course, not all wolf-bloods are strong enough to actually see these things and remain intact, but the chances are greater, and most werewolves don't consider revealing their existences to the wolf-bloods to be a sin. This can act as some small source of consolation if an *uragarum* does lose her mind in the course of dealing with the Uratha.

When players create their **Werewolf** characters, a number of Merits can represent wolf-bloods. Allies, Contacts, Mentor and Retainers all describe the character's interaction with another person, and those people can very easily be *uragarum*. As Storyteller, don't feel compelled to raise the effective cost of these Merits just because the people they represent are wolf-bloods. Remember, being wolf-blooded isn't really a blessing and usually doesn't denote any kind of supernatural power or awareness; being wolf-blooded only describes a familial and spiritual relationship with werewolves. If anything, the fact that these supporting characters are wolf-blood makes for good justification for their association with the Uratha. Rather, let the players depict their Contacts, Allies, Mentor or Retainers as expressed in their respective descriptions in the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, and allow their *uragarum* status to help define the relationship, rather than the cost.

ALLIES

Characters can't have an Allies Merit defined as "wolf-blooded" because Allies, as described on p. 114 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, come from organizations or societies. The character might have a rating in Allies in a given circle *because* one or more wolf-bloods belong to that circle, however. For instance, a character's brother might be a cop and be *uragarum*. The character, therefore, has Allies (Police) due to his family ties. This would be no different if the character weren't a werewolf and the cop weren't a wolf-blood, of course.

The difference comes when dealing with the supernatural. Werewolves have obligations to keep the *Hisil* in their territory maintained. While most human beings don't know or care about the "spiritual reflection" of the world they live in, *uragarum* might find themselves taking actions for their Uratha relatives that they don't understand but that these Uratha insist are absolutely necessary. For a wolf-blood represented by the Allies Merit, these actions usually involve measures that the Uratha cannot or do not have time to undertake them-

selves but contribute to the harmony of the spirits of the area. In the example above, the cop's brother might ask him to crack down on the pimping going on in a particular borough. The werewolf might or might not explain that the current situation is attracting spirits of pain, greed and disease to the area and that these spirits are feeding on the bird-spirits dwelling there, which, in turn, is upsetting the pack's avian totem.

Werewolves seldom call on their Allies for backup in fights. Anything that a pack can't handle alone is almost certainly dangerous enough that a few humans won't tip the balance. That said, sometimes having a few seemingly normal humans on hand can alter the outcome of a fight. For instance, a werewolf might call upon Allies to make sure a meeting between her pack and a rival pack has human witnesses, reasoning that the other pack is less likely to resort to violence if they are being observed.

Remember, too, that *uragarum* might act out of familial obligation up to a point, but the Uratha needs to be available at times as well. Of course, what the wolf-blood asks the werewolf to do depends on how much the wolf-blood knows about his family. In the example above, if the policeman knows about the capability of Uratha to track by scent, he might arrange for his brother to visit a murder scene and help in hunting down the killer.

CONTACTS

Like Allies, Contacts exist within a given circle of society. Having family within that circle might give a character a reason for having the Merit to begin with, but may or may not be worth a bonus to rolls to gain information from that contact. A knowing *uragarum* might be more willing to provide sensitive information to a Uratha relative, either because of a greater sense of obligation or because the wolf-blooded knows that the werewolf might hunt him down if he doesn't. A wolf-blood who doesn't know the truth about his family has to be approached carefully, lest the werewolf reveal too much in the course of her questioning. If an unknowing wolf-blood has too much information, the results can be more dangerous than a normal human having the same data. Humans, after all, don't naturally attract attention from the spirits, but *uragarum* do. That means, for instance, that a wolf-blood in the habit of talking to himself might inadvertently let something that seems trivial to him but is damaging to his "family" slip — and one never knows who or what might be listening.

The Contacts Merit is similar to the Allies Merit in many ways. The difference is that Allies are friends and companions who provide services and Contacts are just sources of information. That in mind, the critical difference for our purposes is the nature of the information the Uratha seeks and whether she can ask for it directly. This, as mentioned above, depends on whether the *uragarum* knows about his condition.

By way of example, consider a Bone Shadow whose *uragarum* nephew is a priest. The Bone Shadow's pack has noticed a considerable increase in spirit activity in the churches in the city, and wonders if this stems from some change the priests homilies, a boost or a fall in attendance, or something else entirely. If the priest knows about his condition and about the role of the Uratha in the world (which would lend itself to some interesting discussions between the werewolf and her nephew, incidentally), then she can ask him pointed questions,

explain the situation to him and hopefully get a good handle on what is happening. If he is ignorant, however, she must frame her questions in a context that he would understand and that isn't likely to arouse suspicion. How she goes about phrasing these questions might be worth a bonus or a penalty on the roll to extract information from her nephew, and the Bone Shadow needs to be careful not to insinuate that there are spirits hanging around the churches, as this sort of suggestion would be met with skepticism, at best, and outright hostility, at worst. A knowing wolf-blood as a Contact raises a different sort of problem, though. Namely, the Contact knows the truth, and that means that another party could theoretically extract information, such as the pack members' identities and locations, from the wolf-blood. Characters can regulate how much they tell their Contacts, of course, but, as a relationship progresses, information tends to build up. If the Contact in question is family, the wolf-blood might have access to more information than is probably safe for the characters.

MENTOR

A wolf-blood acting in a Mentor capacity to a werewolf is rare, but hardly impossible. Older family members have much to teach their juniors, and just because those juniors happen to be werewolves, the lessons of the elders don't become any less valuable. That said, wolf-blooded Mentors don't *normally* instruct their relatives in martial matters. It's possible, but werewolves tend to learn to fight practically, rather than by undergoing instruction. (A werewolf who wants to learn to shoot, though, could easily learn from a human Mentor.) Likewise, a wolf-blood isn't likely to be teaching a werewolf about the spirit world or about the history of the Uratha — the werewolves keep this information closely guarded, and instruction in these matters happens over the course of tribal initiation.

Keeping all of that in mind, it is possible, especially in long-standing *uragarum* families, for children to be instructed in some of mythology and beliefs of the People by wolf-blooded elders before the children's First Changes. This tends to occur in environments where the Uratha members of the family can keep close watch on the wolf-bloods, as it doesn't do to let someone so knowledgeable and yet so fragile out in the world unprotected. More common, though, are *uragarum* Mentors in more mundane topics. A werewolf might visit a wolf-blooded Mentor for instruction in any number of Skills. Mentors don't have to be older than their pupils, either. An Iron Master who experiences the First Change late in life might wish to learn about computers to keep up with his younger tribemates and takes lessons from his young niece in his spare time. Werewolves, though not human, must live in a world controlled by humanity. Therefore, the werewolves must have the skills to survive in this world. Since Uratha have trouble functioning in schools or other such environments for any length of time, an understanding family member can be the best course of action.

As stated on p. 115 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, the higher the rating in the Mentor Merit, the greater the Mentor's influence in the character's life. An *uragarum* Mentor is unlikely to have much control over a werewolf, simply by dint of having different priorities and no good way to control the pupil. As such, Mentor Merits representing

uragarum teachers tend to be rated ●●● or less. It's not impossible though for a wolf-blood Mentor rated ●●●● or even ●●●●● to teach an Uratha. The bonds of family, after all, can be extremely compelling, and a werewolf might feel that she owes much to her *uragarum* instructor.

RETAINERS

Probably the most common representation of a wolf-blooded in a **Werewolf** chronicle is with this Merit. A wolf-blood Retainer probably knows the truth about his kin. (If not, he is probably employed in a limited capacity that doesn't involve spending much time with the werewolf.) With that in mind, the player should come up with a compelling reason why the Retainer follows the character's orders and describe what those orders usually entail.

Werewolves are very self-sufficient. They don't typically need bodyguards, and anything that would pose enough of a threat to require one is certainly more than a match for a human being. An investigator is probably superfluous, given the Uratha's skill in tracking. Companionship is a possibility, but, as mentioned earlier, a human being can never be part of a werewolf's pack, and the pack is the fundamental social unit among Uratha. It's not necessarily that werewolves don't want their families to help them out, it's just that they usually don't have any need for it.

This isn't always the case, though. Werewolves get hurt, and not every pack includes someone who knows the Rite of Healing or indeed has any kind of medical training. An *uragarum* who can patch wounds at all (in the case of aggravated damage) or long enough for regeneration to kick in can be quite useful. Maintaining territory sometimes consists of menial work that the werewolves don't want to do themselves, and Retainers can be put to such tasks. Likewise, if a pack needs to travel, a capable Retainer might even be given the task of looking after a territory or even a locus.

Not all Retainers have even this much responsibility, though. Many wolf-blooded Retainers, especially those represented by high dot ratings, have a very specific Skill or set of Skills that the Uratha in question employs the Retainer to use. For instance, a Retainer like Neil Kimberlin (see p. 130) would be useful because of his skill in working silver. Wolf-blooded Retainers employed in this fashion don't have to know anything about the Uratha, and the Retainers' werewolf "employers" often keep their "employees" in the dark about their employers' true natures for as long as possible.

Similar to Allies and Contacts, knowledgeable Retainers are more useful and require less in the way of deceptive maintenance, but can accidentally (or deliberately) reveal the Uratha's true nature to the wrong people.

WOLF-BLOODED AS ANTAGONISTS

Wolfbloods can make superb adversaries for Uratha. **Werewolf: The Forsaken** presents one example in the Wolf-Blooded Hunter (p. 235), but many other viable concepts exist. In fact, a wolf-blood who decides to hunt down his kin is probably the rarest type of antagonist a pack can face (though certainly worth considering).

Remember that "antagonist" doesn't necessarily mean "something that engages the pack in bloody combat;" al-

though, in a game of savage fury, combat is always a consideration. An antagonist, though, is by definition someone who acts in opposition to the protagonist(s). The term doesn't imply motive or method, the word simply means acting in opposition. The antagonist need not even know that the protagonists exist, which is handy, considering that most people would never imagine the truth about werewolves.

How best to use wolf-blooded antagonists depends very much on your chronicle. We've presented some possibilities and suggestions here.

THREAT TO SECRECY

"A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," as the saying goes. Many wolfbloods know nothing at all about their condition, but some know just enough to get them into trouble. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, many *uragarum* know nothing about werewolves but do recognize that supernatural forces are at work in their wolf-blooded's lives. Many such wolfbloods keep these forces secret as best they can, but some people thrive on the attention that such forces can bring, reveling in being mysterious and outré. Of course, most people who claim to be able to use magic, contact the dead, speak with spirits or command other such incredible powers are either lying or unbalanced, but sometimes a wolf-blood draws notice for the spirits' attention to her life. Some of these *uragarum* even believe that they are commanding the spirits, rather than being tormented by them (in the same way that sticking one's hand into a beehive is "commanding" the bees to sting).

Most people shrug these claims off or point and laugh, but some people know what to look for. Werewolves, in particular, can recognize *uragarum* if the Uratha look hard enough, and, where wolfbloods dwell, werewolves are seldom too far away. Bale Hounds and Pure Uratha sometimes slay such wolfbloods out of hand but, more often, use them to lure other werewolves out into the open (the *Asah Gadar* especially). Likewise, the Hosts might use loud-mouthed *uragarum* to find Uratha to mount preemptive strikes or to further their own agendas. Since spirits follow wolfbloods, a Rat Host might be able to chew through the Gauntlet more easily near one, while a Spider Host might see a wolfblood as a danger and move to kill her.

Uragarum who know of their status are probably more of a danger than those who do not. A wolf-blood who knows about her family, even if she doesn't know details, might inadvertently lead enemies to a Forsaken pack. Any personal effects she keeps might retain her Uratha relative's scent, enabling another werewolf to track him. Likewise, if the wolf-blood is captured and subjected to torture, none of the Uratha's secrets are safe. When Uratha make the decision to reveal themselves to the *uragarum*, the consideration for safety has less to do with the wolf-blood being unable to keep a secret and more to do with what she might say under pressure.

It's not unthinkable, too, for a wolf-blood to reveal a werewolf's existence to the wrong people deliberately. This can happen out of spite or malice, out of fear (if the werewolf has threatened his kin or if the *uragarum* has witnessed the Death Rage) or out of concern. This last is most common among ignorant or mostly ignorant wolf-blooded. Accepting that a family member is a werewolf is difficult, even with physical proof. The wolf-blood might conclude that she and

her Uratha relative are both insane and need help. Again, going to a medical professional and saying “my brother is a werewolf” probably won’t result in immediate reprisals for the Uratha, but what if the professional in question has heard these kinds of stories before? What if he is an Azlu hiding in a human’s body, searching out weak spots in the Gauntlet?

STORY HOOK — EVERYTHING ON THE WEB IS TRUE

One of the characters, or a werewolf of the characters’ acquaintance, has a younger nephew who knows about the Uratha. How he found out isn’t necessarily important; maybe the older werewolves think he’s a strong candidate for the First Change, maybe he found out by accident, maybe he’s just part of a family that shares everything. In any case, he’s never actually *seen* anyone change shape or seen any other outward manifestation of the supernatural, and, as he enters his early teens, he’s decided it’s all bunk.

The problem is, the kid keeps an online journal, and he posts everything about his “fucked up werewolf family” online. The Internet, of course, is full of nonsense, but sooner or later someone is going to see the journal and take it as something other than a weird joke, and tracking someone down through the Internet isn’t difficult.

THREAT TO TERRITORY

Obtaining and defending a territory is a primal instinct, almost an obligation, for a pack of werewolves. Some packs are fortunate enough to claim large stretches of wilderness, but most have to accept some humans living in their hunting grounds, and some werewolves actively prefer urban areas to forests. *Uragarum* aren’t members of the pack, but they are breeding stock, and that means they must be protected.

This all seems simple enough, but the wolf-blooded are *people*, and people are complex and unpredictable. Add to this the wolf-blood’s already unstable nature, and the mix can be detrimental to a pack’s control over the vibrancy of its territory. More specifically, wolf-blooded can attract spirits that can damage the local Shadow ecosystem, draw spirits away from their usual hunting grounds and actually contribute to phenomena like the Ridden simply by the *uragarum*’s existence (since they allow spirits to cross the Gauntlet more easily). This isn’t something the pack can blame the *uragarum* for, though. It just goes hand in hand with being related to werewolves, and if the pack keeps its mates away from spiritually unstable and dangerous areas, they shouldn’t have any problem.

Of course, it’s never that simple. Many wolf-blooded know that werewolves exist and gather in packs, but know little about tribes, lodges and the spiritual history of the Uratha. (This information is usually taught to werewolves during their tribal initiation, so the wolf-blooded lack a common way to obtain it.) As such, they are unaware of the

intricacies of territory defense. If approached by a strange pack, the wolf-blooded might not know that outsiders aren’t welcome in their relatives’ territory and may give out information the local pack doesn’t want shared. Of course, consenting to speak with werewolves at all can be dangerous. A Pure pack might kill or kidnap *uragarum*, while a rival pack might seduce a comely wolf-blood (a kind of roundabout territory challenge). What a Bale Hound might do to a wolf-blood isn’t something the Uratha like to contemplate.

If a wolf-blood or a group of wolf-blooded actively decides to work to damage a pack’s territory, the group is in a good position to do it. Their sensitivity to spiritual phenomena and other werewolves means that the wolf-blooded can find important areas in the territory (including loci) and damage them. A wolf-blood’s motive for actually taking this sort of action is important to the story, of course. An *uragarum* who decides that he and his family are cursed or evil behaves in a very different way than a young woman tired of being treated like a brood-mare.

STORY HOOK — ASHES ON THE WIND

The area including the pack’s territory has experienced a dry, hot summer. Fires are commonplace, and the pack’s locus sits in an especially dangerous area — a cornfield, perhaps, or a house far away from a fire station and with inadequate protection. Fire- and heat-spirits have become common in the area, and the pack has already had to stop several from setting deadly blazes. During one of these fights, a magath that had been feeding on fire-spirits attacked the pack while a wolf-blood relative was nearby. She survived, but was left burned and not a little unstable.

The *uragarum* is now a nascent pyromaniac. She feels that she should have died in the fire, and every time she comes near the pack’s locus, so dry, vulnerable and easy to burn, she feels the fires calling to her...

THREAT TO LIFE

It’s not terribly common, but it does sometimes happen that wolf-blooded decide that their shapeshifting relatives need to die. Sometimes this hatred is general. The wolf-blood might decide that lycanthropy is born of Satan and all werewolves must be purged from God’s Earth (whether this hunter knows about his own heritage will, of course, color his style of hunting). Sometimes, the wolf-blood only wants to hunt down and kill a particular werewolf or pack of werewolves. Even then, though, the motives can vary.

Fear is a strong motivator. If a wolf-blood has seen a werewolf in Gauru form in the throes of Death Rage, the *uragarum* might well decide that the world isn’t safe with such a monster in it. This is especially true if the werewolf

harm or threatened someone emotionally close to him — obviously, the Uratha has no sense of self when locked in this state and since it apparently comes with no warning, the wolf-blood cannot rest until the threat is ended.

Revenge is another good possibility. Werewolves kill people, sometimes by accident, usually deliberately. A wolf-blood might have lost a normal human lover or friend to a werewolf's Rage and has decided to kill the Uratha responsible. If the wolf-blood discovers that the murder took place at the behest of the werewolf's pack, then maybe their skins need to adorn his walls as well. Revenge is a slippery slope, and it's very easy for a wolf-blood who enters into the business of werewolf hunting to intend to stop once his goal has been achieved but find reasons to continue.

Jealousy is another motivation, though a rarer one. Wolf-blooded receive many of the drawbacks of being a werewolf with none of the rewards. Of course, being a werewolf carries with it even greater dangers than even the most strongly connected *uragarum* faces, but the wolf-blood doesn't usually recognize that. There is no rhyme or reason to who receives the First Change and who remains wolf-blooded forever, but an envious *uragarum* might believe that by killing others — or killing werewolves in particular — he better his own chances at the Change. This kind of career is likely to be brutal, tinged with madness and ultimately brief, but a wolf-blooded hunter driven by jealousy can make for a stirring and tragic antagonist.

Regardless of motive, wolf-blooded hunters are dangerous for several reasons. Knowledge of Uratha weaknesses is a possibility, but the greatest weakness of the werewolves — silver — is well known to humanity. Crafting silver into a workable form is difficult but certainly possible, and, while fashioning silver bullets for handguns or rifles takes a degree of skill, loading shards of the metal into shotgun shells requires only the proper equipment (and that equipment is easily available).

The most dangerous traits of an *uragarum* werewolf hunter, though, are the ability to resist the Lunacy and the ability to sense werewolves. While neither of these traits is infallible, they both do help to strip away two of the werewolves' greatest advantages in hiding among the human herd. Some wolf-blooded hunters have been known to seek out werewolves who rely on the Lunacy to mask their own actions and rally those afflicted by the Lunacy to attack. A group of humans, of course, can accomplish little against a werewolf, but an attack by humans does push the Uratha into a delicate situation — she must either defend herself or flee. In either case, the tactic can distract

the werewolf long enough for the hunter to draw a bead. The Unseen Sense is even less predictable, since it detects not only Uratha but spirits as well. Even so, with enough precision, the *uragarum* can sniff out a werewolf and surprise her. If the wolf-blood has managed to find others to hunt alongside him and has armed them well, a werewolf can easily fall to such a hunt. Of course, since most werewolves run in packs, hunters must either be patient or be prepared to face multiple Uratha (a situation few hunters could survive, no matter how well-equipped).



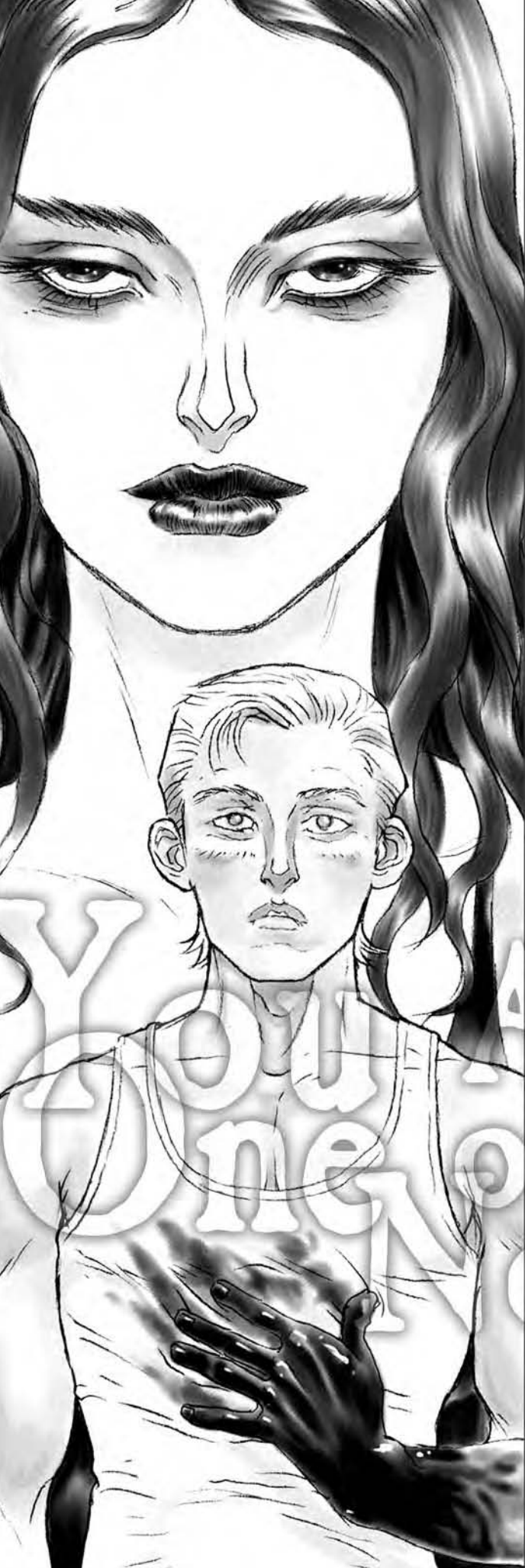
A local doctor recently discovered that he is wolf-blooded. The revelation was not peaceful. He witnessed his cousin's First Change and watched as she slaughtered much of their family, then vanished into the night. He remembers every detail, though other survivors don't. Confused, unhinged and suddenly wealthy (since he inherited money and property from the people his cousin murdered, being one of the few members of the family left alive), he vowed to find his cousin and figure out what happened. He approaches the problem scientifically and methodically, and, within a year, captures and interrogates a young Ghost Wolf. Armed with a practical knowledge of Uratha capabilities (but very little about their culture), the doctor continues his hunt.

The doctor is capable and driven, and has found backers interested in his "research." He doesn't consider werewolves human (how could they be?) and doesn't recognize anything unseemly in his own heritage. If it is ever pointed out to him that lycanthropy is an inherited trait and that he is related to these creatures, he might well snap. Until then, he tracks down what Uratha he can, hoping to capture one alive so he can vivisect it. For some reason, they seem to change back to human forms when they die, which is most inconvenient from a scientific standpoint.





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