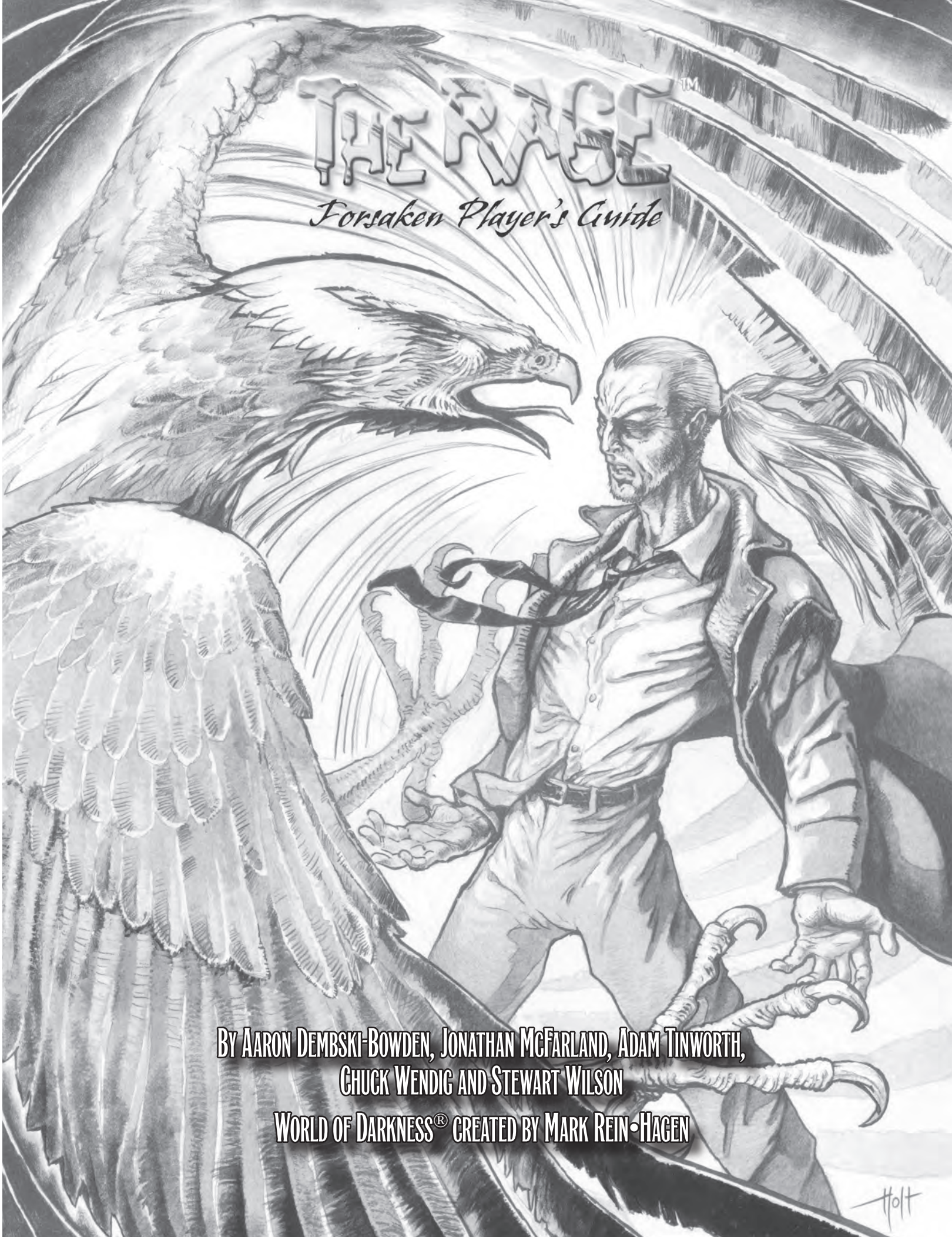
The RAGE™

Forsaken Player's Guide



Werewolf: The Forsaken®

the World of Darkness


THE RAGE™
Forsaken Player's Guide
By Aaron Dembski-Bowden, Jonathan McFarland, Adam Tinworth,
Chuck Wendig and Stewart Wilson
World of Darkness® created by Mark Rein•Hagen
Holt

The Ties That Bind

The bird was dead. That was a problem.

Jason Champlain cradled the dead falcon in his cupped hands. Feathers rustled in the breeze idling through the alleyway as he crouched there. The nearly dry blood clotting on the bird's back smeared sticky on his palms. The gore didn't concern Jason, who still had dark crescents of blood under his fingernails from last night and hadn't changed his clothes in two days. What concerned him was that the falcon's wings were rent with distinct claw marks, like carvings made by tiny talons. Turning the little corpse this way and that, pressing feathers to the side and probing for damaged flesh, Jason sucked in air through his clenched teeth. It was a habit of his when he was thinking, and he was thinking that these dead birds were a sight he was sick of seeing.

Alive, this bird would have deserved his respect and protection. Dead, the bird was just a problem. He buried the falcon arm-deep in a Dumpster and walked away. There were no words to honor the thing's spirit. That would come later.

• • •

Max was standing by the locus when Jason came into the office. Max looked up from where he stood, fingertips still trailing the cold, comforting smoothness of the wooden desk. The resonance of a hundred unbroken promises tingled inside his finger bones for the space of a heartbeat.

He nodded an "Evening" to Jason, already noting the half-cleaned blood on his packmate's hand. "Trouble?" Max Roman believed in cutting to the point as soon as possible. Jason nodded back in greeting and agreement.

"Trouble. Another bird dead." Jason held up the hand he'd briefly washed in a rainwater puddle on the way to the Argentum Building. "Found this one myself on the way back from visiting my granddad at the cemetery. I think someone is leaving the bodies out for me."

With a creak of expensive leather, Max slid into his chair. This was the last thing he needed. Worse, it presented a real problem for his pack, and yet it was something he currently had no time to deal with. Steepling his fingers and holding back a sigh, he met Jason's eyes.



"I've got a meeting with Rachel later and at least one diplomatic engagement to handle with the newest pack which I promised to weigh in on before sunrise. I've also got to spend tomorrow night speaking with the emissary from Santa Fe about the *Anshega* down south. This is all assuming we don't hear another squeak out of BMX for the next few days, and that's an unreliable prospect at best. This is the part where you tell me I can leave this in your hands, because mine are tied."

Jason frowned as he stood regarding the man in the multi-thousand dollar suit sat behind the desk. "It's your totem, too." His tone bordered on reproach, while his eyes showed disappointment.

Max absently toyed with the black driving glove that lay on the desk next to his newspaper. His eyes flicked back to Jason, firmly meeting his packmate's gaze after the moment's distraction. "Don't look at me like that. If I take time away this week, the whole deal could collapse. Denver is on shaky ground right now, and that's the truth."

"That's always your excuse."

"It's always the truth."

Jason had no answer to that. He nodded again, this time in parting, and headed for the door.

All he said before closing the door behind him was, "I'll handle it."

In the silence of the room moments after Jason's departure, Max Roman, alpha of the Silver Syndicate, picked up the phone and started hitting buttons.

• • •

Jason spent the rest of the night in his orrery, watching the planets spin around the sun 100 times and more. As dawn neared, he licked his teeth and tasted three nights' of staleness there. His armpits weren't all that choice, either. With these thoughts in mind, he admitted to himself he'd been hoping Max would deal with this latest threat and leave him out of it. Just as Jason was mulling over a shower and what he would do to solve the problem ahead, the door rattled under a familiar knock.



"Come in."

Richard Canfield, scratching at his receding hairline, did just that.

"I hear you've got some issues." None of the Silver Syndicate beat around the bush. "Let's go sort them out."

Jason followed him out the door, giving the globe of Mercury one last push to set it orbiting in his absence.

• • •

Max Roman was tired of arguing. The part of him that he considered human could do this all day. The afternoon was bright outside, but the tinted windows alleviated any discomfort, and the air conditioning in the office made it the perfect place for three people to sit around a black marble table and argue over matters of territory. The tinted windows showed Denver in all its chaotic urban glory. In this great big city, with all its avenues and alleys, buildings and bars, these two werewolves were fighting over a single street.

The part of himself that he considered his wolfish, primal side wanted nothing more than to subdue them, cow them into silent surrender, then throw them out of the goddamn window. They could find out how important their scuffle really was from the perspective of falling a skyscraper's height to their deaths.

These two sides of his nature combined to create a vague sense of weariness.

"This has degenerated too far. I'll keep it simple." He turned to face the older of the two alphas, the one with the vicious acne scars on his cheeks. "There's plenty of territory for everyone in Denver. You want the street, but the other pack picked it first. If you keep up this campaign against them, then I'll withdraw my support from you."

Twin silences came over the two arguing figures. One smiled, the other did not.

"You can't do that."

"Yes, I can. Your alliance with the Silver Syndicate is not a mandate to screw over other packs and come running to me when they fight back. Frankly, you're looking like more trouble than you're worth right now. You're a threat to the peace with all the noise you're making, so I'll make you a deal. If you walk out of this office now, I'll forget this whole thing ever happened. If you sit there and argue, if you even draw breath to make a comeback, I'll pull my support for your pack."

The acne-scarred alpha left with as much dignity as he could muster. It wasn't much, given the circumstances. The remaining pack leader looked up at Max from where she sat. A smile spread across her face, but Roman's next words wiped it from her features like a chalk eraser over a blackboard.

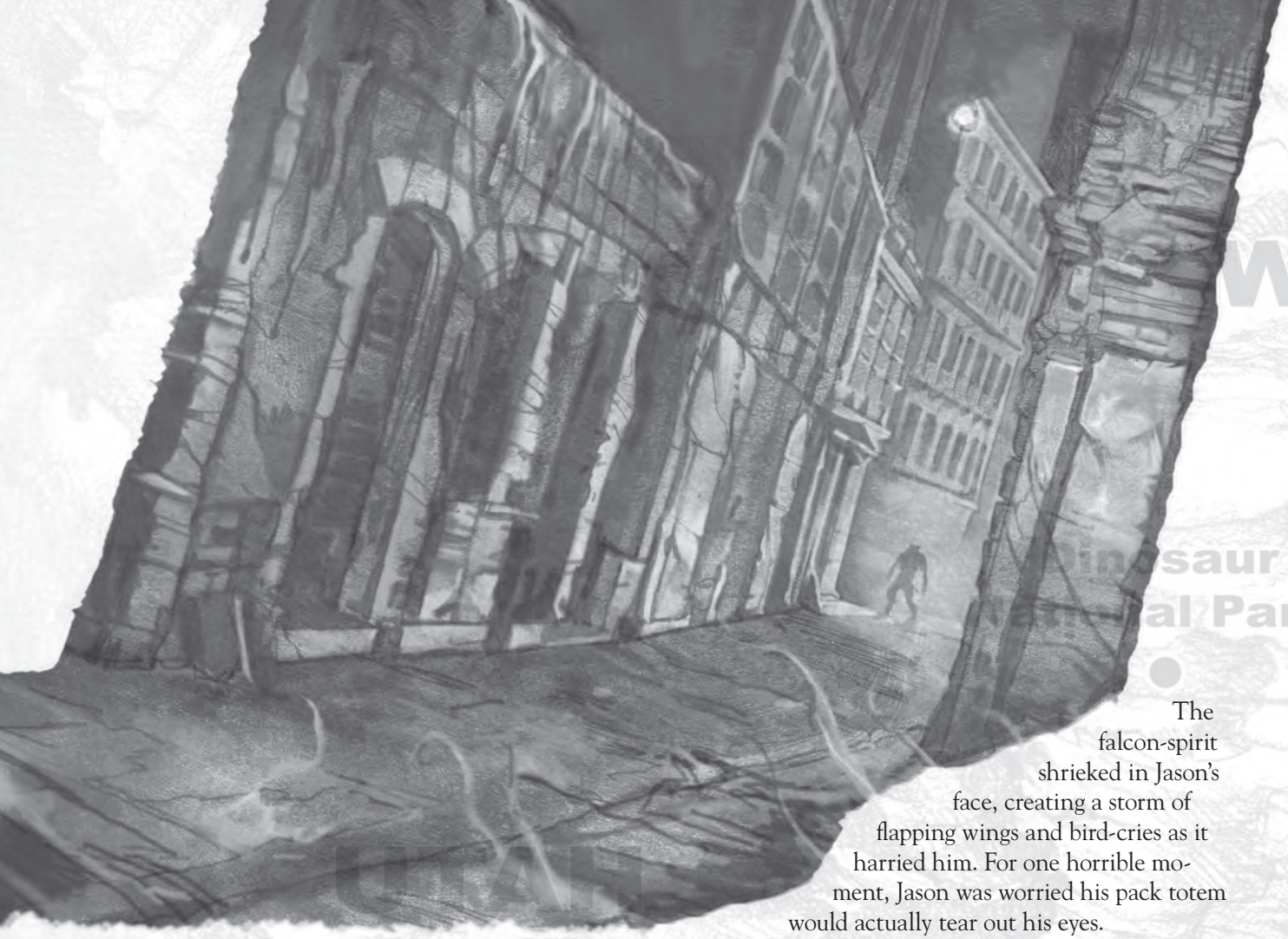
"Have you ever heard of a concept called 'honoring your territory in all things'?"

"What's that supposed to mean?" replied the other Iron Master, suddenly on edge.

"Do you know why James wanted your territory?" Max countered, moving to sit behind his desk again.

"Because he wants the locus."

"Yes, but why? He's a Bone Shadow. He wanted your territory because he believed his own pack could pay greater respect to the spirit of the road that watches over the locus there. His methods were out



of line, but at least he was following his heart and adhering to his tribal oath. You don't get to make that claim. If you're incapable of holding a territory and end up disrespecting it through incompetence or inattention, you're breaking our oath to Sagrim-Ur. I'd rather not see a conversation like this happen again. Follow?"

"Is that a threat?"

Max smiled for the first time in three hours. "Shape up or ship out. Do what you promised Red Wolf, or just surrender the territory to someone who can uphold their own promises. I didn't bring this up in front of James because this is tribe business. But just because there's no one around watching me chew you out, don't make the mistake of thinking I'm not being serious."

"Fine." She said the word while looked anything but. "However, I asked if you were threatening me."

Max was still smiling as he glanced at the floor-to-ceiling windows. "Why, of course not."

• • •

The falcon-spirit shrieked in Jason's face, creating a storm of flapping wings and bird-cries as it harried him. For one horrible moment, Jason was worried his pack totem would actually tear out his eyes.

When the falcon took flight and soared above the dim Shadow-reflections of nearby buildings, Richard touched his packmate on the shoulder.

"That didn't go so well."

Jason blinked back tears of shock. "No kidding. Did you hear what he was saying with those shrieks?" It was a rhetorical question, and Richard shook his head. He didn't speak First Tongue. "He was saying he won't talk to me, because I've failed him. I don't even think he'll talk to Max or Subtle Storm right now. He's freaked out by all these dead birds; I could make out that much."

Richard said nothing. He wasn't *blind*.

• • •

"You took your time." Max was tapping a calligraphy pen on a legal pad before him. Rachel Snow had left his office minutes before, and his smile was long gone. "I called you nearly thirteen hours ago."

Subtle Storm blew a stray lock of curly hair from her face as she stood before the desk. Her usual nest of dark hair was styled only when she ran a brush through it. Never dirty, but always a tangle.

"I was busy."

"You were avoiding Rachel."

"That, too." The heavyset woman stole a mint from the bowl on Roman's desk. "But I was also busy."

"We've got a serious problem with Argent Peregrine. That bird Jason found last week was just the first. He's found another three so far this week, and he thinks they're being laid out for him to find."

"You think it's another pack?" Though relatively new to the pack, Subtle Storm knew how her alpha's mind ticked and tocked.

Max indulged her with a smile. "Of course. I've got to discuss the Santa Fe problem tonight, but Tycho and Cannon's Fire are already out on the Hunt. I need you join them."

Subtle Storm sucked on the mint, then tongued it into her cheek. "I should speak with the totem. There might be a way we can calm him down."

"Not a great idea. Peregrine is furious at us for letting this happen. I think we must have missed some sign somewhere, where we could have put a stop to this. Trust me, 'enraged' was the exact word Richard used when he called me back half an hour ago. No, I want you to meet the other two and find out which pack is doing this to us. Start with the ones that have avian totems, because the kill-markings so far have been consistent with talons."

"You don't think that's a little obvious?"

His cell phone started ringing and Max regarded it with a grudge-laden stare. "At this point, Storm, I'm willing to walk down any path carved by Occam's Razor. Good luck out there."

As Subtle Storm left her alpha to his business, she heard the weariness he tried so hard to hide. It crept into his voice as he said, "Roman speaking" into his phone, and it might have remained in his next words but Storm was already out the door.

• • •

Jason looked at the blood that wet his hands and fingertips. This was blood he did care about, because it was his. He crashed to the ground on all fours, breathless, beaten and bruised. The ground of the spirit wilds was ice-cold here, almost hurting his palms.

Richard, likewise out of breath, patted his packmate on the back. Jason was about to tell him to get lost, but his words came out as a dry crunching snap followed breathy grunt of pain. His dislocated jaw had just reset.

"It's just a scratch, man."

Jason looked down at the nasty gash in his forearm that pulsed blood down his wrist and hand in a sick tempo. As ever, Richard dealt with injuries in Blood Talon understatement. Jason forswore commenting on it, partly because it would be no use and partly because his head was still swimming.

"What the hell were they?" he finally managed to breathe out when his chest no longer heaved.

"You're the Crescent Moon." Richard snorted. "I just kill problems, I don't explain them. There are still a few pieces of one of them over there if you want to check for a driver's license."

Subtle Storm came across the eerily silent road and joined them. Blood spattered her chubby cheeks and matronly clothes, and her tone showed just how unimpressed she was. "Well, that was fun."

"Sure was." Jason spat blood and felt for broken ribs.

"Sure was." Richard chuckled.

"Where the hell are the others?" Jason asked as his picked himself up. "And Max, for Christ's sake."

Storm ticked off names on her fingers. "Elise isn't back from New Mexico yet, Andrea is working with Rumor on some undercover operation that we'll no doubt hear all about when they're done. And Max is overseeing his empire."

A raucous cry overhead drew their attention immediately. A night-dark raven watched them from a rooftop's edge. The bird gurgled its cackling call again.

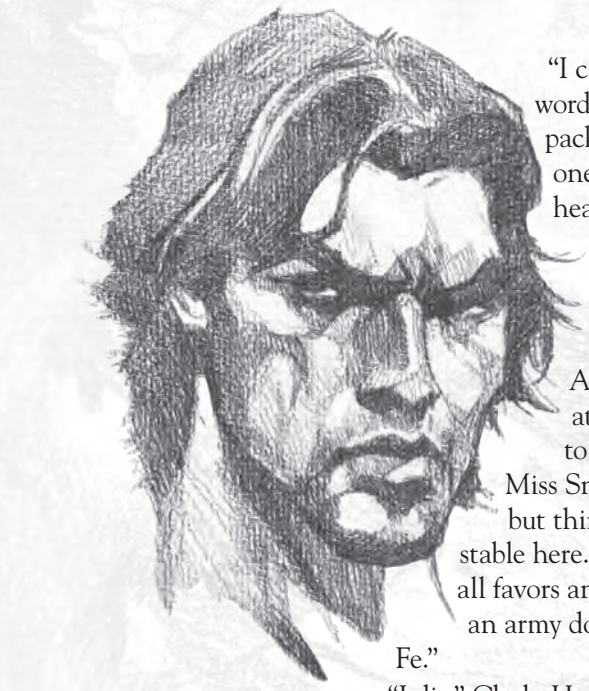
Jason's skin crawled. "You guys ever get the feeling your calories were being counted?"

"Fucker sounds like he's laughing," Richard said. A moment later, the bird-spirit took wing and glided down the street away from them. "This has all the hallmarks of being a trap."

Jason fixed the pack's tactician with his best 'well, duh' look. "Well, duh."

• • •

The werewolf called himself Cholo, which struck Max a ridiculous affectation no matter how much the guy looked the part. After he had finished explaining his situation to Roman, the emissary from Santa Fe sat quietly waiting for a response. It was several minutes in coming, but eventually Max cleared his throat. He couldn't let this opportunity slip past, but he was worried about overextending his resources and his reach.



"I can spread the word among the packs here. Anyone who wants to head south into New Mexico and lend a hand is welcome to do so. And I appreciate you coming to me instead of Miss Snow about this, but things are hardly stable here. I can't call in all favors and just march an army down to Santa Fe."

"I dig." Cholo Howlrunner hadn't expected that. He was happy enough that he'd even got this far. "I hear it clear, ese. What you've said is enough for me and mine. Any help is a step in the right direction."

"So." Max was on shaky ground. He phrased his next words as delicately as he could. "What was this matter you mentioned about some danger to my pack?" Roman hoped what little support he could offer the other alpha was enough to buy the information he'd been teased with right at the start of the meeting.

Cholo tilted his head slightly, as if mulling over the same question. In truth, he was just wondering how to phrase it. English wasn't his first language. In fact, after Spanish and First Tongue, English was his third.

"Your pack totem is a predator bird, right?"

"Right."

"These guys down my way — really nasty Pure, they are. Go by the name Howl of the Before Time."

"I'm listening."

"They've come north for a while. Chasing refugees and stragglers from Santa Fe to Denver. They're kicking it outside the city for a while, trying to put a dent in your plans. From what my Crescent Moon tells me, they've got some big black bird-spirit trying to kill other birds to get at your totem. Makes it look like you don't care about your spirit's flesh brothers and sisters, you know? Maybe break the bond, eh?"

Max thanked Cholo for the information, promised to do what he could about the Forsaken getting their asses handed to them in the south of the Rockies, and politely asked to be alone.

• • •

"Yes?" Storm answered her phone with a frown, not even checking to see who was calling. Turned out it was Roman.

"Where are you?"

"Heading out to the city limits. We've picked up Andrea, and we're tailing a flock of crows and ravens that are leading us out of the city."

"I figured you'd say that." Max sighed. In the background, he heard Richard's voice talking strategy. They knew it was a

trap, at least. The Silver Syndicate didn't get where they were by being stupid. "Listen, Storm, call it off. Something else has come to light."

"Why not tell me now?"

"It's the *Anshega*. Call it off tonight, we'll strike later in the week when everyone is gathered and we've managed to calm Argent Peregrine down. We know enough to reassure him we can uphold our promise of protection now."

Max listened as Storm relayed this to the others. On the other end of the phone, Max heard Andrea and Jason swear softly, while Richard actually laughed. He sounded excited.

"What's so funny?" Roman asked after a short silence.

"We've been spotted," Storm replied. "Call you back."

As the line went dead, Max Roman reached for the gun in his desk and was out the door a moment later. There were times when the empire had to run itself for a few hours. Times when matters of pack, tribe and honor came first.

Credits

Authors: Aaron Dembski Bowden Jonathan McFarland Adam Tinworth Chuck Wendig and Stewart Wilson

Developer: Ethan Skemp

Editor: Scribendi com

Art Director: Aileen E Miles

Interior Art: Abrar Ajmal, John Bridges, Jeff Holt, Brian LeBlanc James Stowe

Cover Art: Michael Phillippi

Book Design: Aileen E Miles

Coming next:



The War Against the Pure

White Wolf Game Studio

1554 Litton Dr.
Stone Mountain, GA
30083
USA

© 2007 White Wolf, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior written permission of White Wolf, Inc. Reproduction prohibitions do not apply to the character sheets contained in this book when reproduced for personal use. White Wolf, Werewolf the Forsaken, Vampire and World of Darkness are registered trademarks of White Wolf, Inc. All rights reserved. Mage the Awakening, Storytelling System, The Rage Forsaken Player's Guide, Shadows of Mexico, Shadows of the UK and Territories are trademarks of White Wolf, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters, names, places and text herein are copyrighted by White Wolf, Inc.

The mention of or reference to any company or product in these pages is not a challenge to the trademark or copyright concerned.

This book uses the supernatural for settings, characters and themes. All mystical and supernatural elements are fiction and intended for entertainment purposes only. Reader discretion is advised.

Check out White Wolf online at

http://www.white-wolf.com

PRINTED IN CHINA.

The Rage™

Forsaken Player's Guide

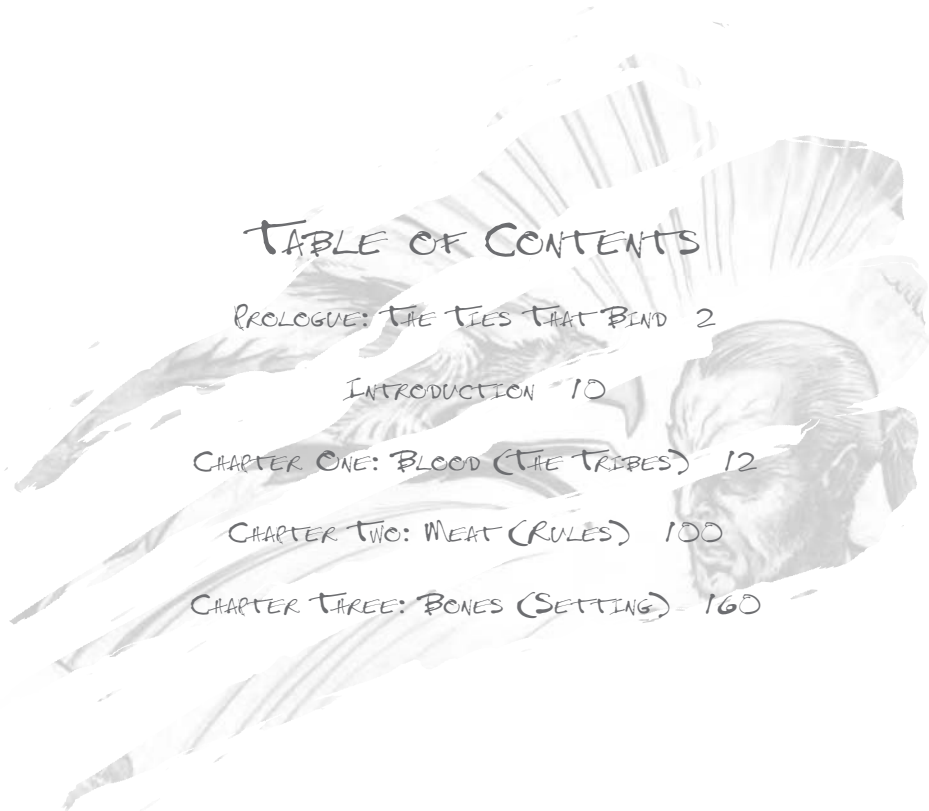


Table of Contents

Prologue: The Ties that Bind 2

Introduction 10

Chapter One: Blood (The Tribes) 12

Chapter Two: Meat (Rules) 100

Chapter Three: Bones (Setting) 160

Introduction

But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee;
and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:
Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee;
and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.
— Job 12:7-8

The wolf must be fed, and this book is food.

As the title states, this book is a player's guide — a compilation of information and rules to help refine and expand a character concept. While some of these tidbits might be most helpful when creating a brand-new character, most of what can be found here should easily find its way into an existing character, helping elaborate on her motifs or perhaps giving her new ideas to grow into.

The Evolution of Character

New options are, by and large, a good thing. The ideal is to find a new option that organically grows a previously existing character concept, helping refine the idea that's been there since inception. For instance, take Whitesplinter, a Bone Shadow Elodoth whose base concept is "death-obsessed Half-Moon who lives as though one foot is already in the grave." Whitesplinter has already spent time working on accumulating the Gifts of the Death list, and all the rites pertaining to death he can muster. A new Gift (say, from the Ending list) or death-aspected fetish (particularly the ghost-touched items in Chapter Two) offers a new toy to play with that suits Whitesplinter's motif. But the real benefit is the possibility of growing and expanding the character's personality as well. Take, for instance, the option of learning the one-dot Ending Gift: Fear of Death. There's a story hook implicit in earning this Gift, of course, but it doesn't end there. Given Whitesplinter's strong Elodoth mindset, what does this Gift say about him? How would he react to someone who is afraid of death, given that he himself acts as though he's already halfway there? If he were to have the Gift used against him as part of the learning process, what would he see? Every new toy or background fact you add to your character can ask potential questions such as these. Similar to the prelude, each new toy or background fact gives you an opportunity to learn more about your character and find more hooks with which to entertain your fellow players. Not bad for a "power-up."

And then there's adding something completely new to a character. Say that Whitesplinter's player takes a real liking to the pack tactics section. Whitesplinter's base concept doesn't have much to do with pack cohesion, but that's why it's a base concept and not a detailed summation. The player has some fun kicking around ideas for how to have Whitesplinter see a need for these tactics and encourage his packmates to learn them. In particular, he spends some time thinking about Whitesplinter's relationships with his packmates, and whom he'd go to first. Again, the addition to the character offers new questions that help get a handle on aspects of the character you might not have thought about before.

So don't let anyone tell you that new character options, particularly rules options such as new Gifts or rites, are more the province of the "roll-player" or some similar half-baked jibe. Every new addition to your character has the potential to grow and realize her personality. All you have to do is ask the right questions.

Raw Creation

The creation of a brand-new character is a pleasure all its own. Some players are practically addicted to it, creating folders full of characters in their spare time and switching out their old characters for new whenever the Storyteller will let them get away with it. Constant cycling through characters can be hell on a pack, however, and can even be a drain on players. So when should it be done?

The most obvious answer is "when a character dies." It's a dangerous world, and as strong and resilient as werewolves are, even they can meet a brutal end all too quickly. Presuming that the chronicle still has plenty of life in it, the pack can gain a replacement soon enough.

A bit more troublesome (from the perspective of players, not characters) is simply tiring of a character. The old character must somehow be gracefully written out of the equation to make way for the new. This may involve deliberately dying, although it's usually better to talk with the Storyteller about setting up a good scenario first. Simply deciding to get your character killed off at the first opportunity may mean you take some of the other characters with you, and that's not likely to keep your friends happy. Whether you choose to have your character leave peacefully, die horribly or even vanish mysteriously, talk with your Storyteller about potentially turning the changeover into a story hook that can entertain your fellow players. Drama is good, and the loss of a packmate is sure to be a dramatic change for the pack.

In either case, there are two demands placed on a new character entering an existing pack: plausibility and ease of integration. As a player, you should be looking to create a character who could plausibly join the pack, and who

doesn't cause a lot of undue disruption to the pace of the chronicle while doing so. These demands aren't terribly stringent, but paying some attention to them will help ease the transition and get the action rolling all the quicker, and perhaps increase the other players' investment in your new character. For instance, consider the "plausibility" angle. Say that to make it more plausible that your new character would join the players' pack rather than another established pack of Storyteller characters, you create a tie between your new character and the packmembers and their territory. He may have been a bouncer at their favorite bar, or maybe he was dating the alpha's sister. The previously existing tie should make it easier for the rest of the pack to accept him (unless he was a jerk to the alpha's sister), and also adds a new topic for roleplaying. Similarly, avoiding disruption is a worthwhile goal, particularly unnecessary conflicts between personalities or stepping on someone else's schtick. Note that you can still have a character who conflicts with his new packmates and not actually cause unnecessary disruption — such as when you and your fellow players want to roleplay conflict, but agree that the conflict won't affect everyone else's enjoyment. Maybe your character *was* a total ass to the alpha's sister, and there's a powerful tension between the two characters. But if the conflict is simple roleplaying color and doesn't cut into everyone else's roleplaying (or get the pack killed), then the conflict is not really disruptive. Meeting these two demands is a fairly common-sense endeavor, but it never hurts to devote just a little extra time thinking about it during character creation. The results can be all the more engaging.

A Finite Chronicle

Some groups like to run their chronicles with no set end in mind — the game runs until it stops running, perhaps with some eventual climax that's impossible to beat, perhaps by simply losing momentum. However, consider the possibilities of a chronicle that's expected to have a beginning, middle and end from the moment you start character creation. These shorter chronicles add a degree of intensity, and, of course, opportunity to try more chronicle concepts. The best part is that you can revisit the characters of the chronicle after it ends, as a sequel of sorts, or you can move on. Or both, even. It's not the most obvious way to play the game, but it's certainly worth a try.

Chewing the Gristle

So, the contents.

Chapter One: Blood expands the information on the five Tribes of the Moon, as well as the tribeless Ghost Wolves. Each tribe's customs are brought into focus, from their recruitment policies to the strange traditions that vary from place to place. Note that this chapter focuses on the social and setting information having to do with a tribe; rules mechanics such as new Gift lists are generally found in the next chapter. The tribeless Ghost Wolves aren't left out, either, as they receive an equal share of attention — who they might be, why they might not be part of a tribe and what they might be doing about it. Even the possibility of forging an entirely new tribe is discussed here. It's a task that is all but impossible, but clearly it's been done eight times previously….

Chapter Two: Meat focuses more tightly on options for the individual character (and some options for the whole pack. A series of new Merits and Flaws designed specifically for werewolves can be found here. The chapter then continues with 11 new Gift lists (five of which count as tribal Affinity lists for the five Tribes of the Moon), and two new kinds of rites: hunt rites and seasonal rites. The arsenal of the Forsaken is then augmented with fetishes, talens and artifacts of a less . . . savory stripe: objects empowered by the energies of ghosts, or cursed with malevolent resonance. The chapter finishes off with a deeper look into the various roleplaying ramifications of the Harmony Trait, and an extended treatment of the pack dynamic, including some new pack tactic ideas for fighting as one.

Chapter Three: Bones looks at the bigger picture, at the world of **Werewolf** as a whole. The first section of the chapter introduces a seldom-seen social dynamic, that of the "clutch" or alliance of packs. This attempt to achieve greater cooperation often fails — here we look at why, and outline the challenges such that your characters can attempt to forge a clutch of their own if so inclined. Then comes a look at werewolves around the world, and their cultural, spiritual and physiological diversity. This section can assist the Storyteller in creating a **Werewolf** chronicle that takes place a bit farther afield, but the primary function of this section is to make it easier to visualize characters from around the world for player use. Finally, the chapter closes with a look at the concerns facing the Forsaken around the world. These potential hotspots and story hooks may inform a character's background or provide the pack with a new ambition.

We hope the book makes for a good meal — tasty, filling and nutritious. May your werewolves grow sleek and mighty on this fare.



Chapter 1

Tommy was the first one to see them coming over the line. They kept low to the ground and moved in pairs, each one covering his partner, as smart wolves should. But if they were trying to keep completely silent and unseen, they weren't trying very hard, or they just weren't very good. They all passed right by Tommy, not one of them looking deep enough into the darkness to see him, and then he came to collect us.

Grigori already knew, of course. He'd been rocking there softly, almost asleep, before his eyes snapped open and he picked up that bone ritual knife that's not really white any more. "Tommy's coming. So are they," he said, and we didn't have any time to get anything else out of him before Tommy was back. Not that we tried real hard. We've learned to trust Grigori's hunches, if "hunch" is the right word for something that isn't so much pure guesswork.

Scipio was ready – hell, he was downright hungry. That spear he's been working on hasn't been far from him for weeks, and he was sighting down its length and hefting its balance almost before the words were out of Grigori's mouth. Scipio finally set it back and chose the axe; I guess the spear wasn't ready yet. All the while, he had that smile on his face. The one that says, *I smell blood*.

Devi kept asking Tommy questions, as she always does. Not just the basics like number and location; she was asking things such as "How old?" and "How were they paired?" and "Did she look like she had any fetishes?" She was already sorting through all the possibilities to split them apart and pull them down, you could tell. I never got the phrase "mind like an iron trap" until I met sister Devi. Never forgets, friend or foe. Never.

Meg – well, Meg was quiet. I like her a lot better when she's laughing or furious or even in tears. If she's cutting loose emotionally, maybe she'll storm out of the room or call us some really foul names or tear up someone's arm, nothing permanent. When she's completely calm – I half-expect someone to die, Oath or no Oath. And if they're looking to kill her packmates – to kill us – well, Meg's ready to give them as good as we get, and more.

Me? All I can do to keep up with these guys, my brothers and sisters. I might not have their gifts, but I'm loyal. Stray dog, that's me, ready to lay down my life for the people I've found, even for my ghost to shred its way back out of Hell to keep on fighting with them.

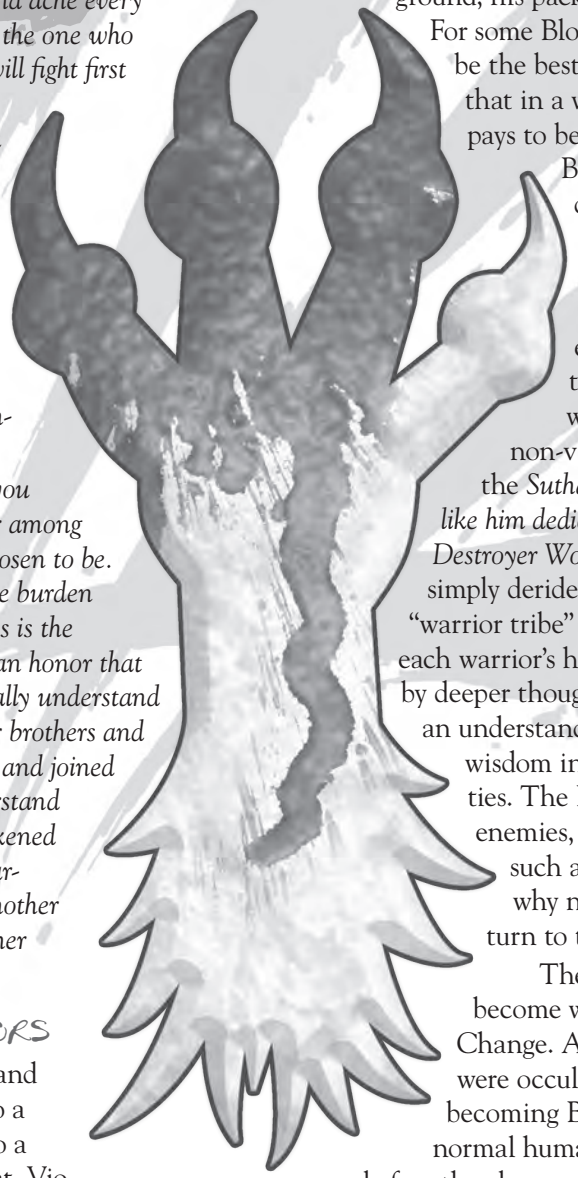
We few, we happy few. We band of brothers.

Blood Talons

If something is bound, the binding can be broken. If something is driven away, it might return. If your territory is warded for protection, the wards will eventually fail. As a Blood Talon, you are the one to face these cold, hard facts and bring your own solution, because when something is dead, it can never trouble you again.

You will bleed every night and ache every day because you've chosen to be the one who faces the worst in this life. You will fight first and run last. You will battle the hardest and the longest, and you will bleed the most. You'll carry scars from your duties: duty to your tribe, your totem and — most importantly — to your pack. You bleed so the others don't have to. That's called sacrifice. You kill so the others can survive. That's called responsibility.

Whether bloodshed makes you smile or cry, you are the warrior among the hunters because you have chosen to be. If someone must do this, then the burden and the honor will be yours. This is the nobility of the Blood Talons — an honor that the other Uratha might never really understand when they look at you. But your brothers and sisters, each sworn to Fenris-Ur and joined by blood, they will always understand it. You've felt it before — a quickened heartbeat and a flicker of familiarity when you meet the eyes of another Blood Talon, that sense of a higher purpose.



Blood of Warriors

Any werewolf is a hunter and a killer, whether he is sworn to a tribal totem or not. No oath to a spirit is required to change that. Violence and bloodshed are part of the Forsaken's lives each night that they take to the streets and Shadow of their hunting grounds. Few werewolves shy away from that.

The Blood Talons offer the understanding that warrior skill can be honed and focused, and used to reach a higher purpose. It's less about kicking ass and taking names than about responsibility and self-sacrifice. A heavy sense of responsibility grips a *Suthar Anzuth*, and he channels that into fighting skills to be rightfully proud of. Through savage and ugly violence, he becomes better at protecting his hunting ground, his packmates and his loved ones.

For some Blood Talons, it's a passion to be the best. For others, it's simple sense that in a world that wants them dead, it pays to be the best warrior they can be. But there is always something deeper, rarely seen or felt by those outside the tribe.

Perhaps there's always that shred of doubt in the eyes of other Uratha when they see an average office worker or otherwise apparently non-violent person seeking out the *Suthar Anzuth*: *"Why is someone like him dedicating his life to a creature like Destroyer Wolf?"* The werewolves who simply deride the Blood Talons as the "warrior tribe" are missing the depths in each warrior's heart. His violence is fuelled by deeper thoughts, and his skill is born from an understanding that there is nobility and wisdom in Fenris-Ur's ferocious abilities. The Blood Talon, in killing his enemies, gives life to his pack, and in such a light, it is not so hard to see why newly Changed werewolves turn to the *Suthar Anzuth*.

The majority of *Suthar Anzuth* become warriors only after their First Change. After all, how many people were occultists and shamans before becoming Bone Shadows? How many normal humans were hunters and trackers before they became Hunters in Darkness? This is not to say the Blood Talons don't have their fair share of members who were police officers or soldiers or had a knack for martial arts before joining the tribe, but the focus on becoming a warrior is as often the result of joining the *Suthar Anzuth* as it is the cause for it. Anyone who feels the weight of genuine responsibil-

ity in their lives can find a place among the Talons. What a man spent his human life doing usually means nothing to the tribal elders.

But there are other aspects to the call of the *Suthar Anzuth* beyond respectable devotion to others. On the surface, their ideology of responsibility seems noble enough, but once involved with the tribe, this responsibility can take deeper root. To the Blood Talons, the human world of comfort and safety that each werewolf was born into is a lie. The Uratha are the inheritors of a powerful warrior legacy: in their veins runs the mystical blood of Father Wolf, the greatest warrior of Pangaea. Many *Suthar Anzuth* feel a close kinship with *Urfarah* that develops over the years of their lives, manifested in their bond with Fenris-Ur, the Firstborn that most Talons feel best represents the slain progenitor as an unrivalled warrior and slayer of foes.

There is also the matter of practicality. Beset by enemies and fighting to survive night after night, week after week, year after year, training as a warrior above all else makes sense. In that light, it's simple logic, and the tribe draws its fair share of members from that cold and hollow truth. This aspect of the tribe's appeal tends to be found most in the youngest members of the tribe, and has the tendency to fade away as the werewolves grow older and get more in touch with the spiritual aspects of their existences.

Of course, the exhilaration of physical prowess, of victory over enemies and the sensation of living in a body that is honed to excel should never be underestimated. This exhilaration underlies almost all the Blood Talons do, breeding a confident grace and an aura of self-assurance that can seem smug and irritating — and probably intimidating — even to other werewolves. The fact of the matter is, no matter how shallow it might seem, Blood Talon physiques usually look good. They look like what they are: people who train their bodies to hunt, fight and kill. That makes them healthy and strong, usually with defined physiques that anyone might envy, concealed under their street or work clothes.

But no matter how fit and strong a Blood Talon character is, there is almost certainly a fierce aspect to his physical presence that can make others uncomfortable. This is because there's a reason, a purpose, behind the dangerous-looking bodies of any Blood Talon. It's more than bodybuilding or physical training; it is development and improvement in order to kill your enemies and keep your friends alive. A slender Talon who is diligent about his health and training might be all iron-hard muscle and cable-like sinew to the point where he borders on looking obsessed. So while it's easy to talk about how good the Talons look because of exercise and combat prowess, if it were that simple they'd all simply be more attractive than other werewolves, and as far as the game system goes, Talons aren't. Responsibility burns within them, and it shows clearly on the surface — in tired eyes that stare for threats, in bones that ache from hours of fighting the night before and in the dozens of scars that mark their bodies.

Sacrifice marks a wolf, and the wounds are rarely pretty.

Wars Against Harm

The Blood Talons talk a lot about how they're the best equipped to protect their loved ones and hunting grounds but what about the other tribes? The fact is while the Blood Talon approach to dealing with a problem is admittedly less cerebral than what other werewolves might at times suggest the Blood Talon solution is quick decisive and permanent Wards fail bind ings can be broken and negotiations with inhu man beings from the Shadow can turn sour in the space of a heartbeat or suffer treachery at a later date But destroying your threats outright means they never bother you again

Yes there are ethical issues and it's foolish to suggest that a Blood Talon and his pack are powerful enough to beat every antagonist they come up against in combat But similar to *Urfarah* and Destroyer Wolf the Blood Talon's instinct to try. If the fight is obviously going to be a tough one then that's where the other packmates come in They use their skills to learn what they can about the spirit or creature locate its weaknesses and the Blood Talon leads the charge to put it down for good The Blood Talons might be unsubtle and could be accused of being "hammers that see every problem as a nail " but the fact of the matter is that a problem dead is a problem solved What better deterrent to future antagonists than the fear of merciless destruction? In embracing the violent aspects of their heritage and nature the *Suthar Anzuth* do not pretend to be anything but what they are — werewolves

The Tribal Oath

Offer No Surrender that You Would Not Accept.

The oath of Fenris-Ur is a notion of responsibility that binds the werewolves of the tribe together. The oath could be phrased any one of 100 ways,

but it would always mean the same thing: don't give up where others could succeed. Prove that you can endure. Don't behave in ways you find unworthy in others. Hold yourself to the highest standard.



The Blood Talon oath matches the Bone Shadow oath in terms of diligence and equals the Hunters' promise in terms of responsibility. The Blood Talon oath even rivals the Storm Lords' oath in regards to tenacity and a fear of failure, though does so for very different reasons. The *Iminir* fear failure because of their status in the eyes of others. The *Suthar Anzuth* share some of that, but also fear failure because of the high personal standards they feel they must live up to. In emulating and understanding the warrior spirits of Father Wolf and Fenris-Ur, the Blood Talons are setting themselves difficult targets to reach.

Echoes of Fenris-Ur's ferocity show clearly in the oath, balanced with a more human sense of honor. Destroyer Wolf's killing power is mirrored by the Blood Talons and reflected in their promise never to give up in a fight unless they would find such a surrender acceptable from an enemy. But this is also a human reasoning, a counterpoint logic that means the Blood Talons always seek to preserve some temperance in their struggles, with the key notion that an honorable surrender does exist in some battles. While the children of Fenris respect their totem's murderous fury, they temper it with mortal codes of honor.

The endurance and judgment demanded by the oath is something almost all Blood Talons will have felt in their human lives before they ever became *Suthar Anzuth,* and before they even knew that werewolves were real. In mortal life, it's a decision not to back down when others would keep going, or to give up when there's still hope of success. It could have been a ruthless attitude to an important career, or an unwillingness to let personal relationships deteriorate when they could be saved. Perhaps it was resilience through an abusive youth or overcoming some trauma or adversity in life.

Whatever form it takes in the pre-Change years, it speaks of enduring through challenges when it would have been easier to give up and surrender. The

schoolboy who stands up to bullies or endures day after day, and who feels sympathetic pity for those who capitulate to the bigger kids, or the overlooked office worker who grinds on to get his work done over the whining protests of co-workers who cut out early: these are the kind of souls who understand what it means to hold yourself to a higher standard than you see in others. In human life, they might be considered stubborn, driven and, in some cases, even selfless. As Uratha, they have the hearts of Blood Talons, and within such souls the warrior instinct of sacrifice and responsibility will grow.

It would be a lie to ignore the fact that the Blood Talons also have their fair share of people who were simply aggressive during their human lives: bullies at school, criminals with savage tempers and so on. These souls are by no means the majority in the tribe, but they aren't rare. What it comes down to is that no matter a werewolf's human reasoning and experiences, when a Blood Talon runs in the Wild Hunt, his hunter's instincts are touched by the passionate fury of Destroyer Wolf, bleeding down the totem bond. That creates a unique bond and a powerful sense of understanding between tribe members, even if they hate each other in every other way.

Tribal Identity

To be a Blood Talon is to feel a personal weight of responsibility shared by others within the tribe. That much is obvious. But tribal members are connected in other ways that cross national, racial and any other human boundaries. The most obvious aspect, and something likely noted by any werewolf with a *Suthar Anzuth* in his pack, is that blood itself holds great significance to the tribe.

This significance works on more than one level. Blood is the fluid of life, and any warrior understands how precious his own blood is, while reveling in the shedding of his enemy's. But this is merely an instinctive and practical thought. The true reverence for blood comes from what it represents, and to the Blood Talons blood represents sacrifice, survival and victory. A werewolf feels the blood pound in his veins every time he changes form, and is infinitely familiar with the smell and taste of his own blood. Across the world, the *Suthar Anzuth* use their own blood as a sacrificial component in their mystic rites. When a spirit demands devotion and respect, what greater sign of sincerity is there than to shed your own blood at the creature's feet? When providing an offering to a respected totem, what could ever show diligence and strength more truthfully than the blood of a fallen foe?

And in the quiet moments, blood is perhaps more important than ever, as a focus for the thoughts of a warrior. What else could represent triumph and duty done so clearly as blood on your hands, as your fingerprints show through the blood of a creature that threatened your life? When a werewolf returns home at dawn and stands in the shower, his cuts and bruises stinging as he watches pink water running down the plughole, what could be a more meaningful sign of what he has endured to guard his loved ones?

Blood makes the *Suthar Anzuth* think, to reflect on all they have done, all they are and all they will do in the future. Uratha outside the tribe would likely be surprised at the cerebral nature of the Talons' reverence for blood. Indeed, some all-Talon packs might seem cultish to other werewolves, made up of Uratha who pay an eerie reverence to blood itself, seeming to adopt their passionate respect as a religion of sorts. These packs are noteworthy because they are extreme cases (some believe this is a hidden Blood Talon lodge forbidden to outsiders), but they do exist.

Another tradition among the Blood Talons is the act of creating one's own weapons. This custom has been known to bleed down into individual lodges where it sees greater emphasis, but it remains a tribal tradition that many Blood Talons adhere to at least once in their lives. The weapons are often simple and durable rather than ornate, built to be used, not admired. Skilled craftsmen are not above making their prized creations both beautiful and efficient, however, featuring expensive materials and runic First Tongue engravings that detail the weapon's name, history and the wielder's deeds to date. In the case of a Blood Talon creating a masterpiece of a weapon — one to last decades and to shed the blood of hundreds of foes — the tribe's werewolves rarely settle for anything but the finest job they can do. To this end, many Blood Talons learn the Fetish Rite as they grow in experience, in order to create the most powerful and worthy weapon they are able.

Blood Talons with exceptional skill have been known to create weapons for their packmates as well, and depending on where their talents lie, a *Suthar Anzuth* can toil to create firearms and other more complicated weapons for himself and his packmates, perhaps toward the aim of creating something worthwhile to hand down to his descendants or earn renown for his generosity and skill.

It is said that the Blood Talons use crafted weapons more than any other tribe, and many packs will see this borne out with the evidence of their eyes. The *Suthar Anzuth* respect for a reliable and efficient weapon can seem to border on the tribe's reverence for blood. Truly valued weapons, such as fetish relics or spirit-awakened tools, are sometimes treated as trusted siblings and cared for with a respect rarely seen outside of precious antique collectors — at least when the Blood Talon isn't using the weapon to slaughter his enemies. To werewolves outside the tribe, caring for a blade can seem an unhealthy obsession. To a Blood Talon, it's just good sense to take care of the blade or gun that has saved his life so many times. Treasured weapons are often marked when they make another kill; axe-hafts or revolver barrels are notched with a little scratch, and sword blades are given another rune, etc.

Body decoration is a tradition among the Blood Talons that varies greatly from region to region and pack to pack. Most *Suthar Anzuth* bear their battle scars proudly, but no shame is earned by those who need to cover up such injuries for the benefit of their day-to-day lives and jobs. Other Blood Talons take the opposite approach, highlighting their scars by getting tattoos that curl around the marked flesh and draw additional attention. For some werewolves, a scar is a mark on the flesh. The scar speaks of deeds done and fights won. For others, a scar is another form of expression closer to art, especially among Cahalith. It is not unknown for particularly proud Blood Talons to tattoo themselves with markings resembling their spirit-brands, making up an inked litany of their achievements displayed on their skin, to complement the silver markings they bear in the Shadow. Some *Suthar Anzuth* do this to record deeds that they believe worthy of note, even if such acts didn't earn them renown in the eyes of the spirits.

Remains of enemies can make fearsome additions to Blood Talon couture. In some cultures, more than others, skulls or bones are bound to the werewolf's Gauru form, and some of the tribe have been known to dye swathes of their fur dark red with the blood of fallen foes, coating themselves with it over many years. Some regions adopt more human-like methods of body decoration, such as the Blood Talons living among the tribal peoples of North America with bones and feathers tied into their hair, each with its own significance.

Perhaps the most well-known Blood Talon custom is that each member of the tribe proudly bears an initiation scar. This scar is a deliberate wound, a marking of the flesh to indicate that the werewolf has been adopted as a child of Destroyer Wolf. The scar itself can be gouged into any part of the body, with the most common places for males being the bicep, forearm, pectoral muscle or between the shoulder blades, and for females being the bicep, forearm, nape of the neck or small of the back.

The scar itself is part badge of honor, part personal sigil. New Blood Talons receive the mark at the culmination of their Rite of Initiation, when the ritemaster gouges the symbol into the applicant's skin with his claws. Like a fingerprint, each scar is unique — a twisting symbol of curved lines and gashes that marks the werewolf as a member of Fenris-Ur's brood. Renowned Blood Talons often have their scar symbols remembered through the ages and modified by later generations seeking to emulate the deeds of past heroes. Cahalith of the tribe frequently make a point of noting and recalling name-scars for the purpose of maintaining and passing tribal lore down to the next generation. Blood Talons also often etch this unique mark upon their possessions (especially weapons) to declare ownership. This practice gives rise to some members of the other tribes referring to initiation scars as *name-glyphs*.

Upon leaving the tribe, those who turn from the oath to Fenris-Ur are usually asked to burn away their initiation scar, eradicating evidence of their broken bond.

Packs

All-Blood Talon packs tend to exist in extremes, depending on the clash of personalities involved. While many *Suthar Anzuth* packs across the world exist free of the stereotypes, enough packs follow one of the two extremes that they are well-known examples of what happens when Blood Talons work together for any length of time. Such packs commonly either display rigid military-style hierarchies with orders smoothly obeyed and no member in doubt as to his place, or they resemble close-knit families with members constantly arguing and jostling amongst themselves for attention and position. Whichever trend a Talon pack follows, the packmembers (and even those packs that don't) are all united in aspect: they are all *vicious*.

Given the tradition of werewolves following ancestors and more recent family members into the Blood Talons, it should come as no surprise that this tribe features a great number of packs filled completely, or with a majority, of *Suthar Anzuth*. Such packs are aggressive on the Wild Hunt, especially

when confronting inhuman enemies such as spirits and Ridden, usually killing first and asking questions later. Just as any Blood Talons, these packs can be accused of being crude and unsubtle, but they are ruthlessly efficient through their violence, frequently having great success in keeping their Shadow hunting grounds clean of infestation and spiritual discord. Spirits and *shartha* alike soon learn to fear going near the territory, and those that enter or are born within the territory are often destroyed before ever getting a chance to negotiate. More diplomatic and intellectual approaches do exist, but there's no argument against the results. When negotiations do occur, they are usually conducted by a patient Elodoth or Ithaeur, and are based on what the pack desires, not what the spirit finds acceptable. There is little give in a Blood Talon territory, which can leave many territories eerily silent over time as spirits fear to confront the local pack.

It's no secret that the *Suthar Anzuth* pay great respect to their totems, with the spirit member of a pack being viewed as a sibling of the werewolves. However, most Blood Talon packs don't generally favor brash, aggressive or powerful totems. The pack is usually strong enough by virtue of tribe and training, and though the *Suthar Anzuth* view their pack totems as brothers of spirit (while packmates are brothers of flesh), the Blood Talons' respect and affection rarely translates in the need for yet another skilled combatant.

Instead, most *Suthar Anzuth* seek totems that will strengthen areas in which the pack shows weakness, often binding a spirit that grants them access to knowledge, skills or powers that they would rarely have an opportunity to attain on their own because of the rigors of the Wild Hunt. When a pack does choose to bind itself to a spirit that shares in the Blood Talon predilection for battle, such a being can seem dangerously unstable or blood-hungry by the standards of other Forsaken packs, and even the Pure.

History

The world has seen several instances in history in which some event is named as the moment when the age of the warrior drew to a close and the age of the soldier rose to eclipse it. Famous examples would be the final abolition of the samurai under Emperor Meiji and the gradual transition of samurai clans to the Imperial Japanese Army, or the Roman Empire's conquests over the tribal peoples of Europe. No one date exists that isn't conflicted by the histories of other nations and cultures.

The Blood Talons have always understood war. Humans kill for land, money, religion and freedom, but it all comes down to a battle for power: the power to live without oppression or the power to prosper through the oppression of others. The Blood Talons and their fearsome totem have known this for thousands of years; if the legends are to be believed, the *Suthar Anzuth* have lived in war from a time before mankind first conceived the notion of warfare. It will come as no surprise to learn that the tribe has been drawn to human conflict throughout history, either to stand as observers or to fight in the shadows for their chosen side.

In battle, in war itself, there are always lessons to be learned. History might never acknowledge great Blood Talon warrior-captains among such cultures as the Khanate of the Golden Horde, the Roman Empire, the Third Reich, the Union and Confederacy or the Native Americans, but that doesn't mean the werewolves weren't present. The *Suthar Anzuth* have their own wars to fight, and once the Change takes hold of them, few throw themselves into the human conflicts that might have captivated them or swept them up in their mortal lives. In addition to the drastic shift in perspective, the Oath of the Moon and Uratha tradition both have clear mandates on revealing the presence of the People to humans. But the Blood Talons watch, fight when they see a purpose and learn.

While human wars are just another lesson and their own battles draw their real focus, tribal legends tell tales of Blood Talons who rode with Temujin-called-Genghis, Khan of the Mongols, or shape-shifted in the hellish chaos of the D-Day landings in order to kill enemy soldiers. In truth, little in the way of evidence exists to suggest that a Blood Talon has ever attained a famous position in history's battles, but stories pass from generation to generation, down through wolf-blooded family lines. And while Uratha may not have memorably marched with human armies or held recorded positions in history's wars, wolf-blooded mortals have. The *Suthar Anzuth* never ignore this resource. Cahalith are especially wont to delve deep into their family bloodline to seek any wolf-blooded ties to historical conflict, learning from the stories passed down through the centuries.

Aspects of human conflict have filtered into Blood Talon culture over the years, though. The *Suthar Anzuth* are half-human themselves, and they spend much of their lives in the human world they were born into. Few tribe members remain completely untouched by human strife. The most notable

impact various human cultures have had on the Blood Talons is through the notion of honor. From medieval jousting to the gunslingers of the Old West and the *bushido*-bound samurai of the Far East, the Blood Talons have shaped their own honor around cultural influences that the tribe found worthy.

Rather than simply appropriating the notions of honorable (and successful) combat found in human warrior cultures, the Blood Talons feel a natural bond with those cultures that already match the heart of Fenris-Ur's Oath. The American West notion of a fair duel with the more skilled man walking away afterwards, or the Japanese code of *bushido*, both have immediate parallels to the promise of responsibility, judgment and sacrifice every Blood Talon must take. In such a light, it is easy to see how the tenets of these warrior-dominant cultures can affect the local *Suthar Anzuth*.

Perceptions and Reflections

The faces of the moon shine down and inspire each tribe in slightly different ways. Elodoth from the *Suthar Anzuth* are rarely the same from pack to pack, let alone from tribe to tribe. Unsurprisingly, the Blood Talons often focus their Luna-given blessings and talents toward violent purposes. The following section presents the general Blood Talon perception of auspices, and the tribe's considerations of each of the five types of Renown attached to the moon signs.

Rahu

"The full moon's light turns the night-time world colorless, into black-and-white. That's how I see things, too. You don't have to agree with me, but you might want to think about how you'll argue the point, because by my own choice and the mandate of a goddess, I am twice the warrior you will ever be."

The image of the blood-drenched shapeshifter howling up at the full moon is tied closely to the Rahu of the Blood Talons. They are the warriors of the warriors, living their lives by protecting their pack and shedding the blood of their foes.

In a tribe of werewolves focusing on their warrior prowess, those born under the full moon might appear on the surface to be the best of the best and therefore deserve the highest respect from other *Suthar Anzuth*. This is not necessarily so. It is undisputed that the Rahu are Luna's chosen warriors, but the fury that comes with the auspice and the primal rage within a Rahu's heart is intimidating even to other Blood Talons. Luna's full moon children are blessed with advantages in terms of battle prowess, and all among the tribe acknowledge this. However, Rahu sworn to Fenris-Ur are no more deserving of respect than Uratha of any other moon sign, and even the most pious or spiritual werewolves among Destroyer Wolf's tribe rarely consider the Rahu "more blessed" by Luna.

To the Blood Talons, the Rahu sign is often called the Killing Moon. Some believe that killing is what these werewolves were born to do, and while it is easy to admire their talents for it, most Talons have to admit that death can seem to cling to these Uratha more than any other. When the Blood Talons use the term Killing Moon, they do so with great respect, sincere admiration, but also a touch of unease. No *Suthar Anzuth* werewolf *needs* Luna's blessing to become a warrior, and those that have it can seem intimidating, intense, even frightening if they are unstable or have difficulty restraining their rage.

With the light of the full moon comes great skill in battle and many abilities that complement a warrior's struggles, but the full moon also comes with a certain focusing of a werewolf's abilities that can seem limiting to other Blood Talons. These werewolves are doubly warriors: by their own choice and Luna's mandate, which makes them master of their chosen path, but occasionally skilled in few other areas because of their primary focus. While the majority of Rahu are seen by their tribemates as balanced, competent individuals who deserve respect for their skills, there is occasionally doubt about some of the tribe's Full Moon members. Children of the Killing Moon carry a double-edged blessing among the Blood Talons, and most are acutely aware of the clashing respect and unease they inspire in their tribemates. If the Rahu exemplify the tribe's warrior soul, they also threaten the nobility of it, for the Talons have no shortage of tales regarding Killing Moons who were driven over the edge into degeneration by their bloodlust.

Aside from the tribal outlook, most Blood Talon Rahu are intense people at heart. Whether they are inexperienced Uratha seeking to come to terms with their new violent lives or elders with decades of death behind them, these werewolves often have an eerie intensity in their dealings with others, born from their inner focus. A common sensation among the Rahu of the tribe is one of confidence: an inner sense of assurance that may or not bleed out into

the werewolf's personality in various occasional ways, such as bragging or stubbornness or a set to the werewolf's jaw that his pack soon comes to know means "I disagree." The Full Moon werewolves who harbor self-esteem issues in their hearts tend not to be forthcoming about their personal doubts in public, though obviously they might confide in their loved ones outside the pack.

Purity

Purity is deceptively simple. On the surface, it seems to reward a werewolf simply for living up to the expectations naturally placed upon him by Luna, the denizens of Shadow and the balance of his own soul. And yet each tribe has its own struggles with Harmony; each werewolf lives through his own difficulties with acquiring Purity Renown. It can be hard to get respect for something you should be doing anyway.



The Blood Talons put a militant, sacrificial slant on the acquisition of Purity. Where any of the People can expect to gain this renown by acts of morality, righteous zeal and self-restraint, the *Suthar Anzuth* focus heavily on the potential for self-sacrifice in the name of Purity. If a werewolf can uphold his Harmony and suffer in the service of others, then he is following the Blood Talon ideal of Purity and is likely to increase his Renown in the eyes of the spirits. Other tribes have been known to regard this perception as akin to martyrdom. Few Blood Talons see a problem with that.

Cahalith

"I had a dream of Destroyer Wolf meeting a spirit in ancient Pangaea that he spared out of disgusted pity. Now you come here yelling at me, and all of a sudden my vision makes sense. Listen, kid, I can recall the name of every Blood Talon who walked this area within the last three hundred years. If you want to leave an impression on this world before you die, you should start by impressing me."

The Gibbous Moons among the Blood Talons are the ones who don't just fight to win; they fight to express themselves through victory. Whether it's a personal victory, the triumph of a great Blood Talon hero or the glory of the tribe itself, the Cahalith are the ones who howl the loudest in remembrance. Those Cahalith who are drawn to the Blood Talons often dream of violence and blood, and seek out the children of Fenris-Ur in the hopes of mastering the murderous visions that come to them.

As fighters, many battle with a unique flair or style, seeking to outwit and impress fear into their foes just as the Cahalith seek to defeat their enemies. To this end, many Cahalith learn martial arts, and those who bear weapons often decorate them with intricate runic engravings that draw the eye or Chinese-style tassels that distract and annoy their enemies. A Cahalith wants to look fearsome, and most display themselves to that effect by displaying trophies bound to their various forms. Some fight in Gauru form, bearing the skulls of fallen enemies on a chain collar, each carved in tiny script detailing the tale of how the trophy was taken, while others wear crafted bracers of metal in the war form, etched with lists of past deeds and the names of honored ancestors.

As loremasters, the Cahalith take great pains to recall the names and deeds of Blood Talon heroes,

both to emulate them and tell tales of their greatness to others in the tribe. Of all *Suthar Anzuth*, the Gibbous Moons delve deepest into the past to learn of ancient legends and tell the stories afresh. The Pangaean era fascinates most Blood Talon Cahalith, as do tales of human wars and empires that bear hints of the supernatural concealed somewhere in the tale. Anything that makes an inspiring or enlightening story is something that a Blood Talon Cahalith can take and twist for his own use.

Perhaps unusually for any member of a society as fractured as the Uratha, the Gibbous Moons of the *Suthar Anzuth* are often greatly concerned with their tribe: its history, its present and its future place in the world. Over the course of their lives, many will seek out stories and learn for themselves what customs other Blood Talons hold to across the world, and are likely to incorporate these traditions into their own packs. In such ways is the tribe bound together through the diligence of the Cahalith. These werewolves often roam packless around the world and its Shadow for a few years of their lives, seeking out other members of their tribe and staying long enough to learn the local customs, before moving on again.

As seers, the Gibbous Moons are awash in their tribal reverence for blood and bloodshed. The prophetic dreams that come to these werewolves frequently pertain to a battle in the future or death in the past that somehow applies to the werewolf and his pack now. Curiously, many Cahalith have admitted to dreaming of their Firstborn totem and his deeds in Pangaea on many occasions through the years. These visions of Fenris-Ur's ancient hunts and battles always have some correlation to something in the Cahalith's future struggles, though, as with all prophecy, the link isn't always immediately clear.

Glory

Glory is often called the meat and drink of the Blood Talons. It's true that the tribe as a whole pays great attention to Glory, with bragging about victorious battles taking principal place alongside telling tales of ancestors' deeds as the most well-known Blood Talon fireside discussions. Bravado is nothing to be ashamed of among the *Suthar Anzuth* — as long as it can be backed up. But while Glory can seem almost immediately obvious and easy to obtain among the tribe, it's often not so clear-cut. In a tribe where victory in battle is a core principle the culture, the Blood Talons frequently expect a little more than the other tribes do.

Glory to the Talons isn't simply a matter of killing enemies. Courage and the way a battle is fought, as well as the purposes it is fought for, are vital to the Blood Talon ideal of Glory. Killing enemies for the good of the pack isn't usually considered particularly glorious — after all, it's what most *Suthar Anzuth* are expected to do each night anyway. What the Blood Talons do pay attention to are the victories and battles that inspire others. The werewolf who kills a spirit that wronged his ancestors, the courageous last stand that allowed the rest of the pack to escape, the fight against overwhelming odds that sees the Blood Talon walking away scarred and victorious at the end: these are the type of events that resonate among the tribe.

The lessons of the past have a place among the actions of Talons today, and most of the tribe put great stock in not only learning of ancestral deeds but in emulating them. Blood Talons seem to interact with their ancestor-spirits more often than most other werewolves do, and take great pains to record family histories and historical victories, whether they are Cahalith or not.

To the *Suthar Anzuth*, their higher standards for what constitutes Glory justifies the Blood Talon penchant for bragging. Whether other werewolves agree with this outlook is a matter that varies from pack to pack.

Elodoth

"Battle needs a purpose, or it becomes futile. War needs a cause, or it becomes slaughter. We have to find the focus in each and every fight that we want to win. You can still kill without that focus, but it lacks something important, the same way you can kill with a lump of metal instead of a sword. I temper my bloodshed with the knowledge that I'm doing the right thing, the right way. If you're doing the right thing the wrong way, then you're probably not going to walk out alive afterwards. If you're just doing the wrong thing… well, I won't howl over a fool's grave."

Blood Talon Elodoth walk a difficult path. The mantle of responsibility that falls upon them demands that they walk the line between warlord and peacebringer. The Elodoth within the pack has the deepest insight into the coming battle, the implications of victory and loss and any future repercussions that will arise from the conflict. While a quick mind and the ability to plan isn't solely a Half-Moon trait, a specialty of the Elodoth among the Blood Talons is to think these matters through to their conclu-

sions. In doing so, with a full comprehension of the possibilities surrounding every battle, the Half-Moon brings great insight to bear.

All Blood Talons train for conflict, but the Elodoth train more than their tribemates to deduce how to win in any given situation, no matter the foe. More importantly, the Elodoth train to recognize which battles should be avoided if necessary. Their position is not to imply stupidity or ignorance on the part of other *Suthar Anzuth*, but just as the Rahu is gifted for killing, the Elodoth is gifted for analysis and intuition, blending human reason with wolf instinct to find the best approach to conflict. Struggle is part of a werewolf's life, and Blood Talon Half-Moons excel at discovering which struggles are productive, and which are doomed. Elodoth learn of the enemy from the Cahalith and Ithaeur, scout and study the enemy with the Irraka and plan the conflict with the Rahu. In and out of battle, Blood Talon Elodoth are frequently born alphas, even if they are shy and nervous in mortal life. This stems from the Half-Moon penchant for intuitive thought and decision-making, as well as any natural charisma the Elodoth may or may not have.

Many Elodoth become veritable loremasters of information pertaining to the weaknesses and habits of all who set foot in their territories, in case the future brings a battle against the spirit, werewolf or human in question. Most Half-Moons are also brutally direct in their dealings with spirits. Very little cajoling and negotiation goes on by the standards of the other tribes, but Talon Elodoth are often the most "conversational" of their own tribe in this regard. Even so, the choices offered to spirits and other beings in the hunting ground are usually limited at best, and are entirely based on the werewolf pack's terms. If the creature can be swayed to assist or give strength to the werewolf pack, the creature will be given the chance to do so. If the spirit poses even a remote threat now or could reasonably do so in the future, the spirit is better off dead and forgotten.

It often falls to Blood Talon Half-Moons to act as judges among their own kind and tribe, punishing severe violations of the Oath of the Moon if they deem it necessary. While the Irraka deal with any human witnesses who result from violating the Oath, the Elodoth traditionally deal with the violators, and they do so quickly and with little mercy.

Elodoth also have a noted tendency to pay respect and attention to the pack totem. Traditionally, in many packs, the Half-Moon actually scouts the Shadow and tracks down potential spirits that would serve as appropriate totems for the pack. The Blood Talons have a longstanding custom of offering great rewards and a sense of brotherhood to their totems — usually after savagely hunting the totem, beating it into submission and binding it. Frequently, the Half-Moons of the tribe, with their deep-rooted connection to both substance and Shadow spend the most time with the pack's totem, sometimes even rivaling the time spent with the other packmembers. Some Elodoth in this position will take the totem as a mentor of sorts, studying the inhuman knowledge and behavior of the spirit and drawing upon its perceptions to help develop the werewolf's own unique outlook.

When the pack does battle, the Elodoth often feel a sudden instinct to defend their totem just as they would any sibling or loved one. Even those who have no special affection for the pack totem sense the connection in battle and will likely make sure they are aware of any danger the totem is in, in case it needs protection.

Honor

The notion of a code of honor, while something of a secondary concern to others, is important to many Blood Talons. The tribe is divided along a rough line: for while all can see that Honor is important to Luna and the spirits, some *Suthar Anzuth* see Honor as the measure of a balanced and noble warrior soul, and others see it as an impediment to victory by any means, at any cost.

Many Blood Talons seeking to acquire Honor behave nobly, judging their brethren fairly and fighting by both human and werewolf standards of honor. This works for much of the tribe, but aspects of this approach are rejected by other Blood Talons. The Irraka who works with poison before a battle is unlikely to earn Honor for his deeds, and must compensate in other areas if he wants this Renown. The Ithaeur who unleashes hordes of spirits at an enemy pack to drive them out without warning is also unlikely to gain Honor for the act, when it would have been nobler to confront the intruders and warn them first.

Most Blood Talons seek to acquire Honor from the spirits by unswerving dedication to duty or by learning the laws of various challenges between werewolf and spirit, and upholding them diligently. A key aspect in earning Honor among the tribe to remember that a sworn oath is sacred, and to break it is profane. Considering a spirit's ban and leaving it alive rather than destroying it out of convenience or

anger is another way to earn Renown, but one taken up by fewer Blood Talons than, say, Bone Shadows.

Ithaeur

"If you're dead set about taking on these shartha, we'll need to tip the balance against them first. I can bind the spirit of the burned-down school into silence so that it doesn't shriek like a child when we enter this time, and I'll call in an old debt with the death-spirits I dealt with during my Rite of Initiation. After that, it's up to our claws and klaives. Let me check your weapons before we go, and we can start this thing tonight."

In a tribe that always stands prepared for war, the Crescent Moons are the specialists who oppose beings from the Shadow. With mystic arts and gathered wisdom, the Ithaeur leads his brethren in battle against a thousand types of spirit, for it's both his Luna-given calling and his chosen area of expertise. Crescent Moons in other tribes seek to understand the Shadow for any number of reasons. Blood Talon Ithaeur seek such understanding primarily in the name of ending any threats that manifest from the world's twisted reflection. Knowing your enemy is the first step in beating him. Those who Change under the crescent moon often find their way to the Blood Talons when they first confront the hostility from the Shadow, and realize that the spirit world offers them an unending cold war. Those who choose to fight back often find their path as one with Fenris-Ur.

Being experts on the denizens of the Shadow and the landscape of the spirit wilds can make many Ithaeur grim and stoic souls. Seeking to understand the mind and powers of a multitude of inhuman creatures is no easy feat, or a responsibility that any Blood Talon takes lightly. Crescent Moons may occasionally sacrifice some gains in Glory because of their more cerebral nature, but they are highly respected among their tribe and rarely suffer significantly in the acquisition of Renown.

If the Crescent Moon knows how to put down the spirits tearing through her pack, then she'll do it with rituals or claws. Results are all that matter, and Glory lies in even quiet triumph. In addition to the role of an advisor on matters of the Shadow, most Blood Talon Ithaeur also build up great reputations among their packs as indispensable support warriors. While the Crescent Moon lacks the physical powers of the Rahu and the Cahalith that would earn him great kills and easy Glory, or the stealth-born predatory ability of the Irraka, many Ithaeur come to possess an incredible hoard of rites and Gifts that can lend advantages in a multitude of situations. Many of an Ithaeur's rituals and powers will serve as post-battle recovery or pre-conflict support, while others bolster the skills of packmates or summon spirit-allies to the fray.

Of course, after the chanting is complete and the mystical powers have slipped their leash, an Ithaeur is still a werewolf and still a Blood Talon, and he's hardly helpless in a fight. Part of the auspice's mandate translates well into the warrior tribe's outlook; knowing the Shadow means knowing the spirit wilds, not just its denizens, and Crescent Moons are often the best of the best when it comes to choosing the place where a battle in the *Hisil* should be fought. A Blood Talon Ithaeur knows every inch of his hunting grounds beyond the Gauntlet, and knows where any trespass can best be countered.

With the tribe's focus on weaponry, it often falls to the mystics among the *Suthar Anzuth* to create fetishes for their brethren — or at least bind spirits into already created tools. Ithaeur who dedicate the time and effort to this activity are deeply respected by their tribemates, sincerely appreciated by their packmates and often garner significant reputations among the spirits as well. Such reputations are not always favorable, of course, and the Crescent Moons are usually seen either as honorable souls seeking spirits as battle-brothers or merciless slavers who capture and bind whatever spirits are useful to their cause. Ithaeur are also never shy on advice regarding how to honor the fetish weapons they create, often detailing a list of respectful ways to treat the weapon and its spirit as it is handed over after creation.

Wisdom

Knowledge is power, and the Blood Talons respect any among their number who use their knowledge to achieve an advantage over the enemies of the People. As such, Wisdom is gained fastest by those who use what they know (or acquire more knowledge) in order to tip the odds against a pack's foes.

In some packs, this often takes the form of mastering new rituals that complement the werewolves' battle prowess or defeating an enemy spirit through discovering and exploiting its ban. Any Blood Talon getting involved in ways that make the final fight easier and lessens the risk of losing packmates in battle is ripe for significant Wisdom gain.

Irraka

"We don't need to risk a fight with the Pure when we're outnumbered three-to-one. Give me a few days, and their alpha will be dead — or he'll be so insane he'll wish he were. Everything I've seen about them makes me think that'll unnerve them enough to move on. The other packs in the city won't know we did it, so don't go bragging. But the job'll get done."

The hunters among the destroyers, Blood Talon Irraka walk a difficult path. Many are stalkers and scouts without peer, balancing their warrior prowess with guile, cunning and lateral thinking. They fight their battles by choosing where to stage them, whether the Irraka roam ahead of their packs to track enemy movement or hang back with their packmates in order to deliver lethal strikes when opponents are distracted. Most Irraka are self-sufficient and capable in the wilds (both rural and urban) to the point that they might even seem distant to their packmembers.

The difference between a hunter and a warrior is most clear among the Irraka of the Blood Talons, for the Irraka are more the former than the latter. Precise strikes and unconventional kills are the hallmark of a New Moon's Wild Hunt, where enemies are poisoned before a fight, maimed immediately to weaken them or throated quickly at great personal risk in order for a fast kill, rather than letting a battle play out. The longer an Irraka is engaged with his foes, the more he risks the odds building up against him from unknown factors. What matters is the kill, not how it's made, and not the victory howl afterwards. The New Moons of other tribes sometimes wonder why any Irraka would choose the Blood Talons in the first place, but the answer is usually simple enough. Blood and responsibility — even the moonless can feel the compulsion to walk among the fiercest wolves in order to protect what's theirs, or the call of forging themselves into the deadliest of predators.

Blood Talon Irraka rarely think of Renown when they do battle — they focus on survival first and foremost. Glory might matter as much to them as any of their tribe, but the Irraka don't mind earning it quietly and over time. This can generate tension between the Irraka and other Blood Talons, for while the New Moons get the job done, they can sometimes appear to lack a fiery "warrior spirit" or display the traditional battle lust inherent in Fenris-Ur's bond. Some are even accused of lacking honor. To an Irraka, a foe dead by a sniper shot to the head is just as worthy of glory as if he'd fought the enemy fang and claw for an hour under the light of Luna. Other Blood Talons see the results of their Irraka brethren's actions and admire their unique approaches, but wonder at how strong their wolf-hearts beat. It is said that the New Moons of all tribes often see themselves as "more human and less wolf" than Uratha of other auspices, and this pragmatism and unconventional logic can seem eerie and cold among traditionally hot-blooded *Suthar Anzuth* packs.

This conflict plays out within many Blood Talon Irraka as well. Some might find it difficult to earn Glory Renown along traditional means because of their tactics, while others feel troubled by the call of their wolf blood to the point where their hunter's instincts bleed into their human lives, and they find themselves making decisions based on a hunter's simple logic. Many New Moons walk an uneasy balance they are never entirely comfortable with.

Lastly, it often falls to the tribe's Irraka to act as cold-hearted and secret enforcers of the Oath of the Moon. *The Herd Must Not Know,* and the *Suthar Anzuth* are known to cover such mistakes by simply killing untrustworthy witnesses. More often than not, the Irraka shoulder the burden of covering their packs' tracks. This is a haunting mirror of other notable New Moon behavior, such as when a Talon Irraka will lead enemies away from his packmates, buying time for the pack to regroup and counter-attack.

Cunning

The Blood Talons take especial pride in acts of deception and stealth that actively harm their enemies. Innovative plans for upcoming engagements, information from the enemy camp acquired at great personal risk, targeted killings and assassinations: these are the deeds that win a Blood Talon Renown in the eyes of the spirits and admiration from his tribemates. Among the *Suthar Anzuth*, Cunning means thinking outside the box to get results, and getting results usually means beating the enemy.

An indirect but no less effective way of doing battle is to defeat your enemy without even facing him. Blood Talons that earn Cunning play to their strengths, whether they arrange an "accident" to befall a chosen target, or weaken foes before a battle by assaults meant to sap the enemy's resolve and energy. Such assaults could take the form of poisonings, for example, or the attack of the Talon's bribed spirit-allies to soften the foe before the pack strikes together.

Concerns of the Soul

The Blood Talons are marked by their tribe and their Firstborn totem. Just as they receive the bless-

ings and gifts their oaths and sponsorship provide, they must also deal with the effects the tribal bond has on their souls. Usually this is benevolent and reassuring, such as the sense of kinship among warriors that permeates throughout the tribe. But in cases of some werewolves, such as those with extreme Harmony or Primal Urge ratings, the Blood Talons betray subtle differences because of their allegiance. All the tribes have such quirks and behaviors, and they manifest among the *Suthar Anzuth* most often related in some way to the tribe's proclivity for violence.

Harmony

Although the Blood Talons do not necessarily advocate killing their human and werewolf enemies more than any other tribe, because of their warlike ethos, the *Suthar Anzuth* are no strangers to death. Such familiarity can easily lead to Harmony degeneration, and like all wise Forsaken, this is something the Blood Talons sincerely wish to avoid. Most of the tribe pay attention to the state of their souls, spending time in meditation and veneration of Luna from time to time, and trying to behave according to the natural laws of Purity Renown. These werewolves are keenly aware of the spiritual chasm they stand astride, for the tribe has more than its fair share of tales regarding Uratha who have fallen into degeneration and hateful bloodlust.

The Blood Talons with extremely high Harmony are wellsprings of incredible self-restraint and often possess chivalrous or noble qualities above and beyond what one usually finds in the tribe. These balanced souls spend a great deal of time with their packs, often seeking to alleviate pressures or solve problems by taking additional responsibilities themselves, such as guarding the wolf-blooded families of packmates, or maintaining extended patrol duties when the others have gone to rest. Unchecked, this is a recipe for burnout, but many Blood Talons possess the self-discipline necessary to remain balanced.

On the darker side of the coin, Blood Talons with low Harmony are the shameful burden the tribe must bear. As a *Suthar Anzuth* werewolf degenerates, his bloodlust is amplified and his self-restraint erodes. At the deepest levels of degeneration, as the Blood Talon approaches becoming a Broken Soul, humans and other werewolves will become prey for food, or worth killing over the most minor of aggravations. The fall of a Blood Talon is woven with a sense of tragic majesty, for most degenerates lose their battle skills and replace those skills with a sickening and desperate feral fury that often increases the werewolf's killing power as his soul breaks.

If the *Suthar Anzuth* gets out of control (a term that varies in meaning from region to region), then the degenerate is likely to be hunted and put down by his tribe. Rehabilitation isn't unknown, but killing the wretch who has endangered himself and others through his lack of self-control and weak spiritual fortitude is still considered honorable. As with most Blood Talon problems, a dead problem is one that never needs solving again.

Primal Urge

The Blood Talons generally seek to heighten their Primal Urge after their First Change, fusing their flesh and spirit halves closely together, offering more power and allowing longer use of the war form in times of need.

The social penalties of high Primal Urge do not concern some among the tribe, who either react with amused resignation or a superior swagger when humans reveal their discomfort. Others actively relish the effect high Primal Urge has on people, especially with regard to the advantages in intimidation. Overall, Blood Talons tend to regard this negative aspect of Primal Urge as an accepted part of their nature, and learn to live with the discomfort they cause nearby mortals. To *Suthar Anzuth,* reducing their physical and spiritual power purely to make humans feel comfortable just makes no sense.

Concern only arises when a werewolf's spirit half begins to eclipse the mortal half, when the soul becomes stronger than the body at Primal Urge 6 and higher. Many Blood Talons regard this (and the accompanying Essence bleed) as an uncomfortable lack of control over a warrior's own body. The additional power gained is often a powerful lure, however, and one that some Talons find difficult to resist over the course of their lives. At particularly high levels of Primal Urge, the blood that binds the tribe begins to manifest in the werewolf's very form — his eyes may become red, he may sweat blood rather than pure perspiration and his coat may turn a rich scarlet.

Story Hooks

The following section details a few hooks that players and Storytellers might find interesting to incorporate into their chronicles' Blood Talon characters.

• **A Matter of Tradition:** Family matters to the *Suthar Anzuth*, with some elders putting significant

pressure on their younger relatives to follow in their footsteps and become Blood Talons. Although Fenris-Ur is notorious for never accepting a werewolf with no real desire to join the tribe, established Blood Talons don't always shake off the expectations of family members once they've joined the tribe. Relatives can ask for favors at the most inconvenient of times….

• **The Final Fight:** Calling on the unity of the tribal bond works in some regions and doesn't work in others. The Blood Talons tend to respond more often than not when one of their number pleads for the assistance of his tribemates, though not enthusiastically if the assistance places their own packs at risk. Tribemates who have fallen on hard times can be especially draining, as some of them get it into their minds that a great battle against the enemies that plague them is a grand idea and will earn them honorable death or glorious redemption through victory. A Blood Talon who hears this call to arms will face a tough choice between ignoring the call from a tribemate and dragging his pack into something that might very well seem one or more of the dead by the end of it.

• **Bittersweet Inheritance:** Weapons getting passed down through the Blood Talons can be a matter of great ceremony and importance. But not all weapons (in fact, very few) simply get handed over neatly upon an elder's death. The usual turn of events involves the potential inheritor having to find the place where his relative was slain in battle, which is rarely as easy it sounds, and winning the fetish through his own strength. Other inheritances can become clouded when the slain Blood Talon's weapon is claimed by his own packmates, and the werewolves who knew the dead warrior best refuse to give up such a useful memento of their fallen packmate.

• **Blood's Vengeance:** Ancestor-spirits and elder relatives are well-known among the tribe for asking their younger Blood Talon brethren to avenge wrongs done to the family in the past. Some werewolves have found themselves plunged into bitter conflicts with immortal creatures or another bloodline of werewolves that has lasted hundreds of years. Characters might earn great Renown and respect for defeating the family foe, or risk alienation and potential greater reward for forging an alliance with the enemy.



Bone Shadows

My grandmother, a Bone Shadow like me, always told me to 'forget the obvious.' Ignore it. Disregard it. The truth, she said, often hides beyond the apparent, past the easily observable. It waits in the darkness and fog. When you hear the thicket rustle, do you believe that the briar moves of its own accord? No. Something waits hidden behind the tangle of thorns. You must pry apart the twined briars — and yes, you will bloody your hands in the doing — and there you will find what stirs the thicket. The answers aren't ever easy.

Grandmother used to laugh, too. Others outside her pack would see her on the periphery between territories, and she'd be sitting on the flat of some rock or in a dusty circle on the grassless plain. There she'd be casting her bones, those little bones like a squirrel's spine or a pigeon's skull, or even the delicate architecture from the hand of a stillborn infant. And they'd stand over her and mockingly ask her what she saw in those stupid old bones.

She'd lie and tell them that the secrets of the universe are carved in very small letters in those old things, and only she could read them. Grandmother never told them the truth. I know the truth. So did her pack. She wasn't reading the bones, but instead watching how the light plays off them, how darkness bleeds beneath them.

No, she didn't care about the bones at all. She cared only about their shadows.



Becoming Death, Becoming Hidden

What Bone Shadows often become is not often how they begin. When one Forsaken looks upon an old *Hirfathra Hissu* and sees the mad shaman with inexplicable powers, it's easy for him to believe that the Bone Shadow has always been that way. Respected and feared, the elder Bone Shadow may seem a paragon of mystic knowledge and lorekeeping, so strong in his ways that his power has always been with him, both inside and out.

Inside, perhaps. Outside, not so much. Those who see fit to join the Bone Shadows rarely enter into their First Changes as shamans, witch doctors or sherpas. Moreover, rarely are they well regarded by their respective communities. Those meant for the Bone Shadow tribe enter into werewolf life as outcasts and oddities. Their human peers think them strange, perhaps unsettling. Think of a young boy whose only friends belong to a chorus of imaginary people. Or an old priest who finds himself driven to perform rituals that no Bible would ever permit. Even a housewife whose own husband finds discomfiting the way she stares off into space and whispers weird entreaties in languages not her own. Certainly not all Bone Shadows began so bizarrely; some simply possessed a damning curiosity or an intimate-yet-unspoken fascination with the dead and dying. Most who come to join the Bone Shadows do so not because they want to become that, but because they don't really know where else they *fit*. Every tribe has its mystics, but only the Bone Shadows offer comfort in such peculiarity.

Finding and Being Found

Many *nuzusul* belong to the Bone Shadows long before they consciously make the choice or are actively invited into the tribe. The world often seems different to nascent Bone Shadows. The Change opens their eyes to things that other werewolves may not see: the foreshadowing of nine crows on a clothesline, the way the wind blows differently

around that one maple tree, those tall men in the city whose eyes are not real but merely the *illustrations* of eyes upon bulging skin. Even the First Change provides clues. For many Bone Shadows, it lasts longer: days, even weeks where they hear voices coming from power outlets and see leering algae faces floating on brackish pond water. Sometimes the final moments of the Change, when the body is cast into its struggling forms, happen around several humans, possibly even the werewolf's friends and family. The Change seems to *want* them exiled from the world of humans so that they may be finally thrown headlong into the mad life of the mystic.

Those who seem destined for the *Hirfathra Hissu* are, appropriately, most often found by members of that tribe. Many are found in the normal ways, but some Bone Shadows learn of *nuzusul* long before the First Change actually happens. The spirits are the ones that know, and seem driven to whisper the names and places of future First Changes. A spirit may appear to a Bone Shadow out of nowhere and tell her of a newly Changed Uratha who will need her help. It may be a week from now or a year, but often a spirit won't let the subject go until the werewolf agrees by *oath* to track down the *nuzusul* and initiate him into the tribe.

Still, not every Bone Shadow comes to the tribe immediately. Many are found by packs of differing tribes, and join with them for a time. Over time, though, the Bone Shadows find their place among the *Hirfathra Hissu*. Strange dreams, the urging of spirits and an ineluctable tugging upon the heart and mind sometimes drive the death-seekers and secret-finders into the "proper" tribe. It may take a month or half a lifetime, but one way or another they find their way home.

Custom: The Seeking

From time to time the Bone Shadows go among other packs and tribes searching out those werewolves who belong with them and nobody else The criteria for this are unique to the seeker: some Bone Shadows look for the overly curious the needlessly abused or those whose own packs are afraid of them Sometimes they have no crite ria at all and instead hope that their instincts will guide them toward lost sheep

Some Bone Shadows are particularly forceful in their recruiting After all if a werewolf belongs among them then they will stop at nothing to show him the truth — even if it means scoring his fur with fire and blowing stinging dust in his eyes to subdue him Others are far subtler instead preferring to give nothing more than an open invitation If a werewolf doesn't accept the invitation at that time so be it he is clearly not ready

Initiation

Kamduis-Ur demands many things of his children. He wants a Bone Shadow to be both student and teacher. He needs warriors as well as diplomats. And above all, he needs werewolves who embrace mystery and madness. The path to becoming *Hirfathra Hissu* is a dark road full of dead ends, switchbacks and peril. A Bone Shadow must be diligent enough — and perhaps foolhardy enough — to walk down that road no matter the cost or the danger. And so, the tribal initiation must test a subject's willingness in these things.

Below are a handful of sample Bone Shadow tribal initiations. These may be unique to a given region (perhaps only Appalachian Bone Shadows practice particular rites) or may instead be specific to a single pack (the Sand Snakes pack of Arizona, for instance, involves poisonous Coral Snakes in its initiation).

• **Test of Death:** The Bone Shadow must find and placate the ghosts of her dead friends and loved ones (which surely she has, for all Bone Shadows are surrounded by death in life). She must take however long she needs to visit with them and learn no fewer than five secrets from them that she did not know previously. This is rarely so easy as asking, for many ghosts are driven to rage and madness by dint of their regrettable condition. The truths learned here are that death is as common as stones and pebbles, but in death are hidden many unknown truths.

• **Test of Diligence:** The tribe establishes an unsolvable mystery. This may be the murder of someone who is secretly not dead, or may be a landmark in the Shadow that never existed. The test may be a posed riddle with no fixed answer or could even be a labyrinthine scavenger hunt filled with paradoxical clues and belligerent spirits. The initiation is considered over when the Bone Shadow tries to solve the mystery even though doing so is impossible. By struggling with and attempting to provide an answer, she has proven her devotion to uncovering secrets, impossible as they may be to find.

• **Test of Diplomacy:** The Bone Shadows will take a novitiate, blindfold him, smear his nose with a pungent herb and plug his ears with river mud. Then

they will take him deep into the Shadow, carrying him hours or even days into the wilds. There, they leave him to find his way back to the locus used to enter. They aren't looking to measure his skills at tracking or cartography. They know that along the way he will encounter spirits, whether by his approach or theirs. A Bone Shadow must be familiar and comfortable when dealing with spirits, and be especially attentive to the tribal oath. And should the spirits make trouble for him, it is his duty to return the favor.

What's curious about many of these initiations is that Kamduis-Ur doesn't require his children to complete the tests properly. They merely need to show their commitment by persevering, even if that means doing the wrong thing. It's not about being right (or will it ever be); it's about being *willing*.

Characters

Below are a few Bone Shadow character ideas. These can be used and adapted into players' characters, or can instead serve as examples of the diversity found within the tribe.

Suburban Seer

This Bone Shadow, before her First Change, was always a little "off." She sat alone at the lunch table at school, doodling in a notebook or staring off into space. She noticed things, things nobody else seemed to care about. Lottery numbers seemed to hold hidden patterns and thus, secret meanings. Flocks of sparrows seemed to be holding court instead of picking at worms. The Ms. Pac-Man machine down at Cuffy's Arcade would sometimes fritz out when she was playing and give her messages written in a tongue not her own. Now, as a Cahalith of the *Hirfathra Hissu*, she fulfills the role of suburban seer with the rest of her pack. They keep half the town as their territory, and watch as new mysteries play out before them every day. Why does Carl Greenbriar drizzle his own blood over his lawn at night after he mows? Who's been fucking with the stoplights, putting them dangerously out-of-sync? Worst of all, who's been sacrificing possums at the elementary school playground, laying out strange sigils (formed from strips of possum skin) on the metal slide? And *why*?

Killer of Death

The tenement wasn't right. The burned-out husk in the bad part of town was a bad place, with windows like mouths and cancerous blood forming the coagulated mortar between crumbling bricks. With his pack, this Bone Shadow looked time and time again for whatever bad spirits were making this place like this. They killed all the murder-spirits that flocked there, and wiped out the gangs who ran their poison trade out of the basement. But still, it didn't help. Eventually, this Ithaeur figured it out: ghosts were living in the walls, warping the fundament with their own dark puissance. And so, alone

he went into the building, and gave each phantom what was due: death for the already dead. With that done, the tenement lost its grim edge in the Shadow, and became just another building. The pack was able to take it as its territory, and this Bone Shadow found a new role. After hearing of his exploit, others from his tribe found him, and declared that his new place in this world was to kill the dead. Some ghosts were too angry, and it was now his job to lay them to permanent rest.

Judge of the White Corn

His First Change wasn't kind. As a police officer, he was speeding down one of the long asphalt ribbons of road that cut between fields, chasing a drunk who was driving way too fast. The Change gripped him with hallucinations hard and fast, and before he knew it the car smashed head-on into a telephone pole. The engine came up through the dash and took off his leg at the knee — and even after the Change, this leg never healed. He hasn't been a Bone Shadow for long, but he's established himself as a smart and balancing presence, possessing a keen sense of justice even for an Elodoth. With his pack, the White Corn Jury, he holds court in the midst of Brooker's old cornfield. He arbitrates disputes among the region's five other packs, as well as negotiating truces and pacts with the various spirits. Because he has only one leg, sometimes the other werewolves think him incapable of fighting — after all, isn't that why he's been relegated to act as judge and not executioner? But whenever they get uppity, he surprises them with just how fast he moves on that one leg of his. Sometimes, they just need reminding that even a one-legged Bone Shadow can still kick a Blood Talon's ass from time to time.

The Tribal Oath

Pay Each Spirit in Kind.

The oath of Kamduis-Ur could also be phrased, "Eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth." If a spirit offers its tooth so that a Bone Shadow can make a knife of it, then the Bone Shadow must give her own tooth in return. And if that spirit decides instead to snatch the werewolf's eye out of anger, then the Bone Shadow will embrace his wrath and cut out the spirit's eye — or its equivalent should it have none. Some outside the tribe, along with a few Bone Shadow neophytes, assume that this oath is simply about returning favor. They're wrong — that's only one side of the equation. The concept of paying a debt is not without judgment. A debt may be a positive thing, for example, providing information or Essence, or performing a task. A debt may also be a terrible thing, such as spilling blood, trading lies or ushering in a grand betrayal.

The way Bone Shadows approach this oath — and *why* they adhere to it — is not universal. Some accept the oath at face value, following it as a soldier would an order from on-high. It is an oath, rock-solid and indefatigable. They follow the oath because it is what they're told. Of course, few Bone Shadows act so stridently without question, and so many choose to examine the oath under close moral and spiritual scrutiny. The conclusions drawn are many. One Bone Shadow may decide that the oath is a fool's promise, and she decides to adhere to it only because she must, not because it is wise. Another may see that it is out of pragmatism that the oath exists; to get something expected, one must give something, and by giving something, you sometimes get something unexpected. The werewolf recognizes that nothing in this life is free, and the oath helps to keep that in perspective. A third Bone Shadow will see the spiritual significance of the oath. Pragmatism be damned, the oath is about the balance of all things, so tender and delicate. The Shadow is nothing if it is not balanced, and so the oath helps ensure that if a spirit gives something (be it a simple stone or a terrible curse), then it will receive something of equal significance. In this way, balance is kept.

The literality of the oath is oft in question, as well. Some *Hirfathra Hissu* believe that what is paid must truly equal what is given. If a spirit flees the Shadow and murders the wolf-blood sister of a Bone Shadow, then the Bone Shadow must murder one of the spirit's own siblings. (Should it have no "siblings," then the Bone Shadow must find the closest equivalent: a single ally or slave, perhaps.) Other Bone Shadows confronting that situation believe that the debt to pay features far greater ambiguity than a simple one-for-one accord (more modern Bone Shadows might even make a sardonic comment about "compounding interest"). These less-literal interpretations assume that the oath isn't math, and cannot be relegated to a simple equation. Because the spirit brought pain and death, the spirit will receive pain and death. The Bone Shadow may repay that spirit by destroying *all* of its siblings and allies, perhaps even destroying the spirit itself. The balance came due, and it did not *precisely* equal what was paid in: but in the end, the oath is served.

Custom: Spirit Negotiations

Many Bone Shadows demonstrate the oath through the custom of spirit negotiations. Other werewolves talk to spirits as if the werewolves were owed favors, but the Bone Shadows know that in the beginnings of arbitration, neither side owes the other anything.

While the custom itself differs from region to region, negotiating with a spirit is rarely a simple affair. It's uncommon for a Bone Shadow to simply stand there, ask for information and promise its return. No, the custom of negotiation is an elaborate, byzantine affair, gilded with ritual and circumstance. One Bone Shadow may sit in a circle drawn of leaves and drizzled blood, so that she and the spirit may discuss terms. Another Bone Shadow may not discuss terms at all, and may simply travel with the spirit for a time, talking about anything *but* what the Bone Shadow seeks and will pay; by the end of the walk, both sides intuit what the other needs, and either give accordingly or go their separate ways. Some *Hirfathra Hissu* believe in ritualized, highly structured combat: during the fight, every step and blow means something. The negotiation is coded within movement and pain because words are not sufficient.

Werewolves of other tribes often shake their heads at what seems utter nonsense — that is, until the Bone Shadow returns from her arbitration with a powerful new fetish or a surprising gem of information.

Tribal Identity

To be *Hirfathra Hissu* is not to be one thing. No template exists for the perfect Bone Shadow. Yes, certain qualities are sought in most of the tribe: intense curiosity, willingness, perception. Still, every Bone Shadow is different. Where one might be a mad warrior, dancing around his beleaguered foes in a spiral of knives, another may sit quietly atop a porous crag, taunting spirits with lunatic dares and bitter invective.

The Bone Shadows still comprise a single tribe, however, and as such, carry with them a number of traditions. These traditions aren't found amidst members of other tribes. While they're absolutely universal among the *Hirfathra Hissu*, they still have an important place among the tribe members. These practices and beliefs bind Bone Shadows from around the world. Gullbaiter from Piscataway, New Jersey, maintains many of the same traditions as Marid Surat of the Bedouins outside Riyadh. Below are several of these traditions, great and small.

Bones

Appropriately, bones are a significant symbol within the tribe. Bones represent a number of things: on one level, they represent a literal link between life and death, between the physical world and Twilight. The Bone Shadows believe that many secrets are lost in death (and therefore must be recovered, a task suited to them in particular), and bones are one means of divining those mislaid secrets. Divination with bones is not uncommon among the *Hirfathra Hissu*. For many, this isn't literal divination; the bones do not actually confer true glimpses of the future. No, they simply allow a Bone Shadow to meditate upon things that are important to her. She casts the bones and examines how they fall, what shadows they cast, all the while hoping to find a moment's inspiration in the osseous configuration. For some, this enlightenment guides them on esoteric subjects (perhaps granting a +1 to an Occult roll), while others use the bones as foci when meditating (+1 to Meditation, as found on p. 51 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**). Admittedly, some Bone Shadows bind spirits to their collection of bones, making fetishes that literally help the werewolves to mystically find answers that are otherwise inaccessible.

Even those Bone Shadows who do not use bones in divination or meditation still give themselves over to the imagery of bones. The representation of bones can be minimal (a withered coyote paw or homegrown human skull tattoo) or elaborate (100 bird skulls dangling from the body on various leather cords, rattling together whenever the werewolf moves). Some might make masks out of skulls or pierce parts of their bodies with finger bones. One suburban Bone Shadow, Black Bobby, always wears a ratty dark T-shirt with a white skull image bleached onto the front.

Another tradition involving bones is the way that Bone Shadows pass along legends and lore. Tribe members are certainly loyal to their packs, but often reserve a portion of their loyalty for the rest of their tribe. Thus, when in an area or upon a road that other Bone Shadows might travel, a tribe member will leave behind snippets of legend or pertinent warnings for her tribemates to find. The Bone Shadow often writes the message — which may be a few words inked on a slip of paper the size of a Chinese cookie's fortune or a lengthy poem or missive penned in tiny letters and rolled up in a little scroll — and then

deposits it within a bone. The werewolf leaves the note clamped between the teeth of an otter's skull or stuffed into the hollowed-out spine of a gazelle. She then puts the bone somewhere that only other Bone Shadows are likely to find it. Maybe she leaves marks that other tribe members know to look for. Perhaps all the Bone Shadows in a given region know to hide the bones toward the trunks of densely branched fir trees. The message itself could be a word of warning ("Do not trust the Irralunim by Scalpel Rock") or a snippet of myth ("Upon this rock, Ten Quiet Thunders tamed the Spider Duchess, and took a serpent-shaped scar upon his muzzle"). While this tradition has no official name, many refer to it as the "Chain of Bones."



Custom: Cracking the Shell

One custom has emerged out of the traditions of Asian Bone Shadows and has found its way among Western wolves The custom involves taking a bleached turtle's shell and painting it with glyphs and ritual prayers The ritemaster then drills or taps a hole in the center of the bony shell

The focus of the ritual is actually a fetish The fetish is a spiraling iron rod possessed of a falcon-spirit (for falcons fly high and see all) A Bone Shadow asks for information regarding another werewolf posed as a single question He then screws the rod through the shell's hole and activates the fetish The iron heats up with the stirring of the contained spirit's wings and then suddenly the shell cracks loud and fast It never splits but a series of spidery cracks snake out from the center of the shell The ritemaster then receives an answer to her question (though admittedly the answer comes garbed in mythic imagery and is never absolute)

The spiraling rod is a two dot fetish should any Bone Shadow wish to inherit or make one of her own While Cracking the Shell is considered a ritual no ritual roll is necessary — only the fetish's activation is required to achieve the results

Pacts

The Bone Shadow oath gives an indication of how important pacts are among the tribe. A pact, whether a spoken accord or an unspoken promise, forms the basis of a Bone Shadow's honor. The Bone Shadows' oath guarantees that they will treat a spirit fairly (and "fairly" may mean destroying that spirit if that's what is deserved), but many take the concept and carry it with them in their dealings with non-spirits, as well. Because of this, many Bone Shadows are fond of making promises and oaths to everyone they meet. The promise can be small ("I swear that I will give Red Jack the message") or profound ("For the rest of my days, I will watch over your family, and any who dare to threaten them will lose his left hand or paw"). Some pacts can be promises *nobody* wants to hear ("When

you least expect it, I promise that I shall chase Death to your tent and then watch as he stills your heart in his frigid grip").

Bone Shadows don't just make oaths to other werewolves, either. Whoever a Bone Shadow encounters is likely to hear some kind of promise, be it a vague assurance or a concrete concordat. It doesn't matter if the recipient is an ignorant human, a cowering Ridden or a lordly vampire: a promise is a promise.

However, a promise can be awfully ambiguous. The Bone Shadows know that, and some use that to their advantage. Saying, "I promise to give you this flinted knife when you tell me where the Ghost of Aubrey Jones is" doesn't guarantee that "giving" the knife doesn't mean slamming it home in the person's chest. Some Bone Shadows make slippery promises like this as par for the course, granting themselves plenty of wiggle room to go left or right during the fulfillment of a pledge. Others prefer zero doubt: what they say, they mean, in as plain and concretized language as possible.

The thing is, few Bone Shadows ever make slippery promises to *one another.* If one Bone Shadow pledges something to another, it stands. Kamduis-Ur desires solidarity; his children shall have no shadows between them.

Ghosts

The children of Death Wolf inherit a close tie to death and the dead, even if they would rather go without. The Bone Shadows have access to a tremendous amount of lore concerning the ghosts of the human dead, even if that lore is scattered throughout the tribe rather than maintained in a central source. Therefore, the general tendency is to treat ghosts in similar fashion as spirits — pay them in kind. A vengeful ghost that plagues the living should be removed. A ghost that interacts only in short, harmless (if frightening) bursts with the living is less in need of a permanent solution. Some Bone Shadows prefer to help the ghost attain some sort of resolution and pass on, if they can. Other Bone Shadows have no compassion for the remnants of human dead, seeing them as less self-aware than animals.

Naturally, those Bone Shadows who have been initiated into the lore of the Death Gifts are those who have the most frequent contact with ghosts. The act of learning a Death Gift is almost a separate initiation into a sub-sect of the tribe. With the power to interact with the dead comes the necessity to gather lore about death and undeath. When a young *Hirfathra Hissu* comes to a mentor and asks to learn one of the Gifts of Death, the mentor almost always responds with some variation of "Are you certain? Do you know what you're asking?"

The question becomes even more complicated when dealing with undead entities other than ghosts. Vampires linger on after death for reasons entirely different from those of ghosts — vampires are created by their own kind. They aren't the product of a life unfinished. The lore concerning ghosts and the "true dead" simply doesn't apply to vampires, and so there is no real tribal tradition concerning the proper means of dealing with vampires. Some Bone Shadows attempt to help vampires achieve what they could not in life, hoping that the creature will feel content and be ready to move on beyond the gates of Death. Other Bone Shadows see vampires as a potential hazard, rival or prey. Still other Bone Shadows say, "not our concern."

The Forsaken Dead

It is something of a sensitive point that the Bone Shadows those who are initiated into the mysteries of Death have so little concrete information about what happens to the souls of their own kind Many have gathered their own information about the Underworld the land of the dead that lies beyond the Shadow — though never firsthand, for walking in the Underworld is no task for the living Some even discuss the name "Stygia " and what it apparently means to human necromancers But even these are places of the human dead and it's uncertain if the spirits of the Uratha have any place there A prevailing theory among the Bone Shadows is that somewhere beyond the veil the ghost of Pangaea stands The Firstborn guide the souls of the valorous werewolves there where they hunt as they once did Other Bone Shadows believe that the fallen reincarnate perhaps as humans who will never Change again Still other Bone Shadows take the lessons of their human religion and merge them with Bone Shadow philosophy to find a logical answer. At the end, the question of the Uratha dead is a matter of faith

Packs

Many Bone Shadows feel that the only ones who understand them are members of their own tribe. It is therefore surprising that one of the unwritten and unspoken goals of many Bone Shadows is to belong to packs with multi-tribal representation. The thought behind this is that werewolves of other tribes

are capable in their own ways, but are perhaps without the proper attentiveness or respect when it comes to the balance of the Shadow Realm and its denizens. While no Bone Shadow would openly suggest that she belongs to a multi-tribal pack to act as a kind of *police officer…* in effect, that's what she's doing. Her pack may not understand what's right — or, at least, what's necessary — when it comes to maintaining the balance, and so the Bone Shadow lives to do it for them. This is why in many packs the Bone Shadow ends up in an advisory role (sometimes as beta, the "power behind the alpha"). Sort of a combination of priest and parole officer, the Bone Shadow makes sure the pack attends to its spiritual needs and to the needs of the *Hisil*.

While all-Bone Shadow packs are less common, they aren't exactly rare. Tribe members flock together because they understand one another's purpose intimately. Moreover, at times the spiritual concerns of a given pack outright *require* the perspectives of several Bone Shadows. When the Kill Devil pack (of Kill Devil Hills in North Carolina) hunted the great-but-troubled spirit known as the Crashing Teeth of White Waves, the packmembers sought to unravel the entity's tortuous ban. Doing so required several tribe members (in this case, one from each auspice), and in the end each contributed a crucial part to paying the spirit what was owed.

The tribe has no predetermined rules for how an all-Bone Shadow pack must organize or act, though certainly some common themes can be identified. Most packs take wise and complex (sometimes overly so) totems, valuing those spirits that are like constantly shifting puzzles to be solved. (In fact, many Bone Shadow totems are frightening and inscrutable, featuring high-severity bans that act as constant challenges to the packs that abide by them.) Many Bone Shadow packs seek to be "blessed," as most believe that representation from all auspices is critical to the spiritual health of any given pack. While a few packs reject the standard "alpha-beta" dominance, most believe quite profoundly in that tried-and-true way. Instinct and wisdom urge werewolves to gather in that way, and so the Bone Shadows tend to give into their instinct, much as one might let the river current carry him.

In the Masuria Lake District of Poland, several Bone Shadow packs make their home. Each pack is structurally the same, featuring three members, one from each major generation. The eldest is called Grandmother or Grandfather (*Babka* or *Dziadek*, respectively), the middle wolf is Mother or Father (*Matka* or *Ojciec*) and the youngest is Daughter or Son (*Córka* or *Syn*). Each pack assumes control of the territory around a single lake, and each lake features a powerful lake spirit hungry for the elaborate rituals and sacrifices provided by the werewolves. The Bone Shadows' family alliance has controlled this region for nearly 1,000 years, and shows no signs of giving up the spirits' favor or the various small loci that pepper the district.

On rare occasions, one might encounter a lone *Hirfathra Hissu*, traveling as an itinerant shaman. Such a werewolf represses his own instinctive urge (which can unbalance his Harmony) so that he may wander from territory to territory, helping those packs and spirits that require his often vast wisdom. In this way the lone werewolf is like a bodhisattva, ignoring his own spiritual needs so that he may cater first to the needs of others. The Bone Shadow known as Martin-of-the-Rust is one of these nomads, traveling from city to city to lend his profound knowledge of the urban Shadow to those packs who need him. To help salve his potentially damaged Harmony, Martin-of-the-Rust actually asks that a pack take him in as one of its own for a time (which may be a few weeks or even a few years) while he lends his guiding hand. Of course, many packs are disinterested, because Martin, for all his wisdom, is both stubborn and belligerent.

History

Bone Shadows are both the keepers of history and its discounters. On one hand, they can be obsessive lorekeepers, mining every minute event for meaning and secret. They also recognize that history turns in cruel circles, and one must see the gyre's revolution before he can hope to slip through its center and escape it. However, many Bone Shadows also believe that to obsess over history can be in its own way a blindfold preventing one from properly seeing new knowledge. If a werewolf continually compares present events to past occurrences, he is unlikely to untangle whatever conundrum waits before him.

Still, for as much as Bone Shadows involve themselves in the maintaining and telling of history and its secrets, they can just as easily *become* history — or at least find some small place in its embrace.

Human History

Most Bone Shadows agree that it is unwise to involve themselves in the matters of humanity. Sometimes by trying to steer humankind's fate, a pack can find itself in the tragic position of Oedipus — in other words, by trying to avoid fate, they steer straight into it.

Humanity does what it will; controlling it is as easy as herding bees. What the Bone Shadows instead prefer is to take control of history's after-effects. Humankind leaves madness in their wake, and the tribe often seeks to clean up whatever they leave behind.

When the sword of Islam cut a swath across the Middle East in the seventh century, the Bone Shadows — paired with Bedouin wolf-bloods — traveled in its wake, helping to calm the angry *djinn* spirits and the blood-soaked sandstorms that would rise up out of the Shadow. When Temujin rode through towns as the conquering Khan (accompanied by Blood Talons, if the stories ring true), cutting up bodies and leaving them in massive fly-specked flesh cairns, the tribe was there, helping to calm vengeful ghosts and destroy the gory magath that rose from the piles of dismembered limbs. In both world wars, the Bone Shadows stayed to the shadows, hunting the Worms that squirmed through the trenches, saving old books and scrolls from the Nazi fires, and helping deranged war-addled spirits once again find some small peace.

This *laissez-faire* principle has not always remained true. During the Roman Empire, the Bone Shadows struggled, caught between powerful spirit lords granted power by mortal cults as well as fledgling Christianity (whose proponents cared nothing for the animistic traditions that the Uratha hold true). There, the tribe members were active, helping to steal power from both the rampant spirit lords (or "little gods") as well as the burgeoning monotheistic faith. Even now in the Middle East, the Bone Shadows see how the landscape of the *Hisil* erupts in cankerous, infected Wounds. Many have taken sides in the various terrible struggles there, defending their territories with active and often violent vigilance. This has sadly put many of the tribe at one another's throats (and many outside the region note that this is exactly why they must not involve themselves in the terrors of humanity).

Uratha History

Although the Bone Shadows may endeavor to remain outside the course of human history, they tend to be more fully involved in the happenings of the People. In this way the tribe is not merely the keeper of history, but also its maker. Legend suggests that this has been true from the very beginning: the werewolf who struck the killing blow that felled Father Wolf was said to be a Bone Shadow. This wolf, manifesting Kamduis-Ur, purportedly was able to salve Father Wolf's soul and spirit as it made its transition from life to death. Legend also whispers that this Forsaken who would become the first Bone Shadow also knew that the death of *Urfarah* would end in a curse, but for some unseen balance the act was made necessary. (Further stories say that this werewolf was the architect of one of the earliest lodges, a Bone Shadows lodge that keeps a powerful and serendipitous secret heard in Father Wolf's baying death howl. This group — the Lodge of the Howl — reportedly still exists, and many old Bone Shadows are its secret members.)

In all the points of werewolf history, both broad and local, the Bone Shadows have insinuated themselves, even though they weren't always welcome. When the idigam came back to the world several decades ago, the *Hirfathra Hissu* were the ones who cried out that simple destruction would not do; the idigam's tangled bans first needed unraveling. During the inexorable attacks by the Pure during the 1990s, many Bone Shadows threw themselves into uncovering more about their ceaseless attackers, sacrificing themselves in pursuit of understanding. The Bone Shadows helped to see what made the Pure totems so strange and so strong, and saw how silver cut the Pure all the more deeply than it did the Forsaken. What the Bone Shadows discovered did not allow them to triumph, but the information helped many packs live to fight another day, even in defeat.

It always seems that whenever something strives to bring great imbalance, Bone Shadows appear. (This doesn't imply that they come as champions or heroes. On more than one occasion, a pack may find that the Bone Shadows who arrive are there to help the pack's adversaries in the name of "balance" or "debt.") When the Pale Plague struck Boston last year, tribe members were the ones who discovered that the disease was born of the Beshilu, but passed to humans from the lips of bloodthirsty vampires. When a territorial fracas threatened the safety and sanctity of the Cyclopes Caldera on the island of Santorini, the tribe stole the locus right out from under the two warring packs, leaving both without access to the Shadow. When the winds and waves of Hurricane Katrina drowned New Orleans, the Ug-Tanah pack stayed in the midst of the storm, challenging it, spitting in its eye, culling those water elementals that swelled with sudden hunger. The Bone Shadows don't appear as part of a concerted plan. They have no network of werewolves calling the tribe to action. The Bone Shadows are simply driven by their need to know and their need to *do*. Tribe members can be obsessive in their diligence to unravel mysteries and stare death in its one dark eye.

Custom: Truth of the Teller

The Bone Shadows write things down Many keep journals Individual tribe members aim to preserve old knowledge as well as scribing the new However despite their strict adherence to written history Bone Shadows also makes a strong habit of telling stories and histories in the oral tradition Most Bone Shadows are in one way or another versed in the ways of storytell ing, and will gladly tell a story to fit the situation (or to counter a particular mood)

They are encouraged to tell the story as they see fit, not as history demands it to be. In this way history changes easily from teller to teller, and that's fine by the tribe. While no story changes drastically in a single telling the "whisper down the lane" effect shifts history a little each time Epithets change ("the murderous Blue Bull" may become "the vengeful hero Blue Bull") dates shift (a battle in winter becomes war in the summer) and other small details meander away from the original telling This is not only accepted, but expected. History is in flux, relative to the witness and to the teller and therein lies an important lesson about all perceptions

The Many Shadows

Certainly the Bone Shadows are not one thing. Where one is a wizened shaman whose limbs are as brittle as ivy-choked wood, another is a suburban detective searching for mystic clues in an old Addams Family pinball machine. The various faces of the moon, the many codes of Renown and the branching paths of the soul allow for a multifarious spread of *Hirfathra Hissu*. Whirling dervishes, meditative madmen, holy murderers, honey-tongued diplomats: these are the many faces of Kamduis-Ur's children.

Rahu

"Newsflash, Princess, the Talons aren't the only ones who know how to wade into battle and come out covered in the blood of the enemy. Our people do it as well as theirs. Except, listen close, because here's the difference. We know why we're doing it. This isn't war for the sake of war. It's war with purpose. My claws and teeth don't just cut through flesh and muscle. They tear apart ignorance. They rend through mystery like it was rotten fucking sinew. It's all about context, baby."

The Full Moon warriors of the *Hirfathra Hissu* are both different from the Rahu of other tribes, as well as the same. They are the same because, at heart, they feel the Rage burning hot through their hearts like biting acid, and they wade into battle the same as everybody else. The lucky ones emerge in the blood of the enemy, the unlucky walk out missing eyes or hands or part of a muzzle. It's not how the warriors of the tribe act that separates them from others; it's *why* they act.

These Rahu seek a different purpose when leaping at the throat of an adversary. It's not about refusing surrender or protecting territory or a locus. No, the Bone Shadow warrior acts with one of many potential purposes perhaps unique to its kind. The Rahu may attack an enemy to repay a brutal debt. She may dance, klaive-against-klaive, in the hopes of earning information for her pack. There is a purity found in combat, where one's soul is laid bare with every swipe of claw or gnash of teeth, and the Bone Shadow Rahu may be reading the fight as one reads a book, deciphering the enemy's actions with a keen and dismantling eye.

The Full Moon *Hirfathra Hissu* can be rather specialized, as well. Some focus only on combating spirits — after all, battling an ephemeral entity is nothing like fighting a human. It can be a puzzling, dizzying affair, and many Rahu of the tribe study it for decades. The same goes with those who fight only ghosts. Specters of Twilight can be psychotic and murderous. Whole packs of Bone Shadow Rahu have been formed with the sole purpose of giving those vicious ghosts exactly what they deserve: a final reward.

Rahu of the tribe often share a kind of culture, a mini-society within the larger group. Whenever one tribal warrior meets another, they often take time away from their packs to train together and learn new secrets. A patient, spiritual warrior may spar with a frothing berserker (whose face is painted with a chalky skull), and the two will learn moves and tactics from one another. Moreover, they often discuss their differing philosophies. Is it proper to be a reluctant warrior, or is one's Harmony better served by giving into the undertow of battle? What is the final goal of war? Is death the purpose (and it may be, for Kamduis-Ur assures them that death is pure)? Or is war just the means to justify another end such as knowledge, intimidation, or sacrifice?

Optional Rule: Spirit Warrior's Eye

If the Storyteller allows it, when creating a Bone Shadow Rahu character, you can modify the inbuilt auspice ability known as "Warrior's Eye" (see p. **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). In this case, the character is more capable when "reading" a spirit foe, and less capable when eyeing up any other adversary. The same roll applies (Wits + Primal Urge), but the character gains a +2 to the roll when reading a spirit foe and –2 when reading a non-spirit foe.

Purity

One Bone Shadow, the jungle soldier known as Suchada Suthep, demonstrates his idea of purity by balancing a newly polished sword upon his finger. He demonstrates the clean and gleaming line formed by the steel, then runs his own finger across the blade so that it draws blood. "That is purity," he says, "the balance of battle."

Many Bone Shadows have a different (and specific) idea of what Purity is: it's death. The tribe's totem makes it very clear that death is the purest, simplest thing. It strips away the complexities of life and bares the answers to many a mystery. Purity is therefore best expressed by the Rahu, who is the bringer of death upon the muddy, bloody battlefield. One of North America's oldest tribe members, a withered eremite known only as the Confessor of Leaves, demonstrates his own idea of Purity by bringing students to the battlefield every day for several days after a battle. There he shows the decay of corpses: maggots and beetles eat the flesh away, until in the end there is nothing but gleaming bone. *Pure* bone.

Cahalith

"I fought my enemy — the burned wretch known as Walter Blaze — and lost. I went home to paint him, then, oils on canvas. As the brush cast his image in many hues, I saw things I couldn't see before. I saw how he falters when he leans in to strike. I saw how in his eyes was an all-consuming fire, a fire he wishes will sweep over our territory and eat us alive. The way his lip curls tells me how much his people hates our people. Better still, it tells me how easy it will be to bait him to come close so that we may gut him and read his entrails."

The *Hirfathra Hissu* hold their Cahalith in the highest regard. The tribe's Gibbous Moons are besieged by vision and inspiration, so much so that the pressure to vent those elements feels like a worm trying to chew through the skin to escape. They often seem distant or disconnected from the world around them, dizzy and lost, focusing on one thing at the expense of all others. A Cahalith may cross a busy intersection to get to a strange flower growing up through the sidewalk across the way — except, she forgets to check for oncoming cars and appears unfazed as one zooms past only inches away. One Bone Shadow, Swept Sage, is known to vocally compose a poem in the midst of heated battle. With each crack of his whip he finishes another line or stanza, tasting the blood on the end of the leather cord for sporadic inspiration.

As artists, the tribe's Cahalith are driven to reflect the world around them not simply as a record of its presence but as a way to see old things in a new light. Painting or writing about a tree allows the Bone Shadow to see things he might've otherwise missed: an owl hiding in a knotty grotto, a set of initials carved into the side by a pair of unruly lovers, thirsty roots poking from the earth. The Cahalith may then use what she gleans later. Perhaps when dealing with the tree's awakened spirit, she has things to offer — or to take away.

Those who aren't artists may end up solely as prophets. The tribe is renowned for its mad seers, and many of these seers end up as powerful leaders. While certainly the Bone Shadows revere all manner of martial prowess and social discipline, many packs elevate inspiration and enlightenment above all. The Cahalith visionary is given glimpses into the unseen and not-yet-known, but it's more than just the *access* to these visions that matter. The devotion to these visions, the commitment to deciphering mysteries, counts the most. Those who see perhaps more "touched" than others (or, at least, more drawn to the mysteries) are considered blessed. Older Cahalith prophets find these untested oracles and quite literally train them. Some Cahalith may disappear for weeks; others never return to their packs at all. When the prophets come, often in a group of three, they open the door to new ways of thinking, helping provide a light and a map through the maze-like tangle of dreams and hallucinations.

However, historians and lorekeepers comprise the largest bulk of the tribe's Gibbous Moon Uratha. The Bone Shadows value the keeping of records immensely, and so it falls to the Cahalith members to undertake this task when no others will. Some Cahalith are simply that, record-keepers, obsessively

recording information in journals, on microcassettes, in MP3 files, whatever. They have little context or understanding, and refuse to examine what they write (some suggest that by examining it, you taint what was recording by re-examining the moment too many times). Other Cahalith are vast storehouses of information, most of which is contained in their brains and not on paper. One of these Cahaliths may have almost eerie recall: she knows who controls the territory surrounding that old dead field where the tree with the bee-hive is, even though it's some 100 miles north. Even though she wasn't there, she knows the angle of the arrow (poisoned with drain cleaner) that stuck in the neck of that Pure Tribe asshole five years ago.

Custom: Registry of Bone

History is all about death It may be writ ten about people or werewolves who are still alive but the *moments* recorded are dead gone They're *history*

Some suggest that's why the Bone Shadows are so obsessed with it — it fulfills their fascination with death (and the mysteries trapped within it) Many Cahalith of the tribe maintain small storehouses of lore and history This storehouse known traditionally as a Registry of Bone may be small and hidden (a carved out hunk of abutment under a closed down overpass) or massive and well known (an abandoned schoolhouse brimming with books loose pages and minor fetishes) When confronting a mystery a Cahalith may withdraw to the Registry, either to look for specific examples or perhaps only to glean the patterns of history (or he may simply hope to meditate) Some Registries are connected to one another — perhaps by phone line or website or even by small tunnels bridging one territory to the next

Glory

Many werewolves — including some Bone Shadows — claim that this tribe understands the idea of Glory least of all the codes of Renown. They're wrong. Courage in the face of danger needn't be on the battlefield. Chasing the spirit of death into a Beshilu warren to steal a written secret clamped between the spirit's jaws, that's bravery, too. Wandering into a Wound to barter with a murder-spirit whose fingers are tipped with blood-soaked silver: that takes major guts. Moreover, these acts of nerve aren't forgotten; the tribe's Cahalith members champion these stories again and again.

That said, most Bone Shadows refuse to give credence to Glory, despite their attention to it. The elders of the tribe, even the Gibbous Moons, are quite clear: Glory comes only after Wisdom. Bravery isn't born of ignorance (some werewolves act as if the two are synonymous, acting brash first and calling it courageous later). Only those who act wisely deserve Glory. At least on the surface, Glory is secondary. It sounds good, too, until one of the Gibbous Moons begins his epic retelling of "Grass Snake Finds the Door to Death's Own Dream." At that point, it's clear that the Bone Shadows hang plenty of significance upon the codes of Glory.

Elodoth

"Hello, Reverend Oxblood, Fox Magister of Shit Hollow. I come bearing the price of discussion: a single white peony with blood flecked on the petals. For your lapel, of course. If you do me the service of sitting and talking for a time, I believe we can make a deal that will be amenable to both your people and my pack. I want to negotiate passage through Shit Hollow without earning the ire of the other foxes. Tell me what you ask in return, and we shall have our bargain. But first, if you please, sheath your claws or I promise to skin you there where you stand."

The oath of the Bone Shadows demands judgment as finely tuned as a precision scale. What is owed must be paid. It falls to the tribe's Elodoth to be the arbiters of this oath when others cannot be trusted to do so. The Elodoth — possessing a keen sense of balance, of how one task can be equal to another, of debts and payments — is the one who steps first into the circle with the spirits and negotiates a deal. The Elodoth's job is to get what the pack or tribe wants. If they seek a totem, or the teaching of an elusive Gift or the favor of a single piece of information, the Elodoth must weigh what is desired with what must then be given. Spirits aren't easy when it comes to negotiations. Rarely are they clear about what they want, and even when they are, what they want may not be what is spiritually equitable. If the Elodoth asks a spirit to guide his pack the long way around a vicious Wound, the spirit may ask the werewolves to destroy three of its enemies as payment. While the pack may consider it a fair price, the Half-Moon's job is to determine whether or not the price is spiritually evenhanded. Just because they're willing to pay it doesn't make it right to do so.

The Elodoth must also act as judgment in regards to the tribal oath, as well. Sometimes, a spirit deserves "payment" whether or not negotiations took place. At times, this payment comes as a favor: if a spirit unwittingly performed a task that helped the pack, then the Elodoth will find suitable compensation. The same goes for any spirit that offends the pack or its allies. The Half-Moon is the one the tribe looks to when deciding what punishment must befall a spirit. The Elodoth may not be the one who delivers the punishment (the Rahu or Ithaeur often take up that charge), but the Elodoth is damn sure the one who metes it out.

The Bone Shadow Half-Moon is also the one who takes up the well-being of his pack, sometimes to a compulsive level. Are they spending enough time in the Shadow? Are they familiar enough with the area's spirits? Acting as a kind of pack priest, the tribe's Elodoth members help shepherd their packmates toward what the Elodoth believe is the proper course of action (woe to those Bone Shadows who follow an imbalanced or deranged Half-Moon, who will gladly lead them off a cliff's edge to learn some crucial lesson).

While the other auspices within the tribe often come together for moments of solidarity, the Elodoths tend to stay away from one another. Having two separate "voices of balance" can be frankly unbalancing, and few want to muddle their own judgment with the ideas of another. For this reason, very few Bone Shadow packs have two Half-Moons present.

Honor

For the Bone Shadows, Honor is tricky. On one hand, it's incredibly important; after all, the very concept fuels the tribal oath. Honor is at the crux of the tribe's ideas when dealing with spirits — fairness, balance, justice. And yet, that only applies when dealing with spirits, not human beings or even other werewolves.

Fact is, the *Hirfathra Hissu* are all-too-often willing to let Honor go by the wayside. They don't discard Honor for the sake of doing so, and whenever possible they're likely to maintain it. But if acting honorably will lessen a Bone Shadow's chances of achieving his goal, then he may very well embrace dishonor. Certainly, not all tribe members are this way, and many place the concept as paramount in all their dealings. It's just that the Bone Shadows see problems from all sides. They are often the victims of their own relativity, and it's easy to view the world as painted in so many shades of gray. When Maiandra Cloudheart is accused of being dishonorable (something that happens quite a lot, for she is a rather puckish Half-Moon), she replies only with, "It's all relative. What's honorable for me is rarely honorable for you."

Ithaeur

"It's important for you to know just how fucked we are. The ocean is angry. Its waters are just one big mouth, waiting to swallow us up. The winds and pelicans are whispering about us, and they say our odds aren't very good. But don't worry. I'll take the rowboat. I took care to prepare it earlier, just in case — I painted its bow in bile and draped dried vervain flowers across the stern. This is what I do. I know things you don't. And because of me, maybe we're not going to be fucked after all."

Arrogant and more than a little mad, the Crescent Moons of the Bone Shadows tribe are the shamans, the ritualists, the spiritual leg-breakers. While the Elodoth may be the one to identify a proper totem spirit, the Ithaeur is often the one who tracks it and forces it to submit. The Ithaeur performs sacrifices, pulls secrets from a spirit's body by reaching down its throat and acts as the bridge between the world of the living and the ghostly ways of the invisible dead. Truly, the Bone Shadow Ithaeur is in many ways the *ultimate* Crescent Moon — not better than those from other tribes, but simply more intense, focused, and possibly insane.

Acting as an Ithaeur for this tribe is not without its pitfalls, something that many Bone Shadows work against. On one level, the shaman works best alone. Many lose ties to their own People and instead cast a diaphanous line into the Shadow. When walking between worlds, it's easy to get lost. On another level, dealing with aggressive spirits is all the more dangerous than combating things in the physical world. Spirits have an arsenal of weapons far more dangerous than sharp teeth or shotgun. Injuries born of spirit interactions often affect the mind and soul as much as they do the body, and so many Bone Shadow Ithaeurs — so committed to their tasks that they throw themselves headlong into peril — walk away a little more insane each time.

Because of this, Bone Shadow Ithaeurs are encouraged to have several anchors. One anchor is always the pack. The tribe doesn't usually condone lone Ithaeurs, for over time they can become dangerous (though, they can also become incredibly wise despite their disrupted Harmony). The pack acts as an incredible touchstone, and the Half-Moons in particular make every effort to bring the Crescent Moons "back to earth." Many also take other smaller anchors beyond the pack. One Bone Shadow, Isteban of the Choking Vines, tends to a garden at the far end of his territory. Another may fix motorcycles, or take daily walks through the suburbs or work at the local homeless shelter. The task itself matters little; what matters is that it is a relatively mundane task that takes the

Ithaeur out of the Shadow and away from spirits. By dealing with the real world and focusing on a simple chore, the Bone Shadow can become a little more centered. In time, she will be called upon to venture into the hoary mists and confront some awful spirit, but for now she can try to remain grounded.

Some can't remain grounded, though. As time goes on, they cease to understand their packmates and feel utterly disconnected from the physical world, as if they themselves are ghosts. Many such Bone Shadows retire from the life, finding some small hunk of territory (a swampy grotto, a sheltered mountaintop cave, a small canyon in the approximate middle of nowhere) where they live out the rest of their days, naked and howling. For those brave enough, such figures possess a wealth of knowledge and power. Getting that knowledge from them, though, can come with a high cost — perhaps life or limb.

Custom: Masks

Many Bone Shadow Ithaeur wear masks whenever they perform tasks appropriate to their auspice (such as dealing with spirits) The mask can be anything: delicate hand painted porcelain a half mask leafed with bright gold a demon's mask made of clumped mud and dry bristled brush the skull of an animal The purpose of such a mask is multifold as well Some wear them to embody the traits of what they most wish to be — the Crescent Moon may wear an owl mask because such birds are wise and efficient hunters. Perhaps he wears a mask that is meant to reflect his totem, or a powerful spirit he admires Alternately the mask may be meant to frighten and intimidate (and may even grant a t o appropriate Intimidation rolls)

Wisdom

Many Bone Shadows are fond of pointing out what they feel is a tribal Catch-22: Wisdom is of the utmost importance to the tribe members, and yet few are willing to admit that they possess it at all. (They are also likely to note that those who believe themselves wise are probably fools.) Some *Hirfathra Hissu* believe that Wisdom is contained in knowing many rituals and being able to recite history, but most are quick to point out that possessing information isn't the same as being wise. Wisdom and knowledge are not mutually inclusive: a child can be wise but have no knowledge (and, many note that gaining knowledge only makes exercising Wisdom all the more difficult). Much in the way that a piano-playing prodigy is able to play not because of training but because it's what his fingers *do*, the truly wise cannot make themselves so, they simply *are*.

Those who value Wisdom — not just Ithaeurs, as the whole tribe sees its importance — often express this code of Renown in specific ways. Some might seek to unravel the bans of many powerful spirits. Others hope to invent their own rituals, geared specifically toward their own pack and territory. Some play wild puzzling games of intuition, inscrutable to those who see them executed (and maybe even to those who play them).

Truth is, all Bone Shadows seek Wisdom. But few Bone Shadows agree on what that search actually means — or what it is they truly hope to find.

Irraka

"I'm the wolf who goes where you won't. Dark tunnel? Mouth of the beast? The dead center of enemy territory, where the Ivory Claws live in their clean little town? Count me in. But it's not just that. I do things you don't want to do. I take the bullet. I play a mean game of pretend, where the loser, if caught, dies. I get in under the skin, and make people tell me things they're not supposed to say. I may not feel good about it. But me, I'm all about necessity."

When the moon goes dark, the Bone Shadow Irraka is happiest: then she can be herself, gamboling about in the murk and gloom, smelling the perfume of night flowers blooming. Sadly, the No Moons of the tribe don't get a lot of chance to be happy. While the Irraka members in other tribes are sent out as scouts or hunters under the cover of darkness, the Bone Shadows prefer instead to put their No Moons out in the harsh light of day. The darkness, for them, is more metaphorical, composed of subterfuge and trickery.

For instance, many of the tribe's Irraka are practiced liars and imitators. They take on other personalities for the good of the pack (or tribe), perhaps waltzing into Pure lands pretending to be one of them, or blending in with a human street gang to find out the best way to disrupt their neighborhood dominance. They act as the fabled "wolf-in-sheep's-clothing," feigning to be something they are not. Their imitations (sometimes even going so far as acting as another werewolf's doppelgänger if the look is right) must withstand scrutiny — even that which comes under the glaring sun. They cannot count on the cover of actual darkness to stay hidden. No, they must be hidden, but in *plain sight*.

Some Bone Shadow No Moons must instead cloak themselves in moral darkness. The tribe seeks information and knowledge at every turn. If that means taking it from someone else, so be it. Those who dare to conceal important knowledge must be made to relin-

quish that knowledge, and when nothing else works, the Irraka are brought in to finish the job. Simply put, some are trained as torturers. (Rumor says that the No Moons of the tribe even have their own lodge: "The Hand and the Knife.") Certainly the tribe places restrictions in this: Irraka torturers are never to torture other Forsaken, or their wolf-blooded families. Everybody else, however, is fair game. Be it one of the Pure, a two-faced magician or a local corrupt human police officer, the No Moon will do what needs doing. Some learn the art of causing physical pain, whereas more adept (and certainly more frightening) torturers learn the ways of bringing mental and emotional anguish.

This path damages a werewolf's Harmony, to be sure, which is why many endeavor daily to perform counterbalancing acts. One may train to find peace in sessions with the pack totem, whereas another may simply devote himself to doing good things for the pack's territory. Anything to help shut out the nightmares of what one must do to survive. Some regret becoming one of the tribe's torturers, while a rare few begin to relish it. Some stay on the path regardless, recognizing that, if whittling away a Fire-Touched's extremities with a silver knife is what will get him to spill the location of the wolf-blood hostages, fine. Others can only stomach the path for so long before giving in and finding another "line of work."

Cunning

Three-Face Miranda, one of the tribe's elder No Moons, tells her students this: "Cunning is being smarter than everyone else, but not yourself." Her packmate, another Irraka named Cormorant Black, laughs that off and says instead, "Cunning is not getting killed."

While the tribe doesn't value Cunning above, say, Wisdom, Bone Shadows do consider Cunning an important watermark. Kamduis-Ur knows that Wisdom is the ability to do the right thing, but he also knows that when chasing death, the wrong thing can happen regardless of your intentions. Cunning, therefore, is the ability to make the wrong thing right. Wisdom is deep, slow. Cunning is sharp, shallow and fast. Even the wisest *Hirfathra Hissu* is useless if he cannot think his way out of a situation that suddenly goes horrifically awry. Many tribal mentors tell their younger students that the ability to see a chess match's endgame is only useful if you can still play the game piece by piece. For the tribe's Irraka, Wisdom is the long con. Cunning is what gets you there.

Concerns of the Soul

The mystics of the *Hirfathra Hissu* are bound together by their natures. While no two Bone Shadows are really the same, each is connected by the grace of Kamduis-Ur. His presence and teaching — passed from tribe member to tribe member — reflect in the way a Bone Shadow's soul shifts during her life.

Harmony

Most Bone Shadows are quite attentive when it comes to Harmony. The tribe deals often with spirits, likely more often than werewolves of other tribes. Seeing as how spirits react far more amenably to those with undamaged Harmony scores, most *Hirfathra Hissu* endeavor to keep themselves somewhat balanced.

Still, some say there is insight to be found in imbalance. While this belief is not universal, a few mentors feel that pushing oneself to the edge helps to clarify *why* Harmony is important in the first place. Rarely does one encourage another to sink far enough so that spirits actively loathe him, but certainly a few dots' worth of loss allows for an astute "compare-and-contrast." Moreover, some Bone Shadows regrettably perform tasks that upset their own spiritual equilibriums. Whether it means spending too much time alone as a hermit or torturing a human FBI agent for information, some tribe members certainly skirt the edge.

Curiously, high-Harmony Bone Shadows may appear just as mad as those with low scores. A Bone Shadow with Harmony 9 or 10 is a revered shaman, truly walking between worlds. Such a Uratha might speak only in riddles, be followed by a loyal passel of spirits or ghosts in Twilight and attempt to impart lessons that — on the surface, at least — make absolutely no sense. The truly enlightened figure, balanced on the sharp point of the spiritual pin, often doesn't make much sense to those without that level of illumination.

Low-Harmony Bone Shadows are just as crazy, but their madness serves as only as a negative example. Those below Harmony 3 begin to reveal odd or grotesque behavior. The werewolf may feel she's embracing the nature of the Firstborn totem, but in reality she's starved herself to a pale, shallow frame. She may try to embody death, much as Kamduir-Ur does, but in reality all she's doing is torturing and killing forest creatures. Many low-Harmony tribe members become embroiled in a tangle of obsessive-compulsive behavior. Everything becomes a riddle to be solved. Paranoia and suspicion take hold as the werewolf believes that everybody is concealing knowledge from her. One Bone Shadow, the once-revered John Blackstone, became literally afraid of the living. His Harmony dropped so low that he could not abide life itself, and so surrounded himself with corpses (which he treated as both friends and food). Proving that Wisdom and Harmony are not exclusive to older werewolves, the story goes that a young

pack of Bone Shadows, the 59th Street Sparrows, were able to nurse John back to sanity.

Primal Urge

Some Bone Shadows unconsciously deepen their connection to their Primal Urge without meaning to. Because Primal Urge represents the connection to a werewolf's spiritual half, tribe members strive to feel that power, often without even recognizing exactly what it is they're feeling. They only know that it feels right, and it compels them.

Some in the tribe are able to recognize this for a time, and encourage a kind of balance in this as they do in many things. A high Primal Urge can hamper a werewolf as much as help, and so many mentors encourage their students to gain that power slowly and sparingly.

Others, however, don't care. They see Primal Urge as a badge of authority and instinct, and embrace it. Those who gain Primal Urge to the point of Essence bleed, however, begin to manifest unusual traits: elements of the Firstborn. These werewolves may appear gaunt, their fur may begin to turn black (or white) if it wasn't already. Their eyes may change to colors that are not precisely natural (anything from eerie ice blue to a bloodshot red). Not just their physical form changes: their demeanor, too, may shift as Essence bleeds. They may become quiet like Kamduis-Ur, speaking only rarely. The werewolf may suddenly disappear into the shadows or spend a surprising amount of time in the *Hisil*. Even the world around her may shift: spirits seem to gather in her wake, flames gutter and go out as she passes, animals or humans may feel faint (as if their lifeforces are waning ever-so-slightly) in her presence.

The tribe tells stories of a werewolf once known as Jericho Glass. When he reached the pinnacle of his power (Primal Urge 10), he renamed himself with only a number ("Seven"). His physical change was said to be immensely frightening, even to the most stalwart Rahu. Seven gained three feet in height, his teeth grew black and gleaming like polished hematite and his eyes became holes with lights in them that looked like agitated fireflies. He didn't hang around this world for long, disappearing into the Shadow not long after reaching his pack. Though, while he remained, those Bone Shadows who stood in his presence were said to be able to themselves gain what Essence bled from his flesh.

Story Hooks

What follows are a few story hooks that, as a player, you may be able to incorporate into your character's past and potential future. Obviously, should you find one of these hooks useful, let the Storyteller know so that two of you can work to make it a meaningful part of the tale, not just a note scrawled on the back of a character sheet.

• **Madman and Mentor:** Congratulations! Your Bone Shadow has been chosen. An elder of the tribe emerges from what appears to be a long journey, and he "claims" your character as his new student. He has no pack. He has few teeth. He may not even wear clothes. Dried blood and sinew cling to the underside of overlong fingernails, and his eyes (each colored differently from the other) seem unable to focus on one thing for long. His offer to teach your character isn't so much an offer as it is a "demand." He won't just go away. He damn sure won't be disrespected. He's clearly powerful, but it's difficult to determine whether he's insane from enlightenment or imbalance. Sometimes he says things that seem so profound that they blow your character out of the water; other times his tirades seem incomprehensible. He may become violent if rebuked.

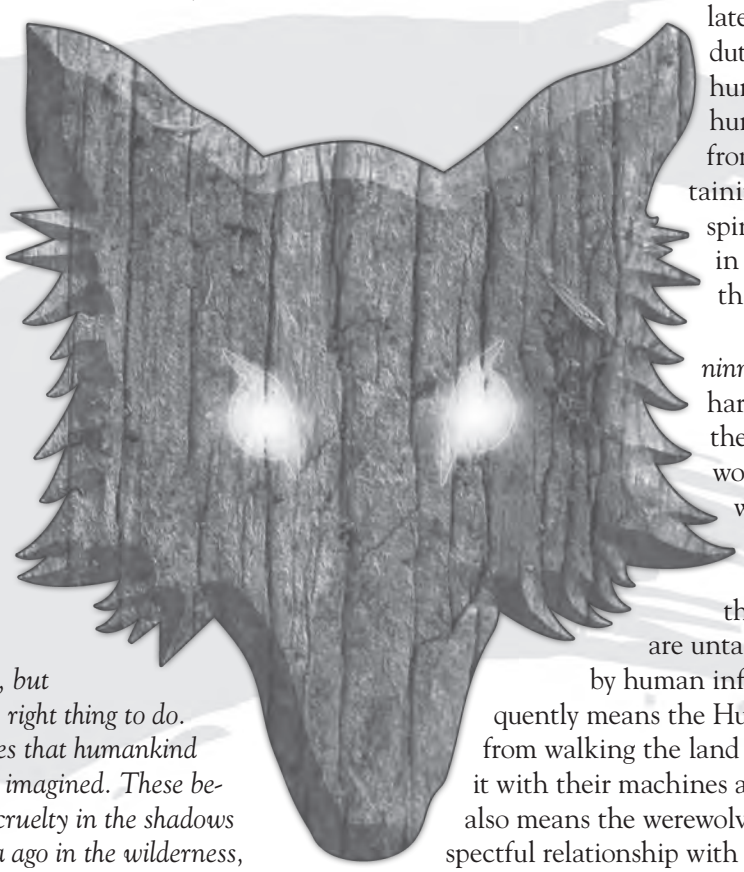
• **Keeper of the Dead:** No matter what auspice your character belongs to, upon his First Change he becomes a magnet for the restless dead. They seem to flock to him, demanding that he help them fulfill their needs. His fellow Bone Shadows claim that he has been chosen as a "keeper of the dead," or one whose task in this world is to be the bridge between the land of the living and the Twilight of the dead. This role is, according to many, blessed, one that embodies the very essence of Kamduis-Ur and has been since time immemorial. Problem is, it isn't easy. Ghosts make it difficult to concentrate or sleep. Needy specters threaten to make trouble if their desires aren't met. Can the character learn to control them? Does he learn to embrace the role and find a way to gain favor from the dead, or is there a way that he can pass this "job" onto another Bone Shadow?

• **On the Hook:** Your character, be it during her First Change or at some later point during her early years as a werewolf, is saved from death by a powerful spirit. Perhaps she was attacked by a large pack of Predator Kings, or swarmed by a sudden disrupted nest of Rat *shartha*. Whatever the case, a powerful spirit manifests and save her ass at the last minute. The spirit claims she now owes the spirit — a debt that will remain unpaid until the spirit comes calling. Unfortunately, the spirit, while powerful, isn't precisely trustworthy. Whether it's a strange conceptual entity (a hungry avarice-spirit, perhaps) or an odd magath, there's no telling what the spirit will want, and when. Still, the tribal oath ties the character to this. The spirit is likely to come calling at the worst time. Can the character find a way to repay the debt before this happens? Wriggling out of the obligation will earn her no favor with her peers in the tribe.

Hunters in Darkness

As a Hunter, you have a sacred duty coupled with an understanding the others lack. Your duty is to watch over the sacred places in the world, to defend them from defilement and destruction. Your understanding is born from the knowledge that such sacred places are ever poised in delicate balance, a balance that must be maintained as well as defended.

Your commitment and skill are evident, bound together in the way you hunt: hidden, unseen, undetected by your prey until the moment of the first and final strike. As Meninna, *you are one of the most primal-hearted werewolves howling and hunting under Luna's sky. It falls to you to stalk prey into the darkest places of substance and Shadow, emerging with knowledge and scars your pack will marvel at. You are the one who fights for the soul of places untouched and unseen by humanity, not for thought of reward, but because you know it's the right thing to do. Your enemies are creatures that humankind has never seen and never imagined. These beings were spawned from cruelty in the shadows of cities or born millennia ago in the wilderness, and have never seen a human in the centuries since. Yet these creatures hate you for the sins of your ancestors. You hunt them now because you were born to hunt them, because someone must do it and you possess the skill to survive.*



You are a scion of Black Wolf, a child of Hikaon-Ur, and you guard the soul of the world — respecting those who defend it and slaughtering those who would desecrate it.

Blood of Hunters

The Hunters in Darkness are consummate predators in both urban and wilderness environments, watching over the sacred places humans never see. Such locations exist in the dark places of cities as well as in the deep wild, with the greatest and most vital being nothing less than the Shadow itself. The simple truth of the tribe is that the Hunters in Darkness run their Wild Hunts wherever the eyes of humans are blind, from the edges of civilization to the spiritual reflection of human cities. The *Meninna* are the werewolves who are never seen until it's too late to turn back. The duty of all *Urdaga* is to hunt as the slain Father hunted, protecting flesh from Shadow and maintaining the balance of the spirit wilds. The Hunters in Darkness embody that duty.

Ideally, the *Meninna* seek to prevent any harm from coming to the sacred places of the world in the first place, which often involves guarding pristine wilderness where the spirits of the *Hisil* are untainted and unaltered by human influence. This vigil frequently means the Hunters prevent humans from walking the land or encroaching upon it with their machines and cities. This vigil also means the werewolves maintain a respectful relationship with the spirits within the region's Shadow, allowing them to perform their natural roles as long as they do not fall into deviancy or corruption.

Above all, the tribe strives for balance. Every problem has a hundred solutions, and the decisions made must always benefit the hunting ground first and foremost. Some enemies can be warned away, some can be reasoned with or neutralized without physical force, while others must be destroyed before they can wreak the havoc they are capable of. The Hunters, in their actions, are more akin to wardens than warriors, maintaining a vigil over a region's spiritual balance, working with the spirits when possible and destroying their foes only when neces-

sary. Little pacifism flows through the tribe, however. When battle is inevitable, the Hunters strike first and kill fast. They can exalt in bloodshed, the power of dominance over others, as any human or werewolf might, but the wisest show a restraint born of understanding and purity.

A Hunter in Darkness understands his territory with a perception few werewolves share. He notes the rhythms of its ecosystem, the ebb and flow of seasons, of the local spirit-life, of the humans that walk unaware of his presence. His heart calls for patience and understanding within his territory, that he might better defend it from harm and detect the first stirrings of corruption and imbalance. To this end, the *Meninna* watch the spirits and the people, learning their ways, their duties, their personalities and marking the choices made by others. Everything is weighed, measured against the local balance and judged. If it is found worthy, the Hunters leave it be or offer subtle praise. If it is found wanting, then it will be warned, threatened and perhaps finally destroyed.

To be a Hunter is not to protect Nature itself. Nature is arbitrary and cruel, hot-blooded and callous, and the *Meninna* understand this better than anyone and anything. What these werewolves protect is the natural order. Spirits devour one another for sustenance and power, and the Hunters do not wage a crusade against such behavior. Only when a spirit breaks its natural place, by destroying a great number of other unrelated spirits, mutating into a magath or possessing a human, does the spirit earn the Hunters' ire. Such activity defies the balance of a hunting ground, and must be stopped by threats, mystical power or howling for the Hunt to begin. Of all the *Urdaga*, the Hunters in Darkness most abhor Wounds in the Shadow, and they seal these unnatural spiritual injuries as best they can, whenever they are able.

Likewise, humanity as a whole is not some hated enemy of the tribe, but the werewolves are forced to acknowledge how much damage humans can do to the Shadow with their presence. In many areas, such as urban hunting grounds, important or powerful humans are watched with the same vigilance as any spirit, and are confronted if their actions threaten the balance of the Shadow. The skilled lawyer who earns fat fees in return for keeping rapists and killers on the streets is just as viable a target as a death-spirit that haunts the alley where the spirit was born, encouraging other humans to shed blood. Indeed, humans and spirits are often allied without really knowing — with humans acting selfishly, hatefully or violently, and spirits leeching off the pain the mortals create. The Hunters accept that spirits will be drawn to humans and that the actions of people will birth new spirits. This is natural. It's when the natural order is broken by acts of excessive cruelty, violence or emotion that the *Meninna* stalk their prey. In the World of Darkness, the Hunters are rarely at rest.

Maintaining the Balance

It's lofty talk to speak of keeping a difficult balance within a hunting ground especially given that any werewolf pack worth its salt is likely to be doing their best toward such ends anyway Don't all of the *Uratha* Forsaken and Pure keep their hunting grounds maintained to their chosen standards? What separates the Hunters from the natural urge of a werewolf to protect her hunting ground? In short two things: actions and ideol ogy The *Meninna* mindset is not openly rooted in self interest though many freely acknowledge and enjoy the fact that their actions keep their hunting grounds untainted most of the time What is a natural urge in all werewolves is refined and focused in the Hunters in Darkness

They live for this natural drive working and fighting for it each night because they believe it is the best way to do the Father's duty They take the fight to the most sacred, secret places of a hunting ground — places that other werewolves might ignore as unimportant or even fear and the Hunters set these sites up as the line in the sand where all resistance must pour out from The Hunters explore every last option available in their defense of territory living according to the Oath of the Moon and upholding *Urfarah's* duty all in the name of purity The *Meninna* know their place in the world perhaps better than any werewolf and when they fight for their hunting grounds they are not simply doing it for glory or out of desperation but because they understand that's what werewolves must do since the Father's death Even Hunters who don't cling to mythic legends of Pangaean progenitors still feel their instinctive territoriality take hold under a moon rise running through their hearts with powerful intensity

The Tribal Oath

Let No Sacred Place in Your Territory Be Violated.

Even before the Change takes a werewolf, those who will find a place among the Hunters have a firm idea of what's important to the them. Whether family, home or possessions, the wolf-blooded humans are often fiercely protective of what they consider theirs. Some even find that they find that they have a strong need for personal space and often resent intrusions and interruptions in the daily routines. What is usually clear in all those with the potential to become Hunters is a sincere devotion to maintaining and improving what's theirs. For some, this takes the form of making home improvements or souping up an old car, for others it's watching out for the local environment or neighborhood. Such attention can take any form.

The fierce territoriality of the Hunters is what usually draws new recruits. When the Change takes a werewolf and he stands ready to choose his tribe, few things can seem as appealing as bonding with the werewolves who understand the most about their primal, wild sides. The *Meninna* stand apart from humanity, looking out from the shadows and seeing mortals as both wards and antagonists. This compelling, unique mindset appeals to many newly Changed Uratha, seeking to come to terms with their new lives and separate themselves from what has come before.

The oath sworn to Black Wolf is the key principle to ensuring that in any given region, the spirit and flesh remain in healthy, natural balance. In turn, the key aspect of upholding the oath is to decide just what constitutes a "sacred place" in the first place. And the answer is not a simple one.

The Spiritscape

The immediate answer when dealing with the value of areas in the spirit wilds is, of course, loci. These fonts of spiritual resonance are the lifeblood of the spiritscape as well as locations of immense tactical significance to the Uratha. These sites are inarguably precious, and depending on their location and power, are often wont to attract some dangerous attention in the form of rival packs, *shartha* and spirits looking for sustenance.

Hunters will often range ahead of their packs, even scouting the territory alone on some nights, checking on the loci (major and lesser alike) and hunting for new supplies of Essence in the local area. When it comes to a battle over a specific locus within a hunting ground, the Hunters within a pack are probably the most familiar with the beings that are likely to prey upon the locus as a resource, as well as being the werewolves who will fight fiercest in its defense. Likewise, Glades and shoals may not pulse with the notable power of a locus or a Wound, but they are still locales for significant spirit activity, and are keenly watched over by the Hunters in Darkness.

The *Meninna* are also keen guardians over Places That Aren't. Locations that exist within the Shadow but lack a physical counterpart usually have a core mystery that bears investigating and are likely to be revealed as sites that require a degree of vigilance within a hunting ground.

Death Sites and Battlegrounds

It is common for the *Meninna* to consider places within a hunting ground sacred even if they have no obvious significance to outsiders. Areas where important battles were fought, or where packmates fell (and might even be secretly buried) often fall under the "sacred" descriptor to the werewolves of Black Wolf's tribe. Such areas are respected as monuments or gravesites, sometimes both, and are usually visited on a pack's patrol of their territory to make sure no spirit or human is poking its business where it shouldn't be.

Home

Easily overlooked sacred parts of any territory are, quite simply, the homes of the pack and their loved ones. Many Hunters in Darkness work toward extensive protection of their homes and the homes of their friends, sometimes even taking it upon themselves to watch over their packmates' dwellings if rumors of trouble are sweeping through the area.

Tribal Identity

The connections among the Hunters in Darkness spread across the world are strong and well-founded in tradition, but most are almost invisible to those outside the tribe. In packs and lodges across the globe, certain traditions are passed down and taught to other *Meninna*, and through this mentor-learner grapevine each werewolf is bound to the greater whole. The children of Black Wolf are often secretive, true, but they are a close family despite their appearance to outsiders.

As the tribe with the greatest focus on Purity, the Hunters in Darkness are sometimes spoken of as being "purer than the Pure." Though most *Urdaga* may shake their heads at the choice of words, the sentiment is a good one. Many Hunters often have a high



Harmony, live close to the Oath of the Moon and can at times seem to be part of an overtly spiritual, even religious, core to the tribe. Note that there's nothing in the Oath that implies passivity, and it is made clear that the Wolf Must Hunt. Yet, the pervasive sense of spiritual purity among the werewolves most involved with the tribe can be inspiring and intimidating in equal measure.

Just as Hikaon-Ur favored the darkness and considered the silent night her ally, it is a custom — almost a religious reverence — that the night, when Luna is in the sky and the spirit wilds fall into darkness, is a holy time. Most tribe members are content to recognize the tactical advantage of hunting after nightfall and see no further into it than that. But to the Hunters in Darkness who delve deepest into the lore and customs of their tribe, often in old age or through fervent adherence to Purity, the absence of light is considered a good omen, and night is a near-holy time that the tribe's members are in their greatest strength, when Black Wolf sees all her children do. Among these ardent faithful there exist rituals and Gifts that function only at night, when unwanted witnesses are blinded by the dark.

Black fur is evidently no more common among the Hunters in Darkness than in any other tribe, but these werewolves often do consider dark-furred Uratha to be blessed by Hikaon-Ur. It some regions, black fur has been known to create an elitism, or even a tribal hierarchy. These regions are rare, but the bias can spread around the tribe in some areas from time to time. Black fur does tend to run in the blood in those cases where a family line tends to bring the majority of its Uratha children into the tribe, such as the Nordant clan of the Catskills or the Montelunas of Italy.

Among the majority of the tribe, a story passes down through the centuries perhaps more than any other: that of Hikaon-Ur watching over the Pangaean dens of her Firstborn siblings while they slept, sated and full from the hunt. Little tribal lore

from the other *Urdaga* appears to lend any credence to this tale, but it remains a popular legend among the *Meninna*. Beyond the applications of simple storytelling, it is a custom that many Hunters in Darkness uphold today, secretly watching over their packmates' homes and families, like a guardian angel in the shadows. If the werewolf detects spirits or other creatures paying undue or unwanted attention to the dwellings of his packmates, he will lead the watcher away, confront it and perhaps even bind it or destroy it if necessary. This kind of behavior goes unnoticed and unrewarded by almost all outside the tribe, and most Hunters are fine with it remaining that way.

Another custom that finds its way down the generations is what the tribe refer to as Silent Tongue. Wolves can convey a staggering amount of meaning through non-vocal communication, such as body posture and scent, but they can lack accuracy and complexity. Howls make up for much of this, but suffer the drawback of alerting the enemy in some situations. Silent Tongue was developed in antiquity as a language and a script that the Hunters use to communicate when they do not wish outsiders to know what they are speaking of, or to hide the fact that anyone is speaking at all.

Silent Tongue is primarily a mixture of hand gestures and facial expressions, but the motions conform to no human sign language. Rather, the motions are an interpretation of the sounds made by First Tongue syllables, with even growls, whines and hisses being displayed as various hand and mouth movements. As with all advanced languages, Silent Tongue has a written form, with the script possessing all the versatility of First Tongue but bearing no resemblance to it. The hundreds of possible sounds within the spirits' language are instead represented by slashing-style glyphs that spell out the words they stand for. Not all tribe members are fluent in Silent Tongue, but most pick up scraps of the language to use over the course of their lives. It is common for the *Meninna* to leave their unique glyphs spray-painted onto concrete or clawed into trees and stone, in order to alert any tribemates that they are in a hunting ground guarded by a pack with a Hunter member. Another common use is for a Hunter to leave a record of his (or his pack's) deeds in an area after they move on, leaving glyphs for other Hunters to come across and perhaps for *Meninna* Cahaliths to remember in future sagas. Such markings are easily missed by other werewolves, who are likely to consider the glyphs meaningless graffiti or simple gibberish if they even notice the glyphs at all.

Constructing fetishes is very popular within the tribe, with many werewolves seeking out the rites to create their own spirit-bound tools soon after their First Change. Even the youngest Hunters often put a great deal of time and effort into creating talens, often for stealth, information-gathering or healing purposes. The fetishes that the *Meninna* create are usually plain, durable items designed to do their job and withstand damage for a long time. They are also created from natural items, found objects in nature, more often than meticulously forged or shaped objects. In this vein, most Hunter fetishes are practical in use, but are rarely weapons. The tribe has no stigma regarding spirit-bound weapons, but such creations are rarer among the *Meninna* than among other tribes.

The Hunters in Darkness seem to favor fetishes that contain willingly bound spirits, tied to the items through sworn oath and sealed pact, as a sign of respect. However, few of the tribe would balk at binding a spirit through force if it served their purposes or was necessary. The Hunters usually like to resort to force only when required in such dealings, with many Ithaeur believing that the soul of a fetish will work better with the werewolf if the spirit within is content.

In addition to this preference, the *Meninna* have a penchant for fetishes that can be used in the wolf form, such as rocks or branches clenched in jaws, or animal-tooth necklaces that hang around lupine necks. Since so many of the tribe favor their Urhan form in the wild and spend significant time on four legs instead of two, this is another example of Hunter practicality. Such fetishes are usually created to heighten some facet of the wolf's senses or physical prowess, and in some cases can only be used when in the Urhan shape.

The tribe makes no secret of its most renowned custom and all of the tribes, Forsaken and Pure, are aware of the seasonal rites that the Hunters in Darkness practice at various points of the year. Regional variations abound for these seasonal rituals, with solstices, equinoxes, religious festivals and the like all filtering into the local occasions. Not all are celebrated in most areas, but the two that remain in their purest form despite all local involvement are the summer and winter solstices — the days that mark the greatest turning of the seasons by the longest and shortest days of the year.

These solstices are celebrated in dozens of cultures and religions, each in a similar way, but the Hunters are not simply acknowledging the hours of daylight from sunrise to sunset. Instead, what the tribe acknowledges is the shortest and longest *nights* of the year, when the seasonal cycle is at its high and low points and Nature itself holds its breath for the coming changes.

In these hours after nightfall, the children of Black Wolf take to the Shadow, relishing in the Wild Hunt and cleansing their territories of intruders and Wounds, howling down the vengeance of their ancestors who performed the same rites in ancient times. Such primal and violent celebration makes for a heady turning point in the year, and packs that miss their Hunter members on these nights are likely to notice a refreshed attitude and keenness of eye in those days after the seasonal ritual. It is not unknown for *Meninna* to bring their packs on these solstice night hunts, though werewolves from other tribes are expected to acknowledge the honor being given to them in allowing their presence, and in some cases, offer gifts as thanks.

Packs

All-*Meninna* packs are the living embodiment of why humanity fears the dark. Bonded through Hikaon-Ur, the werewolves are silent on the Hunt, passing unnoticed and unknown through the territory they claim. Warning signs deter any humans or dangerous spirits that tread too close to discovering the pack's presence, and witnesses are silenced one way or another. On the surface, when a pack of Hunters is noticed at all, the pack seems to be everything intriguing and frightening about the legend of werewolves stalking the shadowed wild.

Many such packs live much of their lives in the wilderness, and such a lifestyle means the packmembers often heavily favor the wolf form. Some Hunter packs have been known to dwell within the Shadow and the physical world equally, dividing their time almost evenly between the two realms. Also, less (perhaps even almost no) contact with humanity means that some of the werewolves might still wear the same tattered clothes for months on end or simply abandon their human modesty over time and be perfectly comfortable naked in front of each other. The packmembers are also likely to speak more in First Tongue or as wolves over time, as it assures a degree of privacy in case anyone is watching and becomes the language most often spoken, what with the Hunters dealing only with spirits instead of humans. This can make meetings between these isolated *Meninna* packs and other Forsaken difficult and strained.

The pack usually takes care to set extensive markers and wards around the edges of its hunting ground. Hunters in Darkness are almost always keen to make potential enemies avoid entering the territory if possible, bypassing the potential problem rather than dealing with the chaos and cleaning up any mess afterwards. First Tongue glyphs carved into trees and rocks, piles of bones or broken camping equipment — these are the markers that warn werewolves and humans that they are walking somewhere they are unwelcome.

Many of these wilderness packs have a noted tendency to choose (or bind) totems that have never encountered humans before, as the werewolves see value in their most trusted ally having an inhuman perspective on the world around them.

Urban packs lack the luxury of living as free as wolves in the wild. Urban Hunters tend to become expert at hiding within plain sight, out of necessity and common sense. They take unassuming jobs, usually involving little contact with the public, and dwell in neighborhoods where their late night comings-and-goings will be largely ignored.

No matter where the hunting grounds are located, Hunters in Darkness packs watch over their territories with unmatched tenacity. Local spirits are often given the chance to ally with the pack or remain untouched as long as they do not violate the natural order, but generally the Shadow denizens will display a mixture of guarded admiration and jealous fear for the werewolves' strength.

History

For thousands of years, the Hunters have watched history, standing by the sidelines of great events and witnessing the changes of the human world without interfering overmuch. With the majority of the tribe dwelling in the wilds, any *Meninna* involvement in history has been quick and specific, before retreating out of sight again. Work crews killed or scared away in the early Amazon deforestations, colonists menaced as they expanded across North America and displaced the native tribes, and so on.

Wherever natural territory was threatened as civilization expanded, Hunter packs almost certainly put up a fighting retreat as they moved to new

ground. But humanity has never been the enemy of the Uratha, and the Hunters bear no great grudge against progress or development. Many lament the violation of the natural land and the darkness of the Shadow in the wake of human changes, but that is usually on a personal level, fought over hunting ground by hunting ground.

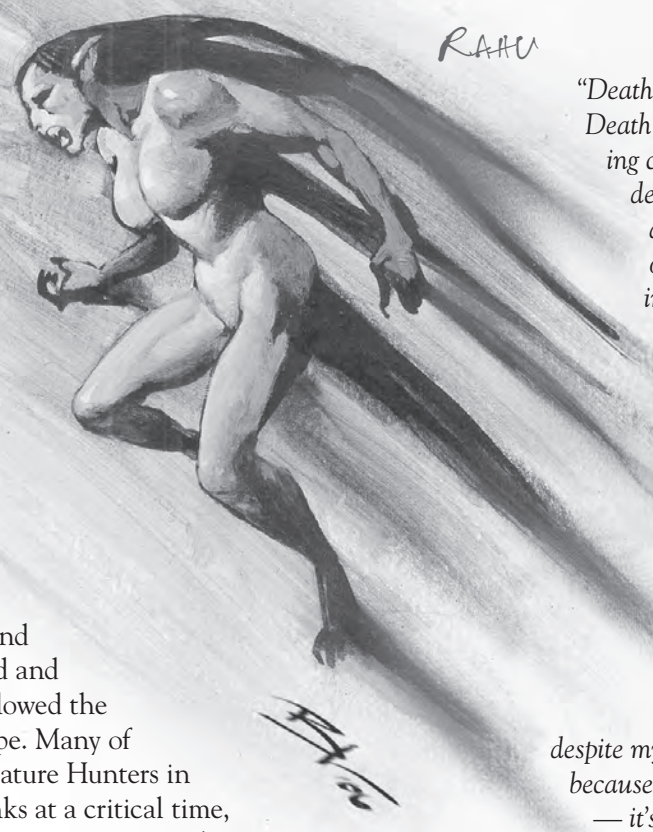
Even though the tribe is made up of those who were once people themselves, the distance between a Hunter and his human life means that few werewolves come through their Rite of Initiation caring much about the way the world of Man turns.

The history of the Uratha themselves is different, and studded with Hunter in Darkness involvement. Many *Meninna* legends arose from the first battles against the Pure, when werewolves such as Unseen Talon and Karavah the Thunderer harried and destroyed Pure packs, which allowed the Hunters' brethren time to escape. Many of the battles in Uratha history feature Hunters in Darkness striking from the flanks at a critical time, leading an overwhelming force into a trap or making a desperate stand at the gates of a sacred territory that they would not abandon. These stories do not always end well.

Ultimately, though, Glory is not the greatest concern for the Hunters in Darkness. They tell their own stories when dawn is far away, tales of heroes who fought and killed and died, who led legendary lives without the rest of the Uratha ever knowing just how much they achieved. Just as the most sacred grounds are those where only the Hunters in Darkness walk, the greatest triumphs are those where only the Hunters in Darkness remember.

Perceptions and Reflections

Luna's most primal children take her blessing to heart in different ways from the other tribes. The Rahu is a warrior born, and must reconcile this with his hunter's mindset. The Ithaeur sees the spirit world from the perspectives of both wolf and human. The Cahalith sings songs of ancient glories and recent battles in a wolf's howl as often as in a human's voice. Nowhere else is the balance of wolf heart and human soul more evident than in the moon signs of the *Meninna*.



Rahu

"Death from the shadows. Death at the end of a punishing chase. Death in silence, death in howling pain, death in a surge of anger or after hours of laying in wait. It's all the same to me, because I can do it all when the time comes. Hikaon-Ur and Luna have blessed me with the confidence and the power that I need to keep my hunting grounds free of corruption. If I seem content despite my struggles, it's not because I'm ignorant to danger — it's because I know I can't really ask for anything more than what I have been given."

Hunter in Darkness Rahu walk the balance between hunter and warrior like no other. In a world of deep shadows and silent stalking, the Full Moons are always ready for the hunt to turn into a war, and for their bloodshed to make the difference between the pack's life and death. Many Rahu seek out the Hunters in Darkness because the full moon demands Purity, and no tribe understands Purity more than the Hunters in Darkness.

A Hunter Rahu will keep pace in the shadows with Irraka of any tribe, matching them in stealth

and providing invaluable assistance should things go sour and turn violent. The Warrior's Eye and instinctive tendency to size up opponents before a battle begins can actually make a Hunter Rahu teamed with an Irraka in his pack one of the most effective scouting duos imaginable when it comes to infiltrating enemy hunting grounds. They can get in and get out usually without being seen, and if they are discovered, they at least have a fighting chance of getting out alive.

Because of the Oath of the Moon and the Rahu regard for Purity, many Hunters in Darkness are moral people, bound by ethics and iron-hard codes of honor, justice and fair play. This doesn't mean they play nice or avoid battle, but it does mean that a Hunter Rahu often thinks twice about every action that might cause bloodshed. Behind his Rage-bright eyes is a predator's instinct tempered by respect for the natural order. When a *Meninna* Rahu kills, it's almost always for a good reason, and one few other werewolves could ever disagree with. His wolf-mind rejects needless killing, and that's an instinct even a born warrior learns to trust.

High standards of both skill and purity spread throughout the tribe's Full Moons, and while most Rahu find their position to be an inspiring and valuable one, there are always those who chafe under the responsibilities. Not necessarily weaker than their brethren, some Hunters in Darkness struggle to maintain the occasionally holier-than-thou standards of *Meninna* Rahu, and spiral into depression and degeneration. The eldest and most respected Rahu among the tribe can actually appear as warrior-priests of a sort, akin to monks who practice martial arts, renowned for their fierce battle spirit as well as their religious reverence for the world. Among the Full Moons who simply seek to get by with their packs, surviving night after night as best they are able, such near-holiness is unattainable at best and annoying to the point of hatred at worst. However, it is no surprise to find that many Rahu become alphas in their packs, or at least respected betas, because even the Storm Lords have to admire just how the Hunter in Darkness Full Moons adhere to Luna's Oath.

A Hunter in Darkness Rahu is at his best when on the chase. The part of the Hunt where caution is finally thrown to the wind, when the stalking is finished and the prey is aware it is being hunted. It is here that the Rahu comes into his own, chasing down the enemy with silent strength, pursuing with the skilful tenacity born of his tribe and the Rage born of his auspice. Still soft-footed even when his blood is up, a Hunter Rahu on the chase will lead his pack through the hunting ground, bringing the prey down first and holding his own until his packmates catch up. It's not rashness or egoism, but rather a concerted surge of everything the Hunter Rahu excels at. In this, he is living the Hunt and shedding blood, the two things he was born to do.

In battle, the *Meninna* Full Moons combine a wolf's pack awareness with their personal ferocity. Staying aware of the ebb-and-flow of every fight is not easy, but the Hunters will turn on a dime if necessary, killing the enemy in droves one moment and leaping to the aid of an embattled packmate the next. A Rahu's skills here most often win him true friends, because he can be relied upon to do the most damage to the pack's enemies, bearing the brunt of the assault in every fight, as well as being there for his packmates if they are in danger. Of course, this is additional responsibility for many Hunters, and it can create a sense of bitterness among those who already have trouble maintaining the generally high Harmony expected of them, but no one said anything about Uratha life being easy.

Purity

Purity is dear to the hearts of the Hunters. The *Meninna* don't necessarily raise their Renown any faster than most other werewolves, because the Lunes always expect the Uratha to adhere to the Oath of the Moon and keep their Purity rising, but the tribe's werewolves usually lose Harmony less often than others might. A sincere devotion to seeing the natural order through the eyes of a wolf as well as a human means the Hunters' greater understanding helps in their drive to attain Purity. Only a rare Hunter ever wields a silver weapon or resorts to cannibalism.

The Hunters in Darkness understand Purity. Most *Meninna* werewolves spend a lot of time away from the press of humanity, even when claiming territory in a city, and feel very comfortable in their wolf form — certainly as comfortable as they do in their human form. In a Hunter's mind, he may not consider himself a man who can change into a wolf but rather a unique being that can take the shape of a wolf and a human at will. He stands astride that balance, seeing with both perspectives. This viewpoint, this closeness to the primal wolf side as well as the reasoning human nature, allows the Hunters in Darkness to understand Purity so clearly. Wolves do not needlessly torture prey, they do not betray

their pack, they do slay without cause or leave others to hunt for food without hunting alongside them. In coming to terms with their Uratha souls, *Meninna* come to see Purity in a very clear and instinctive light.

Cahalith

"That howl you've all been hearing for the past three nights? That was me. I know it what it costs you to come out here and leave your hunting grounds unprotected. I know that, and I also know what a beating you've all be taking lately. We've been taking it, too. I summoned you out here away from the city because we've found out what's behind all the chaos affecting us all. The Dreamers in your pack must have some ideas, too. If we follow Luna's light, we can end it this night under her gaze. If we break up and return to our hunting grounds, we'll be butchered pack by pack. So listen up."

Hunters in Darkness Cahalith seek out everything they can possibly learn about the Shadow. Individuals will have different reasons for doing so, but it seems an almost innate drive in the werewolves born under this sign to apply their auspice tendencies to the mysteries of the spirit wilds. Some seek answers to current or future threats in the hunting grounds, others wish to learn all they can of the local spiritscape to prepare hiding places and sniff out hidden spirits. Others hunt for lore pertaining to the werewolves who walked the area hundreds of years ago, and chase legends pertaining to the region's history that might mean something today, such as a lost fetish, a powerful spirit in slumber or an ancient tale with a lesson that applies to the resident pack now. Most Gibbous Moons seek out solutions to these mysteries in order to strengthen their pack and in preparation to face enemies in the years ahead.

With this knowledge, the Cahalith are usually experts above all others on their packs' hunting grounds. Often, the Gibbous Moon marks the glyph-names of his packmates at the boundaries of their territory, he maintains any contingency hiding places in case the pack needs to go to ground and he tracks out the best places for battlegrounds when the need arises. If the pack must flee from a fight, the *Meninna* Cahalith howls for the others to follow, and he will use his knowledge of the landscape, physical or spirit, to lead them clear of pursuers.

In addition to his Shadow-knowledge, a Hunter Cahalith is most often the one who acts as envoy to other packs. He tells of his packmates' deeds, howling of their past victories, creating haunting or exciting tales through spine-chilling or blood-pumping wolf cries that render any human storytelling flat by comparison. Practice in living as a wolf makes many Hunter Cahalith's howls breathtaking in their expressiveness and resonance. In those who seek out such creativity, it is every much an art form as more traditional expression can be for Gibbous Moons of other tribes.

Oracular powers set the Cahalith apart from his brethren, and in the Hunters, such prophecy can take a chilling tone. When the dreams turn dark, as they frequently do, the visions often show ghostly hints of a threat to the entire region rather than to the Cahalith and his pack, showing grim events-to-come, or omens of corruption in nature. A recurring theme in the tribe's visions are of dark portents occurring in sunlight (or artificial illumination), such as a building in the hunting ground somehow rotting in sunlight, or a locus in the shape of a pool of water growing scummy in the heat of streetlamps. In a tribe in which darkness is both a blessing and a good omen, the light in many prophetic dreams is a harsh and dangerous symbolism of things to come.

Perhaps because of the tribal affiliation for Purity, some Hunters in Darkness have been known to dream of future violations of the Oath of the Moon, either by their own hands or the actions of others nearby. This can lead a Hunter down the path of judging his allies and enemies, or simply to the point of gently forewarning those whom he feels could use a little straightening out.

Glory

The Hunters might seem to reject Glory on the surface, but nothing could be further from the truth. Without inspiration for their deeds and fulfillment for the actions, Uratha life would be more than a painful struggle for survival — life would be senseless and joyless. Without the tales told of past heroes and the deeds of the pack itself spreading to other ears, what imprint can a werewolf hope to leave on the world he has sworn to defend?

Some *Meninna* might balk at the boasting and bragging often associated with Glory, but the tribe itself puts great worth in this stripe of renown. The value isn't necessarily tied to the Blood Talon idea of personal valor, but often instead takes the form of the potential for lessons learned and lore gained. Memorable deeds that spread to others will serve as inspiration and earn the packmembers respect when they meet others.

To say that no Hunter brags about his deeds is untrue. Some do, and deservedly so, for they have achieved a great deal and are entitled to respect. But there is almost always an edge of joy within their shared stories that is different from, for example, the Blood Talon exultation at conquering a foe. Howling of one's great victories, crying them out to the spirits that listen, is a celebration of success in the Father's duty and another night of life under Luna's light. Personal triumph has a powerful place in such celebration, but the need to remember others and be remembered in turn has a different heart among the Hunters in Darkness.

Elodoth

"You don't need to know how or why I've watched you, only that I have. That's why I know what you're thinking now, and I'm here to tell you it's wrong. You haven't considered all the changes to the physical world that draining this locus will bring, and you haven't paid any attention to the way the Shadow is becoming poisoned by the repercussions of the rape in Wenford Alley. You don't need to listen to me, but if you don't, you'll all be dead sooner or later and it'll be up to my pack to clean up the mess like good, caring neighbors."

Where all Hunters in Darkness seek to balance their wolf-mind and human heart, the Elodoth of the tribe instinctively know that balance from the moment they Change. Among the *Meninna*, the Elodoth find a place where that balance and their expertise in walking it benefit both the tribe as a whole and their own packs.

Elodoth of any tribe are expected to be truthful and above deception, and are judged by the Elunim according to such expectations. While the Oath of the Moon does not forbid lying, Half-Moon Elodoth feel little temptation to engage in deceit anyway. Their tribal proclivity for often living as wolves and seeing things as a living part of the natural order blends perfectly with their auspice-born drive for honesty and Honor. After all, wolves don't lie to one another. Hunter Elodoth don't see the wisdom in such a perception — they live it instinctively. This can mark *Meninna* Half-Moons as admirable, inspiring leaders, fair judges and excellent readers of others' intentions, but it can also make them poor liars even under duress.

Hunter Elodoth frequently use their dual wisdom and perceptions to take the long view of the hunting ground's future. Their perceptions focus not only on the current troubles and how they can be solved, but also on what future ramifications might come from their deeds. If honoring a benevolent spirit's ban, no matter how complex, could lead to the benefit of the hunting ground, it makes more sense to try than to destroy the creature out of convenience. The werewolves' negotiations with spirits are often based on the desire to form a strong future for the territory, with spirit-allies firmly established and an extensive knowledge of local denizens plotted out in case of attack or trouble.

Coupled with this is the *Meninna* Elodoth knowledge of the physical realm, matched only by the Hunter Cahalith's knowledge of the local Shadow. In his pack, it is almost always the Hunter Half-Moon who best knows every inch of the territory claimed. In this sense, he lives out the balance of his auspice and tribe, knowing the real world and its dark reflection alike.

As with the Cahalith of the tribe, it often falls to the Elodoth to serve as heralds and envoys between packs in the wild and the city. A pack might hear howls in the night from their Hunter in Darkness neighbors, but rarely see them, only ever encountering the Half-Moon at rare neutral ground meets. As the Walker Between, Hunter Elodoth often find themselves pressed into this role whether it is one they desire or not.

The Elodoth who judge their pack and tribemates regarding their adherence to the Oath of the Moon are usually fair when dealing with transgressors, but harsh when it comes to punishment. Champions of both high Honor and Purity, these arbiters can seem intimidating at the best of times: a notion made all the more frightening by the fact that Hunter judges watch unseen from the shadows before making their judgments. Their way is to watch a target, waiting for him to betray himself, rather than confront another werewolf and interrogate him. Such behavior means that *Meninna* Elodoth are rarely above creating fetishes to assist in discerning the truth when necessary, or setting bound spirits to watch over a potential violator as an extra pair of eyes.

Honor

The Hunters in Darkness see great honor in mediating and negotiating between Forsaken packs. Even the recluses (in fact, especially the recluses) who stay away from the hunting grounds of others admire the skill it takes in keeping two potentially antagonistic packs away from each others' throats.

Likewise, to negotiate fairly with a powerful spirit and win its favor is considered honorable, more so if the werewolves know its ban and don't seek to exploit it. While there will always be a time and a place for the death of dangerous spirits, the Hunters see most denizens of the Shadow as natural beings, and guarded respect between Uratha and spirit is more productive and useful than reaving the *Hisil* clean of all anything that could, on the off-chance, become a threat one night.

The deeds worthy of the highest Honor are closely bound to the duty of the *Urdaga* anyway, for the *Meninna* respect any and all who carry out the Father's duties, especially as the centuries pass from his death and the tales of Pangaea edge closer to legend rather than history.

Ithaeur

"The spirits of the trees and the wind are silent, and that's never a good sign. I can smell some kind of taint in the air, a corruption… yet to reveal itself. We should pay double attention to the loci at the abandoned motel and the truck stop. If everything goes to hell the way the spirits seem to think it will, then our best bet is to ward those places and make sure they remain under our control. If you want to risk a time-out before the game starts, I heard of a thing in the city's Shadow that might be able to shed some light on all this. It's a long shot, but we could be back before sunrise."

It's often said by other Forsaken that the Crescent Moons of the *Meninna* decide just what is sacred within a territory, and what must be defended. While decisions of that magnitude within a pack's hunting ground probably fall to the alpha or a vote among members, Hunter Ithaeur tend to have a gift for pinpointing hidden value in certain areas. Their deep involvement with the Shadow and various relationships with any number of spirits — some allied, some bound, some threatened or cowed — allows the Crescent Moons to get a clear feel for the heartbeat of the local spirit wilds. While all the Hunters share an affinity for the *Hisil*, where no human eyes can see, the Crescent Moons involve themselves enough to really feel the pulse of the second world. Many join the Hunters out of a sense of reverence for the spirit world — a cautious, wary reverence that is all-too-aware of the great evils that spawn there but a sense that there is also a great sacredness to be found in the Shadow as well.

When it comes to discerning the places within a hunting ground that could be considered sacred, the Hunter in Darkness Ithaeur looks far beyond the immediate picture. His curiosity and courage in dealing with the denizens of Shadow will help him to uncover the territory's past, how spirits and events of years past have contributed to the shape of the hunting ground today, and what the current population portends for the future.

Most Hunter Ithaeur spend a great deal of time in the Shadow, maintaining a complex network of relationships, treaties, oaths and treacheries with dozens, perhaps even hundreds, of spirits in the local area. This allows the werewolf access to a vast amount of information and influence over the region, and depending on the spirits he deals with, they will serve his purposes as information brokers, a spy network, a messenger service or a personal strike force. Ithaeur of the *Meninna* keep open to any possible arrangement that will benefit their pack and its hunting ground. Most importantly, however, the Crescent Moon wants to *know*. He wants to be aware of all that transpires with the Shadow of his territory, and will bribe, threaten, bind or kill in order to find out.

The Hunter's spirit contacts (be they allies, servants or slaves) are also a lifeline into other hunting grounds. While werewolves generally respect the rough borders of another pack's territory, spirits don't usually consider themselves residents in any given hunting ground. They move, they travel and, in doing so, they cross borders that don't tend to apply to their own kind. Hunter Ithaeur recognize this, and use it to their advantage. Spirits are charged with bringing back information about other local packs, perhaps even about neighboring Pure. Trusted spirits can also be relied upon as messengers, operating in an ad hoc "grapevine" of sorts among the tribe's Crescent Moons.

When the Hunters in Darkness gather for their seasonal rites, the Ithaeur is almost always the one to lead the tribe in their mass rituals and observances. While the Elodoth are traditionally the ones to watch over any ritual challenges that occur at such times, the Crescent Moons lead entire ceremonies and organize the gathering in the first place, finding somewhere remote, secure and free from prying human or *Anshega* eyes.

Wisdom

The deeds of Wisdom most often respected by the Hunters are the discoveries of something new and hidden about a spirit, the Shadow itself or about some aspect of their territory. Learning a spirit's ban, especially if the creature resists strongly, is always

worthy of respect among the tribe. The same is true for learning anything notable regarding the history of the pack's hunting ground, as long as that information is something that could have an effect today. Idle curiosity is not a trait that earns much respect with any of the Forsaken Tribes, and even less with the Hunters in Darkness. There's so much important, vital knowledge out there that they see little point in wasting time with trivia.

Wisdom earned, lessons learned and mysteries solved in the name of survival are the deeds most respected by the tribe. Creating new rituals or using them in new ways is still worthy of Renown, but those kinds of discoveries take a lesser seat to uncovering lore or deducing the mysteries already existing in abundance within the Shadow.

Irraka

"I've run and hunted, unseen and unheard, unknown to human and spirit, since the moment I swore Hikaon-Ur's oath. It's not a case of me hiding from trouble. I'm always there. You'd not believe the things I've seen. It's not a case of me fleeing when I get seen, either. I didn't earn my name by running away. I don't hide and I don't get caught. I may not be invisible and I may leave the faintest scent of my passing in my paw prints, but if you ever catch my trail it's because I let you, and you're not going to like what you find at the end of your hunt."

In urban areas, most Hunters hide in plain sight: average folks on the subway, the usual beggars on the street. It's the New Moons of the tribe who get away without ever being seen at all. In the wild, the other Hunters are silent stalkers and the wolves that howl in the distance, warning humans away. The Irraka lies motionless, barely breathing, watching with dark eyes as the prey passes within yards. The Hunter strikes the hunted, and the prey is dead before the werewolf makes a single sound above a whisper.

When any enemy, flesh or spirit, confronts a Hunter Irraka, the enemy is being stalked by a creature literally born to hunt. Most New Moons among the *Meninna* possess a near-infinite patience, as well as senses sharp enough to rival even Black Wolf on her midnight hunts in lost Pangaea. If they were not born with these (and most were) then they cultivate them through training and diligence in the true wilderness or the urban wilds.

When it comes to the Wild Hunt, Irraka of the other tribes often see themselves as scouts and trackers whose specialties lie in leading the pack to the enemy and striking from the shadows. The Hunter New Moons take such duty if there is no other to fill them in the pack, but they often take a more sinister role when the opportunity arises. Enemies who give up a losing battle and flee from the werewolf pack will soon find they have fled right the jaws and claws of the waiting Irraka, who circled the battle specifically prowling for stragglers, cowards and the weakest foes. *Meninna* New Moons can be skilled fighters, but most are shameless in their skills at ending the lives of the weak, injured and distracted enemies who desperately try to flee the pack's fury.

As watchers and stalkers without peer, the Irraka of the tribe watch incomers to the pack's hunting grounds, assessing their intentions and abilities before reporting back to the pack. When such reports detail a new enemy, a New Moon tends to either speak of a threat to the pack or the territory itself, or simply describes another dead foe that the New Moon took care of without arousing suspicion.

With their primal instincts and auspice-given tendencies, a great many *Meninna* Irraka are trackers and information-gatherers without peer in the wilderness. A pack alpha can give a name and a rough description of someone or something, perhaps even less, and the New Moon may need no more than that in order to track down the target. Most are relentless, even ruthlessly single-minded, in their hunts, which is part of what makes them such dangerous enemies and useful allies.

Cunning

In some respects, the Hunters in Darkness gain Cunning renown just by living their lives. If they dwell within a city and its Shadow, their very existence is a monumental act of stealth. Even in the wilds, when the werewolves hunt their prey and howl to the face of Luna in the *Hisil* sky, the fact that the Hunters have evaded discovery from humanity is testament to their cunning.

Of course, this is just the beginning. The tribe sees deeds of stealth (stalking hunts or tracking, for example) as part of their nature anyway. It's those who take it a step further, returning with stories and evidence of incredible feats that earn the most respect amongst their brethren. These deeds earn additional praise if the Hunter managed to strike out at an enemy without being detected, or evaded chase soon after.

Something the *Meninna* regard with admiration is for a werewolf to kill a foe and leave no trace of the attack, such as chasing down an enemy until

he is exhausted, at which point he is hounded into a river, lake or over a cliff edge to die. Other feats of Cunning that appeal to the Hunters involve finding unique ways of keeping humans and others away from a hunting ground, usually by terrifying them without revealing the presence of wolves at all.

Concerns of the Soul

In the cases of extremely powerful werewolves, such as the Hunters in Darkness with very high Harmony and Primal Urge, the powerful bond with Hikaon-Ur can bleed through into the Uratha's actions and mindset. It is not the derangement or spiritual pressure instigated by the Pure Firstborn upon their adopted children, but rather telltale signs that show the werewolf's soul is either in perfect balance, or unstable in some way.

Harmony

The tribal devotion to the ideals of Purity mean that many Hunters in Darkness lean toward high Harmony ratings, but those who reach the highest levels can seem like paragons even among the *Meninna*: werewolves who are balanced, controlled predators who clearly understand their place and duty in the world. High Harmony can breed an assured confidence in a Hunter, a clarity of thought that he knows his place in Creation and what is achievable in his life. This gives some *Meninna* a sense of peace within their battle-filled lives, and in others fuels a fierce ambition to achieve more.

A high Harmony among the tribe is a certain way to earn the respect and admiration of one's brethren, and that leads easily into tales being told regarding the werewolf's prowess, instinct and self-control, which can in turn lead from Purity to Glory or Wisdom renown.

But the expectations do not elevate and inspire everyone. Hunters with low Harmony are pitied by their tribemates, considered to have failed to understand their place in the world, failed to live up to the standards Black Wolf set at the birth of the tribe and failed to learn the self-control necessary to fully succeed in werewolf existence. To say that all Hunters in Darkness are harsh toward their low-Harmony brethren might be an exaggeration, but the majority almost certainly think less of such werewolves. Pity may turn to sympathy, and sympathy into the belief that a werewolf with exceptionally low Harmony might need 'rehabilitation' or retraining under firm guidance.

Degeneration doesn't simply lead to a lack of respect and pity from tribemates, though. The real difficulty is within the Hunter's own head, as he finds it harder to resist his wild, instinctual impulses. In such souls, the wolf-heart takes to the surface as the degeneration progresses, and the most debased Hunters in Darkness are the truest monsters of the wild imaginable. Humans and wolves are considered choice prey, and enemies are slaughtered, their carcasses dragged back to a wilderness den to be feasted on later when the werewolf hungers again.

Primal Urge

As with Harmony, the Hunters tend toward a higher-than-average Primal Urge when compared with their fellow Forsaken. Social penalties are never an issue for those who dwell in the wilderness, and even those claiming urban hunting grounds are likely to see the advantages of personal power before the disadvantages in dealing with people. The Hunters in Darkness are fighting enemies that humanity has never seen and can't even imagine, so many of the tribe think it pays to strengthen oneself as much as reasonably possible in the line of the Father's duty. At particularly high levels of Primal Urge, the werewolf's coat darkens and seems almost to bleed shadow, and birds and animals may fall silent as he passes noiselessly through the area. In some cases, the Hunter's eyes become a vivid yellow or bright blue in all forms, or darken to near-blackness.

Hunters with a significantly high Primal Urge do not always see it as a problem. Sure, Essence bleed is an inconvenience, but when compared with the exultation of coming closer to the alpha hunter that their tribal totem represents, it's a small price to pay. Others see it as a warning sign that the werewolf's own body is rejecting the changes, and such a Primal Urge is therefore unnatural and dangerous.

Story Hooks

The following section details a few hooks that players and Storytellers might find interesting to incorporate into their chronicles' Hunter in Darkness characters.

• **Monsters in the Wilds:** Some Hunters in Darkness can go too far when they distance themselves from humanity. They become the monsters in the wild that ensure campers don't come back to their families and people on the outskirts of villages bolt their doors at night. Some stand a good chance

of coming to the attention of the Pure Tribes, and it falls to the werewolf's tribemates to bring him back on the path before the Hunter degenerates so far that he begins to violate the tribal oath without regret. A *Meninna* might hear of a tribemate nearby who has begun to prey on humans or wolves, or he might bear the shame of a relative who nearly fell from the tribe in the past.

• **Forgotten and Unknown Horrors:** The Hunters walk where humans never see. This brings them into contact with ancient, powerful and unknown spirits that have long-since been extinct in the two worlds or never had physical counterparts at all. Some are unique beings that have remained hidden since before Pangaea was destroyed and are awakened by something (or someone) nearby. Hunters who have met such creatures can carry the knowledge of the beings' existences with a heavy heart, for their terrible and unpredictable powers are almost certainly to be feared, and many werewolf packs simply won't have the physical strength to stop such a being outright if it chooses to make itself known.

• **New Realms:** The Shadow is full of mysterious sites and places-that-aren't, where the Hunters in Darkness walk out of sight. What spirits call these places home, and what brought these sites into being in the first place? In some cases, the existence of a place with no equivalent in the real world can be a dangerous nexus of energies in the Shadow. Other times, a site serves as the resting place of a spirit that has gone to great lengths to avoid notice, such as one of the Maeljin's servitors.

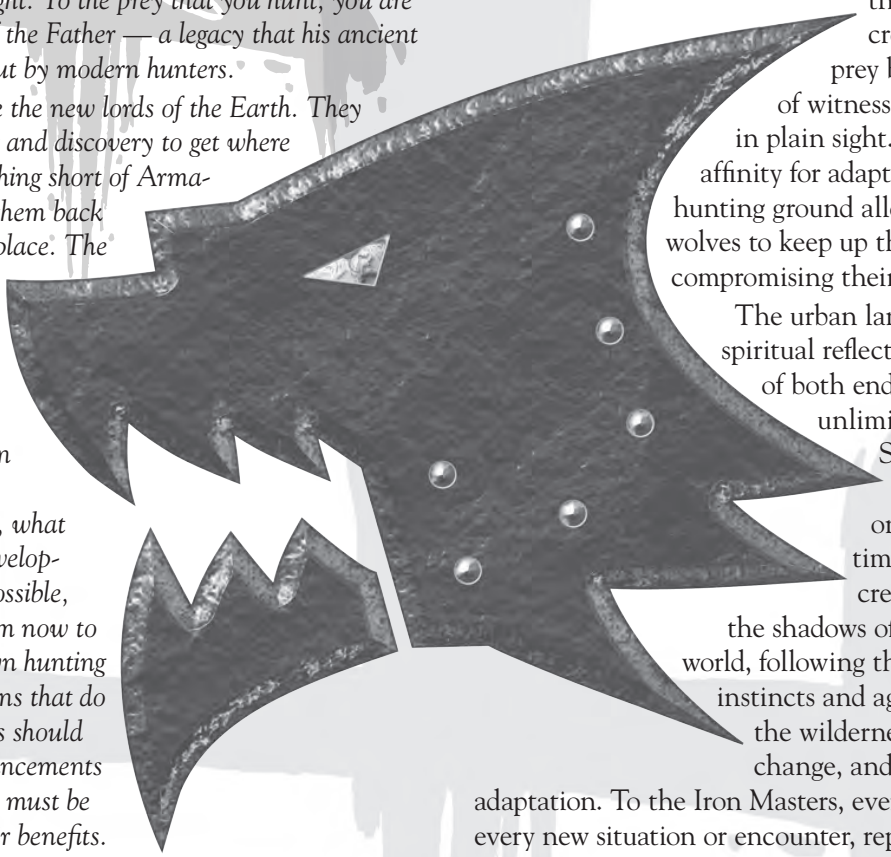


Iron Masters

In cities and forests, on two legs or four, you are the one who watches the ebb and flow of every situation, of every night in your hunting grounds, of the landscape itself, watching for signs of change. Chaos is dangerous, but it also beings new challenges and new advances. As an Iron Master, you are the wolf among the herd. To those you would protect, you are as much a monster as the beings you fight. To the prey that you hunt, you are a living legacy of the Father — a legacy that his ancient duty is carried out by modern hunters.

Humans are the new lords of the Earth. They rose through war and discovery to get where they are and nothing short of Armageddon will put them back in their original place. The world has learned to deal with that, and so have the Iron Masters. It's our place to learn how to recognize how it happened, what strengths and developments made it possible, and emulate them now to improve your own hunting ground. Traditions that do not strengthen us should be broken. Advancements that empower us must be mastered for their benefits.

The one truth in life is that change will always come. It will take the shape of wars and deaths and wear the face of cures and technological developments, but the force of change cannot be stopped, only ignored by the stubborn and harnessed by the cunning and the ambitious. As one of the Farsil Luhal*, you stand amongst those who do not cling to the old ways out of fear or ignorance, but follow the paths of the evolving human world because that's where the real opportunities lay. Should humanity be cast back down into barbarism, you will adapt and endure beyond them.*



Blood of Change

Walking the line between human and werewolf is not an easy one. An Iron Master must always be aware of the duality in his life, protecting his pack and hunting ground and fighting terrible battles out of sight of the city's other residents. The tribe honors their territories under the pressure of remaining unseen by humans, much like their brethren the Hunters in Darkness. But while the *Meninna* watch and kill from the shadows, the *Farsil Luhal* are among the herds and the crowds, hunting prey before the eyes of witnesses and killing in plain sight. Only the tribal affinity for adapting to the urban hunting ground allows the werewolves to keep up their duty without compromising their secrecy.

The urban landscape and its spiritual reflection are places of both endless threat and unlimited opportunity. Strange new spirits emerge, older ones change over time, and unknown creatures stalk in the shadows of the physical world, following their own whims, instincts and agendas. Even in the wilderness, time brings change, and change requires adaptation. To the Iron Masters, everything new, every new situation or encounter, represents the possibility for an advantage somewhere down the line. New spirits can share previously unknown lore, or offer new Gifts. Creatures that enter a physical world hunting ground can be treated as allies as long as their actions do not clash with the Forsaken's duty. In every night's hunt, something new and different will offer the chance to work with the changes for a later benefit.

If what the werewolves see is dangerous and threatens their oath to uphold *Urfarah*'s duty, then the danger is removed or destroyed. But almost every Iron Master will evaluate a situation carefully before annihilating a potential advantage. Some risks are worth taking.

It is also the way of the tribe to know their hunting grounds inside out, back to front and upside down. The Iron Master within a pack is the go-to guy when it comes to questions about the territory's layout, because most dedicate no small effort to keeping appraised of the landscape and even seemingly small changes that occur within their protectorate. When physical scouting won't cut it, the Iron Masters can often fall back on a network of human contacts spread across the territory occupying various roles in society. When the mortal grapevine isn't enough the werewolf goes to the spirits he's threatened, bribed or served in the past. When the denizens of the Shadow can't provide the information he needs, the *Farsil Luhal* goes back to running in the alleys, the streets, the boardrooms, the offices and the Shadow himself. Endurance is the second of their virtues, right behind a dedication to territory that can shame even the *Meninna*.

The greatest trial in an Iron Master's life is to keep track of the impact humanity has on the Shadow. Even on a local scale, such as a few city blocks, a neighborhood or a sleepy rural town, the actions of humans are the primary factor in what occurs on the other side of the Gauntlet. One corrupt cop can leave a trail of negative spirits in his wake over the months he walks a beat. One crime scene, whether it was rape, murder, mugging or suicide, can have a resonance that spreads ripples throughout the community in both worlds. One restaurant, store or bar can have a motley host of patrons on both sides of the Gauntlet, many of whom have an adverse effect on the local Shadow. And that's not even counting buildings that can be real hive nodes for spiritual foulness and corruption, such as hospitals and hospices. A pack with a place like that nearby is going to be busy above and beyond the call of duty, and often the Iron Master in the pack pays not only the greatest attention to what needs doing in the territory's reflection but also to what causes the trouble and why.

Human Sympathizers

The tribe is accused by its detractors and enemies as having fallen too far from their wolf ish natures Forsaken werewolves with an Iron Master packmate know with the evidence of their own eyes that this isn't true but the criticism remains, often snarled most fiercely by the Preda tor Kings or embittered Hunters in Darkness who long ago severed their attachments to the lives they once led Some might also accuse the *Farsil Luhal* of relying too much on technological tools communicating digitally instead of howling like a wolf and killing with pistols instead of claws and jaws as the Father did These detractors are wrong

The children of Red Wolf recognize that humanity has in a lot of ways got things right Technology breeds greater advancements each year and reshapes the Shadow along new lines Human progress generates more and newer ways for the Iron Masters to create new fetishes learn new Gifts and honor their territories through new tactics and resources To be an Iron Master is to see that for all of the damage humanity has done to the world and to the Shadow humankind has also achieved many useful things — things that can easily be assimilated into the Wild Hunt These wolves among the herd aren't mere imitators and they are more than just protectors They are skilled at seeing understanding and cherry picking the best out of any given situation that humanity has influenced, and in the modern age, that's pretty much everything However there's still a danger implicit to embracing modern technology and that's being foolish enough to rely on it When the power goes out and the gears jam the true *Farsil Luhal* adapts quickly and skillfully proving that there's still iron in his soul

The Tribal Oath

Honor Your Territory in All Things.

Before a werewolf takes the tribal oath, even before the Change, certain tendencies in character and behavior lead experienced Forsaken to know a potential Iron Master when they see one. Humans who do things differently are the ones who usually find their place among the *Farsil Luhal*, whether they worked hard for social reform in mortal life or spent their days thinking outside the box in order to get their own way. The tribe is full of risk-takers, idealists and visionaries. Criminal elements also find their way into the Iron Masters — those people who used their wits and cunning to get away with breaking the law, whether they were cat burglars, millionaire insurance fraudsters or freedom-fighting terrorists before the Change.

A unifying trait between humans and werewolves before they join the tribe is that most often have a powerful need for privacy. Home and hearth can be very important for pre-Change Iron Masters, which leads some of them into resistance and insurgency work in times of war, or into political activism if the opportunity and need arises. At the very least, many

potential Iron Masters will feel powerfully uncomfortable if someone reorders their personal effects at home or in the office. Before taking the tribal oath, some werewolves also feel a great need for personal space. This discomfort usually fades once the Uratha has become part of the tribe and finds balance in his life.

Sagrim-Ur's oath itself speaks to the importance of understanding a territory's strengths and advantages; it implies the foresight to adapt to what a land or city has to offer rather than changing the territory without changing oneself. The Iron Master changes his coat for the seasons, rather than expecting the seasons to change at his will. The oath is also a mandate to witness and mark the changes around the werewolf's pack. In honoring a territory, an Iron Master notes well all changes and particulars in his hunting ground and can react accordingly. Red Wolf demands that his children remain alert and observant, just as *Urfarah* once commanded of him. In seeing local changes, the werewolf is prepared to deal with them and adapts better to change himself.

What tends to happen is that most Iron Masters manifest a streak of efficiency when it comes to matters of territory. In some werewolves, the efficiency can also be a vicious streak, and the *Farsil Luhal* within a pack tolerate no defiance or misbehavior among the local spirits. Iron Masters with that attitude will likely get on well with any Blood Talon packmates.

More often, though, the duty to bear witness over all aspects of a territory results in an efficiency born from watching and implicitly understanding the hunting ground. Spirits of certain types must be honored in a certain way or they become intractable, troublesome and hostile. Some people — however loathsome the werewolves find them — should left alone to do their thing because it benefits a precarious balance in the physical world. Some spirits are more likely to cause trouble by their nature and need additional incentive or threats to maintain stability. Some criminals who plague a neighborhood can be removed in order to create a better hunting ground. There are 10,000 things to think about in honoring a pack's territory, and although it's no easy feat, the reward for doing so is the lessons learned in the process. Each challenge prepares the Iron Master for the next one, and most become experts on the local area in a short space of time.

The *Farsil Luhal* possess a number of minor unique rites that vary from region to region, concerned with honoring the spirits of their territories. In most cases, the rites are little more than ritual phrases and speeches designed to be spoken to spirits. These addresses echo Red Wolf's own words to the spirits of ancient Pangaea when the Firstborn wolf would force his curiosity on the denizens of Shadow. Iron Masters speak these phrases now to remind spirits of the tribe's bond to *Urfarah* and one of the Firstborn, as well as to thank them more sincerely than a simple First Tongue acknowledgement.

Tribal Identity

Iron Masters in any given area tend to share resources and information amongst each other more than the werewolves of other tribes. While this predisposition is unlikely to cross boundaries of rival packs, let alone hated enemies, a region's *Farsil Luhal* have a tendency to stay in touch with one another because it's useful to do so. In some cities, this might take the form of a monthly, even *weekly*, equivalent of the "board meeting" (see below) but most often it means that the Iron Masters make sure they keep tribemates' cell phone numbers or contact details handy and don't get shy about giving the heads-up for trouble and — much more common — asking for information, gossip or even advice. It's part kinship and part knowledge that the best way to cope with change is to be prepared for it.

This informal grapevine can sometimes take more substantial form. The Iron Masters of Cairo have an elaborate system of finances set up in the city, which local slang refers to as "the Account." The system was set up as a way of assisting tribemates and, by extension, the other Forsaken packs in the city after they took Cairo back from the Pure in the '70s. Every member of the tribe has access to this single vast wealth of saved money, whether they use the account number in dealings over the Internet, a rite to withdraw from an awakened ATM's spirit or simply hit up a contact on the street for a handout. The Account is managed by a single pack and its dizzyingly complex totem of statistics bound into the role. The spirit tracks the main bank account and all withdrawals, and the werewolves keep track of individual lenders who dole out cash on the streets to those who have no bank account. Werewolves either pay back what they borrow straight into the bank with a little interest, or (more frequently) they repay their scrounging by offering useful information to the pack that finances the Account.

Other Iron Masters in cities across the world have similar setups, whether they use cash as a currency, or information. The Account is a popular

model, but variants spread like wildfire or develop naturally anyway without outside influence. Through the efforts of three Iron Master werewolves from three separate packs, the *Farsil Luhal* of Manchester have unprecedented access to the city's closed-circuit security cameras, and share copied DVDs of city center footage with every tribe member in exchange for information trade-offs and other minor favors. There's no such thing as free information, but among each other, the Iron Masters don't charge much.

In many cities across the world, the local Iron Masters gather once a year on an arranged night, usually falling on either New Year's Eve (or the local equivalent) or the anniversary of a huge event in the city's history such as the Great Fire, 9/11, the fall of the Berlin Wall or Hurricane Katrina.

These gatherings usually take the form of a family get-together of sorts, followed by a celebration and ritual hunts through the urban Shadow. The meeting itself is usually referred to as "the board meeting" by the local *Farsil Luhal*, and no matter where the event is held, it is a chance for every single Iron Master in the city to make her voice heard. Whether the board meeting is held around a glass table in a corporate office building or on the roof of an abandoned parking lot, each werewolf speaks in turn, telling of his year in the city and the deeds of the pack. These meetings are often used to mourn fallen tribe members as well as to spread any warnings around to other packs. Some celebrations are even marked by Iron Masters pleading with their tribemates for assistance, especially if a pack has suffered greatly during the past 12 months.

Many werewolves of the tribe go in for some degree of body decoration, but the practice is much more common in the wolf and war forms than in the human shape. Iron Masters often take great pains to make their animalist forms stand apart from others in their packs and tribe, with each werewolf striving for individuality. Of course, as in many things tied to the tribe, such decoration changes at the werewolf's whim, and most Iron Masters consider their appearances to be ever-changing: a work in progress.



The most common affectations usually involve dyeing shocks of fur contrasting colors, or bleaching them blond or white in order to stand out. Urban wreckage often finds its way into Iron Master decoration, such as chains braided into shaggy Gauru fur, or long nails bound together in a metal tooth necklace. These items are almost always taken from a place in the hunting ground with some significance to the werewolf or his pack. Likewise, technological objects such as colored wires, transistors and resistors are often tied into the bleached fur, though such "trinkets" are usually made into talens or weak fetishes with rather unassuming appearances.

Much of this custom depends on the region the werewolves dwell in, as Iron Masters drawn from African tribes rarely tie the same items into their fur as the *Farsil Luhal* of New York City. One pack in the outlying villages of Dhaka, Bangladesh, is known to decorate their Urhan forms with holed coins tied into their black fur at various places, never touching, pieces of tin chipped off from the rice bowls they all share in their communal home and the feathers of any vultures they find dead in the city, this last as a way of honoring their pack totem. The packmembers believe the moonlight's reflection on the coins and metal shards in their fur does homage to Luna, for they are prevented from howling to her in the midst of such a huge city. Likewise, their choices of decoration do not compromise their silent hunts — a factor almost all Iron Masters are aware of, if and when they decide to change their appearance.

Packs

It can be murder to fight a neighboring pack if it is made up of Iron Masters, because the *Farsil Luhal* don't fight fair. Whether their neighbors are Pure or Forsaken, the werewolves can expect to face up against the most cunning and deceitful foes they've ever faced, and will likely suffer more than once under the Iron Master penchant for setting up elaborate ambushes. A focused *Farsil Luhal* pack is a vicious enemy to have within a city, for the Iron Masters will have a vast array of skills and tricks at their disposal, such as control over the spirits of technology, talents at sabotage, unmatched knowledge of the urban Shadow and perhaps even access to surveillance technology. Even when backed against the wall, an Iron Master pack is likely to have a few final surprises ready in order to escape or triumph, given that the tribe's werewolves have such tried and tested abilities to think on their feet and adapt to changes as they happen.

Leadership within Iron Masters packs varies from place to place. One pack will answer to a wise Ithaeur or Elodoth who steers their course through the horrors of the city's reflection each night, while other packs take a vote on each major decision and elect no true leader. Still more packs are more akin to free agents of a sort, meeting infrequently and each employing their own lone wolf tactics to keep the territory clear, only gathering to coordinate their efforts and collect intelligence. Other packs will live together in communal accommodation, and are for all intents and purposes a "normal" family.

An Iron Master pack that stays close to the packmembers' human roots has another advantage many other packs will lack. The werewolves are likely to be spread around the city in a host of jobs and careers, and even if they are not all as usefully placed as a journalist, lawyer, police officer or a paramedic, they can still draw surprising resources from their day jobs. In the modern world, power can come from surprising angles. While the utility of a packmember in a media agency, law enforcement, law firm or the emergency services can never be denied, manual labor industries or estate management work has a usefulness all its own. A rival pack that finds its main haven foreclosed by the bank are seriously inconvenienced, especially if it keeps happening until the point where the pack rather leave its hunting ground and cease threatening its Iron Master neighbors for fear of further reprisal. Likewise, a pack can find itself baffled as to how its Iron Master rivals know so much about their hunting grounds, never realizing that one of the *Farsil Luhal* is in the pack's territory for hours every day working on a construction site and scouting during his lunch hour. The best threats are those that go unseen, and the Iron Masters are veterans at hiding in plain sight.

Farsil Luhal packs often share something symbolic in the way they dress. A pack drawn from the warring urban gangs of Los Angeles might claim traditional gang colors as their pack identity, but that's an extreme (and very visual) case. More often, the members consciously choose or unconsciously adopt a similarity in their dress the longer they spend bonded to one another. A simple bracelet or cloth wristband worn under clothes can be all a pack feels it needs, and can be worn by beggars and businessmen without arousing any notice. Others unconsciously coordinate colors, each arriving in matching tones whether they're wearing skirt suits, jeans or stolen overcoats. Not every pack follows the custom, but many either

do it without realizing or choose something subtle that the packmembers feel strengthens their bond.

History

Many times during the course of history, the Iron Masters have watched and learned as events unfolded. The pace of change has multiplied during the past few hundred years, and the resulting developments in the human world have resonated throughout the tribe.

Since the destruction of Pangaea, the tribes of humans have developed into the modern world: a place of colossal cities, divergent cultures and globe-spanning communication. The *Farsil Luhal* have watched the changes take place over the millennia, blending in and adapting to the changes that sweep over humanity. The most obvious effect this has had on the tribe is the adaptation of new technologies into the Wild Hunt.

Humankind's technological advancements have meant unprecedented new tools to use in the defense of a hunting ground, but this is only one of the changes such developments have caused. When humanity experiments with new ideas and new concepts, and when new inventions roll out into mass production, the effect ripples across the Shadow. The Iron Masters in a pack might be able to work on a new fetish or use the new tool, but this is a secondary consideration. What change in the physical world means is change in the Shadow, and that is rarely a welcome event. Accompanying every new idea and invention is a horde of new spirits that spread across through second world, and the *Farsil Luhal* are usually the most dedicated to finding out all they can of technology's spiritual after-effects.

Some events in history have captivated many members of the tribe. While history is a path showing constant change and developments over time, some advances have altered the face of the world (and its reflection) immeasurably. To be an Iron Master in such a time is to stare at infinite possibilities with no solid predictions. At such times, the tribe's werewolves must surely recall the dying words of Father Wolf to Sagrim-Ur, *"Things will not be as they ought. Note well how they go."*

These events burn into the tribal consciousness among the Iron Masters, sensed as they occur and recalled thereafter as moments in time when everything changed forever. Some packs try to stop the changes, others might even encourage them. Most packs, however, are content to watch and learn, adapting to the new face of the world.

The Industrial Revolution stands out as one of the major changes that shook the human world and absolutely warped the Shadow forever after. Iron Masters living in dense population centers in England during that period were run ragged cataloguing the alterations (and the corruptions) in the Shadow of their pack's territories as technology began to saturate every aspect of human life. A more sedate but no less fascinating echo of this progress was the spread of the North American railroads across the United States, binding metal veins onto the surface of the pristine continent and serving as a portent of greater colonization and changes to come.

War is well-known as a great agent of change in both culture and technology. In regards to negative changes, nothing has rent the Shadow apart and reordered it as badly as the world wars. Packs across Europe and Asia fell in their hundreds against the Shadow's spiritual outcry as millions of spirits of pain, fear, war, death, torture and starvation flooded hunting grounds that were burned and razed in the physical realm. The Uratha may never be united into a great nation, but Pure and Forsaken felt dread at the world wars that paved the way for the creation of atomic energy. There was no unity of purpose or fear for the earth-spirit itself; what gripped packs across the world was a fear that with humanity now commanding the power of the sun, the Shadow would see yet more dangerous new spirits born with deadly powers at their disposal. It is said among the tribe that some of their brethren sought out Oppenheimer to confront him about what he was doing (or to kill him, depending on the person telling the story). If true, these attempts obviously failed.

Perceptions and Reflections

As the tribe bound closest to humanity, the Iron Masters see things slightly differently from the other tribes. The *Farsil Luhal* temper their Rage with the cunning of the wolf among the herd, and an Iron Master's auspice inspires him to deeds that might be considered unusual (even improper) to the other *Urdaga*. However, few werewolves with one of Sagrim-Ur's tribe in their pack can ever deny the usefulness of their Iron Master packmate, despite any evident breaks with tradition that happen along the way.

Rahu

"Don't talk to me about honorable challenges or noble duels from the ancient sagas. My honor is in the eyes of my friends and family, because I've kept them alive my own way. All the nobility I need in my life comes from the fact my pack gets by night after night with none of us being buried. When I face a fight, I zig instead of zag, and I don't play nice. My life's on the line, and I want to walk out alive after the blood has finished flying. I don't care about being remembered in years to come. I care about being alive, noticed in the here and now."



To be born with a warrior soul in the tribe of change is to fight smart, unpredictably and for want of a better word, *dirty*. Iron Master Rahu rarely ponder matters of honor or glory when they get stuck in. What Sagrim-Ur's Full Moons are most concerned with is Getting It Done, any way, any how and emerging on top afterwards with as few scratches as possible.

In a fight, a *Farsil Luhal* Rahu is a blur of confusing motion. If raw physical strength and ferocity will win the day in a traditional werewolf-on-werewolf battle, then fine. If not, if it's not a sure thing, then the tactics are likely to change moment to moment as the Iron Master explores where his advantages lay. In these battles, the Rahu of the tribe really shine. The werewolf won't just go toe-to-toe and dodge an enemy blow, he'll shapeshift down to human form and unload two shots into his opponent's belly as the werewolf leaps out of the way. To wear the enemy down, the werewolf will make a break for it without warning, throwing grit into his foe's eyes or kicking bottles or boxes at his head, before leaping back into the fray when the opponent is most distracted. Red Wolf's Rahu are masters at using the environment to provide additional weaponry, and will disengage in order to climb a wall and make an unexpected leaping attack, take out an opponent's legs with gunfire or throw a quick kick to knock him off the edge of rooftop.

When it comes to the creation of fetishes, many Rahu learn the rituals necessary to construct their own weapons. Iron Masters have some distinct attitudes with their fetish weapons, noticed by packmates and tribemates across the world. Firstly, many Full Moons go through weapons as if they were fads, using them for months and adopting another on a whim because it has a different function, inflicts injuries in a different way or appeals to the Iron Master on some other new level.

Secondly, most of the tribe's Rahu build up a hell of a weapon collection. They can take on the Wild Hunt with an arsenal of concealed fetishes on their person, with each weapon serving a unique purpose that assures its inclusion in the collection.

Thirdly, a great many of their fetish weapons are unusual by traditional standards, with their unpredictable nature being part of their appeal and value in a fight. When werewolves hunt their prey down, any Pure pack or spirit can expect to face claws, jaws and perhaps even swords, axes and spears. What an Iron Master Rahu brings to the fight is a level of unpredictability, firing bullets painstakingly engraved with glyphs and bound with spirits of shattered glass, or a length of industrial chain wrapped around a fist like a monstrous knuckle-duster, which can also be

used as a whip, coiling and biting like the snake-spirit bound within it.

An Iron Master weapon can be modern, antiquated or somewhere in between. The main consideration (really, the only consideration) when creating one is that it should never be what the enemy will expect. In this respect, the weapons are akin to the werewolves who wield them.

Purity

The precepts of Harmony are founded in the ways of the natural order, of Nature itself, but they are not limited to the behavior of creatures in the wilderness. Whether an Iron Master claims territory in a sprawling city or in a rural village, his attention to Purity will likely be no less than that of any werewolf in the wild.

The deeds of Purity that resonate through the Iron Master are rarely tied into a werewolf's self-restraint. The *Farsil Luhal* make no secret of their tradition-breaking temperament, and the tribe does little to honor those who resist sniffing out new opportunities and ways of doing things. In firm restraint, there is often an element of risk-avoidance that, while wise, isn't particularly endearing to the Iron Masters. Just as any Uratha, however, the Iron Masters admire any werewolf who resists the temptation to break the Oath of the Moon, or Death Rage, and such actions will likely earn recognition.

The emphasis Iron Masters place on Purity is often in terms of a werewolf's zeal in his cause, his skill in adapting to the changes in his territory around him and the ability to remain moral when it would be easier, but not *better* or *wiser*, to break the rules for immediate gain. *Farsil Luhal* who bring an almost crusading ethic to pacifying their hunting grounds are often respected by the Lunes and feared by the other spirits, which frequently results in a rise of Purity. Likewise, those who face the dangers of the Shadow and the physical realm without falling into Harmony degeneration through cutting corners and quick fixes tend to earn respect in no small measure.

Cahalith

"This city has a million stories. You can find the beginning of one anywhere: in Dumpsters and alleyways, corporate offices and night-time parking lots, and in the Shadow reflection of those places. There's always a trail to follow after that: a spirit that knows something more or a person that fits the next piece of the puzzle. You want to know why I spend my time doing all this? I'll tell you why. Remember the pedophile they found dead last month, the one the police had spent two years trying to catch? Well, I'm the only one in this city that knows how he died. Finding out where he was hiding was no treat, but I feel pretty good about that night's work, let me tell you."

Tapped into the heartbeat and lifeblood of a city, the Iron Masters of the Gibbous Moon often find themselves receiving prophetic dreams about changes, past and future alike, in the landscape of the city itself. Such visions might show buildings aflame, linking a fire in the past to a threat within the hunting ground today, or a nightmare of twisting metal bars and crumbling concrete walls, telling of the suffering that will come in a certain area in the future. Iron Master prophecies frequently show the clash of humanity versus the wild, with the werewolves themselves as silent witnesses between the two sides (or taking whatever side is most advantageous). In these dreams, many *Farsil Luhal* insist that they can feel the city speaking to them, whispering into their minds with Luna's permission. The communications, in tones of tortured steel and 1,000 mortal voices, warn the Iron Master of threats he will soon face, or hint at ways of avoiding the coming trouble. Few of their visions are set in stone — they more often tell of what should be changed rather than what should be allowed to happen.

The Cahalith in Red Wolf's tribe are known to spend a lot of time interacting with spirits within the Shadow, but in ways apart from the general run of pack duty. In these meetings, Cahalith seek out spirits to learn from them, hunting down lore and twisted, alien logic that will better help the Cahalith understand how a city lives and breathes in its own way. Among the Iron Masters, the Cahalith are the ones who often consider human settlements alive, sensing the undercurrent of spiritual resonance in a city's roads and buildings. Within a town or city, humanity and its million habits — from emotion to economics and from murder to ignorance — fuse into a gestalt entity that makes up the spirit of the city itself. Though the Elodoth and Ithaeur are considered the experts on dealings with the second world, the Cahalith is more often the one who seeks to understand the city's personality and presence, using such knowledge to benefit his own hunting ground and bring it into accord with the city's preferred landscape. There is lore and wisdom in attuning oneself to the city's spirit, an affinity often more useful than simply learning more Gifts, and the Gibbous Moons understand that.

Cahalith within the tribe find many ways of howling without drawing human attention to themselves. Many compose songs, write stories or create art as a way of recording the deeds of their pack, of honoring Luna and of expressing themselves when an ear-splitting howl just isn't possible. At least one novelist has made a living by weaving stories out of the creatures his pack has encountered in the Shadow, and although his work reads like horror fiction to mortal readers, other werewolves see the truth in the words and make note of the deeds, just as they are preserved on bookshelves all over the world. Another Iron Master has gathered great renown in the modern art scene for his warped sculptures apparently depicting the nightmares of his childhood. In reality, he is presenting to anyone looking, whether they are aware or not, a list of the beings his pack has bound or destroyed. In the shadows of the second world, the Lunes look on and remember him just as if he had howled his triumphs to the Mother's bright face at midnight.

Glory

Glory is not a concept synonymous with the actions of many Iron Masters. Even when they perform great deeds or win terrible battles, the tribal way to do it is by playing viciously and fighting unfair. A haughty Blood Talon or Storm Lord might have no trouble in looking down on the Iron Masters within their packs as a less-than-glorious member.

The great deeds are there, even if at times the path to achieving them is convoluted. Stories of Iron Master triumphs over enemies might sidetrack into a discussion about the quick-thinking and crafty ways the werewolf won the fight, but the end result is that he walked away and his opponent didn't. The spirits respect that.

The *Farsil Luhal* penchant for *unique* actions also earn them no shortage of Glory on account of bravery. Everyone can respect a werewolf who infiltrates an enemy stronghold and returns with information, but when the Iron Master of a pack does the same thing, hanging from the rafters of a warehouse for seven hours, learning everything he needs and then covering his own escape by well-timed gunshots that take out the lights in the room — it's clear their adaptive style shows results more often than not.

Elodoth

"I'm one of the reasons people are afraid to walk down dark alleys and back roads at night, and yet I'm one of the reasons it's a little bit safer to walk down the street at all. In a tribe born out of change, it's my duty to point out the times when tradition is worth following. In a race with a mythic heritage, it's my place to speak out against old laws that no longer have meaning. I judge my brethren, but I understand when they sin. My life is a flipped coin that never landed heads or tails. I'm what happens when the coin lands on its edge."

To be an Elodoth among the Iron Masters is to tread a balance between the chaos of the urban Shadow and the mundane aspects of human life. Many Elodoth still hold jobs from their mortal days, though the tribe's Irraka tend to be the ones clinging to that particular part of human existence with the most frequency.

What many Elodoth seem to have a natural affinity for is inducting new werewolves into Uratha life, helping them balance their wolf-hearts and human minds. It's an inglorious position at times, but an honorable one, and when a pack encounters a newly Changed Ghost Wolf hidden somewhere in the city, the Half-Moon is the natural choice to guide the poor wretch into balancing his life before and his new existence. When a fresh initiate to the tribe has to learn how to survive as a wolf without the conveniences of his tender human life, the Elodoth can teach him the ways of four legs and fangs. As an Iron Master, the Elodoth can seem less primal or feral (on the surface) to new Changers, and knows how to react well to change. Perhaps he even teaches lessons that resonate familiarity with the werewolf who was, until so recently, a human. Because of this implicit understanding of human and wolf duality, many Elodoth of the *Farsil Luhal* rise to positions of great respect among their pack and tribe.

The beta position in many packs is filled by Iron Master Elodoth, because such a character likely possesses great instinct about the difficulties of living as a human and a wolf. He understands the dangers of mortal witnesses, sees clearly the trials involved in maintaining a real human life, and also understands the difficulties of living up to the honorable standards expected of all Uratha. These werewolves become part counselor, part advisor to their packs, and even though such a role is rarely acknowledged formally, the Elodoth still find themselves the default stop for first advice in a packmate's personal life.

This goes both ways. With such an intuitive understanding of how werewolf life clashes with the human mindset, a great many Elodoth of the tribe become judges over their peers, dispensing advice

when needed and judging their deeds and crimes when necessary. A Storm Lord Elodoth might pass judgment over his pack out of a sense of superiority or responsibility, but an Iron Master Half-Moon does so because he sees their problems with the clarity of perfect understanding. He instinctively knows, on some level, what they are going through. As the Walker Between, he was born to know. As an Iron Master, he feels the conflict, too.

Rendering judgment over their packmates can be something a werewolf takes great pride or joy in, and it can be a solemn duty that the Elodoth regrets but refuses to back down from because he knows it must be done. Punishments usually involve a penance or set task that should bring the charged werewolf some new understanding about his sin, be it something to bring his Harmony into balance, or a task to repair any violations involving the Oath of the Moon. Refusal to comply with these sentences will lead to threats and possible expulsion from the pack, or even tribe. The majority of Iron Masters greatly respect their Elodoth, because they all realize the burden of maintaining Honor in a tribe centered on defying the old ways to find something better.

Honor

The *Farsil Luhal* see honor in living up to their responsibilities despite the difficulties. Examples looked upon with the most favor are those tied with auspice roles, even if not immediately associated with Honor: such as an Irraka who gets battered and beaten one night yet who perseveres on scouting hunts despite his injuries because he knows his pack need his eyes, or the Elodoth who judges and punishes her own brother because it was the right thing to do.

In some respects, much of what the Iron Masters might consider honorable holds a hint of the self-sacrifice commonly found in Glory. Any great act of justice, truth or fairness that somehow costs or harms the werewolf himself is that much likelier to impress the spirits and his tribemates, because it becomes so much more evident that he is willing to maintain nobility in a tribe that can sometimes seem lacking in such a quality — at least from the outside.

Ithaeur

"I got these burns on my face from being electrocuted half to death by some crazy-ass spirits I freed from a Wounded locus in a power station. This, here, was from a fight with some kind of twisted tree-spirit that was enraged at the destruction of its physical form when a park was paved over last year. This scarring on my arms was from a difficult binding in which a fear-spirit formed out of a kid's nightmares would only play ball if I offered a pound of my own flesh and blood. Yeah, I'm a mess. The city's reflection will do that to you in no time. But it can't be all bad, or you wouldn't be here asking for my advice, would you?"

Among the Iron Masters, it is said that the Cahalith seek out the soul of the cities while the Ithaeur hunt through the blood and bones. The Gibbous Moon of a pack reads the ebb and flow of a city's great spirit, coming to terms with the soul of the sprawl. The Ithaeur reads the individual details, working with, threatening, binding and driving out the spirits that shape the spiritscape.

Iron Master Crescent Moons are aware that the great majority of spirits are already known and familiar to the Uratha. Individual packs won't have encountered every kind of being out there, but the lore is available to werewolves if they know where to look, and which questions to ask the right people among the Forsaken. What the Iron Master Ithaeur seek out instead are the spirits that are newer to the Shadow, those that are born in reflection of an ever-changing human world. Spirits of new power sources, new weapons, of metal and electricity and machinery that have only existed in the physical world for a few hundred years. In terms of mythic existence, these spirit choirs are still very young, and their presence in the Shadow is often unpredictable, with many of their actions resulting in unknown consequences. Magath formed from these creatures can be especially dangerous, and Iron Masters are ever on the lookout for such twisted spirits.

These tendencies to seek out the new, the undocumented and the unpredictable, tie into the Ithaeur penchant for creating fetish tools that have never seen use in a territory before. The Crescent Moons usually leave the weapon-making to the Rahu, focusing instead on crafting tools with unusual or specific uses outside of battle, perhaps with an eye to stealth, deception or negotiation. A pack in the city of Warsaw, Poland, has its Iron Master Ithaeur to thank for a host of minor spirit-bound tools, such as leather gloves bound with an urban bat-spirit, allowing the wearer to cling to overhanging surfaces for hours on end without tiring, and a spirit of order bound within a coin that always comes up heads and never tails. An Ithaeur might have to endure some doubt or even ridicule at his newest overly specific

creation, but the time almost certainly comes when it proves invaluable.

One of the unifying aspects of those born to this auspice is their collective instincts regarding the Ridden. The Iron Masters are the werewolves closest to humanity in spatial and social terms, if not spiritual ones, and to see people possessed by rogue spirits extending their influence beyond their appointed territories makes the skin of an Ithaeur crawl more than anyone's. Every city is a chaotic hive of dangers where flesh and Shadow run the risk of clashing, and rarely is it more evident than in the *Hithimu*. Some Crescent Moons will take a violent path with such deviants, others will seek out any means of exorcising the invading spirit and saving the human if possible. No matter what the Iron Master's personal thoughts might be on the matter, the instinctive revulsion that creeps under his skin in the presence of the Ridden means that most of Red Wolf's Ithaeur are fierce in their efforts against these creatures.

Wisdom

Wisdom isn't purely drawn from ancient stories, old spirits and sagas from the past. Wisdom can be found in learning and adapting to the changes of Shadow night by night. The Shadow itself is alive with activity, ever-changing and evolving (in some places warping and rotting) with the tread of time, the increasing influence of humanity and the spirits born in the reflection of great cities.

The Iron Masters seeking Wisdom are the ones who understand the changes within the second world, focusing on elements of the spiritscape that are new to the world, or previously unseen. Creating new rituals (either using new components or achieving new results) or receiving new Gifts from previously unknown spirits are actions particularly worthy of note.

Irraka

"The things others miss, the stuff that slips through the cracks — that's what I see. Sometimes that means I need to run as a wolf through a hundred dark alleys and sniff out disturbances in the nastiest places of the real city. Other times it means just paying attention to normal humans, seeing who is acting up and where the local trouble is going down. Nine times out of ten, I might find nothing, but that one time I hit gold is always worth the effort. There are things going on in this city that you wouldn't even believe, and it's my duty to find out what they are, who is running the shows and how my pack can drop the curtain on them for good."

Among the Forsaken, the Irraka are known as both New Moons and No Moons, depending on the speaker's beliefs. Among the Iron Masters, the Irraka most certainly consider themselves the latter. They are the blessed of Luna Hiding, when the Mother allows the skies to blacken so that she can watch the cities from shadowed heavens.

In a pack, it's likely that the Iron Master Irraka will be unmatched in urban stalking, but that's hardly the only specialty of these werewolves. Beyond the obvious, because of the noted Irraka closeness to their human lives and the Iron Master proximity to humanity, Sagrim-Ur's No Moons are perhaps the most likely of any Uratha to maintain mortal ties, even careers. Such a decision is weighed against whether such work is flexible enough to allow the werewolf frequent access to his pack, and useful enough to provide information pertaining to the Wild Hunt. A *Farsil Luhal* journalist might be a cliché, but journalism is also a dream job for most Irraka willing to remain in the working world.

Not just affinity for their once-human lives keeps No Moons involved in the physical world. Most Iron Master Irraka consider the physical city their area of expertise just as Ithaeur focus on the city's reflection. The No Moon's natural abilities (and those she likely trains as well) make her an excellent scout for urban areas, which is vitally important for city packs not only to hunt down prey, but also to know just when and where it is safe to shapeshift. Witnesses are the last thing an urban packs needs to deal with, and the first thing the Irraka learn to keep a look out for.

It also stands to reason that the Irraka monitor the physical world because any interference by spirits there is almost always hostile or otherwise dangerous. When a *Farsil Luhal* No Moon spies signs of violation from the other side of the Gauntlet, it's usually a clear indication that a troublesome spirit is pushing its luck and influence further than it should. By keeping aware of these signs — disturbances in local people's behavior, unusual activity in certain areas, etc. — the No Moon can give his pack a heads-up before real trouble starts to throw down. That means the pack gets to make trouble first, perhaps stopping the spirit before it causes too much chaos in the real world.

The emphasis on the Irraka's place in the physical world has more to it than simple scouting,

however. The No Moon's ties to the human world — and in many ways, his distance from the Mother's light — make him the ideal packmate when it comes to dealing with humans. An Irraka who pays his taxes and holds down a decent job, with the added benefit of Evasion Gifts, has a much better chance of infiltrating the right parties or gatherings in order to learn what he needs to learn. An Irraka keeping up with the current fashions (or with the knowledge to fake them well) has a better chance of getting into the right clubs where he needs to do a little eavesdropping.

Many No Moons maintain extensive networks of human contacts, from bribed beggars on the street to "friends of friends" who might hold interesting jobs, such as in the media, the law, the medical sciences, the press or law enforcement. A character might not be a social paragon, but these ties to the human world come naturally to Iron Master Irraka, and are undeniably useful.

Cunning

The best way for an Iron Master to earn his primary Renown is to implement a new way of pacifying hostile elements. It sounds simple enough at face value, but the many problems besieging a pack's hunting ground come in the form of threats old and new, familiar and foreign. Thinking fast enough to deal with them at all is a challenge, and ending a threat with previously unforeseen cunning and invention is no easy feat. Often it's *necessary*, but that's never a guarantee of ease or simplicity.

The Iron Masters, as wolves among the herd, also greatly admire those among their tribe who perform great deeds for their packs without alerting humans to the presence of the People. Witnesses, especially reliable witnesses, can be an Iron Master's worst enemy. Keeping hidden in plain sight despite all the strife in Uratha existence is to be admired, and the *Farsil Luhal* take great pride in their ability to do so.

Concerns of the Soul

As the tribe with the closest ties to the human world, the Iron Masters are probably the most careful about maintaining their Harmony and Primal Urge within levels that don't inconvenience them or draw unwanted mortal attention. When either trait starts to rise extremely high or fall drastically low, tribemates have been known to track a character down and see if he requires any assistance and in some cases even issue an ultimatum if the extreme scores are jeopardizing the security of the Uratha packs in the same city.

Harmony

Harmony is not Morality. This can cause dangerous confusion if an Iron Master isn't careful in adapting to his new instinctive guidelines for balancing the wolf and the human. After all, just because he doesn't feel any guilt about stealing, doesn't mean he can be open and blasé about it. Because the *Farsil Luhal* remain so connected to the human world, the slight differences in ethical outlook can be disorientating at times, as the werewolf tries to balance what he once *believed* was right with what he know *knows* is right. The differences are subtle enough, barely noticeable until Harmony starts to plummet down or rocket up the chart.

Obviously, werewolves with low Harmony are in danger of revealing themselves and their kind to human witnesses. Murders begin to occur around the degenerating Iron Master, and he feels a deep wrongness about the killings, but not the moral guilt he'd expect to feel. Instead, he focuses on the instinctive sensation that the killings were wasteful, impure, because they had no true reason behind them beyond his loss of control. Before the Change, he would likely feel guilt for ever performing such an act. Now his actions take on a certain intriguing discomfort, where moral guilt no longer plays a part. Some Iron Masters have difficulty understanding Harmony's primal sense of wrongness and how it applies to their actions, even learning to enjoy the imbalance of their souls now that human guilt no longer touches their thoughts. That's a dangerous addiction and clearly the mark of an unstable mind.

Iron Masters with exceptionally high Harmony create their own trouble soon enough. At levels 9 and 10, the creed of Harmony states that a werewolf must obtain his own food and shapeshift at least every three days. For werewolves in the depths of a city, these can both become very difficult. Obtaining one's own food is no easy feat when the Iron Master has lived as all humans live, buying their food from stores since they were born. The city provides little in the way of sustenance that many Uratha would consider worthy unless desperation set in. It can severely unnerve packmembers to find that their holier-than-thou Iron Master packmate is dining on rats, cats and stray dogs because he must obtain his own food.



Primal Urge

Extremely high Primal Urge is usually a bad sign for most Iron Masters. It bespeaks of a werewolf out of touch with the human world and its changes, sacrificing his ability to blend in and adapt with humanity in favor of the primal power of a hunter and killer. While the advantages of high Primal Urge are many, they are often consciously ignored by most urban werewolves out of necessity. The Iron Masters who come to possess great reserves of Primal Urge are like nightmares of human imagination: literal monsters stalking in the dark places of cities and howling to a moon made dim by light pollution, waking up entire neighborhoods with mournful wolf-dirges.

Iron Masters with low Primal Urge usually dedicate their efforts to improving themselves in other ways and enjoying the fact their presence only causes minor discomfort to humans. While it would be false to say more Iron Masters than any other tribe have lower Primal Urge ratings, it is fair to say they are more appreciative of the benefits inherent in such an outlook.

Story Hooks

The following section details a few hooks that players and Storytellers might find interesting to incorporate into their chronicles' Iron Master characters.

• **The City Spirit:** Cities are alive, each with their own distinct personalities and temperaments. As the Iron Masters shape the Shadow of their hunting grounds, the great spirit of the city will probably pay attention to their behavior. Though few city-spirits would ever act directly to oppose or support a werewolf pack, the signs of a city's attention can mark a character or a pack for many years. Eerie events might occur around such a character, such as technology failing or strange figures paying undue attention to him, and spirits bound to the city (such as building- or street-spirits) might react to the werewolf's presence.

• **The Grapevine:** Iron Masters who attend the tribe's yearly board meetings have access to a great deal of information, most of which directly concerns all local *Farsil Luhal*. Characters can hear of new recruits, new dangers, new changes to the Shadow and new physical world alterations that will affect the city's reflection. This grapevine works both ways. Many Iron Masters have felt

uneasy at the level of gossip (positive or otherwise) doing the rounds about them and their own packs, and a well-known name can lead to others seeking out the character with unknown intentions in mind. For example, mentors can hunt down a promising student, or old grudges might find a way of getting revived through continuous exposure to gossip and rumor.

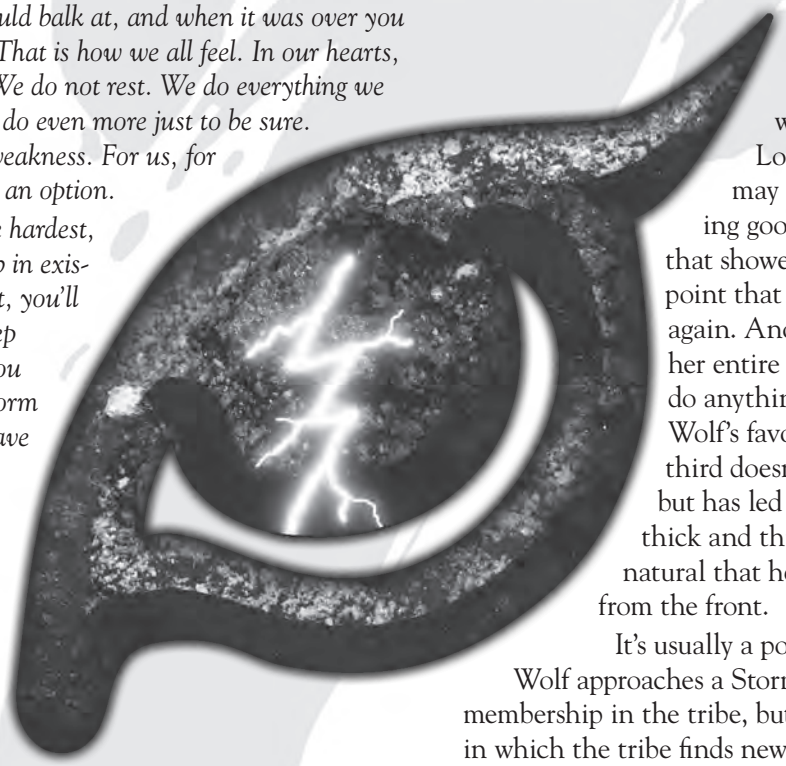
• **Something Borrowed, Something Blue:** In cultures where arranged marriage is commonplace, many Iron Masters also follow the practice. Werewolf parents will arrange for their wolf-blooded children to marry into other wolf-blooded families, and ties will almost certainly be made in order to strengthen the blood of the wolf in a community that's aware of their supernatural heritage. Characters with mortal ties to such cultures are likely to have an arranged marriage in their future, and it's down to them whether they accept or rebel against this fate.



STORM LORDS

When your pack is lost, you must lead them to safety. When your pack must fight, you must lead them into battle. When your pack's spirits are low, you must hold them up. You shoulder the responsibility to keep your pack working. If you do your job right, you won't get any thanks. If you fuck up, you'll be the one they blame.

Maybe you didn't ask for this role outright, but it was plain in your heart. You wanted it, needed it. Skolis-Ur made you fight to live through something veterans of other tribes would balk at, and when it was over you begged for more. That is how we all feel. In our hearts, we do not sleep. We do not rest. We do everything we can, and then we do even more just to be sure. Anything else is weakness. For us, for you, failure is not an option.



You chose the hardest, most thankless job in existence. Every night, you'll finally drift to sleep wondering why you ever joined the Storm Lords. But you have seen weakness in yourself and others, and you've had enough. Your weakness is something that will not trouble you again. If you can beat it, so can anyone. And if they can't, they can damn well learn. Until they do, you are better than they are. You have the right — the duty — to lead them, whether they like it or not. You will lead, and they will follow, because duty, responsibility, and honor command it. Because you are a Storm Lord, and we have a nobler purpose.

Riding the Thunder

To say that the Storm Lords hate weakness is accurate, but only to a point. The tribe as a whole despises anything that shows tribe members as weak, and tribe members live their lives knowing that whenever their totem pays any attention to them, they have failed. This attitude informs everything a Storm Lord does on some level, and it's the one burning thing that matters when a prospective werewolf petitions to join the tribe.

The Storm Lords walk a hard path, constantly testing themselves and checking their every decision for weakness. Most Ghost Wolves who see this wonder why the *Iminir* as a whole refuse to accept their bad decisions and moments of weakness. After all, surely what's done is done. Some of the tribeless see the Storm Lords in another light. There is a wide range of reasons for why any werewolf would respect the Storm Lords enough to join. One may be obsessed over making good some past misdeed that showed his weakness, to the point that he refuses to ever fall again. Another may have spent her entire life proving that she can do anything, and gaining Winter Wolf's favor is the ultimate sign. A third doesn't obsess over weakness but has led his community through thick and thin and finds it only natural that he should continue to lead from the front.

It's usually a positive sign if the Ghost Wolf approaches a Storm Lord to petition for membership in the tribe, but that's not the only way in which the tribe finds new members. Every *Iminir* is constantly on the lookout for Ghost Wolves who would make good Storm Lords. Some are quietly practical, calm and centered with their own sense of the right thing to do, and to Hell with anyone who tells them otherwise. Others were personally successful in the human world and have a yearning to remain so as werewolves. Still others were leaders — from corporate CEOs to community heads — who have the natural drive to be alphas. Finally, the Storm Lords look for people who work tirelessly behind the scenes, making sure that everything they are involved with is a success. The one unifying factor in all of these cases, the one thing that a Storm Lord looks for in any werewolf she deems worthy of the tribe, is a burning urge to succeed no matter

what. If a Ghost Wolf possesses that drive and determination, the Storm Lords may well approach him.

Initiation into the Storm Lords is a harsh process. Skolis-Ur showed weakness once and once only at the death of Father Wolf, and will not accept as his child anyone who would show the same weakness. Every Storm Lord must go through an ordeal that would normally break his spirit. Each tribe member stands proud in the knowledge that other tribes contain members who would not find favor in Skolis-Ur' eyes. If a Ghost Wolf approaches a Storm Lord with a desire to join Winter Wolf's brood and fails the trial set before her, then she takes no dishonor in the eyes of the People for her failure — even though it will likely burn in her breast for a long time to come. If a Storm Lord approached her, some *Iminir* would see the bad judgment as a mark of weakness for the recruiter. If the recruiter was the reason for a particularly promising werewolf failing her initiation, because she was unprepared or did not know what the rite would entail of her, the Storm Lord may well feel Winter Wolf's presence casting a disapproving gaze over the Storm Lord's soul.

The Tribal Oath

Allow No One to Witness or to Tend Your Weakness.

The Storm Lords are unique in one regard. No matter whether a prospective recruit passes the trial set before him, everyone who goes through the rite must swear the Oath of the Moon. For someone who doesn't make it into the tribe, having to take the oath can be a mark of humiliation, but every Storm Lord knows that it is the only way. Really, this practice honors everyone who chose to join the Storm Lords, whether successful or not. The prospective werewolf is still worthy of joining the People, after all. Many in the other tribes see this opinion as a mark of pride, and often call it hubris — but only when there are none of Winter Wolf's children around to hear.

Only those who made it through the harsh trial of endurance set before them also swear Winter Wolf's tenet, *"Allow no one to witness or to tend your weakness."* No member of the tribe at that point would deny that oath. That simple phrase takes everything that the Storm Lords stand for — honor, endurance, strength, leadership, victory and the burning need to do whatever it takes to avoid showing weakness. Storm Lords do not impose the oath on their recruits. Any werewolf who is initiated into the tribe already lives the oath in a way that others sometimes find it hard to comprehend. Every werewolf who joins the tribe has a concrete idea of what weakness is and why she must never give in to it.

An immigrant who has worked for his family and his community, who works hard to improve race-relations in his part of the city, is already living the oath before he Changes. To him, weakness is sitting back and letting things go. Before he stood up to lead, he was weak for relying on others. He could have been weak when a gang of neo-Nazis shattered both of his legs just for being Mexican, but he did not let that stop him or hand off his duties on other people. He didn't quest for revenge, either, tainting his mission until it was unrecognizable. He faced down everything the world threw at him, and when he underwent his First Change and met other Uratha, he knew he was a Storm Lord from that moment. He had lived his life to Winter Wolf's tenet, and he was not about to change.

An executive who spent her human life striving to make things better at her company, taking every opportunity to work her way up the hierarchy, is already living the oath before she Changes. For her, weakness is seeking power for power's sake. She allowed the glass ceiling to hold her back once before, not going for a position on the board because every other member was male and "everyone knew" that the next appointee would have physical as well as metaphorical balls. That moment has burned inside her ever since, and her Change at the hands of a would-be rapist cemented her need to change things. The Storm Lords saw her hatred of the weakness that the system instilled in women everywhere, and the tribe sought her out. Swearing to let none witness or tend her weakness, she was already planning her ascent to the board — and what she would do with her newfound power to make sure nobody ever looked down on the women of her company.

However a Storm Lord sees Winter Wolf's tenet, one thing is clear: it isn't anything new to her. Tribe members have all lived their lives according to those words, though many didn't realize it. Their interpretations differ, each finding solace in his own definition of weakness and how it affects him, but the oath binds them as close as any religion or nationality — often much closer. While each member has his own understanding of the oath, the words have a similar effect on everyone.

Tribal Identity

Storm Lords differ across the world. A Storm Lord from Saskatchewan has more in common with

other local Uratha than another of his tribe who was brought up in Mumbai. That said, some things don't change from place to place. Some things, no matter where a werewolf is or what his packmates are like, are hallmarks of the *Iminir* that no werewolf can deny. Greatest among these unchanging faces is the tribe's affinity for storms.

Some *Iminir* are certain that Skolis-Ur speaks through thunder and howling winds, that lightning is his talons striking the earth. Many more disregard such viewpoints as needlessly superstitious. All Storm Lords know that Winter Wolf chose the hard path of leadership, and storms are the harshest weather that many will ever encounter. When the winds howl and rain hurls itself at the ground, the *Iminir* need to immerse themselves in the storm. For some, this is simply due to a love of storms, but others see it as another little trial, a miniature ordeal that they suffer gladly to show Skolis that they still willingly endure everything the world throws at them.

The Storm Lords are incontrovertibly tied to such weather, be it a blizzard or a tropical storm. Cahalith study the flashes of lightning and howling of the winds, hoping to divine a message. Rahu of the tribe work on emulating the storm, striking as suddenly as a bolt of lightning. Iraka capitalize on the low visibility and distracting noise to perfect their arts of stalking. Followers of every auspice find something that they can learn from as the wind and rain scours the earth, and most other Uratha think that the Storm Lords' affinity for thunder ends there. Those Uratha couldn't be more wrong.



When the world is throwing hard choices and too many emergencies at a Storm Lord, an *Iminir* can spend time in the storm alone, thinking through her problems while the weather emulates the raging in her mind. The world reflects her mind,

and that gives her some measure of inner strength. *It's only a storm. Skolis-Ur ensured that I have endured far worse.* While it can seem strange that *Iminir* like spending their time alone in harsh weather, often the solutions they bring back with them are the best way forward.

When a Storm Lord has nothing more to worry about than patrolling her territory, the storm gives her some measure of comfort. Things could be worse for her, and the pounding thunder often serves to scare off minor spirits that would otherwise be a problem. *It could be worse. I have respite now, but soon I will endure more without falling.* *Iminir* who are lucky enough to be in such a position often take note of any obvious omens — such as a tree struck by lightning — as a chance to stop problems before they develop.

Packs of Storm Lords will meet outside when a storm rages, reinforcing not only their own personal endurance but also the knowledge that every packmember is strong enough to endure anything, strengthening their bond.

The desire for trophies is another conceit shared throughout the tribe. Rather than showing off, each trinket reminds the *Iminir* of something she has overcome, some challenge or ordeal that she has endured without showing weakness. Of course, this cuts both ways. When she does show weakness — and worse, when she fails because of her own weakness — a Storm Lord is honor-bound to take some memento to remind her of her failure.

Those few Uratha who know that some Storm Lords take tokens from failure as well as success see this as an odd conceit. Why should an *Iminir* — a member of a tribe renowned for their hatred of weakness — advertise a time when they were weak? The reasons are twofold.

First, the mock-trophy is a reminder of a situation in which the Storm Lord failed. If there's any better way to ensure that she will not fail again in a similar situation, nobody's yet found it. While she carries the mock-trophy, she has a direct reminder of fucking up, and an imperative reason to avoid collecting another such token.

Secondly — and more controversially among the tribe — these reminders of failure keep the *Iminir* honest. Everyone succeeds, and everyone fails. Several Storm Lords are humble (or proud) enough to believe that showing their failures keeps them accountable, and they will relate the stories behind any of their tokens if pressed. Others in the tribe refuse to carry anything that would indicate or commemorate their failure. They believe that they hew closer to Winter Wolf's oath by keeping their weakness away from other werewolves, while those who show both success and failure claim that their honesty shows a greater degree of honor, which Winter Wolf rewards.

A few go further, shunning the idea of trophies altogether. When they meet Storm Lords who do carry trophies, these werewolves argue that a Storm Lord should not rest on the pride of past glories or show their failures to others. Pride is more than a sin; pride is another form of weakness — an interesting viewpoint in light of Winter Wolf's proud nature. Instead, these *Iminir* insist that one should act at all times as though Skolis-Ur were watching closely, and should let this attitude inform their dealings with other werewolves. In this way, those who shun trophies quickly gain respect among other Uratha.

For the majority of the tribe, trophies of both victory and defeat are a way to advertise their prowess. Some carry these trinkets openly, showing their stories to anyone who chooses to ask about them. Small patches on clothes, recovered trinkets and found items turned into jewelry are the most common forms of trophy, but others prefer tattoos, body piercings or scarification to advertise their prowess. Most Uratha know that behind such marks are stories, and that the bearer will likely tell if asked. On a quiet night, two *Iminir* trading stories of their successes — and how they avenged their failures — will rouse the spirits of any werewolf who listens.

The practice of bearing trophies relies on the honor of the werewolf who carries them. While every Storm Lord wishes that her tribe members were paragons of honor, that simply isn't true. Some are despots who use signs of past victories to impose their rule over other werewolves, while others build a false reputation by inventing the stories behind their trophies. The former is forgivable, to a point. The latter is not. Benefiting from false trophies is a crime among the tribe, and *Iminir* gladly police their own. A Storm Lord has to be seen to be honest about what he has done. While exaggeration can sometimes warm the hearts of his companions, it's also a swift slide toward overconfidence and lying to the werewolves he is supposed to trust implicitly.

The *Iminir* don't all display their trophies. Several werewolves of the tribe carry their reminders with them as a physical scrapbook, small items that remind them of both victories and failures kept somewhere safe. Their stories are not for the People

at large. Instead, the *Iminir* view such trophies as a personal history, much as a diary of their successes and failures. Harsh experience has taught others among the People that a Storm Lord who displays no trophies wishes to keep quiet about his past not because he is not proud of it, but because he sees no reason for others to know. Much as human war veterans, these Storm Lords reason that if another Uratha were there, he would understand. If not, then no amount of words can do it justice. When faced with someone who is unsure of his capability, such a Storm Lord would be much more likely to show the questioner how good he is first-hand than relying on the tale of a past victory. Memory is all well and good, but new victories don't happen in the past.

If a Storm Lord turns his back on Skolis-Ur, honor demands that the Storm Lord destroy his trophies. If he refuses, his ex-tribemates will do it for him. Those victories belonged to a werewolf who doesn't exist any more. Trading on that reputation would be so dishonorable that most *Iminir* couldn't even conceive of it.

Packs

The common view of all-*Iminir* packs is that of a barely contained argument. After all, each werewolf wants to be alpha and has good reason to be, leading to endless quarrelling and fractiousness that sets packmate against packmate. That's what happens when too many cooks get together, right?

Wrong. Dead wrong.

A pack is greater than the sum of its parts. The pack has a role: it must protect its territory. Furthermore, each member of the pack has a role that she must play, or the pack itself is a failure. These roles are often but not always dictated by auspice. Packs of *Iminir* understand this implicitly. Only one werewolf can be the alpha, that much is obvious. While some packs do fall to infighting and personality clashes, they're nowhere near as common as most werewolves think.

Each Storm Lord is accustomed to succeeding in harsh situations. Often, that means doing the best you can and then doing more when that's not good enough. In a pack in which every member shares that attitude, everyone takes one role swiftly enough. Storm Lords must excel in their chosen role, never displaying weakness. They have to do what's expected of them. Rather than all striving to be alpha, instead the *Iminir* in a pack strive to be the best at what they have to do. Petty squabbles are just another sign of weakness.

A good alpha helps her pack. She doesn't tell the others what to do and when; instead, she relies on the others knowing what to do. Instead, she works tirelessly to make sure that they can fulfill their role without a problem, assessing the big picture and getting rid of obstacles before they become insurmountable. This hands-off approach to leading a pack is one of the sides to the *Iminir* that other tribes will likely never see. When this approach works, the pack is like a well-oiled machine.

Of course, that assumes every alpha of an all-*Iminir* pack is a good alpha, and that's just not the case. In some cases, the alpha is a hideous micromanager, assuming that he knows every role better than the person taking that role. Such interference leads to swift challenges for leadership, but a powerful alpha can hold his post even though the rest of the pack has turned against him.

Even if the alpha is good, others in the pack may have aspirations toward leading. When their desire to lead overwhelms everything else, things go horribly wrong. Packmates choose sides or chip in with their own desire for leadership, and the pack becomes little more than a fight waiting for an excuse to start.

Contests for leadership among packs of *Iminir* are harsh affairs. When there isn't actual animosity between the alpha and challenger, the actual contest is rarely violent. The most common challenge is for each to try for a time, usually between a week and a month, to take both the role they would have if the other were alpha along with the duties of running the pack. Whoever was better at doing both may choose which position he wishes to fill — often, the first thing a brash challenger knows about being alpha is when he has to lead his pack for a while after the old alpha stepped down to teach the challenger a lesson.

The *Iminir* take great pride in their totems. The totem is a spiritual reflection of the pack as much as the totem is another member, and thus few packs of Storm Lords are comfortable with a totem spirit that doesn't embody their own drive for excellence. The totem doesn't have a specific niche to fill as the members of the pack do, so Storm Lords favor totems that embody the purpose and nature of the pack — a warrior totem for a warlike pack, a totem used to deals for a pack who solve conflicts by striking bargains and so on.

The totem should embody the concept of the pack, giving it purpose and direction. Hence, it's very rare to find a pack of *Iminir* that favors a totem that has the same drive for perfection and hatred of weakness as themselves. Those few who do are extrem-

ists, lashing out at both the Pure and other Uratha for their weakness even as they scourge any signs from themselves. Others among the People avoid such packs out of a simple sense of self-preservation. Fanatics are dangerous to be around, even if they're on your side.

History

Every country has seen great leaders and incredible tyrants: from the first humans to lead a tribe to Hammurabi, from Alexander the Great to Robespierre, from Machiavelli to Stalin. Some people are born to lead, some seize the helm of leadership and some have leadership thrust upon them. The Storm Lords understand this, and none of them has any desire to be in the third category.

The tribe as a whole prefers to take lessons from leaders who already uphold the tenets of Skolis-Ur: those who are strong, proud, noble and willing to endure anything to see that they are right. While the typical examples are obvious, there's a lot of respect in the tribe for leaders that humans often don't think of as good. Chairman Mao's Great Leap Forwards are textbook examples of hoodwinking an entire country into following a cause. Hitler remains an entrenched demon in the collective minds of Europe and America for his ability to lead a country. Charlemagne may have been benevolent, but he was still a tyrant. Every one of them embodies something that Winter Wolf also embodies, and the *Iminir* are far more likely to learn from them as a result.

Iminir with an eye to history look to every human leader whose name has lasted for 100 years or more. After all, the tribe has taken on the hardest role there is — the tribe is going to lead the Forsaken to salvation. Sometimes that requires martial strength, sometimes trickery and sometimes the iron hand of a tyrant. Each situation is different, but none is unique — the tribe has won battles and suffered betrayals many times throughout history.

Werewolves roamed America before Columbus, and had just as hard a time dealing with native tribes as werewolves do with modern humans. One pack of well-known Storm Lords made their territory in the Appalachians, and had wolf-blooded among the local human tribes. The pack's main problems were spiritual in nature, and they relied on their informants to let them know when the humans would be performing rituals, as spirits often used such venues to possess a host. Their allies grew weary of the Uratha only coming to them for information and assistance, and betrayed the pack to a spirit that answered their call. Knowing when the pack would be weak, the spirit brought others of its kind, and slaughtered the pack in one night.

The colonization of India, however, saw werewolves at each other's throats. Forsaken fought Forsaken, each caring more about their right to territory than the lives of their brothers. The Fire-Touched, aided by spirit allies, managed to make peace between the invading and native Pure Tribes, and they hunted the People like dogs. The Tribes of the Moon would surely have lost India if it weren't for a Storm Lord Irraka. Called the Midnight Queen, she inspired other Uratha to follow her to save themselves from the Pure. Using their reduced numbers and the Midnight Queen's head for unconventional tactics, she lead the Forsaken in a guerilla campaign against the Pure of India, leaving them a shadow of their former selves. While her victory was great, it was also the end of her reign, as the People went back to squabbling over territory and colonial rights.

During the Great War, some *Iminir* found that their territory was the field of battle. Deciding not to run away, a Rahu of the tribe decided that several local packs could survive without leaving their territory. Other werewolves disagreed, but he argued and fought them into submission. Trapped between two entrenched armies, the local Uratha didn't last long. Those who survived the bullets fell to chlorine gas. As his numbers dropped, the Rahu became harsher, often imposing his will on the other Forsaken through physical force. By the time a German machine-gun cut him in half, he had killed three of the werewolves he had sworn to protect, and only one survived to the end of the war.

In the USSR under Khrushchev, Pure and Forsaken took their fight deeper into the shadows than ever before. The intelligence agencies and secret police had plenty of reason to shoot every werewolf they found out about, for crimes against the state. In Moscow, the Pure relied on violence well away from prying eyes to remind the Forsaken that the Pure existed. One Storm Lord decided to turn the political situation to his advantage. Through a number of message-drops and deniable contacts, she subtly manipulated the system to her advantage. The Pure vanished or were arrested, their allies killed or relocated. Despite her great victory against the Pure, she was unable to tell the People of Moscow, afraid that they would see her as a security risk.

Reflections

Not every Storm Lord becomes alpha of his pack, especially when that pack is composed solely of *Iminir*. That doesn't leave the non-alphas open for an easy ride. No Storm Lord would ever allow himself to relax, and those without another cause — through personal choice or lack of opportunity — strive to know themselves, to exemplify something that defines them. All too often, this leads to members of the tribe pouring their hearts and souls into fulfilling their auspice roles, working to become the archetypal werewolf of their moon-phase. While members of other tribes mutter about "damn fanatics" and think that Winter Wolf's children are going too far, none can doubt the burning passion a Storm Lord can bring to bear in her quest for mastery.

Rahu

"The full moon turns the world black-and-white. I'm there. I am the force of the moon's light, the moonbeam that leads others to victory. I've planned this for days. I've fought this battle in my head a hundred times, planning for each and every contingency. It won't work out like I planned, that's not the point. The point is, I know what to do when things go wrong. So when the shit hits the fan and I tell you to do something, you do it or you die, by their claws or mine."

The face of Luna's mad rage, Rahu among the Storm Lords are often blunt and straightforward outside of battle, and merciless when the fighting starts. Some Storm Lord Rahu lead packs with the flair of a general marshalling troops, others provide tactical advice or muscle for their packs. Some prefer the role of guardian, tirelessly protecting their packs and their territories from any harm. While all Rahu are warriors, the *Iminir* know that most battles are fought with the mind. Hence, their Full Moons are effective, intelligent warriors who fully understand every battle they get themselves into.

The tribe's aura of strength draws many Rahu to follow Winter Wolf. Never showing weakness is a good thing for a warrior, and the tribe's legendary endurance inspires them. Often, these warriors see themselves fighting as a rearguard, giving their packs time to get to safety. Others come to the tribe because of their pursuit of excellence. An untrained street-punk and a veteran both may join the tribe because they realize how much they have to learn, and they have the burning need to be the best that sets the Storm Lords apart.

As pack alphas, Rahu lead with a no-nonsense air that belies their expertise in physical violence. While open to suggestions, ultimately a Rahu makes her choice and then sees it through to the bitter end. This stubbornness is a trait common to Full Moons and *Iminir* both, and thus the combination never fully escape it. At their best, Rahu who lead are inspiring leaders who do not ask anything of their followers that the Rahu wouldn't do themselves. At worst, Rahu can be brutal and despotic, their fires burning for a doomed cause that will bear none but bitter fruit. Most Rahu walk the middle ground, trying to inspire but all too often failing to get their reasons for action across.

Some Rahu work their whole lives to exemplify the concept of the warrior. While the Blood Talons are the tribe dedicated to conflict and war, the Storm Lords are the tribe of leadership and excellence. If the *Iminir* had no Rahu who could fight, the *Iminir* would not be living up to their mandate. Unlike the Full Moons of other tribes, many Storm Lord Rahu aspire to study all forms of combat, though others prefer to specialize rather than spreading themselves thin. Neither path carries more respect, but every Full Moon must challenge himself. Likewise, they either study all forms of warfare, from Sun Tzu's art of war to Valery Sablin's submarine tactics, or focus on one area. Some Rahu content themselves with being master strategists, able to recall winning strategies from Agincourt to Iraq and beat all comers at chess, but such storehouses of lore are rare. Far more common are the warriors who put themselves through rigorous physical training. Learning one style of combat and then another, they are never content as long as there is more to learn about the art of combat. These Rahu are dangerous simply because so much of their knowledge relates to killing other people. It takes dedication for one to fight without honestly trying to kill the other person, which can be a real problem in an average bar fight. The honor of the *Iminir* rests on their shoulders, and such warriors know the benefits of self-control.

While the Full Moons who walk the path of war are plentiful, most walk a middle path between the pure tactician and the pure combatant. Knowing tactics appropriate to their enemy and learning forms of combat best suited to it, they excel at hunting Hosts, Ridden or any other creature. Another slant on the same idea is not to hunt one kind of creature but to hunt the things that are most likely to cause trouble in their territory. These guardians walk their packs' territories day and night, looking for the first

signs of trouble. Urban werewolves train in improvising weapons from trash and the best way to trap their prey, keeping it close so they can finish it off quickly. Their rural and wild counterparts know where to drive their prey to in order to cut it off, and how to use their prowess at the hunt to their advantage.

No matter what roles *Iminir* Full Moon take, one thread remains constant — endurance. In a fight, they are the last to fall. In a hunt, they are the last to tire. They never give up, and often find themselves holding long grudges against any creature or spirit who has managed to best them. They don't wait until they outnumber the creature, showing only cowardice, but face their foe as soon as they believe themselves able to take it down. Long-running rivalries between *Iminir* and both Uratha and spirits start this way, and the Rahu will never back down.

Purity

In many ways, Purity is the one form of Renown that applies to all Uratha regardless of tribe. All Forsaken must hold to the Oath of the Moon, and all must exercise iron self-control anyway. But it's hard to gain recognition for something that everyone does every day, and with the different views of Harmony that come from tribal differences come different view of what Purity actually means.

One of the most obvious ways in which an *Iminir* can demonstrate Purity is to lead by example. Nobody will listen to a leader who talks about self-control but goes on to lose it at the first sign of provocation. Likewise, nobody will listen to a degenerate about the Oath of the Moon. Purity demands practicing what you preach, and the Storm Lords strive to be the example for others to follow. For the Storm Lords, leading by example is everything. A Storm Lord will never ask another to do anything she wouldn't do in the same spot, and she never sets loftier goals for those she leads than the ones she sets for herself. She must be an example of iron self-control, her Rage within just another thing she must endure until the time comes to release it.

The creed of the pure Storm Lord: *I ask nothing of others I do not ask of myself. I lead, and others follow my example. I don't make them. I'm good enough that I don't have to.*

Cahalith

"I dreamed of this very situation three weeks ago. It all makes sense. There's two ways things can go here. You can listen to me, you can take my advice and you can do what I ask. That way, we live. Or you can make the plans I saw us make, do what we usually do when the shartha start causing chaos. If you do that, I'll not join you. Following fools into battle is the biggest sign of weakness I know."

Some among the People claim that the Storm Lords are clouded by their own visions of grandeur — not just of leading other Uratha, but of great goals and sweeping plans. Whether this is true or not, the tribe's Cahalith give the *Iminir* such a reputation. Visionaries among visionaries, the Gibbous Moons exhibit the drive behind the tribe's need to lead. Some are alphas who express themselves through their pack. Some are lorekeepers who study history in order to inform the present. Others are seers, contrasting the history of their territory with the problems they have yet to face.

Cahalith join the Storm Lords because the tribe respects and rewards visionaries. Not every *Irraka* has a grand plan, but the tribe recognizes those who do and sees no reason to keep them from their goals. Such Cahalith are natural leaders. Others join because they believe that the tribe's creed of honor and cast-iron endurance will help them control the raging emotions that burn inside them.

When she leads, a Cahalith is always inspiring. It's hard for her not to be. Her every movement is an expression of what's in her head and heart, but as the alpha of a pack she's not only got herself to work with. Every member is another tool for her to express herself. That's not to say that she regards the other packmembers as objects, rather she's like the lead of a band, with her pack as the other musicians. While everyone has input, their contributions get more weight if they're in line with the vision and direction that the Cahalith has already chosen. Of course, this also has a downside. When a packmate starts going against the Cahalith's vision, such differences can strain the relationship between the werewolf and her pack, but it's often hard for the Gibbous Moon to realize that there's a real problem.

As a lorekeeper, a Cahalith becomes the memory of her pack — and quite possibly other packs nearby. It's up to her to remember heroes of both the local Uratha and her tribe, and great leaders. More than remembering their names, she must remember their stories. A hero isn't a hero if nobody remembers what he did. A great alpha stops being great when nobody remembers how he lead or what he was like. *Iminir* loremasters do their best to excel at everything they do, and thus find themselves not just remembering these stories but immersing themselves in them. The stories have a life separate to the Cahalith; she en-

sures they keep on living by learning them and passing them on to anyone who will listen. The stories are doubly reinforced when she finds a way to relate them to a current problem, using the lessons of the past to solve problems in the present. Often she finds herself unable to talk about the stories as separate entities with any but another Gibbous Moon, and that in and of itself gives her an odd, slightly aloof air. But when it comes to telling the tales, nobody does so with more passion and power than one of Winter Wolf's Cahalith, as she leaps about the place with vigor, shouting and even enlisting the aid of her totem to bring each story to life.

Visionary Cahalith rely on their prophetic dreams to guide their packs. When Cahalith lead, often their packs don't know what to expect — but those who have hunted with the Gibbous Moon before know that she'll find something. Whether the dream leads to a hunt or not, the alpha must factor in all of her pack when it comes to interpreting her dream. She isn't alone, and if she hares off to chase her dreams then she neglects her pack — never a good idea.

If she doesn't lead, a visionary *Iminir* can be trouble for her pack. The duty to interpret her dreams falls to her and no other, and if she can't find a way to convince her pack that her visions relate to what their currently involved in, or show a really pressing problem, she's in trouble. Worse, she must talk with her pack, as haring off without her pack is a sign that she doesn't trust their capabilities — a real weakness in any werewolf.

Glory

Storm Lords have a very clear idea of glorious behavior, a lot of which revolves around the difference between great and wonderful victories and stupid failures. The *Iminir* obviously find glory through near-legendary feats of endurance, but that's by no means all. The one key factor is winning. Nobody in the tribe has any respect for a glorious failure. That said, success is a powerful thing. A Storm Lord tends not to succeed in mundane ways. He will outsmart his opponent, out-fight her or just plain refuse to give in and die. The tribe as a whole can seem like it has a martyr complex, but only because many members seek Glory by taking on impossible odds and surviving.

Foolish victories and battles entered into without thought rarely earn a Storm Lord any renown for glorious behavior. Acting without thinking isn't brave or courageous; it's dumb. While the *Iminir* will tolerate curable ignorance, terminal stupidity is a sure-fire way to lose renown rather than gaining it. Remembering tales of the past or composing tales of the future are both acts that the *Iminir* look favorably upon. After all, they allow others to learn from the past without repeating the same mistakes — increasing their chances of success in the future.

The creed of the glorious Storm Lord: *I fight with my head and heart both, and both are equal. If I lose my heart, I am a coward. If I lose my head, I'm a corpse.*

Elodoth

"You think I'm not doing much. That's fair enough. To you, I'm not doing much because I'm not fighting. But if I stopped doing what I'm doing you'd never so much as find the fights that matter. You think I'm overconfident? I'm getting things out of your way. I'm making sure the spirits and shartha you fight actually matter, rather than being pawns of something bigger. I'm making sure our territory is safe and telling you what to kill so that it stays that way. I don't claim that I can fight, that's not my problem. My problem is everything else."

Elodoth of the Storm Lords are natural alphas. They don't have the bullish desire for leadership that defines the Rahu or the impetuousness that often marks an Irraka leader. Walking the line between the shadows and the moon's light gives the Half-Moon a crucial insight into how his packmates deal with situations. In some cases, an Elodoth is a pitiless micromanager constantly looking over everyone's shoulder and demanding that his pack tell him everything as soon as it happens. Other times, the Half-Moon understands that a good leader leads by getting obstacles out of his followers' paths. He does his best to let others in his pack perform their roles without having to deal with issues that will only slow them down.

Elodoth become Storm Lords either because they want to lead, or because the tribe's role as mediators appeals to them. The *Iminir* force themselves to be the best they can at what they choose to do, and to many Half-Moons, that means leading a pack. For others, the tribe offers them a chance to excel as a diplomat or judge, perfecting softer skills that they can put to use both among other werewolves and in their human communities.

Storm Lord Elodoth do not always lead from the front. For every born alpha, there are three who either cannot or will not take the reins of leadership. Some of these werewolves are problem-solvers as mentioned above. An Elodoth who walks this path works from the background, making sure that his pack works seamlessly together and never realizes

the benefit of his work. The work of these werewolves does nothing to disabuse other Forsaken of the notion that the Storm Lords can be sly, tricky bastards happier as Grand Vizier than ruler. No matter whether other Forsaken appreciate it or not, these *Iminir* provide vital help to other Forsaken, making sure that their alphas lead well.

Often, a Half-Moon who doesn't lead finds himself playing Devil's Advocate, especially in a pack with other Storm Lords. He analyzes all plans for weakness and problems, working out what could go wrong before it happens. Whether he can raise problems that he finds with the others in time to prevent disaster is a question of the pack. Too often, *Iminir* Half-Moons find themselves muttering "I told you so," under their breaths and coming up with alternate plans as everything falls apart around them.

Elodoth often become the face for their packs in dealings with humans and spirits. Elodoth use their natural skills in mediation to ease the pack's way when diplomacy is the best way forwards, whether that means cutting a deal with a group of local mages or convincing a powerful spirit in the pack's territory that the Uratha are not what the spirit should worry about. This role as mediator annoys more straightforward Uratha, who don't appreciate the tortuous logic and fast-talking negotiations that exemplify an *Iminir* forced to negotiate. Not all Elodoth of the tribe are so sly; the brutally honest approach takes longer to win people over but leaves them feeling better disposed to the werewolf than a barrage of words.

One role that the Half-Moon must take is that of judge. Having to weigh the actions of your own kind — possibly even your own pack — to root out those who have gone against the Oath of the Moon is never an easy task. The *Iminir* rise to it, though. Sentimentality that allowed them to ally with an oath-breaker would be a weakness. Some try to be firm but fair, gauging the situation and circumstances around it as would a human judge or lawyer. Others have no problem going with their preconceived notions; Uratha who find themselves being judged by one of these Storm Lords had better have read up on their Kafka.

Carried through all the roles that an Elodoth must play is a great sense of responsibility. The Half-Moon stands on the dividing line, making sure each side stays where it has to, and all Half-Moons are intense about what they do. Whether an individual makes complex plans and arguments or leads by brash example, one thing is clear: any Half-Moon follower of Skolis-Ur would find running a large company a welcome break.

Honor

The *Iminir* rely on their Honor. Without it they could not lead, as none would trust them. Worse, they would not trust themselves. Glory is all well and good, and has its uses, but Honor speaks to the tribe in a special way. It's honorable to do what you say you will, no matter what. It's honorable to struggle through in the face of adversity. It's honorable to remain standing even though the weight of the world rests on your shoulders. Most Storm Lords create a personal code of Honor before or shortly after joining the tribe. Some write it down and keep it close, reading the words to give them strength. Others never let their code out of their head. The code is a personal thing, but it holds two common tenets: *I will hold to the Oath of the Moon*, and *I shall allow no one to witness or to tend my weakness.* Other passages may include things such as the werewolf adjudicating things fairly, always making good on his word, ensuring every challenge he issues is just and so on.

All *Iminir* are honorable. Some act as despots, but often this comes of following their codes as best they can. Honorable behavior, outside of upholding any particular code, includes a Storm Lord recognizing weakness in herself in order that no other Uratha should see it, enduring anything the world throws at her and being true in her judgments of others. Fairness and truth are in rare supply, and the *Iminir* sometimes feel as if they were the only ones who care about either.

The creed of the honorable Storm Lord: *Others strike at me. The world throws problems at me. My weakness threatens my pack. But I will not fail.*

Ithaeur

"I know these junk-spirits. I spent a week in their domain to gain Skolis-Ur's approval. They're a cruel, nasty bunch, but I know their bans, and that they've been pissing off the spirit of the abandoned subway station. And the spirit is getting stronger by the day, what with all the humans bleating about it on the news. Of course, we'll have to help get the station up and running again, but on the other hand we'll never see trouble from junk-spirits around here if we do. Just do as I say, and we'll be fine."

Among the *Iminir*, werewolves who change under the crescent moon have a large role to play. While some Rahu choose to specialize in fighting spiritual foes, matters of the Shadow fall to the Ithaeur. When they lead, their packs have an affinity for dealing with spiritual matters. Even when not, the Ithaeur must be a spiritual expert. One will advise his alpha

on how to fight spiritual problems; another will support her pack with powerful ritual magics. A third embodies his auspice's talent for learning, applying himself as an expert in a wide variety of fields, from medicine to the sciences and the occult.

Showing no weakness is a cardinal rule when dealing with denizens of the Shadow, and Winter Wolf's tenet draws many Crescent Moons to the tribe. Some Ithaeur claim that the tenet relates directly to dealing with spirits, as it gives the werewolf an aura of strength that better allows her to dominate wayward spirits. Others just live by the rule. It's obvious that Winter Wolf, being a spirit, would give his tribe a tenet that helped them in dealing with wayward spirits. Whatever her views, an Ithaeur likely joined the *Iminir* because of the spiritual benefits to their tribal vow.

Crescent Moon *Iminir* make eclectic alphas when they lead. Working in the only way they can, their packs naturally gravitate toward problems in the Shadow. When spirits make trouble, the Ithaeur leads his pack to deal with them, forcing spirits back across the Gauntlet — and any non-spirits back to the material world. While their concerns are mostly with the spirit world, the connection between material and immaterial is obvious to anyone who knows the Shadow. The territory of such a pack is often immaculate from a spiritual perspective, ensuring that the pack faces fewer problems from the Shadow than other packs. Of course, often the appeasements made to the spirits are problematic — especially in a city, where the authorities frown on any group of people demolishing every streetlamp or painting the east wall of every building in a particular block bright pink. The Crescent Moon must remember that she is a creature of the physical as well as the spiritual, and often her packmates will help ground her, reminding her of anything that would be problematic. If she doesn't listen, then her pack can quickly get into more trouble than they can deal with.

When Ithaeur don't lead, they are almost universally spiritual advisors of some kind to their packs. While a situation may not be the Ithaeur's specific field of expertise, when the Elodoth finds a situation he can't talk his way out of, it is up to the Crescent Moon to tell her pack how to fight whatever spirit they face. Thus, the Ithaeur is often in a comparable position to the Rahu — in the tribe, both auspices share the *Iminir* drive to excel, and both have a role that all Uratha packs need. The Crescent Moon has to be an expert on spiritual matters. Of course, only a rare Ithaeur wouldn't see a lack in such expertise as weakness. Their very presence is often enough to cow lesser spirits that would attempt trouble against an Ithaeur of another tribe.

Some Ithaeur pursue their knowledge of the Shadow exclusively, learning the power struggles and bans of the spirits in and around their territories. Other Ithaeur prefer to temper their knowledge of the spirit with knowledge of other fields. One common field is the general nature of other creatures who live in the shadows. Vampires and wizards walk the secret paths of the world along with the Uratha, and knowing how to deal with them is much the same as knowing how to deal with spirits. Likewise, some Crescent Moons complement their knowledge of spirits by learning about ghosts and other incorporeal beings, some of whom even work on rituals with the aim of binding ghosts or sending them to where they belong. Whatever the Crescent Moons choose, only a rare Ithaeur is not an expert in something.

Other Crescent Moons prefer to support their packs through their knowledge of rites, unleashing powerful spirit magic to assist their packmates in all manner of situations. While a werewolf doesn't have to be an Ithaeur to learn rites, often the auspice's affinity for the Shadow gives the Ithaeur the edge in tracking down hidden knowledge. While an Elodoth can talk a spirit out of the magic he needs to save his territory, an Ithaeur is more likely to bend the spirit to her will. Given the enmity spirits have for the Forsaken, the Crescent Moon is often more likely to succeed.

Wisdom

Wisdom is more than book learning and collecting knowledge. An *Iminir* must she know her capabilities and the capabilities of everyone around her. If she doesn't know something, she recognizes that as weakness, but she doesn't necessarily load up on useless trivia just because it might come in handy. Wisdom to the *Iminir* is a tendency to think before acting, to know what's likely to happen and plan around it. While the cunning Storm Lord can solve problems before other Uratha notice them, a wise Storm Lord knows not just the problem but a whole host of possible solutions, including what to do when — never if — things go wrong.

To a Storm Lord, Wisdom also involves knowing both what one can do and what one can't. Being aware of her own limitations is anything but a sign of weakness. It allows the *Iminir* to formulate plans that will succeed because they're based on her own strengths. It also lets her know when something is beyond what she thinks possible. Whether she decides, that weakness would be overconfidence or buckling under depends on her assessment of the threat and her own poten-

tial. Not all wise Storm Lords got that way by careful planning; being wise doesn't preclude a headstrong and prideful approach to solving problems.

The creed of the wise Storm Lord: *Know what you know, know what your pack knows, but most of all know what you don't know but need to.*

Irraka

"The Fire-Touched on the east side won't be giving us any more grief. Nor will that demolition order that was going to trash our territories. I know you told us not to bother pissing them off, but this was just three nights, two hacked computers and one night altering demolition manifests. Hardly anything. Now our territory's safe, and they've a major headache as the derelict block they were using as a base is getting torn down. I know you didn't want me to do anything, but the opportunity was staring me in the face. I'd be a fool not to."

The Irraka are hunters and stalkers without equal. While common rumor among the other tribes of the People claims that all *Iminir* New Moons are talented assassins, that's only true as far as all Irraka are assassins. Some take the traditional Storm Lord roles of leader or advisor, others strike out ahead of their packs to quash problems and still others are mavericks who barely hold to the authority of their own alphas. And then, of course, there are those who train to be the best killers that they can. After all, not excelling at what you do is hardly an attitude worthy of Skolis-Ur's tribe.

A No Moon often chooses to join the Storm Lords because the tribe's tenet is of great benefit to a hunter. Never showing weakness gives her prey — and her allies — a false idea of just how good she is without her having to do anything. Others join because they believe that the Uratha need werewolves who will uphold the Oath of the Moon, and the Storm Lords have proven themselves honorable enough for the role.

Where an Irraka is alpha, she tends to lead a pack of like-minded dirty fighters. While they still conduct themselves with honor, they scrupulously look over their plans, trying to work out an angle or advantage to every situation. In fights, they use whatever comes to hand, and when dealing with spirits, anything goes. The Irraka doesn't lead with any particular methodology, but she likely has plenty of style and flair to keep her pack with her. At worst, the Irraka's lack of respect for other werewolves' territories makes them liabilities; at best, they can be the most successful packs in their area.

Only a rare New Moon has the temperament to advise his alpha, but those who have one in their packs are very glad. *Iminir* Irraka often cultivate a reputation as devious bastards who could think through a corkscrew in a hurricane, and those with the patience to do so bring their skills to bear assisting their alphas. Often, the revised plan includes the kinds of things that hunters would consider — blocking escape routes, finding an ambush ground and goading the enemy toward it — along with a few strokes of genius that greatly enhance the chances of success. These extra steps aren't all a chance for the No Moon to shine, that'd be silly. Rather, she puts the skills of the whole pack to use in a way none of them had thought of before.

Maverick Irraka don't make things easy for their packs. At best, their alphas trust their Irraka to do their own things, helping out in their own ways, but prefer more structure to their plans. At worst, the Irraka's solutions to problems actively undermine the rest of their packs, leading to an enmity that's hard to shake. The Irraka's attitude comes from the *Iminir* need to excel, and the knowledge that they can do things. Since they can, and it would solve a problem or help in some other way, they don't see a reason to hold off. It makes more sense to sow discord amongst the ranks of one's foes before you attack, after all. Their impetuousness cuts both ways, and ignoring their pack isn't something they can do for a long time.

Prowess as a hunter makes it only natural that all Irraka have some affinity for assassination. While most prefer to hunt only the enemies of their pack, some go further. They stalk their territory, looking for humans who know too much and spirits that keep breaking through. Rather than waiting for yet another chance to track down these beings, some Irraka take it into their own hands. The human dies; the spirit is the subject of a Wild Hunt. Darker rumors suggest that the *Iminir* moonless don't stop there. Enforcing the Oath even among other Uratha, the Irraka are willing to hunt and slay even their own people. While members of the tribe deny any such "secret police," the rumors refuse to go away, leaving many to wonder if there isn't a kernel of truth there after all.

Cunning

Deception and stealth are tools for the backroom manipulator as much as the assassin. While the *Iminir* respect the talent and grace with which their stalkers remove troublesome obstacles from their companions' paths, spirits and the tribe both have far more respect for trickery that stops a problem from ever occurring. Whether getting a

packmate out of jail with a few well-chosen words or setting a logging company on the territory of nearby Pure with no more than a well-timed computer hack, the Storm Lords reward cunning behavior that strikes preemptively, before there is a problem to solve.

That's not to say that all cunning *Iminir* are manipulators. After all, for a skilled hunter and assassin to think he could turn his hand to politics would be weak. Why is he not doing what he is good at? The Storm Lords view cunning acts as an abstract, combining the art of seeing problems that don't yet exist and solving them in a way that the werewolf in question is good at. Anything more is over-thinking the problem.

The creed of the cunning Storm Lord: *Be the best at what you do, and in doing so fix things that others would never think of.*



Hearts of Ice

Skolis-Ur asks much from his children and gives little in return, though few ever think they've got the downside of that particular deal. The *Iminir* are a tribe born to lead and destined for greatness, purging their own weakness with a ferocity that no other tribe can ever quite manage. These inherent traits aren't all Skolis-Ur leaves in one of his Uratha. Bonding with a Firstborn does mark one's soul, after all. While the *Iminir* normally distinguish themselves through action, when Harmony or Primal Urge go to the extremes the imbalance (or balance) manifests in ways subtly unique to the *Iminir*, focused on their need to lead, and their hatred of weakness.

Living in Harmony

Some Storm Lords find it hard to uphold the tenets of Harmony even as they strive to be the examples that other werewolves follow. After all, it's tempting to spend time alone thinking problems through when your packmates insist the only way forward is to hit things as hard as they can. It's hard to resist the urge to torture a *shartha* to learn more about others in the area. And when the Pure are common foes, carrying and even using a silver weapon is a tempting expediency. The *Iminir* must fight against these urges to maintain balance between their flesh and spirit sides, and Honor dictates that they spend time making up any wrongs they have committed, meditating and venerating Luna in order to slowly bring themselves closer to balance.

It's often harder for *Iminir* to hold to Harmony than other tribes. Being a Storm Lord often requires a strong personality, whether to give other Uratha something to follow or to make sure that all the little things behind the scenes go the right way. A Storm Lord who doesn't have a preconceived notion of how things work is rare, and surprisingly often that conflicts with the tenets of Harmony. After all, if someone honestly believed that the Lord helps those who help themselves, why should he not carry a silver weapon to use against the Pure? Why should he not use it? That's just one of the more obvious examples, and many issues are far more complex.

Those who possess the self-control and discipline to maintain high Harmony find themselves living the

tenets and the Oath of the Moon. They discard even the vestiges and trappings of any beliefs they had as humans, instead embodying balance. Sometimes, this is a quiet confidence in the *Iminir*'s own actions being right; sometimes, she is a walking display of what a Forsaken should be. It all depends on the Storm Lord in question. One thing is for certain — no *Iminir* with high Harmony would hide his light under a bushel.

Either extreme of Harmony has an effect on a werewolf. For degenerate *Iminir*, their right to command is obvious, and they can and must do anything to ensure that control. Not all tyrants or dictators among the Storm Lords have low Harmony; some find that it's the easiest way to lead their fellows toward redemption. Those who are on the path to becoming *Zi'ir* often take any advantage they can get, killing other werewolves with silver weapons and hunting humans for food because it makes puts them in a stronger position as leaders. People ruled by example will only go so far, they reason. Those ruled by fear will go much further for their leader.

Unfortunately, with the sometimes-idiosyncratic approaches that the tribe has toward leadership, a Storm Lord who is degenerating out of control can go a long while without others noticing him. When they do, retribution is swift. Rehabilitation is almost unheard-of even for the greatest heroes of the tribe. Coming so close to being a Broken Soul is too great a sign of weakness for the tribe — or Skolis-Ur — to bear. The best that such a Storm Lord can hope for is a swift death when his tribemates find him. It's the only way others will not have to tend his weakness again.

Predators

Primal Urge is a double-edged sword to most *Iminir*. On the one hand, Primal Urge a sign of mastery over both the flesh and the spirit — and leaving one to flounder is an obvious sign of weakness. But things are never that simple. Humans are scared of werewolves, especially those who embrace their role and grow closer to their spiritual side, and in some cases that isn't for the best.

Unlike many other Uratha, the *Iminir* see the benefits of working with humans. If they don't scare people off, then they can build a rapport with some people, and generally make their own lives easier. It's a hotly contested point of view — is it a sign of weakness to embrace the humans in your territory or to ignore them? While every Storm Lord has a strong opinion, the tribe as a whole cannot decide.

While the tribe as a whole has no prevailing opinion, individual *Iminir* never stand on the fence. Each knows which is true, because it's "obviously" right. When two disagree, the arguments can provide entertainment for both (as well as any Uratha who cares to watch) for several nights.

A more disconcerting feeling is the sense that the spirit is overpowering the flesh. As a Storm Lord's Primal Urge grows higher, she starts to bleed Essence and her spirit becomes stronger than her flesh. Ultimately, only leaders who can harness their spiritual power rather than being claimed by it have truly mastered their weakness. It's yet another challenge, another chance to prove that the Storm Lord is worthy of Skolis-Ur' patronage. Failure is weak, and Winter Wolf is often harsher with his more powerful children.

Story Hooks

Each player should be suggesting ideas for stories based on her character's personality and background, because that way the story tackles things that the player wants to tackle. The following hooks are examples of the problems most common to Storm Lords.

- **Fall from Grace:** The werewolf who introduced the character to his tribe — an *Iminir* who is well-thought-of by other werewolves in the area — starts to lose it. Before, he was harsh but fair, now he's punishing everything as a sign of weakness and is running his territory like a dictator. What's caused his shift in attitude? Why has he decided that he has to rule with an iron fist? And what does his pack think of the change?

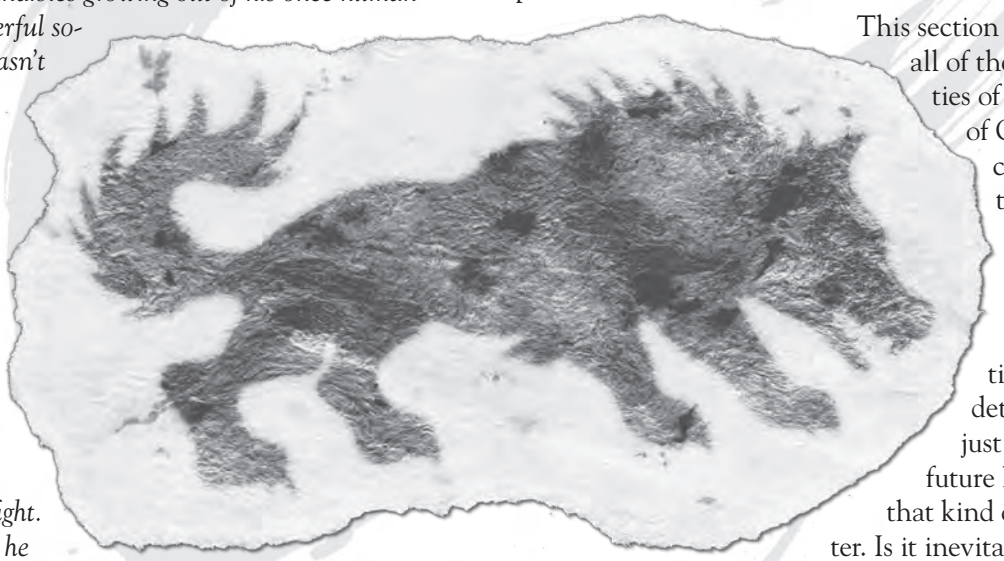
- **Against the Odds:** Sometimes things just turn to shit. The character's pack is in trouble, their territory is under attack and there only light at the end of the tunnel is an oncoming train. Some great calamity has befallen the pack, and it's up to the character to lead them through. Perhaps they have to go deep into the spirit wilds to find a rite that will reverse the problem. Or maybe there's nothing they can do but endure and survive.

- **The Pretender:** A new pack has claimed territory bordering on the characters'. The new pack's alpha is a show-off Storm Lord who quickly gets a reputation as a good and fair leader. Just one problem — he's ripping on your character's pack, slowly extending his territory into the pack's, and the other werewolves of the area are on his side. It's up to you to assert your dominance. Why is he doing this? And is he really the great and good leader that others think?

Ghost Wolves

I'll tell you a secret. I've been watching you and your pack, Bone Cleaver. I've been in your territory, and you never once smelled me. Sometimes I like to take time just to see how the other side lives, you know? Sure, I see what you're thinking: I violated your code, your sanctity, your personal space. Well, newsflash: I don't really give a rat's good goddamn foot about that. You and me, we don't live by the same set of laws, ain't that right?

And you'd better be glad we don't. Remember last week, when that thing got the drop on you near your own locus? Ugly things, the Ridden. Different, like snowflakes, this one with a beetle's carapace and a pair of bloody mandibles growing out of his once-human mouth. Powerful sonofabitch, wasn't he? The way he threw Black Betty through that walnut tree, I mean, fuck. Bit Gregor's hand off right at the wrist, too. You put up a pretty good fight. But Bugboy, he near managed to crush your skull, way I saw it. Then, out of nowhere, remember the arrow? The one that came through the front of Bugboy's ugly mug and put him down for the count? That arrow was mine. I'd like it back, actually.



So, you'd best be happy we don't follow the same laws, because I saved your dumb ass that day. You think I'm weak because I don't play your games, but here's another newsflash: I'm not the weak one. That's you, Bone Cleaver. Because for all the pomp and circumstance, for all the laws and oaths, that shit just shackles you to the ground. Me and my boys? We're free. And that makes us strong.

This section is going to go differently from the others. The Ghost Wolves are not a formal tribe (though a few of them might disagree on that point), and so all the standard ideas are out the window. One Ghost Wolf Rahu can be wildly different from another: Thom Washington may hide away, grossly uncomfortable with his own bloodthirsty urges, while Knifetooth may embrace her auspice as a mercenary warrior walking the many roads this world has to offer. It's not as if each Ghost Wolf belongs to the ranks of the unaffiliated for the same reasons, either. Where one may grow tired of the violence and need to retire from Uratha society for a time, another may be a revolutionary seeking to dramatically change that society from the inside. The reasons for eschewing tribal attachment can be moral, spiritual, even political.

This section explores all of the possibilities of the kinds of Ghost Wolf characters that are available to players. Moreover, this section helps determine just what the future holds for that kind of character. Is it inevitable that such a character will eventually find a tribe or go mad? What happens when several Ghost Wolves come together and decide to form their own sixth tribe?

Past the Margins

The *Thihirtha Numea* don't get a lot of respect. What they earn from other werewolves requires the Ghost Wolves to work twice as hard as those Uratha who belong to tribes. Moreover, the benefits are practically non-existent. No tribal totem blesses the *Thihirtha Numea* with favor. They have few lodges to which they can belong. It's harder to earn Renown and learn Gifts. The big question, therefore, must be asked: Why would any werewolf want to be a Ghost Wolf? That question can't be answered easily, as countless answers exist. Below are a number of pos-

sibilities that a player may use when creating a Ghost Wolf character.

Isolation

Sometimes, a werewolf slips through the cracks. While both the Pure and Forsaken can be found just about anywhere in the world, that doesn't mean they've achieved total domination. Places exist where both groups simply don't exist for one reason or another, and it's possible that a person in such an area will experience the First Change utterly alone. Such a place might be a remote fishing village in Alaska, a distant island in the South Pacific or simply a few blocks of urban wasteland where vampires haven't let the werewolves gain ground. While many werewolves who experience the Change in this way go mad and self-destruct (or die in captivity at the hands of curious mages with silver scalpels), that's not universally true. A few manage to control it, by dint of instinct or through the whispering "advice" from spirits. Either way, a werewolf raised in such isolation may not find others like him for years, if ever. While he wouldn't call himself a Ghost Wolf (unless a spirit identified him as such, at which point he may believe all those like him must be *Thihirtha Numea*), that's what he is.

In fact, an entire pack of Ghost Wolves could exist like this. Way up in some tiny Appalachian hamlet, perhaps the pack and its forebears have been around for decades, cut off from the rest of werewolf society, totally ignorant of the what's really going on. What would such a pack be like? They could be brutal backwoods beast-men, hiding from the humans in ramshackle lean-tos miles from town. They could just as easily be a functioning society, given to their own rules, even living openly among humans (particularly if the humans are just as isolated as the Ghost Wolves). What happens when the Pure or Forsaken come across these remote Ghost Wolves? Do the other Uratha try to dominate and integrate the Ghost Wolves? Or is the only solution to destroy them? Could be that the Ghost Wolves have enough power to stave off such an attack, maybe harnessing the forbidden magic of a totem that rules beyond just one pack and guards the entire "society."

Exile

Some werewolves just can't handle it. One may fail the tribal initiation, leaving him without a people to call his own. Another may go years as a werewolf before suddenly snapping on the battlefield, crumpling like a paper cup under a boot, unable to reconcile the internal clash of wolf versus man. Some commit grievous sins, accidental or purposeful, against their tribemates and are either exiled from the ranks of the tribe or escape before they can mete out justice. No matter how it happens, these werewolves are Ghost Wolves because they failed at being anything else. They're not *Thihirtha Numea* out of choice (though one could lie and claim it was his choice, not another's).

Many such Ghost Wolves are temporarily among the exiled, hoping eventually to rejoin the ranks of Forsaken society. Some instead fall prey to the seductive authority of the Pure, who will gladly gobble up the Forsaken's scraps, if only to turn the Ghost Wolf against the society to which he once belonged.

Rejection

For some, the life doesn't reject them; they reject the life. After a werewolf's First Change, things don't automatically become easy or routine. Existence as a rage-fueled half-human is complicated. One has to wrestle with powerful emotions, odd physiology, and threats from every shadowed corner (and two realms, the physical and the spiritual).

Not every Forsaken can handle it. A werewolf may be mentally unprepared: if she entered her First Change already carrying a heavy load of mental and emotional baggage (and maybe a mild derangement or two), the "new life" will only serve to shatter her psyche further. Others are fine for years, and only feel the crushing burdens later in life. A single event (a savage attack by the Pure, the betrayal by close allies, an encounter with a puzzling spirit) can leave a werewolf suddenly scarred, as if suffering an unworldly version of post-traumatic stress disorder. Alternately, a series of hard decisions and ugly scenes can whittle a werewolf's determination over the course of time. Time can be cruel, with the loss of loved ones, the constant give-and-take of territorial battles or curses from petulant spirits.

Some are stable going in, but find that they don't have a strong support system to keep them going. A werewolf might live at the hands of an abusive pack leader, belong to a troubled pack of monsters and fools or be surrounded by those who are just as unprepared as she is to initiate a werewolf into this world.

However it happens, when a werewolf can't handle it, she sometimes withdraws from it, leaving her tribe and becoming a Ghost Wolf. For some, this is a transitory shift. She may go off and find a more suitable tribe or pack, or perhaps will simply come to terms with her own misgivings and failings while

away from the society. Others make this a permanent exeunt, unable to return to the fold.

Repurposed

A tribe represents many things. It is spiritual, in that each member forges a sacred bond born of one of the Firstborn totems. A tribe is also political, with each tribe bringing its own principles and actions to the table in regards to how it deals with werewolves and other creatures. The tribe makes laws, adheres to customs and teaches its members secrets available only to them. Common cause, concrete laws and spiritual purpose bind all the members of a given tribe.

And, sometimes, a werewolf decides that he doesn't care for the ways and laws of his tribe, and further finds that the other tribes don't have anything else to offer him, either. When this happens, the choices are few: find and join the Pure (if they don't gut the werewolf on sight) or become a Ghost Wolf.

Those who become a Ghost Wolf in this way are not rejecting werewolf life or society. They know what they are and recognize the internal and external struggles, but they are acknowledging that *so far* they've found no place for themselves in this society. (In this way, they're similar to someone who marks "Independent" as his political party. He's uncertain that the extant parties represent him, and so he can only be unaffiliated.) A werewolf's dissatisfaction may exist with some or all elements of the tribal life. One Uratha may believe that the Firstborn totems are untrustworthy masters and prefers not to pledge himself to their tangled oaths. Another may feel the tribes don't represent his way of life, or that they too openly steer their members away from the human element. A Forsaken extremist — too far lost in broken Harmony or madly powerful with Primal Urge — may also feel that no tribe can accurately represent what he wishes to accomplish.

The Tribeless Pure

Technically a Ghost Wolf doesn't automatically fall into to the ranks of the Forsaken at all and he doesn't belong to the Pure He is somewhere in between unfettered by either side's laws but also without the benefits intrinsic to both That said a predominance of Ghost Wolves end up siding with the Forsaken if only because doing so seems the sane choice

Some do however end up within the Pure Most Pure refuse to deal with those werewolves who haven't had their auspices burned away to "purify" them but in some regions the Pure allow the tribeless to co exist with them in packs The tribeless are shackled to the Pure's madly primal totem spirits and given over to hunting the Forsaken These tribeless are still treated with very little respect however and only rarely are they called Ghost Wolves Most are referred to as "whelps" or "puppies " though some use the more formalized term "Half Wolf " Half Wolves are often abused dragged around like pets made to entertain and serve as pack mules

Initiation

The *Thihirtha Numea* are not an organized tribe, and thus do not have any kind of proper initiation. For many, the lack of initiation *is* the initiation — neglecting to walk through that door is what makes one a Ghost Wolf.

Still, in some areas, the Ghost Wolves have more formalized organization. In fact, if more than a handful of the tribeless exist in a given area, it's possible that they work as a small society, with ragtag rules and impromptu initiations all their own. These elements are likely informal, and are rarely as demanding as tribal initiations, but they can exist just the same.

Such initiations are likely simple, and sometimes made up on the spot. They may offer the Ghost Wolf a chance to spit in the eye of the other Forsaken ("Go into their territory and steal the Ithaeur's eyeglasses") or may instead be a practical task that would help the local *Thirhirtha Numea* ("This one Spirit Thief keeps messing with all the neighborhood kids, but we don't have time to deal with him — you go take care of it, and we'll let you share our food"). If the local tribeless are nomads, maybe the cost of traveling with them is simply to bring one's own vehicle to the caravan (and maybe some food and liquor, too). If they have their own territory, perhaps the initiate needs only to bring something that the territory needs: a generator, a couple of guns, money, whatever.

Of course, the irony is, failing to complete a Ghost Wolf initiation doesn't stop a werewolf from *being* one. It just means that she's exiled even further; not only do the tribal Forsaken keep her outside the margins, but now the local tribeless see her the same way. In this way, she is an outcast among outcasts. Though, in further irony, if there are other abject

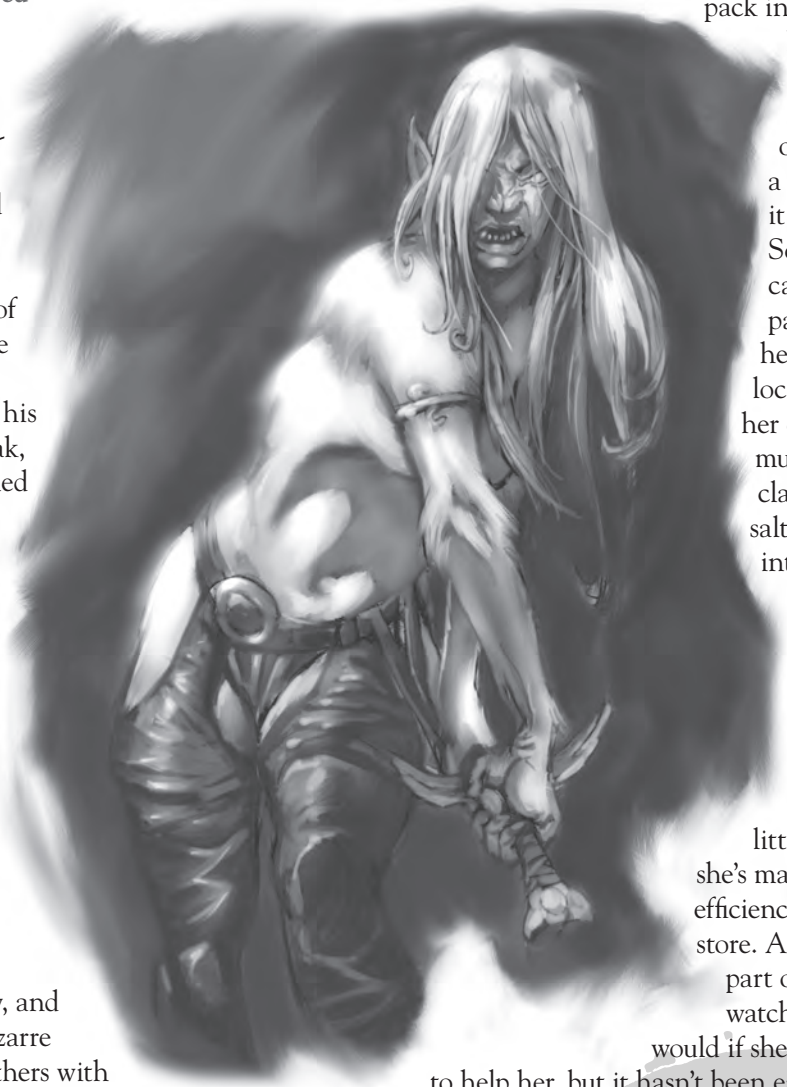
exiles like herself, what's to stop them from forming their own small society of refugees?

Characters

Below are some of the various possibilities available to players looking to create Ghost Wolf characters.

The Undiscovered

When the First Change swept down upon him, nobody came. The few streetlights that weren't yet busted out buzzed and sparked, and the street seemed to undulate like the back of a pissed-off snake. He shouldn't have found any kind of sanity as his bones seemed to break, and his muscles burned and lengthened — the initial rampage took him inside an abandoned warehouse, where he smashed everything he could, even scouring his claws to bloody nubs. But by morning, he'd found a little bit of control, something he'd gain every night since. He lives there in that building, now, and with some kind of bizarre synchronicity, two others with the same "problem" found him huddling there one night. They agreed to watch each other's backs, help one another get food and try to lend each other a modicum of peace. Now, he's found his way back to some semblance of a regular life. Sure, he still lives in the gutted warehouse with his new friends, but he has a job running the projector at an old porno movie house, and he's even falling in love with one of his "pack." But still, things plague him. The walls whisper to him, and there's something about the bathroom at that porno theater, something that makes him think the doorway in is more than just a doorway.



The Criminal

She fooled herself into thinking that the child could be just that, a real child, not the sickly gnashing spirit that squirmed free from her womb and fled into the Shadow. Somehow she believed it would all work out, that *her* baby would be different because it was loved, and she told all the others — her own pack included — to go to hell. When the pack found the *unihar* at their locus, suckling on its energies like a bloodthirsty piglet, it attacked them. Soon after, the pack came for her. Her packmates brought her up before other local werewolves, and her old alpha scored her muzzle with a spiraling claw and rubbed sea salt and wine vinegar into the wound so the spirits would curse it and leave it a scar. And with that, they exiled her out of their lands. She found her way to a nearby town, a little rural burg where she's managed to get a small efficiency above an antique store. Alone, she's made this part of town her territory, watching over it as she would if she had a whole pack to help her, but it hasn't been easy. She wonders what she should do. Does she deserve such loneliness? Should she seek out other Forsaken and lie to them, hoping the spirits (or her scar) don't reveal the truth? Or, should she seek out the ones from the Pure Tribes, hoping that they will accept her despite her crimes against the Shadow?

The Priest

For a time, he was an Elodoth of the Storm Lords, and they embraced him as a powerful judge of others, a strong and balancing force. But he and his tribemates were vain and prideful, and their reluctance to show even a hint of frailty only made

them all the more frail. The time came that he and his pack rode into a vicious fray on the backs of their chopper bikes, and he watched as the chaos took hold and swallowed each warrior in its raging maw. His lordly brothers and sisters, once dignified and regal (in a way the streets and highways understood), were now lost to their baser urges. Hungry, they ate flesh that was not to be eaten. Enraged, they culled those enemies who did not need to be murdered. It was then that he made a decision to leave his tribe and join no other. He set himself on a path not of righteousness (for what was right was no longer clear) but of balance. Now, as a kind of neutral spiritual leader, this Ghost Wolf walks among other packs, helping them tend to their own inequities. He has a pack of his own, a ragtag bunch of nomads who remain affiliated with various tribes, but they let him do his work when it needs to be done. They respect him, and know that he has earned a place around the campfire.

Why?

Why play a Ghost Wolf? Aren't they ham strung by weaker stats from the get go?

To a slight degree yes but that's not a mark against them so much as it is the cost of playing a complex and unfettered character From a ro leplaying standpoint portraying a Ghost Wolf in game can be very rewarding Ghost Wolves can be very complex sometimes troubled characters While we hope to avoid conflict in real life, in fiction we strive for it because it makes the story more interesting So too with the Ghost Wolves

However the Ghost Wolves have an advantage that other Forsaken do not: *freedom* There is no Ghost Wolf template no general idea as to what one should look like or act like In creating a Ghost Wolf a player has near ultimate freedom in deciding all the elements that go into the process — elements that are in some ways decided when it comes to creating tribally affiliated Forsaken.

Laws and Customs

The Ghost Wolves share no common laws among themselves on the whole, and as individuals, Ghost Wolves are beholden only to the traditions they choose to follow. That said, in localities where a number of Ghost Wolves dwell, they potentially co-exist as a small society of their own. Therefore, they may hold their own laws — big or small — to keep their kind in check. Their customs can be just as varied.

Such laws might be simple ("You may not hunt any of the area's whitetail deer") or convoluted ("Every second night of every full moon, every Ghost Wolf will speak no words until sunrise to honor those lost when the Azlu attacked three years ago"). One law may dictate how one can use a locus for Essence or to enter and exit the Shadow (and Ghost Wolves with control of a locus are likely to strictly control access to it), while another may demand that the local *Thihirtha Numea* all carry with them a fetish weapon at all times. Laws can be righteous and ask a werewolf to perform specific tasks to uphold his Harmony and the sanctity of a given territory, or may instead be blasphemous and enforce the "communion wafer and wine" of human flesh and blood.

With proper isolation or territorial dominance, a sub-society of Ghost Wolves can set the laws and customs that dictate the governance of their own kind. What's important to remember is that these traditions are not necessarily tied to Forsaken society as a whole, and may be slightly or wildly variant. Such practices can be more rigorous and upstanding than those of the local Uratha, or they may be wholly deviant in comparison.

Concerns of the Soul

Just because a werewolf is without tribe doesn't mean he is unaffected by the spiritual matters that concern all Forsaken. While some Ghost Wolves may be unwilling to admit it, many are similarly affected by these matters, and under scrutiny would be able to see the common threads that bind the tribeless.

Harmony

Some among the tribeless note that being in spiritual balance (i.e., having a high Harmony score) is unrelated to tribal affiliation. Just because one is a Ghost Wolf does not make such balance harder to reach. Hence, tribal belonging is not as important as some Uratha would lead one to believe. The argument against, provided by other Forsaken, is that while a werewolf's Harmony is not directly tied to tribal attachment, that attachment provides him with a support system to keep him in check — something that the Ghost Wolves accidentally or purposefully eschew.

An enlightened Ghost Wolf, harmonious and beatific, is just as sacred as those from other tribes who reach such exalted status. The pinnacled Ghost

Wolf, however, tends not to wear the trappings of any one tribe, and is either without *any* such trappings (appearing perhaps naked, or in very plain clothing or robes), or instead reflects her own personal ideas of enlightenment. In the case of the latter, the spiritually attuned Forsaken may inadvertently dress in all white (the Ghost Wolf known as Snowflake wears a tattered wedding dress), may carry around a small library of various sacred books (some written by humans, others scrawled into journals by now-dead Forsaken) and may be a powerful leader accepted by werewolves of all tribes (for in this way, a Ghost Wolf leader is without prejudices toward one tribe or another). How the high-Harmony Ghost Wolf acts is entirely up to her; no tribal leaning colors her actions or appearance.

Thihirtha Numea with low Harmony can be frightening to behold. Unmoored to any kind of pre-existing social structure, they can be whirlwinds of depravity or out-of-control madmen with regret in their hearts and blood in their mouths. Degeneration leads to derangements and compulsions reflective of a Ghost Wolf's disconnect from Forsaken society. Derangements illustrative of such isolation include Depression and Melancholia, Suspicion and Paranoia, or Avoidance and Fugue. Some also develop phobias of crowds or wide open spaces (agoraphobia) or of strangers and aliens (xenophobia). Ghost Wolves can also suffer symbolic compulsions: leaving odd sacrifices (shiny objects, bits of fur and flesh) for other Forsaken, obsessively walking just outside territory that is not their own, suddenly developing a neurotic need to fulfill the oath of another tribe or spending an inordinate amount of time among spirits (which may hate the Ghost Wolf for his damaged Harmony).

Primal Urge

As a Ghost Wolf's connection to his spiritual side grows, it begins to bleed beyond the flesh. Despite Ghost Wolves' general lack of commonality, many exhibit similar traits as their Primal Urge score rises to powerful levels. For one, their flesh and fur grow pale, as one would expect from an actual ghost. (One Forsaken claimed that a Ghost Wolf in her pack became so attuned to his spirit side that his flesh would sometimes appear so pale that faint light would shine through, as if his skin were waxen paper.) Some believe this is just a physical manifestation of the tribe's given name, but this can't be so: even those isolated tribeless who've never heard the term "Ghost Wolf" may appear wan and spectral. Others suggest that perhaps the *Thihirtha Numea* are secretly shepherded from a great distance by a forgotten Firstborn totem — but so far, such speculation remains without reasonable proof.

Worth noting is that some Ghost Wolves, particularly those who are uncomfortable with their lupine natures, avoid Primal Urge as if it were a plague. The idea, perhaps rightfully so, is that Primal Urge represents the werewolf's monstrous nature. Giving into that force is therefore the same as choosing to become a monster. Some *Thirhirtha Numea* are able to stave off this side of themselves, instead devoting their attentions to other improvements and changes of the self. Curiously, though, others can't stop their Primal Urge from growing within. Like an ember born into a conflagration, they unconsciously find that their accursed connection to their monstrous side grows unbidden. This can, for some, lead to some manner of reconciliation between the flesh and the soul. For others, it is a road to madness and self-loathing.

Small Revolutions

Below are just a few ways you can "customize" your Ghost Wolf character. Because they are not so easily bound to convention, the following ideas may allow you play a werewolf using elements you may not have previously considered.

The Others

Ghost Wolves seem more likely to play nice with the other supernaturals. While the Forsaken are not given to automatic hostility with regard to the other "strangers" in the World of Darkness (such as vampires and mages), werewolves simply prefer to stick to their own kind whenever possible. The Ghost Wolves don't always have the luxury of relying upon their own kind, and so they more easily insinuate themselves into the social movements of other creatures.

One Ghost Wolf, Frank "The Fixer" Polcetti, works as a mercenary for a big group of local vampires. The vampires, over-concerned with their monetary holdings and real estate "territories," pay Frank to get his hands dirty so they don't have to. They're not friends, Frank and the bloodsuckers, but they have a working relationship that has yet to fail either side.

Another of the tribeless, an Elodoth known as Annalise, actually *belongs* to a cabal of mages. The mages, on the hunt for knowledge lost with their respective ancient civilizations, venture into the spirit realm to uncover such secrets. Entering the Shadow is always a gamble, even for mages, and so they have

Annalise. While neither side knows the entire weave and weft of the Shadow, the two together can help navigate the unstable perils of that place far more easily than if they worked alone. Annalise considers the mage her pack (a fact that other werewolves frown upon). While the feeling isn't entirely reciprocal (the mages don't quite get the concept of "pack"), they certainly consider her a friend and ally. For now.

Diverse Packs

Because Ghost Wolves needn't necessarily adhere to the rigorous laws of Forsaken society (especially if they remain isolated from the other werewolves), Ghost Wolves can be a little more free-wheeling when it comes to who they allow in their packs.

What happens if a Ghost Wolf pack lets in wolf-bloods, as well? Or a loyal Ridden? Is it possible that a human or a wild vampire may make a faithful packmate? Technically, these individuals can never *truly* belong to the pack, and they can't gain the benefits of a totem. But, with Storyteller approval, what happens if the totem's benefits *do* carry over? Is that the reward for belonging to a strong pack? Or is there an ancillary cost, whereupon the non-werewolf suffers somehow for the power (a weakened constitution, a damaged Social capacity or maybe the individual begins to gain odd disfigurements similar to the Spirit-Claimed).

Human Ties

Consider that a Ghost Wolf may have closer ties to human society. Some refuse to admit what they are, and so they cling to their "old life," while others simply float between the worlds of the Forsaken and the day-to-day doings of humanity.

Could a Ghost Wolf hold down a job? Any werewolf could, though the Ghost Wolves may have more practice at doing so, out of sheer bloody-mindedness. Some human jobs are suited toward a werewolf's primal nature: firefighter, park ranger, police officer, hunting guide or leg-breaker for the mob. Does that mean that a werewolf couldn't be a night janitor at the city hospital, protecting his hallways from spirits of sickness and mortality? Not at all. A werewolf could be that, or a quiet librarian who only embraces his wildness at night or even an office worker who sits in the midst of a cubicle sea. Though, such jobs likely possess a finite limit for the Ghost Wolf. Eventually, anger or other primal emotions will overwhelm his ability to work in such a restrictive environment for long. A werewolf's spirit is vibrant and, frankly, pissed-off. Holding down a job requires that the job at least try to match the Uratha's own nature.

Ghost Wolf characters can be intimately tied to other sub-groups within human society, as well. One Ghost Wolf might belong to a street or prison gang. Another Ghost Wolf might belong to the city's throng of homeless, blending in with the addicts and schizoids and victims. (The Ghost Wolf known as "Pai Garra" counted as his pack a few dozen street children in São Paulo, Brazil — they were his eyes and ears, and many were trained to fight as he would, with fang and claw.)

The White Wolves of the Redwoods

North of San Francisco in and around the California wine country the area is thick with various forests mountains and tracts of wide open land The forests in particular sport the massive ancient sequoia trees (whose awakened spirits are stubborn and cantankerous) The whole damn thing is one big Ghost Wolf protec torate

Here the Ghost Wolves have high numbers and therefore enough power to keep everybody out Other werewolves are welcome… provided they drop their tribal affiliations at the door and become *Thihirtha Numea* This in and of itself is an odd social construct for there aren't many places in the world where Ghost Wolves maintain widespread authority But the various regional territories work as something of a commune doling out responsibilities regarding to a lottery (performed with painted stones) The packs and the region still recognize proper alpha dominance and territory is still sacred: but here the tribeless Forsaken share responsibilities (hunting Ridden fortifying borders keeping the human herds in check) with far greater efficiency than what might be expected.

A Sixth Tribe

Many Forsaken see the Ghost Wolves as missing a crucial part of themselves, as werewolves who — to put it frankly — need to shit or get off the pot. And this is true for some. Many tribeless are afraid to give into their lupine selves or fail at tribal initiation, and are therefore Ghost Wolves by default, not by choice.

Still, this isn't true for all tribeless. Many *Thihirtha Numea* are quite active in werewolf society, and furthermore, some seek what for many Forsaken appears impossible: to found a sixth tribe (or ninth, depending on one's perspective regarding the Pure).



Tribe or Lodge?

What separates the formation of a new tribe from the separation of a lodge? On the surface the two appear the same: totem spirit shared ini tiation powers and abilities unique to members

The difference is less an issue of seman tics and more an issue of intention A lodge is potentially small scale It is often regional and even when it's not a lodge often gives into very specific ideas that are refinements of concepts already put forth by pre existing tribes A tribe is meant to be large scale even if it starts out small The goal of forming a new tribe is not to create some secret sub society geared toward a very precise idea or task but to form an all en compassing tribe whose doors are open to any Forsaken The totem tends to be bigger (a First born or theoretically a spirit of equal power) the ideas more overarching and furthermore tied to a particular code of Renown

Certainly some Ghost Wolves form their own lodges and in this way they are creating mini tribes for themselves But the goal of a legitimate sixth tribe is far greater — and harder — for the *Thirhirtha Numea* But that doesn't stop them from trying

The Tribal Quest

The quest to found a sixth tribe is awesome in scope. This is no one-shot story; forging the path for an entirely new tribe of werewolves is worthy of one or even several continuing chronicles.

Below are a few of the elements and considerations that can go into such a quest. These story hooks can be incorporated into a Ghost Wolf character's history or wants, though they should never be utilized without input from the Storyteller. The Storyteller can ensure that such a goal is not at cross-purposes with the story that he and the other players are planning to tell.

Unveiling the Purpose

The extant tribes represent a wide array of backgrounds for the Forsaken. Because of this, forging a new tribe is not done lightly. If the pre-existing tribes already represent what a Ghost Wolf seeks, then there's little reason to go through the massive trouble and spiritual upheaval required to create an entirely new tribe. As such, a concrete and powerful purpose might drive a Ghost Wolf and his pack to aim for such a grand goal.

Moreover, the purpose is rarely something that a werewolf just up and decides one day. No, the

purpose is the result of something massive: a terrible event that leaves an indelible mark, a world-shattering shift in perception, an egregious shift in Harmony or Primal Urge. The impetus that pushes a werewolf to found a sixth tribe really needs to be colossal.

Consider a Ghost Wolf whose own wolf-blooded family is savagely murdered at the hands of an enemy, be it a pack of Pure or a cabal of soul-stealing sorcerers. With his home and family in bloody ruins, the Ghost Wolf may realize that no one tribe is geared solely toward protecting humans. This desire may lead him on the path to create a tribe of defenders whose key purpose is keeping humankind safe from the depredations of the supernatural.

Alternately, consider what happens if the above Ghost Wolf discovers that his family was murdered by one of the Forsaken. While the event is similar, the direction taken may be more extreme. The werewolf may hope to create a tribe that polices its own society — these "enforcers" aren't about defending humanity, but about forcing the Forsaken to account for their sins. The Cahalith will call curses to the offenders, the Ithaeur will force spirits to work in tandem and thus help punish the monsters and the Elodoth will serve as judge, jury and executioner. The Irraka may work as hidden spies, and the Rahu are those who demand that justice overtakes the impure.

The event of revelation is kind of like the moment in many heroic myths when the hero is reluctantly pushed onto a particular path. It may not be something he wants to do, but it is something that he needs to do for himself or for his people.

Finding a Totem

A tribe cannot exist without a totem. (Well, a tribe *can*, but for the tribe to be legitimate in the eyes of any other Forsaken, it must be guarded by a potent totem.) Moreover, the totem cannot be like the ones that aid a single pack. The totem must be more powerful, able to devote its attention to countless members (either itself or through followers). The totem also must be significant and fundamentally agree with whatever principle upon which the tribe will be founded. A calm and peaceful water totem will not oversee a tribe of blood-soaked berserkers.

The quest to find such a totem — and bind it in service to a sixth tribe — is monumental. The quest cannot entail a simple night's journey into the Shadow. Many of the most powerful totems are obfuscated in places far off the beaten path, sequestered in strange realms only barely connected to the spirit wilds. Plus, convincing a totem of a tribe's worthiness will take work. It doesn't work like it does with a pack, whereupon the werewolves hunt and subdue a spirit and bind it to servitude. A powerful tribal spirit will not be forcibly bound, and will ask its potential children to jump through a great many hoops. The tasks and riddles it demands of werewolves are likely intimately tied to the purpose of the tribe, as well. If the tribe's goal is, as above, to defend humanity, the totem may suddenly unleash a bevy of its own servants to attack a local school — the werewolves must thwart the attack before anybody gets hurt. If the goal is to become a tribe of societal enforcers, the totem may ask that five Forsaken criminals — one from each auspice — be brought before the totem so that it may judge and punish them.

Ideally, the totem desired would be a Firstborn totem, but those that exist already watch over the other tribes. Or do they? Consider the possibility that one or even several other Firstborn totems exist. Does one remain hidden far from the world, so ashamed of its complicity in *Urfarah*'s murder that the spirit enforced its own exile? Or, was the wolf so strange or brutal that the other Firstborns were the ones who sent it to exile? Perhaps this spirit was the runt of the litter, the whelp of the First Pack, and so, similar to a true Ghost Wolf, the spirit was unable to make anything of itself — until now. Just because the Firstborn has not yet been known doesn't mean it's impossible that one exists. Convincing one won't be easy, either, and may involve more than just performing tasks that it wishes completed. The tale surrounding the Firstborn may require that the totem be redeemed, perhaps even drawn away from the brink of total madness and imbalance much rehabilitating a low-Harmony Uratha.

One example of a Firstborn wolf might be Udzhalla-Ur, "Watcher Wolf." The aforementioned enforcer tribe may have heard legends of a Firstborn who always stayed at the margins, watching her brothers and sisters hunt and play. When it came time that they decided to murder Father Wolf, Watcher Wolf did not do what she always had done, which was tell *Urfarah* what she had seen. Her silence on the subject caused her complicity in his death, and so she retreated from the world and disappeared deep into the primal realms beyond the spirit wilds. Those Ghost Wolves wanting to form this tribe must then descend into the madness of the Shadow to find her. The long journey doesn't end with finding her, however — once there, they find she is asleep, having truly withdrawn, and so the quest becomes how to

wake her from this deepest sleep. And then, how do they prove their worth?

Alternately, consider the possible existence of "Secondborn" totems, descended directly from the Firstborn. These wolves are not merely servants of those greater wolf-spirits, however, and are like the Firstborn in that they represent greater ideals.

Spreading the Word

A tribe's makeup cannot be a single pack, not for long. A sustained sixth tribe is meant to be included in a large portion, if not all, of Forsaken society. The latter portion of the quest is about becoming a tribe in the "public" eye. It involves recruiting other Uratha while maintaining whatever oath the tribe's totem demands.

The idea sounds simple, but it's anything but. Resistance likely waits at every turn. Surely other Forsaken consider a sixth tribe blasphemous, even if the tribe is guarded by an unforeseen Firstborn totem. Forsaken may try to undo the work and end the tribe — not out of evil or jealousy or rage, but out of what *they* perceive is the righteous course of action. The Pure, too, won't be happy. They already seek the culling of the Forsaken, and hearing of a new tribe will have the Pure sniffing for fresh meat in no time. (Of course, consider the possibility that the sixth tribe isn't Forsaken at all. Either it aims to be separate from both Pure and Forsaken, perhaps hoping to act as a link between the two factions, or perhaps the tribe joins with the Pure, instead.)

Other questions abound. Do spirits loathe any new tribe of Forsaken, or are there those spirits who have a vested interest in supporting this sixth tribe? Will the spirits teach the new tribe any Gifts at all? Will some spirits teach the tribe Gifts that no other tribe has yet uncovered? Must the tribe be more proactive in protecting itself from enemies, separating itself out into distinct lodges, each with a particular goal in mind (diplomacy, war, clandestine actions, etc.)? What must the tribe do to survive? How much must it sacrifice of its members — including their Harmony scores — to stay standing and gain traction?

Creating a Tribe

This section isn't about characters beginning the process; this section is about Ghost Wolves having already formed a sixth tribe. The guidelines and questions posited below should help you come up with a pre-existing tribe that has obviously managed to gain some ground and survive for whatever amount of time the Storyteller feels necessary. As a player, you can help to determine the nature of the tribe, but you should do so with the approval and/or guidance of the Storyteller. Moreover, it might make an excellent group activity for all players to get in on the creation of this sixth tribe.

Purpose

The tribe's purpose can be as broad or specific as you like, but for the group to have wide appeal, it must therefore have a wide purpose. The Bone Shadows, for instance, share the overarching theme of "mysticism." They share certain traits and purposes, all of which are relatively broad in scope. The goal here is to find a deficit in what the tribes currently represent. Is there something missing from the current five tribes?

For instance, the Bone Shadows are mystic, but not necessarily religious. Can a sixth tribe be a specifically religious tribe? Note that this needn't be specific: a religion such as Christianity is massive and contains various sects and practices beneath its umbrella.

What about a tribe of nomads? Or the aforementioned "defenders of humanity?" Perhaps a group of diplomats or advisors (maybe even the "power behind the throne" types) would be suitable. The theme and purpose also shouldn't deviate from what it means to *be* a werewolf. Werewolves are angry, primal, combative creatures. A tribe of diplomats can't *only* be calm beings with honeyed tongues. Some can be, some of the time. But others must use their words as they would their claws — to cut deep and savage an opponent. Consider in a tribe of diplomats, how would wolves in the wild negotiate? Soft yips? Or a growl uttered around teeth clamped around another wolf's throat?

Appearance

Do the Ghost Wolves who comprise this tribe share any appearance elements, or are they too ragtag to share much of anything? Any shared appearances should be tied to the nature of the tribe. If the werewolves are tied intimately to the human world, do they attempt to dress in a way that allows them to blend in with humans (dark suits, bland casual clothing, clean but unexceptional grooming)? A tribe of religious ascetics might wear nothing but threadbare robes, or even travel around naked. Do the tribe members share traits in Urhan, as well? Perhaps a Firstborn totem marks them with specific patterns or colors.

Totem

We have already discussed the topic of totem somewhat, but it bears repeating that the purpose of the tribe must be tied to the nature of the totem. In fact, consider the possibility that the totem is the one that *gave* the tribe its purpose. Out-of-game, you can reverse-engineer the tribe's creation. Perhaps a pack of Ghost Wolves discovers the path to a long-hidden Firstborn totem. Upon finding the spirit, the old wolf declares them his new "children," and sets them upon the task of bringing others to him so that he may once again power in the world.

Either way, the totem must be tied to the tribal purpose and given the power necessary to watch over an entire tribe (likely belonging to the Incarnae). A tribe of religious zealots might have as its totem the All-Consuming Fire, a powerful elemental that, in particular, loathes the Fire-Touched for how they corrupt his children. The aforementioned tribe of diplomats might be shepherded by Ramamu-Ur, or "Growling Wolf," a Firstborn (or Secondborn) totem.

Oath

The oath, as demanded by the totem, is a reflection of the tribe's purpose. The oath of Ramamu-Ur might be something along the lines of, "Offer negotiations before battle," or if they're a little more hard-line, it might instead be, "Carry no weapons but the words you speak." A tribe dedicated to protecting humanity might have a totem that demands, "Never bring harm to a human." Alternately, the oath might be a twist on the Bone Shadow oath: "Pay each human in kind."

An oath should be both firm yet open to debate. Certainly the other tribes have varied understandings and explanations for their own oaths, and a sixth tribe should have the same leeway.

Initiation

Once again, the tribe's purpose must be reflected in how the tribe members test those werewolves who wish to belong. A new tribe may offer more lax initiations if it's desperately seeking members, or may instead offer more rigorous testing if its members are particularly discerning.

The diplomats may ask a novitiate to find a particular spirit — one that is, at bare minimum, antagonistic — and "talk it down." At no point during this test can the werewolf attack the spirit, and must repress his anger at every moment.

The religious ascetics may ask that a potential member starve himself, go without sleep and brand his flesh with hot irons. They may also ask that each initiate bring another new potential with them as the "cost" of entry.

The tribe of defenders may demand that a new member go out and save one human from supernatural harm. Or, for a more passive and thoughtful initiation, the tribe may ask a werewolf to go out and learn about the lives of five humans — for, if one is to protect the human herd, he must be able to walk among them and understand why he protects them.

Primary Renown

In choosing the tribe's primary Renown, you should tie it thematically to what the tribe holds as its utmost ideals. Do the diplomats attempt negotiations because it is the honorable thing to do, or are they Glory-hounds and storytellers? Are the religious ascetics concerned overmuch with the concept of Purity, or is the stripping away of physical trappings a way to gain Wisdom?

Tribal Gift Lists

Choosing three Gift Lists for starting characters helps you vary the focus of the tribe a little bit. The three lists should probably come from **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, but consider that this book features a number of new Gift lists to which Ghost Wolves could have unique access. (The Storyteller can disallow this, of course.) Auspice lists are generally off-limits.

The tribe of diplomats might have as their Gift Lists: Dominance, Insight and Inspiration.

The tribe that acts as enforcers and secret police among the Forsaken might start with Evasion, Insight, and Stealth.

The nomadic tribe may start with Elemental, Knowledge and Stealth.

Sample Tribes

Below are a few "sample" tribes that Ghost Wolves may either aspire to create or plan to join, should these tribes already exist. These aren't written to include the full tribal spread of information; each entry is just a quick description. The rest is up to you.

Tower Hounds (Anzaghar Iltium)

No werewolf wants a Tower Hound on his tail, because it means the werewolf did something wrong. The Tower Hounds act as spies, secret police and arbitrators within Forsaken society. They make sure that the Oath is kept strong, that no *unihar* are sired and that the packs keep the loci safe. The Storm Lords believe it is their job to stand vigilant over the frayed quilt that is Forsaken society, but the Tower Hounds are quick to ask, then who will watch the

Storm Lords? The Tower Hounds see themselves as necessary fail-safes within a culture of monsters.

The Tower Hounds are mired in suspicion; they suspect others of crimes, and others suspect them of various offenses both social and spiritual. Their totem, Crow-of-the-Tower, sits high and helps them keep vigil over the world. They seem bent toward habitual mistrust, but this instinct has given them an edge more often than it has failed them — at least, for now. Some Forsaken fear and loathe the Tower Hounds, considering them betrayers and mocking them as "secret police." Others have seen the good that the Tower Hounds do, rooting out inequity — whether a Forsaken accidentally eats the flesh of a human in the heat of battle or whether she has willfully become a Bale Hound in service to malefic forces, the Tower Hounds believe it is their job to right such wrongs, and many applaud them for it.

The tribe is small, and many still think of them as Ghost Wolves. This gives the Tower Hounds a relished impartial edge, an edge that may sadly wither over time as they become more political. Still, their tribal vow to their totem remains firm: "*Levy the sin against the sinner.*"

Speakers of the Vine (Kaukanu Daugu)

It's not about being weak. It's about being balanced, prudent and wise. Both wolves and humans communicate with their own kind; wolves yip and howl, humans sit and chatter. The rage in a werewolf's heart is overwhelming, a crash of tides with a cruel undertow that draws too many into its mad swirl. The Speakers of the Vine seek to mitigate that a little, and believe that they must act as arbitrators and diplomats before anything else.

Some Forsaken consider this burgeoning tribe as a passel of weaklings, but those who truly face a Speaker of the Vine may find themselves surprised. Tribe members consider words to be weapons, and they approach every conversation as a battle to be won. Even this doesn't convince everybody, but such fools may find that the Speakers know that their words must sometimes require raking claws and gnashing teeth as backup. The Firstborn totem, found deep in the Shadow and besieged by leeching spirits of guilt and shame, now helps the Speakers find their voices in times of tribulation. The totem, Ramamu-Ur or "Growling Wolf," is glad to lend a powerful voice to his children whenever possible.

He also asks not that they never resort to destroying their foes, only that such a reaction is not their first. "*Speak with words before claws*," is the simple vow the tribe follows.

Savage Priests (Idimatau)

For years a small cultic lodge on the fringes of Forsaken society, these Ghost Wolves have gained considerable power recently, enough so to allow them to claim authority as a sixth tribe. The once-cult cares little for the mysticism of the Bone Shadows, and instead believes that the way to balance and sanity is through the dogma of Father Wolf and Mother Luna. The tribe, even in its infancy, has countless holy texts — some written in actual books, others inscribed upon the bark of every tree in a given forest.

The tribe follows the powerful elemental Incarna, Wind of the Wolf's Lair. The totem, said to be the wind that whispered secrets to *Urfarah* as he slept in his den, now breathes inspiration (which many consider quite mad) to the Savage Priests. Many do not trust the Savage Priests; their goals seem at odds with the rest of Forsaken society. The Savage Priests wish for all Forsaken to belong to their "church," and claim that to repay Father Wolf for their sins, they must use Mother Luna's aid to conquer those who do not wish to be conquered. The time is over, the Priests say, for the Forsaken to be weak. While some werewolves consider this and the tribe's brutal methods to be absurd, others are glad to have *something* — some kind of direction, some kind of action. Recruitment grows as the tribe walks among the Ghost Wolves first and foremost, hoping to diminish the tribeless and give the disparate lots a true place and purpose in werewolf society. But the Priests go among the other tribes, as well, seeding their conversations with the promise of action and power in the name of holy service.

The oath they follow is simple: "*In the name of Mother and Father, convert the weak to make them strong.*" Many point out that to convert, one needn't use violence (though that always remains an option). The tools of conversion are many: seductive words, bitter invective, promises of gain, and threats of destruction.

Story Hooks

The story seeds below can be incorporated into your character's backstory, or can be presented to your Storyteller as a hook that will manifest in the game's present.

• **Taking Sides:** Your character, a Ghost Wolf, is a participant in Forsaken society. He recognizes what he is, and even if he chooses to remain tribeless (or is forced to by circumstances), he still runs with a pack and abides by the laws and vows of the People.

When he's away from his pack, however, a group of tribeless approaches him. These werewolves, calling themselves the "Lodge of Dissent," no longer wish to be bound by the strictures of Forsaken society. They believe that, as Ghost Wolves, they are treated as common dogs, not proud wolves — all because they don't fit neatly into the "perfect" paradigm that the tribes have imagined. The lodge is already a few packs strong, and has a totem (a chaotic spirit known as Lightning's Two Faces). For now, they remain a "secret army," devoted to undermining Forsaken society so that they may carve out a place for themselves where they can stave off threat from both the People and the Pure. On one hand, the lodge members seem like good people, as if they really believe what they're saying. On the other, there is a manic gleam in their eyes when they speak, and is that totem stable enough to be trustworthy?

Bottom line is, they want the character to join them. They'll take no for an answer — at first. But over time, they'll continue to revisit the idea, making subtle and eventually not-so-subtle threats. Can this lodge be made into something good? Or is it destined to spin wildly out of control and get people killed? Will the character and his pack join them, save them, or destroy them?

• **The Reluctant:** Your character is a Ghost Wolf because she has no other choice. Perhaps she failed a tribal initiation or committed a crime powerful enough to mark her for exile. She — alone or with a pack of disparate Uratha — has waited at the periphery of Forsaken society for some chance to redeem herself. The chance for redemption comes, but the tasks ahead threaten to overwhelm her and her allies.

See, the other Forsaken have begun to go mad. Like rabid dogs, they fight among themselves, and seem incapable of making rational decisions. Why? Is it some disease spread from the bite of a virulent Beshilu? Have the Firstborn totems been somehow compromised, which is why the Ghost Wolf is unaffected? Or is it a curse cast down by a terrible enemy, be it a potent Incarna or an unrestrained sorcerer? Did the curse fail to affect the tribeless because Ghost Wolves didn't belong with the rest of the Forsaken, and thus were overlooked as threats? Or did the local Forsaken partake in some action that angered the enemy, an action in which the tribeless did not participate?

Whatever the reason, as the Forsaken turn on themselves with some kind of spiritual distemper, other enemies see fit to capitalize upon their Forsaken's weakness. Perhaps the Pure move in for the kill. Or an army of ragtag Ridden rises up and marches on the territories. Or the Azlu see fit to band together and start sucking out the sweet meats stuffed in werewolf flesh. Now, it's time for the Ghost Wolf and her pack to step up to the plate. Can they unravel the curse that plagues the local wolves while staving off the sudden threat?

• **Amity of Monsters:** The Ghost Wolf is at the center of a tense social web whose strings are pulled taut in every direction. The local region functions as a brood: various supernatural factions work together to maintain secrecy and power, thus helping to keep a status quo and stave off unwanted outsiders. The laws of each group merge with the laws of the local society — some vows are left at the door, while others take center stage.

The groups aren't necessarily friends, but it works. The magic-workers don't stir the spirits unnecessarily, and the Ghost Wolves don't go stealing Essence from the mages' loci. The vampires drink as they see fit, killing rarely, and help stamp out any of the strange heresies that might aggravate the local spirits. The werewolves, in return, help provide the bloodsuckers with protection when needed. All groups share information and watch one another's backs. Not because of friendship, but because such an alliance is mutually beneficial. It's not perfect; small betrayals happen on a nightly basis, but it works better than in most places.

Problem is, new Forsaken have come into town. Not only do they have no vested interest in such an arrangement, but they actually consider it a kind of blasphemy. They seek to actively undo the tense accord. The Ghost Wolves, they say, can either be part of the solution, or be counted among the dead. The tribeless must decide to which side they belong. They could bring the considerable power of their alliance against the Forsaken, but it would surely end the lives of those werewolves — and is that right to do? And yet, they've worked so hard to keep the peace, that it seems unforgivable to have it shattered by an army of malcontents. Alternatively, are the Forsaken right? Is this a blasphemy? Are the costs to maintain the alliance too high, spiritually and morally?

Other Benefits

Ghost Wolves start off a little hampered. If you feel that these minor weaknesses (restricted opening Gift List no primary Renown) ham string a character too much from the beginning consider adding in another benefit to a tribeless character's stats *With Storyteller approval* choose one of the below items:

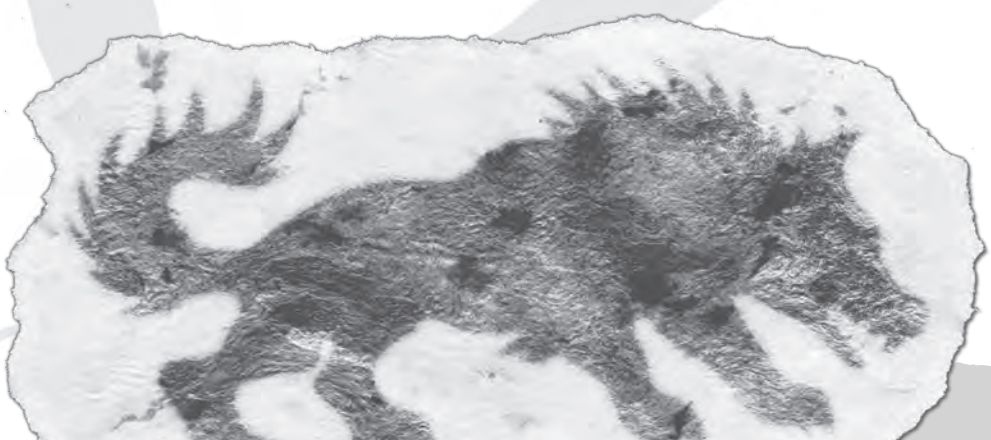
• Because a Ghost Wolf may cling so des perately to his human life he tamps down his connection to his Primal Urge The character may ignore one die of the Social penalty associated with his Primal Urge score though he may never dip below the – p enalty (So at Primal Urge the werewolf's Social penalty is – not – dice)

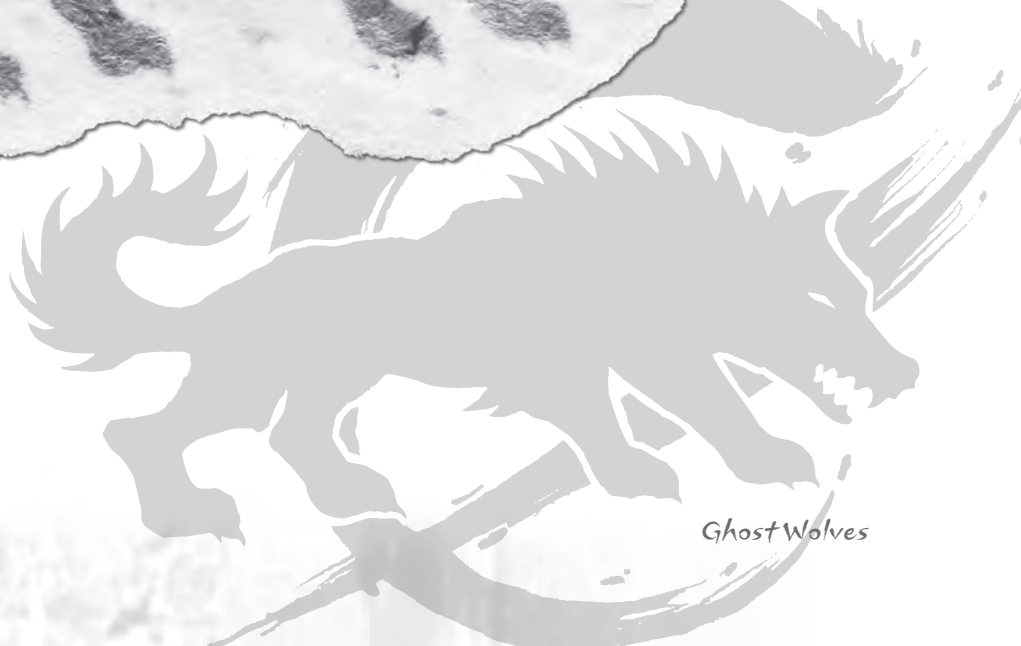
• If the Ghost Wolf is tied to humanity it may be easier for her to learn human Skills Hence certain skills have a reduced experience point cost to purchase (new dots x instead of x) Pick three Skills from the following list: Academics Computer Drive Medicine Occult Politics Science Socialize Streetwise The three Skills chosen have the reduced experience point cost The character may not change the Skills once chosen

• Spirits can smell the mark of the Firstborn on those Forsaken who belong to the tribes Hence in any situation in which a spirit can at tack a tribe member over a tribeless the spirit will take that course of action The spirits only at tack Ghost Wolves as a last resort with no other more tempting targets available

• The Ghost Wolf begins play with one free dot in one of the following Merits: Allies Contacts Resources Retainer or Status (though Status *cannot* be tied to Forsaken society) The free dot is due to the tribeless werewolf's proxim ity to humanity

Note that should the Ghost Wolf at any time become a member of a tribe, the effects of these benefits are lost. Any Skills purchased with lower experience point expenditures do not disappear but the lowered experience point cost is no longer accessible






BRIAN
EBLAND
96

Chapter 11

It shouldn't have gone down like this. It shouldn't. She was the hunter.

And her pack... her pack! How could this be happening? They'd already scouted out the street. They knew how many to expect.

But... but those others...

Miranda was the first to go. She went ahead, scouting, and didn't come back. Nobody could question her loyalty. They got her, somehow. Her scent just... vanished.

Then Prodigal snapped. It didn't make any sense. Something must have been working on him, something that only he could hear. He just tore into Gauru form and ran, ran like a mad rabbit. She'd tried to stop him, but he was too fast. The others said it was probably a trap, and they were right, so they lost sight and sound of Prodigal.

She had to assume he was gone now, too.

Then the twins had been pulled down. All of a sudden, the enemy was all around them. But they ignored her, and they ignored Weiss, and they took Noir apart. Even as she and Weiss had been clawing at their backs, they kept tearing Noir down until he couldn't move any more. Then they turned on Weiss.

And they ignored her.

She couldn't help it. She panicked. She ran, shutting out the strangled howl that was quickly cut off.

The moon seemed almost to pulse overhead, to laugh at her.

The street was empty. Why didn't the humans hear? Even just one, for a distraction – where were they?

The door was locked. She tried another one. Also locked. A third one – locked!

They were closing in, quick but not too hurried. Weiss had to be done. She flattened herself against the door, baring her fangs.

Out in front, moon on his head and shoulders, the leader wore Dalu form. She could see him smile, no humor or love in it. Not even hate.

"Hunt us down, Anshega bitch... hunt us down long enough, kill enough of us, you'll put us up against the wall. But the ones you don't kill get stronger, and we learn to work together better." His eyes were yellow. "We don't like being your quarry."

"And it's not happening again. Not ever."

A strong and well-constituted man digests his experiences (deeds and misdeeds all included) just as he digests his meats, even when he has some tough morsels to swallow.

— Friedrich Nietzche, Genealogy of Morals

While this chapter isn't quite as singularly devoted to turning over and examining several of the details of the **Werewolf: The Forsaken** setting, the meaty chunks of new character options provided here don't exist in a vacuum. Each new Merit, esoteric Gift or peculiar fetish hints at a story behind it, one that may be provided by you as a player rather than the Storyteller. The more options there are to choose from, the more potential branches and forks there are in a character's story from the moment of birth to the time of death. Improperly chosen, the options here could potentially dilute your character concept, but properly chosen, they can greatly refine it. Sample what seems interesting, and dig into whatever meets your tastes with gusto.

Merits

The Merits provided in **Werewolf: The Forsaken** only scratch the surface of the advantages some werewolves possess. The following section outlines several new Merits that are available to werewolves. Some are unusual abilities that come with the First Change; others are ties developed over the course of a werewolf's life. Unless the Storyteller deems otherwise, these Merits can only be taken by characters who possess the Werewolf supernatural template from **Werewolf: The Forsaken**. Some of the Merits in this section have prerequisites. As with other Merits, these should always be matched against the character's ratings in Hishu form.

When running a game with an expanded list of Merits, the Storyteller is encouraged to either give her players a few points of Merits for free (such as the free dot of Totem mentioned in the example of character creation, **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, on p. 73), or to increase the number of available points to spend on Merits. The easiest way to handle this is to allow so many points to be spent on Merits from the **World of Darkness Rulebook** for the character's pre-Change life, with more points available only after a character's First Change to spend on Merits that only werewolves can possess.

The following Social Merits from the **World of Darkness Rulebook** bear some expanding:

Allies: The Allies Merit can apply to "local werewolves," meaning that the character is well-thought-of by other Forsaken in her area and can call on packs other than her own for help. The more she asks for extra help, the more these other packs will call on her and her pack for assistance. If only one character in a pack possesses this Merit, her own packmates may resent her for dragging them in to solve her friends' problems. Note that Allies (Local Werewolves) only applies to local Forsaken, including Ghost Wolves. At the Storyteller's discretion, a character with a good explanation may also possess Allies (Local Pure), though a rating beyond one or two dots should only be allowed if the reasoning is truly phenomenal.

Allies (Local Spirits) is another possibility given the strong links that werewolves have with the Shadow. Local in this case will likely apply to the character's territory. Again, given the innate hostility many spirits feel toward the kinslayers, this Merit should be rare, especially at high levels. In addition to specifying the degree of influence a character has with the spirits in her territory, this flavor of Allies also determines the highest Rank of spirit that will answer a character's call. Also bear in mind that when the spirits call on the werewolf for favors, they may well deliberately ask her to go against things that her pack stands for, or even to break the Oath of the Moon. Spirits are inscrutable like that.

Contacts: In addition to the mundane Contacts in the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, Uratha characters can be on the grapevine with regard to other packs (either personally or through wolf-blooded intermediaries), or local spirits (though only spirits of Rank 1 or 2 will act as an information source to a werewolf). Contacts within the Pure Tribes are also possible, but outside of exceptional circumstances, this will usually be the character leaning on wolf-blooded or other human agents rather than the Pure themselves. And when the Pure find out that the

Uratha are leaning on their allies, all hell will likely break loose.

Mentor: In addition to humans, a character may have a mentor among the People, who can provide advice and instruction in werewolf life. This doesn't happen often, as Uratha are expected to stand on their own, and for werewolves who have passed their Rite of Initiation, this teacher outside the pack can threaten pack dynamics. Unlike allies and contacts, denizens of the Shadow are too otherworldly to act as mentors to any physical creature, though if a werewolf convinces one, she will soon find that it teaches her things she would rather not know.

Retainer: While a character can have a human or wolf-blooded retainer, having someone else around who isn't part of the pack is disturbing to both the Tribes of the Moon and many Ghost Wolves. The extra person doesn't gel with the social model that comes naturally to werewolves. When a character has such a follower, he is usually dispatched on errands orthogonal to the pack's current task, where he can help but doesn't get in the way. It's highly irregular for any werewolf to act as a retainer to another, and it is a sin with a Harmony Threshold 5 to form a stronger bond with one werewolf than one's whole pack — even if both werewolves belong to the same pack.

Mental Merits

Auspice Blessing (•)

Prerequisite: One auspice Affinity Skill at ••

Effect: Whenever your character can see her auspice moon — or at least where it should be in the sky — she is filled with confidence in the role that Luna has given her. Irraka slip that little bit more silently when the new moon is out, and Elodoth argue that bit more eloquently when bathed in the light of the half-moon. You gain a +1 equipment bonus to one Auspice Skill when your auspice moon is in the sky. This Skill must be rated •• or higher. *Available at character creation only.*

Drawback: The effects of this Merit only work when the sun is down, and your character can see where her moon would be in the sky (clouds don't affect this Merit, but buildings do, for instance). If the character's moon isn't above the horizon after sundown, she must be able to see the sky directly above her.

Ephemeral Reckoning (•• or ••••)

Effect: Whether through hours of study or an innate knack, your character has more insight than most into the Shadow. Something inside her picks up on spiritual resonance without her consciously noticing.

At the two-dot level, your character can make a reflexive Intelligence + Occult roll once per scene to determine the resonance of a given area. Dramatic failure indicates misleading information, failure offers nothing, success gives the main resonance of an area and an exceptional success shows the subtle layers of resonance before her.

At the four-dot level, she can make a similar reflexive roll to pick up on the resonance of a source of Essence that she has found. Only one roll of either kind can be made per scene, though with the four-dot version of this Merit she may try again if the first roll is a failure (see "Successive Attempts," the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 132).

Moon-Centered (••)

Effect: No matter your character's auspice, the sight of the full moon fills him with a powerful rage that yearns to be unleashed. Mother Luna's face fully revealed spurs him to release the rage within in the only way he knows. On nights of the full moon, your character adds one to his Stamina + Primal Urge when determining the number of turns spent in Gauru form only. This counts as the natural duration for the purposes of Gifts and other effects that alter the duration.

Drawback: Your character is on edge in the light of the full moon until he can release the rage within. All Composure rolls suffer a –1 penalty during the full moon until he can take Gauru form. Changing forms just once is enough to offset this penalty for the duration of the phase (usually three nights).

Physical Merits

Fighting Style: Tooth and Claw (• to •••••)

Prerequisites: Strength ••, Dexterity •••, Stamina ••• and Brawl ••

Effect: Your character has spent a long time in her Urshul and Urhan forms, becoming acquainted with the body and senses available in her inhuman forms. Rather than training, instinct has spurred her to practice hunting and killing prey. Very few people expect a werewolf to be fully adept with the flexibility offered by her lupine shapes, expecting her to rely on natural strength and speed the same as in Gauru form. Your character bucks that trend, having tested all her body's forms to their limit.

Dots purchased in this Merit allow access to special combat maneuvers that must be bought sequen-

tially. Your character can't have "Slip Through" until she has "Hunter's Eye." The maneuvers and their effects, most of which are based on the Brawl Skill, are described below. These maneuvers can *only* be used by a werewolf in Urshul or Urhan form.

Hunter's Eye (•): Your character's eyes are naturally drawn to signs of weakness, which normally indicate the easiest prey in a group. Your opponent's Defense is counted as one lower for the duration of the scene if you spend at least one turn observing him.

Slip Through (••): Your character is used to darting around an attacker, confusing him by attacking from many angles at once. Make a normal attack roll, penalized by the opponent's Defense. This attack does not strike the foe or do any damage; but if you roll even one success, your opponent is distracted as he works out where you will attack from next. Your opponent does not apply his Defense against the next attack he suffers.

Pounce (•••): Your character leaps at her opponent, bearing him to the ground with her full weight. Make a normal attack roll. If you roll more successes than your opponent's Size, he falls to the ground under you. Getting up counts as an action (see "Going Prone," the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 164). Close-combat attack rolls against a fallen opponent receive a +2 bonus. **Drawback:** Your character's Defense suffers a –2 penalty on the turn you make this attack.

Fury (••••): Your character knows how to go all-out, striking with both claws and teeth at the most vulnerable spots on an opponent's body. She can make both a claw attack and a bite attack against the same opponent in the same turn. The bite attack receives a +1 bonus. **Drawback:** Your character cannot use her Defense on the same turn she intends to use this maneuver. If she uses Defense against attacks that occur earlier in the Initiative roster, before she can perform this maneuver, she cannot perform the maneuver in the turn. She is too busy ducking out of the way of incoming attacks.

Throat Tear (•••••): Your character's jaws are powerful enough to tear a creature's throat out with a single bite. Do not apply the +2 bonus for size of teeth and jaw to the attack roll (other bonuses apply normally). Instead, if the roll is successful, apply the modifier as automatic successes for the purposes of damage. **Drawback:** Spend one Willpower point per attack. Note that this Willpower expenditure does not add three dice to the attack.



Metabolic Control (••)

Prerequisite: Stamina •••

Effect: Your character has more control over his body than most werewolves. This allows him to stop his body from regenerating, at least for long enough to set a wound. In addition, this Merit allows the werewolf to slow down other aspects of his physique. When normal people are out of breath, werewolves normally aren't. When normal people are shocked by injury, werewolves normally aren't. This Merit allows your character to appear no better than a normal human, slipping under the radar of anything that would hunt him. Camouflaging himself in this way takes a Stamina + Survival roll, with a success indicating that your character has suppressed his metabolism for one scene, or one day for an exceptional success.

Drawback: Preventing regeneration in a particularly stressful situation may require spending a Willpower point, at the Storyteller's discretion.

Social Merits

Animal Magnetism (•••)

Effect: Your character is a focal point for everyone in the room. Through a combination of pheromones and body language, she has an edge of danger that's hard to resist. Her primal, powerful nature hides just under the surface, and when she wants to, she can let it out. Your character lowers the penalty from her Primal Urge by two when making a Presence or Manipulation roll to distract or seduce someone who would normally be attracted to her gender.

Drawback: Being the center of attention is not always a good thing. People who are attracted to you will keep flirting or trying to strike up conversations when you're alone, and everyone who isn't attracted to you will likely resent you. You suffer a –1 modifier to rolls made to deal with people who aren't attracted to your gender.

Predator's Gaze (••)

Prerequisites: Presence •• and Intimidation ••

Effect: Your character has a tendency to look at people as if they were prey animals. Her body language is domineering, and in conversation, her eyes focus on the throat or another weak spot. People want to get out of her presence, and while that can be annoying, it can also be very useful for getting things done quickly.

Your character gets a +1 bonus to all Presence or Manipulation rolls when convincing people to leave her alone or get things done quickly. A shopkeeper will serve her first, just to get her out of the store, and a street gang will suddenly decide that mugging her might not be the best plan they ever had.

Drawback: Looking on people as prey doesn't help with making friends and influencing people. People look askance at anyone who hangs around with you voluntarily, and you'll likely be the first name in people's heads whenever they hear of a violent crime in the area. After all, you sure look and act the type.

Flaws

Flaws are optional traits, described in the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 217. As Flaws were originally presented, if the Storyteller is willing, a character can take one Flaw and gain Experience when that Flaw gets in her way. The following additional Flaws are available to werewolves, representing some of the unique afflictions of a life spread between two worlds.

Mental Flaws

Anthropocentric: Your character can't fully capitalize on his shapeshifting abilities. He instinctively tries to solve any problem in his Hishu or Dalu forms, and derides his Urshul and Urhan forms because they don't have opposable thumbs. While he will still shapeshift, it takes some serious thought to break him out of "human mode," and even Dalu form doesn't feel right. This Flaw often manifests in gadget-hounds, mechanics and others on the bleeding edge of tool-use; werewolves from a strict religious upbringing with a "two-legs better than four-legs" message are also candidates.

Headstrong: Your character doesn't hesitate. After all, she's a werewolf, a paragon of physical power. Nothing can stand before her. Unfortunately, she doesn't hesitate when she really should, and finds herself in a lot of trouble that she could have avoided had she paused to think about things. Instead, the rush of physical power makes her dangerously overconfident. This Flaw is often found in characters who were weak or oppressed before their Change, or who haven't yet found themselves in real danger as a werewolf.

Physical Flaws

Bad Regeneration: Your character has suffered a wound in the past that didn't set right. Regenerating just made the wound worse, locking bones into odd positions. Nothing short of repeating the old wound and then re-setting the injury while the werewolf regenerates will correct the problem — but when

causing the wound is worse than living with the consequences, not many werewolves choose this course of action, assuming it even works. Your Health is one lower than normal because of this. This Flaw awards points only if the character's mis-regenerated wound causes him physical or social problems. Note that if the injury that this Flaw relates to is ever fixed, your character loses this Flaw.

Poor Sense of Smell: Whether through one too many breaks or a lifetime smoking cheap cigars, your character has next to no sense of smell. Truly powerful scents get through — decaying bodies and the like — but other than that, she can't even tell what's for dinner without seeing it. Unfortunately, this affliction carries through to your character's lupine forms as well. Subtract two dice from any scent-based Perception rolls, including tracking in Urhan and Urshul forms. Even though she suffers this penalty, you get an experience point at the end of the session only if this Flaw caused her notable trouble.

Silver Allergy: Your character is hurt by the very touch of silver, as some stories say the Pure are. Wearing or carrying silver causes an allergic reaction, and pressing a fist-sized lump of pure silver to her skin will cause one point of aggravated damage. This Flaw awards points only if the character's allergy causes her physical or social problems.

Social Flaws

Disharmony: Your character's upbringing instilled a strong moral code, and a set of beliefs about how the world worked. Unfortunately, the First Change ruined all that. Introduced to an animistic world with spirits everywhere, and able to change between man and wolf, she's not found a way to reconcile the beliefs and morality of her human life with the instinctive force that is Harmony. This Flaw can show up in many circumstances, from characters who are strongly religious to vociferous atheists. This Flaw awards points whenever a character does something that matches her morality but violates the tenets of Harmony.

Hollywood Syndrome: For whatever reason, your character displays a number of physical signs associated with werewolves in mythology. Her middle and ring fingers are the same length, hair grows from every part of her body — especially her palms — and her eyebrows have grown into a thick monobrow. This Flaw awards points whenever someone believes your character to be a werewolf based on these signs.

Lone Wolf: Your character doesn't play well with others. For most people, this isn't a problem — human misanthropes can get through their lives easily enough, if they try — but to a werewolf such a problem is a curse. The need for a pack burns within the heart of every werewolf, but your character can't stand having people around him. This could come from inclinations that the character had before his Change, or a fear of what he has become — and of what others like him might do.

Materialist: Try as she might, your character can't deal with spirits on the same level that she does humans and animals. No matter what she's been taught, she's still got hang-ups about spirits and ephemeral beings, and finds it hard to take them seriously even when they're right in front of her. Experience is awarded when your character refuses to take a spirit seriously, whether in a long debate or a battle.

New Gifts

Some of the Gift lists in this section, or in other **Werewolf** books, can tread ground that other Gift lists appear to cover. While the standard is to assume that every Gift list published is a separate list, some Storytellers may decide to change that for some cases (City Gifts and Urban Gifts). If that is the case, there are two ways to combine the two lists.

First is to combine the two lists into one. Storytellers who chose this option go with whichever title they prefer for the new Gift list and pick one Gift from each list for each level. This leads to one Gift list with five Gifts that better suits a group's idea of how the Gifts should be ordered. Second, the Storyteller may decide that all of the Gifts are available as one list, with the option of picking either one when the character in question earns a new Gift. Take care when doing this, as it effectively gives some characters access to two Gift lists for the price of one. The best way to handle this situation is to allow the player a choice of which Gift she wants her character to learn at each level, and have the remaining Gifts form a "shadow" Gift list for the purposes of buying them. Don't make this change to just one or two Affinity Gift lists, though. It's unfair to players whose characters don't have affinity for a duplicated list. Either create one duplicated list for every tribe or auspice, or for each that features in your game — but don't forget to add extra lists to accommodate new characters.

Five of the following Gift lists count as tribal Affinity Gift lists for their respective tribes, and can be purchased by members of the appropriate tribe at a reduced experience point cost. These lists are as

follows: Alpha (Storm Lords), Battle (Blood Talons), Blending (Iron Masters), Ending (Bone Shadows) and Stalking (Hunters in Darkness. The remaining Gift lists — Darkness, Endurance, Information, Pack, Predator and Weakness — are not tied to any particular tribe. Players can select them as their free pick at character creation after selecting those for tribe and auspice, or purchase them with experience points as normal.

Storytellers may choose to assign the unaffiliated Gift lists to tribes or auspices as they see fit, but should remember to inform their players of the change. In the interest of fairness, the Gifts should be evenly distributed as well; if you choose to give the Hunters in Darkness affinity with the Darkness list (which doesn't seem out of place), the other four tribes should each get an appropriate Affinity as well. For instance, it would be appropriate to give Endurance to the Blood Talons, Information to the Iron Masters, Pack to the Storm Lords and Weakness to the Bone Shadows; the fit isn't perfect, but neither is it wholly disruptive. Of course, it would also be appropriate to give the Pure Tribes affinity with the new Gift lists — something that may not help the players' characters so much as harm them later on.

Alpha Gifts

The *Iminir* aspire to the role of the alpha tribe, the leaders of the Forsaken. Not every Storm Lord will be a pack leader or hold a position of authority, but it is the tribe's duty to lead the others by example and guide their brethren, even when in a subordinate role. Alpha Gifts are often referred to as Winter Wolf's Gifts, for the spirits that bestow them upon the Storm Lords are closely associated with the Firstborn totem of the tribe. The Gifts are traditionally sought out by *Iminir* werewolves who want to present a more authoritative demeanor in their packs, most notably by alphas or Uratha that want the top slot.

Sense Guilt (•)

Being the leader means knowing your friends and foes. Storm Lords use this Gift to detect any hidden shame or guilt in their packmates and enemies, to see if such a weakness can be neutralized or exploited, depending on the werewolf's decision.

By meeting the target's eyes for a turn, the character can search the other's soul for evidence of guilt or past shame that still haunts the subject. This is a sensory Gift, not an invasive one.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Empathy + Honor versus subject's Resolve + Resistance

Action: Instant and contested; resistance is reflexive.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character either believes she sees a grave guilt that isn't there in reality, or sees innocence where a great shame truly lies.

Failure: The character detects nothing about the target's guilt.

Success: The character senses any serious shame or guilt the target feels over past actions. The subject need not be feeling the emotion at the time of the Gift, because the sense detects any shame buried deep in the werewolf's heart. The information provided by this Gift is vague, offering only conformation of whether the target feels any serious guilt, rather than exact details of why.

Exceptional Success: As with a success, but the information provided is much more detailed. The character gets a general sensation of whatever deed fuels the guilt, such as "crime against family," "crime against a stranger," "violation of Uratha law," or so on.

Alpha's Aura (••)

<n>An alpha should be an inspiration in war as well as peace. This Gift heightens the werewolf's outward projection of confidence, creating a palpable aura around the Storm Lord in battle. Enemies suddenly fear the werewolf, re-evaluating their attacks and rethinking strategies in the face of such an impressive opponent.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Composure + Intimidation + Honor versus subject's Resolve + Resistance

Action: Contested; resistance is reflexive.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The failed Gift backfires and the effects of a success are applied to the Storm Lord instead of his opponent.

Failure: The Storm Lord fails to project his aura to intimidate the target. The Storm Lord may not try again on the same subject for the rest of the scene.

Success: The character emits a fearsome wave of authority and competence. For the remainder of the scene, the werewolf may use his Composure *or* his Intimidation rating in combat instead of his Defense against the target, depending on which is higher.

Exceptional Success: As with a success, though the effects apply against the target for an entire night, until the next sunrise.

Taste of Flaws (•••)

A good leader finds out all he can about his enemies before confronting them. This Gift allows the Storm Lord to sense his foe's weaknesses, detecting flaws in his opponent's speech, mental faculties or combat style. This Gift does not reveal specific weaknesses as with the New Moon Gift: Sense Weakness, but instead reveals an overall picture of the target's flaws and shortcomings, allowing the Storm Lord to work around them.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy + Wisdom

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Storm Lord receives a false impression of the target's flaws and reacts to weaknesses that do not exist. For the next three turns, the werewolf suffers a –3 penalty to all dice rolls made against the subject, whether they are combat rolls or social rolls made to intimidate, charm or negotiate, etc.

Failure: The werewolf remains unsure of the target's flaws.

Success: The Storm Lord receives a clear impression of the target's flaws. The character senses how to seize upon the advantage in combat and social situations, such as exploiting weaknesses in his opponent's combat style, pinpointing openings in his arguments and so on. For the remainder of the scene, the character receives a +2 bonus to all rolls made against the subject, including combat rolls.

Exceptional Success: Per success, but the bonus rises to +3.

Lordly Will (••••)

The strongest leaders render themselves immune to unwanted outside influence, hearing only the voice of their own authority and those of their advisors. This Gift reinforces the alpha's dominance over his own mind in the face of psychic or other supernatural manipulation.

When activated, this Gift makes the character automatically immune to all Gifts, Disciplines, Numina and other supernatural powers that affect the mind — such as Dominance Gifts, Majesty Disciplines, etc. The Gift's effects last for the turn in which the Gift is activated; if the opponent attempts to use another mind-affecting power on the werewolf next turn, the werewolf must spend another two Essence to invoke Lordly Will for that next turn if he so chooses.

Cost: 2 Essence

Dice Pool: No roll is necessary.

Action: Reflexive

Alpha's Howl (•••••)

With a long and powerful roar, the Storm Lord exalts in his prowess, skill and nobility over his enemies. The howl thunders through the ears of his foes, temporarily stripping them of courage and mastery of their own supernatural abilities. Any enemies within earshot of the howl (beings who actively wish to harm the character) will suffer the Gift's effects. In cases of more than one opponent, the Storyteller should use the highest Resolve among the group to resist the Gift's effects.

Cost: 3 Essence

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Glory minus subjects' Resolve

Action: Instant and resisted

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Storm Lord fails to instill dread in his enemies and may not use this Gift on anyone for another cycle of the moon.

Failure: The roar has no effect beyond its natural intimidation value.

Success: For every success on the roll, an enemy within earshot loses the ability to use his supernatural powers (including shapeshifting, unless in Death Rage) for a turn. Gifts fail, Disciplines don't function, vampires are unable to spend blood to enhance Traits, etc.

Exceptional Success: No further benefit beyond the additional successes.

Battle Gifts

The Gifts that heighten a werewolf's killing power in war are much prized by the Blood Talons, who regard these powers as a blessing from Destroyer Wolf. As such, they are often named after their totem or referred to as Destruction Gifts or Battle Gifts. While they do not specifically increase combat Skills, they add to a Blood Talon's intimidation and efficiency in combat when facing enemies on the Wild Hunt.

Visage of Fenris (•)

By channeling their tribal totem's rage, the Blood Talons can plunge themselves into the connection with Fenris-Ur and manifest an aspect of his fearsome presence to intimidate their foes. Eyes blaze with primal fury, and the werewolf's snarl drops several octaves to mimic the growl of Destroyer Wolf.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Glory versus subject's Resolve + Composure

Action: Instant; resistance is reflexive.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf fails to manifest Destroyer Wolf's rage and is unable to use the Gift for the remainder of the night.

Failure: No effect.

Success: Channeling the ferocity of Fenris-Ur, the werewolf suddenly seems more intimidating and threatening to those who oppose him. All enemies facing the character suffer a –2 reduction to their Initiative totals as they flinch back from his presence.

Exceptional Success: As with a success, but enemies attacking the character suffer a –4 penalty instead –2.

Worry the Prey's Heels (••)

The werewolf who wishes to catch a fleeing enemy can use this power to halt his foe's limbs, slowing down any attempts at flight. The Gift is most often used on cowards who seek to flee a fair fight, or when a pack desperately needs to catch someone who doesn't wish to be caught. It is said that a coward's shame fills the heart of a fleeing enemy and slows his muscles.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Honor versus the target's Stamina + Primal Urge

Action: Instant; resistance is reflexive.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf fails to prevent the target from fleeing and is unable to use the Gift on that subject again for another cycle of the moon.



Failure: The target is not hindered at all.

Success: Shame and pain slow the target's limbs as he seeks to flee. His speed is halved for the remainder of the scene, or until the werewolf lifts the power.

Exceptional Success: In addition to the previous effect, the target is so cowed that he suffers a –1 penalty to all Social rolls with the Blood Talon character who used this power against him for the rest of the night.

Savaging (•••)

The injuries inflicted by a Blood Talon in his Rage can be a terrifying sight. This Gift focuses on channeling Destroyer Wolf's legendary ability to rend his foes apart as he fought them, making the wounds inflicted by a character strike fear into the hearts of those watching.

To use the Gift, the character spends the necessary Essence and makes his attack roll as normal. The power is considered a success if the character inflicts three levels of damage.

Cost: 2 Essence

Dice Pool: No roll is required beyond the natural roll to hit an enemy in combat.

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: No additional penalty beyond the dramatic failure of the attack roll.

Failure: No additional penalty beyond missing the opponent in combat.

Success: The attack does an additional point of damage, and the wound inflicted is so grave that those enemies of the Blood Talon who witnessed the attack suffer a –2 dice penalty to all combat rolls made against him for the rest of the turn. This penalty is psychological, and may not affect certain enemies (such as unliving automatons that are incapable of any emotion).

Exceptional Success: As with a success, but the dice penalty that attackers suffer is raised to –3.

Primal Anger (••••)

The more a Blood Talon loses himself to his primal bloodlust, the more dangerous he becomes. Characters using this Gift harness the ferocity and wild-hearted anger of their wolfish natures, using it to enhance their strikes in battle. Every blow falls with the desperate strength of an enraged wolf on the hunt biting at its prey.

The werewolf spends the required Essence and then can add his Primal Urge rating to any attack rolls for the remainder of the scene.

Cost: 2 Essence

Dice Pool: No roll is required.

Action: Reflexive

Heartstopping Howl (•••••)

The howl of Destroyer Wolf roared across the Pangaean night in prehistory, terrifying spirits and mortal beings alike. His Blood Talons are children are capable of emulating this great howl to strike terror into the hearts of their enemies, reducing them to gibbering, panicking wretches.

The character howls with all of his breath, loud and long, creating a roaring howl filled with his rage and hatred. Enemies affected by the blood-chilling howl find themselves overcome with fear, trembling and weeping as they attempt to strike the Blood Talon in their midst. In cases of more than one opponent, the Storyteller should use the highest Resolve + Primal Urge among the group to resist the Gift's effects.

Cost: 2 Essence

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Glory versus target's Resolve + Primal Urge

Action: Instant; resistance is reflexive.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Blood Talon fails to strike terror into his foes and may not use the Gift on the same enemies again for another cycle of the moon.

Failure: No effect.

Success: The werewolf's howl (no matter which form he is in) strikes terrible fear into the hearts of his enemies within earshot. Opponents affected suffer debilitating tremors throughout their bodies, and their eyes water with panicky tears. Every affected opponent suffers a –3 penalty on all combat dice rolls, including a –3 penalty to the opponent's Defense, for the remainder of the scene.

Exceptional Success: Per success, but with the penalty on opponent's rolls raised to –4.

Blending Gifts

Red Wolf asks that his Iron Masters adapt to the changes wrought by humanity and keep pace with the changes shaping the modern world. The Blending Gifts help werewolves to do that, adding a little edge against the harshness of life in the dark places of city and wilderness, the Shadow and among the unseeing human herd. Thus, these Gifts are often referred to as Red Wolf's Gifts.

Shadow Coat (•)

The careful werewolf is interested in blending into both the physical and the spirit world. This Gift makes him seem less remarkable when in the spirit world. Spirits are less likely to notice him at all, though if they do, their ire toward one of the Uratha is not diminished.

Once activated, this Gift imposes a –3 penalty to all dice rolls made to notice the werewolf. The Gift works only in the Shadow; the Gift's effects end at the end of the scene or when the werewolf re-enters the physical world, whichever comes first.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: No roll is required.

Action: Instant

Manytongues (••)

Humanity has hundreds of languages in use today, and hundreds more that have seen use during past centuries. Iron Masters have fallen back on this Gift a great many times over the years, especially when moving to claim territory in a new area. Manytongues allows the werewolf to understand but not speak the language of any human he is speaking with, whether it is face-to-face or over the phone, as long as he can hear the subject's voice.

Cost: 1 Essence per targeted subject

Dice Pool: No roll is required.

Action: Instant

Resist Toxin (•••)

Cities produce a great deal of foulness as they grow and develop. Between artificial human-made toxins that can affect the Shadow and the powers of some spirits to poison their enemies, this Gift is a handy defense mechanism.

Any time the character suffers the harmful effects of poisoning, he can activate this Gift to purify his system immediately and take no damage.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: No roll is required.

Action: Reflexive

Mask the Hunter (••••)

Even when werewolves don't wish to, they attract attention. The burden of Primal Urge can seem to be a blessing in a werewolf's life, but Primal Urge subconsciously alerts nearby humans that there is a predator in their midst. This Gift is one of the most valuable offered by Red Wolf, allowing an Iron Master to suppress the wolf within for a short time and interacting with humans normally.

Once the power is activated by the expenditure of Essence, the character is no longer subject to the social penalties of Primal Urge for the rest of the scene. Unfortunately, this advantage comes at significant cost in Essence. There is simply no easy way for the hunters to walk among the herd, and this Gift is treasured by those who use it even for short durations.

Cost: 3 Essence

Dice Pool: No roll is required.

Action: Instant

Hide the Curse (•••••)

Mastering the most powerful elements of change and adapting to one's environment, this Gift from Sagrim-Ur allows a werewolf to mask himself completely among the human herd. For a single day, the werewolf has the ability to suppress his own curse, living from sunrise until sunset as a perfectly normal human. Of course, with no fear of Death Rage and no Primal Urge making humans uncomfortable also comes the inability to shapeshift and use any Gifts, so werewolves should be very careful when they use this power. This Gift only functions during the day; the power of Luna over her children renders any attempts to use this Gift past nightfall completely impossible.

Cost: 3 Essence

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Gift fails, and the Lunes of the character's choir are angered by her presumption. At the Storyteller's discretion, the character may suffer minor social penalties in dealings with the Lunes associated with her choir, and is unable to use the Gift again for a full lunar cycle.

Failure: The Gift simply fails.

Success: The character loses the ability to channel any of her supernatural abilities, including shapeshifting, until nightfall. The character is considered completely mortal in all respects, lacking even regeneration and Primal Urge.

Exceptional Success: No further effect.

Darkness Gifts

Moonlight casts long shadows, and in those shadows the Uratha lurk. Legends of werewolves often tell that the creatures can only come out at night, preying on an ancient fear of the dark passed down for generations in the form of old stories. Werewolves

who have learned Gifts of Darkness embody some of that fear, slipping unseen between patches of shadow and striking with the sudden intensity of a single moonbeam into a blackened room. The spirits of nocturnal creatures (such as foxes, owls or bats) teach these Gifts, as will some Irralunim — though a non-Irraka will need to offer plentiful chiminage. The suggested modifiers below apply to all Darkness Gifts when a roll is necessary.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+2	Only light comes from nighttime stars
+1	Only light comes from the new moon
–1	Only light comes from electric lights (street lights, etc.)
–3	Gift used during daytime

Darksight (•)

Though a werewolf can track by sound and scent, in cities and other human-dominated areas the forms necessary to do so can attract more attention than they're worth. This Gift mitigates that risk, allowing a werewolf in human form to see perfectly no matter the level of light. Where there is any illumination, the user of this Gift can see as if it were bright daylight. In situations in which there is no light at all, the character can see as if her surroundings were bathed in the light of a full moon. Whichever the case, the character's eyes glow yellow when using this Gift.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Wits + Composure + Wisdom

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character's night vision is entirely lost, as if someone had shone a bright torch in her eyes. All penalties for darkness are doubled until the end of the scene. This character also cannot use this Gift for the same period.

Failure: The werewolf's eyes do not adapt to the darkness.

Success: Night becomes as day to the character. Ignore all penalties to rolls based on visual perception that are applied due to darkness (such as Perception rolls). The character can see colors to the same degree she could if it were daylight. If there is no available light at all, the character can see in monochrome, though all rolls relying on vision suffer a –2 penalty. Sudden bright lights will stop this Gift working as the enhanced vision shuts off to deal with the visual stimulus, but do not have any other detrimental effects. The Gift's effects last for 30 seconds per success.

Exceptional Success: The Gift is as effective as for a success, but lasts until the end of the scene.

Aura of Dread (••)

A werewolf who knows this Gift has an edge beyond the obvious. The darkness hides many things, and through subtle spiritual urging onlookers worry about what will follow her out of the shadows. The darkness may conceal the rest of her pack, or she could be a harbinger of a far deadlier threat. This Gift exacerbates the ancient human fear of the dark places outside of the cave, and though it doesn't actually alter anything visible, it does instill a feeling in the minds of everyone present. The werewolf is the face at the window on a moonless night; the chill howl heard by campers when there are only stars for light.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Presence + Empathy + Purity

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: People who witness the werewolf gain just that bit more confidence, shrugging off minor fears and being more willing to confront her. The werewolf suffers a –1 modifier on any attempts to scare or intimidate anyone who would have been affected by the Gift.

Failure: The victims are unperturbed by this Gift.

Success: Everyone who can see the character (including through a window or one-way mirror, but not a broken or time-lapsed link such as television or photographs) is on edge, fearing what will come for the witness out of the darkness. The next Composure roll each person present makes this scene suffers a –1 modifier.

Exceptional Success: As a success, plus the user of the Gift can focus on one person and attempt to instill a powerful fear of the dark (as a Phobia derangement). The target resists the effect as a reflexive action with Resolve + Primal Urge. If the werewolf's number of successes is still over five after the resistance, the target suffers the phobia until the end of the scene.

Shadow Step (•••)

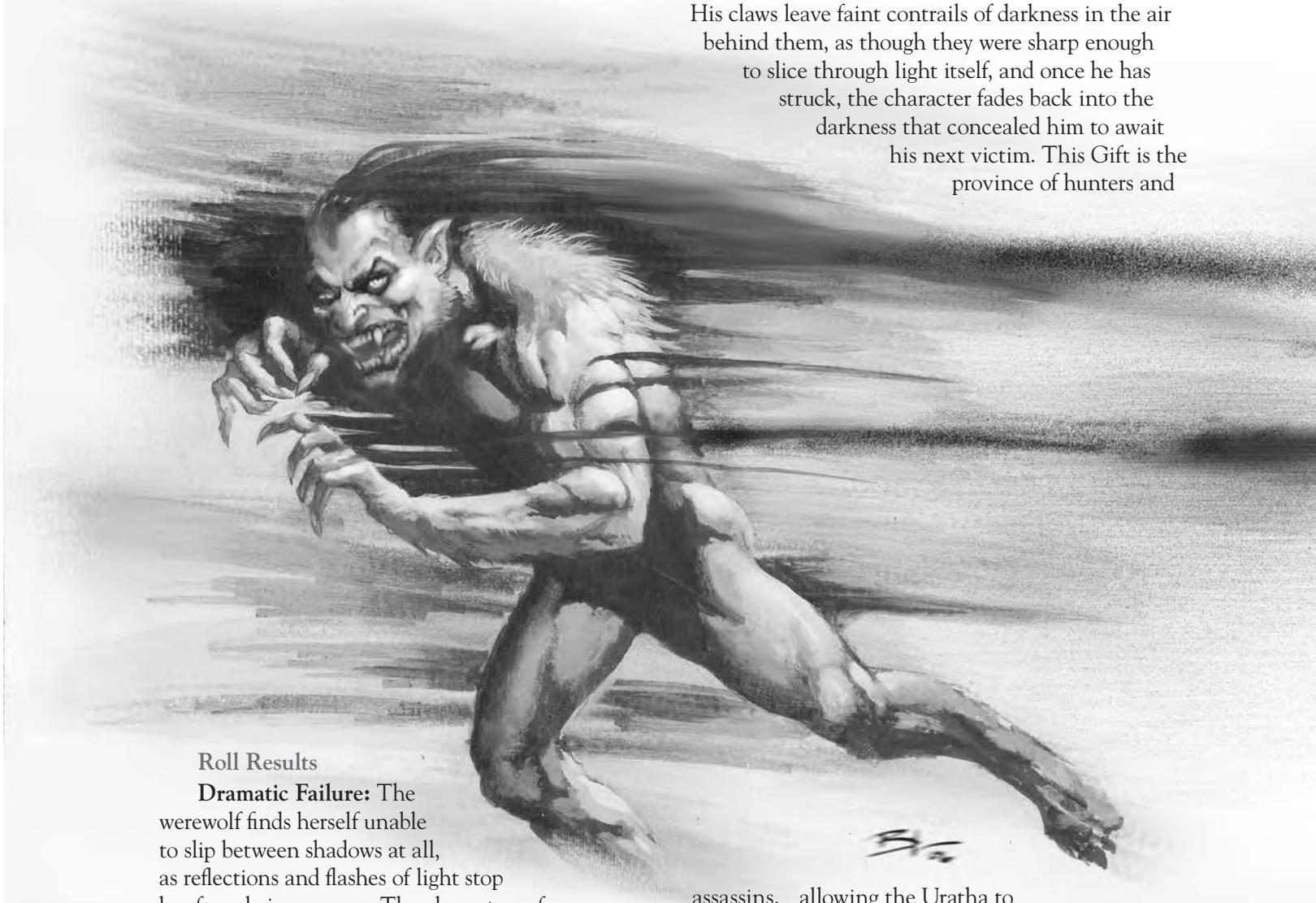
Huddled in stone houses, humans looked out at the dark in fear, never knowing if some beast was going to attack, and if so where from. This Gift

allows a werewolf to play on that fear, letting him slip from one patch of shadow to another to confuse prey — or predators — as to his location. Though hardly the fastest means of getting around, slipping between shadows in this way does allow the werewolf to move without being seen, strike from odd angles and convince her victims that there is more than just one of her.

Cost: 2 Essence

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Stealth + Cunning

Action: Instant



Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf finds herself unable to slip between shadows at all, as reflections and flashes of light stop her from being unseen. The character suffers a –1 penalty to all Stealth rolls for the remainder of the scene.

Failure: The shadows reject the character for now.

Success: The character must be stood in a patch of shadow or darkness large enough to conceal herself. She can move to any patch of shadow she can see that is within twice her Primal Urge in yards, and that would be large enough to conceal her. The shadows swallow her whole when this Gift is used, and next turn she emerges in her desired patch of darkness.

Exceptional Success: The character can see out of her destination from the moment she vanishes. She gains +2 Initiative on the turn that she arrives.

Moonlit Talons (••••)

A character with this Gift can strike from concealment with incredible swiftness and power, like a beam of light that dispels the shadows around him. His claws leave faint contrails of darkness in the air behind them, as though they were sharp enough to slice through light itself, and once he has struck, the character fades back into the darkness that concealed him to await his next victim. This Gift is the province of hunters and assassins, allowing the Uratha to strike from hiding without betraying his position, and finds little favor among those who would rather face an opponent with honor.

A werewolf can only use this Gift to augment a surprise attack made from the cover of darkness.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Strength + Stealth + Glory – subject's Composure

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf's strike is mistimed, leaving him both vulnerable to a counter-attack and visible. The attacker can make an automatic surprise attack against the character.

Failure: Though the attack proceeds as normal, the character's claws move as swiftly as normal and the shadows do not welcome him once his strike is made. The Gift has no effect.

Success: The character makes a surprise attack as normal (see "Surprise" in the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 151); however, the target of the attack may not make a Wits + Composure roll to act normally. Next turn, the victim must make a Wits + Composure roll in order to act, as if the surprise attack happened that turn.

Exceptional Success: As a success, with the werewolf's first attack receiving a +2 bonus.

Nightblind (•••••)

Fear of the darkness lurking outside of the cave is one thing, but that fear pales in comparison with the fear many people have of the darkness in their own heads. Using this Gift on a target lets a werewolf reach into a human's head and turn the brightness right down. A normally blinding light provides no more illusion than the stars alone, and anything less than that leaves the target totally blind, his eyes unable to see. Being struck blind tends to make people panic, making this the perfect Gift to use on a band of hunters. After all, most people need to see what they're shooting at.

Cost: 2 Essence and 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Wits + Occult + Honor - Composure

Action: Instant or Extended (20 successes required)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The would-be victim can see the werewolf with incredible clarity. Efforts to track the werewolf and ranged attacks against her have a +1 bonus until the end of the scene.

Failure: The character cannot affect the target's sight this time.

Success: The werewolf strikes her target blind, greatly reducing the amount of light his eyes can process. In any light less than a full-on searchlight, the target cannot see. For humans, this means visual perception rolls automatically fail, and uses the "Fighting Blind" rules in combat (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 166). In excessively bright light, the target has a –3 penalty on visual perception rolls, and can see as well as if the only illumination came from the stars on a dark night. The target remains blinded for one turn per success.

This Gift can also strike a person permanently blind. In that case, the roll is extended, with 20 successes needed. Once the 20 successes have been acquired, the target is struck blind but does not recover after a scene. The extended version of this Gift takes two minutes per roll.

Exceptional Success: For the normal version of this Gift, the werewolf can target up to three people in an area of her Primal Urge in yards. If the character is using the permanent version of this Gift, the extra targets suffer only the effects of the temporary version.

Ending Gifts

Death Wolf walked the Pangaean landscape for many years, seeking out the answers at the end of every creature's life. Through the Ending Gifts, her Bone Shadow children are able to explore the ending of lives as she once did, learning as their totem learned. Though the *Hirfathra Hissu* already have access to the Death Gifts, the Ending Gifts focus on aspects of death more tied in to Kamduis-Ur's personal journey and the answers she worked for. As such, the Ending Gifts are often referred to as Death Wolf's Gifts.

Fear of Death (•)

The werewolf can look into the eyes of any living being and determine what type of death he most fears. The Gift can have some dark uses, revealing to a Bone Shadow just what method of death a subject fears the most, providing enough information for the character to arrange some grave threats or terrifying ambushes. Although the Gift was bestowed with a more insightful and cerebral intent in mind, there's nothing stopping a cunning werewolf from using Fear of Death to scare his enemies or punish someone by killing her in the way she's feared most since childhood.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy + Wisdom versus target's Resolve + Primal Urge

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf garners an incorrect perception of the subject's greatest fears regarding death. Whereas a person might fear being strangled after rape because of a similar incident in

her life, the werewolf might sense a distinct fear of heights and falling that do not exist in the target's mind.

Failure: The werewolf is unable to perceive the subject's greatest fears regarding death.

Success: The character learns the method of death that the subject most fears, which is perhaps tied into a phobia or horrifying event in childhood.

Exceptional Success: The character also gains a faint impression of the reason the subject feels such fear, sensing images and fragments of thoughts detailing why that particular fear is so strong.

Eyes of the Slain (••)

This Gift is a take on the apocryphal power to stare into the eyes of a corpse and discover how the victim was murdered. Though the Ending Gifts do not allow a werewolf access to such power, many Bone Shadows find Eyes of the Slain to be a fascinating opportunity nevertheless.

The Gift only functions on the bodies of physical beings (not ghosts or spirits) that the werewolf has killed herself. In bringing about the death of the person, the character has bound herself to the path of the deceased soul's destiny. By staring into the eyes of the corpse, the werewolf can focus her senses on that bond, determining what it was in life that the slain person most lived for. For some corpses, the images that shine in the eyes might be of their drug addiction, love for their children or an ambition regarding their career. It can be a difficult process to watch, for even the most hard-hearted of killers might have left behind something touching that they truly lived for, no matter how twisted their ideals. It goes almost without saying that some Bone Shadows use this Gift as a means of post-mortem interrogation as well as an aid to understanding mortal death.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Empathy + Honor

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The corpse's eyes show nothing. Any local ghosts or death-spirits might become drawn to the location, sensing the killing and a potential new ghost.

Failure: The character learns nothing from the glazed and motionless eyes.

Success: The character spends a full turn looking into the corpse's eyes and learns the most important thing that the soul is sorriest to leave behind. In the cases of people, the Gift allows the character to sense the name of the face she sees and its relationship to the dead person, i.e., "Mary, his daughter" and a detailed description.

Exceptional Success: Per a success, but the character also learns another driving aspect that the deceased is sorrowful at leaving behind.

Death Masque (•••)

It takes a bold werewolf to call on Death to protect himself, but some Bone Shadows do just that. This Gift allows the werewolf to wrap himself in the imagery of his own death, effectively deceiving onlookers into believing that a glancing wound was lethal or that a near-miss became a mortal strike. Once the foe believes the Bone Shadow dead, he may gain a few precious moments to heal — and to strike from behind.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Survival + Wisdom

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The death energies come to the werewolf, but do not act in his favor. The werewolf takes one point of bashing damage.

Failure: The Gift fails to work; the werewolf's wounds may appear a bit worse than usual, but not enough to convince anyone that they're mortal.

Success: The illusion takes effect. Any wounds that the werewolf has just suffered appear to be magnified. If the werewolf is unwounded but was previously in mortal danger, the illusion depicts that danger catching up to him. For instance, a recent claw rake across the back appears to be much deeper, with more blood and possibly deep cuts into the spine. If a person was shooting at the werewolf, Death Masque creates an illusion of bullets going into the heart, throat or head (or all three). As long as some plausible source of death has threatened the werewolf within the last six seconds, Death Masque can make it appear as though the danger has killed the werewolf.

The illusory wounds granted by Death Masque last for the remainder of the scene, or until the werewolf chooses to end the Gift's effects. The illusion extends to all five senses; the Bone Shadow smells dead, has no discernable pulse and cools to the touch. However, it will not conceal any movement more dramatic than breathing, regeneration or eye movement. If the werewolf gets up and keeps fighting (or doesn't fall to the ground in the first place), oth-

ers see him still moving and fighting, just with what would appear to be mortal wounds. This Gift can be used to gain the element of surprise on an attacker (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 151).

This Gift automatically deceives any mundane observer. A supernatural power used to see through the illusion (such as the vampiric Discipline of Auspex) may see through the Death Masque; compare the observer's successes on her activation roll to the werewolf's successes gathered to activate this Gift.

Exceptional Success: As above, and any supernatural attempts to see through the Death Masque are at an additional –1 penalty.

Bone Hex (••••)

Death Wolf learned to influence Fate in her travels, watching as creatures died under the twists of her machinations. This Gift allows her children to do the same, by weaving fate into a different pattern and altering the immediate destiny of a chosen subject. By killing in this manner, the werewolf does not avoid any Harmony loss she would otherwise experience if the death had been administered directly.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Presence + Occult + Glory

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The veins of fate refuse to be manipulated and the effects of the Gift backfire. The Bone Shadow suffers a –4 penalty on her next three dice rolls.

Failure: Fate remains the same, refusing to be twisted by outside interference.

Success: The character manipulated the fate of the subject by conscious thought. The target suffers a –4 penalty on his next three dice rolls, including Harmony, Morality or other degeneration rolls.

Exceptional Success: Per a success, though the Bone Shadow can choose when the effects of the Hex apply, as long as they occur within one month of the Gift's use.

Images of Death (•••••)

Death Wolf learned all aspects of endings in her travels, even the ability to perceive a creature's death from the moment of its birth. With this Gift, the werewolf can flood a target's mind with images of his own death to come. This is a horrifying power, filling the subject's mind with sensations that he unerringly knows represent the way he will die. Even relatively painless or quick deaths will hurt the target's mind and eyes as he sees the literal end of his life.

Obviously, Storytellers will need to be careful when characters use this Gift, for it is supposed to show a person his exact death, not a possible one. Once a character has suffered this power's effects, his fate is sealed. There is the belief among the Bone Shadows that if the power is used frivolously, such as on idly curious packmates, then the images shown detail a much harsher and earlier demise than would otherwise have happened.

Cost: 2 Essence

Dice Pool: Wits + Intimidation + Purity

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Gift fails and instead shows the werewolf conflicting visions of her own death. Unlike the images inflicted on others, these detail only possible deaths, appearing as eye-wracking visions that debilitate the character, reducing her dice pools by 2 for 10 – Stamina hours.

Failure: The Gift fails to show the target anything.

Success: Images of the target's eventual death flash before his eyes, stealing all of his senses. If he dies in a car wreck, he feels himself standing on the road staring at the accident. If he dies in battle, he sees the death blow falling and his body breaking. If he dies in a hospital bed, he smells the disinfectant on the ward and the stale blankets bathed in his sweat. This is a traumatizing experience, to say the least. Anyone witnessing his own death in this way must suffer a –2 penalty to all dice rolls for the next week as he experiences recurring nightmares of the vision. No matter what steps the target takes to avoid his death, it will still occur in the ordained manner.

Exceptional Success: The visions turn into nightmares that last a month instead of a week.

Endurance Gifts

Werewolves are traditionally strong, fearsome beasts. Their shapechanging nature allows them to regenerate almost any wound, and folklore often remarks upon their incredible stamina — often, they will not stop or end their hunt, and mere food and tiredness mean nothing to them. These Gifts enhance that fortitude, allowing a werewolf to reap the most benefit from his regenerating body and shapeshifting metabolism. Endurance Gifts are taught by the spirits of animals noted for their stamina, such as camels, and the spirits of ancient forests and mountains.

Vigil (•)

A pack must keep constant watch over the pack's territory and more besides. From spirits to *shartha* to humans who just don't know when to stop, the world cries out for a werewolf's attention. This Gift allows her to keep watching the world even when she's about to drop from tiredness.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: This power requires no roll.

Action: Reflexive

Upon activating this Gift, the character doesn't need to sleep for the next 12 hours, and does not suffer the normal symptoms of tiredness (lack of concentration, irritability and so on). Werewolves typically use this Gift when they've already been awake for 18 hours or more, and it leaves them feeling perked up and refreshed — a spiritual second wind. Once the period of extended wakefulness is up, the character feels a pressing urge to sleep for eight hours, and can sleep through any amount of noise or disturbance. She can use this Gift again before its effects wear off to get another 12 hours (and adding four hours to the time she must spend asleep), but once this Gift ends, she must sleep before she can use any other Gifts.

Long Running (••)

Sometimes, a werewolf must run as she never has before. Be it to take news to her packmates or seek out secrets deep within the spirit wilds, some things require that she not stop running until the message gets through. This Gift enhances her endurance, allowing nothing to stop her as long as all she does is run. Some Uratha have used this Gift to bring the secret of an ancient ritual back to their packs to save their territory, while others have ensured that they are far away from a new evil that will kill their pack.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Stamina + Athletics + Purity

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character tries to run, but features of the landscape that would normally present no problem to him tangle his feet and prevent him from getting a good start. He cannot use this Gift for the rest of the day.

Failure: The character runs, but his feet are no more fleet than they normally are.

Success: The werewolf is able to run all-out for as long as he needs. Double his Speed (as if sprinting) in order to work out how fast he travels when running. This Gift's effects last one hour per success, but the character can cancel the Gift's effects before that point, as long as he has spent at least five minutes running, as he has a spiritual need to cover distance that his muscles will not deny. The Gift cannot be used in combat as it requires preparation, though a character who is attacked while running still applies his Defense. After the Gift's effects end, the character must sleep for at least four hours.

The character can re-activate this Gift at any point before it ends; however the new duration takes effect from the point that the roll is made.

Exceptional Success: The character not only runs all-out, he is able to deftly overcome some obstacles that would normally get in his way. Add 2 to his Speed after doubling for a success. This bonus doesn't last if the character re-activates the Gift.

Eternal Hunter (•••)

A werewolf who possesses this Gift will keep on going almost forever. Neither hideous injury nor death will slow him down, as he focuses himself on his need to survive. While this Gift will not allow him to regenerate his way back from an obvious death, his spirit-enhanced endurance puts off the effects of his wounds until after his enemy is dead on his claws, or he has overcome the problems before him.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Resolve + Survival + Honor

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character attempts to fight off the pain, but it overwhelms him. He falls immediately unconscious, and reverts to Hishu form.

Failure: The character must roll for remaining conscious and bleeding out as normal.

Success: The Gift focuses the character's will and resolve, making certain that he will not die. He does not have to roll for unconsciousness, and takes no extra damage when he has taken his Health in bashing or lethal damage. Only outright death will have an effect. The werewolf regenerates all damage as normal during this time, unless he takes enough damage to be dead. This Gift lasts for one turn per success, and the effects (unconsciousness rolls, bleeding out or death) occur immediately afterwards.

Exceptional Success: In addition to the effects of a success, any member of the character's pack seeing the use of this Gift immediately regains one Willpower point.

Rise Beyond (••••)

Werewolves pride themselves on their endurance. The Storm Lords exemplify this, but that's not to say that every other tribe doesn't reward the ability for an Uratha to rise beyond adversity, stoically carrying on and even finding themselves working better under pressure. This Gift rewards that nature, giving the werewolf using it a greater chance to succeed if his body is broken than if he were uninjured.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Stamina + Athletics + Glory

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf reaches deep inside, looking for a second wind, but instead comes face-to-face with her own lack of resources. All wound penalties are one higher (–1 becomes –2 and so on) until the end of the scene.

Failure: The character has nothing more left to give.

Success: The werewolf is flooded with renewed strength of purpose, and a desire to see her enemies hurt as much as they hurt her. All wound penalties are instead applied as a bonus to applicable die rolls for the remainder of the scene.

Exceptional Success: As a success, but the extra reserves are particularly potent. Increase each bonus by +1 (for example, +2 becomes +3).

Legacy (•••••)

The werewolf has learned how to endure even beyond death, with spirits ensuring that his dying wishes of revenge are carried out against his killer. Spirits that are near when the werewolf dies must carry out his dying wishes — often they must avenge his death by killing his killer. This Gift doesn't allow an Uratha to bless his pack when he dies; the spirits only listen to curses of vengeance. As with all spirits, they will hunt down the werewolf's killers and exact his revenge.

Cost: 3 Essence and 2 Willpower

Dice Pool: This power requires no roll.

Action: Reflexive

This Gift can only be used if the werewolf is going to die on the turn that it is used, and he must pay the full cost of the Gift at the point of activation. The werewolf spits one final curse at his killers in First Tongue, empowered with spiritual Rage. This curse seeks out and finds everyone who has had a direct hand in the character's death — the whole pack of Pure who ambushed him is a valid target, but the human who poisoned the pack's water supply and weakened him does not suffer the effects.

The curse can be effectively anything. It could be a simple "You will all die by the end of the year," or something far more subtle — "You can never eat the flesh of beasts again." Curses with a direct effect — death, incapacity — tend to take a year to manifest, and apply modifiers of up to three dice in a situation in which it looks likely that the character will fall prey to the curse. Non-direct curses, such as never eating the flesh of beasts, last until everyone cursed is dead and cause incredible pain if their restriction is broken. The precise mechanical effects of this Gift are left to the Storyteller, but should be suitably appropriate and powerful.

Information Gifts

Some forward-thinking werewolves have taken to interrogating information-spirits — not just data-spirits but the far rarer spirits of concept and meaning. Wherever they hide, these werewolves hunt them for their knowledge. So far, only the following Gifts have come to light, and the Uratha who have learned them are not cohesive enough to form a lodge — though if they survive for long it is only a matter of time. Iron Masters and Bone Shadows are the most likely to find a spirit willing to teach Information Gifts, though that is mostly because of those tribes' natural cunning. Only conceptual spirits of information can teach these Gifts.

Sense the Flow (•)

Information comes in many forms. A lot of the time the flow of information is obvious — information flows between two people in conversation, or from a book to its reader. Sometimes, it's less obvious, such as a radio transmission or a coded message. This Gift allows the user to perceive the flow of information in an area, and can single out one particular stream. Radio broadcasts look like shining contrails that emit a faint high-pitched whine, while a coded message might make a passage of text smell wrong.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Resolve + Computer + Wisdom

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf sees codes and information where there are none, and misses obvious signs. His next Investigation or Computer roll has a –1 modifier.

Failure: The Gift reveals nothing.

Success: The character can sense information flows, to an extent. She can see a faint link between the source and the receiver of information, and the hue of the link gives her some idea of its nature. Information flows only manifest to this Gift when the information is received — a street sign generates a faint flow between itself and everyone who reads it, but only when someone read its; and cell phones only create a flow when a call is in progress and one of the participants is listening. The character can see that a graffiti tag contains a hidden message only when someone is reading it, but she can tell that the message is hidden and who receives the message. In a crowded city street, these flows can quickly overwhelm the werewolf. Concentrating on one flow that she knows about — the flow from the wire a contact is wearing to the cops outside, or a radio broadcast that she is listening to — allows her to follow it to its destination. As the Gift works on information, the character is lead to the source of the broadcast. The Gift works for one minute per success and can be re-activated as a reflexive action if the character is actively following a trail.

Exceptional Success: The Gift is as effective as for a success, plus the character can see the presence of information that isn't currently in transit. By examining a computer, she can get a feel for what it's used for from the types of files present, or she can determine whether a piece of text or art contains a coded message. Note that the presence of information doesn't give her access to the information itself — there's a whole world between knowing there's a hidden message, and knowing what it means.

Tongues (••)

This Gift allows a werewolf to extract the information from a source regardless of the form it comes in. This Gift allows him to understand something written or spoken in a foreign language without knowing the language in question, as the Gift extracts the information underlying the words. The Gift then processes that information at a spiritual level into a language that the character understands fluently. Thus, there is no chance for ambiguity or misunderstanding, and the character picks up on hidden meaning with ease.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Wits + Academics + Cunning

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The translation is botched, appearing to convey the basic meaning of the text but with enough alterations to dramatically alter the actual meaning of the piece. All rolls relating to the translated information have a –1 modifier.

Failure: The character gets nothing from the Gift.

Success: The Gift effortlessly translates not only the text but also the deeper subtext and other subtleties concealed in the words. The Gift lasts for one piece of text roughly equal to a chapter of a book or one full conversation. Note that though the Gift gives the character a complete understanding of what was written or said, this Gift does not grant understanding of the language. Hence, in a conversation, she would have to speak the language used in order to reply. The Gift works on any information that is not being deliberately hidden, such as via a code or cipher.

Exceptional Success: As a success, plus the Gift works in reverse, converting the character's meaning back into the original language. If the language is verbal, this effect lasts for the whole conversation. If the language is written, the character can write a piece no longer than the original.

Babel Effect (•••)

Language is a means of conveying structured information, a means of spreading ideas from one person to another. Language is a remarkably versatile form, and even a mild grasp of a tongue will allow someone to convey a wide range of basic ideas. This Gift shatters that. By crudely reorganizing the information that underlies a conversation, the werewolf can render a group of people entirely unable to understand one another. Without the ability to communicate using anything more than gestures, a group's cohesion swiftly degrades until there's nothing left but a lot of people getting in each other's way. To those affected by the Gift, every other member of the group appears to be suffering from dysphasia.

Cost: 3 Essence

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion + Glory versus each target's Composure + Primal Urge

Action: Contested; resistance is reflexive.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf is unable to make herself understood to anyone using anything more complex than crude physical gestures for the rest of the scene.

Failure: The targets of the Gift remain able to understand one another.

Success: The character can target up to five people, all of whom must be part of one identifiable group (gang members, or a hunting party) within five times her Primal Urge in yards. Every target resists the Gift's effects with the target's own Composure + Primal Urge, and only those who roll fewer successes than the werewolf are affected by this Gift. Every affected member of the group becomes entirely unable to communicate with the others using any form of organized language — including sign language — and must rely on crude gestures to convey any meaning. While any member of the group who is not affected can be understood by those who are, those affected cannot make themselves understood to anyone else in the group.

This effectively ruins the group's co-ordination, making most tactics (including Pack Tactics, see p. 156) effectively impossible. The result of this is that each affected member suffers a –2 modifier to all rolls where communication with the other affected people is a factor. The Gift lasts for one scene.

Exceptional Success: The werewolf poisons the underpinnings of his targets' communication. Anyone suffering this level of effect cannot make himself understood by anyone, as opposed to just members of the same group.

Steganography (••••)

Language is a carrier for information, a means of encoding thought and meaning — information — in a way that allows one person to transmit information to another person. This Gift allows the werewolf to add a hidden information-spirit to her words, encoding a hidden message or meaning that only someone of her choosing will understand. Anyone else reading or hearing her words will hear what she says, but her chosen recipient will also understand a message just for him. The few werewolves trying to unlock a Lodge of Information often use this Gift to communicate, but that is far from the only use.

Cost: Varies, see below

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Subterfuge + Cunning

Action: Extended (10 successes; 10 minutes pass per roll)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf's message is either warped as it is hidden so that it has a different meaning, or someone other than the desired target receives the hidden message.

Failure: The message conveys no extra meaning.

Success: The werewolf hides a message underneath what she is saying. Any individual she can identify, or members of a distinct group, will hear both messages, though the werewolf must spend one Essence per recipient. For example, in sending a message to her pack hidden in a message from a nightclub DJ, she must spend one Essence per packmate. If she instead selected "members of the Blackbird street gang" and spent three Essence, three members of the gang who are present at the rave will hear the message. If there aren't enough people present, the extra Essence is wasted. If there are more present, the Storyteller decides who hears the message and who does not. The hidden message cannot be longer than the original message.

Exceptional Success: As a success, but all members of a group hear the message for only one Essence. Any extra Essence spent is returned to the werewolf.

Twisted Words (•••••)

All too often, people hear what they want to hear. A speech on a controversial subject such as immigration or gay rights has the potential to warp in listener's minds until they hear what they expected or wanted to hear. This Gift goes further than that. The werewolf convinces the information-spirits of the speech to change depending on their audience, meaning that different people hear what he wants them to hear, rather than what was actually said. While the new meaning must be on the same subject, it doesn't have to bear any relation to the original. A group of Klansmen looking to lynch a speaker on race relations will get the impression that the speaker supports their views, even if the speech held a diametrically opposite viewpoint. Victims of this Gift can't point to anything specific that gave them the impression that they came away with, but they are nonetheless certain about what they heard. This Gift only works for speeches, not written words.

Cost: 2 Essence; optionally 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Wits + Persuasion + Wisdom – Composure

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Everyone who would have been affected by the Gift hears exactly what the speaker says and nothing more, and knows that the werewolf is trying to pull the wool over her eyes.

Failure: The character can't alter anyone's perceptions of what is said.

Success: The werewolf can either wreck the meaning of the speech, making the speaker out to be a ranting lunatic incapable of holding a coherent sub-

ject, or can deliberately warp one group's perceptions of the speech in a direction of her choosing.

Wrecking a speech is easier than twisting it. The werewolf convinces the information-spirit to go crazy, mutating into wild yarns and insane conspiracy theories that are only vaguely related to the subject at hand. Listeners can make a reflexive Resolve + Persuasion roll to attempt to follow what sounds like a lunatic screed, but nobody else can take the speaker seriously. The Gift discredits the speaker in the minds of everyone present.

Twisting the speech requires the werewolf to select a group among the listeners. The selection can be a wide group, up to and including "people who agree with the speech." That group then hears a meaning to the speech that the werewolf decides. This change to the speech is general, and can be made at any point. For example, a werewolf present at a Fire-Touched sermon can twist the words of the preacher in the ears of all who would agree to hear a pro-Forsaken speech. Adding her own meaning to the speech costs one Willpower in addition to the Essence cost.

Exceptional Success: When ruining a speech, none of the listeners may make a Resolve + Persuasion roll to determine the original meaning of the speech. When twisting the meaning, the werewolf can choose two groups, feeding both a different message.

Pack Gifts

Despite the instincts toward pack life that surge through every werewolf, many Gifts ignore their users' packmates. Gifts of the Pack go some way to redressing that balance, being the reward granted by a group of wolf-spirits to a pack that braved the spirit wilds to find the one spirit that could heal a Wound in the pack's territory. The pack showed incredible teamwork and behaved as a true pack should. History doesn't say what became of the pack, or whether the packmembers remained the perfect example of a werewolf pack for long. The spirits of creatures that hunt in packs teach these Gifts, including wolves, ants and dolphins.

Web of Scent (•)

A pack can only work together so well, even with the bonds of the totem joining each packmate. The spirits that grant the werewolf this Gift want him to work closer with his packmates, and to that end they let him share their senses. He can't communicate with his packmate or control where she looks; he is very much a passenger behind her eyes and nose.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: This power requires no roll.

Action: Instant

The character can borrow the senses of any of his packmates within half his Primal Urge in miles. He has to know where the chosen packmate is, whether through his normal senses or Gifts such as Pack Awareness (see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 117).

When borrowing his packmate's senses, the werewolf must choose which senses remain his own and which come from his packmate, and these choices remain for the duration of the Gift. He gains the full benefit of her natural senses, but doesn't benefit from any Gifts or other supernatural sensory effects that affect her. He also can't use the borrowed senses of his own body, so would not be able to hear an attacker sneaking up behind him if he were relying on his packmate's ears. The packmate knows when she is sharing her senses, and can spend a point of Essence to 'fog' them for a minute. The Gift-user doesn't gain his original senses back, but gets nothing useful from his packmate for that time, and can do nothing about this interference. The Gift lasts for five minutes, or until the Gift-user cancels it.

Warning Howl (••)

A pack cannot travel as one all the time. Uratha have territory that they must watch over. The entire pack traveling as one would not only make the werewolves easy to ambush, it would leave most of their territory unattended. Without the Forsaken watching, all manner of spirits and other creatures would wreak havoc. The spirits that teach this Gift show the packmembers that they are as one even when physical distance separates them. The Gift allows a werewolf to howl a warning to his packmates, calling their aid from anywhere within the pack's territory.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Wits + Expression + Honor

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf howls, but his packmates aren't the ones who hear him. Spirits, *shartha* or the Pure could hear the howl, and find themselves aware of a lone Forsaken in trouble.

Failure: The character's howl doesn't have the spiritual might it needs to reach his packmates.

Success: The character howls, calling for his packmates to assist him. The howl pierces the Shadow and reverberates across his pack's territory. Each packmember who is in the pack's territory (including any disputed areas) hears the howl regardless of distance, though to anyone who is not part of the pack who hears it will just hear a normal wolf howl (or a human trying — badly — to mimic a wolf howl). The character's packmates know instinctively where he is and why he is calling on them for aid — the Gift allows no misrepresentation, so werewolves who attempt to use it to summon their pack for trivial reasons will be disappointed. In an urban area that isn't part of the pack's territory, the howl can be heard for the user's Primal Urge in city blocks, whereas in rural areas the howl carries for the user's Primal Urge in miles.

Exceptional Success: The packmates rushing to the aid of their fellow double their Speed until they reach him, but only if they head toward the howl. This effect ends when they arrive at the Gift-user.

Brother's Strength (•••)

A true pack works together, each member contributing to whole that is definitely greater than the sum of its parts. The spirits that teach this Gift show the pack that this is so, allowing the packmembers to solve a problem that would normally only allow one werewolf to work on it as a pack, and making them better at working together normally. Of course, if the werewolf who possesses this Gift is not the pack alpha, some may question his right to be organizing so much of the pack's efforts.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Composure + Empathy + Glory

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character's concentration is shredded by the conflicting urges of his packmates. The attempt at teamwork fails, and the character suffers a –2 modifier on the action his pack was attempting.

Failure: The character can summon no more assistance from his packmates.

Success: The Gift channels the character's packmates, giving him greater strength and ability. The werewolf using this Gift must be the primary actor, the character doing the most toward the action. If the action would normally allow teamwork, each secondary actor in the character's pack can use "9 again" on their roll.

If the action would not normally allow teamwork, the character can allow one packmate to assist as a secondary actor. Additional packmates cost one Willpower to add as secondary actors. This Gift can only be used once for a single action.

Exceptional Success: In addition to the effects of a success, the dice pool penalty from a secondary actor rolling a dramatic failure is reduced to –2.

Synergy (••••)

A pack that works together well will always have specialists. Sometimes, a problem needs the same specialist to be in two places at once, and this Gift allows that. A werewolf can donate her skills in an area to another member of the pack, a transfer facilitated by the user of this Gift. The spirits that grant this Gift want each packmate to look beyond what she can do individually to what the pack can do as a whole.

Cost: 2 Essence

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Larceny + Cunning

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf botches the transfer. The packmember with the highest rating instead takes on the rating of the other packmate for the remainder of the scene.

Failure: The character cannot transfer anything.

Success: The werewolf transfers a Skill from one packmate to another, effectively swapping both character's ratings in that Skill. Both packmates must agree to the transfer, and the werewolf using the Gift must touch both parties to the transfer. The Gift-user can give a Skill but not receive. The two characters swap ratings and any Specialties in the named Skill, unless the lower rating is 0, in which case the donating character retains one dot in the Skill. The switch lasts until the character "borrowing" the Skill chooses to end the effect, or the next moonrise/moonset (whichever is sooner).

Example: *Johnny "Gearshift" Blaine donates his skills behind the wheel to Thunderbolt Hamilton, knowing that while she will chase their prey into the ambush, he's going to have the job of actually out-driving the bastard. Gearshift has Drive 4 with the specialty of Stick-Shift, Thunderbolt has Drive 2. Gearshift uses the Gift and succeeds at the roll. Thunderbolt now has Drive 4, specializing in Stick-Shift, while Gearshift has Drive 2 until Thunderbolt ends the exchange. If Thunderbolt's Drive had been 0, Gearshift would have retained Drive 1. After all, it's what he does.*

Exceptional Success: As a success, but the donator of the Skill gains a +1 modifier to all rolls using that Skill from past experience. This bonus stops as soon as the Gift's effects end.

Unity (•••••)

The pack is a being greater than the sum of its parts. Each member contributes something toward the whole, be they werewolf or totem spirit, but the pack performs great deeds and binds powerful spirits. The pack is the basic unit of werewolf life, and this Gift proves it, allowing members to pool their mental, physical and spiritual resources. Spirits teach other Pack Gifts in order to make a point to a pack, showing the packmembers an area where they are deficient. This Gift shows that the pack have nothing left to learn.

Cost: 3 Essence and 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: This power requires no roll.

Action: Instant

This Gift lasts for a scene, and only affects other members of the user's pack within twice his Primal Urge in yards. Until the end of the scene, each packmate present can choose to spend Willpower to affect the roll of any other packmate, can spend Essence toward a Gift or other ability used by another packmate or can take one Health point of damage that would have hurt another packmate. In the case of Health, the type of damage doesn't change even if a Gift or other supernatural power would normally have changed the severity of the damage. Each packmate can only make one transfer per turn of either Willpower, Health or Essence, and unconscious packmembers are entirely unaffected by the Gift — they can neither give nor receive. A character can make her transfer at any point in the Initiative order.

Predator Gifts

Werewolves are consummate predators. The Forsaken ideally use this ability to carry on in the footsteps of Father Wolf, but many also carry out their own hunts, whether to avenge slights against their pack or pursue personal vendettas. The Pure enlist the aid of spirits in the Pure's quest to slaughter the Forsaken, hunting the werewolves who attempt to carry on in Father Wolf's footsteps. These Gifts were originally the sole purview of the Predator Kings, knowledge gained from spirits that hated the kinslayers. A hundred years ago, a pack of Bone Shadows decided to do something about that. Questing deep into the spirit wilds, they surmounted incredible challenges and trapped the original spirits with their own bans. Striking a deal with the spirits, these Bone Shadows ensured that the Forsaken can learn these Gifts for themselves. The spirits of predatory animals, including wolves and big cats, now teach these Gifts.

Bestial Fellowship (•)

The werewolf gains a kinship with other predatory beasts. While even the most savage animals normally register the half-spirit children of Father Wolf as higher predators than themselves, a werewolf using Bestial Fellowship overrides this instinct. The animals get a sense that the werewolf does not see them as prey, and will let her be. In addition, she can talk with other predators, possibly learning valuable information, though she cannot convince them to do anything that is against their nature. Suppressing the wolf-side of her spirit is an uncomfortable thing for a werewolf to do, and Uratha especially try to avoid using this Gift more than is necessary. One positive side of the Gift is that it works for all predators up to and including predatory animals kept as pets, such as most pet cats. Using this Gift is a sin with a Harmony Threshold of 8, and over-reliance on this Gift may make it harder for the user to gain Purity Renown.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Upon activating this Gift, the werewolf gains four extra dice on all Animal Ken rolls made to influence predators. This Gift lasts until the moon next rises or sets.

Hunter's Fortitude (••)

Wolves are not unique among predatory animals in eating only rarely. However skilled a creature is at hunting, there are many days when the creature will go without food. This Gift allows a werewolf in any form to mimic this fortitude, allowing her to lie in wait or track prey for days on end without the common distractions of normal life.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Stamina + Survival + Honor

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character is overcome by hunger, and even after he has eaten his fill finds it hard to avoid little distractions. All Resolve rolls suffer a –1 modifier until the end of the scene.

Failure: The character has no extra reserves to tap.

Success: The werewolf can survive without food and needs only a small amount of water to keep in perfect condition. His mind is attuned to the task of hunting prey, be that an extended hunt or a stakeout lasting several days. While he still needs sleep, he feels as though he has slept for twice the amount of time he actually has. The Gift's effects last for three hours per success, after which time the werewolf must eat a hearty meal and rest for at least 12 hours.

Exceptional Success: The werewolf's mind is so focused on his task that any roll to distract him suffers a –1 penalty.

Savage Hunt (•••)

The apex predator understands the importance of the hunt to her own survival. Tracking prey to eat is only one aspect of the overarching thing that is the hunt. With this Gift, the character embodies every part of the hunt, losing herself to the need to run prey to the ground, giving up a piece of herself to the hunt in order to embody it. While some Forsaken apply the concept of hunting liberally, referring to everything from Internet searches to gunfights, a character embodying the Savage Hunt knows that they are wrong. Hunting pits the hunter's senses, reflexes and claws against the prey. Only the truly worthy among the prey survive. Using this Gift against other werewolves is a sin against Harmony equivalent to using a silver weapon (see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 181).

Cost: 3 Essence + 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Athletics + Purity

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character becomes an avatar of the hunt, but her prey is not whom she chose. Her new prey could be anyone, including a packmate or a wolf-blooded ally, and is chosen by the Storyteller.

Failure: The character fails to invoke the spirit of the hunt.

Success: The werewolf feels a surge of energy as she dedicates herself to the ancient hunt. Naming her prey, she gains a number of advantages. First, her senses are sharper, better isolating the scent and sound of her chosen target. All rolls to find or track her target have a +1 bonus. Also, her bite and claw attacks deal aggravated damage against her chosen prey only. The Savage Hunt lasts until the moon next rises or sets (whichever is next), or until the werewolf catches and kills her prey, whichever happens first.

Exceptional Success: The character gains a better understanding of her prey while she tracks it. When she encounters her prey, roll Initiative as normal. If the hunter rolls lower than her prey, the hunter's Initiative is instead equal to that of her prey.

Harry (••••)

Predators either strike from concealment, stalking their prey and then attacking swiftly, or they run it down until the prey is exhausted. Their prey knows what is coming, but still runs. The prey has a hope, however feeble, that it can escape. Sometimes it does. More often, it collapses from physical and mental exhaustion. While not resigned to its fate, there is certainly no chance that it can run any farther. This Gift gives the werewolf's prey that fear. They know from glimpsed shadows and occasional scents created by spirits of the hunt that something is toying with them, waiting for them to drop, but they never know where the werewolf is or when she will strike. This is a very unnerving feeling, and someone who survives being under the influence of this Gift will remember it for the rest of his days.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Wits + Intimidation + Glory versus Resolve + Primal Urge

Action: Contested; resistance is reflexive.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character's prey is filled with resolve, determined to face her fate and seize any opportunity to best his hunter. The target of the Gift receives one bonus Willpower point that can only be spent to support actions taken against his hunter. This extra point can bring the prey above his normal Willpower maximum.

Failure: The character attempts to run her prey to the ground, but has no spiritual assistance in doing so.

Success: Spirits aid the werewolf as she runs her prey (one person or creature) to the ground, spooking him and generally making sure he is never sure of what is happening or where an attack will come from. Her prey's rolls suffer a –2 modifier for the duration of the confrontation. The prey can roll Resolve each turn after the first to reduce this modifier to –1. The effects of this Gift last until the end of the scene.

Exceptional Success: As a success, and the werewolf's Initiative is doubled for the conflict.

Predator's Kin (•••••)

There are some things that no hunter can tackle alone. Some are massive creatures that could easily crush one hunter; others are groups of prey animals that would overwhelm a lone hunter. Even solitary predators understand the benefits of assistance. This Gift summons nearby predators to the character's aid. Depending on the area, this assistance can come from unlikely quarters — coyotes and badgers will respond to this Gift in a city. Wolves and dogs will respond to the call, but they will be on edge. This Gift taps into their predatory nature without paying any respect to Father Wolf, and canine animals can sense the difference.

Cost: 2 Essence

Dice Pool: Presence + Animal Ken + Glory

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Local predators respond to the call, but are as much a nuisance to the werewolf as her prey.

Failure: Nothing answers the character's call for assistance.

Success: This Gift summons every predatory creature within the user's Primal Urge in miles, though wolves and dogs respond as if the user's Primal Urge were two lower than it is. The majority of predators found in an urban area will do little more than distract the prey, but large creatures such as wolves or big cats will do more damage. The animals that respond are treated as one creature that makes one attack, with a number of dice equal to the largest Size in the group. This group of creatures deals lethal damage. Larger creatures (Size 4 or above) can either be handled individually as Storyteller characters, or add one attack to the general mass per three animals present. A group of miscellaneous small predators assisted by a cougar and two wolves would thus make two attacks with a dice pool of 4.

Exceptional Success: The creatures attack with such ferocity that they add one die to their attack pool.



Stalking Gifts

Stalking Gifts reflect Hikaon-Ur's own hunting style, combining the essence of her stealth, skill and predatory mastery within her own hunting ground. They are sometimes referred to as Black Wolf Gifts, though whether this is in honor of the totem or because she was the first to bestow them onto the Forsaken is a matter of debate.

Stalking Gifts are treated as tribal Gifts for the Hunters in Darkness, who learn these Gifts from spirits of darkness, night and shadow. *Meninna* characters can choose to begin play with one of these Gifts as their tribal selections or learn the Gifts through the course of the chronicle as with experience points. A curious aspect to these powers is that they function only at night.

Night Sight (•)

Wolves have an incredibly powerful sense of smell and keen hearing to go with it. Werewolves can take advantage of this aspect of their nature just by shapeshifting to their wolf forms, but for Hunters in Darkness who claim city territories, that's not always an easy option. Just as Hikaon-Ur hunted in pitch blackness by using her supernatural senses, so too do her children learn to see in utter darkness as if the moon's bright light illuminated all around them.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Survival + Honor

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf is temporarily blinded for a turn as her eyes fail to register anything.

Failure: The werewolf's vision is unchanged.

Success: The character suffers no penalties for blindness in darkened or pitch-black areas for the duration of the scene or until sunrise, whichever comes first. Supernatural darkness hinders the werewolf as normal.

Exceptional Success: The werewolf is able to see even in supernatural darkness.

Heaven's Guidance (••)

A true hunter is never lost in the wilderness, whether it's the deep wild, the back alleys of cities or the distorted chaos of the Shadow. This Gift allows the werewolf to pinpoint roughly where she is, giving her a perfect sense of direction and an eidetic recollection of the ways and distances she has traveled since sunset.

The character needs only look up at the night sky to activate the Gift. Whether the sky is a star-filled expanse or a dark and cloudy shroud, the werewolf feels the Gift's benefits.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: No roll is required.

Action: Reflexive

Scent the Supernatural (•••)

The best hunters develop an almost sixth sense for danger and being watched. This Gift allows a Hunter in Darkness to detect the scent of any unnatural or supernatural presence in the area, and determine the presence's type. Supernatural presences include manifested spirits, Ridden, Hosts, vampires, mages, werewolves, ghosts and any Gifts or rites being performed nearby. Scent the Supernatural only reveals presences of supernatural entities on the same side of the Gauntlet as the character using the Gift.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy + Wisdom

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf believes she can sense the presence of something supernatural nearby, but is either incorrect or grossly misjudges the type of being detected.

Failure: The character detects nothing nearby.

Success: For every success on the Gift roll, the werewolf can "smell" the presence of any supernatural creature or active supernatural effect within 30 feet. The scent varies by the nature of the presence, although some imprecision is still possible. The Hunter will instantly recognize another werewolf's scent or the scent of a familiar Gift's effect, but other supernatural presences may become less obvious based on the character's familiarity with them. A vampire would probably register as "something dead" or "a stink of blood," depending on its current status, scents that could be confused with other undead or entities that feed on or bathe in blood.

Exceptional Success: The details offered are more precise. A vampire might be described as "a stench of dead, polluted blood," for instance.

Shadow Strike (••••)

Night is the time when the Hunters in Darkness are in their element. This Gift allows the werewolf to literally blend in with the darkness around her as she hunts, with shadows and the night itself wrapping around her as she stalks her prey.

Characters using this Gift are able to melt into a shadow or other patch of natural darkness and emerge from another elsewhere to make the killing strike. The only consideration is that the shadow where the character emerges from must be of a size to allow the werewolf to "fit" as if emerging from a portal or hole.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Stealth + Cunning

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character not only fails to emerge from the patch of darkness as desired, but she is trapped in absolute blackness for three turns, unable to escape back to the real world or the Shadow.

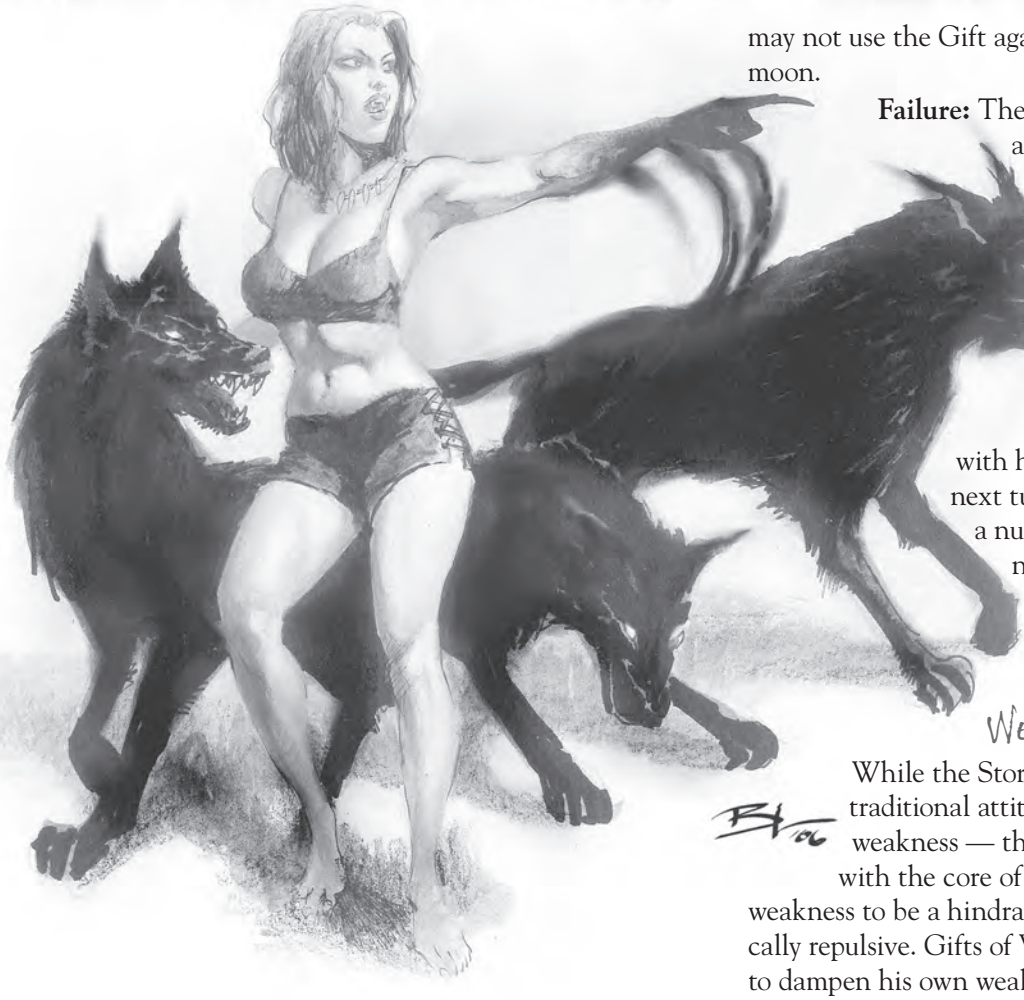
Failure: The character fails to enter the shadow.

Success: For every success on the roll, the character may emerge from a patch of darkness up to 20 yards away.

Exceptional Success: No effect beyond the bonuses of additional successes.

Shadow Pack (•••••)

Hikaon-Ur was a lone wolf, and though her children run in packs with their brethren, there will be times in a werewolf's life when she finds herself alone in the darkness, hunting alone as her totem hunted. This Gift is an echo of the great powers Black Wolf used in the depths of the Pangaean wilderness, summoning a pack of dark and shadowy wolves to assist in bringing down prey. The Shadow Pack appear as



flickering wolf-shapes composed of pure darkness, flashing in and out of sight as they move. These shadow-wolves are Hikaon's own servants and allies, born before the world split. They hunt in eerie silence, moving in perfect unison with the summoner, returning to Hikaon's dark wilderness realm in the Shadow once their hunt is completed.

To call the shadow-wolves, the character must raise her head and howl silently to the night sky as she spends the Essence, going through the motions of howling but making no sound. Upon manifestation (either in the physical world or the Shadow) the shadow-wolves use the character's Attribute and Ability scores, and possess the same Health scores as the werewolf in Urhan form.

Cost: 1 Essence per shadow-wolf summoned

Dice Pool: Presence + Animal Ken + Purity

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The silent summons fails to call any of Black Wolf's spirit brood to the character's side, and the shadow-wolves ridicule her attempt. She may not use the Gift again for another cycle of the moon.

Failure: The silent howl fails to summon any of Hikaon-Ur's shadow-wolves.

Success: The shadow-wolves begin to manifest from any shadowed areas within 10 yards of the character, and will be able to hunt with her at the beginning of her next turn. The summoning lasts for a number of turns equal to the number of successes rolled.

Exceptional Success: No additional bonus beyond the extra successes.

Weakness Gifts

While the Storm Lords exemplify the traditional attitude a werewolf holds toward weakness — that is to say, they hate it with the core of their being — all tribes find weakness to be a hindrance even if it's not physically repulsive. Gifts of Weakness allow a werewolf to dampen his own weakness while exploiting it in others. The Storm Lords don't favor this Gift list because too many see it as a cheap get-out clause that disgraces their ties to Winter Wolf. Spirits of animals with hidden strengths teach these Gifts, including a wide variety of poisonous spirits. The Gifts are also taught by some spirits aligned with the Maeljin.

Reflection (•)

In order to know weakness, the werewolf first seeks it out in the one place she knows it resides — herself. While other Gifts allow her to manipulate the weaknesses of others or hide her own failures, this Gift allows her to know her own limitations far better than she could without spiritual understanding. She knows what is holding her back, allowing her to work around that problem.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy + Wisdom

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character believes one of her strengths is really a weakness. She suffers a –1 penalty on the next roll she makes with her highest Attribute or Skill.

Failure: The werewolf understands no more about herself than normal.

Success: The werewolf realizes how her own weakness is holding her back. If she has to make a Chance roll before the end of the scene, she instead makes the roll as if she had one die.

Exceptional Success: The werewolf gets more insight into how she can work around her weakness. She can reduce the penalty applied to one roll that affects her current situation by 1 (so a –3 penalty becomes –2).

Shallow Heart (••)

Focusing on weakness includes inspecting the dark corners of one's own mind. Many Uratha don't like what they see there, reliving the moments of shame and wrath that have made them who they are. For a short time, this Gift allows the werewolf to show another — or herself — what she would be like if those little twists had taken a different turn and she had become a different person entirely, with a different core of weakness whispering into her heart. The werewolf can use this Gift upon herself or another, but using it on another werewolf is a sin with a Harmony Threshold of 6.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Composure + Larceny + Cunning versus Composure + Primal Urge

Action: Contested; resistance is reflexive.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target changes Vice as for a success, but entirely outside of the character's control. The Storyteller should choose a new Vice for the subject of the Gift, and the player of the subject should play it out fully.

Failure: The subject sees no other weakness but his own.

Success: The werewolf inflicts plays around with his subject's secret weaknesses and triggers, exposing a different set of negative values to the world. The player can select a new Vice for the subject, which lasts until the end of the scene and should be role-played appropriately. The new Vice entirely replaces the old one; though, if the subject has already indulged himself, this scene he can do so again.

Exceptional Success: The subject finds triggers he didn't know about, leading him to question who he is. This new understanding is akin to his committing a sin with Morality Threshold (Harmony Threshold for werewolves) of 6.

Coward's Soul (•••)

The weak accept tawdry untruths about free will and nobility. They act as though a moment's grace, defying their basic weakness just once, will redeem them for the countless little sins of a week or a month. Their actions — however noble — are a pitiful reflection of their own weakness, trying to make up for their guilt over being such a worthless human being most of the time. This Gift enhances that feeling, inducing a depression that robs even the most selfless actions of all meaning besides assuaging the actor's guilt.

Cost: 3 Essence

Dice Pool: Resolve + Empathy + Purity versus subject's Resolve + Primal Urge

Action: Contested; resistance is reflexive.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character is overcome by the guilt and depression she had intended to inflict. For the remainder of the scene, any action that would trigger her Virtue does not do so.

Failure: The werewolf cannot capitalize on the subject's weakness.

Success: The werewolf inflicts feelings of guilt and depression in the victim that last until the next time the subject gets a good night's sleep. If the subject's Virtue would have restored her Willpower before she awakes, she regains no Willpower.

Exceptional Success: The subject is consumed by self-loathing. In addition to the effects of a success, the next action that the subject would consider noble is at a –2 penalty.

Hidden Self (••••)

A werewolf who masters weakness must accept that it lies within his heart as much as any other's. The claims of some Uratha that they are beyond weakness are nothing but lies. They hide their weakness, but it still lurks within them. This Gift allows a werewolf to hide his weakness from the world. To those who care, he is without the weakness that defines everyone. While this can be a useful tool to bluff or bluster an opponent, the use of this Gift is never perfect. People can tell that something is wrong, something is missing, and may come to suspect the character because of that.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Composure + Subterfuge + Glory

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character is overcome by the very weakness she was trying to hide. She must find an opportunity to indulge her Vice before the end of the scene, but gains no Willpower for doing so.

Failure: The character's attempt to hide her weakness fails.

Success: The werewolf successfully hides her weakness from onlookers. This weakness can be her Vice but it could be something else; a low Attribute, low Harmony or a derangement may all be considered weakness by the character. She does not suffer the effects of her most obvious weakness for one scene. If her weakness is a Vice, she regains one Willpower in a situation in which she is strongly tempted to indulge but does not, derangements don't have any effect, a low Attribute is rolled as if it were average (two dice) and so on. Supernatural powers that attempt to discern her weakness automatically fail.

This effect only works when people are watching the werewolf, and anyone observing a situation in which the werewolf's weakness would normally affect her can make a straight Resolve + Empathy roll. Success indicates that the observer knows something is wrong, though only an exceptional success indicates to the observer that the werewolf is hiding her weakness from the world. Storm Lords who make use of this Gift (and are caught) are guaranteed to have a very hard time gaining Honor Renown.

Exceptional Success: The effects of the Gift extend until the next moonrise or moonset (whichever is sooner). Observers who try to see through the Gift do so at a –2 penalty.

Wrack (•••••)

All the physical power of a werewolf is sometimes no match for the darkness within a person's heart. Using this Gift, a werewolf inflicts a person with spirits of weakness that make sure that every little moment of shame plays out a thousandfold in the subject's head. Every moment of weakness comes back to haunt the target of this Gift, and, in extreme cases, can lead to self-harm and even suicide as the subject tries any means possible to make up for leading such a wretched existence. Even if the target doesn't harm herself, she certainly has no recourse to defend herself against anyone who would free her from her pit of weakness, though many werewolves find the psychological damage that this Gift produces just as effective as their own teeth and claws. There's no doubt that this is a cruel Gift, but those who have gained the secret knowledge behind it believe that in some instances it is the only way forward that has any justice behind it.

Cost: 2 Essence and 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Wits + Larceny + Honor – target's Resolve

Action: Contested; resistance is reflexive.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The subject of the Gift is flooded with confidence in herself and her actions. For the next day, any attempt to exploit her weaknesses suffers a –3 penalty.

Failure: The subject is no more depressed than anyone else in the World of Darkness.

Success: The subject of the Gift finds herself suffering severe depression and self-loathing as every little moment of weakness plays back behind her eyes. She can take no actions beyond moving half her Speed each turn without spending a Willpower point (which does not grant the usual three-dice bonus). If attacked, her Defense counts as zero. The Gift's effects last for two turns per success, and if the target survives she must make a degeneration roll as if she had committed a sin with a Morality Threshold equal to her current Morality trait (so if she had Morality 6, she would roll three dice).

Exceptional Success: The subject of the Gift starts self-harming, gouging long wounds in her arms with any vaguely sharp instrument nearby, or her own nails if no tool presents itself. The subject takes her Strength in lethal damage in addition to the other effects of this Gift.

Rites

The new rites described here fall into two sub-categories: hunt rites, which are performed as a means of blessing a hunt and stacking the odds against the prey, and seasonal rites, which are regular invocations to win the Uratha blessings relevant to the time of year.

Hunt Rites

The hunt rites are quite specialized in purpose. Each one is typically performed in anticipation of a specific hunt, with the intent of making things easier for the werewolf pack or more difficult for the prey. Hunt rites often also have the added bonus of striking greater fear into the pack's quarry, as the world seems to deny him safety. The Pure keep their own hunt rites as well, and are quite prone to use them against the Forsaken.

Call the Cloudless Sky (••)

The Forsaken find it easier to hunt and fight when they can clearly see the face of Luna in the sky. This rite controls both cloud and fog, sweeping them from the sky so that moonlight can fall clearly on the Forsaken's hunting ground. Even a raging storm can be quelled for a short time, an eye opening up in its midst to reveal the gaze of Luna. Needless to say, the Pure do not practice this rite.

Performing the Rite: The ritemaster places a silver coin in shallow dirty water — a filled saucepan, a dirty puddle or something similar. She then paints a mark of her own auspice over her eye, usually in her own blood. As she rocks back and forth on her heels over the water, chanting soft invocations to sky and water and moon, the sediment gradually clears from the dirty water. Once the silver coin reflects a cloudless sky through clear water, the rite is complete.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (15 successes; each roll represents five minutes' effort)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes gathered are lost. The rite cannot be performed again for another 24 hours.

Failure: No successes are gained.

Success: Successes are accumulated. If the required total is gathered, the sky is cleared of clouds over the ritemaster's territory. This change in weather lasts for 10 minutes per point of the ritemaster's Primal Urge. After that, the prevailing weather conditions will take over at the usual speed. If this rite is used on a clear, still night, the clouds and mist might not return; if this rite is invoked during a thunderstorm, the clouds will sweep in almost immediately, assuming the storm hasn't already passed the area in that time.

Exceptional Success: Successes are accumulated. If 20 successes are accumulated, the prevailing conditions last for double the usual duration.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+1	Light clouds or mist
–1	Heavy clouds or smog
–3	Storm weather
–5	Hurricane

Call the Empty Road (•••)

The scent of a traveler's fear when walking down an empty road at night, the moon overhead, no human voices to soothe him, but only the movement of animals close by — this is the invocation of Call the Empty Road. This rite reduces the odds of anyone but the intended prey from traveling down the marked section of road or street, therefore making it more likely that the werewolves will have him all to themselves. While this rite was originally developed to be used along country roads, urban werewolves are quite capable of using it to catch their prey along deserted city streets late at night.

Performing the Rite: The ritemaster must be able to name the intended prey, although a true name is not necessary. Specific details such as "the red-haired male stockbroker who lives in Victoria Arms" suffice. (Of course, if there are two stockbrokers of this description, both will be able to travel freely down the road while the rite is in effect.)

The ritemaster draws a line across the road at all potential entry points. The section of road protected varies with population density: the rite can be performed on up to two miles of back-country road, or up to a city block's worth of urban street. Once the lines have been drawn, the ritemaster settles by a crossroads leading to the given road or street, where she performs small obesiances to the spirits, asking them to divert the attention of any humans other than those she names.

For obvious reasons, this rite cannot be performed along particularly high-traffic roads such as an interstate highway.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (30 successes; each roll represents five minutes' effort)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes gathered are lost.

Failure: No successes are gained.

Success: Successes are accumulated. If the required total is gathered, the section of road is marked. Until the sun next rises, all humans of Willpower 4 or less who are not named by the rite feel a faint antipathy to the target area, and will not travel down the given road unless they succeed at a Resolve check. This aversion is unconscious, and easily rationalized away — "I heard someone got mugged there last night," or "Hey, let's take a shortcut instead of the scenic route." Supernatural beings are not warded away by this rite, though they may perceive a faint sense of unease if their Willpower is low.

Exceptional Success: Successes are accumulated. If 35 successes are accumulated, the effects of the rite target humans of Willpower 5 and lower.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+2	Road or street has an existing bad reputation
+1	Ritemaster uses target's true name
+1	Late at night
–2	Cloudy day
–2	Dense urban area

Binding of Locks (••••)

The Binding of Locks was developed specifically for urban hunts, though the rite has its uses in certain rural areas. When successfully enacted, the rite locks all doors and windows within its area of influence, making it all the harder for prey to find a safe place to hide. No door will open to the quarry; no car will carry him from the scene.

Performing the Rite: The ritemaster draws some of her own blood and mixes it with oil. She then dips a fingertip or claw into the mixture and slowly draws a number of circles on a door or window, singing a song of wakefulness to the spirits of doors and portals. As she concludes the rite, she draws a horizontal line through each circle, "locking" the rite.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (20 successes; each roll represents one minute's effort)

Cost: 1 Essence

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes gathered are lost. A few locks may even open themselves out of spite.

Failure: No successes are gained.

Success: Successes are accumulated. If the required total is gathered, all locks within the equivalent of a city block's area, centered on the ritemaster, immediately lock themselves. They can be unlocked again at any time as usual; the rite does not keep them fastened. Only locks and fasteners (such as a window fastener) are affected; the rite cannot affect security devices such as door chains or security alarms.

Exceptional Success: No additional effect other than the quicker accumulation of successes.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+1	Dead of night
–2	Daytime

Seasonal Rites

These rites are typically performed once a year, during the appropriate season. As with many other rites, seasonal rites can vary greatly by region. The exact form of the rite might evolve to match local traditions, as might the day on which it's performed — if it's performed at all. The Uratha of the Everglades might ignore the Darkest Night of Winter, for instance, as winter is less of a force in their region. These rites are often the focus of a specific gathering, one in which the Forsaken acknowledge the tenuous relationships between their packs. The Pure also know their own seasonal rites, although their rites tend to be darker affairs laced with a stronger dose of penance and zeal expressed through pain.

Seasonal rites also offer small blessings to the participants, in tune with the seasons they celebrate. A successfully enacted seasonal rite grants its participants a number of discretionary dice, which may be used at any point within the next lunar month to add to a dice pool related to the rite's focus. These dice form a small pool that, once exhausted, does not recover until the character undergoes the rite a second time and receives a new blessing. For instance, Doomwise gains six dice from the Spirit Lamps of Autumn rite to be used in rolls related to spirits. The next week, she finds herself in tense negotiation with a glass-spirit, and decides to add two dice to her Charisma + Persuasion pool. She has four dice remaining to spend for the month. She decides to use all four two days later on a Strength + Brawl roll when attacked by a maddened magath. She could not, however, have used the dice to intimidate a Pure captive by threatening to invoke spirits of wrath against him; the dice could only be used when dealing directly with a spirit.

Blood Communion of Spring (•••)

With this rite, the Uratha tap directly into spring's power of renewal. The Blood Communion of Spring is a ritual celebrating life, and, to a lesser extent, a fertility rite, though werewolves are hesitant to invoke the spirits of fertility when gathered with one another and not their wolf-blooded mates. A communal sacrifice of blood renews the Uratha's sense of their ties to the land. Those who receive the blessing of spring find it easier to relate to their human relatives and mates, or to run among the animals of the world, if only for a short time.

This rite is the easiest of the seasonal rites to master and enact, in part because the Uratha's natures are already keyed to renewal and the vibrancy of life. The rite is often performed on the spring equinox, though in many areas this rite is coordinated with appropriate human holidays. Most notably, werewolves from Christian backgrounds often find

it fitting to enact the Blood Communion on Good Friday or Easter.

Performing the Rite: The Blood Communion of Spring begins at sunset, and continues through the twilight. The participants gather in a circle, often stripped to the waist, and pass around a small bowl made of wood or silver. As each werewolf receives the bowl, he announces his name, auspice, pack and tribe to the others. He then makes a customary boast or pledge of his loyalty to pack and tribe, or to Luna, and a customary promise to uphold something particularly dear to him (such as defending his new bride, or swearing to tame the spirits surrounding his territory). Many Blood Talons in particular point out scars they've acquired over the last year as part of the rite, especially if gained in defense of a human loved one or packmate. As he finishes, the werewolf then cuts himself and lets a measure of blood into the bowl to mark his pledge. He then passes the bowl on to his neighbor.

Once all the participants have shared of their deeds and blood, the ritemaster then takes the bowl and walks around the circle, telling each participant in turn to drink of the blood and share in the strength of the People. "*Muth, Su, Hithim*" — "Blood, Body, Spirit." As the communion continues, the fervor of the Uratha begins to rise higher. The ritemaster is last to drink, and as she throws down the bowl, she leads the assembled werewolves in a howl. The packs separate at that point, some returning to their human mates to spend their energy, others attacking a more traditional hunt with renewed vigor.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (15 successes; each roll represents 10 minutes' effort)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes gathered are lost. The mood sours as the rite goes awry, and all participants receive a –1 penalty to Composure checks for the remainder of the evening. The rite cannot be attempted again that evening.

Failure: No successes are gained.

Success: Successes are accumulated. If the required total is gathered, the rite succeeds. All participants in the rite gain four discretionary dice, which may be used toward any action related to social interaction during the next lunar month. However, the great fervor of the rite has its drawbacks. Participants suffer a –1 penalty to Resolve rolls for the duration of the evening.

Exceptional Success: Successes are accumulated. If 20 successes are accumulated, the number of discretionary dice awarded to each participant is increased to seven.

Bone-Fires of Summer (••••)

Summer is the traditional season of war. The People mark the season by building great fires, in which they burn war trophies and offerings to their totems. This ritual proclaims their strength and ferocity to the heavens, and empowers their resolution to continue fighting. The Pure are said to add living sacrifices to their fires to prove their devotion, a step that most Forsaken are not willing to take.

Some areas build their bone-fires on the summer solstice, while others wait for the temperature to be at its hottest. More aggressive werewolves (particularly the Pure) often favor enacting the rite in the middle of a heat wave, when violence is already rising high. In the United States, some werewolves choose to set their bone-fires on the Fourth of July. Urban packs often have to perform this rite outside their territory, though some actually burn down entire buildings as an offering.

Performing the Rite: This rite is typically performed at night, though there is no drawback to lighting a fire under the sun. The rite begins with the ritemaster appearing, torch in hand, to exhort the gathered werewolves to show their might and resolve to the spirits. As the pyre is lit, the participants throw in war trophies or personal offerings to their pack or tribal totems. Each offering is made with a howl, boast or battle cry. The offerings vary greatly: hand-carved statuettes, paper money, scalps, delicate origami, leather jackets splashed with the owner's colors are all possibilities. Bones, of course, are the most famous offering, particularly femurs or skulls carved with an account of the former owner and how he died. The ceremony closes with a great howl led by the ritemaster, after which pack alphas usually cry out to their packs to follow them on a hunt.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (20 successes; each roll represents 10 minutes' effort)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes gathered are lost. The rite's failure actually acts as a light curse on the participants, giving them a –1 penalty to Dexterity rolls for the remainder of the night.

Failure: No successes are gained.



Success: Successes are accumulated. If the required total is gathered, the rite is a success. All participants in the rite gain six discretionary dice, which may be used toward any action related to combat during the next lunar month. In addition, the spirit of war floods the participants. All affected werewolves suffer a –1 penalty to Composure checks and gain a +1 bonus to Stamina checks for the duration.

Exceptional Success: Successes are accumulated. If 25 successes are accumulated, the number of discretionary dice awarded to each participant is increased to nine.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+1	Per werewolf who takes at least two levels of damage by exposing herself to the flames

Darkest Night of Winter (••••)

The most somber of the seasonal rites, the Darkest Night of Winter is a ritual dedicated to endurance and perseverance rather than zeal, strength or wisdom. This rite is a scanty meal shared between predators, a reminder of lean times and an exhortation to endure and thrive despite the lean times to come.

As the title suggests, this rite is typically performed on the winter solstice. Other popular dates include New Year's Eve, or the new moon closest to the end of December.

Performing the Rite: The rite is always performed when the sky is at its blackest; attempting a spiritual reinforcement of endurance requires adverse conditions. The presence of moonlight at the rite is considered an affirmation of weakness, as if the People were unable to endure poor conditions without the presence of their mother.

The participants meet under the open sky, and traditionally wear very little in order to defy the elements. Mountaintops and rooftops are particularly valued gathering places. The ritemaster opens with a ritual greeting and invocation to the spirits, and sets some form of food in the center. The food is traditionally meager for all the werewolves concerned: a

single deer carcass for a gathering of multiple packs, or a solitary skinny rabbit for a pack. The rite then moves to an invocation of those who died during the past year. Each participant repeats the names of those Forsaken lost to the packs gathered, and offers some memory, however, short, of the deceased. The ritemaster then divides the food among the werewolves present, stating that even on this meager fare and under this hostile sky, the People will endure.

Unlike the other seasonal rites, the Darkest Night of Winter does not typically end with the assembled werewolves rushing off to hunt. It has become something of a tradition, particularly in Europe, for the participants to then retire to a bar, pub or restaurant for a peaceful bout of drinking, something of a respectful wake for the fallen. Even the most bitter of rivals are expected to get along with one another on this night. It doesn't always work out that way, but the ideal is still valued.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (20 successes; each roll represents 10 minutes' effort)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes gathered are lost. The rite's failure hangs over the participants, giving them a –1 penalty to Resolve rolls for the remainder of the night. The rite cannot be attempted again that night.

Failure: No successes are gained.

Success: Successes are accumulated. If the required total is gathered, the rite is a success. All participants in the rite gain six discretionary dice, which may be applied to any action related to enduring physical or mental hardship during the next lunar month.

Exceptional Success: Successes are accumulated. If 25 successes are accumulated, the number of discretionary dice awarded to each participant is increased to nine.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+1	Total cloud cover
–1	Visible starlight
–2	Visible moonlight

Spirit Lamps of Autumn (••••)

When the nights begin to grow longer, the power of the Shadow begins to grow as well. Werewolves answer this with the rite called Spirit Lamps of Autumn. This rite offers respect to the spirit world and honors their totems, but also is a demonstration of the Uratha's own strength and vigilance. The lamps lit send a simple message to the spirit world — *We see you.*

This rite is sometimes performed on the autumnal equinox, but frequently may take place later into the season, when the nights are longer than the days. The four nights surrounding Halloween (Devil's Night, Halloween, All Saints Day and All Souls Day) are popular choices in the West, with some werewolves choosing a night based on which moon phase will be most favorable. Some ritemasters insist on performing this rite on nights of the crescent moon, when the Ithaeur's strength is at its peak and the spirits can be resisted.

Performing the Rite: The right begins at twilight, and continues into the deepening night. All werewolves participating in the rite bring spirit lamps they've fashioned themselves to the gathering. These lamps take a great variety of forms. In some regions, all of the lamps may be made in the same way, in accordance to tradition — all red candles with wicks made from the maker's own hair, for instance. The lamps may also vary tremendously even within a single gathering, with a lantern made from the skull of a Ridden enemy burning beside a kitbashed electric light with occult sigils covering its lampshade.

The ritemaster moves from one participant to the next as the rite unfolds, instructing each werewolf to place her lamp at a specific point along a spiral pattern. Each lamp is blessed by the ritemaster in turn, and ritually lit by the werewolf who brought it there. The participant then stands above or beside her lamp (perhaps even holding it), staring out into the growing blackness, and stating her conviction to stand fast against the Shadow. As the ritemaster places and lights the final lamp (always the ritemaster's own), he then speaks out in praise of the totems of the People. The Blood Talons present join in the praise of Destroyer Wolf, the Bone Shadows present join the soft chant to Death Wolf and so on. The ritemaster then names the pack totems of each participating pack, and the packs themselves speak words of thanks and honor. The words vary, but the intent is the same: *We see you. We see and honor your strength and wisdom, valued allies. We see and respect your might, enemies, and we will stand against it. We see you.* The rite closes as each participant moves beyond the circle of light into the darkness, leaving only the ritemaster in the spiral of light. Many packs move directly into a hunt that very night.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (20 successes; each roll represents five minutes' effort)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes gathered are lost. The rite's failure demoralizes the werewolves in attendance; all participants suffer a –1 penalty to Composure checks for the remainder of the night. The rite cannot be performed again that night.

Failure: No successes are gained.

Success: Successes are accumulated. If the required total is gathered, the rite is a success. All participants in the rite gain six discretionary dice, which may be used toward any action related to direct dealings with spirits in the next lunar month.

Exceptional Success: Successes are accumulated. If 25 successes are accumulated, the number of discretionary dice awarded to each participant is increased to nine.

Fetishes and Artifacts

The fetishes created by the Uratha are not the only objects of power in the World of Darkness. This section provides not only a selection of new fetishes and talens to be used in the appropriate fashion, but also strange artifacts that derive their power from something other than a bound spirit. These artifacts open up new venues for stories for the characters that possess them — not always for the good.

Talens

Bitter Brew

This coffee-like drink is infused with anise, chicory, milk thistle and a few drops of the drinker's own blood. When consumed, Bitter Brew grants the drinker a +2 to his Speed for one hour. Any strong wind-spirit empowers this talen.

Action: Instant

Churning Smoker

This hand-rolled cigar or cigarette is stuffed with tobacco leaves, human hair and crushed cliff rose petals. The user blows the smoke in target's face, and the target must immediately roll Wits + Resolve. Failing that roll means the target vomits. Humans (including ghouls and wolf-blooded) suffer a –2 penalty to the Wits + Resolve roll. Truly supernatural humans such as mages suffer no such penalty. This talen is empowered by a dizziness-spirit.

Action: Instant

Tooth Soap

Two human canine teeth are buried in the center of this ragged bar of handmade soap. When allowed to lather up an inorganic object of Size 5 or smaller, the talen reduces that object's Durability by 1 until the soap lather dries. The lather dries in one hour, then flakes off. The soap is empowered by a termite-spirit.

Action: Instant

Wisp Gum

This chewing gum, made from spruce gum and mixed with wood ash, must be dried prior to chewing and chewed for one hour prior to activation. Once the gum is sufficiently softened in the mouth, the werewolf can stick the gum to any surface. The wad of gum will then emit a string of smoldering smoke — this white smoke almost glows with its own light. Only the werewolf who chewed the gum can actually *perceive* the smoke, however. He can see this shimmering smoke from up to a mile away, and can *smell* it with a Wits + Survival roll for up to two miles. The smoke stops after an hour. This talen is empowered by a spruce-spirit.

Action: Instant

Fetishes

Skullbird (•)

This fetish is a small bird's skull hung from a cord and placed around the neck. Once the fetish is activated, a werewolf can mimic one sound from one animal convincingly, be it a lion's roar, falcon's screech or a whale's keening. A mockingbird-spirit is used to create this item.

Action: Reflexive

Splinter Key (•)

This metal splinter, which may be sheared from cut steel or be a sliver from a busted cable, functions as a starter key for any automobile. The werewolf inserts the splinter into the ignition and activates the fetish, and the car starts. The trick is that the car will only run for a half-hour, at which point the fetish must be reactivated anew to restart the vehicle. Other more powerful versions of this fetish exist, with approximately one hour of use added per Merit point bought. An electricity-spirit is used to create this fetish.

Action: Instant

Fly Bottle (••)

This small bottle fetish is filled with dead bugs, usually flies. On a successful activation roll, a swarm of those bugs leaves the jar (encompassing a swarm far larger than what the jar could contain) and attacks the nearest individual. Flies get in his mouth,

ants dart up his pant legs and arms, moths flit in front of his eyes. The bugs, whatever they may be, cause no damage to that individual, but confer upon him a –1 penalty to all rolls, and –1 to his Defense for three turns. Whatever insect is in the jar requires that an equivalent spirit be bound to the fetish.

Action: Instant

System Key (••)

This small USB key fits into the USB port of any computer. When the fetish is activated, the spirit within literally gives a part of itself to the computer, inhabiting the system with this shard. The key can then be removed. The werewolf, at any point during the next two days, can roll his Harmony (or spend one Essence to negate the need for a roll) to see what a user is doing on that computer. Whatever the user is doing, whether downloading porn or encrypting illegal documents, becomes known to the werewolf. Each "glimpse" lasts five minutes. A curious animal-spirit (monkey, cat, rat) fuels this fetish.

Action: Instant

Bone Spur (•••)

This sharp osseous spur, which is worn as a piercing through an earlobe or elsewhere, helps a werewolf suss out potential sinners. Once the fetish is activated (which lasts a scene), when encountering another character with a low Morality trait (Morality, Humanity, Harmony, Wisdom or the like) score, the fetish reflexively reacts. When within five yards of a character with Morality 3–4, the spur tingles when seated in the werewolf's flesh. When within five yards of someone with Morality 1–2, the spur turns hot, and the flesh around it stings. If within five yards of someone with Morality 0, the spur burns the skin, causing a single bashing level of damage to the wearer. Note that the fetish doesn't allow the werewolf to determine who precisely is morally degraded — if the werewolf is in a crowd of people, the fetish provides no concrete indication. A spirit of wrath or justice is used to create this fetish.

Action: Reflexive

Cat's Suture (•••)

This thick leathery cord, made from dried cat intestine, is used to sew up a wound before it heals. When it heals, the skin grows around the thick stitch (though the stitch is still visible, occasionally rising above the puckered skin like a fish's back sticking out of dark water). From that point forward, whenever a werewolf takes a wound that would kill him or knock him unconscious, he may activate this fetish to grant him three more Stamina dots, which further increases his Health levels by the same number. These dots last for a number of turns equal to half of the werewolf's Willpower (round up). Damage taken in these Health boxes accumulates on top of other damage once these boxes are taken away with the end of the effects. A dog-spirit helps create this fetish.

Action: Reflexive

Four-Fingered Charm (••••)

This fetish is four human fingers, dried, and bound together with wire or leather cord. The fingers often retain the flesh, though the drying process makes it rough and papery. Most werewolves hang this talisman around their neck, though some keep it on a bracelet or shoved away in a deep pocket. When the fetish is used reflexively just before performing an act of theft, the fetish confers upon the werewolf's Larceny roll the "9 again" rule. Moreover, any attempts by witnesses to notice the act of theft (likely with a Wits + Composure roll) are made with a –2 penalty. This fetish is created with a crow- or blackbird-spirit.

Action: Reflexive

Peeper Jar (••••)

The Peeper Jar is an eyeball, most likely human (though any mammal's eye will do), sitting in a Mason jar filled with brine. A werewolf can place this jar anywhere, activating it at the time of the drop. For the next 12 hours, he can spend a Willpower point and close one eye, and see through the eyeball in the jar. The eyeball actually moves around, jerking left or right depending on which direction the werewolf "looks." He can have full 360-degree vision, provided the view from the jar isn't somehow blocked. A paranoia-spirit gives life to this fetish.

Action: Instant

Herne's Black Lantern (•••••)

This powerful fetish was created by a Hunter in Darkness known by his packmates as Herne the Huntsman. It was crafted from a black paper lantern drizzled with goat's blood. A white tallow candle burns within, though the flame never burns the paper, or the candle burn down (though one can purposefully put out the flame). When activated, the lantern casts eerie shadows over a radius of 100 yards. Any humans who come within that radius begin immediately to feel physically queasy and emotionally unsettled. They instinctively leave the lantern's radius, subconsciously identifying it as the source of their discomfort. Should they remain within that radius for

more than a turn, they suffer a –3 penalty to all rolls within that area until they leave it. If placed within 10 yards of a locus, the fetish takes on further properties when active. If any spirit or creature attempts to take Essence from that locus, a lick of searing white flame flicks out and causes one point of aggravated damage per point of Essence taken. Only the werewolf to whom the fetish is attuned may take Essence without assuming this damage. This werewolf may also end the effect at any time. The fetish remains active until the next lunar phase, at which point the fetish can be reactivated. A firefly-spirit fuels this one-of-a-kind fetish.

Action: Reflexive

Milewalker's Cloth (•••••)

Some werewolves, such as the titular Milewalker, claim no one territory and remain itinerant. This old fetish is a set of two cloths that look like white, gauzy bandages. A werewolf wraps both of his bare feet in these cloths. Once the fetish is activated, the Forsaken disappears from the physical world, but doesn't go to the Shadow, either. Some speculate the fetish allows the werewolf to walk between worlds, perhaps along the razor's edge of the Gauntlet, while others say he must be going somewhere else entirely. All the werewolf can see in this place-between-worlds are roads and paths previously traveled. These paths are lit up with brightness according to their frequency used (I-95 would shine as brightly as day, while a deer trail used by only a few hunters might appear as faintly luminescent as a dying flashlight). She sees no humans, spirits or other werewolves. Provided she treks upon these previously traveled roads, her travel time is cut significantly. What would normally take her one hour now takes her 10 minutes (therefore, a six-hour trip would only last one hour). The fetish lasts until her journey is complete, and she reaches her destination (i.e., wherever she stops for more than an hour). This fetish is bound with a road-spirit.

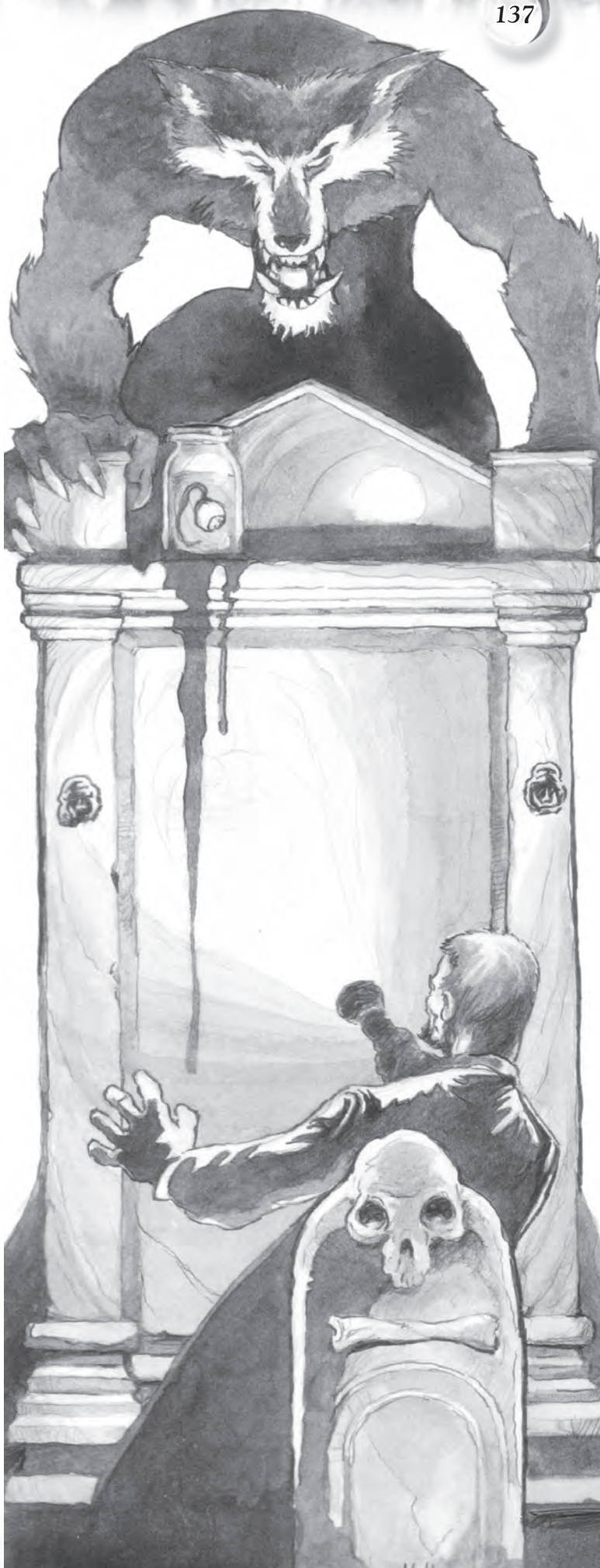
Action: Instant

Klaives

The following klaives may be purchased by starting characters with the Fetish Merit.

Steel and Lightning (•••)

This rigid steel pipe is a conduit. At the far end is a hunk of concrete, and inside is a tangle of colored wires (some of which poke out at odd angles from both ends of the klaive). It does normal damage as a metal mace (three bashing damage; see p.170, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**), but when activated,



also shocks the werewolf's adversary with a quick and brutal blast of electricity. The shock is equivalent to that from a wall socket, and does four bashing levels automatically. The damage from a regular attack can be mitigated by armor. The shock damage, however, ignores armor. The electricity only comes when the weapon connects; those hit by such a weapon do not need to make any roll to pull away from the current, as it is only a sparking shock. A lightning-spirit fuels this weapon.

Action: Reflexive

Fulgent Talwar (••••)

This curved Indian saber (stats equivalent to a normal sword; three lethal damage) gleams so brightly that opponents may have trouble making attacks against the wielder. When activated, the klaive allows the wielder to double his Defense if used during the day or a full moon. If used during any other moon phase, it only confers a +2 to his Defense (which may or may not be equivalent to his doubled Defense). A hellion or other light-spirit is used in creating this fetish. The Defense bonus lasts for a number of turns equal to the character's Primal Urge x 2.

Action: Reflexive

Sequoia's Spear (••••)

This long, thick-hafted spear is made from the wood of a sequoia redwood and often features elaborated ornamentation carved up the klaive's length. The spear functions as a normal spear until activated. The spear, when thrust into the ground, creates a radius of power. If the user remains within the radius of power, which is equivalent to 10 yards, he gains the following bonuses: +1 to Size (with a resultant +1 to Health), +1 to Strength (with a resultant boost to Speed) and +1 to Composure (with equivalent gains to Willpower and Initiative modifier). The spear's effects last for a single scene or until someone removes the spear from the ground, whichever comes first. If the werewolf leaves (or is forced from) the spear's empowering radius, he loses all bonuses. A redwood-spirit is used to create this klaive.

Action: Instant

Gazadum (Ghost-Touched Objects)

Ghosts stain the world around them with their presence. The residue of death-given-consciousness leaves behind an imperceptible taint, an invisible



veneer of rot and decay. Sometimes, a specter is given over to such intense, single-minded emotion or powerful insanity that the very physical world around the ghost grows dark with the stain of the ghost's power. Other times, the ghost literally imbues a part of the world with some or all of himself, either linking himself to an object (making it his anchor) or possessing it outright.

Werewolves call objects specifically possessed by ghosts *gazhdum*, or "ghost-touched." Some believe the use of such objects as fetishes is justified, harnessing them for the werewolf's own needs. Others believe the use of such objects is blasphemous, and using a human soul — one theoretically trapped — is a gross misdeed against one's own Harmony.

Ghost-touched objects subscribe to the following rules:

• A player can purchase these objects with the Fetish Merit.

• Every ghost-touched object is tied somehow to the ghost that inhabits it; the possession isn't random. A ghost of a man who murdered his family with a fire axe may dwell in that very axe. The specter of that man's wife may possess her wedding ring, her wedding dress or even a lock of her dead daughter's hair.

• Ghost-touched objects smell strongly of scents associated with death — anything from rotten flowers to grave-dirt to roadkill to formaldehyde. This smell lingers for a scene. A character tracking a ghost-touched object or its user by nose gets a +2 to the roll.

• The effects of *gazhdum* are always negative, and often associated with death. Such an object will not grant a werewolf hope or provide positive feelings; even the effects are marked by the provenance of the grave.

• *Gazhdum* cannot be created using the Fetish Rite.

Activating a ghost-touched object requires the expenditure of one Willpower point. The object is insidious, and demands that the owner devote his will toward appeasing the specter within. A werewolf cannot spend Essence instead of Willpower, as no spirit resides within to "bribe." This does mean that werewolves are not the only creatures capable of using ghost-touched objects, although they (particularly Bone Shadows) are often among the most capable of identifying such items.

Le Parfum de Folie (•)

Missy Worthwick was not a lucky girl. Life never gave her much of a break. Her job sucked. No man would give her the time of day outside of asking for her to move aside or to get him a cup of coffee. Even at age 25 she was plagued by persistent acne, which only contributed to her loneliness. One day, she sat down on her bed, sprayed herself with her favorite (and very expensive) perfume and then downed a bottle of lithium.

An echo of her soul now resides in the perfume bottle, perhaps associating it with the one thing in the world that made her feel special. Now, when activated, the perfume's spray confers upon a user the appearance of being dead. The user, smelling strongly of lavender and carnations, literally appears dead to all who examine him: capillaries burst upon unfocused eyes, no pulse, no breath, total stillness. The user literally cannot move or speak during this time, and the effects last for a single scene (attempting to take action during this time obviates the object's effects). Only a successful Wits + Medicine roll (performed with a –3 penalty) will allow a character to detect the subtle signs of life behind the illusion. The user cannot use this on anybody but himself.

Action: Instant

Dead Recorder (••)

Dr. Sabira Gupta devoted her life to helping others, even at the cost of her own life experiences. A counselor, she helped many through long years of therapy, shepherding them through addictions, obsessions and phobias. Her work was far from complete when she took a misstep down a stairwell and fell, breaking her neck. Her ghost did not wander for long, instead trying to scream out a message on her black microcassette recorder. Her voice didn't transfer to the recorder, but her corpus did.

The recorder, when placed within a foot of a dead person, will record that person's last thoughts — up to a minute of what went through the person's head before death. His thoughts may reveal who killed him, or might just be an eerie monologue of fears and dreams brought on by a lack of oxygen prior to death. The recorder requires a fresh microcassette every use. Regardless of how much space is on the tape, it records up to a minute, then nothing more.

Action: Instant

Bitch's Broken Mirror (•••)

Becky was cheating on him, and Joe wouldn't stand for it. When he found out where she was going every Friday night — not to the movies with her friend at all, oh no — he did what any man would do. He shot her in the face with a .38 special and then put the gun under his own chin, painting the ceiling



with his brains. For decades, his ghost lingered, finding that his soul was not salved by the act of murder-suicide but only further enraged. Somehow, his specter stumbled upon the little vanity mirror Becky used every Friday night to check herself before she went out that door to meet her men. Without meaning to, Joe's angry ghost entered the mirror and its reflective glass split, the fractures like a spider's web.

When the *gazhdum* is activated, the *next person* to stare into the mirror's shattered glass gains the Suspicion derangement (mild). If the viewer already has the mild version, he gains Paranoia (severe). This lasts for a single day, but the werewolf can continue the effects by spending a Willpower point to force the effects to last for another day. During this time, the werewolf can spend an entire Willpower *dot* to make the effects permanent. What the victim sees when staring into the mirror is different for each; some see the laughing faces of all who have ever mocked them, some witness their loved ones cheating on them, others see just an empty void.

Action: Instant

Little Baby Burns (•••••)

The plane didn't make it long past takeoff. A mechanical failure caused the Airbus to swing to the side, where the wing hit the tarmac — seconds later, the cabin was pinwheeling across the runway, a ball of red fire and black smoke. Everybody within died.

One *gazhdum* came from the wreckage, a little charbroiled doll, her face half-melted, with one eye staring bright white out of a morass of black plastic. The ghost that resides within this doll remains a mystery. It seems likely that the girl to whom the doll belonged is the possessor, but the user of this object sometimes hears other voices: men, women, even radio chatter. Is the doll a kind of black box capturing many of the ghosts that died on board the flight?

The Forsaken who wields this doll becomes terrifying to behold. When the *gazhdum* is activated, the werewolf catches fire but takes no wounds from the flames. Howling winds and screaming voices whirl about him. The flames wreathing his body are the size of a bonfire (2) with the intensity of a Bunsen burner (+2) — see the "Fire" rules in the **World**

of Darkness Rulebook, p. 180. The fire lasts for a number of turns equal to the half of the werewolf's Willpower score (round up). The character takes no damage, and even his clothes remain untouched (though if he comes in contact with fires he caused, that can cause him damage).

Those burned by the fire — provided they live — suffer nightmares for one week after contact. These nightmares involve the crash of the plane: burning bodies, screaming victims, the sound of metal crumpling. During that week, the nightmares cause a persistent –1 penalty to all Mental and Social rolls.

This ghost-touched object can only be used once per week.

Action: Reflexive

Ghost-Touched Stories

Every *gazhdum* is home to a story, a very *personal* story tied to someone's demise or rest less soul. A werewolf may very well just use a ghost-touched object as a selfish tool and nothing more, but may grow guilty for doing so — isn't the ghost within perhaps trapped, unable to move onto any final reward?

A story or subplot can focus on uncover ing more about the ghost within the object. The ghost is no longer in Twilight, having possessed the object (willfully or not). Perhaps after the werewolf uses the object, he experiences a weak connection with the ghost within, exemplified by dreams, or seeing the specter out of the corner of his eye or hearing its voice whispered in only his ear.

Releasing the spirit won't be easy. Destroy ing the object does release the spirit, but doing so also destroys the ghost (which may or may not be what the werewolf desires). The only other way to release the specter is to uncover more about who the mortal was, and continuing his "work" (which may be helping others… or hurting them). If the ghost's goals are satisfied, it may be able to leave the object.

Of course, that's not always a good thing. Some ghosts are violent or downright crazy. Moreover, once the ghost has left the *gazhdum*, its mystical properties disappear.

Arrathudum (Cursed Items)

Some objects are cursed. Powerful emotion, as noted, leaves a resonance. This residue can feed the spirits of an area or even create a locus. The residue can also, at times, mark an object in the physical world with a strongly negative spiritual resonance. Only scenes of great horror and atrocity can change an object in such a way. The Forsaken call such objects the *arrathudum*, or the "accursed icons."

Accursed objects work according to the following rules:

- Every *arrathudum* has both a power and a drawback. These both occur at the time of activation.
- Because the object serves as a link to the Shadow, like a pinprick between worlds, the object can help a werewolf cross the Gauntlet. When stepping sideways at a locus, a werewolf with one of these objects in her possession gains a +1 to the roll to enter the spirit world.
- A player can purchase these objects with points in the Fetish Merit.

Activating a cursed object follows the same basic rules found on p. 204 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, with a few exceptions.

- Any entity with a Morality Trait can roll that Trait to activate the object; vampires roll Humanity, werewolves Harmony and so on. Cursed objects seem to react more strongly to souls that seem "stronger" in some way. Given their slight corruptive influence, this is not necessarily a good thing.
- A point of Essence spent will not obviate the need for a roll; as the object has no spirit, Essence cannot "bribe" the spirit.
- Failure to activate the object still earns the owner the item's drawback, but not its power.
- Dramatic failure requires a roll to resist *Kuruth*.

Black Phone (•••)

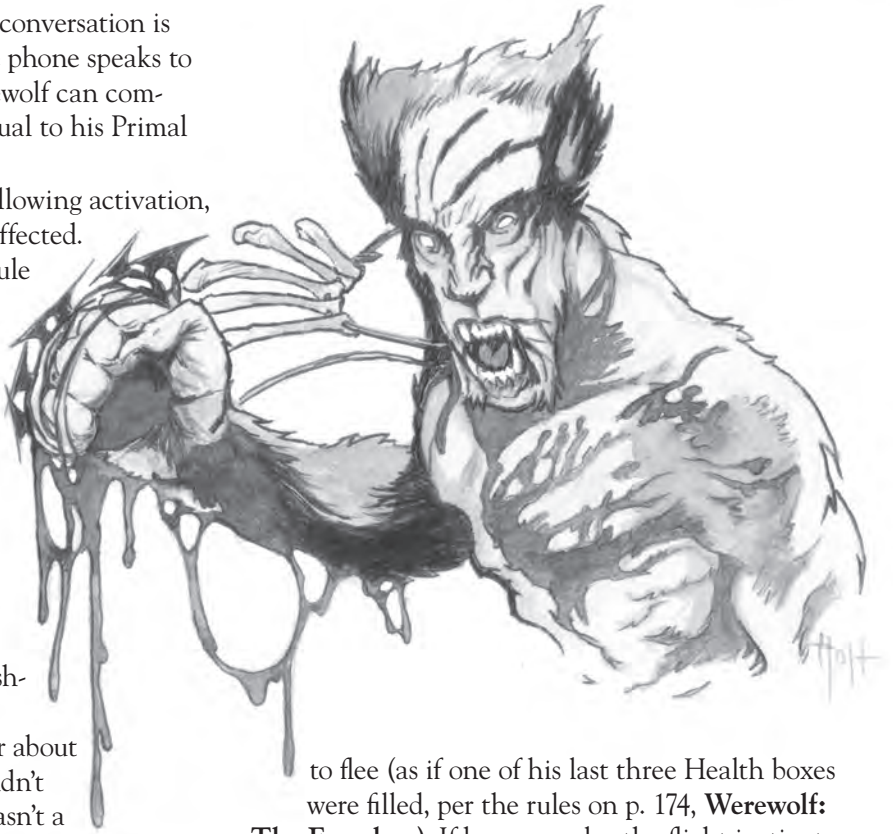
The man came off the mountain, a hermit driven mad by his own isolation. He entered the ski lodge — just ramping up for the season and playing host to several skiers and vacationers warming themselves by the fire — and opened fire with an autoloader shotgun. A few escaped. Most ended up in a heap in the center of the room before the man turned the gun on himself. On one of the end tables was an old Western Electric (300 series) Art Deco rotary phone, an antique that wasn't hooked up to anything. The phone, flecked with blood, became *arrathudum* the moment the man ended his own life atop the pile of still-warm corpses.

When the *arrathudum* is activated, a werewolf can use the phone to speak to any one werewolf that he has met in the past, no matter where she is in the

physical world or the Shadow. The conversation is not two-way; the werewolf with the phone speaks to the target, not vice versa. The werewolf can communicate a number of sentences equal to his Primal Urge score.

Drawback: For the 12 hours following activation, the werewolf's Social rolls may be affected. On all Social rolls, the "10 again" rule no longer applies. In addition, any 1's that come up on a roll are subtracted from successes. (This latter part does not affect dramatic failure rules.) This manifests as the werewolf stutters or misspeaks, unable to find the proper words.

Action: Instant



Razor Wire Knuckles (•••)

The storm was a real frog-squasher. Lightning flecked the darkness every second or so, and the thunder about tore the sky into ribbons. Storms didn't usually spook the cattle, but this wasn't a normal storm, and the whole herd shared a sudden twisting fear. The animals stampeded, running together to the far end of the field where they battered the coils of razor wire, bloodying themselves so that they could escape. And escape, they did — toppling over the edge of the subsequent cliff and into the flooding gully below. Hundreds of animals, plummeting to their death. Legs broken, flesh ripped from stray wire.

One coil of that wire — still rusty with cow's blood — seems naturally shaped to fit one's fingers so that they serve as a kind of skin-tearing set of lethal knuckles. The wire knuckles do +2 damage (lethal), and attacks made with them are done using Brawl. Upon activation (done at the moment the knuckles do damage to a foe), the razor-barbed knuckles sting the wound. The following turn, two more continuous lethal damage are conferred to the foe, ignoring Defense and armor. In addition, for the remainder of the combat, the foe hears the braying sounds of a dying herd of cattle, distracting him from making successful attacks. The foe's attacks are therefore hampered by a –1 penalty.

Drawback: After the *arrathudum* is activated, every subsequent turn of combat (until the combat is over, per the Storyteller's designation), the user must roll to resist *Kuruth*. Entering Death Rage does not cause the werewolf to attack, but instead incites him to flee (as if one of his last three Health boxes were filled, per the rules on p. 174, **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). If he succumbs, the flight instinct kicks in immediately. Vampires and other supernaturals capable of frenzy test to see if they go into frenzy in similar fashion.

Action: Reflexive

The Honorable Badge (••••)

The cop found that his job carried privilege and distinction. The badge afforded him respect — respect he used to pull over people and kill them. A sociopath, he found it easy to deceive his way onto the force, and once in a cruiser by his lonesome, he was able to mount a considerable body count before being caught and eventually sent to the electric chair.

His badge, an item cursed by the pleas and screams of those who believed the officer to be a savior and not a killer, can help a werewolf pretend to be someone else. When the badge is activated, the character appears to *one* person to be exactly whom that person most desires to see at that moment (anybody from a long-lost father to a mailman who should be delivering a package from home). The werewolf designates the target of this illusion at the time of activation, and that person must be within the werewolf's line of sight. At this point, the werewolf gains +5 to any Social rolls when dealing with that person, as she believes him to be whom she most wishes to see. The person may make a Wits + Composure roll to see through the illusion, but this roll is contested against the werewolf's

own Wits + Subterfuge roll (a roll to which he gains the +5 Social bonus). This power lasts for one scene.

Drawback: One hour after the badge is activated, the werewolf's hands begin to drip with blood. The blood starts slow at first, the flow light. But over the next eight hours, the blood begins to drip as if running from a leaky faucet, steadily oozing. The blood cannot be contained by gloves — it simply oozes around the edges and even through the toughest leather. Anybody attempting to track the werewolf does so with a +4 bonus. After the eight hours are up, the blood dries upon the hand and flakes off in flecks of rusty brown.

Action: Reflexive

Nizar's Tabuk (••••)

It was a bloodbath. Saddam's Baathist army marched through Al-Hillah, violently quashing a Shi'a uprising by murdering both soldiers and civilians. From a distant window, one of Saddam's snipers fired into civilian crowds with alarming accuracy. The man, Nizar, was preternaturally talented in the art of murder, and every bullet fired found its mark. He believed his rifle, a marksman's Tabuk (looking like a modified Kalashnikov), was blessed by Allah and so was a potent weapon against the uprising. It would be nearly 12 years before Nizar was killed in the United-States-led invasion of Iraq, but his rifle — which since earned hundreds more kills — found its way through many hands since that time.

By itself, the scoped single-shot Tabuk rifle has the following stats: Damage 2, Range 200/400/800, Clip 30+1, Strength 3, Size 3. When the rifle is activated, however, the werewolf can add his Resolve to the roll to attack. Also, damage taken from the shot is aggravated. Finally, when activated, the gun uses up no ammunition. (The gun must be activated for every turn of attack.)

Drawback: The gun is hungry to kill. Once an hour has passed since the last activation, the drawback takes effect unless the werewolf activates the weapon and shoots someone. After the hour, he feels the hairs on the back of his neck stand tall, and the gun grows cold. He has three turns in which to shoot someone with the activated weapon. Failing to do so results in the gun making a terrible wailing sound, a screeching howl that unnerves all who hear it. Those within 100 yards of the weapon suffer a –1 penalty to all Mental rolls, as they are unable to concentrate. The werewolf who last activated the cursed item, however, suffers a –3 penalty to *all* rolls no matter how far away he gets from the rifle. He can always hear the sound cutting through his ear drums like a dentist's drill. The rifle screams this way for eight hours, at which point it abruptly stops. The werewolf's –3 penalty ends at this point, as well.

Keys of Cages (•••••)

In the basement of the Columbus Avenue tenement, the men in pristine suits kept the women locked away in kennel cages. The women were used as slaves for various abysmal pleasures, sold to powerful men with big money and endless desires. The basement was kept mostly dark except for a few Coleman lanterns. The women were fed poorly, and made to wait in their own waste. One night, when being led from her cage, one of the prisoners managed to grab a ring of keys from her jailer, and stabbed one into his jugular vein. She was killed, of course, but the misery left its mark on those keys.

The keys are now cursed. On the ring are nine keys, one for each *severe* derangement in the **World of Darkness Rulebook** (see pp. 96–100). When the keys are activated, a werewolf can use one of these keys (he may not know which key corresponds to which derangement) to lock any door that has a keyhole. The key fits the keyhole, regardless of its physical dimensions. The key doesn't actually *lock* the door. The key merely curses the door with its power.

From that point on, any who try to open that door automatically gain a severe derangement (one that corresponds to whatever key was used to lock it upon activation). The derangement lasts for one month. The effect on the door, however, is permanent — the only way to remove the effect is to destroy the door. All doors locked by a Key of Cages gains a +5 to its Structure.

Legend suggests that more than one such keyring exists — any atrocity tied to being locked away (prison riots, concentration camps, a father who locks his children in an attic) may become thusly cursed.

Drawback: A werewolf who uses these keys is cursed — his next roll, no matter what it's for, suffers an automatic dramatic failure. This drawback is present every time he activates the keyring to lock a door with madness.

Harmony

One of the avenues of character personalization available to the **Werewolf** player doesn't, at first glance, appear all that variable — Harmony.

Harmony doesn't affect all werewolves in the same way. Yes, the various "sins" that affect Harmony are universal — eating human or wolf flesh will cause ter-

rible internal dissonance in all Uratha. But the ways that a werewolf interacts with the demands of Harmony are very different.

One of the most important factors is that Harmony is not actually a change of belief system. It's a new state of internal balance that can be thrown out of whack by acting in accordance with a belief system. It comes from the heart and gut, not the head. Harmony *can* be a belief system, a code of morality. But that's the individual's choice. To use a dietary metaphor, Harmony is more akin to developing allergies to specific foods, while a belief system is like choosing to become a vegetarian for whatever reason: health, religion, ethics, what have you. When a werewolf develops an instinctual sense that, say, stealing isn't particularly wrong, this is somewhat like developing a craving for a particular type of food.

When considering how Harmony affects your character in a roleplaying sense, there are two potential avenues for roleplaying hooks. The first is how Harmony affects his personal code of conduct. The second is what Harmony *feels* like — a more personal question than it might seem at first.

Harmony Versus Belief

The interplay between existing belief and the instinct of Harmony makes this particular Morality Trait so engaging. Harmony is a merciless mistress, and one that bears only some similarity to human instinct. Harmony adds a new axis to a character's behavior, just as the Change adds new instincts and senses. The actual demands of Harmony are already very well discussed in **Werewolf: The Forsaken**. The other part of the equation is considering how your character prioritizes those demands.

The Uratha Viewpoint

If the Uratha can be said to have some sort of communal attitude toward ethical conduct, it's that Harmony must be recognized. Individual werewolves may reject this attitude entirely, of course. But part of teaching a new werewolf how to survive is teaching her how to avoid going mad. That means teaching her how to keep her internal balance in check. The alternative is… unpleasant.

Werewolves are aware of the general concept of Harmony. They call it by a wide variety of words and phrases in human languages, of course; "Harmony" is no more universal a term than "internal balance." The First Tongue has a word for the particular concept, *Zisilim*. However, since *Zisilim* cannot be directly measured, some werewolves ignore the concept as a valueless conceit. Those who ignore Harmony and have no strong human code of ethics to guide them in its stead typically fall far and fast.

The Forsaken, of course, preach a code of behavior that is derived directly from the demands of Harmony. The Oath of the Moon is something like a religious commandment, but it's also something like kosher law — the Oath teaches methods of maintaining one's health through proper behavior. Some werewolves go further, and spend much of their time trying to devise a more complete code of ethics that allows for the refinement of the soul. Even the Forsaken have their solitary ascetics bound by stringent codes. The difference is that these ascetics are more monster than monk.

Conversely, the Pure teach a code of ethics that often involves "sinning" against Harmony, but that also stresses acts of atonement as a method of mending the inevitable imbalance after the fact. Some Forsaken have noted that the Pure approach to Harmony is something like a binge-purge approach to nutrition. And for all that the Pure rival or exceed the Forsaken in strength, the Pure don't seem to have the upper hand in emotional stability.

The tribes, of course, teach their own creeds and have their own philosophies regarding the demands of Harmony. These teachings are discussed at some length in Chapter One of this book.

Human Heritage

No human viewpoint can properly incorporate all the demands of Harmony. But some belief systems don't actually conflict with *Zisilim* all that much. Even the very core of the Morality system that governs humans has no direct conflict with werewolf behavior.

The main problem, of course, is that life as a werewolf has its necessities that often contradict human ethics. A good Catholic werewolf will have difficulty obeying the Ten Commandments, as Catholic doctrine interprets the ninth commandment as forbidding lying — and a werewolf has no choice but to lie in order to protect the secret of werewolf existence. Most human belief systems and religions prohibit murder, and even the most virtuous Uratha is frequently called upon to take the life of another sapient being in order to defend his friends or loved ones, to say nothing of himself.

Many werewolves discard their former human codes of behavior after the Change, if indeed they ever followed them at all. Some try to hold to both human and werewolf codes, although this is far more

difficult. But a large number attempt to reconcile both. It generally takes thinking of their human values in their most basic terms, especially for religious codes. Numerous werewolves describe themselves as Christian, and most willingly admit that their version of faith could be considered a brand new denomination. Obeying the greater part of the Bible is highly difficult, perhaps impossible, but the heart of their faith lies with believing in Jesus Christ as the Savior — something that is never expressly forbidden to werewolves. Some Christianity-based belief systems wind up working a bit more like the Pure cycle of sin and penance, but as one Elodoth put it, "the humans act in much the same fashion, and they're still forgiven."

But not all human codes come from religion. A werewolf who was raised by ex-hippie parents who wanted their kids to do their own thing and be happy no matter what might have just as much difficulty with Harmony's demands as a devout Muslim. Military training might prepare a werewolf better for the emphasis Harmony places on self-reliance, and strong family pressure to acknowledge the "blood is thicker than water" aphorism might cause some conflicts when a werewolf tries to favor his human relatives over his pack.

Ultimately, the details of a character's life before the Change inform potential conflicts with Harmony, as well as the character's attitude toward those conflicts. Your character may feel guilty whenever he's forced to give up on one ideal to promote another — or she might revel in finding a new value system that replaces the ethics she grew up resenting. This may not be the core of your character's concept, but it's an area of perspective well worth considering.

The Internal Compass

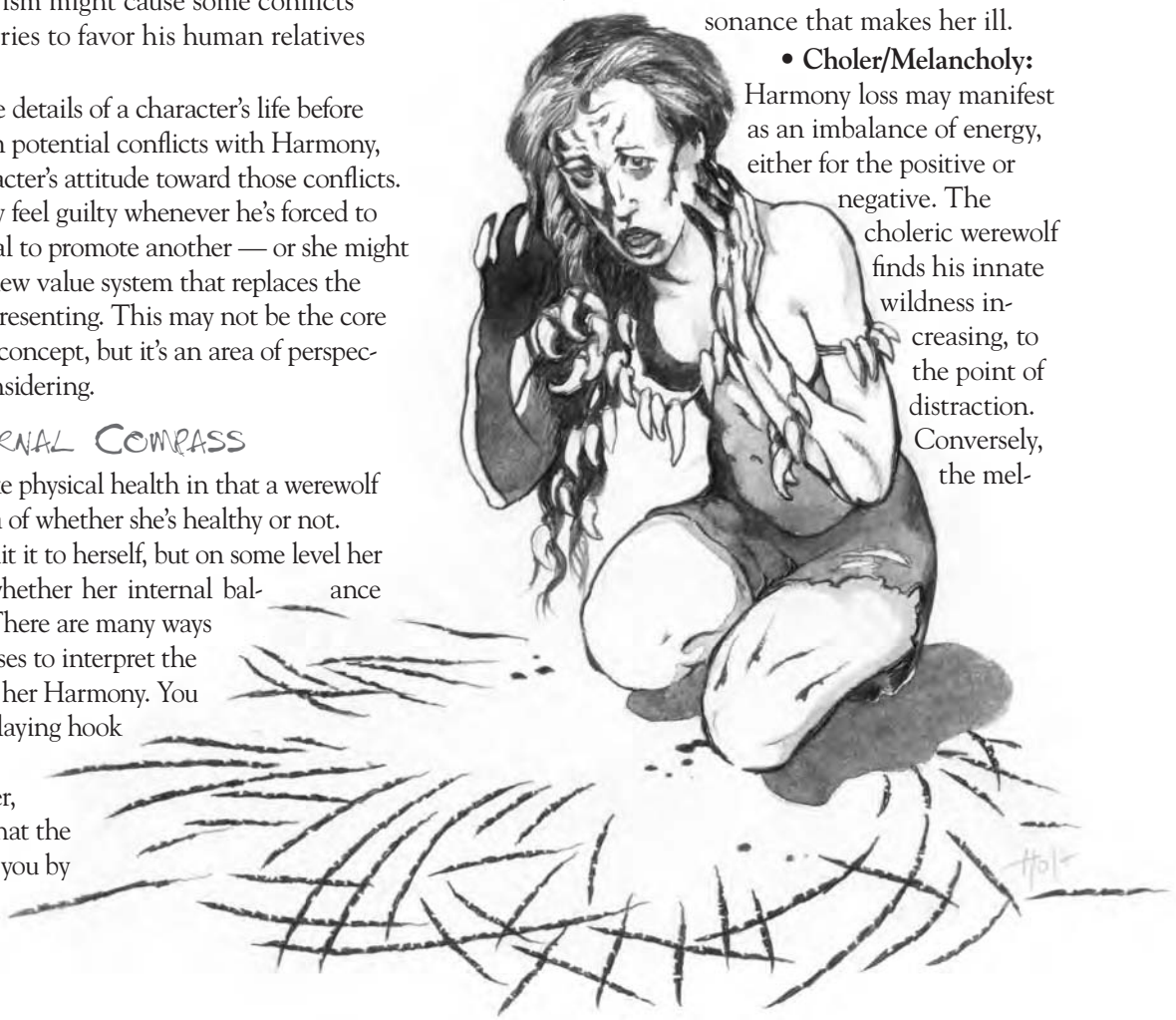
Harmony is like physical health in that a werewolf can have some idea of whether she's healthy or not. She might not admit it to herself, but on some level her instinct tells her whether her internal balance is strong or weak. There are many ways for a werewolf's senses to interpret the vague awareness of her Harmony. You may choose a roleplaying hook for your character's Harmony barometer, or you may prefer that the Storyteller surprise you by describing the unfamiliar sensations that accompany a change in your internal balance.

Losing Harmony

It's much easier to lose Harmony than to gain it, and many werewolves will feel such a loss without ever understanding what it's like to regain it. A werewolf can usually sense when she loses Harmony, as the dissonance it causes her soul is hard to ignore. This dissonance can take many forms, and the compulsions that manifest at low Harmony may reflect the overall nature of the werewolf's ill-feeling. The following are just a few examples of how a werewolf may sense Harmony loss; feel free to devise your own.

• **Nausea:** Some experience Harmony loss as a kind of nausea, as if some intangible miasma had settled over their soul. The sensation is slightly like guilt, and slightly like the revulsion of watching someone else suffer a horrible fate. Their guts writhe and knot, but not physically. At low levels of Harmony, the werewolf feels unhealthy a great portion of the time, and may take no actual pleasure in eating or sex. Her compulsions may involve abstinence or self-denial, in an instinctive reaction to avoid the dissonance that makes her ill.

• **Choler/Melancholy:** Harmony loss may manifest as an imbalance of energy, either for the positive or negative. The choleric werewolf finds his innate wildness increasing, to the point of distraction. Conversely, the mel-



Harmony

ancholic werewolf has less spiritual energy than usual, and may fall into deep despair. The lower his Harmony drops, the more pointed this behavior becomes, until the choleric Uratha is compelled to constant action (often destructive) and his melancholic counterpart finds little genuine meaning in anything. Choleric compulsions often involve strange expenditures of energy, such as aggressively marking available surfaces, or bloodletting in an unconscious attempt to let some of the excess imbalance out. Melancholic compulsions may be related to a desire for greater spiritual energy; peculiar eating habits (such as a craving for bone marrow or glass) or bizarre sexual hungers are just two particular ways for a werewolf to attempt to fill the perceived void.

• **Confusion:** The feelings of Harmony loss may concentrate in the mind. As Harmony drops, the werewolf's thoughts become slightly disassociative. She occasionally finds it harder to keep a solid train of thought, or more frequently experiences completely tangential thoughts and memories. Her compulsions may drive her to compulsive behavior based on numbers or words, such as attempting to negotiate with others in a language she's creating in her head or obsessively counting objects such as bricks or steps. She craves the order that her mind is having increasing difficulty giving her.

• **Pain:** Some werewolves even feel Harmony loss as a dull ache, like an old wound or a slight headache. Though the sensation is not enough to inflict wound penalties, it can be increasingly maddening. As Harmony drops further, the ache becomes more constant and harder to ignore. The werewolf's compulsions may involve obsessive grooming or self-mutilation, as an instinctive attempt to doctor himself, or a instinct for destruction.

• **Distemper:** The werewolf may feel feverish or subject to chills as her Harmony drops, interpreting her spiritual imbalance as an imbalance of body temperature. She may seek out physical contact to try to warm herself, or distance herself from others to try "cooling off." Compulsions may range from attempting to consume foods of the appropriate sort (spicy or frozen foods in particular) to frequent shapeshifting (attempting to find a comfortable form) or wearing strange articles of clothing (from an unconscious belief that wearing all blue or eschewing metal ornaments will make her more comfortable).

Gaining Harmony

Raising Harmony is no easy thing. It requires dedicated attention to both sides of one's nature. A truly harmonious werewolf (which in no way means "peaceful") indulges the savage monster in his heart that wants to savor the feel of his enemies' torn flesh, and also indulges his human mind that seeks order, reason and security.

The sensations of high Harmony are not quite as dramatic as those of low Harmony. A werewolf who moves into Harmony 9 or 10 suffers from no compulsions that drive her toward unusual behavior. She simply feels "healthier," closer to existing as a perfect whole.

The sensation of a high Harmony may act as a mirror to the way in which a werewolf perceives a loss of Harmony. A werewolf who felt pain as he lost Harmony might feel a vague sense of pleasure as he clambered back up toward balance, a pleasant sensation akin to soft cloth against the skin or a filling meal in the belly. The werewolf who was feverish at Harmony 5 might feel perfectly comfortable at Harmony 9, as if her surroundings were the perfect temperature at all times.

Harmony never becomes so pleasant a sensation that it's distracting or addictive. After all, those sensations are signs of something going astray. And a high Harmony is no armor against the horrors of the World of Darkness; indeed, high Harmony provides more to lose. But those werewolves who are able to retain a high Harmony can honestly say that the internal sensation of perfect spiritual health is a reward all its own.

Packs

The desire to be a part of a pack is integral to the mindset of every werewolf. It doesn't matter if she was a people person before her Change or if she was a shack-dwelling misanthrope, the desire to belong to a group of other werewolves is all but impossible to resist. Some Ghost Wolves try, and even succeed for a time, but living without a pack takes a toll on their minds — and on their Harmony. Living without a pack goes against not just the instinct of a werewolf, but the core principles by which they balance their minds and spirits. Ignoring that urge is harmful, but for some, the conflict between the need for pack and their desire to be alone, without their own kind, resolves in favor of no pack at all.

Werewolves of all tribes have this instinctive knowledge that they need a pack, and all form packs. Some join packs of their own tribe, on the assumption that like-minded fellow werewolves will work best with them. Others join packs of mixed tribes, either out of a desire to see other viewpoints or because the other werewolves were old friends from their

human lives. Not every choice a werewolf makes is informed by her shapechanging nature, and concerns from her human days inform her desire for the kinds of werewolves she wants to be around — for her new family. After all, she can't choose her human family, but the pack is a whole new chance, especially for those werewolves from abusive or dysfunctional homes. Of course, the problem then becomes keeping away from an abusive or dysfunctional pack.

Such packs aren't common, however. Unlike human families, the werewolves in a pack choose each other, and their totem. While newly Changed Uratha may find themselves pressured into joining a pack, many existing packs accept new members — especially ones they help mentor. Some allow the new werewolf to decide, others put pressure on her one way or another. There's no common ground.

Starting Afresh

New werewolves who choose to start from scratch have several hurdles to overcome. First is finding a group of like-minded Uratha. If the pack forms because of one cause or another, then finding new members requires making sure that everyone cares about the cause — in addition to everything else. Electing to spend just about all of your time with a group of dysfunctional fanatics isn't something most Uratha want to do.

While a group of werewolves choosing to form a pack because they know each other is one way to go about things, often there aren't enough packless Uratha in an area. To form a new pack, any werewolves who don't already have a pack join together, effectively starting blind. Often, the strongest bonds among packmates are forged this way, as nobody has any preconceived notions about anyone else from their lives before becoming Uratha. When some packmates have known each other before becoming werewolves, the situation changes. Their pre-existing relationship can spoil the bond among the other packmates, leading to accusations of favoritism and worse.

Whether there's a cause or not, the prospective pack need to know if the packmates are going to be able to live together. Most packs do just that. In cities, they share one apartment or house. In the wild, they live together in whatever structures they choose. While rural packs may seem to have it easier, all new packs have to work out little things like who is responsible for rent and bills, who finds food and who looks after the finances. A functional pack doesn't have any freeloaders; everyone pitches in to help with mundane affairs. It's one of the few areas where life in the pack is egalitarian, all ranks and positions forgotten.

The issue of where the pack lives opens up the sometimes thorny question of territory. A new pack can take over the territory of a pack that recently died, or of a pack of Pure that was recently fought off, but such freedoms are a rarity. It's far more common that a new pack has to strike out on its own, finding an area that the pack can claim as a hunting ground. The pack could find a place that has no other werewolves in residence — possible in some sparsely populated areas, like the rural United States, but sheer folly in the crowded British Isles. If the pack does so, the pack has to find somewhere to live, assay the dangers of the territory — do other supernatural beings call it home, or are the *shartha* particularly common? — and convince spirits in the local Shadow that the werewolves are worth more to help than harm. Some spirits will ally with the Uratha simply because having powerful friends is a good thing, but far more will resent the sudden imposition of Forsaken into the spirits' lands, and will take much more convincing. If the pack has moved far, the packmembers will have to introduce themselves to neighboring Uratha and learn from them of any Pure holding territory close by. Likewise, the local packs can be a gold mine of information about the Shadow of the nearby area and many other things that a pack will need to know, but the neighboring packs won't give the information for free. It will take a lot before the other Uratha around the pack's hunting ground see them as locals, rather than ignorant foreigners. Of course, if the pack takes territory close to where the packmembers all Changed, this problem at least is mitigated.

Spiritual Allies

Once a pack has assembled and found a hunting ground, the pack must move on to find a totem. More than a distant patron, a totem is a very real member of the pack that happens to be spiritual. When a pack chooses which spirit to take as the pack totem, the pack's decision says a lot about the nature of the pack. Indeed, it doesn't matter if a pack is made up of the same tribe, ethnicity, gender or anything else — someone who knows what totem the pack follows has a link to what bonds the group of werewolves together.

Having selected a totem, the pack must go out and hunt it. Often, this is the first hunt that a new pack has undertaken together. It's also the sloppiest. Despite being a pack in name, without the spiritual component the new werewolves aren't really a *pack*.



They don't work together as well — but they don't realize that yet. Any pack that ends up with a totem shows potential when the pack hunts the spirit, but only after bonding to the totem do the packmembers realize what they've been missing.

The difference between a pack with a totem and a pack without is the difference between a group of people who happen to live together and a family. The members of a pack may love or hate each other; that doesn't matter. They have proved that they are willing to work together when they have to, and the spiritual bond to the totem is proof of that. An Uratha who is part of a group of werewolves without a totem can leave whenever he wants, without looking back, even if the others have been his friends of 10 or 20 years. An Uratha who is part of a pack won't leave a packmate behind, even if they both hate each other. Even if the totem does nothing more, its presence adds a bond that nobody can describe if she hasn't experienced it.

Most totems add more than just the bond among packmates. What kind of aid the totem gives depends on the spirit. Some will manifest to fight alongside their packs, some spirits will grant their packs boons that match the spirit's nature and yet other spirits will protect their packs with their own Influences and Numina. However the spirit chooses to look after its pack, the spirit will do so. Whether the Uratha members treat it as such is up to them, but the totem is just as much a member as any one of them.

Signing Up

Often, a group of newly Changed werewolves don't get the chance to go off and form their own pack. Uratha don't grow on trees, and there are rarely enough new werewolves in any area to form a pack. Even if there are, some will decide — or be influenced — into staying with the pack that discovered them, or another local pack. Those who join an existing pack have a very different experience from those who strike out and set up their own pack. It's similar to the decision many humans make about whether to take a job with a large, established company or sink all their time into a startup in someone's garage.

A werewolf who joins an existing pack doesn't have to worry about finding others who share his vision, securing territory or hunting a totem spirit. Uratha on the outside looking in see an easy life without these concerns, but the apparent ease masks a whole range of different troubles. From personality clashes to getting too much — or too little — to do because he's the "new boy," joining an established pack can be as hard as starting from scratch.

Some things that established packs may not consider are human concerns such as where the new member will sleep. If the pack maintains a common place of residence, and many do, the new werewolf can find herself sleeping on the sofa — a prospect that looks good when the next new member joins and is on the floor. The new member could find herself having to share a room with another member of the pack, which can quickly lead to arguments as the two personalities clash. Also, the pack likely shares a number of duties from patrolling territory to raising enough cash to make the rent. Some packs will throw the new member in over her head and expect her to keep up. Others will insulate her from these necessary chores for just long enough that they're a sharp reality check when her packmates insist she does her part.

Often, an Uratha who joins an established pack does so because she wants to be close to some remnant of her human life, and the pack's territory is close to that. She must keep her human ties separate from her packmates, or face strong questions from friends and family who neither like nor trust these people she's hanging around with. To humans, a werewolf pack looks a lot like a gang or cult, and people who knew her as a normal person will worry about the new werewolf. Keeping the two sides of her life separate is not an easy thing to do at the best of times, and no matter how she tries, human ties will get in her way. She has a new family now, and loyalty to her old friends and family only gets in the way of doing what she has to. Some Uratha disappear or fake their own deaths, thinking that the pain they cause their human relations is a necessary evil to protect them. Even this isn't enough. The pack's enemies, especially the Pure, will find out somehow. Be it spirits that keep a close eye on the werewolf's family, or a bartender who slips the word on his friends to a customer, someone — or something — will find out, putting the werewolf's relatives in a world of danger.

Bonding with the existing pack can take time. It's hard to get accepted by a group of people who all know each other a hell of a lot better than any of them know you. Even if it's not deliberate, it's still off-putting for the new packmate to see the older packmates sharing in-jokes and sayings, or working together like they've practiced until it's an art form. It takes hard work to break in to the peer group, even with the bonds shared by all members of a pack. Knowing whom the new member likes and whom he dislikes, whom he can trust and whom he'd not lend a 20, isn't easy but it is possible. If he throws himself into his duties and makes a real effort to get to know his packmates, this closeness will come a lot quicker. If he doesn't, the other members will question how much he wanted to join the pack in the first place. After all, in many cases the new werewolf asked to join. Packs where new members are coerced or forced into joining often take much longer before the latest member feels like part of the pack — often, when a newer member joins.

The one packmate who doesn't create this air of exclusion is the pack's totem. Even if the new member's bond with the totem isn't strong to begin with, it wants to know all it can about the new packmate. If the werewolf gets along with the spirit — something almost unique, given the attitude of most spirits toward the Uratha — the bond between the two will strengthen quickly. If, on the other hand, the new packmate sees the totem's ban as a chore or acts in some way that the totem doesn't like, the two will find themselves at odds despite the bond the pair share. Needless to say, if the new packmate has bonded well with the rest of the pack but doesn't get along with the totem, her life can be very interesting indeed.

This enmity can stem from all manner of sources. After all, the new werewolf wasn't part of the pack that hunted the spirit in the first place. He didn't have a part in selecting the totem, and so it's easy for the spirit to see him as something other compared with the pack the spirit remembers. Of course, if the new packmate has joined the pack, there's little that the spirit can do. Even so, it's often wise for packs who are considering taking on new members to consult with their totems. After all, the spirit is just as much a member of the pack as any of the Uratha.

Some packs don't offer their new recruits a choice in the matter. For whatever reason, these packs shepherd new werewolves whom they discover from their Change until they join the pack, without giving the new Uratha a choice in the matter. Why the packs choose to do this varies. For every sole pack of Forsaken in an area dominated by the Pure, who save new werewolves from joining the wrong side, there's a pack dominated by Bale Hounds who don't want word of their practices to get out.

The Wrong Mood?

Some Storytellers may be wondering how this information relates to their games. After all, **Werewolf** is colored by a paranoid, horrific ambiance. Surely taking time out to focus on the pack's day-to-day life runs counter to that?

Playing at happy — or dysfunctional — families has no place in a game of animistic horror, and it poisons the otherwise carefully crafted mood of the game. Right? Well, wrong. The answer is "no," for two reasons.

First, joining or founding a pack isn't re ally an easy, upbeat event. The sections above provide flavor and story hooks, ideas for what can happen (or go wrong) with either endeavor. No pack ever has it easy when it forms, whether the packmembers have to convince a spirit that initially wants them dead to be their totem, or they have to steal territory from the Pure to have a place of their own. Likewise, joining an existing pack is often an exercise in loneliness and worry for the new packmember.

Second, any story should spend time on the life of the pack, the ups and downs that the werewolves go through either when they're starting out or later on. Having a one-shot session focused on the pack can really drive home that the werewolves are closer than many human families. The relatively comfortable life of a pack when nothing's going wrong provides a stark contrast to the paranoia when the Pure come calling. The pack is a refuge from the insanity of the Shadow and the problems that the Uratha have when dealing with the modern world. Use the pack to give the players an island of comfort and safety — then pull the carpet out from under them.

Organization

Not every pack of Uratha organizes itself like a wolf pack, though deep down each werewolf has an instinctive urge to follow an alpha. Some packs are meritocracies, where each member's say is commensurate with his expertise, some are run democratically and others hew closely to the wolf-pack, with a beta and omega in addition to the alpha. Each pack works differently, and generalizing based on a given pack is never a good idea.

That said, every pack has an alpha. There's something about the nature of the pack that makes following an alpha feel right. For some packs, the alpha is no more than a figurehead, ensuring every packmember knows what the pack as a whole has decided to do. Far more commonly, the alpha is the final authority, the werewolf in charge of the pack. Often, she listens to her packmates — especially those with more experience of a given situation — and uses what they've told her to guide her decisions. This isn't always the case. Some alphas are effectively dictators or tyrants, who listen to their packs only if the whim takes them. These alphas control their packs with an iron fist, and soon most other packmembers learn to get in line behind them. Other werewolves will still follow a tyrannical alpha, some through fear and others through seeing the results he's achieved before. A powerful werewolf with a weak pack can lead without anyone questioning him, and as long as he keeps succeeding, his pack will follow him to the gates of Hell.

Other alphas listen to their packs, though the alphas retain the final authority. Even if their packmates' suggestions appear to be workable, these alphas may well ignore any suggestions in favor of their own instincts. These alphas tend to earn the respect of their packmates quicker than tyrants, mostly because such alphas do listen to their fellow werewolves. If the alphas do something that doesn't make sense at first, there's often a reason beyond simple vanity, though many only share their reasoning with their packs after the fact. While such alphas can make inspiring leaders, these werewolves can fall to thinking themselves superior to their packmates, and slowly use their ultimate authority over their fellow Uratha more and more.

Some packs model themselves more closely on wolf packs. In addition to an alpha, packmates act as beta and omega as well. The beta is a second in command, a right-hand man to the alpha. When the pack must split, often the beta is in charge of one group while the alpha takes the other. Among some packs, the beta werewolf is the old alpha who was beaten in a challenge, while others have the post of beta mean little more than a specialist, a werewolf with knowledge that's particularly useful in dealing with the current problem. For packs in which the beta is a more permanent position, the beta is often the werewolf who will take over when the alpha dies, unless another packmate challenges the beta. Other packs prefer their members to challenge for leadership based on skill and experience, and while being the pack's beta is a good start, it is no guarantee of leadership.

Werewolves who are the omegas of their packs have an interesting role to play. The bottom rung of the pack hierarchy, omega wolves get the last access to food and never get to mate. A werewolf who is her pack's omega is the bottom rung, the butt of all the jokes. She may be physically weaker than her packmates, or a new member of the pack when all the others have known each other for years, but she's the bottom rung. Being the omega does have some

benefits — no matter how bad things get, she's still part of a pack. Her packmates will come to her aid and share their resources, and she still gets to feel part of something. Despite the downsides, being an omega werewolf is still vastly preferable to not having a pack at all.

Some packs prefer to organize along more human lines. In such a pack, the alpha may be a figurehead, or even voted into place. Plans are made with the full input of each packmember, and any contentious decisions are put to a vote. Each member of the pack has an equal say in everything that the pack does. Despite that, the human angle is a major downside. There's something that goes against a werewolf's instincts about voting on everything, and often if a pack waits for every member to say her piece that pack isn't going to be able to react with the speed that others could. Also, the pack is likely to strain its relationship with its totem. Spirits do not understand the human need for false equality. Trying to force this on beings that are half-spirit is inadvisable; trying to incorporate a spirit in such decisions is absurd. If the pack does go for such human means of dealing with problems, the pack drives a wedge between the pack and its totem.

Conflicts

Instinct tells an Uratha that he must run with a pack, that walking alone is unhealthy. That doesn't mean he has to like his packmates. A pack is like a family in many ways, and all families fight. Some are mere sibling rivalries and squabbles, the differences of opinion that keeps any group together. Others are more serious, and when death is involved — as it so often is for the Uratha — such conflicts can split a pack in two.

Not every problem or argument is a serious one. While packmates may initially think that they get along just fine, a werewolf who spends every waking hour around another werewolf will soon find out each little habit and mannerism that tries his patience. Some werewolves can put these irritations behind them, but far more are unable to. Often, a pack has a means of dealing with conflicts, making sure that they don't lead to one or more members leaving, but sometimes that isn't enough. Finding out that one of your packmates used to be in the KKK is one thing, finding out that he's not thrown off the bigotry and hatred is quite another — especially when other members of the pack aren't exactly white of skin and blond of hair.

Several alphas understand how to deal with these situations, from the simple and petty to far more important problems. While their methods are decried by other packs as being too human, often they get results. If it's a small problem, the alpha may talk with both packmates first, trying to work out a solution that doesn't rely on her playing favorites. This could be as simple as getting both packmates to talk through a solution, or require that one actively tries to stop whatever behavior is aggravating his packmates.

All too often, that doesn't work or both sides are just as right as each other. In that case, buried in the instincts of each werewolf is the idea of challenging for dominance. This is also how packs that aren't so human deal with conflicts. The packmates who are in contention engage in some form of activity designed to prove which is correct. To more martial werewolves, any challenge is shorthand for trial by combat, often — but not always — to first blood. Whether the fight has a referee and occurs at a set time, in the fashion of a duel, or involves one werewolf ambushing the other without warning is up to the pack. As long as the werewolf's packmates consider the challenge fair, the result stands.

More canny werewolves realize that a trial by combat isn't always the best way to settle anything. They prefer other forms of challenge, from games of chess to verbal debates. Some packs insist that the werewolf who brought the complaint must abide by the other's decision as to which form the challenge will take, but that's far from common. When a werewolf is aggrieved, it's often up to her to see that sufficient justice is done.

Not all packs rely on challenges to resolve conflicts. Some have an adjudicator, often an Elodoth, who weighs each side and proclaims who is right. The adjudicator has to be fair, and more than that, her packmates must see her being fair. Shady deals, bribes and playing favorites make her packmates less likely to trust her judgment, and thus she's less likely to solve anything. That doesn't mean that corruption isn't possible, just that the adjudicator must be careful about hiding it. In more populated areas, one member of a pack may act as an adjudicator for other packs, but only at their request. While she may make better decisions, and have the respect of other werewolves, her lack of connection to the pack in question can be a notable problem.

In other packs, the alpha is the final authority. Quarrels may start among packmates, but they end with him. This technique only works if the packmembers hold their alpha in high regard — or are scared

shitless of him. In that case, there's no assurance that the judgment the alpha hands down will be fair or impartial, but he'll likely take a stand that the majority of his pack agree with. Of course, there's nothing to stop him siding with a minority view, either because he agrees with it, or for less obvious reasons.

Punishments vary among packs, often based on the severity of the offence or the popularity of the guilty party. If the pack's Rahu has saved every packmember's life several times over, the pack will likely hand down a lesser punishment than a new, untried member. Minor problems, such as deliberately aggravating another packmate, warrant minor punishments such as an increase in chores or spending more time out patrolling the pack's territory. More serious issues, such as attacking another packmate, get likewise increased punishments. The majority of packs never wish to kill a werewolf who was one of their own, so the most severe punishment most will ever lay down upon a packmate is exile, removing him from the pack. This is often reserved only for the most serious of crimes against the pack, when the exiled werewolf has proved that there's no way he can work with the pack.

The above describes the situation in the majority of packs, but certainly not all. There are packs that consider fairness and justice to be human weaknesses. In these packs, the alpha's word is law. If a werewolf has his alpha's trust, then the werewolf can do a lot — from "accidentally" attacking packmates to sexual assault or worse — and receive no punishment, while his victim is punished for false accusation. Often, these packs consider exile too good for many werewolves, and for harsh crimes — real or invented — the list of punishments includes death. Other packs that hear of this may want to take action, but unless they have proof that the pack is killing its own members, they have no reason to take action.

Pack Mentality

Every werewolf has an instinctive need to belong to a pack, something no human truly understands. There's a distinct change in mindset that comes along with the Change, and that mindset affects the new werewolf's view of social situations. His pack is more than a family: it's a part of who he is. For a werewolf, the pack becomes part of his self-identity. While he may not get along with all of his packmates, and while he may hate them all on sight, having a pack is infinitely better than not.

Without a pack, a werewolf becomes listless and irritable. His desire to cling to his human ways of thinking and viewing the world is in stark conflict with his need to be with others of his own kind. While it's possible for him to carry on without a pack, it's not at all easy. He is often unable to focus, thinking about how to solve each problem he faces with a pack, rather than on his own. While it's possible for him to overcome these problems by working with a group — wolf-blooded or other supernaturals are most common — there's still an itch at the back of his mind that the situation isn't right, things are not as they should be. Either he learns to deal with these problems, burying his discomfort beneath a shallow layer of calm, or the distraction of his own instincts prevents him from leading a human life that he wants.

In a pack, there's something different. Each packmate is comfortable around his packmates in a way that humans cannot be. A packmate who takes a human or wolf-blooded lover often finds himself having to explain the closeness between his pack and him, lest his lover become jealous. Werewolves can and often do maintain close friendships from their human lives, but likewise these friendships begin to cool, especially if the human sees his old friend around a group of strangers with whom he seems to get on better with than anyone. This isn't an easy thing to go through, and many werewolves find themselves letting their human relationships cool while growing closer to their packs in the process in a cycle without apparent end. Likewise, werewolves look on their packmates' close relationships with suspicion at best, and paranoia at worse. The pack closely scrutinizes anything that could come between one packmember and the others, and for good reason. If some creature — be it the Pure, a spirit or some other creature inimical to the Uratha — got too close to a packmate, all the pack's secrets could get out.

This comfort extends to how a pack thinks about a problem. A werewolf doesn't see a problem in terms of his individual abilities, rather approaching every situation with his pack firmly in mind. From cleansing a Wound to fending off the Pure, a werewolf with a pack is never alone. He thinks in terms of his pack, and their abilities as a whole. An Elodoth may not be able to take on a warped Spirit-Claimed by himself, but he has an instinctive understanding that the pack's Rahu is up to the task. Everything the pack does together reveals more about each member to each other, and a pack would look oddly at any member who spent too long away from the others. The others wouldn't know his strengths and weaknesses as they know their own, and likewise he wouldn't know

theirs — potentially disastrous if he suggests any plans, or the pack needs his help to resolve a situation. No pack can afford to have lone wolves, and to the Uratha, spending too long away from one's pack is a real problem.

Often, packs have little rituals that they go through to cement their bond. There's nothing magic about these actions, but they have deep hooks in the werewolf psyche. A pack may all sleep naked together — not for any sexual reason, but because it reinforces how comfortable they are together. Likewise, a pack may swim together or perform other intimate actions with other packmates present. Often, these bonding exercises involve the packmembers being naked. This isn't because werewolves find each other sexually arousing — no more than they would other humans, anyway — but because nudity is a strong taboo in many human cultures. In most Western cultures, the only people who see someone entirely naked are her parents (when she is young) and her lovers. The bond among packmates, the rush of understanding that they share, is different from — and often claimed to be stronger than — human love.

The bonds among packmates are strong, and that extends to the pack's totem. The spirit is as much a part of the pack as any werewolf, and while some packs consider the totem to be nothing more than a storehouse of power or a means for them to use spiritual powers, they never truly understand their totem. The spirit is both a member of the pack and the pack personified; thus, many packs ask their totem to be with them and watch over them, especially when cementing the pack bond.

Sometimes, a bond long forged must be broken. An Uratha who kills a fellow werewolf, or who otherwise commits a great crime against his pack, is exiled from his pack. This is more than a symbolic gesture: the family that is the pack is literally losing a member. Exile is never a decision made lightly, but sometimes it's the only way. More than just expelling the exiled Uratha from the pack, the other members of the pack will not acknowledge him. To them, he is not just gone, he is dead. After all, the packmembers had a spiritual bond with their packmate, and now that is gone. Any werewolf who claims to be him must be lying, as that bond isn't there. Symbolically, it's the same as a death sentence, at least within the pack. The majority of packmates must agree to the decision, and the totem must also agree to remove its bond from the werewolf; often, but not always, this happens in a stylized fashion, with each remaining member of the pack turning their backs on the exiled werewolf, or spitting upon him.

The exiled werewolf often moves on. He's never going to be welcome in the pack's territory, and most of the nearby packs will soon hear why he was cast out. Despite this, the desire to be a part of a pack still burns within his mind. His best choice is to try to find a new area, and join a pack of other werewolves who don't know of his crime. Some, especially those who believe that they were justified or have reformed, tell their new packs what happened, hoping honesty will stop history repeating itself. If the crime was caused by mental suggestion, or was something the new pack doesn't consider a serious crime (similar to humans, werewolves can be very intolerant), the pack may accept him. If his crime still haunts him or he remains defiant, he's likely to keep his past actions a secret. After all, why pollute a perfectly good working relationship with a new pack just because a gang of far-off Uratha didn't like him?

Totem

The totem is both the most essential and most alien part of the pack. The bonds between the totem and the packmembers are what makes a pack into something more than just a group of werewolves. The totem can act as an emissary to other spirits, or assist the pack in the physical world. No matter how close the totem gets to its pack, however, the totem remains a spirit. Not only does it lack the instincts and drives of werewolves, it's missing a lot of the human aspect as well.

The bond between totem and pack is a strong one. When a totem joins a pack, the packmembers' essence alters ever so slightly in a fashion favorable to the totem spirit. This change in resonance (as much a "mark" as anything else) is enough to make the packmembers slightly more at ease around each other, and marks them as being part of the pack. The change in resonance is subtle and unique to each spirit, and from this small change the pack starts to bond. They start to think in ways that the totem agrees with, and the totem, in turn, is affected by their actions. The spirit picks up on the werewolves' affectations and attitudes toward common problems, and in return the packmembers slowly start to think more and more in line with their totem — and what it represents. Much of the bond between werewolves and their totem spirit is social, as each packmember does things for the totem and the spirit does things in return. The only spiritual part of the bond is the mark of resonance that each packmate shares with the totem, and for many packs this serves only to

break the ice with their totem. The close links are forged by word and deed, much as they are for packmates.

A pack's totem can help the pack out in a lot of ways. The totem can make the pack stronger, faster or smarter. The totem might grant the packmembers a Gift, or a unique ability that marks the werewolves as the totem's followers. All of these blessings involve the spirit giving power directly to the werewolves in its pack. For some, it's a brash show of how much the totems can empower their followers, while other totems prefer to give their packs power so that they can remain in the background unnoticed. A totem that grants obvious benefits to its followers gives them direct insight into the spirit's nature.

Totems can also assist their packs more directly. Their packs find that things go easier for them when they are in a place that the spirit's Influences can affect, and spirits that have slipped across the Gauntlet must not just contend with angry Uratha but also a spirit. Facing a spirit that is anchored to a pack of werewolves is never a fun prospect, especially if that spirit is powerful in its own right. In the Shadow Realm, the pack's totem walks alongside the werewolves as real as they are, and just as willing to strike down their enemies. Some totems are able to materialize in the physical world, adding their support to their packs when it is needed.

Despite all of these benefits, the pack totem never quite fits in… and it doesn't even really try to. It isn't an Uratha, it doesn't know what it is like to be Forsaken and thus there's always that niggling doubts in the werewolves' minds: *Does this spirit really understand us? Can we trust it?* It takes a long time for the pack to find the answer to such questions. After all, spirits are alien beings — even Uratha ancestor-spirits do not think like werewolves; the Uratha's transition into spirit has altered their perceptions and priorities in a way that no Uratha could understand without going through the same thing. Spirits think in terms of resonance and imperatives, the commands of their bans and the fields of their Influences. What a totem-spirit suggests when its pack asks for advice may be illogical, ill-advised or just plain impossible. This fact is a part of what makes totems more than just reservoirs of power or summoned creatures that can blast spiritual foes. A totem may not attack another spirit because of its ban — though the totem won't necessarily tell the pack that beforehand. The bond between totem and pack tries to inform the werewolves of how different the totem's worldview is by requiring the packmembers to hold to a ban, but many packs ignore the underlying lesson.



So why do spirits become totems? Often, they buckle under at the mere sight of the werewolves. There are ancient bans and compacts at work that underlie the concept of Uratha packs having totem spirits, but some spirits are more willing than others are. Some even present themselves to packs without them having to hunt for their totem.

The majority of spirits become pack totems because doing so gives them allies. In the Shadow, a spirit backed up by several of Father Wolf's descendants holds significantly more power than the spirit alone. While the majority of spirits still resent the kinslayers, they respect the werewolves' physical power and that gives the totem spirit an edge. Others, especially those that offer their patronage to the pack, may be fleeing other spirits, needing the strength that the werewolves offer, but it's more likely that the spirit has a different purpose and the spirit wants to use the pack for its own ends. Once the bond between pack and spirit is strong enough, those goals will be the pack's goals, and the werewolves will do the spirit's work gladly.

The relationship between pack and totem is never perfect, and some packs prefer it that way. Some Uratha are just callous, treating their spiritual packmate as nothing more than a source of extra power or a tool they can use to bargain with spirits on their own terms, rather than as a real member of the pack. These abusive packs often retain their totems for a while, but their actions change the spirits. At best, the spirit will withhold its blessings and powers, and eventually leave the pack behind. Far more common is for the pack's actions to change the spirit, dragging it down in the cycle of abuse. This is especially true when the pack's actions toward the world are worse than toward the spirit. The totem is compelled to assist the pack simply because they're its pack, and so it does. More and more, the pack calls upon the spirit's aid for the pack's own purposes, and the spirit's nature changes, little by little, as the pack does. Soon enough, the pack totem is a wholly different spirit from the one the pack bonded with, and the change in the totem has started to drag the pack in a new direction, whether the pack wants to or not.

The resonance of the totem does more than just open up a means for the packmembers to work together and recognize the totem. The resonance also affects the pack's drive, adding a subtle undertone to its every action. A pack who follows Panther-Who-Slinks-in-Shadowed-Paths and one following Boar-with-Iron-Hooves may both need to break someone out of prison, but there the similarities end. Boar-with-Iron-Hooves' pack won't even think about sneaking in and sneaking out, instead setting up a riot or blowing one of the walls open, whereas Panther-Who-Slinks-in-Shadowed-Paths would never conceive of such overt action. The resonance and Influences of the totem spirit affects how the pack looks at problems, and as the pack grows closer to its spirit, the packmembers will start to see situations more and more as their spiritual patron does, unless they make an effort to change. If the packmembers do change, their actions will change the spirit as well. Werewolf packs symbolize the interdependency between the physical world and the Shadow, after all. One cannot change without affecting the other.

Animistic Horror

It may be hard to reconcile the idea of a totem spirit with the concept of a game of animistic horror. After all, the idea of **Werewolf** is that the denizens of Shadow hate the Uratha for being half-flesh and half-spirit, something that inspires instinctive revulsion to those of pure spirit origin. Why would any spirit want to help a pack? And of those that would, why go into so much detail?

For the Uratha, the totem bond is a throw back to the days when Father Wolf was still alive. It's a sign of the physical and the spiritual being in harmony, and a rare one at that. But that's not always the case for spirits. A spirit may join in to the totem bond for a number of reasons, not all of which have so noble a purpose. The spirit may just want an ablative screen of werewolves to hide behind when the spirit's enemies come call ing. After all, the pack is honor-bound to defend their totem — it's another member of their pack. Thus the spirit gets protection, and possibly free reign to make even more enemies. Others may see the bond with a pack as a very lucrative op portunity; if they have an agenda that involves the material world, what better way to accom plish it than acquiring an anchor made of the very creatures who are sworn to guard the boundary between physical and spiritual. Yet others want the chance to influence a pack of Uratha. These beings' resonance starts to affect the were wolves, who go along with it and only make the situation worse. In such cases, a totem spirit can lead a pack most of the way to becoming Bale Hounds without anyone noticing.

Even if the totem has no other agenda, the spirit is one among many. If the odds are for the pack and the spirit is truly on their side, the rest of the *Hisil* is not. Other spirits will regard the totem as a traitor, serving Uratha masters instead of being what it should be. The pack and its totem stand alone against both spirits and *shartha*, and the pack then has another ally to lose — or see corrupted.

New Rules

The following rules are optional, but offer extra flavor if the Storyteller wants to emphasize the feel of belonging to a pack, and the advantages that it has over going solo. The Merits and combat options here are in addition to any other extra Merits that the Storyteller is using, and fit alongside the extra Merits provided on p. 103.

Pack Merits

The following Merits either provide a bonus for the pack as a whole, akin to the Totem Merit, or become more effective as more members of a pack buy them. These Merits show the closeness and effectiveness a werewolf pack possesses compared to just about any other group.

Pack Affinity (• or •••)

Effect: Either because packmembers have spent so long in each other's company or through a powerful totem bond, packmembers have a better understanding of one another. They will find themselves finishing each other's sentences, or all sharing the minor aches and pains of one member. Some packs even share a form of primitive communication, through a combination of these shared feelings and body language.

For one point, each packmate who possesses this Merit gains an unconscious awareness of the others' general states of mind. All Social rolls among packmates have a +1 bonus as long as one of them possesses this Merit.

For three points, each packmate who possesses this Merit can communicate with others who also possess this Merit without using words. A combination of body language and the general low-level empathy between packmates allows them to send simple messages of up to three words maximum without anyone else being able to eavesdrop. These messages are normally of the form of "Danger," "They hurt Jack" and so on.

Drawback: Characters with the three-dot form of this Merit suffer the highest wound penalty of all of their packmates, whether they themselves are injured or not. There's a price to pay for such close ties.

Pack Tactics (Varies)

Effect: The packmates have trained together, learning how best to use their combined skills to strike at powerful opponents or groups that threaten to overwhelm them, to dominate others before a fight begins or to get their way without ever being seen. This training has paid off, and the packmates have a number of options that are unavailable to other groups when they work together.

The pack can pick one pack tactic for each point put into this Merit. This Merit is shared by all members of the pack; all members of the pack can use the tactics whether they put points into this Merit or not. The pack cannot select pack tactics that require more werewolves than are part of the pack. The prerequisites of each tactic must be met by one member of the pack who possesses this Merit (hence, a tactic with prerequisites of Manipulation ••• and Intimidation ••• would require one packmate to have both traits).

Synergy (••)

Effect: Your character has spent a lot of time working with his packmates, to the point where they are more effective working together than with other people. They know how to apply each other's strengths in general, rather than in specific trained situations. If your character is involved in a standard teamwork roll (not including pack tactics) with other members of his pack, and everyone involved has this Merit, you get a +1 die bonus to your roll.

Drawback: If your character is involved in a standard teamwork roll (not including pack tactics) without any other members of his pack, you suffer a –1 penalty.

Pack Tactics

Pack tactics are special combat maneuvers which can only be performed by a pack, using the confidence that each member has in her peers to the advantage of the pack. While traditional thinkers consider pack tactics a form of synergy that only makes itself evident in combat, the principle of some or all of the pack working together can apply just as well to a range of other situations, from interrogation to research.

Which tactics a given pack will use is entirely up to that pack. Rather than just providing a list of possible tactics, this section outlines a simple system for building tactics that apply to a wide range of situations. Following that are some examples, useful both in and out of combat. In many ways, pack tactics are similar to Fighting Style Merits in that pack tactics offer extra maneuvers that the pack can use — though only when more than one packmember is present. Unlike Fighting Styles, there is no hierarchy or need to buy some tactics before others.

Creating Tactics

Pack tactics consist of set-piece actions, things that the packmates have practiced together. While many werewolves think of pack tactics only in terms of combat, they are just as useful if not more in other situations. Members of a pack who have practiced can intimidate people or sneak into high-security facilities without a problem just as easily as they can dog-pile a larger enemy.

The first thing to do when working out a new pack tactic is to decide what you want to do. What's the sort of thing that you envisage the pack doing better if the packmembers train together? What tactics is the pack likely to use? A pack based on stealth and sneak-raids is going to have a very different set of tactics from a pack of straightforward ass-kickers. What is the pack like? What's the packmembers' style when they work together? These questions will give you an idea of the sort of thing the pack may train at.

Second, decide how many packmates are needed to carry out the tactic. Harrying someone to both tire him out and get him to run where you want takes at least four werewolves (one front, two sides, one back), while a show of strength might take only two. Not every tactic requires that the whole pack gets involved; the best packs know how to divide their resources to get the most benefit. No tactic can involve more than five werewolves.

Third, what does each packmate do? Assign each role in the tactic an action. Tactics are normally based on the teamwork mechanics (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 134). One of the packmates is the primary actor, the others are secondary actors. If the tactic calls for it, the teamwork mechanics needn't apply, but one werewolf remains the primary actor; the others the secondary actors. If some of the secondary actions are combat actions (grapples, bites and so on) the action doesn't count as a secondary action for the purposes of the pack tactic.

Fourth, what are the requirements? Each pack tactic has prerequisites — they require one dot per two packmates involved (round up), distributed among one Attribute and one Skill that the tactic uses — if there's only one prerequisite dot, it must go into a Skill; no Attribute prerequisite can be rated at one dot. One member of the pack must meet all the requirements for the pack to take the tactic. Adding extra dots of prerequisites means you can add extra benefits if the tactic succeeds. No pack tactic can have more than twice the number of participants in dots of prerequisites.

Fifth, what are the bonuses? Aside from the potential extra dice from teamwork, a pack tactic has extra bonuses from the tactic's prerequisites. Use the following guidelines, based on how many dots of prerequisites the tactic has. These guidelines are meant to give you an idea, rather than being set in stone.

One/Two dots: Opponent halves his Defense against the primary actor; primary actor adds one extra die.

Three/Four dots: Primary actor's action is Instant rather than Contested; primary actor adds one success if action is successful.

Five/Six dots: One secondary actor's roll benefits from "9 again"; primary actor can make two connected actions rather than one (Teamwork bonus doesn't apply).

Seven/Eight dots: Primary actor's roll benefits from "9 again"; Teamwork bonus applies as extra successes to primary actor's roll rather than die bonus.

Nine/10 dots: All secondary actors benefit from "9 again."

Sixth, check with the Storyteller to see whether the new pack tactic meets with her approval. She may ask you to change it so that the tactic doesn't mess with her game — especially if the tactic has nine or 10 dots of prerequisites. Work with her to make the tactic a useful part of the game.

Example of Creation

Rob is working out a pack tactic for his character's pack. The pack has been mixed up in a number of underworld deals, and keeps having to prove that the pack is serious. The best way to prove that is good old muscle — it's much easier to intimidate someone if your packmate is holding him six feet off the ground, especially if that packmate came up behind the target.

It's obviously a two-werewolf tactic. One lifts the target off the ground, with a one-off Grapple attack in Dalu form (Rob assumes that the added strength will be enough to lift the target up). Assuming that works, the other can talk the target round — a straightforward Presence + Intimidation action. The second werewolf is the primary actor; while the first could start a fight, the second is helped by his packmate.

As there are only two werewolves involved, there's one mandatory prerequisite dot, which must go into a Skill. Rob figures Intimidation is the obvious choice. Wanting more bang for his buck than one dot gets him, Rob adds a three-dot Strength prerequisite. With four dots of prerequisites, Rob figures

that the target doesn't get to resist his Intimidation attempt, and Rob can add two dice to his attempt. Helen, his Storyteller, figures that just one extra die is enough, along with any successes left over from the successful grapple.

Captive Audience

Required Werewolves: 2

Prerequisites: Strength •••, Intimidation •

Effects: One Uratha in Dalu form grabs the target from behind and lifts him six inches off the ground, as a standard grapple action. If this succeeds, the other can make a Presence + Intimidation roll with one bonus die for each success that the grappler won by plus one, and the target's resistance to the Intimidation roll is reduced to zero dice.



Sample Pack Tactics

There's no way that the tactics here could be a comprehensive list of pack tactics. It's impossible to group the tactics into Mental, Physical and Social because of the wide range of actions involved — as the above example demonstrates. Use these for inspiration and to gauge what level of prerequisites a pack tactic should have when designing your own.

Bad Cop, Worse Cop

Required Werewolves: 2

Prerequisites: Presence •••, Intimidation •

Effects: Both werewolves interrogate a human, relying on the social problems Primal Urge engenders to put the target more on edge and make him feel even more victimized than he is. Make a Presence + Intimidation teamwork roll. If the first roll succeeds, the primary actor gets the normal Primal Urge social penalty as bonus dice to his roll (hence, Primal Urge 3 would give a +2 bonus to his roll).

Can Opener

Required Werewolves: 2

Prerequisites: Strength ••, Brawl ••

Effects: One werewolf, usually in Urshul or Urhan form, leaps at the attacker, catching her claws in its hide. Using her momentum to tear away part of the hide, the second can then dig her claws into the unprotected flesh underneath. This tactic works very well on armored humans as well. The first werewolf makes a Strength + Brawl attack that does no damage. If that succeeds, the second werewolf's attack ignores any armor that the target was wearing, including natural armor from scales or a thick hide.

Crowd Eyes

Required Werewolves: 4

Prerequisites: Wits •••, Composure ••••

Effects: When the pack needs to find someone in a crowd, just one werewolf probably won't cut it. Four werewolves moving through the crowd in clear lines, making sure that they're not getting in each other's way, and communicating through glances and nods can go through a group of humans much faster, and stand a better chance of finding what they're looking for. Make a Wits + Composure teamwork roll. The primary actor's roll benefits from "9 again."

Dog-Pile

Required Werewolves: 3

Prerequisites: Strength •••, Brawl ••

Effects: One werewolf runs at the pack's opponent, knocking him to the ground. The others gather round, biting and clawing at any point they can reach and keeping the opponent on the ground with their added weight. The first werewolf makes a normal attack roll, and if she gets more successes than the opponent's Size, he falls to the ground prone. The other werewolves add one success to their attack rolls if they succeed. Note that attacks against a prone opponent have a +2 bonus. The opponent cannot get up unless he can succeed at a Strength + Athletics roll penalized by the highest Size of the Uratha dog-piling him.

Good Samaritan

Required Werewolves: 3

Prerequisites: Manipulation •••, Subterfuge ••

Effects: Sometimes, the pack needs to get information from someone the pack has never met before, and the packmembers don't have time to charm their way into his good books. Two packmembers in Dalu form make to beat him up, preferably in a dark alley (Presence or Strength + Intimidation). One packmember in Hishu then runs in and "scares them off." The Intimidation rolls act as secondary Teamwork rolls for the rescuer's Manipulation + Subterfuge roll to get on the target's good side and get him talking. The target is so flustered that the werewolf's Subterfuge roll has three successes added if it succeeds.

Wishbone

Required Werewolves: 2

Prerequisites: Strength •••, Brawl •

Effects: Both werewolves, in either Urshul or Urhan form, grab one of the target's extremities and pull in opposite directions. The results are often about as subtle as a brick, but that often has its advantages. Both werewolves make a bite attack against the target, dealing damage as normal. The second werewolf to act adds two successes if his roll succeeds.



Chapter III

"God," said Irina, "you can smell it all the way up here."

Sonia's mouth twitched up in that little way she had, which she liked to pretend was something like a smile. "I can't believe you didn't know this was here before."

"Why would I? I mean, all right, yes, I knew there was a labor camp somewhere around here. Okay, maybe not that I knew, maybe more like I had heard. But... sweet God, the smell!"

"You're a sensitive one, Irina. I can't smell anything but ice and dirt. Frozen dirt."

"You lying bitch, Sonia, don't tell me you can't smell this." Irina pawed at his face.

"Look, there's no blood or shit down there that isn't, oh, fifty years old. This is one of the camps that was shut down not too long after Stalin died."

"Right, yes, so what's that fucking smell?"

"You're the one who changed under the crescent moon, Irina. I was hoping you'd tell me."

There was a long pause.

"God, I hate you, Sonia."

The frontier is the outer edge of the wave — the meeting-point between savagery and civilization... The wilderness masters the colonist.
— Frederick Jackson Turner

Welcome to the Clutch

Alliances don't usually work for werewolves. They can function on a limited level, of course — not every pack eyes the throats of neighboring werewolves, but most recognize that nature demands a level of tooth-and-claw competition. Still, most "alliances" are little more than a handshake or an honorable nod to watch each other's backs when trouble brews. No concordat is drawn up on old parchment. Nobody swears an oath to uphold some kind of invented tradition. An alliance of packs is little more than an unspoken understanding not to piss on people who might have to come through for you in a pinch. It works as often as it fails.

Still, sometimes werewolves look to something greater. Territory is just one slice of the domain pie, and a single pack cannot hope to protect an entire domain from the endless regiment of enemies who hunger for werewolf meat or spiritual discord. The Forsaken are outnumbered. Spirits are limitless. The Pure are incalculable hunters. Even a single throng of Beshilu can overwhelm a pack with its squirming knot of a thousand starving rats.

And so, occasionally packs come together, recognizing that the threat that surrounds them is far greater than what a single pack can think to fight. They establish some kind of formal accord, a society larger than most werewolves are used to. Such an alliance may have a 100 names: accord, confraternity, brood, coalition, protectorate. The most common — and perhaps unsurprisingly, the most vulgar — term used is "clutch." A clutch of wolves, coming together and protecting a given domain. In a perfect world, the packs form a small society, operating by given rules of order and forging an alliance that staves off enemies from outside the domain. In a perfect world, such a pact stands the test of time.

Newsflash: This isn't a perfect world. Alliances work for a time, but many fail. And the enemies aren't always outside the brood. Just as often, they lurk within.

Clutch, Noun.

Why the term "clutch?" Two reasons

The first definition of the word is this: "a hand, claw, talon or paw in the act of grasping." Werewolves know that attempting such an alliance is a far grasp. But nothing worth doing is without risk and effort, right?

The second definition — and by far the more vulgar of the two — is as follows: "the complete set of eggs produced and/or incubated at the same time; also, a brood of chickens." The term is dismissive, one used by Forsaken outside the alliance. Such a term derogatorily suggests that those who would rely on wolves beyond the pack for aid and leadership are, of course, chickens. Unfit for the instinct of wolves, given over to the pecking order of cowardly birds. It's an ugly implication, and one that a cynic would be wise not to voice too loudly around a group of allied werewolves already on the defensive.

Why It Works

The reasons such an alliance can work are few, but potent. Without these reasons, a clutch tends to dissolve into brutal cliques (which may or may not rest along pack lines), which signals the end for any functioning union. Certainly, some protectorates attempt to function without such bonds, but most fail. Others invent reasons to stay together, perhaps inflating the threat from an enemy or offering illusory rewards. Such invention rarely holds a group together for long.

Common Purpose

Solidarity can be the cement that strengthens and keeps a union of Uratha. Focusing on an external need or struggle guarantees that the often-tense energies of a werewolf alliance don't suddenly turn inward, all teeth and spit. Common purpose can be any goal or threat that needs constant attention. Do the Pure wait at the protectorate borders, gnashing their teeth and sharpening their machetes? Is the werewolf domain smack dab in the center of the city, where adversaries (vampires, sorcerers, Rat Host

hordes) wait on all sides? Perhaps the clutch protects a powerful locus or fetish. Or the packs all stem from a large and resourceful family of wolf-blooded humans — a family worth protecting despite the costs and squabbles. A purpose can be as wild or strange as it needs to be; whatever works to hold the packs together. Do they teach one another in some kind of "wilderness training" camp? Are they a club of mad hunters, each sharing a bled-out, weakened Harmony score? Or are they the pinnacles of Forsaken morality, helping whittle away the turpitudes of the People, maybe even rehabilitating (or trying to, at least) Zi'ir?

Whether this works because all packs agree, or whether it works because one pack convinces the rest that the alliance is necessary (even if it isn't), the common purpose is perhaps the primary reason for any alliance to exist and remain together in the face of adversity. In fact, it is exactly that adversity that — like a diamond in a tension-set ring — holds the clutch together.

Tribal Bonds

Though the ties of tribe extend among werewolves of different packs, they aren't strong enough to make pledges of mutual support the norm in Forsaken society. Nonetheless, tribal ties are the most successful example of bonds among werewolves that extend further than one's pack. In an area where the members of a given tribe share a more specific vision, it may be easier for them to convince their packmates to assist them in forging that vision for the good of all. If nothing else, tribe opens an avenue of communication that might not otherwise exist between two packs. When two packs discuss a potential alliance or joining a clutch, it can make things easier if Blood Talon talks strategy with Blood Talon and Storm Lord discusses the balance of power with Storm Lord.

Checks and Balances

If an alliance can manage the rare feat of the packs finding harmony with one another, the alliance might survive. It is the unique clutch in which every pack has a purpose that no other pack can fill — and, moreover, can then gain reward from the alliance for performing that purpose. An example might be a pack that has no locus or useful territory, and probably isn't smart or spiritually savvy enough to keep hold of one for long. That said, they may not be smart, but they're strong as oxen and know how to break legs.

Enter pack number two. This pack holds a locus, and knows how to placate the spirits well enough to keep it going. Problem is, the packmembers simply aren't ready to ward off the physical threats that will eventually come their way. If the Pure come sniffing around, the packmembers'll end up as fur coats, and the locus will be ripped from their grasp. They need legbreakers — so, the pack approaches the first pack and offers those packmembers the opportunity to act as the defenders of the locus. The first pack gets Essence, and a nicer hunk of territory than the pack could've gotten anywhere else.

It builds from there. The two packs together might realize that gang activity is building up in the area, and such a thing can't simply be stopped by talking to it or crippling it — like a hydra, gang culture seems to sprout heads whenever damaged. And so, the two packs find a third pack that has wolf-blood ties to the local gang community, thus giving them the means to steer the tide away from their locus and domain. Of course, that third pack wants something above and beyond the reward for pure altruism. Maybe the pack wants Essence. Or to learn some new rites. Or just a hunk of the city to call the pack's own. The clutch grows out of these tangled relationships, and the clutch survives because of the complexity. Everybody needs something, and everybody gets something.

Of course, remove even one pack from the equation, and the whole thing may blow away like a house of cards in a stiff wind.

Clutch Versus Clutch

Here's a story idea, and one that forges a surefire common purpose: two alliances warring over a large domain.

Consider that, whether the war is a cold war or one of blood-soaked agitation, this is going to surely keep an alliance together. The hearts' blood of the given werewolves will begin to run hot with competition and dominance, and this will concretize the factions, keeping the packs working against the adversarial clutch instead of battling one another. Of course, the biggest challenge comes when one side finally wins. When this side dominates the other group — by destroying them, exiling them or accommodating them into their own clutch — suddenly the winning side's own common purpose is gone. Poof. It's either time to find a new enemy or reason to exist… or watch the alliance the packs fought so dearly to protect suddenly break away into itty-bitty pieces.

Why It Fails

The sad fact is that an alliance has about a thousand reasons to fail in comparison to the couple that can keep the alliance alive. A forged protectorate has to have wolves composed of great vim and vigor when determined to act against the odds and their own natures. Below are reasons why an alliance may stumble… or perish outright.

Pack Instinct

The pack is the central — and in many cases, only — unit in the loosely knit werewolf society. The pack is more than family, greater than friends, and offers invisible bonds that represent more than just a connection of allies — these bonds of spirit are forged in blood, shadow and fire. If the pack is the body, the werewolves in the pack are the organs. They work together or they don't work at all.

This leads to a certain mindset among the Uratha. "If it's not pack, it's not anything," is a phrase that some learn from their alphas, letting them know just where the rest of the world stands in relation to their packmates. Pack comes before all else. Some werewolves don't openly admit this, and even struggle against it — after all, one has family and loved ones, old friends and allies, all of whom cannot belong to the pack. But instinct cares little for thought. Rationality needn't apply. Pragmatism? Not if it stands in the way of the pack.

Tribe is one of the few things that overcome this mentality, if in limited fashion. The ties of a tribe are a powerful bond of philosophy, spirituality and sometimes even blood. The tribe is the extended family to the pack's nuclear family; the tribe may produce rivals as well as allies, but it's one of the things that keeps werewolf tradition alive as a whole. This isn't quite enough to cement together an alliance, though, except in areas where only one or two tribes have any real representation. A werewolf is willing to help a tribemate within reason, but that doesn't drive him to believe he should risk his whole pack to help out the entire pack of a tribemate just on the principle of mutual support.

Werewolves may think an alliance can work, but rarely do they feel it. Their brains say one thing, but their feral hearts tell another story. All too often, even if one pack gives into its pack needs and fails the alliance, it can kill the entire clutch.

Distrust

Werewolves don't trust other werewolves simply by dint of their spiritual connectedness. Wolves are competitive creatures, and when paired with the cunning conceptions of the human brain, there's no telling how far a pack will go in securing its fortunes. The human part has predilection for prejudice and distrust. Considering that Uratha "society" breaks itself out by countless divisions — auspice, tribe, lodge, family, pack, totem — this can create a network of schisms in both a fledgling and veteran alliance.

Seeds of distrust germinate more easily when werewolves are paired or forced together in non-pack situations. Who has ulterior motives? Is one pack working secretly for a lodge? Shit, could they be Bale Hounds? Is someone stealing more Essence than she deserves? Human distrust, fueled by Uratha rage, makes for an ugly boil-over. Many alliances have imploded as a result of this equation.

Unprepared

A lot of packs aren't really ready for the responsibility and wisdom necessary to keep up with the clutch. Certainly, some are capable politicians and able leaders, but many simply fail to anticipate the constant needs of the alliance. Many are wild-men, preferring to mediate disputes with a fist or bite. In some protectorates, that can work just fine as long as everybody is on the same page. Most times, such outright violence eventually leads the clutch to fail, unless held together by other purpose.

Many Forsaken aren't ready to be political. They either have to quickly learn to swim, or quickly learn to drown. How to dole out Essence? What's the best way to communicate with other packs and territories? Is there an easy method to convince or force others to perform tasks that are more for the good of the clutch than for the good of their particular packs? Can the leaders of the alliance rely on honeyed-tongues to get them through the end of each day, or are torture and violence the only things these brute bastards understand?

Woeful non-preparedness can actually cause more harm than good. When an alliance fails to understand its need and crumbles, it can leave a vicious power vacuum in its place. If the Forsaken aren't fast to sweep up the pieces, other enemies will be glad to do it for them.

Purity in Numbers

Don't hesitate to use any of this when it comes to the Pure Tribes. Pure werewolves are, in fact, slightly likelier to come together in greater numbers and forge stronger (and longer-last

ing) alliances. That's one of the Pure's deadliest advantages — their hatred for the Forsaken lets them push past the wolfish instinct in an effort to take control of entire domains. This gives the Pure dread power.

In most cases, the Pure call their alliances "confederacies." Each confederacy is different from the next, and what exists in this section can easily be applied to one. That said, most confederacies are more brutal than anything the Forsaken can come up with. In most cases, the Pure see such brutality as an ugly, but *necessary* force. It is exceedingly fortunate for the Forsaken that the Pure are still vulnerable to their wolfish, territorial instincts. Some of the greatest victories against the *Anshega* have come when a confederacy exposed a major flaw and fell to in-fighting, giving the Tribes of the Moon a tremendous opportunity.

Types of Alliance

Below are some of the various types of "clutch" that werewolves may form. With each, you'll find a successful example that may be used as just that, an example, or may instead be dropped into a game directly. Each also has one or several advantages and disadvantages listed, some of which are systems-based for ease of use in-game. These rules are, of course, optional, and are suggested only as a potential way to add more Storytelling color to the chronicle.

Hegemony of Pack

A hegemony is the rule of a single dominant group over the entire group; in this case, it implies that one pack rules over several others in a forged alliance.

How does the dominant pack claim rule? On a simple level, werewolves respect power and authority. The lupine instinct drives individual Uratha to honor those who are stronger than them — which is precisely how a given pack's alpha becomes alpha in the first place. So, it's safe to assume that a pack in authority has that authority because of legitimate and demonstrable strength, though it can just as easily be power that is artificial but perceived as strength. One is as good as the other, though indemonstrable ability may eventually fall apart under the duress of scrutiny.

The precise definition of "strength," however, is up for grabs. Is the ruling pack militarily strong, capable of leading other packs to war with both cunning strategy and powerful physicality? Or, is the pack purely a physical presence, able to knock challengers to the mat with a single swipe? Perhaps the pack-in-authority simply rules by dint of age and Renown — the oldest is given control regardless of actual merit.

Nearly anything can give a pack the supposed "right" to rule. Maybe the pack has the most powerful totem. Perhaps the pack controls all of a domain's significant resources (money, food, loci). Maybe the spirits continue to babble some prophecy about "the Killfalcon pack," which forces that pack to rule whether they want it or not. If the other packs can be convinced of one pack's supremacy — whether by nodding and conceding or by being forced to that understanding with violence — then that's all a pack needs.

Advantages: The ruling pack gets the lion's share of respect, be it genuine or grudging. Assume that the ruling pack gets a +1 bonus to all Social rolls when dealing with the other (and lesser) werewolves in the hegemony. Those werewolves not of the ruling pack gain advantages when purchasing Skills or Skill Specialties that the ruling pack already possesses. Assume that learning Skills or Skill Specialties from the lording pack means a werewolf can spend one fewer experience point when purchasing them. (So, if buying Stealth 3 would normally cost nine experience points, it now costs eight. A new Skill Specialty costs two instead of three.) Again, this only applies to Skills and Specialties that the ruling packmembers already possess.

Disadvantages: Few werewolves are content to rest on their laurels and be led by the nose. This happens in individual packs when werewolves struggle for the role of alpha (or even beta), and it can happen here, too. The ruling pack must always worry that another pack will attempt to depose the ruling pack — or succeed in the overthrow. Members of lesser packs (i.e., any werewolf not a part of the ruling pack) also find that some resources are harder to come by, as they are more likely hoarded by the ruling pack. In cases deemed appropriate by the Storyteller, some Merits (such as Resources, Allies, Contacts, Status and Fetish) are harder to purchase while within the hegemony — assume that, in such cases, doing so costs one more experience point than usual.

Chance of Success: About 60%. The hegemony is something of a macrocosmic representation of an individual werewolf pack. In a hegemony, the weaker are lead by the stronger "alpha," and all fall in line behind that hierarchy. Still, pack instinct is strong, and going outside or above it in representation can raise a werewolf's hackles.

Example: Lords of the Wheat

The Lords of the Wheat — a five-Forsaken pack with one representative from each auspice — rule over the domain of the Nine Fields with a stern (though perhaps fair) rule. The pack maintains authority by mark of age and aggregate power. They Lords are the oldest. They are said to be the wisest. They certainly have the greatest Renown. As such, they have long controlled a number of the key resources and relationships in the area. The wolf-blooded families belong to the Lords in blood and obedience. The spirits listen to them above all. Even their totem is the greatest among the area packs.

And so, they rule. They rule because they can. If any of the other seven packs in the region want a piece of the pie, they must honor the Lords of the Wheat, tithing Essence and performing tasks when the need be. If the other packs want to talk to the spirits or gain access to the locus, they bow and scrape and accept the lordship of the "alpha pack." Worse is that, on all sides, they are beset by enemies: the Pure mostly, but on the northern end of the territory (where the field meets the highway) wait a nest of vicious rural vampires who are held at bay only by the forged alliance of the Nine Fields.

Others hunger for the rule, however, and plot to take it. The Scions of Rust, a pack of Iron Masters inhabiting a small farmstead territory near the highway, believe that they can lead a coup to unseat the Lords of the Wheat. If lesser packs are lost in the struggle, so be it. But will that weaken them enough to let the Pure — or the vampires — in from beyond the domain's now-unprotected margins?

One-Alpha Autocracy

The single-werewolf autocracy is similar to the hegemony, except it is not a pack that lords over the clutch, but a single Forsaken. This Forsaken might have a pack, but he gives his packmates no greater power in the alliance than he affords any other Uratha. Some such autocrats don't have packs at all, instead extending their instincts to include the entire alliance as a grand pack of many wolves.

The leader of the clutch has absolutist rule — his word is final, non-negotiable and carved in stone. His judgment is likely sound, but even if it's not, his rule needs to remain unchallenged for this type of alliance to work. Whether he is a wise strategist, keeping his people close until the time is right to strike or instead throws them time and time again at bloody and insurmountable battles, is his cross to bear. The rest go along, or they are no longer part of the clutch.

This can be incredibly hard for the autocrat to maintain. Given a pack's ability to dismantle a single werewolf's rule with relative ease, a Forsaken autocracy doesn't often last. When such autocrats do survive, it's because the alliance is founded on the right kind of relationship. Perhaps a gathering of young, untested werewolves follow behind a grizzled, elder Elodoth, believing his word to be First Tongue gospel. Alternately, it's possible that the werewolf lord holds some kind of power or artificial authority over the others. Does he keep their wolf-bloods hidden so that the werewolves follow him? Is he the target of some mad prophecy uttered by powerful spirits and strong totems? Is he simply a master of dominance games (and possibly Dominance Gifts)?

An autocracy can function for awhile, but time and mistakes whittle away trust, and eventually the werewolves talk of deposing their ruler. Certainly some challenge, and some fail (the lord must be capable of fielding some defiance to his rule, after all). But his loss is inevitable; someone, some day, will get the better of him and pull his authority out from under his feet.

The autocrat's method of rule (and how he applies it to those beneath him) goes a long way toward determining how long the alliance holds. A dictator, doling out swift punishment to those who deny him and meager reward to those who support him, cannot last for long in most cases — unless he perhaps holds sway over a passel of grim Rahu who respect that kind of mad control. On the other hand, a ruler who doesn't have the backbone to draw a little blood and fur to keep the group in line won't merit a lengthy rule, either.

Advantages: Those who follow the leader are likely to now possess the Mentor Merit at three, four or five dots depending on the strength and experience of the autocrat. The leader, on the other hand, can purchase a number of Skills at half the normal experience point cost (round up). Those Skills include Expression, Intimidation, Persuasion and Subterfuge.

Disadvantages: Time isn't kind to the autocrat's rule — time wears his supremacy thin as the weeks and months go by. Assume that for every month lording over the alliance, it becomes harder for the autocrat to get what he wants with honey, and he must begin to rely more and more on vinegar. Each month, he suffers a cumulative –1 penalty to all rolls based on getting what he wants through being nice (Expression, Persuasion, Socialize) and must instead rely on being duplicitous and cruel (the penalty does



not affect Intimidation or Subterfuge rolls). Maximum penalty is –5 dice, though this can be mitigated through Skill Specialties and the Status Merit. Those beneath him begin to feel this wear and tear on his leadership, as well. If five months pass and the alliance remains in existence, assume that the werewolves become more easily agitated. Should the autocrat wound any of them with lethal or aggravated damage, they should make a check for Death Rage regardless of their Harmony scores.

Chance of Success: As a temporary alliance, it stands a good chance (60% or so) of working. If the autocrat seeks a more permanent rule, expect that number to drop to about 20%. It works temporarily because werewolves respect the natural authority of a single leader. For a time, their instinctive minds can be fooled into believing in the idea that they belong to a large pack, with the autocrat as their alpha. But eventually, the illusion fades as relationships become more strained and the lord begins to fray at the edges.

Example: Festerboar's Army

Festerboar — once called Samuel Great-Tusk for the way his teeth came out over his lip like tusks — believe that he and his pack could reclaim their lost locus. The Pure who stole it from them seemed few in number, and young to boot. And so Samuel followed his pack into the fray, and found themselves the subject of a cruel ruse. The young Pure pack was just bait to lure them into overconfidence; the real enemy awaited with larger numbers and greater power. The pack was overwhelmed and destroyed, all but Samuel, who managed to escape with a nearly mortal wound. One of the Pure stuck him in the side with a cruel dagger that moaned and howled as it thrust betwixt his ribs, and to this day that wound has never healed. It suppurates, oozing pus and blood, stinking with rot.

Festerboar has since given up the idea of territory. As long as the Pure monsters live, no territory is safe. He's tired of playing the victim. Bored with acting as the honorless dogs. Now, he takes the fight

to the Pure with an army of once-weak, discarded Uratha. Those without pack, those who have been kicked to the curb. All madmen, lost souls, wolves with big axes to grind. Most of them are young and untested, but Festerboar doesn't care. He'll smelt that brittle iron into honed steel. He loves them all for the way they follow him, for the way they take the back of his hand when they disagree, for the way they help him clean his wound every night with a muddy poultice and fresh hemp stitches.

The nomadic army of ragtag Uratha cuts across the country in a wagon train of trucks and RVs. The Pure will suffer in the army's wake. And if other Forsaken stand in the way of Festerboar's army, the Forsaken'll catch a mean claw, too.

Story Hook: Except, Except, Except

A pack of young Forsaken somehow man ages to whittle out a hunk of territory. They may not know much about their surroundings, only that what they have is theirs and theirs alone.

Except, not for long. A far more powerful pack comes along with what may appear to be a pretty gracious offer. Instead of simply kicking the younglings out, the elder pack invites them to join their alliance — a vast clutch of many packs that make a kind of territorial quilt. As part of an alliance, the young packmembers'll enjoy a level of safety and resources that, as untested Uratha, they could not find elsewhere.

Except, there's a catch. They're on the out skirts of the territory. Protection doesn't come fast, if it comes at all. And they're expected to tithe their own resources — money, Essence, objects of power, whatever — to the elder pack. If the younger Forsaken don't comply, they'll get their asses handed to them. So, maybe they decide to leave.

Except, yeah, that isn't easy. The elder pack comes sniffing along for the traitors, and decides to make their life hell for betraying the protectorate. What happens from here? Do the characters abandon territory? Do they try to suborn others into joining their inadvertent revolution? Can they turn their enemies — Ridden, the *shartha*, the Pure — against the elder pack? Or does another neighboring alliance (hopefully a better one) tell the young Forsaken that their small territory is smack dab between the two protectorates, so they better pick a side fast?

Parliament of Wolves

The parliament is a representative body of werewolves in a given domain that meets to make decisions and forge strategy with consideration toward all the wolves in that region. Nine times out of 10, the representatives who make up a parliamentary council are the alphas from the domain's packs, brought together as one governing body. Other options exist, however, for the council's makeup. The council may comprise the five oldest Uratha, or the five most powerful werewolves (often decided by Renown with one from each auspice). Alternately, some packs vote on who should be their representation at council meets — if the alpha is a scowling Rahu but the beta is a honey-tongued Elodoth, then the choice seems clear.

Most parliamentary alliances can be considered either loose or strong. A loose council clutch meets rarely, perhaps only when threat is obvious or when major disputes threaten the sanctity of the aggregate territories. The strong alliance meets with far greater regularity, possibly once under every phase of the moon. Topics discussed and handled during such meetings can run the gamut: territorial disputes, threat assessments, task assignments, discussions of spirit and Shadow, even plans to increase the size of the ruled domain (either through force or by bringing new packs into the parliamentary fold).

The council itself may decide tasks through a voting process or by conceding to the representative with the highest appropriate Renown. If the issue at hand is what to do about the influx of Azlu, the representatives might defer to the werewolf with the highest Cunning or Glory. If the sanctity of a locus is in question, she with the greatest Purity may be called upon, unless the situation involves a sensitive matter of spirit, in which case the highest Wisdom wins out. The representatives may even defer to matters by auspice: the Rahu may handle war, while the Elodoth handles subjects involving negotiation and mediation. How the council breaks down its authority is, frankly, up to the council.

The parliamentary system would work great, if it weren't for the hot-blooded tempers of werewolves in general. It becomes increasingly difficult for a pack to take orders from some nebulous council, especially if the pack's own alpha doesn't agree with the orders as given. The council must walk a fine line in maintaining the peace and Purity of the domain. Politics must be wielded just as deftly as a claw or knife: if one pack balks at a given task, what does the council do? Does

it attempt to grant a perhaps excessive reward, thus greasing the pack's palms in an effort to achieve a certain goal? What if other packs catch wind of this reward, and similarly begin to resist orders? At what point does the parliament rely on one or several enforcers to back its orders with some degree of authority? At what point does the council forego politics and simply become an authoritarian hegemony?

The council must always dance that tightrope. A good Politics score is necessary to keep such an alliance together. One misstep, and the fall to the ground is far, with no net to be found.

Advantages: Purchasing non-primary Renown is easier for all members of this clutch, for those who sit on and off the actual parliament. While Renown itself is not a marker of status, the larger numbers of werewolves found in most parliamentary alliances (20 or more) help a character to increase his personal standing in non-traditional ways. Characters must still earn their Renown with appropriate action, of course — existing as part of this alliance doesn't make Renown free, it simply helps spread the resonance of one's deeds. (Details on the roleplaying aspect of gaining Renown can be found on p. 194 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**.) Purchasing alternate, non-primary Renown with experience points now costs new dots x 7 (instead of new dots x 8).

Disadvantages: The parliamentary structure of this alliance isn't natural. It's not enough to cause a Harmony loss, but it is enough to make regaining Harmony more difficult. Some recognize this as a small cost to pay in making a legitimate society of the People work — and, it encourages those within it not to lose Harmony in the first place. Others don't recognize it directly, but simply feel out-of-sorts when kowtowing politically to this style of clutch. Assume that, when purchasing Harmony, the cost is now new dots x 4 (instead of the previous new dots x 3).

Chance of Success: About 50%. This style of alliance works better for werewolves more in touch with their human intellect than their lupine instincts. Wolves don't barter with a lofty council for power — they bow their heads to a single alpha and settle matters with blood and howls. One is more likely to find the parliamentary clutch within the city, though certainly some rural ones have found success.

Example: Circle of Dogs

The Circle of Dogs makes the worst part of the city its protectorate. The Circle watches over the war zone, the gangland, the city dump and the gutted-out tenements. Individually, these Forsaken may not be the smartest, fastest, or even wisest Uratha in the metropolitan area, but Luna knows that a little solidarity goes a long way.

The Circle of Dogs alliance is home to six packs, only five of which have current representation on the actual council. Each pack chooses a representative to send to the council, and the sixth pack's choice recently ate the wrong end of a subway train during a scrap with a swarm of amputee Ridden. For now, that pack sits in mourning, though the rest of the council is pushing the packmembers to soon choose a replacement for their fallen comrade. Little does the Circle know, that pack is considering leaving the alliance — and since the pack's territory is smack dab in the center of the entire alliance domain, that could cause a bit of a weakness in the area's protectorate.

Still, the parliament does what it must, and has been going strong for damn near 10 years. The representatives meet once every half-moon at the city dump, occulted betwixt canyons of trash and metal. They've even managed to make a half-ass treaty with the local Beshilu. If the rats will stick to the wharf and act as watchdogs (or perhaps "watchrats"), the Forsaken won't come marching in there to cut them to ribbons.

The Bloody Politic

Any of the above alliances (though in particular the parliamentary and democratic models) are a good way to engineer a political **Werewolf: The Forsaken** game. If you're hungering for something a little more than cutting enemies to ribbons or dealing with the minor political affairs of pack and domain, consider asking the Storyteller for a game in which one of these alliances is prominent. It guarantees to draw various packs together, forcing all to interact in a way that demands political savvy. And, of course, these alliances are presented in this book (a player's guide, after all) as options for you as players. If such an alliance doesn't exist in your chronicle, you can try to build one. The challenges that attend such an ambition are myriad, but the potential gain is great indeed.

One Wolf, One Vote

Democracy asserts that, by giving each individual a vote, each individual must then be equal

to the next. Ah, but that goes against the wild voice in a werewolf's heart. The wolf knows that all creatures are not equal, that even a single pack is given over to a tangle of dominance games. The Forsaken, for the most part, know and respect the hierarchy-in-flux system, caring little for the equality posited by democracy. And yet, that's the wolf talking. The human inside the beast may yet hunger for freedom and hope to accomplish some of that boastful egalitarianism paraded about by much of the Western world. And so, from time to time, an alliance of werewolves comes together, made of like-minded People. In this clutch, they try to be equal, they try to decide on things as a group. As a rule, it doesn't work — but every rule suffers from exceptions.

The general basis for this type of alliance is that every werewolf is given the same theoretical power as his packmate or neighbor. Everyone gets a vote. Majority rules. The nature of the voting is up to the werewolves — do they anonymously score their vote into a piece of slate with a sharpened claw, putting beneath a covered basket? Or do they brashly vote in public, wearing their allegiances on their sleeves? (Many prefer this, but this can lead to flaring tempers when one Uratha sees another betray him during the vote — and with werewolves, nobody wants flaring tempers.)

In the end, it becomes a numbers game. Ideally, every werewolf would vote his conscience, but reality reveals something quite different. Can a werewolf — especially, say, the omega — vote against his pack and expect to come away unscathed? What happens if there are three packs of five forming a power bloc against two packs of six? If the majority sticks to its guns and votes together (even in the face of one's scruples), then they have the power despite the theoretical equality given to all.

Moreover, what will someone do to gain another's vote? One's allegiance can be mutable, and votes therefore purchased. A Full Moon may offer to teach a younger Uratha some new combat moves if she votes with him at that night's vote. Or worse, that Rahu may torment her and bully her and promise more… unless she votes with him during that night's vote.

The size of the clutch makes for tricky business. Smaller alliances are easier to maintain, but can more easily become one power bloc ruling over a weaker sub-alliance. Larger clutches help guarantee a level of diversity, but the organization of holding so many votes, paired with the sheer cacophony of "equal" voices straining for attention makes for a political snafu. What's to stop a voting referendum from turning into a vicious, howling fray? Does the group need enforcers to keep the process in line? If the process needs such enforcement, is the concept of equality already corrupted?

The clutch must learn to navigate around these holes and walk a line that all can accept. Those who have managed to make this style of alliance a successful one were not without months or even years of ironing out the kinks. Many find that some "elected" positions are necessary — perhaps a werewolf to judge whether or not a potential referendum has merit before going to vote, or the aforementioned "enforcers" to ensure that the system doesn't become mired in corruption. Still, even after perfecting the system, the allied werewolves know that their feral hearts would prefer them raze the process to the ground.

Advantages: The werewolves of the voting clutch get a lot of practice with their Social Traits, and thus gain the benefit of having lowered experience point costs when it comes to purchasing Social Skills. Purchasing any new Social skill while belonging to this alliance requires new dots x 2 (instead of the normal new dots x 3).

Disadvantages: This style of clutch is made more for humans than wolves, and so it hampers the growth of a werewolf's Primal Urge score. His Primal Urge represents the power of his predator's soul, and the further it grows, the harder it is to interact with humans. But this alliance mimics the way humans interacts, and hence it weakens the werewolf's potential connection with that ancient instinct. Purchasing a new point of Primal Urge is now new dots x 9 (as opposed to the current new dots x 8).

Chance of Success: Slim to none, about 20%. Werewolves just don't work that way. And yet, ironically, many attempt it. Perhaps it's the mind of the human hoping to assert dominance over the beast's heart, but it seems that a lot of younger Uratha make the attempt to go to this system — if not on a large scale, then within their given pack. It works for a time, but eventually the monster wins out, and any level of egalitarianism is torn to bloody gobbets.

Example: The Quill and Claw Society

A series of small but wealthy towns dot the highway that cuts between the mountains, and one

Forsaken alliance claims the whole domain. These werewolves — seven packs, each with three to six members — are of the highest sort of breeding. They believe themselves to be refined monsters, every last one of them aristocrats and gentlemen (or ladies, as it were). They wear suits. They own real estate. They don't commingle with the humans too often, but the werewolves' politics and business affect the mortals daily. These werewolves believe themselves a more civilized sort, and so they long ago adopted a system of voting that ensures every werewolf has his say.

It works, though not without some effort on their part to dampen the normally fiery moods associated with their kind. They maintain their civility (or, as some outsiders say, the illusion of civility) with great strength of will. The system works because of three conditions instituted by the clutch. The first is that they don't vote on everything. Every pack gets its own territory, and for the most part is allowed to rule its own land as it sees fit. Only when something affects the entire domain does it come to a vote. The second condition is that they have codified a simple code of conduct that goes above and beyond the Oath of the Moon; these rules go a long way toward establishing the ins and outs of the voting process, as well as helping to ensure vicious power blocs don't form.

The third, and what some suggest is the most important, condition are the organized hunts. Once a month, beneath the full moon, the werewolves gather together, leaving their individual territories protected by a network of wolf-bloods. Together, the werewolves shed their fine suits and spit-polished shoes, and they hunt. They hunt all night, moving as one massive pack. They use no human language. They hunt only as wolves, reveling in their lupine instincts — and thus, theoretically giving an outlet for the baser needs that could stand in the way of their so-called democracy. But all is not perfect. Humans go missing periodically during these hunts, and while that's to be expected, some have been found up in the mountain passes — half-eaten, as if bitten into by a Gauru's maw. The worst came recently, when an entire ski party was found massacred in the pine woods above one of the resorts, each mortal ripped to shreds, hunks of meat taken from their midsections.

Kinship of Tribes

This type of clutch is pretty straightforward on the surface, and in fact resembles a lodge. The difference here is that this tribal alliance has no overarching totem, no powerful fetishes or rites specific to its union. This alliance is simply a congregation of packs, all from one tribe, who gather to protect a given area and protect their tribal ideals. Common interest forms the basis for the protectorate, forming it around a given physical area.

Perhaps a number of Storm Lord packs gather to protect the old colonial part of the city — where all its history (and money) lies. The alliance would include no werewolves from opposing tribes; should one of the packs have a trusted member from, say, the Bone Shadows, then too bad. She goes, or the pack goes. Certainly, such strictness isn't universal, but can be common in these types of clutches. Hunters in Darkness may form a large alliance to protect a series of loci connected by lines of energy, and maybe a passel of Bone Shadow packs forge a circle of territories surrounding a weird suburb that offers a series of inexplicable Fortean features and events.

Usually, such alliances are pretty loose — they end up as a series of territories connected together by geography, with each pack helping to shape its territory in a somewhat unified manner. (A clutch of Blood Talons might hope to shape each territory into strictly militaristic hunting and training grounds. Thus, while every territory is technically unique, each represents a common theme based on tribal interests.) Certainly, some develop more complex forms of rule (and in fact, many of the above alliance models can be applied whole or in pieces), but generally these alliances end up as undemanding configurations of common interest.

It's not impossible that such an alliance isn't based on tribal bonds, but instead founded upon common auspice. A clutch of Irraka may come together to protect a wide tract of dark woods where the Gauntlet is thin and weird spirits are afoot. Such alliances don't last as long as tribal ones, however, because such specificity breeds weakness. A large number of Ithaeur may not be altogether without combat proficiency, but their Specialties suggest that most of the alliance members are truly good at only a handful of things.

Advantages: Tribal Gifts are easier to learn — while werewolves don't teach Gifts directly to one another, the agglomeration of various werewolves from one tribe helps to ensure that the appropriate spirits are likely nearby, as well. Assume that tribal

Affinity Gifts cost even fewer experience points: new dots x 4 (instead of new dots x 5).

Disadvantage: Because such an alliance is public, other tribes and their related spirits become less likely to teach non-Affinity Gifts. The werewolves wear their allegiance upon their sleeves, and this can be troublesome. If purchasing a Gift from outside their tribe, auspice (or the "common" Gift paths), the werewolf pays new dots x 8 instead of the expected new dots x 7 cost.

Chance of Success: Pretty good, about 70%. Tribal lines are already strong among many werewolves, and so it's easy to fall in line with an alliance of tribemates. Still, though, werewolves are individuals first, and there's no telling with a hunger for power or a simple disagreement can begin to unravel a once-firm protectorate.

Example: Steelboot's Solidarity

Trains don't run on the old tracks anymore. The 25-mile stretch of track has been abandoned by humans — but not by spirits and werewolves. Old powerful spirits still travel its length between towns, spitting steam and turning clockwork wheels fueled by brightly burning hunks of coal. Some packs wanted to harness these spirits for themselves. Others did not trust these ephemera of steam and steel and wanted to re-form the territories along the tracks to their own designs. That's when the Iron Masters stepped in.

At first they were three packs, led to the charge by a grizzled old plane mechanic named John Steelboot. They waged a war for the territories up and down the old tracks; at first, they met with meager success, but when other Iron Master packs heard of what the packs sought to accomplish, they jumped on board. After that, it was just a matter of time. Now, several Iron Master packs inhabit the string of territories that line the tracks, and there they commune with the enigmatic train-spirits to learn new ways of walking between worlds.

From the distance, though, the servants of an old dead idigam watch and wait, massing their strength in the neighboring coal mines. These creatures, once-human but now subterranean dwellers with skin of black dust and eyes like lumps of dark anthracite, loathe the Iron Masters who have taken the tracks under their protection. The time will come when the idigam's children will strike, hoping to shake free this alliance from its roost.

Lodges

Lodges can be one form of alliance — a regional lodge that protects a given area ultimately works together as a clutch of Uratha. Their advantages are usual, and may share specific rites, Gifts or totems. They also likely share a +1 Social bonus when dealing with other members of a given lodge.

Way Out of the Box

Below are a few unclassifiable alliances. These examples can be thrown headlong into a game, or simply used to illustrate the point that players and Storytellers should be free to think far outside the box. Werewolves are traditional creatures, but they're also unconventional by dint of their very existence. In a given domain, the packs might be willing to try anything to stay alive and keep their land.

Governance of Spirits

The packs of Uratha living along the river's edge have traded in their autonomy and instinct for safety, sanity and sanctity. The domain in which they hunt and live has long been a powerful glade, a wilderness preserve that pulses with a kind of vital puissance. They recognize that few places like this exist, and so they do their level best to protect it. They are allies in defense of purity.

But they also have little control. The spirits here — whether the Council of Bitterns or the various burbling river elementals — are in charge, and the werewolves have little say in the matter. Those of the Shadow have greater power here than elsewhere, and in a roundabout way, that helps keep the land pure. The werewolves are the physical protectors of the domain, acting literally as the hand of the bizarre spirit government that has long held sway over this region.

The packs know that they don't have control of this protectorate. They know that their Harmony suffers a little at such sacrifice, but perhaps a measure of imbalance is necessary on their part to maintain the balance of the glade, never mind the fact that a werewolf's Harmony can be as much a barometer of outside balance as the equilibrium within. Never mind what Father Wolf wanted or Mother Luna whispers. Never mind that one pack has already be-

gun to exhibit the strange impulses and compulsions of disturbed Harmony, collecting hundreds of pebbles and diligently collecting moth cocoons. If that is what is necessary to keep this place sane, letting the spirits have a measure of rule, then so be it.

The Penitent Brotherhood

Way out in the desert — standing amidst the sun-red rocks and the saguaro cacti — sits a series of small huts. The huts aren't much to look at. Between them are the occasional tunnels, natural gulleys and grottos, as dry as a dead man's throat. The huts and caves dot the land for miles.

Criminals live here. Exiles. Monsters. The werewolves who make up this protectorate are all lost souls — but they have not come here to exalt in their madness. They have come to find peace, to balance their uncontrolled spirit and to find some level of forgiveness for crimes real or perceived. Those who come here, or are sent by their packs, no longer belong in that world. They become parts of new packs, and accept new totems to stand over them. These werewolves venerate these spirits, the Shadow and Luna especially. Faithfully, they stand beneath the desert moon and pray with whisper or with howl. They learn new skills from the brothers as well as teach the knowledge they have that others don't. Some fixate on old engines, trying to make them run. Others cultivate flowers in the cracked and dusty ground. All of the brothers focus on learning new rites, for this protectorate teaches that ritual is the road back to sanity. Ritual gives purpose.

This protectorate is headed by the Humble Sarah Swan, a woman who does not mind the moniker of "brother." She was the one who founded this place, and she is the one who will die here when the time is right. She has seen much and done much. Some even whisper that she knows how to rehabilitate the ones known as "broken souls," but she won't admit to such a lofty achievement — then again, she admits to little of her own merit. She's a little mad: her differently colored eyes seem a little mad, and some brothers find that she talks to herself even when others stand near, but all the brothers here are a little mad. It's what helps keep them sane.

In the Company of Monsters

Who ever said an alliance could be formed only from the ranks of the Forsaken? The Ninth Street Sentinels thought that way at first, but their alpha — a mean wall of one-eared Blood Talon manhood named Minister Red — decided to think outside the comfort zone.

The fact was this: the pack claimed as its territory one of the worst parts of the city. The packmembers made good work of cleaning up their block, keeping crime low by patrolling both the physical world and the world across the Gauntlet. But it was easy to see that all they had was their little pocket of relative sanity, while the rest of the neighborhood had gone to the dogs, vultures and gangbangers. Minister Red decided it was time to change some shit.

Other werewolves didn't want a single part of the anarchic "war zone," and so Minister Red made his case to some of his stranger neighbors: a cabal of witches over on Millspaugh. A nest of bloodsucking vampires who worked in and around the park, hedged in by all the human filth and depravity. Minister Red met with others, too: a small Muslim church of mortal men, a strange old man who lives in the water tower (and, when heat lightning flashes in the sky, appears to be all stitches and discolored corpse flesh), even a Ridden junkie who sometimes snitches for the police. To everyone, Minister Red made an offer. He said, "Join me and we can make this neighborhood ours."

It worked. It wasn't easy. They had to take back the area block by bloody gunshot block. Over the course of a year, the area became a no-man's-land of crime and destitution. Minister regretted this, but he stood firm on his theory that you can't fix something without first breaking it down into pieces. By the time they were done, it was time to rebuild. Red didn't kid himself. This was no allegiance of altruism. Those who worked toward this loose brood did so out of pragmatism. Controlling the area and keeping it sane meant the monsters could have a little more freedom. If that meant that the neighborhood looked a little nicer, that its people were a little safer and saner, and that the blood-soaked local Shadow was a touch less dark… then the ends justified the means.

Lines Drawn in Blood

In the town of Silvertree, it's easy to see how much influence the Troxler family has. The two car dealerships, book-ending the town, are both Troxler owned. They own the pharmacy, the bar and most of the satellite farms dotting the land outside the town proper. They even have three streets named after them: Troxler Lane, Troxler Lakes and Troxlertown Road. The Troxler family — big and locally powerful — has lived here for the last 150 years, and will live there for the next 150 if they get their way. And they usually do.

They're wolf-bloods, every last one of them. Most of them don't know it, but enough recognize an inkling of what's going on — and those who do know make sure they keep the family safe and sane when and if the time comes that one of their own makes the Change. This alliance isn't all wolf-bloods: they have two small packs of Forsaken who live in and around Silvertree, but these werewolves are not the ones in charge. They are defenders, enforcers, hunters — but they aren't given much modicum of authority. The Troxler wolf-bloods make it clear that the werewolves are important, sure, that they fill a critical niche, yes… but beasts are not to be given the keys to the kingdom. The family knows it has a good thing going. The family also recognizes that the werewolves help to keep that together. But beasts are beasts, monsters are monsters. Everybody has to know his place.

Curiously, the family members gather in clique-ish packs, even when they're not Forsaken. Little clusters of Troxler family can be found all over town — the big-haired wives down at Danny's Diner, the Troxler money-men who gather every week for the big game, even the teen Troxlers band together at school and make up a majority share of the student council. The werewolves aren't the only packmembers in town. The family will fight tooth and nail for its self-interest.

Work-for-Hire

Four-Fingered Sally has a good thing going — good for everybody, better for her. For going on 10 years now, she's had the city in the palm of her hands. The vampires don't own shit. The smart Ridden high-tail it and run, the not-so-smart ones suffer and die. She's the Queen of the Town, baby, and all the packs kick up to her.

She and her own pack, the Tungsten Valentines, run the city a little like a labor union, a little like organized crime. She's parceled the city out into various territories, and she's done so in a way that the wolf-minded understand. Bigger territories for elder Forsaken, little territories for the new fish. But it isn't just age, no, she runs this with the flavor of meritocracy, too. You do some work for Sally — meaning, you do work for the entire protectorate — and you get paid. And you climb the ladder, slowly but surely, carving out a nice place for yourself. Of course, there are always those who have more power. Friends and family of Sally always seem to come out way ahead, garnering big rewards for small work, but it's not bad enough so that the wolves are ready to run a coup on her ass, not yet.

Anybody who doesn't like it can kiss her ass and get out of the city. And she has enough Forsaken on her side to make that work, too. She doesn't let anybody who isn't of the People have their place, which is one of the things she gets a lot of respect for. Vampires? Fuck them. Sorcerers? Asshole witches who get tossed out the door. The city is theirs, belonging to the Forsaken — and better still, belonging to Sally.

Alliance Rules

When choosing to utilize a protectorate in your game, you can opt to include some of the systems described below. These new rules aren't necessary, but may provide some structure and flair to the story.

Merits

Below is a new Merit that players can purchase for their characters in regard to forming or joining an alliance protectorate. (For alternate rules options in improving a protectorate's holdings, see **Territories**.)

Protectorate (Varies; Special)

Effect: Those werewolves committed to a protectorate find that by belonging to one, they are afforded certain advantages that those outside of the alliance cannot necessarily access. This can mean anything from grounds and space sanctified for rituals, a strong loci or simply mundane bonuses such as medical facilities or Internet access. Only those who exist as a part of the protectorate in good standing gain the advantage of this Merit. Those who have been exiled — or dwell within the alliance borders with a haze of distrust hanging over their heads — may not receive the bonuses afforded.

This Merit is shared by all members of a protectorate, but only those who contribute Merit points toward the domain upkeep can have access to the benefits provided (unless the Storyteller decides otherwise). Dots placed in this Merit can be spent by characters on changing or improving a given protectorate. See below for how one can spend these points.

Spending Protectorate Points

Points taken in the Protectorate Merit all go toward a total pool of points that can be spent on forming the domain to the werewolves' advantage. Perhaps they have on-site facilities that help contribute bonuses to various rolls, or maybe they have a series of traps that add an extra measure of brutal security or maybe they simply have a powerfully wild tract of land that provides a bounty of good hunting.

As players, your level of contribution can be matched to the needs of the story. If you're seminal in the founding of the protectorate, you should have a strong measure of control when helping decide where all the Protectorate points go, with input and advice from the Storyteller. On the other hand, if you're just joining a protectorate, don't expect to decide where all the points go, since the Storyteller has already been working on the theme and function of a given domain. However, should that be the case, you should still decide how their points are spent. You're the ones contributing some level of function to the fold, and so you decide how it gets spent. If you decide that some of the points go toward a small cache of books, and thus can add a +1 bonus to the protectorate werewolves' Academics roll, then that's your choice.



Below are the ways in which you can spend your characters' Protectorate points. Unless otherwise noted, characters cannot purchase above a cumulative bonus of +5 dice on any of the expenditures. Ultimately, the Storyteller needs to be the one to approve such purchases, ensuring that they make sense given a protectorate's particular parameters. (If there are no roads in the domain and none can be built, then a bonus to Drive rolls in the protectorate doesn't make sense, does it?)

Essence: Three Protectorate points per point of Essence. Essence purchased with these points counts toward points any protectorate member can put in her own pool once per story. To gain these points in her Essence pool, she must simply sleep for a full eight hours inside somewhere inside the domain. (Of course, she must have room in her Essence pool, and cannot go above the maximum Essence dictated by Primal Urge.) The exact origin of this "free" Essence is up to the characters. It may be just a general recharge accessible from the aggregate werewolves, totems and spirits. It might come from a powerful fetish, locus or rite. A character needn't take all of her accessible free Essence at once — if three points are available, she can draw one point one night, and two the next night. A given protectorate cannot offer more than five Essence to a single werewolf per story.

Example: *The Gutthrush pack brings with it a potent totem, the Praying Buzzard, who shares a little dollop of Essence with the rest of the protectorate. It's only one point of Essence, but at some point during the story any member of the clutch can draw upon that single point to help replenish lost power.*

Location Bonuses: Two Protectorate points per die. Location bonuses go toward establishing a protectorate suitable for the needs of the congregated Forsaken. The bonus goes toward hunting and tracking rolls only. Packs may be able to sense when foliage is disturbed, or be more likely to find footprints or identify odd smells in the dirt (or upon the concrete, if more urban).

Example: *The pack helps to change the protectorate a little bit in both the Shadow and in the physical world. The packmembers help get rid of odd, muddling smells (by cleaning up garbage and chemicals), and also help to forge various small trails through the domain so that the werewolves can move more quickly when hunting prey.*

*They spend four Protectorate points, garnering the territory an additional +2 bonus on all hunting and tracking rolls (see pp. 178–180, **Werewolf: The Forsaken**).*

Ritual Bonuses: Three Protectorate points per die. Bonuses purchased in this manner help ritemasters perform the rituals sacred and important to the Forsaken. Bonuses applied can be the result of having a spiritually consecrated "ritual space," or perhaps by garnering the good will of local spirits. This bonus can not be purchased above a +3 modifier. As for all bonuses gained, they only apply to werewolves casting rituals within the protectorate's boundaries.

Example: *Blackblood Jack, a member of the Motor City Meatheads, wants to throw a little love toward the protectorate. So, he builds a kind of ritual space for the ritemasters of the clutch — since they're mostly Iron Masters, he makes a "garden" of car parts, hissing furnaces and scraps of murky iron. Therein, ritual casters can be removed from the rest of the domain and find a kind of peace. Blackblood's pack spends three points to give the domain a +1 rite-casting bonus.*

Security Bonuses: Two Protectorate points per die. Bonuses bought in the protectorate's security go toward any character's Initiative when acting in a fight against anybody who isn't a member of the protectorate. This could be the result of good sight lines, video surveillance or simply an intimate knowledge of the lay of the land. Also, any attempts to find or gain entrance to the protectorate's sacred spaces (or the entire protectorate if the domain is way away from civilization) are hampered by this bonus. The bonus acts as a negative modifier against those seeking to intrude upon the protectorate's sacred places (loci, sleeping werewolves, fetish stockpile, etc.). The security might be as the result of a concealed cave entrance, a steel door or even a homemade labyrinth. Attempts to find and break into such areas are made at –1 die per bonus purchased.

Example: *The protectorate has made security its number one priority, being the home of a powerful locus and a number of unusual fetishes. The jungle domain is already untamed, but the packs endeavor to make it even meaner: they dig out and then conceal pit-traps, create looping trails that go nowhere and hide a number of their fetishes in various steel lockboxes buried at strategic locations. The various packs contribute eight total points toward this goal, garnering them a +4 Initiative bonus against intruders, and also causing a –4 penalty on intruder rolls to find and uncover alliance resources.*

Skill Bonuses: Three Protectorate points per die. Skill bonuses are reflected by various resources that help contribute to specific tasks. A Drive bonus might be the result of good roads or a map detailing various shortcuts and hazards. A Computer bonus might indicate that a pack pipes in a T1 line so that the protectorate has fast and unfettered access to the Net. A library might lend a bonus to Academics, Investigation or Occult rolls, whereas a small lab might help with Medicine or Science-based tasks. Bonuses may also come from a simple innate familiarity of the domain: if the werewolves learn where every creaky step or path of brittle twigs awaits, that might be enough to garner a +1 to Stealth rolls. Unless the Storyteller allows otherwise, this bonus is available to a werewolf only when she's inside the protectorate. This bonus cannot be purchased above a +3 modifier. However, no Social Skills can be modified in this way. No physical facility or amendment to a protectorate can help forge new Social skills or advantages.

Example: *The Leeds Point Devils, a small pack of Hunters in Darkness, just joined the Pine Barrens Protectorate and wants to do the pack's part. Together, the packmembers contribute nine Protectorate points and spend them on Skill bonuses (a total of +3). They add a +1 bonus to all Medicine rolls in the domain because they help build a small cache of first-aid kits and various stolen pharmaceuticals. The pack also helps train the various packs on how to use the domain to their advantage when fighting — how to duck behind the thick trees, how to step lightly among the jagged rocks, how to lead an opponent into an uneven fighting ground. This helps them add a +2 bonus to Brawl rolls in the given domain.*

Protectorate Flaws

No domain is flawless. Every tract of protected land, whether 10 crowded city blocks or 10 square miles of abandoned desert, has its pluses and minuses. The city might have a great hospital (+1 to Medicine) but awful roads (–1 to Drive). The desert might be a hunter's playground (+1 hunting/tracking bonuses) but hostile spirits occasionally make trouble (–1 to ritual rolls).

Assume then that, for every 10 full points put toward the protectorate by its Forsaken, take one Flaw from the list below. New bonuses (i.e., points spent) can help mitigate pre-existing Flaws. For example, if hostile spirits cause the aforementioned –1 to ritual rolls, if a pack creates a sacred space (and makes friends with a few of those angry ephemera), maybe they can add a +1 bonus, thus negating the penalty. It shouldn't go the other way, however, without the approval of players. If players spend points to add a +1 Medicine bonus, a later Flaw shouldn't obviate that purchased bonus. If that does happen, they should

be at least given the option to move their bonus to another Skill (explaining it accordingly).

Note that Flaws can be cumulative. If 30 total points are spent by the alliance packs on a given protectorate, three Flaws are the result. All three Flaws can be put toward the Hampered Skill. If so desired, the same Skill can be affected. (If a computer network continues to age and degrade system by system, the penalty toward Computer rolls may begin to stack cumulatively.)

Flaws apply only when a character is within the protectorate itself. They do not carry over. Also, while players may be allowed to select appropriate Flaws, the characters should not be allowed to invoke meaningless or nonsensical iterations. For instance, characters with a protectorate in the middle of desolate tundra should not be allowed to choose the aforementioned Computer penalties — there are no computers there, and the penalty becomes meaningless. Flaws needn't trouble all the alliance werewolves all the time, but should be meaningful given the function and use of the domain.

Act of Upkeep: No territory can exist without work put into it — whether this means harvesting fruit for food, hunting for meat or simply keeping out the humans, every domain requires some level of maintenance. This Flaw goes above that, requiring every pack to perform some kind of concerted effort to keep the domain in its current condition. Perhaps the spirits require constant supplication. Maybe someone needs to sweep the locus for spirits leeching Essence. Upkeep may be more physical: digging out a location from heavy snow or cleaning sand from machines such as trucks and generators. Or, social: placate pissed-off natives with gifts and prayer, or deliver a monetary stipend to the local wolf-blooded family who owns most of the land upon which the protectorate rests. Point is, with upkeep, every pack gets some kind of important job at least once a week. Failing to accomplish the job in due time creates a kind of agitated tumult within the protectorate Uratha. If the upkeep is neglected for more than a few days, any rules benefits of the protectorate are temporarily halved in effect.

Bad Location: The area isn't suited to hunting/tracking. Perhaps the domain is simply a crowded metropolitan area, muddling the senses with a blur of motion and city-stink. Maybe it snows all the time, covering up potential tracks and scents. Whatever the case, it causes a –1 penalty to hunting/tracking rolls.

Crowded: The packs exist together in a domain that's too small. Perhaps territory gets lost to another pack or protectorate, or is taken by enemies or simply bought by enterprising mortals (to whom the Forsaken cannot reveal their nature). The result is that, when the protectorate lands shrink, the Uratha are forced closer together. Too many packs in uncomfortable proximity leads to hot tempers. Assume a –1 modifier to all Social rolls when dealing with one another until the domain can be expanded.

Hampered Skill: Assume a –1 penalty toward one Mental or Physical Skill. Perhaps a fire destroys a local library (–1 Academics), or maybe characters caused so much trouble at the hospital that they and their "friends" aren't allowed back in (–1 Medicine).

Troubled Rituals: Rites are harder to cast; ritemasters suffer a –1 penalty when performing rites. This can be the result of various unfortunate effects. Characters may have earned the ire of angry local spirits. Maybe the area sees a sudden surge in population growth. Perhaps the environment simply becomes overly distracting (the sounds from a nearby factory are too loud, chemical odors from a nearby town drift over the protectorate or the domain becomes a sudden refuge for biting gnats).

Other Rules

The following rules may also apply to a pack and its relationship to the protectorate:

- Protectorate Merit points can be purchased with experience points. Assume that each point costs three experience points.
- Characters contributing points to a specific function can change the function of those points, but doing so requires both time and cost. For instance, if a character or pack contributing three Protectorate points originally had those points dedicated to a cache of medical supplies (+1 to Medicine rolls), the pack may find that less useful than expected and would prefer instead to devote the points to a communal gun locker (+1 to Firearm rolls). This takes time equal to one week per point shifted. In this case, it's three Protectorate points, and so it requires three weeks. During those three weeks, neither bonus is applicable. The medical supplies are gone, and the guns aren't yet in place. Also, completing the shift costs one more additional Protectorate point — characters may already have one "free" unfettered point hanging around, but if the pack doesn't, it must purchase a point for three experience points, which then goes toward that cost. (The added point also contributes

to the "one Flaw per 10 points" equation, as noted above.)

• If a pack leaves the protectorate, the pack takes any contributed points with it. Perhaps the pack took the medical supplies, or maybe the pack's constant teaching and upkeep on the protectorate lands simply withers in the pack's absence. Flaws earned from those contributed points, however, remain. (In this way, protectorates that see a high "turnover" rate begin to suffer unnecessarily as the packs potentially leave some measure of harm in their wake, but no reward.)

Protectorate = Territory?

This Merit can easily be made to serve and reflect a single pack's territory, not a multi-pack domain. Certainly there will be fewer points to go around, but any advantage is a good advantage. With Storyteller input and player world-building, the pack can have the kind of territory worth fighting for, not just a postage stamp of dead grass or crumbling mortar. This Merit helps give life to any hunk of land claimed by one or many Forsaken packs.

Rites

Every protectorate has a battery of rites it can perform. A clutch likely features one or several ritemasters, and their accumulated knowledge can help deepen the entire protectorate's spiritual know-how. That said, some rites can be particularly useful in making and maintaining a successful alliance. Below are just a handful of these rites, though certainly you should feel free to come up with rites specific to your story's domain.

Rite of Luna's Acre (•)

Protectorates with some level of history have seen their people come and go. Yes, some probably leave of their own accord, but many fall in battle (though a few certainly succumb to old age or disease) when the clutch goes to war. This rite simply consecrates a protectorate's graveyard (or, as some call it, "bone orchard") with Luna's blessing. Those who come to Luna's Acre to pray and reflect often feel recharged in doing so.

Performing the Rite: Enacting the ritual is simple, though lengthy. The ritemaster goes to where the protectorate keeps its dead (or honors the dead through cenotaphs and markers, if not the bodies themselves). There, she must upend a small bottle (thimble-sized) of her own tears onto the ground. She must then whisper a small prayer of her own design to Luna and her fallen clutch-mates. She must repeat the prayer over and over again until the ritual is complete, which may be an hour or more in time.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (seven successes; each roll represents one hour of time)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The ritemaster feels overwhelmed with grief and cannot continue. For the following eight hours, she suffers a –1 penalty to all rolls due to her crushing sadness.

Failure: No successes are accumulated, and the rite fails.

Success: The appropriate successes are added. If the total reaches seven or more successes, the rite is completed. For the following year, any who come to pray at the graveyard for at least 10 minutes of uninterrupted quiet can gain back one Willpower point for doing so. The character may only gain one Willpower point per week in this manner. The rite lasts for one year, 365 days, from the point of the ritemaster's performance. After that, the rite must be performed anew by her or another Forsaken.

Exceptional Success: Successes are added to the total. If the total reaches 12 or more successes, the ritemaster automatically gains two Willpower points for her success.

Suggested Modifiers

+2	Performed during a full moon
–2	Performed during a new moon

Centering the Cairn (•••)

A protectorate's sacred cairn is, on the surface, a pretty straightforward thing. It's a pile of rocks and sticks (though, in cities some might use a small heap of car parts or even paint cans filled with rocks and sticks) that act as the focal point of a communal area.

The communal area isn't just for socializing — it's a spiritually sanctified area made for mediating disputes and dealing with alliance business. The cairn radiates a kind of power, drawing down tempers and mitigating madness. Werewolves can come together and talk, negotiate, even swap stories with less fear of alliance-shattering events taking place.

Some cairns are fancier than others: an elaborate circle drawn in ash and sigil-scored stones, with the center heap of rocks comprising ancient, river-worn

boulders. Circles may be drawn within the circles. The whole affair might sit beneath a claw-etched willow tree. Others care little for pomp and circumstance — they throw a pile of rocks in the middle of some old rickety chairs and draw the circle with a clumsy claw. The level of devotion and preparedness matters little, only the function of the rite and capability of the ritemaster are relevant.

Performing the Rite: Every sacred cairn is a little different, and so, too, are the rituals to make them. The building of a cairn, though, always starts with the drawing of a circle to represent the moon. The circle can be inscribed in whatever material the ritemaster deems appropriate — it doesn't matter if the circle's actual image washes away, as it is the circle's spiritual effect that remains. The circle, whether written in chalk, blood or some other material, is then adorned with various sigils. The sigils represent the tribes, the phases of the moon, auspices, totems and other "binding" factors of the People. Creating the circle thus requires 10 successes on an extended Intelligence + Occult roll; each roll equates to one minute of work. (This roll is performed before the actual ritual roll begins; it adds to the time spent performing this ritual.)

Once the circle is drawn, the ritemaster then puts in place the actual cairn. The cairn itself can comprise any kind of objects — most prefer organic or natural materials (stones, sticks), whereas urban werewolves might instead use hunks of concrete pinned to the ground by a pyramid of rebar. Cairns are rarely extravagant (though one protectorate supposedly uses a pile of baby doll heads wound with Christmas lights).

The heap of material is then ritually prepared. The ritemaster hand-washes each component with pure water. Then, he must drizzle his own blood atop the cairn — and this blood must be drawn from his own teeth. Whether he bites the tip of his finger or nicks his tongue with a sharp incisor and then spits the blood onto the cairn matters little, only that it is his blood drawn from his own bite.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (15 successes, with each roll representing 15 minutes). Note that the time taken to draw the circle comes before this, and adds to the total time to perform the rite.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes are lost. The ritemaster feels suddenly agitated, nervous, suspicious. He risks entering Death Rage, and must succeed on the Resolve + Composure roll not to succumb, but gains a +2 modifier to resist.

Failure: No successes are gathered. The circle may be drawn, but the rite itself cannot be completed.

Success: Successes are added to the total. Once the proper successes are gathered, the cairn's power goes into effect. The cairn radiates its centering, balancing power in a number of yards equal to 10 yards per the ritemaster's Harmony (so, if his Harmony were 7, the cairn's effects work in a 70-yard radius, and thus affect all Uratha within that range). The specific effects are as follows:

- Werewolves attempting violence against one another feel compelled not to do so, as if their limbs resist the very action. They can still attack, but doing so incurs a –4 penalty. (Defending from an attack, however, does not incur such a penalty.) The resistance (and thus, the penalty) can be removed if the werewolf wishing to bring about violence spends a Willpower point.
- Upon approaching the cairn, every werewolf must choose a Social Skill bonus. This bonus provides a +1 die to any of the following Social Skills: Empathy, Expression, Persuasion, Socialize or Subterfuge. The werewolf must choose one of these Skills to boost while within the cairn's radius of effect. This bonus is only good while within the cairn's radius of effect. The Skill bonus is locked in until the next phase of the moon reaches its apex, at which point the werewolf can choose to change the bonus or keep it.
- It is harder to enter Kuruth while within the affected cairn radius. Rolls to resist Death Rage are made at a +2 modifier.

The cairn's effects last for a full month. The ritemaster can, however, maintain the cairn's effects by spending one Essence within three days (before or after) of the negation of those effects. Spending the Essence within that time ensures that he does not need to repeat the roll or process; the point of Essence is enough. If he goes outside of the time limit and fails to spend the Essence, the rite must be performed again. Only the original ritemaster can contribute the Essence.

Exceptional Success: Successes are added to the total. If the ritemaster gains 20+ successes, he can gain back a Willpower point to indicate a feeling of strength and success.

Suggested Modifiers

+2	Ritemaster has the highest Renown of the entire protectorate.
+1	Ritemaster has a Harmony of 8+.
–1	Ritemaster has a Harmony of 4 or less.
–2	Ritemaster has the lowest Renown of the entire protectorate.

The Oath and Fetter (•••••)

Legends say that, long ago, the Forsaken gathered more easily in functional societies — more than just protectorates, they marked the mountains and forests with fortified city-states that kept vigil over the spirits and loci in an effort to guard the harmony of the land. Of course, many Forsaken think that such legends are just that, legends, and thus taste faintly of bullshit. The bestial urges of a werewolf would eventually override the solidarity of such a city-state, guaranteeing the eventual downfall of such a so-called society.

Whatever the case, one rite may harken back to such a supposed time. This rite ensures that those who belong to the protectorate are quite literally marked and favored for doing so. They become tied to the land and to one another by swearing an oath (of the ritemaster's devising). The actual domain itself actually becomes spiritually protected, as well — outsiders feel the effects when they step into a domain that is not their own.

This rite is by no means simple to perform, but its effects are lasting, more so than many rituals.

Performing the Rite: The enacting of this rite by its ritemaster is lengthy and complex. His first step is to walk the perimeter of the entire protectorate — which may be tens of miles — three times in a row. On the third pass, he must mark four spots with blood. On the northernmost point, he must mark the land with the blood of a bird. On the southernmost point, the blood of a mammal (non-human). At the easternmost point, he must drizzle human blood on the ground, and the blood of a Forsaken (himself or another) at the westernmost point. (These direction points can be roughly approximated if an exact directional "peak" cannot be easily surmised.)

When that is complete, the ritemaster must find the relative center of the protectorate. There, he will finish the last grueling stages of the ritual. He must set up a stone circle for himself, and for the next several days and nights he will visit this circle and perform various tasks. He will dance and howl. He will bite and claw at himself (likely in Dalu form) causing a number of lethal wounds equal to his Primal Urge score. He must then deliver unto the circle a number of bodily fluids: spit, blood, bile and urine. These fluids are meant to represent both a kind of purging as well as sacrifice — for forming and keeping a protectorate cannot be done without a strong measure of sacrifice on the parts of all involved.

At the end, he must shift into all five of his forms in that circle. He needn't spend any significant time in those forms, only that he becomes each.

Cost: 5 Essence

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (40 successes; each roll represents one day's worth of effort. The ritemaster needn't perform this rite straight through, and can come back to perform the various parts of the rite over the course of weeks or even months.)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes are lost. The disturbed rite is like a beacon to antagonistic spirits, Hosts or Ridden. They may come sniffing around for the ritemaster's blood and flesh.

Failure: No successes are gained. The rite fails to take effect.

Success: The appropriate successes are gained. If the ritemaster gains 40 or more successes, the ground within the protectorate's perimeter (i.e., that periphery walked by the ritemaster during the rite) becomes supernaturally protected. Those who belong to the clutch also gain a number of bonuses. Note, however, that truly belonging to the protectorate means doing so in more than name alone. To "belong," a werewolf must swear an oath of the ritemaster's devising to the ritemaster himself. The ritemaster must then mark the werewolf's wrists and ankles with the ritemaster's own blood. The overall effects are as follows:

- Werewolves who belong gain a +2 bonus when performing Physical actions within the protectorate's periphery. The land literally seems to aid them: if running, the ground seems to give them a boost. If fighting, they seem to see and feel the space around them, allowing them to move more confidently.
- However, when outside the protectorate boundary, werewolves suffer a –1 penalty to all Physical rolls. They feel awkward, out-of-place. They might stumble more easily or feel uncomfortable in their own bodies.
- Werewolves who do not belong to the protectorate suffer a –2 penalty to all Physical rolls while within the protectorate borders. The land seems somehow to reject them — if running, they might trip on a snaking root that didn't seem to be there before. If fighting, they might find that every time

they swing or bite, a branch catches them in the face or their heel gets caught on a jutting rock.

• Mortals in the protectorate area suffer Lunacy more acutely. Assume that every mortal has a Willpower lowered by 2 when considering the effects of observing a werewolf Dalu, Gauru or Urshul form.

• The Gauntlet is one lower than usual for purposes of traveling back and forth from the Shadow to the physical world. This is the case only within the periphery of the alliance domain.

This rite's effects function for as long as the ritemaster remains alive. Once he dies, its effects cease suddenly. Once a werewolf "belongs" through the oath, he can choose to bow out of the oath (and thus, all the positive effects of the rite) by simply deciding to do so. Doing so, however, means he is now an "outsider," and subject to the –2 Physical penalty while within the protectorate borders. The werewolf can, with the ritemaster's permission, rejoin the protectorate by swearing the oath again, but doing so costs him both an Essence and a Willpower point.

Exceptional Success: Successes are added to the total. If the total reaches 45+ successes, for 24 hours after the completion of the rite, the Physical bonus to all the appropriate werewolves in the protectorate is increased to +3. After the 24 hours, the bonus drops to the normal +2 modifier.

Fetishes

Below are a few fetishes somewhat specific to protectorate use. Certainly, they can be used outside of a domain, but their initial creation and function is geared toward keeping the clutch together.

Wandering Jacob's Map (••)

This fetish — or, at least, the idea of it — is said to have come from a Forsaken named Wandering Jacob. Jacob, a Hunter in Darkness, established a kind of commune way up in the Appalachian Mountains. Here, he invited many packs to a place where they could withdraw from the world and find a kind of perfection in the microcosm of their given domain. It worked for a while, but eventually peaceful relationships gave way to territorial infighting that helped whittle away the harmony of the clutch. Worse, the protectorate began suffering incursions from outsiders: hillfolk Storm Lords bent on taking the protectorate territory by territory.

And so, Wandering Jacob is said to have created a map of the domain, with each territory marked clearly. It's said he imbued the map with a spirit of an eagle or falcon, because such birds-of-prey fly high and have frighteningly powerful vision. When activated, the map allowed him to see just all the werewolves inside the protectorate borders. It didn't allow him to differentiate who was who, exactly, but it did allow him to see who belonged in the protectorate and who didn't. Enemies — or, at least, those with malice in their hearts — appeared as little ghostly red flames. Friendly werewolves — i.e., those who belonged to the clutch — showed up with faint ochre glow-points, like fireflies in the night.

Of course, the story goes on to suggest that the map didn't save the protectorate. In the end, some say the clutch self-destructed, while others claim it was taken apart by those cruel Storm Lords. Whatever happened, most agree that Wandering Jacob is still out there, aimlessly drifting, in search of a new place to forge another utopia.

Those who want to create such a map need, for starters, a semi-accurate map of the protectorate. It could be a crude map painted in blood and mud on a piece of old parchment, or it might be an actual road atlas map with territories marked in pen. The map must be imbued with a high-flying bird of prey (eagle, owl, falcon, hawk). Activation allows the viewer to see all the werewolves within the given protectorate and its territories — friendlies glowing like lightning bugs, enemies showing as match-tips of red fire.

Protectorate Landmarks

We'd like to give you a detailed description of all the physical building blocks of a clutch's protectorate — i.e., just what might go on a map like the one made by Wandering Jacob — but we can't. Every protectorate is different. One protectorate might have a helluva lot of amenities at its disposal: a fetish storeroom, a command bunker, training grounds, a cemetery of the fallen, a cairn and even a place to hang and smoke meat. Others might forego any and all of those accoutrements, instead choosing to let each pack design its own territory accordingly. Does a protectorate meet at a specially designated, abandoned amphitheater? Or do the representatives simply gather around the oldest and biggest tree? Does the domain feature one or several loci, or was the group unable to procure (or keep) a locus for its needs? The layout of a domain is up to you and the players. Let players be a part of the physical design and needs of the protectorate. If they're given a hand in the world-building, they'll feel all the more invested in keeping it together.

Talking Stick (•••)

This fetish can be made of any kind of wieldable "stick-like" object: a rain stick, a gilded scepter, a sigil-painted umbrella, a crowbar. The talking stick's function is to make the speaker the focal point, while theoretically "dimming" the importance of other's words. The speaker gains a +1 bonus to all Presence rolls. However, those nearby (within a range equal to the speaker's Primal Urge score in yards) suffer a –1 penalty to their Presence rolls if they try to talk while the fetish is active and in the speaker's hand. This is represented by them stumbling over words, tongue-tied. The speaker's voice, however, sounds louder, stronger, more pervasive. Werewolves use any kind of loud bird-spirit (goose, gull, mockingbird) to make this fetish.

Action: Reflexive

Local Cultures

The grim phenomenon of undergoing the First Change and becoming a werewolf may seem stridently Western. After all, the dominant myths of werewolves may appear Eurocentric; modern pop culture's idea of the creature is born out of European legend, replete with silver and full moons. Ah, but werewolves — both in legend and as the Forsaken — are not a purely European, or even Western phenomenon.

Culturally, the werewolf or shapeshifter myth is present in just about every part of the world. Europe is, of course, home to hundreds of werewolf legends, but what about Brazil's lobisomem or Mexico's nahual?

Moreover, it's not just about the legend of werewolves or shapeshifters as a supernatural phenomenon. It's also about theme. The themes of **Werewolf: The Forsaken** are not tied to any one region of the world, and can be expressed as a part of any culture. This essay seeks to explore a little of that, and show you how you can create a Forsaken character to come out of the diverse local cultures around the globe. Storytellers may also find this essay useful when choosing to set a story in an unexpected locale.

Just a Taste

It would be impossible to provide highly detailed, exhaustive information on creating werewolves from every corner of the world. Even the length of an entire book wouldn't be enough to give every culture and every



Forsaken theme a truly comprehensive look. What we're aiming for here is a feel for creating characters from various regions, helping provide a jumping-off point for players and Storytellers. Further information on the story hooks provided in this section can be found in encyclopedias (online and offline), websites or books. One book recommended is Robert Pelton Young's *The World's Most Dangerous Places*, which gives a practical, frank and witty guide to the titular regions.

Africa

As with most regions, one cannot say that Africa is a single thing. With more than 50 countries within its continental borders, Africa is a diverse and madly troubled place. AIDS, starvation, border conflicts and ethnic cleansing are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to describing the terrors of the dark continent. Werewolves can come from any part of this region: a journalist working out of one of Nairobi's cushy office towers, a toothy guerilla working for a ragtag rebel army in the villages outside Kinshasa or from the blue-robed Tuareg camel caravans carrying salt and herding goats throughout the deserts of the Sahara.

Shapeshifters

Throughout Africa, legends of shapeshifters abound. The term "Bouda" suggests a man who is born with the ability to walk as a hyena or jackal. Old Kenyan stories talk of those who were born as animals but learned how to walk on two legs and mimic man. Lycanthropy is often associated with witchcraft and sorcery: the Zulu believe that magicians enslave by turning them into beasts. One story claims that men may be possessed, quite literally, by the wilderness of the continent — this "wild soul" changes a man and allows him to walk with two souls, the soul of man and the soul of animal.

What does this mean when creating an African werewolf character? For one, it indicates that there exists a greater belief in the supernatural, which can change a character's perspective from the beginning. While acceptance of old legend isn't universal (the aforementioned journalist from Kenya may not give any credence to such nonsense), it is still more pervasive than in, say, Sacramento. A lot of this belief is tied, however, to the negative. Connecting the idea of lycanthropy to ugly witchcraft or vengeful sorcery isn't likely to give a nuzusul a great sense of pride. Many characters enter into the life carrying connotations that werewolves from other cultures may not possess: some packs actively believe that their existence is a curse, and hope to reverse the "bad magic" by finding the sorcerer responsible. Many Forsaken come to terms with this by finding support among their own kind, but still the feeling lingers — "Are we monsters or slaves to monsters?" Some therefore possess a strong sense of Harmony, trying to walk that line between human and wolf. Others give into the madness, either so profoundly resisting the lupine side that they lose Harmony, or instead giving into the bestial side because the "curse" cannot be escaped.

African werewolves still take on wolf form, though their coloration may change to match local canids or similarly shaped animals. Cape Hunting Dog coloration is common, as are a variety of jackal-like colorations. Some werewolves even resemble spotted hyenas in coat color.

Tribal Culture

The werewolves of Africa segregate themselves into the five tribes just as they do everywhere else. Here, though, tribal identity takes on a larger importance among the Forsaken because it assumes a larger role in the lives of most Africans. The continent is home to more than 400 tribes of humans, and even those who do not formally belong to any tribe can likely trace their blood back to one tribe or another without looking very far. For characters, this can mean a few things.

First, segregation may play a powerful role in how a werewolf character sees members of other tribes. Prejudice may figure into the equation: a war-seasoned Blood Talon may refuse to associate with an Iron Master rust-shaman from a capital city. A Storm Lord caravan leader may fear the ways of the Berber Bone Shadow who barters with the desert djinn. This doesn't mean that werewolves of the tribes can't or don't associate with one another, or won't band together in packs. It only suggests that they may carry with them a stronger sense of tribal self, and see tribal lines more clearly than in some Western domains.

Second, just as the Tribe of the Moon is likely to figure heavily into a character's makeup, so, too, does her human tribe. Whereas an American werewolf may see himself as a combination of auspice and Uratha tribe, an African werewolf may see himself as auspice, Uratha tribe and human tribe. A member

of the Bidyogo tribe colors his life as a werewolf with traditions from his own tribe. He may be a Hunter in Darkness, but his Bidyogo ways are just as important. He may be a fisherman, and wear a mask (which he associates with his duties as Ithaeur). He also considers ancestor veneration paramount, and deals almost exclusively with the ancestral spirits of both his tribes (Hunter in Darkness and Bidyogo). He may even carry around a statuary fetish, which he believes will capture his soul upon death so that others may speak with him more easily after his demise. Alternately, a Makonde Storm Lord may easily merge his two tribal influences: as the headman of a local village, he acts also as the alpha of his pack.

Certainly not everybody considers themselves a member of a human tribe. Some don't care to identify their lineage in such a way, and others actively reject mortal ways (a Tuareg werewolf may no longer accept the tribe's adherence to Islam, for instance). Still, an African character may maintain connections and traditions that characters from other regions may not.

Fetishes

African werewolves are likelier to begin with dots in the Fetish Merit, as the idea of power objects and icons is already endemic among the mortal populace. Examples of such fetishes might be:

- **Figures:** Small humanoid dolls and icons figure prominently among mortal and werewolf African fetishes. They might represent deities, ancestors or traits of desired power. Yoruba "twin" icons are two separate small fetishes that represent opposing powers (one may help a werewolf with Intimidation, the other may offer bonuses to Expression). An ancestor-fetish may provide oracular benefits, giving the user a murky vision of the future as delivered by one of his ancestors. Worth noting is that a werewolf character may possess a Carving Specialty in his Expression score, so that he may make his own fetish figures.
- **Masks**: Masks in African culture can serve various purposes. Some "scare away" spirits, whereas others mark a boy's passage into man hood. System effects might be to give a werewolf a "man's strength" (upping his Strength-based damage pool) or perhaps terrifying spirits (re moving dice from a spirit's attack).
- **Staves:** A werewolf's staff is often topped with a powerful icon (a sitting figure, nails and stones dangling from gut cords, a sharp point etched with faces). Some staves are suitable as weapons, providing klaive-like bonuses, but most provide benefits unrelated to combat. One staff may help "clear the clouds" and show a werewolf the correct way to travel, whereas another may "bring the clouds" and cause rain to fall.

Blood, Rage and Fire

Africa exists embroiled in constant turmoil. National and local politics clash constantly in bloody outpourings. Tribal skirmishes can explode into full-bore genocide. AIDS and hunger drive men to madness. Somalia, Sudan, Rwanda, the Congo, Sierra Leone, Eritrea and Ethiopia… the list goes on and on, and what it means is that a vast portion of Africa's populace is marked by war and disease. It is a part of African life, and it is just as much a part of the continent's Shadow. Therefore, it is just as much a part of a Forsaken character.

If creating a character from one of Africa's war-torn regions, consider what it means for both the character's background and the points on her sheet. A schoolteacher on the edge of Darfur has perhaps seen more rape and death than any one person living in a Western city such as Los Angeles. She may be university-trained (Academics 3) but also be trained to use an assault rifle in case the tribal Janjaweed militiamen come to rape and murder non-Arab civilians (Firearms 2 with an AK-47 specialty). Another character may be a seasoned veteran with a bevy of combat skills, but his training by UN peacekeepers and EU forces perhaps exposed him to a love of French poetry (Expression 3, and two dots in the Language Merit for French). Exposure to war and death may lead a character to start with a lower Harmony (or higher Harmony if she so stridently opposes that life), and may influence her Gift choices beyond tribal affiliation (a Bone Shadow may take Strength over Insight because of the violent conditions in her country).

Sample Characters

Below are three sample character backgrounds of African werewolves. These aren't exhaustive; the sheer potential for regional Forsaken is truly limitless. Feel free to provide them with stats, or to borrow liberally from the descriptions for your own characters.

Abopey the Catfish (Blood Talon Irraka)

The Ogoni people in Nigeria have seen their lands raped for oil. The industry has killed their fishing, wiped out their crops and they have next

to nothing to show for it. Nigeria, the fourth biggest OPEC oil-producer in the world, has long allowed the oil companies to leech resources from Ogoniland. The Ogonis don't want to take it anymore, and since have engaged in brutal uprisings against the oil companies and the Nigerian government. The local police retaliate by burning the Ogoni's houses to the ground. Now, a local werewolf pack — shepherded by alpha Abopey — has gotten in on the action, deciding once and for all that balance must be restored to the region at any cost. The oil companies have allowed all manner of awfulness to gain traction, including a terrible Wound just off the Niger Delta. Abopey, a vicious mischief-maker (whose tricks are violent and bloody), leads his pack like true guerillas — hiding in the waters of the Delta, sneaking about in the darkness between worlds and executing any who dare to harm the Ogoni people or the tender equilibrium of the spirit realm.

Induku (Bone Shadow Cahalith)

Induku makes his home outside Johannesburg, in the sprawling suburb of Soweto. He is a character of several dualities: he belongs to both the Bone Shadow tribe as well as the mortal Ndebele tribe. With his pack, he watches over the various safaris in and around the region, confirming that the balance between animal and human is kept safe — as such, he walks the worlds between human and beast, city and country. A constantly smiling man, he is also a capable hunter with rifle or sling, relishing in the grandeur of pursuit, capture and kill. Despite his smile, Induku keeps much darkness within his heart. He distrusts white men, a feeling leftover from the days of apartheid. He has also mistakenly murdered those he believed were poaching from the sacred lands. Induku has found himself caught in Kuruth one time too many, but refuses to accept that he is perhaps losing focus.



Fathia's Flower (Ghost Wolf Rahu)

Daughter of the now-deceased wolf-blooded named Fathia, the Ghost Wolf known as Fathia's Flower has chosen to avenge her mother's demise. The underprivileged women of Somalia are often pawns in cruel reprisal games, used as tokens of threat and vengeance when the clan heads or warlords seek payback. Her mother was mistakenly raped and murdered in one such reprisal, attacked by mercenaries who simply had the wrong target. Now, Fathia's Flower is just one of many female werewolves in a coalition against the warlords of her region. She is a brutal warrior, highly effective despite the fact she only just turned 16. When she and her pack wade into war, she often mans the "technical," a light Toyota pickup truck with an anti-aircraft gun bolted in the vehicle's bed. She will join no tribe, because she sees such segregation as the reason why such fighting exists in the first place. Even in Forsaken society she cares little for such designations, and looks down upon those who value their own social group over another. In times of quiet, however, Fathia's Flower sometimes wishes she could find a place among Forsaken society, or at least find time to be a teenaged girl instead of an incalculable killer.

AIDS and the Forsaken

Africa sits under the dark shadow of an AIDS pandemic. Two-thirds of the world's AIDS cases are in Africa (roughly 35 million). Life expectancies in Africa are dropping as cases of infection increase. And yet, despite the perva sive rates of infection, AIDS victims are treated as animals or monsters. Many sufferers are abused or murdered. Some are outright exiled. It doesn't help that some countries' health min isters claim that supernatural amulets or prayers can help stave off the disease, or that rape is used as a weapon by soldiers and mercenaries (which of course only heightens the chance of transmission). AIDS affects every part of Africa, and therefore, AIDS will affect a Forsaken char acter. But how?

A character may have wolf-blooded relatives with AIDS, or may herself suffer from the disease (a werewolf's ingrained resilience will stave off death, but may affect her in other ways). She may be haunted by literal specters and spirits of the disease, or by the other spirits that come from the conflicts surrounding the pandemic (spirits of sickness, war, prejudice). Perhaps she's an activist for education, or a warrior against those who would harm the infected. Maybe she herself has prejudices against the diseased, and must overcome such intolerance over the course of a story

Asia

Asia's a big place. China alone has 1.3 billion people; the Forsaken are not rare here, and by sheer ratios alone must dwell in strong numbers. How does one incorporate the local cultures all over Asia into a character? Could a character and her pack watch over the restive dead that stagger through the Twilight of Mai Lai, Nanking or No Gun Ri? Do blood-soaked warrior monks attempt to keep the peace between the Rat and Spider Hosts of Hong Kong? Could an alliance of packs stand as a line of sanity between the warlords of the Golden Triangle (Burma, Laos and Thailand) and the sanctity of the rainforest's roiling Shadow? In no way can this section detail the breadth and depth of Asia in a few thousand words, but it will hopefully give some ideas as to how to incorporate Eastern life into a new Forsaken character.

Eastern Religions

To generalize somewhat, Eastern religions are about making peace with oneself as a part of the whole. The individual makes peace with his role in nature (Shintoism), with his connection to the ethics of the larger society (Confucianism), or with the soul of humanity and the universe as a whole (Buddhism, Taoism). Werewolves, however, are not peaceful creatures; how do the two elements reconcile? Is it possible for a Forsaken character to adhere with any of the Eastern codes or faiths?

It is possible. The key to a Forsaken character is not that she cannot strive for such peace, only that she has not found it. A werewolf may desire peace within so that she may have peace without, but therein lies one of the tragedies of life among the Forsaken — peace comes only in fits and starts, but is only everlasting when one meets the grave. The Uratha are creatures of great anger. They struggle to find sanity between their two souls. The external world — meaning the physical realm as well as the Shadow — is troubled by constant strife, be it with the Ridden or spirits or the Pure.

The goal is, if incorporating Eastern religion into a character's life, to find how it reflects her personality and conflict. Has Taoism given her a way to justify a growth in Harmony, as the religion helps her negotiate the two dueling halves of her own soul? Or are the philosophies of "The Way" more damning and mocking to her, since she cannot grip on the struggle of wolf versus human? Can a Rahu calm his frenzied mind with Buddhist meditation? Can he truly walk the Eightfold Path, which asks him to be good and wholesome and commit no harm to others? Probably not. Perhaps he is instead fixed on the notion that "all life is suffering," and that he may be the instrument of that suffering — a kind of curse, to be sure, but one that at least allows him to know his place in this world. Will a Confucian Elodoth adhere strongly to filial lines, maintaining strong connections to family and ancestor, incorporating his veneration of law and ritual into his own Forsaken practices? Or can he no longer find sanity within the laws of humans, unable to reconcile his old life with his new?

The practices of each religion and philosophy are worth considering, as well. Does a character incorporate meditation into his life (with a high Wits + Composure pool, or the Meditative Mind Merit)? Does reliance on Confucian or Shinto ritual cause a character to become all the more

interested in Forsaken rites (even above Gifts)? Is a pack's small locus actually an old ancestor shrine, charged emotionally with the resonance — for good or ill — of those who have come before? If a character finds peace in martial prowess (i.e., any of the fighting styles in the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, pp. 110–112), is that peace disrupted every time he enters Gauru, frustrating him because he cannot find a center?

Consider, too, that many of these religions make a place for the supernatural. Shinto, especially Folk Shinto, allow for animist traditions similar to what the Forsaken know to be true. Strict Taoism allows for a practitioner to incorporate ghosts, gods, and spirits into his life. Does this color the way a Uratha sees the world? Are all spirits Oni, or demons? Is even the lowliest spirit of wind-swept grass assumed to be the manifestation of an old ancestor? Does a character see fit to practice constant sacrifice to the spirits, so compulsively that it may begin to damage his Harmony?

Anger and Repression

One mistaken connotation regarding the East is that peace and harmony are front and center. Prominent are images of smiling monks, breathless tai chi and delicate paintings of serene nature. While certainly this is an ideal, it's not the reality. Asia has seen a world of violence — much of which is repressed until it explodes. In China, demonstrations are quashed by the police and army. In the jungles of Thailand and Burma, mercenaries belonging to various drug kingpins trade machine gun fire. Anarchist cults in Japan release nerve gas to shepherd forth some kind of madman's apocalypse. North Korea exists in a psychotic police state, locking down every citizen and piping stale propaganda into the citizens' homes day after day.

When creating a Forsaken character from Asia (admittedly a gigantic region), it's important to embrace that anger. Think of Buddhist monks setting themselves aflame to protest the Vietnamese war. Or of army repressions in Burma. Or of gangs of triad and tong wannabes taking potshots at one another in the streets of Tokyo or Beijing or Bangkok. The angry ones are those likeliest to become Forsaken. Take, for example, how teenage violence is on the rise in Japan. Consider a young pre-teen girl who attacks her fellow students with a pair of scissors — could she be on the verge of her First Change? Street gangs in Thailand engage in drug trafficking, human slavery and thuggish thievery. Could a Forsaken be born a victim of that life? Or could she instead belong to that life, a willing participant?



Details

Life in the West is not drastically different from life in the East. It may seem to be; the two are, quite literally, a world apart. But in Asia, people go to work, pay bills, have families, listen to music just as they do in America, France or Australia. So, too, with the Forsaken. They are not wholly unique creatures. They still maintain territories, still keep watch over the balance of the *Hisil* and still war with their own internal mechanisms (Harmony, Primal Urge) as well as attacks from the relentless Pure.

The details — the "little things" — are what differentiate an Eastern werewolf from a Western one. Honestly, make stuff up. Does a pack living outside of Beijing change its totem every New Year? Do some packs of Bone Shadows keep the graves of their forebears or wolf-blooded ancestors located in their individual territories so that they may sweep them and keep their ghosts happy? Have Japanese Elodoth passed around traditions of elaborate tea services, helping negotiate truces between packs over such ritualized consumption? Perhaps the werewolves in Chiang Mai engage in celibate marriages to exemplify both the power of duality as well as the need for control (remaining abstinent with one another is difficult for creatures with such lusty, powerful emotions). Maybe packs of isolated and potentially mad Ghost Wolves watch the abandoned demilitarized zone between North and South Korea, where nature grows unbidden and humans haven't walked in 50 years? The variation of details, spiced with local flair and tradition, will make all the difference in giving an Eastern character life and meaning.

Sample Characters

Three sample Asian werewolves are below. These aren't statted; if you choose to use them, the placement of dots is yours to decide.

Hla Hlaing (Hunter in Darkness Elodoth)

Hla Hlaing, with her pack the Fire Balloon Dancers, watch over a swath of highland territory in Burma (now Myanmar) known as Mouke Tsoe Bo, or "Auspicious Hunting Ground." Their chief hope as a pack is to keep the various villages in their territory safe and peaceful at whatever cost — when the people are peaceful, the Shadow is safe. But recently, the government has declared an end to the production of poppies in an effort to diminish the heroin trade that comes out of the country and gives warlords power. While this seems ostensibly a good thing, the Fire Balloon Dancers do not believe that to be the case. When the peasants grew poppies, the warlords paid handsomely. Farmers could afford food and medicine. Now, they cannot. Poppy production has not been replaced with any other crop, and so the peasants starve and perish from diseases such as malaria. The Shadow seethes. Spirits of sickness grow in power. Many villagers have become Urged or Claimed, acting as monsters among their weakened families. Hla Hlaing now demands that her pack help the peasants and warlords once again reclaim this area for the heroin trade. She will keep her people safe from addiction, and the production of poppies will once again put food in their bellies. She has chosen an evil path, this she knows, but it is the lesser of two evils. That, she claims, is the way of all life.

Outside of Doorways (Iron Master Ithaeur)

Takeshi was not well liked in school. The other students always found him a little off-putting. They did not mock him; they merely left him alone. He would always be tinkering with something, a little robot or unusual toy. The day his First Change came upon him, one of his little robots (a mechanized spider with solar panel eyes) began to speak to him in a strange tongue. The robot told him that Tokyo had many ghosts, and many such ghosts found their way into machines, and soon he would be responsible for talking to them. When a dark-eyed man in a black suit came and bit him, Takeshi was marked — later they would find him tearing his home and little sister to pieces. Now, Takeshi belongs to a small Iron Master pack in the Shibuya district of Tokyo. The area is lorded over by a powerful ring of Storm Lord packs, and they do not give the Iron Master omegas any room to breathe. What they demand of Takeshi and his mates, they get. If they ask the Iron Masters to force a vengeful spirit away out of a motorbike or streetlight, then the Iron Masters will comply or feel the swift claw of punishment. Now Takeshi is called Outside of Doorways by the Storm Lords because they never let him inside their homes, making him stand just outside. He has great powers and potential, but has not yet been able to realize it. He hates those he is with, even the Iron Masters who seem weak and filled with useless anger. He wishes to harness his anger and escape the bonds of those who keep him, but as yet, the opportunity to do so has not yet arisen.

Cholon Sukh, or "Stone Axe" (Blood Talon Rahu)

The pack's totem, White Hunter Cat, asked that the Forsaken follow a straightforward ban: that no snow leopard in the territory be harmed. The pack, lording over one of the mountains in the Mongolian region of Khangai, long kept this pact sound, fighting off poachers and cultivating prey (sheep and goats) for the endangered cats. The day the Pure came, cloaked in blood red robes against the snow-swept mountains, it was all to end. The Pure pack, driven by the demands of their own mad totem (the manifestation of a vicious hailstorm), came in under the cover of night and killed seven snow leopards — one for each of their number. The ban was shattered, and White Hunter Cat spurned Cholon Sukh and his pack. Then a terrible storm swept up, casting daggers of ice and fist-like shears of wind against the Forsaken. Three died on the mountain. The three who remained, including Cholon Sukh, fled the territory, knowing that the Pure and their power was for now insurmountable. Now, Cholon and his two remaining packmates have gone to Mongolia's capital of Ulaanbaatar to find someone, anyone, who can help them return to the mountain and oust the murderous Pure.

Wolf-Blooded

Family is very important among the werewolves of Asia. Therefore, many keep more intimate relationships with their wolf-blooded, more so at least than those of the West. Some packs even keep detailed registers of the known wolf-bloods in and around a given domain. From time to time, the packs may visit the wolf-bloods — some to pay homage to old family, others to make demands and affirm ancient pacts. The goal is ultimately to keep tabs and to ensure that the families do not turn against the Forsaken. It seems that, given too much time in ignorance, the wolf-blooded may come to incorrect assumptions about the Uratha, sometimes deciding that they should be rejected or even hunted outright. And so the tradition comes to maintain connections, however tenuous, with those who share the werewolves' blood.

Indian Subcontinent

The Indian subcontinent includes — for the sake of categorization — India and several of its neighbors: Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal. India alone is the second most populated country in the world, fitting 1.1 billion people into a region far smaller than China (which fits 1.3 billion into its borders). The region is easily one of the most densely populated regions, suffering massive crowding concerns and slamming the undeveloped world into the developed. A city such as Kolkata, sometimes called the "Dying City," features some of the richest and poorest conditions in the whole world — each not far from the other.

This creates a great sense of imbalance, one reflected in a confusing and labyrinthine Shadow. The Forsaken have their work cut out for them here, but help to make order in the world by finding order amongst themselves. By still clinging to the formally dead caste system and by conceding to unshakable notions of duty and to the significance of the spirit, they manage to find stability and peace. To foreigners, the land and its spirit realm seem wildly out-of-control, incomprehensible. But the Forsaken who live here know it well, unassailable in their convictions.

Culture of Obligation

Hinduism is a religion of seemingly divergent ideas: it gives honor to thousands of little gods (deva), but believe all the little gods are part of one big godly force (Brahman). For some, one can be Christian and Hindu at the same time — worshipping Jesus Christ is just another way of honoring Brahman. In this way, all Forsaken of the area are Hindus, even when they are not. Whether they formally call themselves that, the themes and symbols of this religion (the third largest in the world) are deeply ingrained in Uratha culture, and are likely to show in any character from the subcontinent.

To many Forsaken, the infinite and ubiquitous supreme Brahman is exemplified through one's Harmony. They believe that humans find their own balance in this world, just as werewolves have their own kind of spiritual equilibrium, and all of it is Brahman. Every spirit is deva, or a small god devoted to a small thing, all of which becomes the universal force. If Brahman is all things, and all things can have a spiritual reflection, then all spirits are Brahman… whether or not the spirits agree. Humans literally worship the spirits as deva, and in some cases the spirits literally take on the physical shape of how the humans see them. A spirit of doorways may take on an appearance similar to the Ganesh icon hanging above many actual doorways — a little elephant lord with many arms and various icons held in his hands (knives, torches, lotus blossoms, etc.). Further, a pack may take such an iconic spirit as a totem.

Out of all of Hinduism's chief pursuits, the notion of dharma digs the deepest among the Uratha. Dharma, a term signifying "duty" or "righteousness," is seen as the sacred obligations of all Forsaken. Of course, each pack interprets this in its own way: one pack may believe its dharma is to protect the human herd, while another believes that the job is to cull them when they grow too large (which, in India, is always). The werewolves seem to recognize this, and many ask one another, "What is your duty in this world?" Some Forsaken seek other pursuits outside of dharma, including material wealth or physical pleasure, but these are often seen as heretics or, at the least, worthless. (Some such Uratha join the ranks of the Bale Hounds, who have grown strong in India as of late.)

The concepts of salvation and liberation from the earthly shackles of the soul are not shared by many Forsaken. The mortals believe it, but the Forsaken believe that their place is always here among the two worlds. They are bound because of the crime of killing Father Wolf, and forever shall be unable to move to a greater reward. They may become ancestor-spirits, but nothing beyond that.

The Uratha consider themselves bound firmly to the caste system, though few can agree just what the caste system means — it implies different things in different regions. One region may see a pack believing itself to be the kshatriyas, or territorial warrior-teachers, but in another area only the Elodoth may be such. In one part of Mumbai, the Ithaeur are the priestly Brahmin, while in another part, all werewolves see themselves as the casteless and vile "untouchables." It's when such differing perspectives meet one another that violence is inevitable.

Several symbols of the religion are common among the Forsaken, whether or not they truly consider themselves Hindu. The tilaka, for instance, is a mark on the forehead indicating one's spirit-open "third eye." Such a mark may be in ash, red turmeric, clay or blood. Some werewolves wear these marks to symbolize their auspices (five horizontal lines for Full Moon Rahu, down to one line for the No Moon Irraka). Female Forsaken don't usually wear the bindi (dot), as it is a symbol of mortal marriage.

The Om or Aum symbol represents the universal vibration of all things, a balance of sound that represents a werewolf's Harmony. Mandalas, both Hindu and Buddhist, are aids that allow a werewolf to focus (some ink or scar their skin with elaborate mandalas to help them meditate in the moment and stave off Kuruth). Many werewolves also focus themselves through uses of murti, which are small icons and figures of varies gods. The Forsaken in particular, upon taking a totem, often make their own murti-figure of the totem spirit (and some totems demand this). These murtis may figure into how a werewolf prays at a locus, or performs rituals. Mantras, as well, often figure into ritual practice. (Any of the rituals in **Werewolf: The Forsaken** may be accompanied by a mantra or the presence of a murti. At the Storyteller's behest, it may even provide a +1 to the ritual's roll.)

Worth noting is that the Hindu ideas of ahimsa, or "non-violence," are not idealized by most Forsaken. Certainly some attempt to achieve a kind of peaceful balance, but most recognize that the duty of the werewolf is to act as both preservers and destroyers (the provenance of Shiva, largely), not creators. Defending the sacred places and destroying those who would threaten Brahman requires violence. As the Forsaken cannot move on to a greater spiritual peace, they are left in this world and given tooth and claw by the universal force. It is their dharma to hunt and kill. Kali annihilates because she must. So, too, must the Forsaken. Benevolence is not on the path that the werewolves walk.

Talens

Indian Forsaken rely on fetishes, but seem to use talens more. A talen's expendability symbolizes a kind of spiritual reality: once the object has fulfilled its purpose (*dharma*), the object may move into a perfect oblivion. The Uratha use talens as holy items as well as currency. What follows are a few quick examples of talens in the region:

- **Ghost Sticks:** Stick incense made of agar wood, bone dust and powdered goat's gall. Produces a pungent, dizzying aroma. The werewolf who breathes in the talen's smoke can interact with ghosts in Twilight as if they were physical. However, she suffers a –1 penalty when interacting with physical beings outside of Twilight. The effect lasts for one scene. Empowered by a mist-spirit. Action: Instant.
- **Tea of Fourteen Precious Jewels:** This talen is somewhat twofold. It is, at first, nothing more than three white, uncrushed lotus petals. The petals, once dropped into water (no matter how contaminated) purifies the water, warms it without the need for any ancillary heat source and makes a fragrant tea. The tea, when consumed, allows the drinker to ignore one *mild* derangement for the next eight hours. Empowered by an obligation-spirit. Action: Insant.



• **Whistling Arrow:** Archery among the Forsaken of the subcontinent is oddly common. This talen, a hollow arrow-head with holes on the side, makes a loud whistling noise as it flies through the air. Indians learned how to make them from the Chinese, and the arrows were used to both cause damage and signal troops to attack. This talen, upon successfully striking a target, makes him easier to hit for three turns. Any attacks made against the target during the subsequent three turns are performed with a +1 bonus. Empowered by a gregarious bushlark bird-spirit. Action: Reflexive.

Modern Versus Ascetic

The subcontinent is, in many ways, a land of warring extremes: religions of peace and balance suffer in a land of violent border skirmishes, the utmost poor live near exorbitant palaces and astounding beauty sits paired with scenes of ugly decay. Another divide, one that might be harnessed when creating a Forsaken character from the region, is the modern versus the ascetic.

India, in particular, is a land with a burgeoning modernity. Some of the world's greatest doctors and scientists come from this country, and it also has a massive information technology sector. These modern studies lead to a modern lifestyle, which helps water down the old caste system — after all, if a former "low caste" is able to suddenly make big rupees working at a global computer company, suddenly that person has access to nice cars, houses, meals and other luxuries. The "low caste" isn't supposed to have these things, but now he does.

A werewolf isn't likely to be mired in these lifestyles, but may very well come from it. The modern werewolf is familiar with various modern skills (Computer, Medicine, Science), and may commune with spirits that others refuse to acknowledge. India's Shadow is marked by this neoteric growth, and it isn't all easy — the spirit realm suffers from growing pains as networks expand, pollution chokes the air and briar-tangles of electric lines send pulses of uncontrolled power from city to city. Some werewolves loathe this change, others harness it. Not just the Iron Masters ride the wave, either. Hunters in Darkness stalk the high rises and alleyways, discovering new loci awakened with the swell of growth. Blood Talons paint themselves Krishna-blue and hunt serpent-spirits formed of sparking wire and chip-set eyes.

The Shaping, Technology and Warding Gift paths are common among modern Indian werewolves, regardless of tribe.

The other extreme involves ascetics. Some Jainists and Buddhists live ascetic lives, which can involve anything from forced starvation to sensory-deprived meditation, all the way to bloody self-flagellations. Plenty of ascetic werewolves dwell here — gaunt shadows with wide eyes overlooking lean muzzles, flesh and fur marked with self-made scars or brands. Why do they do it? Some deprive themselves because it brings them closer, or so they think, to the Harmony of Brahman, which is only true to an extent (after which, one's Harmony is damaged because one has chosen to resist the urge to hunt or change forms). Some totems demand ascetic lifestyles, and many werewolves practice a kind of "limited asceticism" in which they restrict themselves in one way only. One werewolf may never use a fetish, while another might literally cover his left eye for the rest of his life. Ascetic werewolves tend to have higher Stamina scores, and may also have high Survival or even Streetwise scores (as many ascetics are found in cities and see much of what happens). Common Gifts include those from Elemental, Insight and Nature, regardless of tribal affiliation.

Sample Characters

Below are several sample characters from the region that may find use in your game. You can use them as characters and stat them accordingly, or may instead borrow ideas to merge with your own concepts.

Zulficar the Unclean (Iron Master Cahalith)

Much of Pakistan's population outside of the major cities lives in squatter settlements (kachi-abadis). Here, homes are ramshackle, the people are the poorest of the poor and any physical or social infrastructure is non-existent. Such settlements suffer constantly. Heavy rains can wash them away. Crime and violence is a plague. Disease lurks. Zulficar and his pack have their work cut out for them in the small settlement outside of Karachi that they claim as territory. Few others want it. The place is under constant attack from the Beshilu, as well as unruly cobra-spirits that seem to wriggle free from the Shadow more often than the pack would like. The spirits and ghosts are so degraded and indigent that they embark upon any act of desperation, starving for Essence and sanity. Zulficar dreams of bigger and better things than this wretched shantytown, and yet he feels an obligation to stay and make it safe. His packmates do not seem to share this obligation, which worries him.

The One-Legged Liar (Hunter in Darkness Irraka)

This fakir stands on various corners of the busiest streets in Kolkata (Calcutta), mostly naked while standing on one leg. His other leg — bony, bird-like and dark from the sun — is pulled behind him and tied there, the leg swaddled in scummy cloth so that it can be mistaken for a stump. This werewolf — known by his pack as Narayana, and by the rest of the Forsaken as the One-Legged Liar — shouts madly to the people who pass him. He boasts of lunatic tales, screams stories and lessons from the Upanishads, and pretends to eat hot coals. It's all a ruse, of course, as his name suggests. Narayana is a watcher, keeping an eye on the borders of his pack's territory, looking for all the things that can go wrong. Is the man in the red kurta Urged by a greed-spirit? The woman with the red eye painted in vermillion upon her forehead… a vampire, perhaps? Narayana also looks for ghosts, who seem drawn to walk amidst the living crowds as if the ghosts perhaps belonged to the living and not to the grave. While the rest of his pack attends to other duties, protecting the pack's locus closely, he stands at the periphery — a vigilant guardian robed in fake madness.

Amani (Ghost Wolf Elodoth)

Amani never fit in. Her parents were religious; she considered it bunk. Her brothers were all engineers, so she became one, too — only to discover that nobody likes a female engineer, and they don't want to work with her, either. She despises the caste system and does not subscribe to its prejudice, but is caught in a one-woman caste all her own. Becoming Uratha did not make it easier. She spent too long in her own rage, and when others came for her, they did not approve of her spirit and determination. Worse, she failed their initiations (which seemed stacked against her to begin with). But they will approve of her soon. She will make them. She knows things they do not — she can speak to the tension that holds up a bridge or building, she knows the language of steel and stress. She listens to the spirits of the city, and hears what they say. The other Forsaken, bound in their ways, will soon have to relinquish their grip on the social order. She has things they want. Better still, she'll pass their stupid initiations at any cost.

Land of Many Lodges

Much as India is a land of many gods, for the Forsaken it is also the land of many lodges. Not only are the major lodges all represented in one form or another (i.e., those found in **Werewolf: The Forsaken**), but it seems that every Forsaken belongs to some lodge big or small. It's just part of the culture — one sect may not be wildly different from the next, but one tiny variation in dogma or behavior seems to spawn a whole new lodge.

Latin America

An incredibly diverse region, Latin America comprises many cultures: native, European, African, even Asian. Most of the people are mestizo, or of mixed heritage. As such, the customs of each of Latin America's 20-plus countries are rich and deep, borrowing from so many other cultures and finding many traditions all their own: dancing, music, celebration, faith, sacrifice. It is a wild region with a wild heart, perfect for those Forsaken who dwell there. One werewolf may be a feral hunter deep in Brazil's rainforest, whereas another might be a local practitioner of Santeria in Rio de Janeiro. A Bone Shadow may find Wisdom among the nocturnal guácharo bird in the caves of Peru, while a Hunter in Darkness might reclaim Purity from the drug gangs in the jungles of Colombia. The Uratha of Latin America are as diverse as its people.

Shapeshifter Legends

Latin America is home to a number of shapeshifter legends, each of which is in some way related to the Forsaken.

The lobizón of Argentina is a werewolf that, according to myth, is cursed because he is the seventh son of a seventh son. Though, such a creature can also create others through saliva (a hint of the fact that werewolves track nuzusul by bite). The "seventh son" bit is wholly inaccurate, but perhaps stems from the fact that many Latin American wolf-blooded families are kept particularly large. An extended wolf-blooded family may comprise five to 10 children, each of whom will likely also eventually give way to five or 10 more. In some regions, the Forsaken are particularly populous because of this. Small villages and hilltop herding communities in Argentina are sometimes composed entirely of wolf-blooded families and Uratha. A curious addendum to the legend is that, because the supposed curse of a seventh son apparently lead to parents killing such accursed children, the Argentinian government passed a law in 1920 that says all seventh sons automatically become the god-children of the president of Argentina. Is this a hint that someone in the government at that time was wolf-blooded, or even Uratha? Perhaps.

Amidst the stories of Latin America's native peoples, nahualli are shapeshifting witches given over to various forms: wolf, coyote, cat or eagle. They are believed to be evil, and are said to use dark herbal magic to transform into their various shapes. Old legends claim that the nauhualli war with one another, and this has a basis in reality. Two types of nahual exist. The first is not werewolf, but Ridden. Those Claimed by lie-spirits grow to wear flesh that cannot tell the truth. Their very skin is a deception: are they human, beast or bird? These Ridden also grow mad, and seem hellbent to make others of their kind through sacrifice and prayer. On the Forsaken side is the Lodge of the Nahual, a continental lodge of herbalists and warriors whose sole purpose is to fight the plague of Ridden that has risen up in the last decade or so. The Lodge of the Nahual struggles against the Claimed nahualli at every turn, though it seems to be fighting a losing battle.

The final werewolf legend, this one predominantly found in Mexico and Central America, is of the tlahuelpuchi, a blood-drinking, blasphemous beast existing as an affront to either the old gods (Aztec, Mayan, Zapotec, etc.) or the Christian God, depending on one's religious background. The reality is, the term is one long used by Forsaken to indicate a low-Harmony werewolf. As a werewolf drops in Harmony, he begins to show compulsions and breaches in sanity, and for whatever reason, many such creatures in this regions exhibit similar bans and derangements (fear of scissors, phobia of holy icons, need to drink blood, won't look in mirrors). In most areas, these poor souls are rehabilitated (albeit brutally), but some packs will not suffer the sick to live and instead give them the mercy of the grave. One ancillary legend is that, upon becoming wholly unstable and relinquishing all Harmony, a tlahuelpuchi is visited by a night creature — usually a vampire — and given the chance to join the ranks of the truly unholy. No proof of this exists, but the story persists.

Many Forsaken from Central America tend to have coyote-like coloration, while some in South America sport the distinctive fox-like coloration of

the maned wolf. Black is a common coat color among those born in the region.

Totems

What follows are a few sample totems found predominantly in the Latin American region. They're not fleshed-out with points; should you choose one for your characters' pack, the players can decide how the points are best distributed.

- **Moon-Necked Nightjar:** Nightjar is a bird with feathers as dark as dark can be, with a glowing white band around her neck. Her eyes are similarly bright white. She provides guidance and aid to her pack through troubled times. As a nocturnal creature, she can also help her pack deal with those creatures that can only thrive at night. Her ban is that a werewolf must sleep during the day at least twice a week.
- **Suçuarana-of-Hidden-Jumps:** The *suçuarana* totem — a native (Tupi) Brazilian name for the puma — is a stealthy killer. He helps his pack fight more like a cat and less like wolves; he teaches the packmembers to kill from behind, to break the neck, to drag prey to where it can remain hidden. The totem's ban is that, during any combat, the werewolf must break the skin of his foe using his teeth.
- **El Río Que Traga:** Also known as "The Hungry River," this totem is a lithe and violent river-spirit, born from any of the region's many rivers. Not only does this totem help its children swim, but it gives them a calmness and serenity during battle that grants them great focus. The spirit's ban is that the pack must sacrifice one part of a defeated enemy (anything from a finger to the whole body) into the waters of any river. If no enemy is defeated, the pack must sacrifice one of the packmembers' own body parts, instead.

Cultural Connections

Below are a number of cultural items that the local Forsaken have assimilated into their practices. This list is by no means exhaustive or universal, but may give you some kernels of information which you can then incorporate into a new character.

Music: Latin America sports a vibrant musical culture, replete with traditional dance. Whether the music is indigenous or brought from Africa, Europe or the Caribbean, music plays a part in the lives of many inhabitants, and so, too, does music figure into Uratha culture. Many rituals incorporate dance and music, and some Forsaken make their own instruments and even forge fetishes from them (drums and string instruments in particular). Spirits, too, sometimes ask that the Forsaken dance for them. One totem, the Many-Handed Monkey (sometimes called Las Muchos Manos), demands that his pack dance for him daily or suffer the loss of his favor. Some Forsaken, Cahalith in particular, often possess a strong Expression score at the start of play. See the below sidebar for one ritual that incorporates music and dancing.

Revenge: Revenge killings make up a cruel cycle amidst the peoples of Latin America. Bound stridently to some confused notion of honor, any affront — stolen wife, insult to a mother, a bar fight — may result in a revenge killing. Unfortunately, one revenge killing deserves another, which deserves another, and so forth. The Forsaken are not immune to this repetition of violence. Not only does their savagery nudge them toward such ungainly solutions, but Honor is valued in the region, disproportionately to other codes of Renown. An insult against this code can lead to feral vengeance, which only spurs the cycle forward. Many packs have blood feuds with other packs, and have maintained these feuds for decades.

Shamanism: The native traditions of Latin America are strongly shamanistic, lending credence to the animistic world that the werewolves know. The shaman in a tribe was the go-to figure when it came time for one to communicate with the spirits or with ghosts; the shaman acted as a bridge. The Forsaken here don't like it when humans act as shamans, for the most part, because the werewolves distrust in any mortal's ability to fully accept the burden of spirit interaction. Unready human shamans end up as the unwitting pawns of devious spirits, and the werewolves can't have that. Old Forsaken traditions had the werewolves actively hunt and kill those humans who dared play at being shamans, though this has lessened somewhat. Another old Uratha custom is that, in distant parts of the region, they would actually act as shamans for local peoples. If a villager felt his cattle were cursed, he could take the days-long journey to find the werewolf and his pack, and humbly ask for them to work on his behalf. While the villager was unlikely to know what the werewolf truly was (believing the Forsaken to simply be a powerful shaman or magician), it still forged a bond between the People and humanity that isn't common in other places around the globe. While not strictly shamanistic, the Forsaken also frown on the practices of Santeria or Macumba, which sees practi-

tioners encourages spirits to "ride" them for inspiration and luck. It can easily end in spirit possession — or wholesale cults of Ridden — and the Forsaken rue any such behavior.

Street Urchins: The cities of Latin America are home to an inordinate amount of homeless children. These "street urchins" may belong to gangs or cartels, or be the targets of such groups (killing them or using them as drug mules). Stranger still, however, is the prevalence of young, pre-adolescent Forsaken who dwell in these small children's gangs. Packs of young Uratha, often featuring more Forsaken than in adult packs, carve out small territories in cities such as Mexico City, São Paolo and Buenos Aires. There they fiercely defend their land, themselves, and other innocent children from the depredations of criminals or the Rat Hosts (who seem to take grotesque pleasure in hollowing out homeless children to use as mobile colonies).

Territorial Clashes: Territory is a big deal in Central and South America, among both humans and werewolves. Whether it's merely in the blood of the people or is somehow related to the honor-bound traditions of machismo, it seems that many men tie the pride in their land to their own souls. Clashes over farmland or property all over Latin America can be bloody, and the same goes for the struggle over land claimed by Forsaken. Packs fight brutally over real and imagined territorial disputes, spilling a great deal of blood over an acre here, a border there. Some are willing to forge alliances (called "broods") with humans or other creatures to keep their lands safe — prudence bound with pride makes for strange bedfellows.

Rite of the Dizzying Wind (••)

Story holds that this ritual has been around for nearly 1,000 years, first born of the Toltec Forsaken who walked the temples of central Mexico. This ritual, utilizing music and dance, grants the practitioner access to a trade of power with what is believed to be some other werewolf performing the same ritual elsewhere (though some suggest the power comes from spirits, not other Uratha).

Performing the Rite: With this ritual, the Forsaken dances about in a circle, playing some kind of wind instrument (potentially a many-chambered traditional *tlapitzalli* flute). She must do this for a number of hours equal to 10 minus her Harmony score. Once complete, she suffers a sudden wave of hallucinations similar to those that might be gained from the consumption of a psychotropic herb. The hallucinations — which can be both enlivening and enervating, disturbing and enlightening — last for one hour.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Instant (effect takes place once hal lucinations cease)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf throws up, and suffers a –1 penalty to all Physical rolls for the remainder of the scene.

Failure: The ritual fails to have any effect.

Success: The werewolf may take a number of points equal to his Primal Urge score away from a single Skill and apply them instead to a Skill in which he possesses *no* dots at all. (Example: A werewolf with Primal Urge 2 reduces his Athletics 3 by two dots, and now has Athletics 1. He takes those two dots and applies them to a Skill he does not possess — in this case, Persuasion.) This lasts for 12 hours after the rite begins to work. After the 12 hours, the Skills revert back.

Exceptional Success: As the above success, except the werewolf also feels a dizzying rush of confidence, and gains one Willpower point.

(Note that to complete this rite, the Storyteller may call upon a Forsaken to make a successful Expression roll.)

Sample Characters

Below you'll find three sample Latin American characters without stats. Feel free to use them directly or mine them for inspiration.

Muerdame (Storm Lords Irraka)

Muerdame (slang for "Bite Me") knows that war has costs. Wild-eyed and more than a little crazy, she leads her pack through the tropical lowlands of Colombia, a country in the grip of various rebel forces. The monstrous humans that lock down the highways and lord over the little towns are brutal thugs at best and destabilizing sociopaths at worst. They must not live. Muerdame destroys them wherever she finds them, no matter how they plead, no matter how hard they fight back. Her pack, sadly, is expendable. It is regrettable, but perishing in the act of doing what is right is the embodiment of Honor, and she'll brook no dissenting opinions about it. She regrets much of what she does. She sees the face of her dead packmates every time she closes her eyes. She tastes the bitter blood of her many victims every time her tongue touches the roof of her mouth. But it is what it is: war has costs. She will have revenge against those groups who have taken her land and

hurt her people. She will reclaim her territory, one dead human at a time.

Little Macaw Girl (Ghost Wolf Ithaeur)

The tribes don't want her. With her left arm shriveled, she has so far been unable to make good on any initiation, and so they leave her in Guatemala City without a territory of her own, or any place at all in "their" society. Those Forsaken who stalk the streets of the capital city mock her and call her names — the way she looks, dressing in loud colors atop her dark skin and black eyes, she is known as Little Macaw Girl (Chica Pequeña De Ara). Cowardly birds, the macaws — delicate, afraid, always so safe. She hunts for meager scraps with her two Ghost Wolf packmates, Chuy and Mopán, and that is the life she expects to lead. Except recently, something has happened. Fire elementals — called tohil in part after the Mayan fire god — have begun to approach her regularly, telling her that the world is coming to an end. The elementals, servants of the Ashen Red Lizard, claim that three other power elementals are coming together to destroy the city. Hidden Fish (water), Dead-Eater Bird (air) and Whispering Corn (earth) will unleash rage against the land. Little Macaw Girl believes that this will be disastrous, the city assailed by both earthquake and hurricane. In the last big earthquake, 25,000 people died. With an accompanying storm, thousands more would die. But nobody will listen to Little Macaw Girl, so she must find a way to make them.

Unseen Wolf (Hunter in Darkness Rahu)

Argentina's Gran Chaco region ("Hunting Land" in Quechua) is a vast wilderness of mountains and lowlands, only sparsely populated and given to a certain roughness of spirit. That's the way Unseen Wolf and his packmates like it. The native peoples (and the small Mennonite population) know how to maintain balance — and better still, know to stay away from the "cursed lands" (loci) that dot the periphery of the Argentinean border. Unseen Wolf's pack belongs to a chain of packs connected by linked territories all along the region, working together (grudgingly in many cases) to keep the Gran Chaco pure. Most of these Forsaken are Hunters in Darkness, and further belong to the Lodge of Wrath. Those who would despoil the area with cattle or burning or industry suffer mightily. A new threat has come in recently, a menace from the Shadow. The lik'ichiri, or "fat-stealers," are Ridden that gain Essence through the consumption of adipose tissue. They wait till a victim is sleeping, anesthetize his skin with gummy saliva and then slice out ribbons of fat with delicately sharpened nails. The fat-stealers have come seemingly out of nowhere, possessed by hunger-spirits, and disturbing the populace.

The Middle East

The Middle East is a pot ready to boil over at any time. The area, arguably the cradle of human civilization, is besieged by internal and external conflicts that threaten constantly to tear the region asunder. The big three monotheistic religions struggle to share the holy land, and within each religion various sects do battle with one another for dominance of the people. The region is also hotly contested by external forces based on the sheer fact that most of the world's oil supply comes from there. On the eve of every peace, chaos often comes to upset the balance once more, searing the Shadow and reopening Wounds that suppurate like unhealed cigarette burns.

Forsaken from this part of the world — often assuming the lupine appearances of desert dogs or jackals — must negotiate this dangerous territory in an effort to keep it from ripping itself apart. Most are able to incorporate local customs and traditions into their lives among the Uratha, but some find it impossible to merge the two.

Islam and the Forsaken

It is impossible to ignore Islam in the Middle East. Islam is the dominant religion in nearly every country here; while some countries such as Iran struggle with just how much of Islam should be integrated into daily life, others such as Saudi Arabia are fundamentalist to the core.

The Forsaken from this region must reconcile their own existence among the Uratha with Islam. They must, not because they personally need to care (though they likely do, having probably grown up with at least some Muslim foundations), but because everyone else will want to know. A werewolf cannot gently pass among humans or potentially even other Forsaken if he wears his disdain of Islam on his sleeve. Fundamentalist Islam isn't pervasive in the Middle East — humans there run the gamut of giving only lip service to the religion all the way to being profoundly devoted (so much so that they're willing to martyr themselves) to Allah's will. Werewolves are much the same.

What to do? Some syncretize. They marry the core concepts of Islam with the ways and oaths of Forsaken society. The level of syncretism is up to each pack; some submit to Allah as a God above Father Wolf and all the spirits, others count him as just

another spirit. Some reject Allah as a literal figure, and believe him to be a worthy metaphor (whereas spirits are provably not metaphorical). Spirits may be considered angels (mala'ika) or djinn, or maybe that's just how humans interpreted spirits in the Qu'ran.

Some reject Islam entirely. They may wear the trappings of another religion (Christianity, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Jainism), or may pretend to be Muslim when in reality they're not. Certainly in some areas, one can pass without much scrutiny. Westerners do so all the time. But a Forsaken without the badges of Islam (which may be anything from a prayer mat, a long beard or a calligraphic version of favored Qu'ran verses) may call attention to himself. (One Forsaken, in an effort to appear devout, joined the ranks of the hafiz — i.e., those who have memorized the entire Qu'ran, so when called to demonstrate his faith, there was no verse he could not recite verbatim.)

Other Forsaken reject their own society, and instead rely solely upon Islam. This is difficult to reconcile, of course; the spiritual reality a werewolf faces is not directly in line with the theoretical realities of Islam. And yet, sometimes a character will be brought up with such a strong belief in something from family or society that it becomes nearly impossible to defeat that belief. Certainly some Islamic Forsaken see the Shadow as a dangerous illusion. Spirits and totems are qareens, or demonic spirits pretending to be companions but really guiding a soul toward sin. In this way, some see all spirits as manifestations of evil — and Islamic and Middle Eastern myth is rife with heroes doing battle with or capturing the many specters of sin.

Islamic Fetishes

Some Islamic Forsaken enslave spirits into holy fetish items; many such characters from the region begin play with such items. Spirits bound into these fetishes are often elementals, considered by many Islamic Uratha to be *mala'ika*, or angels. Some also bound malevolent spirits to service, forcing the "devils" to heel. Non-Islamic Forsaken can certainly use the below fetishes, but are less likely to do so because they are Muslim-centric.

• **Ayat (•):** The Ayat is a single holy verse from the Qu'ran written on a scroll, scrawled on a block of wood or even penned on a slip of paper and worn around the neck. This fetish grants a werewolf clarity of sight. When the fetish is activated, +2 dice is granted to all sight-related tracking rolls. Lasts for one hour, can be used once per day.

• **Hijaab (••):** The *hijaab* is a black, full-body cloak. The term itself means "barrier" or "veil," and is worn traditionally to exemplify one's modesty. In this case, when activated, the Hijaab helps calm angers against the wearer. Any wishing to attack the werewolf must spend one Willpower point to do so for every attack. This effect lasts for a single scene, or until the werewolf initiates violence.

• **Tasbih (•••)**: Islamic prayer beads made of pearl, glass, seed or stone and are used to invoke the names of Allah and invoke protection. When the fetish is activated, the werewolf becomes temporarily impervious to damage from a single foe for a number of attacks equal to the werewolf's own Primal Urge score. This only works against one foe. All bashing damage is ignored, and all lethal damage becomes bashing. Aggravated damage, however, is still taken accordingly. This fetish may only be used once per game session.

Activating the above fetishes is considered a reflexive action.

Customs and Traditions

Below are a number of customs and traditions shared by many Middle Eastern Forsaken, regardless of country or religion.

Barter: At the souk, a local marketplace, men haggle over the barter and sale of goods. Middle Eastern werewolves generally consider the virtues of bartering to be paramount. They haggle over the trade of fetishes and noisily negotiate new lines of territory. Some barter for food, others for the right to breed a particular wolf-blood. The Uratha of the Sinai Peninsula actually hold their own monthly souk beneath the light of the full moon. Rumor says that these markets are open to all who are able to find them — Forsaken and Pure, as well as other creatures of the night. It is not uncommon for, in any haggling situation, for the blood of one or both werewolves to run suddenly hot. Bartering can end in violence, and for most, that's acceptable. Whichever Forsaken wins the physical scuffle is seen as he who "won" the demanded price. (Forsaken who favor bartering are likely to start with a higher Persuasion score.)

Hospitality: Hospitality is an ancient virtue in many parts of the Middle East. Invitations into the home are not uncommon, and this translates over to Forsaken society, as well. While day to day, two packs may struggle to overtake one another's territory, from time to time the two will meet in one of the pack's territory — that pack will play host to the

other, serving dinner, sharing stories and even hosting a hunt in which both packs can partake. This is taken quite seriously. The hosting packmembers will be as polite as their bestial natures allow, and even offer gifts (anything from a lamb or rabbit to a gilded cup). The guest pack is not without responsibility in this exchange. Not accepting an offer to visit with another pack is a grievous offense, and can lead to more than just a territorial struggle, evolving instead into a personal grudge. Guests are also obliged to take gifts given to them. Hospitality between two packs isn't solely based on prudence and friendliness; it is a moral duty, shared over the universal bond of food — meat in particular. (Hospitality can equate to a higher Socialize pool for a starting character.)

Qat: Found predominantly in the Arabian Peninsula (Yemen in particular), qat or khat is a bitter leaf that, when chewed, invokes feelings of dizziness, grandiosity and mania. Qat alleviates fatigue and diminishes appetite, and is also the cornerstone of social function in these regions. Men gather and chew qat for hours, talking about everything or nothing, small talk or big arbitrations. In these areas, those who do not chew qat are mistrusted. This custom is found among Forsaken, as well. Those who chew qat are given to its positive effects (+1 to Speed, +1 to Dexterity, +1 to Wits) and its negative ones (–1 to Defense, –1 to Intelligence). Effects last for one hour, after which more qat must be chewed or the user suffers a –1 penalty to all rolls until a full eight hours of sleep can be had. Worth noting is that a qat-spirit is valued for the visions and secrets it can bestow upon a Forsaken, even teaching some of the stranger and more esoteric Gift paths (such as Darkness or Weakness). However, qat-spirits are often erratic and violent.

Unclean: Certain things are considered unclean in the region, and werewolves generally abide by these taboos. Pigs are generally not to be eaten (though some allow it, provided it is killed in the manner befitting the religion of the slaughterer). The left hand, too, is considered unclean, and, for this reason, some Forsaken go so far as to bind their own left hands/paws with cord or cloth when entering into negotiations or other situations of hospitality. Curiously, dogs are also seen as unclean, and while it seems strange, this presents a problem for some werewolves in the area. Most are willing to ignore it as a concern, but others take it to heart. As part-wolf, they see themselves as literally impure. They won't touch humans for fear of contaminating them. Some stay away from humans entirely, forever clinging to the deserts and mountains. When Harmony devolves, some Forsaken will even begin to wash obsessively, even scouring the off body hair in bloody tufts. Despite this, one dog in the region is given a pass among many, and that's the lean saluki. The sighthound is used among Bedouins as a hunting companion. Many nomadic Forsaken also have their own saluki companions.

Sample Characters

What follows are three sample characters. These aren't fully fleshed out, and should you desire to use them, require you to assign them dots and deeper background.

Mustafa the Rebuilder (Iron Master Elodoth)

Mustafa — belonging to one of several packs that watch over the territories in and around Baghdad's Firdos Square — sees himself as a businessman. He buys, sells and barters strange goods and antiquities, particularly those that would serve a more refined (read: supernatural) clientele. At night, he and his allies hunt the streets of the city after curfew, killing those who would dare to disrupt the righteousness of trade. He cares little for the force currently occupying his city, but cares even less for those of his own people who bring blood and fire to this already chaotic place. The time has come to reject even-handedness and negotiations, and for now, he helps his and other packs lead a tooth-and-claw crusade against the sanctity of the Shadow and the city. When the enemies are all dead and dismembered in the streets like common dogs, then business can resume and normalcy will return.

The Caliph of Fire (Ghost Wolf Cahalith)

Madness grows in the heart of this young Cahalith warrior. To him, Islam has always been everything. He will join no tribe and barter with no totem, because Allah's will is supreme. With his knife and AK-47, he believes he has been chosen by the One God to be walking judgment on this earth for the unbelievers and heretics. He wears a crimson hijaab to symbolize blood and fire, and any spirits he meets will either serve him as slaves or perish. He has no pack. He has few Forsaken allies. What he does have, however, are questions. He won't ask them aloud (for fear of offending Allah), but he knows that something feels wrong. As his Harmony dwindles and the bold-faced reality of what he sees is paraded before him under the bright moon, he can't help but feel that he has chosen a terrible path. For now, however, he believes this path is inescapable. Others may be

able to convince him otherwise, but such a conversion will not come easily.

Water-Bearer (Bone Shadow Irraka)

Bedouin women do not always know that they are married — a woman's mother will throw a red cloth over her head and drag her to the marriage tent, where her unknown groom awaits. The werewolf known only as Water-Bearer was one of these women, forced into the wedding tent where the First Change came upon her. Shamefully, she killed many of her own tribe (Rwala) and fled into the night, blood on her hands. The Bone Shadows found her before she starved and went mad, and took her in. Now she serves as a kind of fledgling guide to those Forsaken who require passage through the various regions. She knows how to find food, water, as well as loci and the territories of her peers. With her mentor, Hamila, she is also learning to navigate the deadly deserts of the Shadow — where the most dangerous spirits can hide behind curtains of heat haze.



Arabian Pure

The Pure of the Middle East are zealots, murderers, leading their own campaigns of terrorism against the Forsaken. They are also stridently anti-Muslim. Any Forsaken who leans toward Islam is seen as a criminal worse than the other betrayers, a denier of the spiritual reality that all werewolves serve. When the Pure find an Islamic Forsaken, they often torture him for nights, ending in his beheading. The head is then sent to the victim's pack as a message.

Europe

Eastern Europe

The eastern region of Europe — which, for purposes of this book has its western point at the Czech Republic and goes east all the way through Russia — is a land of old pagan traditions, where packs of werewolves still adhere to pacts that have existed for centuries. The Forsaken here may hold pacts with spirits, vampires, sorcerers, even small remote human villages. One pack may aid in the protection of a slumbering vampire lord, not out of loyalty but out of a deep reverence for tradition. Another may keep distant watch over an old Lithuanian town, keeping firm with an ancient pagan oath whereupon the people will respect the sanctity of the old wolf ways.

This clinging to tradition manifests in other ways, as well. Packs here may have particularly old and bizarre totems with high bans — strange spirits such as the Gamayun bird (a black bird with a woman's face who can tell the future) or the parom, a Slavic snake whose body is made of thunder and who demands periodic human sacrifices. Werewolves also pass along ancient fetishes, many of which are powerful (••• to •••••) and have been in the hands of Forsaken all the way back to the Byzantine Empire. Loci, too, are an element of tradition. Many powerful loci exist, dotting the desolate parts of the region (in the northern hills of Moldova, at the peaks of the Carpathian Mountains, on the small islands of the Black Sea out past the coast of Bulgaria).

Of course, all of that is marked by a distinctly "old guard" segment of the Forsaken population. A brash young agglomerate of Forsaken has grown in the last 10 years, challenging the powers-that-be for leadership and power. These wildly unorthodox werewolves are nearly anarchic, sometimes eschewing the pack structure entirely in favor of strange new social conventions. The Ghost Wolf population, too, has seen a spike in growth, and many of the Thihirtha Numea can be found among this younger (and frankly more violent) set. The old guard cannot afford to lose its grip on the ways and traditions, for fear of reprisal from any number of sources. And yet, the elder Forsaken continue to lose ground to the quisling Uratha.

Stanislav the Fist (Storm Lord Rahu)

He won't admit it, but Stanislav made a terrible mistake. With his brash young pack (blessed with five auspices, and each from the ranks of the Iminir), he knew he could take out the old bastards guarding the locus outside of Morkov. Those fools were dying, too stubborn to trust others with their secrets, and Stanislav knew his pack could run the old fools out and overtake that territory. He was right. But, so were the old bastards. Turns out, they had a good point when it came to not trusting a bunch of upstarts. Those old Bone Shadows had long been maintaining a pact with an ancient roebuck-spirit. The pact was with them and them alone — the fire-eyed roebuck has no interest in keeping the sanctity of a locus held by Stanislav and his boys. Now they're in control of a territory they can't handle. Turns out that the roebuck had the ear of all manner of spirits good and bad, and they're causing no end of problem for the Storm Lords.

Northern Europe

On the surface, the werewolves of Northern Europe seem cold, hard, stalwart. As was the tradition from times past, they continue to pride themselves on their toughness and strength. Doesn't matter from what tribe or auspice an Uratha hails, he mustn't show weakness — if he does, his dealings with spirits, Hosts or other Forsaken will begin with him at an automatic disadvantage. Therefore, many werewolves from the region value Physical dice pools over any other, if only to put forth the proper appearance. Many, too, value the codes of Glory over other Renown, for through Glory one can maintain the kind of epic-told immortality long valued by the old barbarian peoples.

While all this is true for many Forsaken, it isn't universal. Many of the Forsaken of the area are poets and performers, travelers and nomads, mystics and diplomats. Some of the packs in Finland are both seafarers and poets, claiming as their territory many of the large lakes and coasts of the country. They cannot have the bluster and stubbornness possessed by other Forsaken, because the sea-spirits they deal with will not respond well to such snarling boldness. The Ithaeur of Norway — who often gather in packs featuring only Crescent Moon — cannot fight the mounting Beshilu with raw strength. To fight the Rat Hosts (who continue to try to bring the Black Plague back to the region) requires cruel cunning, not loudmouthed strongmen.

One curious tradition among many of the Forsaken in Northern Europe is drinking. Beers and other distilled beverages often find their way into pack gatherings, initiations or other meetings. Many packs even make talens from such beverages, particularly of the traditional aquavit (a harsh vodka-like distillation). Such drinks are often infused with the blessings of spirits and meant to help the drinker gain a boost to his physique or to grant him temporary swiftness. Yes, the drink gets them drunk, too — all the better for fighting. And the Forsaken of Northern Europe don't hesitate to fight, though rarely do grudges come from such fracases.

One last note: many of the Uratha from this region don't cater to outsiders. The human population may value hospitality, but the Forsaken do no such thing. They have too many secret practices (such as sacrificing criminals to the sea-gods by sending them out on a boat or board and setting it aflame and cursing it as it burns), and don't care to share their homes or territories with those who don't understand.

Handsome Katla (Blood Talon Ithaeur)

In the Svalbard Archipelago, things sleep in the glaciers. What these things are, nobody really knows, and they don't care to find out. The dreams of those who guard these glaciers don't speak kindly of the monsters that lie trapped in the frozen ice and rock; some Forsaken can't handle even the dreams, much less the possibility of one of those things waking up. Handsome Katla, a brutish, broad-shouldered Blood Talon woman, refuses to show fear. She must earn the respect of her pack as well as the other packs that share the duties of guarding these glaciers, and to do so, she must at times overcompensate. She fights, drinks, spits and dances on the crusted ice to spite

the slumbering entities. When necessary, she spills the blood of her own packmates (or, just as often, lets her own blood be spilled) to prove her worth. Sometimes, though, Katla must take a boat out onto the frigid waters of the ocean, and there she simply trembles and tries to forget her nightmares.

Southern Europe

Southern Europe, marked largely by the Mediterranean and its accompanying climate, appears to feature Forsaken who are as warm as the air and the ocean. These Uratha have powerful traditions of hospitality, with territorial lines blurring more often than not and packmembers wantonly traded between packs by grinning alphas. Food and drink are powerful motivators and watermarks of this hospitality, with hunts and subsequent meals coming to the forefront of Forsaken society. Lots of smiling, plenty of music and a feeling of my territory is your territory.

It's all a bit of a ruse, of course. Certainly, hospitality is a very real thing (and even engenders its own spirits), but it has practical functions, as well. Werewolves milk others for tidbits of hidden knowledge, hints of forbidden Gifts and rituals, the whiff of a totem's ban to use later. Certainly, many Forsaken are direct and forthright and prefer to attack from the front — but just as many use the traditions of hospitality to backstab those who offend them.

The Forsaken also borrow bits here and there from the old Greco-Roman traditions that still survive in one form or another. Many werewolves literally head large wolf-blooded families, acting as patriarch or matriarch of a human clan. Some treat their wolf-blooded families as kings, some as confidants, others as slaves. The Uratha here also glom onto the competitive spirit of old, competing in formalized games (spear-throwing, running, hand-to-hand combat) as well as less formalized activities (hunting, fishing, earning favors from spirits). In a few areas, the Forsaken even attempt to continue more human styles of government, with packs sending representatives to tribunals. Such practices, while still observed, are usually nothing more than lip service — most Forsaken know that it's an unenforceable sham.

One concern, however, that binds many of the packs of the region are cults. It seems that a number of old cults have survived from the days of the empire and even before. Many human descendents still practice the grim venerations of mad gods from long ago, giving power to spirits pretending to be divine. It seems that every time the Uratha stamp one of these cults into oblivion, another grows from its bloody mess. More worrisome are the rumors that some packs are actually the ones cultivating such packs, blasphemously adhering to old curses and traitorous oaths.

Veado Dançante (Bone Shadow Elodoth)

His packmates, they clap him on the back and sing his praises, even though he is youngest and most foolish among them. They toast to him, mouths sloppy with stains of Madeira wine. They live in what seems a near-paradise out on the Savage Islands off the coast of Portugal, finding relative peace and balance. But some of the spirits seem afraid, and one of them whispered something terrible to Veado, claiming that his packmates are really slaves to the bruxsa, mortal diabolists serving the spirit-lords of sin. Soon, the spirit said, they will attempt to initiate Veado into the true tribe to which they belong. He doesn't want to believe this, and yet the signs are there. His packmates, they disappear sometimes, and return with the faint aroma of blood and bile upon their hands, as if they scrubbed hard to remove the scent but could not eradicate it totally. He wants to call out to others of his tribe to see if they can help him, but is that a betrayal of pack? Moreover, how will he get off the island without them knowing what he plans?

Western Europe

This part of Europe features a number of world powers tied strongly to Western ideals such as democracy and capitalism. Western Europe offers tracts of wilderness (such as the Black Forest) coupled with massive cities (Paris, London, Frankfurt), all of which require the spiritual attention of the Forsaken.

The Uratha of Western Europe are, in some ways, a study in dichotomies. The habits and traditions closely mirror those of American werewolves (or vice versa), though many are loathe to admit it. Older werewolves gather in powerful lodges that have been around for generations, while the younger wolves distance themselves from the elders when possible — and then become those very elders once they're of appropriate age and status. Much of European culture demands a public adherence to etiquette and customary behavior, and yet when it comes down to brass tacks, these Forsaken know how to fight more brutally and bloodily than damn near anybody else.

One thing that binds the Forsaken of Western Europe (and in some ways separates them from their brethren "across the pond") is a deep veneration and understanding of history. Europe is scarred by history; the bones of so many wars lay hidden just beneath the dirt that it is impossible not to ac-

knowledge it. The ghosts and spirits of old conflicts rise time and time again, and the Forsaken must always be heedful of this. Without a respect for the context of history, the Forsaken work against themselves, and so they must understand their enemy to help lay to rest the tangible discord that stirs like a constantly returning storm. The two world wars alone have left behind so many Wounds and ghosts and troubled spirits — and that's not counting the millennia of bloodshed that came before. Certainly, America's had its share of blood spilled, but not nearly to the magnitude that Europe has seen. German and French Forsaken are often over-worked in their attempts to maintain some semblance of balance. Modern troubles (economic disparity, riots, racism) couple with the burns and brands of bad history to make constant trouble for the Forsaken of Western Europe.

Here, the Forsaken stick to their own territory, and try to keep their noses out of everybody else's business. If every pack would watch over its own land, things might be a little more sane. They treat one another with polite respect, sometimes grudging, but rarely do their relationships go beyond that. When relationships are forced past the pleasantries, they often devolve quickly into vicious infighting.

Morue (Ghost Wolf Irraka)

Once a whore, now a brutal vigilante, Morue watches over the Parisian suburb of Clichy-sous-Bois with piss and vinegar running through her heart. She watched as her neighborhood devolved into violence and riots — immigrants against the native-born, Muslim against Christian, poor versus rich — and it sickens her. Those who commit violence will be met with violence, so goes her reasoning. A policeman beats an African teenager to death? Then she will take his head for violating her territory. A Muslim man rapes a local whore without paying? Then he, too, shall die in pain. She sees herself as the patron saint of the abused, coming from such a life herself. Once, she asked others to help her. But the tribes had their own concerns. Now that the neighborhood's violence has exploded, they have come to offer their aid — and now, she rebukes them. They say she isn't giving proper attention to the spirits of old, that new pain is born from ancient wounds, oozing from the scars of war like tainted pus. But she doesn't care. She only spits on the ground and draws a line in her saliva. To cross it is to meet her claws.

Universal Themes

Though we hate to admit it, this section is woefully inadequate if you're looking for a truly conclusive guide to the world's Uratha. We could fill an entire book on the culture of werewolves from Belarus, Bolivia or Birmingham, Alabama. What about the Arctic Circle? North America? Australia?

When considering a werewolf character from any location, whether one of the ones listed above or one we missed, you can utilize certain themes that are universal across the board when it comes to the Forsaken. Werewolves are born of violence, exile and suffering. A peaceful monk is not a likely werewolf candidate, but a used and abused teenager might be. An at-ease office worker with a nice family, or a reticent *hausfrau* with anger issues?

World Concerns: The Largest Territory

Why would one of the Forsaken care about the world beyond her own territory? Of course, she needs to keep a weather eye on the territories that border her own, both as threat and as potential grounds for expansion. And, well, there's that inconvenient truth that too many of the enemies the Uratha face in their day-to-day hunts have no respect for territory. So, yes, perhaps it does pay to keep half an eye on the larger world.

The enemies of the Forsaken do not conveniently bundle themselves up into neat parcels of conflict within each pack's territory. Each has their own concerns and areas of influence, which more often than not overlap several packs' territories, if not more. There's a damn good reason that the Forsaken gather as they do, and it's certainly not for the sheer joy of one another's company because, let's face it, barely contained hostility and aggressive taunting are far more the norm than any form of jovial banter. In their role as the patrollers of the Border Marches, some communication and coordination, however fragile, between normally antagonistic packs can prevent individual packs falling one by one.

In the early 21st century, the need for the Forsaken to be aware of what's going on outside their territories is stronger than ever. Cheap air travels can allow the Ridden or careful Hosts to travel vast distances in a matter of hours — unthinkable a mere few decades ago. Problems that would once have spread only within one pack's territory can hop around unpredictably, and powerful menaces can drop into the heart of a territory without any warning.

The very nature of werewolf packs, and their inherent desire of their own territory is increasingly becoming a problem for them in the modern day. They cannot (and, to some degree, will not) take advantage of modern transport in the same way that their enemies do. Even taking a plane ride can be a dangerous undertaking for a werewolf, for there's no way of knowing how unfriendly any potential pack that claims the destination airport as part of the pack's territory is going to be. One thing that is certain, however, is that the packmembers'll be watching that airport very carefully indeed.

However, the Internet in particular is proving a boon to younger werewolves. They might not be able to move too much physically, but they can forge links with people on the other sides of the world. Contacts spread through mentors and, most frequently, lodges have allowed small networks of e-mail exchanges and the odd, heavily protected website forum to spring up, allowing a surprising amount of information exchange to take place. This has even allowed a little, carefully managed, travel to take place. Packs several hours' flight away can afford to be a little more welcoming than those the other side of the river — providing, of course, that the guest werewolves don't outstay their welcomes.

So, the very nature of the modern world mean that a werewolf needs at least a rudimentary idea of what it happening to others of his kind elsewhere in the world, at least, if he's smart. For there's one hell of a lot of threats out there, and a werewolf can never know when something really nasty might land on his doorstep….

The Whole Truth?

This chapter of the book represents what might be called common knowledge amongst the Uratha. It's not information that they all know, just what an individual werewolf could discover with some time and effort.

By nature of trying to cover an entire planet in a few thousand words, there are some generalizations to be found in the pages that follow, as well as the barest hints as to some major issues the Forsaken face worldwide. The actual truth of what's said here is, as always, ultimately in the hands of the Storyteller. But this is a guide for players, and the information here is designed for you as a player to shape your own background based on what seems dramatic and cool.

Are there great, world-spanning conspiracies that face the Forsaken? Do their enemies take advantage of their territorial nature to gain an advantage in the battle for survival? Well, yes and no. There are certainly issues that affect werewolves worldwide, and a few of those are detailed below. But, on the whole, the creatures that the characters face are as focused on their own affairs as the pack is. While some of the upper reaches of the spirit courts might truly have worldwide ambitions, those ambitions will manifest themselves amongst the local descants and not elsewhere. The Hosts do not co-operate well en masse, and the Pure can be just as territorial as the Forsaken. For all the Pure's difference from the Forsaken, they're still werewolves.

The Rise of the Urban Courts

Urban spirits and their spirit courts are not new phenomena. Humanity has been creating homes for itself for millennia. But the growth and spread of dense urban environments over the last 150 years has been remarkable, and with it has come a boom in the human population. It now stands at something over six billion people. This means two things: humanity has a greater power over both the physical and spiritual worlds than at any time in history, and that huge areas of the planet are now completely urbanized. Towns that could be policed by a single pack a century ago are now thriving metropolises requiring many packs to truly control. And, perhaps more significantly, are almost entirely populated by the ever-diversifying urban spirit courts. New descants arise on a yearly basis and take their place in the ever-shifting power structures of the urban power struggle. For instance, werewolves have been noticing that new courts of drug-spirits have been gaining steady power, often allying with (or cannibalizing) spirits of desire, sloth or lust. Though nowhere near as strong as those courts that have been around for

millennia, the drug courts are a dangerous new threat heavily given to interfering with the physical world.

While these new spirits are still subject to the same metaphysics as any other spirit, their mindsets can be even more alien than those of spirits born of natural concepts and creatures. A bird-spirit is easier to relate to than a car-spirit for a werewolf, for the bird-spirit has its roots in the natural world, just as a werewolf does. And so, throughout the cities of the world, werewolves find themselves facing spiritual threats that the lore passed to them by mentor and lodge gives very little, if any guidance about. Are we on the edge of the birth of a whole new Shadow from the remains of the old? Perhaps. And this new Shadow is one that the Uratha will only survive in by understanding both the human and wolf aspects of their nature.

The Power of Humanity

If there is one true issue that affects the lives of werewolves worldwide, it's humanity's growing ability to influence events on a global scale. The two world wars of the early 20th century showed just how terribly human action could affect the Shadow in a very short period of time. While conflicts on that scale have yet to be repeated, thankfully, it remains a constant danger.

However, day to day, the greater movement of humanity, and its increased ability to communicate widely has allowed objects, emotions and ideas to move around the world with ever-faster speeds. Inevitably, those changes have an influence on the spirit world, with alien spirits being introduced into unfamiliar environments and, during the course of the natural spirit predation, giving rise to strange hybrid spirits that don't yet fit into any of the existing courts.

The Shadow has always been an unpredictable place, and werewolves had to fight hard to build up a basic body of knowledge of it. But now, that knowledge can be out of date almost as soon as it is obtained. Ever faster mass transit and the growth of broadband brings new ideas, objects and people into even the most remote rural area, which once would have seen a degree of spiritual stability for decades at a time, if the local pack stayed vigilant. Now, even relatively young werewolves find themselves muttering the characteristic words of the old: "Everything changes so fast."

How can they possibly keep up? They have no choice. If they don't evolve, they're die. If they don't remain efficient predators, they'll become prey.

North America

Despite the popular conception that North America is all about big cities and there are certainly plenty of those in the area, the continent provides one of the most diverse sets of environments to the Forsaken of any continent on the planet. Dense urban centers and sprawling suburbs sit side by side with vast areas where one can travel long distances without coming across another human. With the diversity of landscape comes a diversity of packs and challenges. In the heart of New York City, a young pack might find a few city blocks enough of a challenge as a territory, while a Midwestern pack might claim a whole county. Packs may have to travel huge distances in the sub-arctic wildernesses of northern Canada, in cold that challenges even the Uratha's metabolism, while in the south of the continent, water can be a major issue (in a number of different ways) for packs with desert or swamp territories. Deserts, forests, mountains, plains and the densest of cities all co-exist in this huge expanse.

Yet, despite the range of environments or, perhaps because of it, the actual society of werewolves, such that it is, is remarkably homogenous. Indeed, the model of werewolf society presented in **Werewolf: The Forsaken** is most closely matched in North America. Territories are strictly adhered to, borders fiercely policed and inter-pack cooperation infrequent at best. Some of this strictness stems from the region's history, with packs coming westwards over the sea, by choice or by compulsion, from Europe and Africa, and claiming their territory fiercely, forcing those who followed to travel westwards in search of land they could claim. The packs that lived amongst the Native Americans had a much looser idea of territory, wandering over larger areas over a matter of months, in a similar manner as is still seen today in the centers of Africa and Australia. Such packs still do exist, and sometimes cause conflict with modern American packs, although these nomadic packs have grown increasing at moving through several territories undetected until longer after they have gone, their passage only betrayed by a lingering smell. When conflict occurs, it's usually because the traveling pack has found a spiritual problem in the resident pack's territory that the nomadic pack cannot ignore.

However, despite the variety of landscape across the continent, the dramatic diversity of spirit types across the huge geographical range of a continent seen in other parts of the world is largely absent in North America. This is truly the land of the mass

media, of the consumer and television and movie theaters and, even more so than Europe or Japan, the Internet. The leveling effect on United States culture, and with it people's perceptions and feelings of these media influencers has an inevitable effect on the spirit world. Certain ideas and emotions being thought and felt all over the nation at the same time, thanks to network television, have an effect on the world the other side of the Gauntlet more or less simultaneously. More than anywhere else on Earth, an event on one side of the continent can have an immediate and dramatic impact on the other side of the continent, thanks to the power of the media. This is particularly true of heavily media-influenced cities such as San Francisco, Miami and New York, where the spiritual choirs really are much the same. The further you move from the large coastal urban centers, the more distinctive the spiritual choirs become, with those in small, isolated towns often having very distinctive characteristics. The local spirits both influence and are influenced by the barroom and campfire myths and legends of the area.

A New Era

The North American continent has, for decades, been relatively lucky. The issues that the native packs have had to deal with have been small, and isolated. The large wars that ranged across Europe during the 20th century had no counterparts on United States soil. Natural disas ters, certainly within living memory, have been small and infrequent. The early years of the 21st century changed all that, with a major terrorist atrocity in New York and the near-destruction of New Orleans by the sea.

The waves of change that rolled through the *Hisil* in the aftermath of these events left the lo cal werewolves utterly unprepared. They hadn't dealt with disasters on this scale before, at leas, not within the lifetimes of any existing Uratha. Dozens of packs disappeared in the weeks after these disasters, as they proved unequal to the challenge. The years since have been a long struggle to reclaim territory and restore some semblance of order to the spirit world.

People who say "but more people are killed on the roads every day" are missing the point. It's the fact that a large number of deaths occurred simultaneously, in a short space of time, in the same place that makes the impact, certainly in a spiritual sense. The focus of these disasters becomes a fountain of resonant Essence, both drawing existing spirits to the area, and changing their very nature, and giving birth to new spirits conceived in the very heart of the tragedy. The spiritual influence can be felt long after the physi cal debris has been cleared away.

American werewolves are, frankly, not used to dealing with devastation on this scale. While their European cousins might have greater experience with such things, just calling them up and asking for a spot of advice runs counter to the Forsaken's fundamental nature. They have to relearn old skills, long forgotten, about how to manage disasters that strike the spirit world with such great force. Already, the reflections in the *Hisil* of New York City and New Orleans are all but unrecognizable to those who had gotten used to the old landscape. Unless the local packs, who often feel as if they are fighting tooth and claw just to stand still, step up, the repercussions of the tragic events in the physical realm will be felt in the spiritual one for a very long time to come.

Specific Concerns

Despite the general similarities of the spirit world in one part of the continent to that in another, North America has its fair share of distinctive concerns on both a local and nationwide basis. The following are a few of those:

Hot City Nights

Clashes between werewolves and the urban predators know as vampires seem slightly more common in North America than in other parts of the world. Key points within the region's urban centers, often bars and nightclubs, are often flashpoints between the blood-drinkers, who use these places as hunting grounds, and the Forsaken, who have to watch such places because of the strong Essence they generate as people's hopes, dreams and desires mix with alcohol and music to create a powerful brew, most appealing to all kinds of spirits. Relations between the two groups can range from non-aggression pacts, in which the two make every effort they can to stay out of each others' business, to open warfare for control of a territory. Groups of young werewolves and young vampires attempting to co-exist in a city environment are particularly prone to erupting into a supernatural version of gang warfare. While these conflicts do occur elsewhere in the world — Tokyo and London, in particular — the societal structure of United States cities makes the density of flashpoints greater, and the conflicts more common.



Hawaii

The islands that make up Hawaii, although technically a part of the USA, are very much a place unto themselves spiritually. The spirit world of the islands is quite unlike that of the continental USA. The fire courts are powerful here, and the whole region pays spiritual homage to Helios in a way that the local Forsaken have never fully fathomed. Admittedly, they do not possess the luxury of much time. Hawaii is more the preserve of the Fire-touched than the Forsaken, and conflict is frequent, fierce and often final for the Uratha involved. Claiming more territory, physically or intellectually, is the last thing on most packs' minds.

Murder Alleys

One spiritual manifestation that seems common in the USA, but which hasn't spread widely elsewhere in the world is the Murder Alley. Every town of any size seems to have a Murder Alley, a small street where multiple people have been killed and where, in the Hisil, spirits of death, murder, pain and violence cluster, feed and do everything in their powers to increase the body count of the alley. These areas seem particularly resistant to any form of spiritual cleansing, possibly because they're so fixed in the minds of the local population that driving the idea of them from people's minds would require wholesale brainwashing. Wholesale redevelopment of the area can do the trick, but not for long, as another old street elsewhere in the city takes on the same characteristics. Hopefully, though, it'll be in another pack's territory.

The Old Men (and Women) of the Woods

Another phenomenon that, while it can be found rarely around the world, is common in the United States and Canada is the hermit in the woods. Such people are the stuff of delicious rumor and gossip amongst children and somewhere between a useful warning and a real danger to their parents, but to werewolves, these people are something else: spirits that have found a regular means of passing across the Gauntlet. Such creatures may be Ridden who live full time in the physical realm or manifesting spirits that spend most of their time in the Hisil, only manifesting when people are around. These spirits are also disproportionately powerful, usually of no less than Jaggling power, and often more than

that. The area around their "home" in the woods (or swamp, or mountains; the idea is common to all wildernesses) is invariably a locus of some power, one that a pack would dearly like to get its paws on. These creatures can be malevolent, benevolent or just unconcerned with anything but their own purposes. Quite what those are, the Forsaken don't know. However, there is a suspicion that hermits act as some form of spiritual anchor between humanity, a race that grows ever more distant from the spirit world, and a time, long ago when it was much more aware of the larger consequences of its actions. Indeed, if the Forsaken have any major rivals in their roles as creatures that walk between the two world, it is in these unique, powerful creatures.

The Pure

The Tribes of the Moon are constantly on their guard for the presence of the so-called Pure all over the world, and North America is no exception. Where there is ongoing conflict, it is more often found in the rural areas of the continent, away from heavy human habitation. Neither side in the ages-old struggle particularly wants the most powerful military in the world to discover their existence, and overt battles in urban areas would make that all too likely. By inclination, apart from some very clever, and very successful packs of Ivory Claws, who often base their territories out of small communities whose population can easily be controlled and whose breeding habits watched, the Pure have the edge in the countryside and the Forsaken in the cities.

The non-Forsaken tribes are heavily active in Canada in particular, with the Fire-Touched waging an active war of extermination against the Forsaken in the Northwest Teritories (see below) as well as in Hawaii (see above).

With a few isolated examples, including Detroit, the Bale Hounds are rare, which makes them all the more challenging —and worrying — when they do surface.

The Battle for the North

The Northwest Territories of Canada have become one of the main skirmishing points between the Pure and the Forsaken, with the latter now primarily an urban force within the region. Packs that manage to carve out even small territories within the wilderness are assaulted again and again until they are finally driven out or, more often killed outright. The fighting has been so intense that the normal animosity toward neighboring packs has eased just a little in the area. The Pure have managed to divide and conquer once too often and so packs are prepared to cooperate with one another in extremis.

The Hosts

Generalizations about the Hosts are never easy. Each adult shartha is a strange mix of the raw impulses of their kind and the instincts and thought process of their merged hosts. Still, there's no doubt that urban life in North America provides plenty of opportunities for the Hosts to work beneath the notice of werewolves or other threats. The large homeless and transient population of many cities provides ample cover for disintegrating early Host bodies, and there are plenty of deserted buildings, basement and tunnels for the adult forms to take refuge in.

Host infestation is a simple fact of life for werewolves in most cities. The Azlu are particularly numerous on the West Coast, and they have succeeded in significantly strengthening the Gauntlet around Seattle, at the cost of many werewolf lives. The increasingly isolated Shadow of the city is also becoming increasingly chaotic, and surrounding areas are beginning to suffer as fugitives flee the area seeking a more permeable Gauntlet and better supplies of Essence.

Not surprisingly, the Beshilu have been all but driven from the city, too. However, that makes the city truly remarkable, for there are precious few cities that doesn't play host to a small swarm of these creatures. Those neighborhoods where respectable people don't go, but where young thrill-seekers and members of "alternative" sub-cultures seem to be comfortable? All too often, these are the early signs of a Rat Host infestation, and a thinning barrier between worlds. Should these creatures be too successful, the residents find their lives slipping into the worst trips imaginable.

The Caribbean

The islands of the Caribbean, a diverse collection of nations and dependencies of other countries, pose a challenge for the Forsaken.

The larger nations, such as Haiti, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and, of course, Cuba, hold many packs vying for territory, whose little "squabbles" can be more easily hidden in the political or criminal turmoil suffered by many of these islands. Conversely, though, that self-same turmoil acts as good cover for pretty much any of the threats the werewolves face, from Bale Hounds to the shartha, negating any benefit. Indeed, the werewolves often find themselves

dealing with heavily armed human gangs as much as supernatural threats. The power of humanity to cause massive spiritual impact when the behavior codes of civilization are, shall we say, a little more lax is immense.

However, the small islands with only a few thousand inhabitants are really troublesome. There are not enough werewolves in the world to cover these sorts of disparate territories efficiently, and, in patterns repeated through island groupings around the world, oftentimes packs have to consider multiple islands part of their territory or, if that's impractical, local packs take turns scouting small, unclaimed islands for threats that need dealing with. This arrangement has it advantages — occasional visitors can more easily pass themselves off as tourists or holiday-makers than those who visit every few weeks — but inevitably leads to conflict at some point. The Uratha are too naturally territorial to be able to endure such an arrangement without some form of struggle for dominance sooner or later. And, once in a while, those "skirmishes" that develop from that stress are actually a calculated attempt by a confident pack, which is growing in power, to add more land to the pack's own territory.

Haiti

Cause and effect are never clear-cut things in the World of Darkness. Haiti's recent slide from democracy into armed rebellion and political chaos is a case in point. Did the political situation attract the Beshilu into the country or did their endless gnawing on the wall between the worlds allow the spirits beyond to stoke emotions and conflict in a way that provided bountiful Essence? Whatever the truth, Haiti's werewolf population has been dangerously thinned by the influx of Rat Hosts, and the werewolves are hard-pressed to deal with them, the occasional outburst of armed conflict amongst humanity and the spirits leaping across the thinned Gauntlet to make things worse.

Gatherings to assess number and track territories still held have become more frequent, and at a recent such meeting, the elderly Irraka Marie-Maude Lespinass suggested that an appeal be made through lodges, mentors and tribal contacts for young werewolves who are desperately seeking territory of their own. She, of course, had already sent that very message, unbeknownst to her neighbors. Whether any werewolves will answer her call remains unknown, as does the reception they'll get from the hard-pressed incumbents should they arrive.

Central America

As for the Caribbean, so, too, Central America. The political stability of North America gives way to less democratic, less liberal political regimes, and with the change grows human misery and suffering. Certainly, the last decade has seen great steps forward in the democratic nature of these countries, and with it, the human condition has improved somewhat. Despite recent political unrest in comparatively stable nations such as Belize, armed struggled in the name of politics is becoming less common.

So much for the material side of the Gauntlet. As the Uratha well know, the damage from decades of unrest inflict on the spirit world does not heal nearly as quickly. Spirits of violence, of corruption, of greed and of ambition still hold considerable sway in the courts of the region, their choirs strong and still agitating where they can to create the Essence with the resonance they desire. The local Uratha are waging a war on three fronts: controlling the power of these courts in the Hisil, dealing with hithim that make the leap into the material world and a strong presence of Izidakh in the region.

Additional information on supernatural concerns in Mexico in particular is covered in **Shadows of Mexico**.

The Pure

What draws the Fire-Touched so strongly to the region? Similar to the Forsaken, the Pure have territorial issues of their own, and the strong presence of the Izidakh in South America means that younger cubs have to look elsewhere for hunting grounds of their own. The presence of already over-stretched native Forsaken is but an added bonus that adds to the tribe's hunting pleasure in the region. Ivory Claws are often found working behind the scenes, manipulating young political firebrands into ill-advised uprisings that both draw Forsaken packs into the open and usually lead to an unpleasant fate for the would-be revolutionary leader at the hands of werewolf or state police.

South America

From the dense jungles of the Amazon to the urban jungles of the cities of Latin America, the Uratha hunt. In the heart of the continent they stalk the jungles, dealing with the primeval spirits that haunt the light-deprived spaces under the canopy, facing off against the Spider Hosts attempting to deprive this verdant region of its spiritual sustenance and coping

with the massive changes wholesale clearing of the rainforest have on the spirit world.

Make no mistake: the Hisil of the Amazon Basin is like no other on the face of the planet. The biodiversity of this vast region is unparalleled, with a great proportion of the world's species to be found here. Many of these are unique. That can't help but be reflected in the Shadow of this region. Indeed, if there's any reflection of Pangaea still to be found in the modern world, it's here. And if the Forsaken need reminding that the words "Pangaea" and "Paradise" are not synonyms, it's here that they'll find that lesson. Imagine: take the greater proportion of the world's population and cram it into this area. What would you expect? Conflicts? Power struggles? Outright warfare along ethnic lines? Transfer that image to the spirit world, and you have a useful, if imperfect guide to the politics of the spirit courts of the Amazon Basin.

There is no more humble Half Moon than one who makes her territory here. She can devote her whole life to diplomacy among the spirit courts, and only scratch the surface of the webs of alliances, conflicts and betrayal that consume the choirs and descants that fill the region. Recent decades have not lessened the conflicts in any way. As the clear-cutting of the rainforest for agriculture or wood continues, more and more spirits are driven into other territories, and others makes the leap across the Gauntlet to prevent their birthing species following others into extinction. Their rivals are certainly not above crossing the Gauntlet and Riding humans to ensure the physical destruction of a rival court.

The Forsaken packs of this region are truly thrust into the frontline of the battle between the spirit courts, attempting to contain the conflicts and mitigate their worst effects. Right and wrong are difficult to quantify, and sometimes the only way to prevent the worst excess of the spirits is to ally (discreetly) with human industry. At others, human industry is itself the worst threat.

Toward the west and south of the continent, the spiritual tenor of the area changes. Populations thin out, as the lush vegetation gives way to the towering Andes to the west and the dry uplands of Patagonia and Atacama, the driest desert on Earth. In the miserable spiritual reflection of this area lurk the desperate remains of the spirit courts long since driven out of the Amazonian region. These creatures are pale shadows of themselves, often subsisting in small packs, hunting each other and any spiritual travelers for Essence and a chance to eke out their existence a little longer. Those spirits that survive for any length of time in the desert are tough, cunning and extremely vicious. Travelers, beware.

The cities of the region might seem like oases of calm by comparison, but they have their own warfare. In particular, many of the cities of South America have wretched slums and shantytowns associated with them. Some nations are worse than others, but the high level of international debt owned by many of these countries mean that their financial status — and hence the quality of life of its inhabitants — can change precipitously overnight, with subsequent dramatic impact on the Shadow Realm. Argentina in particular has seen an increase in people suffering financial distress after the economy melted down in the early 21st century. The consequences on the Shadow Realm were predictable: an upsurge in spirits feeding off the negative Essence of the inhabitants suffering and an influx of spirits. Wounds opened up in the worst affected areas, and some of them have yet to close. The country remains troubled by Bale Hounds even after a return to something approaching economic stability.

The Spirits of Buenos Aires

An interesting quirk of the capital city of Buenos Aires is the sub-culture around the tango. The dance, which was born in the brothels of the city in the 19th Century, bears precious little relation to the clichéd ballroom version seen in the Western world. Here, tango is an intense dance of desire, sadness and passion, with music to match. Naturally the milongas (venues where tango is danced) have become popular feeding grounds for spirits that appreciate Essence with those resonances. And thus, they can become hunting grounds for Bale Hounds, or particularly unpleasant Ridden. However, these venues seem to be an important part in the local population's happiness, as well, so simply sweeping them away is not an option. Packs with territories in the poorer parts of the city have to walk a very careful borderline in how they manage the spiritual effects of these places.

The Lost Territories

The barrio of Caracas in Venezuela has been a breeding ground for spirits born of the emotions associated with poverty, deprivation and suffering, and seems to be a magnet for Bale Hounds, as well. Werewolves whose life, pre-Change, was in the barrio display a notable tendency to be recruited by these corrupted wolves, and all too often a contained, organized territory is lost to the forces of the Wounds by a single packmember succumbing to the lures of



the Bale Hounds. The consequences on the pack's former territory are unpleasant indeed. Young packs are often assigned the task of retaking such territories, as existing packs with bordering territories find assaulting such an area too risky for the reward they get. Of course, should the young pack fail, the pack will often weaken the Bale Hounds enough for the experienced pack to make a serious incursion into the territories….

The Urban Spirit

There's also something of an apartheid at work in the spirit courts of the cities. Those spirits who can be considered "pure bred" — normally those of native plant and animal species, and the urban spirits born from human-made objects look down on the mestizos, the half-breed spirits that combine elements of both, such as the spirits of immigrant species or buildings that combine native and imported buildings methods.

Aztec Legacy

Festering in the heart of the Amazon region lie a number of Wounds that are centuries old now. The extermination of many of the indigenous peoples of South America, and the destruction of their culture, by the invading Spanish left Wounds in the structure of the local Hisil that show no signs of closing. As awe-inspiring as the ruins of these lost civilizations may be to tourists in the physical realm, the ruins' reflections are places of nightmare, home to spirits of fear and pain that take the forms of conquistadors from long ago. Time changes everything, though, and as the Aztec legends of blood-sacrifice and wholesale slaughter of captive spread through tourism, the character of these Wounds changes as well, with some of the Wounds' resident spirits taking on the form of Aztec nightmares and waging war on their conquistador cousins.

The werewolves of the region also find themselves in conflict with mages far more often than the werewolves would like. The Awakened humans seek secrets of lost Atlantis in the ruins of this fallen civilization, and see the Uratha as just another challenge in the mages' way. The Forsaken, on the other hand, know that the dedicated spiritual balance of the area is best left undisturbed by those who don not understand what they are doing. Such a clash of attitudes guarantees a clash in a more physical sense, too.

Europe

In the more than half a century since the last major war that raged across Europe, the Uratha of the continent have reached some form of stability. There are precious few areas of the continent that can genuinely be considered as unclaimed at this point. Those that do exist are often found in urban areas whose densities are growing at such a point that the incumbent packs often find their territories shrinking even as the number of threats they have to deal with rise. Many such packs hand over control of a couple of blocks to a young pack with ill-disguised relief, as the packs return to their own struggles.

This lack of available territory is rapidly giving the region's Uratha a bad name. Traveling packs of young European werewolves, encouraged by their elders, often seek to find themselves land elsewhere in the world. The arrival of a pack of young Europeans in a region is one of the few things that unites packs on other continents, as they seek to keep these territorial invaders at bay.

This, of course, is not to say that Europe does not have its own problems. With one or two notable exceptions — such as the always troublesome Balkans — the trouble spots are localized, with few real, continent-wide issues. Or, at least, so many of the incumbent packs think. A few of the more astute Ithaeur, especially amongst the Iron Masters, are beginning to wonder if significant new spiritual powers are arising in the area, born of the oldest and most densely urban region of the world. The werewolves of this region tend to be more familiar with a greater range of distinct spiritual descants then even their American or Japanese cousins, and are spotting a growing homogeneity among the descants spotted in each city's choir.

Worryingly, some of these growing descants seem less inclined to honor the old pacts with the Forsaken, and are even more hostile toward them than the older spirit choirs, placing ever harsher burdens on the Uratha in exchange for their aid or information, or resisting calls or binding with greater strength than expected. Whether this change is simply a result of their novel nature, or is a more fundamental rejection of a model of the world that these urban spirits do not accept, is still a matter of debate, and a growing sense of panic, amongst the werewolves have noticed.

Also, Europe can almost be seen as two distinct continents, divided by the long-gone Iron Curtain. On one side sits the counties of the "West," those on the western side of the Iron Curtain, and the other the former Soviet Bloc countries, whose economies and very societal structures are going through a period of profound change. And any such chance, with its accompanying cost in human suffering (and human opportunity) is bound to influence the Shadow.

While the political divisions engendered by the cold war are past, their impact on the Hisil and even on the people of the continent is far from history. The German people still deal with the economic impact of reunification on a daily basis, and the growing trend amongst East Germans for nostalgia about the communist era underlines the difficulties they face in this new, capitalist age. Similar struggles are being played out among all the former Soviet Bloc countries, now often referred to the "accession states" as they are accepted into the European Union. The clash between the austere and paranoid life the citizens in these countries once knew and the ruthless embrace of capitalism that some of the nation have adopted have left many people feeling either empowered or crushed, making the spiritual reflections of the urban landscape treacherous places riven by outbreaks of spiritual warfare.

On the ground, this means that the Uratha are forced into the role of spiritual peacekeepers, trying to prevent, or at least contain, bursts of conflict among the spirits that feed off the deprivations of the communist era and those spirits born of, and desperate to encourage, the new era.

The Pure

The Pure Tribes have a significant presence across the continent. The Predator Kings have a particular fondness for the mountainous regions of Scandinavia, which are still thinly populated with humanity, and ever likely to stay that way, if those master hunters continue to have their way. They're also often found in the less populated and heavily forested regions of Eastern Europe, and few packs that attempt to carve out territories from the wooded depths of the region last long.

The Hosts

The dense urban populations of Europe's cities provide fertile breeding grounds for the Hosts. It's much easier for the "quirks" of a Host to go unnoticed among the increasingly anonymous urban centers of the region, and thus build up significant power bases before the Forsaken have any clue that they're there.

The Beshilu find the old sewers, basements and alleys of Europe's oldest cities, particularly hospitable territory with plenty of rats and many, easily accessi-

ble humans, to make their lives particularly straightforward. The Rat Hosts are pretty much endemic in most large cities across the reason, and any pack that goes more than a year without some form of conflict with the Rat Hosts is either incredibly lucky or, more likely, pretty damn sloppy and storing up a world of hurt for themselves further down the line.

The Spider Hosts, on the other hand, seem locked in combat with city spirit choirs, or so it appears to many packs within the continent. Some even joke that where you find a Claimed from the city choir, then there must be an Azlu close at hand. This manifestation of the profound change the growth of the urban choirs is having of the established pattern of the past brings at least some comfort to the Forsaken, who can often bide their time and then strike when both sides are at their weakest.

The Battle Wounds

The two world wars that dominated the first half of the 20th century were the greatest conflicts in the history of the planet, with casual ties in the millions, and whole regions of Europe laid waste. Nigh on a century has passed since the outbreak of these hostilities, yet still the *Hisil* remembers. While some permanent Wounds re main at the sites of the worst atrocities, including the Somme and Dresden, packs that claim ter ritory in the areas of Austria, Germany, Poland, Russia and France that saw the heaviest conflicts are well aware of the fact that the spirit world seems to remember those battles and, worse, cannot truly forget. Landscapes in the Shadow Realm that once seemed controlled and cleansed of the worse excesses of the conflicts still sud denly convulse and bring forth reflections of battlefields decades gone. Spirit choirs that have been destroyed or driven from the area reappear unexpectedly, and in such numbers that it looks as if they never left.

The influence of these resurgent battle grounds isn't limited to the spirit world either. Whenever the *Hisil* has a flashback of this nature, tensions in the physical world rise, too. Racism spikes, and attacks on immigrants grow in fre quency. Extremist political parties gain support, to the despair of the generally centralist politi cians of the continent. Local grievances move from grumbles over a drink to outright violence.

The Uratha have realized that the spiritual damage inflicted is just too severe for them to deal with at the moment. Perhaps, somewhere, is the lost knowledge of Father Wolf that might allow them to finally resolve this past. With a rare display of co-operation, questing packs have formed across Europe and been dispatched into the Shadow to discover what they can, and bring back the Gifts, rites or knowledge needed to heal the scars in the spirits of the world. However, some of those questing packs are beginning to suspect, based on hard-won clues from powerful spirits, that the answer lies in the depths of the spirit world, an aspect werewolves rarely, if ever, visit: the mysterious protean realm known as the Underworld.

Toulouse

What happens when the Forsaken lose to the Azlu? Travel to Seattle, and you'll get a clue. Travel to the industrial regions of Toulouse and you'll find out. Not a single locus still exists within the city limits, and the local Gauntlet is many times stronger than anywhere else in the country. The few werewolves still resident in the city are forced to deal with large, but decreasing numbers of hithim luzak, who fled through the Gauntlet as the Azlu sealed it off, which occupies all their time. There's territory to be won back in this city, but it'll be a hard, hard fight.

The United Kingdom

If the history of Europe is a history of battles, suffering and, inevitably, Wounds, then that history is caught in microcosm in the United Kingdom. Underlying the fiction of the British character is a nation made up of four different nations, and under that fiction lies another level of races and cultures mashed together first by invasion inwards, then by immigration inwards as a result of empire-building. The Shadow remembers all this. The Shadow understands the truth behind the fiction and the tensions behind the facade. That leaves a challenge for the werewolves of this small island: a spirit world riven by conflicts, some of which have their roots in events a millennia ago. What can a young pack do in the face of such age-old struggles?

The state of the United Kingdom in the World of Darkness, particularly regarding Forsaken concerns, is covered in **Shadows of the UK**.

Berlin

In the time since the wall has come down, something has gone very wrong in Berlin. More than four decades of being all but two cities was enough to give Berlin two distinct feels in the Shadow as the lives of citizens in East and West Berlin went in utterly different directions. In the decades since unification, those two sections of the Shadow have been at open war with one another, each seeking to dominate the

other. The werewolves of the city have been hard-pressed to deal with the waves of spirits leaving the Hisil in fear, or as part of a strategy in the long battle. The spiritual war for Berlin shows no signs of abating, and as the ideological conflict between the former East and West Germans becomes a greater feature of life in the country, it might actually be intensifying.

Scandinavian Cities

For no clear reason, there's a significantly higher number of Bale Hounds haunting the streets of the Scandinavian cities, with Malmo, Oslo and Copenhagen particularly badly affected. While the disease often associated with these corrupt werewolves has not been much in evidence, the suicide rate and incidence of mental illness both betray their presence, as do the number of tooth-and-claw encounters local packs have had with them. The Forsaken of each of these cities have taken to forming a blessed pack every few years from newly Changed werewolves, who are not allowed to take territory, but who are allowed to move freely through other packs' territory hunting for the Asah Gadar.

Ukraine

Similar to many of the post-Soviet states in Eastern Europe, Ukraine has been locked in some form of political turmoil for years. However, the situation in this country has not been aided by a spirit of revenge crossing the Gauntlet and claiming a young politician called Gregor Muzychka whose family had suffered terribly at the hands of Russian troops over a period of decades. The Claimed Muzychka has grown understandably reclusive, even as his supporters grow in number, principally in his home city of Odessa. Just killing him is no longer an option; his influence must be negated and destroying the claimed would only increase it.

War of the Cities

Dear Emma,

I have no proof of what I'm about to suggest. I certainly haven't gathered enough evidence to confirm what I'm saying and the, uh, inhos pitable nature of our kind isn't going to make it easy. Certainly some tentative feelers I sent out to packs in the Manchester area were met with vigorous rebuffs, if you know what I mean.

Look, I'll get to the point. I think the spirit courts of the individual city spirit choirs across Europe are at war with each other. I've encoun tered battles between local urban spirits from Father London's choir battling invaders whom I'm almost certain hail from Frankfurt. It's happened too often to be a co-incidence. There's something going on here.

And it could be that the ruling spirits of London and Frankfurt are at war with one an other. Evidence? Well, there are those battles I've mentioned earlier. What other possible reason could there be for those spirits to be so far from home? And there's evidence of it in the Realm as well. The financial press is full of speculation that Frankfurt might rise to challenge London as a financial centre.

Yeah, I know the evidence is weak, but if this is the beginning of a new phenomenon, we need to be ready. It could be that the ages of the cities is a factor here; London and Frankfurt are ooooold by city spirit standards. That may be why we've spotted it when none of our kind in the US have seen anything similar. But I can't help feeling that we'll see this activity increasing. Once spirit choirs get antagonistic, they often stay that way until one choir is subsumed into the others

If only our kind kept better records. I'd love to know if we saw this kind of behavior a century or so ago when the outlying villages were being absorbed into London itself.

Anyway, spread the word and send anything you hear back to me. The Red Wolf alone knows what we'll do if I'm right, but forewarned is fore armed, right?

Yrs,

Karl

The Middle East

One way of looking at the Shadow is that it is the memory of the world and, just as with human memory, the past can influence the shape of the future. All over the globe, from the Wounds of the Amazon to the horrific spirit scars in Nagasaki, conflict leaves its mark, seemingly indelibly, on the spirit world. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Middle East. Wars that have their roots in events millennia old burst into new life and bring with them new death. Cities are built, destroyed and rebuilt time and again.

Many Forsaken are still prey to the human weakness as viewing history as a story moving forwards, toward some form of conclusion and seeing improvement as time passes. The Forsaken of the Middle East are faced to deal with futility on a daily basis, in the certain knowledge that history can be utterly circular, with whole generations refighting battles endured by

their ancestors. And so, life for most packs in this region isn't a hunt, except in the most basic sense: a hunt for the most basic essentials of survival. Wounds blister the landscape right across the Hisil in this part of the world, tainting human activity on every level and driving forward further conflict. Werewolves patrol the edges of these abominations, seeking to contain what lies within, but without real hope of dealing with it.

Something approaching a détente exists with the Spider Hosts here. When the Shadow is as utterly brutalized as it is in parts of the Middle East, then perhaps the only answer is sterilization: the separation of flesh and spirit utterly, in the hope of breaking the cycle. But then, perhaps this is part of the problem. Perhaps that separation is removing something essential from humanity, and leaving them in the grip of ideology without empathy. This is a land with more questions than answers.

This is also a land of predators. The nastier elements of humanity use the wars to prey upon the weakest of society, and the most powerful of spirits feed gluttonously on the abundant Essence generated by this abuse. The Predator Kings lurk around the edge of civilization, threatening to tear down every hard-worn step back from the brink. And underneath it all, the Beshilu gnaw at the very fabric of reality, threatening to send everything spinning into the numerous hungry Wounds in the world.

The Tribes of the Moon don't fight with each other very much in the Middle East. They can't afford to.

Iraq

A war zone isn't a comfortable place for a werewolf. You'd think that all the bloodshed and violence would suit werewolves just fine, but large numbers of heavily armored men, with itchy trigger fingers and some pretty serious technology in their hands, make for an uncomfortable time for creatures who prefer to stay under the radar of human consciousness.



However, as other parts of the Middle East, Iraq is just a damn mess. The mix of emotions bleeding into the Shadow has turned from a steady flow during the days of Saddam Hussein into a vast torrent as the violence has escalated in the years since his fall. Spirits of pain, suffering and all kinds of malicious emotion have been gorging themselves on the feast offered. Maybe they're stirring it up, too, but it's hard for any of the Uratha to say that for sure; humans are doing the job pretty well on their own there.

Some conflict has broken out among packs of Uratha who have followed in the wake of the military, often posing as "security consultants," who have a genuine desire to help out with the spiritual devastation sweeping the landscape. But these have been isolated incidents. So far, the growing chaos in the spirit world is challenge enough.

Africa

Africa is a curious continent, from a werewolf's perspective. From a human's point of view, Africa is a thoroughly troubled continent, with natural distances vying with human-made ones for the title of "most difficult" problem. Pop stars and politicians campaign for relief and aid for the area. Yet, from the Forsaken's viewpoint, Africa borders on the agreeable.

The reason? Biological and population density. The region lacks the biological density of the Amazon basin, or the human density of Europe or parts of Asia. Communities are isolated; territories are discreet and rarely contain too challenging a range of spirits. However, the major challenge the Tribes of the Moon do face is their own lack of density. Territories are often huge, with werewolf intervention in the spirit world purely done on a "troubleshooting" basis, particularly in the central belt of the continent. A pack's lack of connection with a local population can allow potential problems to go undetected for far too long, particularly when it comes to the Hosts and the Ridden.

Northern Africa

Life for werewolves in the northern section of the continent is, on the whole, not much different from that for werewolves in southern Europe. A substantially urban citizen base gives rise to many of the same spiritual problems in other cities around the world. There is an underlying religious tension in the region though, which manifests itself in different ways, mainly in government structures that resist the influence of radical branches of Islam. From the aggressively secular nature of Tunisia's government to the quasi-dictatorship of Libya's unelected revolutionary council, politics lives is the shadow of the Middle East, while sucking in influences from the Europe.

This leads to a diverse mix of spirits in the regions, and struggles within them that reflect the balance of the region without causing undue worry to the physical world. If there's a growing threat, it's the blind eye that local werewolves have turned to Beshilu populations at times. In contrast to general Uratha views, the werewolves of Africa have traditionally seen the thinning of the Gauntlet as a boon. This is especially true for those raised in rural human populations, who are more likely to subscribe to spirit-centric world views, which actively encourage truck between humanity and the spirit world.

Central Africa

Moving south into central Africa, the belt that includes the desert regions is sparsely occupied by both werewolves and humans. The packs that do make their home in this part of the world claim territories significantly larger than those found in other parts of the world. Indeed, territories often overlap somewhat, with two packs both considering an area on the extreme edge of both their territory as their own. Packs very rarely end up in conflict over this, though, because they rarely actually coincide with one another. Pack behavior in the central African region owes as much to the nomadic behavior of the werewolves' human ancestors as it does to their wolf blood. Packs tend to wander around their territory, using either a selection of homes across the area, or abandoning the idea of a fixed abode entirely and sleeping where they can. It can take them three months or more to cover the whole of their territory before starting the circuit again. If the two neighboring packs' circuits coincide, then there will be trouble. However, the odds of that are slight, and conflict usually remains contained to purposeful encroachments into territory.

While this style of living, with its laissez-faire approach to territorial boundaries and slow pace of scouting, tends to make Western werewolves break out in a cold sweat — how on earth do packs keep on top of their territories when they take so long to cover the whole of it? Well, in some measure, they don't. The relatively sparse populations mean that the pack can identify likely trouble spots — usually clustered around human settlements — and visit those more frequently. The rest of their territory doesn't really provide enough physical or spiritual sustenance for many of their foes.

However, when things go wrong, they really go wrong. Spiritual threats can built up unnoticed for months, and can sometimes grow out of the pack's ability to deal with before the pack even knows that the threat is there. The pack's neighbors are too far away to be any help, and often the first they know of the problem is the pack failing to show up at the tur for a pre-arranged gathering. Such occasions often lead to a grand hunt or [First Tongue name needed], as the gathered packs tear through the missing

pack's territory as quickly as possible to deal with the threat and, of course, to claim what they can of the territory before heading back to their own, extended boundaries.

Southern Africa

In contrast with the rest of the continent, southern Africa is a spiritual battleground to compete with the Middle East. For whatever reason — be it the lingering influence of European colonialism, the despotic atrocities committed in the area by the wide variety of post-colonial dictators in recent decades, a result of the institutionalized racism that dominated South Africa for much of the last century or some unknown spiritual influence that has tainted the region as far back as the werewolves can remember — the southernmost tip of the continent is a region of strife and constant struggle even by the standards of the Forsaken. To make matters worse, the second part of the Oath of the Moon is as much honored in the breaking as the observance. Packs are often formed on strict tribal lines, and territory is claimed in the name of the tribe just as much as the pack itself.

Werewolf visitors to the area — the few who make it out alive, that is — speculate that the region is on the verge of a conflict that would make the Brethren War look like a small-scale skirmish, and which might see the whole region collapse into a spiritual pit that could spread out and infect the whole continent or, worse, hand the region over to the Pure wholesale. Bad blood between packs has now taken on a heritage all its own, with squabbles over territory that are decades old being played and replayed by each succeeding generation of werewolves.

Indeed, it's just possible that the Forsaken themselves are a significant contributing force in the spiritual decline of the area.

Life on the Ocean Wave

The sea? You want to know about the sea as your territory? Boy, you're brand new, ain't ya? Look, get this through your head and get it in there good. There ain't no new idea under the sun. Any pack that grabs some land right by the sea tends to take a good patch of the sea, too. Truth be told, the pack tends to take far more than the pack can actually control, or at least claim some such thing. Who gonna say different, huh? Ain't like they got some neighbors on the sea side of their land jonesing for position, boy.

Mind you, that's not to say that some packs haven't claimed the sea as their own. I heard tell of packs operating off their old tramp steamer, or even a fancy yacht, if they've got the moolah. It's a hard life, though. We ain't built for swim ming, and we'll drown easy enough. The shit that hangs out in the Shadow of the sea ain't nothing to sneeze at, either, boy. Sure, you're pretty safe from the hosts and the Pure, damn their eyes, but there are some real fucked-up Ridden living down in those depths. You want to see a fisherman whose been claimed by a shark-spirit for the last five years?

Thought not, boy.

Take mah advice: leave the sea to the expert, and you and your little mates go carve yourselves out a patch of dirt instead.

Oceania

The area referred to as "Oceania" is not a continent as such, but an area equivalent in size to one, that contains the continent of Australia, the islands that make up New Zealand and a vast array of islands and island chains.

The diversity of this region makes it hard to apply the same sort of generalizations that we have for the other major landmasses. There is so little connection between a pack whose territory is a Micronesian island and a pack working the street of Darwin in Australia that broad statements are all but useless. Instead, we'll look at each of the major areas in turn.

The Island Chains

The islands of Oceania fall into three main groups: Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia. The size of individual parts range from millions of inhabitants in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, down to a few thousand in places like Nauru, Niue and Tuvalu. The Pitcairn Islands, nominally part of the United Kingdom on the other side of the world, can muster fewer than 100 inhabitants.

As one might expect with the low population densities, werewolves are not common here, and incomers are certainly not welcomed. While some packs not native to the area do manage to carve out positions for themselves here, they are treated with outright hostility by native packs and will end up socially isolated, even by werewolf standards.

Except on the large, more urbanized islands, which can support a handful of packs, territories tend to be contained to a single island, or a hand-

ful of very small islands. Policing these territories is hard work. They are geographically disparate, which means plenty of traveling, and the human populations are small and close-knit, so cleaving to the secrecy aspects of the Oath of the Moon is a challenge.

Young werewolves struggle to find territory here, and struggle even more to grow it. If your territory is a whole island, gaining more territory means claiming another island — a much bigger task than merely claiming an extra few square miles of territory already on your borders. Sometimes territories swap hands entirely, as a young, aggressive pack manages to drive an older pack off a large island and claim it for themselves, while the aging pack ends up with the young pack's old grounds as a consolation prize. Territories are ruthlessly policed in the area, and violations of the Oath of the Moon are unfortunately frequent.

Battles with Spirit-Claimed are common across all the island chains, with cults around such beings the rule, rather than the exception. If a Claimed isn't spotted and rooted out early, a pack on a smaller island can quickly see the whole resident population's mood turn against the Uratha's human identities. The indigenous religions of the region positively encourage communication and bartering between humanity and the spirit world, and, despite many attempts by urban werewolves to move the inhabitants to a safer, more rational-world view, resurgence in belief in the old ways are common, and open the way for spirits to gain a foothold in the material realm with depressing frequency.

Conversely, the Pure are not widely seen among the island chains. There's at least one pack of Predator Kings at work in the islands, living on uninhabited islands, and striking at both fishing and tourist boats whenever the opportunity arises. However, the Ivory Claws achieved a remarkable coup five years ago, slaughtering the resident Forsaken packs of French Polynesia and claiming the islands, and several others around, for their own. The Forsaken have yet to make any significant in roads in reclaiming that territory.

Lords of the Sea

A small group of Spirit-Claimed, who have been possessed by aquatic-spirits of various forms, have assembled a significant cult around themselves. The Claimed themselves live in the sea, but their followers live a nomadic life on the ocean, raiding shore communities and other boats for supplies, recruits and whatever else they can lay their hands on. Clashes between the group and the Forsaken have been, so far, rare, but as the cult grows, a larger conflict is inevitable.

Australia

Australia is by far the biggest land mass in Oceania, and also the center of Forsaken activity in the region. The werewolves of the region are split into two distinct groups. The groups aren't particularly hostile (or, indeed, friendly) but just have very different experiences of the hunt in their respective territories.

A pack in one of Australia's great coastal cities lives a life much the same as that of a pack in Western Europe or the United States. These are cities on the cutting edge of media and technology just as their counterparts are in the northern hemisphere. The use of English as the main language means a degree of commonality of media, technology and ideas, which means the spirit world is broadly the same, with similar choirs of spirits dominating. Their battles are with the Beshilu and the Spirit-Ridden that lurk in the dark places of the city. Thanks to modern technology, the werewolves' communication and lodge links are more likely to be with werewolves in other parts of the world than with the Forsaken who claim land in the Outback.

Where the continent is truly different is in the vast wilderness of the Outback that dominates the central part of the continent. The Gauntlet is different in the Outback. Not lower — although that's certainly the case in some places — but just more fluid. The strength of the Gauntlet shifts up and down unpredictably, with the ease of stepping sideways and loci appearing and disappearing constantly. This makes life very different for packs that claim territory in the area. They have to take a more fluid approach to entering the Shadow Realm. While it's just as dangerous to them as to any other werewolf, there may be times when it's straightforward to cross over (which is not always a boon, as spirits can just as easily travel the other way) and sometimes it's all but impossible. Australian werewolves are renowned for their knowledge of loci and shaping them, a body of learning gathered out of simple necessity. The region is home to a greater concentration of members of the Lodge of Two Worlds, a lodge that specializes in the transit between the physical and spiritual world, than any other part of the world.

While, at first glance, this area might seem like prime hunting territory for the Azlu, with the sparse population, 3,000 species of spider and the challenge of a often weak Gauntlet, the reverse is usually true. The Spider Hosts are more often found in the south

and east of the country, and tend to avoid the central region as much as they possibly can. The Forsaken have no idea why, and the Azlu certainly aren't volunteering the information. The Rat Hosts throw themselves into the area on occasions, but seem to get bored and move on. "What's the best way to deal with the Beshilu?" "Wait" is a common joke among Australian werewolves, although it's an idea more utterly ignored than followed. A hunt is a hunt, after all.

The Pure are rarely seen in the cities of Australia, with the Forsaken more likely to come into conflict with the urban vampire population than the other werewolves. However, out of the cities, the Pure are common and aggressive, seeing the Forsaken as intruders into a world that should rightfully be the Pure's. Territories are won and lost on a weekly basis across the continent, as the Pure and Forsaken tribes compete for the spiritual access that the unusual Gauntlet of the Outback gives them. The humans who live in the towns and villages live in fear of the cries of "dingos" — Lunacy at work — and the attacks on isolated humans that sometimes follow. A few towns seem strangely immune to such attacks, but the few werewolves who have tried building territories out of such places have suffered rapid deaths at the hands of the Ivory Claws who make their homes in such places.

Worryingly, Bale Hounds seem to arise in waves right across the Outback, often coinciding with periods when any problems during the process of stepping sideways will dump the werewolf in something akin to a shoal between the worlds. A few Forsaken have put forward the idea that the unusual nature of reality in the center of the continent isn't just a place where the separation of spirit and flesh never completed as it did elsewhere into the world, but signs of severe spiritual disruption on a scale that the Forsaken have yet to spot, with the rise of the Bale Hounds and the missteps sideways hinting at the presence of a more sinister spiritual aspect to the region that the Forsaken can only catch sight of from the corners of their eyes. This theory, dismissed by many, makes a discomforting sense to others. After all, if the Azlu avoid the region, then maybe there really is something that the Forsaken know nothing of out there somewhere.

New Zealand

Although nominally part of the same continent as Australia, New Zealand is very much its own place spiritually. Its long isolation from the rest of the world, because of its geographical position, means that 80% of the species found on the islands are only found in New Zealand itself. Not surprisingly, that diversity and difference is reflected in the Hisil, too, with spirit choirs found here that are unknown anywhere else in the world.

While the facts of territorial life are much the same here as anywhere else in the world, there are a couple of significant points of difference. Firstly, the Dead Choirs (see below) are a threat found nowhere else in the Hisil. And secondly, the existence of unique spirit choirs means that there are unique Gifts to be had in these islands, making it a destination for particularly ambitious Uratha who seek powers that others have yet to discover. Such power-seekers rarely succeed, because their hunt plunges them into one of the most significant spiritual cold wars waging in the world.

When humankind came to New Zealand, which happened in two main waves, humans brought with them numerous species that were not native to the islands. The native species have never allowed these incomers to fully integrate. Skirmishes still occur between "incomer" choirs and those of the native species, centuries after their first arrival. While it's hard for even the most experienced of the spirit-talkers to completely unravel the political structures of the spirit world, it seems clear that there are either two major courts across New Zealand, reflecting the incomer species and the native ones, or two broad alliances of smaller courts, which has much the same affect. The impact of this has spread well beyond the spirit choirs born of animal species. Even plant and inanimate object choirs seem to owe some form of allegiance to one court or the other. While individual spirits might show no overt preference, urban spirits certainly seem to be less hostile toward incomer spirits, and the reverse is true of rural spirits. This extends to the werewolves, too, with packs whose territory is predominantly urban getting more cooperation (relatively speaking) from incomer spirits and the rural packs finding it easier to deal with native spirits.

The Dead Choirs

The "discovery" of New Zealand by humankind has not been kind to one of the most isolated ecosystems on Earth. The history of the last few centuries has been the story of the steady extinction of large numbers of species, seeing the end of creatures found nowhere else on the face of the planet. This spells disaster for the spirit descants born of these species,

which face a future with no sustenance from the living creatures that gave birth to them. In most other parts of the world that have suffered this degree of ecological change, the spiritual survivors have either evolved into generic versions of the species they once represented, or been wiped out entirely.

In New Zealand, things have turned out rather differently. The Dead Choirs are a ruthless predatory force that sweeps across the Hisil of both North and South Island, hunting other spirits in vast packs. Ironically, the Dead Choirs' depredations do reflect the very harm that was done to their species in the physical realm. These creatures no longer resemble what they once were. Extended periods of absorbing Essence from a wide variety of sources have made each member of these Dead Choirs a unique spiritual being in its own right — and not in a good way. Their forms are truly monstrous, reflecting a ragbag selection of features and characteristics, which are coupled with some utterly unexpected influences.

A visit to a pack's territory by members of a Dead Choir is something to be feared, because it cannot be prepared for.

Antarctica

Heh. That's good. So you're going to head south, and claim territory in the frozen south, are you, kids? Well, that's just dandy. And why'd you be wanting to do something like that?

Oooh. The challenge of the unknown. Great. So plumbing the depths of the Shadow right here isn't good enough for you? Listen, you jumped-up little cub, there's more in the Shadow of your own backyard that you'll never know or under stand that you'll ever find in the frozen south. The Shadow and the Realm reflect each other right? A big mess of bright white nothing on one side is a big mess of bright white on the other. The spirits you find there are starved little crit ters, not likely to be much trouble to anyone.

So, if you're linking for bound spirits from the depths of time or great mysteries from the past, look elsewhere. The place is as devoid of spiritual life as it is living creatures. If you want to spend your time doing chiminage for penguin-spirits, that's your call, but I've never seen any great Gifts taught by their choirs.

Oh, there's some mad Ghost Wolves who eke out something like a living hunting through those lands. But I bet you won't find many Hosts there to fight. And I bet you the Pure aren't stupid enough to go there, either.

Mind you, you hear rumors, don't cha? About survey bases being found abandoned, with the scientist missing and signs of a struggle. Probably just talk. Nah, I say you guys are better trying to find a small patch of ground to call your own right here.

Right?

Asia

Asia (or the eastern end of the Eurasian continent, if you prefer) is the largest landmass in the world, and contains within it a diversity of culture, belief and politics that makes the rest of the world look somehow bereft of interest. Muslim countries nestle next to Buddhist and Hindu nations. Socialist governments sit adjacent to military dictatorships and newly minted capitalist democracies. The climate ranges from arid heat to frozen tundra. And the brewing conflicts within the continent spill over into the lives of the Forsaken and the Shadow world.

Russia and the Post-Soviet States

The very northern part of the continent is dominated by Russia. In the World of Darkness, countries in the grip of a recovery, or even a rival, seem all too rare. Yet, on first glance, that is exactly what Russia appears to be. The communist days are long gone, and the USSR — an empire by any other name — has been replaced by complete independence for some countries, federation for others and, in one or two cases, an unhappy forced attachment to Russia, as a proportion of the population of Chechnya claim is the case.

Step through the Gauntlet, and the picture of recovery wavers a little. The spiritual damage of the communist era is till evident, and only the very first signs of healing are visible now. Wounds fester in the landscape at the sites of the worst atrocities of the Stalinist regime and even the battles of World War II that preceded them. Few werewolves attempt to claim a Wound as their own territory, choosing instead to take land that borders one, and attempt to reclaim progressively more, step by step, battle by battle. Perhaps, in time, two packs will meet in the middle, the Wound will pass from the Shadow, and rivalries will increase but, for now, there is work enough.

In the wider sense, despite the political conflict and economic difficulties experience, the post-Soviet states have a palpable sense of hope, a belief that the world is improving. It cannot last. The grim reality of

life in the World of Darkness will eventually reassert itself, but the Uratha are making hay while the sun shines, breaking the power bases of the spirit courts that grew under the oppression of the communist era and helping the new courts born from the rising positive energy of the population achieve something resembling equity with their old rivals. Not all werewolves are so pleased to see things changing, though. The Pure are becoming a force to be reckoned with, right across the northwestern part of Asia, seeking to overturn the progress within the political structure of the region and brew conflict between humanity once more.

The Azlu, too, are on the move. They miss the Gauntlet strengthening that came with the suppression of religions belief in the Soviet era, and seek to undo the weakening of it wrought by greater rights to worship in recent years.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan is another country deeply scarred by decades of warfare. The recent battle by United States and European forces to eliminate the ruling Islamic Taliban and impose democracy is just the latest trauma to face a country that only a few decades ago was a civilized nation with values akin to those of Europe or the United States. The patch from mini-skirted women in universities in the 1960s to burqa-clad women denied education in the earliest years of the 21st century was swift and bloody. The Hisil of the country is pocked with small Wounds, which have yet to establish themselves deeply. The worst and deepest date back to the Russian invasion in the 1980s, and if they're not dealt with soon, they will soon establish themselves as a permanent feature of the Shadow.

Poppy-growing, ruthlessly suppressed under the Taliban, has quickly returned as a way of life in the new Afghanistan. The local werewolves, when they have time away from the day-to-day struggles of life in a war zone, suspect that there might be more to this than the economic boon of growing something that, as heroin, will bring in big money. Tentative contacts between local packs and a pack that traveled with the US military has allowed an information exchange about the drug courts that are developing in US cities with the heaviest drug use and the local poppy-spirits. More troubling, the werewolves had seen both sides answering to spirits largely unfamiliar to them. With several centuries of widespread drug abuse behind humanity, a spirit court of considerable puissance is now resident deep in the Shadow, and similar to all such courts, in very interested in ensuring its own survival.

India and Pakistan

Like two angry neighbors, India and Pakistan glower at one another over fence of an ill-defined border. Yet, despite their political differences, and differences between powers with nuclear arms should not be underestimated, there are more points of commonality between these nations than either would acknowledge. Both are densely populated with urban areas where the immensely rich rub up against the heart-wrenchingly poor. A Western businessman in his five-star hotel can look out of his window and see whole families living in spaces many times smaller than his room. Such deprivation breeds resentment, anger and desperation and creature spiritual resonance of that in the Shadow. Conversely, the richest areas of cities can be areas of great culture, learning and beauty. Local Uratha rarely pass judgment on the stratas of human society evident in the region (many of them still feeling attachment to the society of their birth, after all). Instead they concentrate on what they do best: keeping balance between the negative and positive elements of the spiritual landscape. If anything, they police the slums with a more vicious edge than they do the rich areas, as all too often a shartha or a spirit fugitive can hide among the anonymous masses, feeding or moving from host to host until they have gained enough power to become a real threat.

China

Many Western werewolves expect China to be a spiritual battleground. With the decline of Russia as a world power, China has taken some of its status as the great threat, both politically and economically, to the West. Yet, talk to the Forsaken of the region, and you get an entirely different picture. The communist regime in the country may not be to Western tastes, but it has brought to an end centuries of internecine warfare among the many peoples who make up what is now known as China. The Uratha have been able to use the period of relative stability among the human population to start turning around what was once the very spiritual turmoil many think still exist, and bring the Hisil into greater balance.

However, the region is not without strife, as a cursory visit to the Hisil of Tiananmen Square, where a protest was brutally put down in the 1980s, makes that clear, as does the Shadow of countries "claimed" by China, including Tibet and Taiwan.

The werewolves of these countries are painfully aware of the ongoing damage done by the oppression these areas and the potential for long-term spiritual harm.

And deeper, previously undetected problems have become apparent, as the Gobi Desert, found in the north of the country, starts to expand. Despite attempts by both the mundane government of China and the werewolves of the region, to check the advance, the desert continues to expand year after year. What's worse is that the areas the desert claims become spiritually dead, wastelands in the Shadow devoid of any presences, positive or negative. Packs fleeing territory that has been rendered useless have caused considerable conflict in the areas around the desert, preventing any form of coordinated activity to understand the changes.



Korea

Caught between more powerful neighbors, and traditional enemies, China and Japan, the island nation of Korea, once a stable and ancient civilization, with ordered, hierarchical spirit courts to match, has become a nightmare. The country is spilt into two, mutually antagonistic nations, North and South Korea. The two erupted into war in the middle of the 20th century, and time has done little to disperse the hostilities in the decades since. Severely damaged areas litter the Shadow in the hinterlands between the two nations, and, while they are not yet Wounds, given many more years of skirmishing and hostility, they soon will be. The Forsaken's attempts to contain the damage being done are severely hampered by antagonistic behaviors left over from pre-Change days. North and South Korean packs often spend more time trying to win territory from each other than addressing the very real spiritual problems in their existing land.

Japan

Similar to many island chains, Japan has a spiritual landscape all its own. Visiting the Japanese Hisil is a profoundly disorientating experience for a non-native werewolf, as she is confronted with a weird mish-mash of spirit types. The Japanese penchant for cultural and intellectually mash-ups has given the local spirit population a tendency to merge in unusual and unpredictable ways. In the rest of the world, spirits that are bastard offspring are looked down upon by other spirits. Here, they are positively revered. However, the madcap, almost gaudy aspect of the urban Shadow disguises a ruthless predatory nature among the local spirits, which will happily hunt and consume other spirits just to add an element to their

own makeup they feel they lack. An area of the city of Tokyo, several blocks in size, has become almost a no-go zone for local werewolves since a member of the local pack was absorbed by a powerful Jaggling in the Hisil. She proceeded to slaughter her pack, and now rules a small cult of women, all of whom have been Claimed by one of these hybrid spirits.

The Nuclear Wounds

The other feature of Japan's Shadow that never escapes notice is the presence of possible the two worst Wounds on the planet. The cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were all but destroyed during World War II when the only two nuclear devices to have been used in anger against civilian populations were dropped. While both cities have been rebuilt, the spiritual Wound caused by the deaths of tens of thousands of people in a matter of minutes has never healed. No packs claim territory in the cities at the present, as the Wounds' spiritual influence is such that packs that attempt to do so either die, retreat or become Bale Hounds in a matter of weeks.

The Western Pacific Rim

The countries of southeast Asia, which lie on the Pacific coast, may contain the seeds of a new era for the world, and signs of that are easily found in the Shadow and in the physical realm. Even as the great cities of the region grow an a rate unseen in other parts of the world, their economies boom as their service industries steal business for the expensive, unwieldy economies of the West, the urban spirit courts in the region grow in power, even accepting immigrant spirits from declining cities elsewhere in the world.

Of course, the Pure, and the Predator Kings in particular, are less than delighted by this idea. A string of unsolved, brutal murders in Kuala Lumpur, Taichung and Manila are just the harbingers of what is like to be an extended campaign by those fearsome predators to prevent the region falling further to the forces of capitalism and urbanization.

Legacy of the Tsunami

In late 2004 and then again in mid-2006, giant waves, tsunamis, were triggered by undersea earthquakes, causing widespread property damage and wholesale loss of life right across the Pacific Rim. Spiritual devastation followed in its wake, humbling many of the spirit courts, particularly those that draw their power from urban areas.

The spirit courts of the Water Choirs now hold significant power over the other choirs in the region, which pay homage in quite genuine fear of the Water Choirs' wrath. The wholesale devastation caused by the great wave destroyed vegetation and urban areas. If any court still resists, it's the animal court. The wildlife population was not nearly as badly hit by the wave as the human population. Senses that humans have long forgotten, but which the Uratha use every day, alerted many animals to the coming wave, giving them time to escape to the high ground.

These changes in the Shadow have yet to affect the material realm in a significant way. But no spiritual change can go on without some physical reflection, and the canniest packs are keeping a careful eye on the new balance of power.



The Hunt Is On

Savage predators and raging beasts, the Uratha — *werewolves* — hunt the mad spirits and vermin hosts who would subject the world to their dominion. But the Forsaken are hunted as well, by fellow werewolves who blame them for their cursed state and by the spirit dukes who simply want their predators eliminated. Join the hunt with the complete line of **Werewolf: The Forsaken™** products.

The World of Darkness® Rulebook
(WWP55000; ISBN 1-58846-476-8; $19.99 US)
The central product for all World of Darkness games, this book presents the complete Storytelling System game mechanic, everything for creating mortal characters, and details on ghosts.
All **Werewolf: The Forsaken™** titles draw on the systems in this rulebook.

.Lodges: The Faithful™
(WWP30101; ISBN 1-58846-330-3; $26.99 US)

Blood of the Wolf™
(WWP30301; ISBN 1-58846-329-X; $26.99 US)

Lore of the Forsaken™
(WWP30100; ISBN 1-58846-327-3; $26.99 US)

Hunting Ground: The Rockies™
(WWP30200; ISBN 1-58846-325-7; $26.99 US)

Predators™
(WWP30300; ISBN 1-58846-326-5; $12.99 US)

Blasphemies™
(WWP30303; ISBN 1-58846-332-X; $26.99; February)

Territories™
(WWP30304; ISBN 1-58846-333-8; $26.99; April)

Werewolf: The Forsaken™
(WWP25000; ISBN 1-58846-247-1; $34.99 US)
The bible for all chronicles of the Uratha, **Werewolf: The Forsaken** includes detailed rules for werewolves, a comprehensive exploration of their history, tribes, auspices and supernatural powers, along with details on the spirits of the Shadow Realm and a starting setting for your chronicle

Shadows of the United Kingdom™
(WWP30202; ISBN 1-58846-334-6; $29.99; June)

Skinchangers™
(WWP30305; ISBN 1-58846-335-4; $24.99; August)

Lodges: the Splintered™
(WWP30102; ISBN 1-58846-337-0; $26.99; October)

The Pure™
(WWP30110; ISBN 1-58846-336-2; $29.99; December)

Werewolf: The Forsaken Character Sheet Pad™
(WWP30702; ISBN 1-58846-594-2; $9.99 US)

Werewolf: The Forsaken Storyteller's Screen™
(WWP30703; ISBN 1-58846-593-4 $14.99 US)



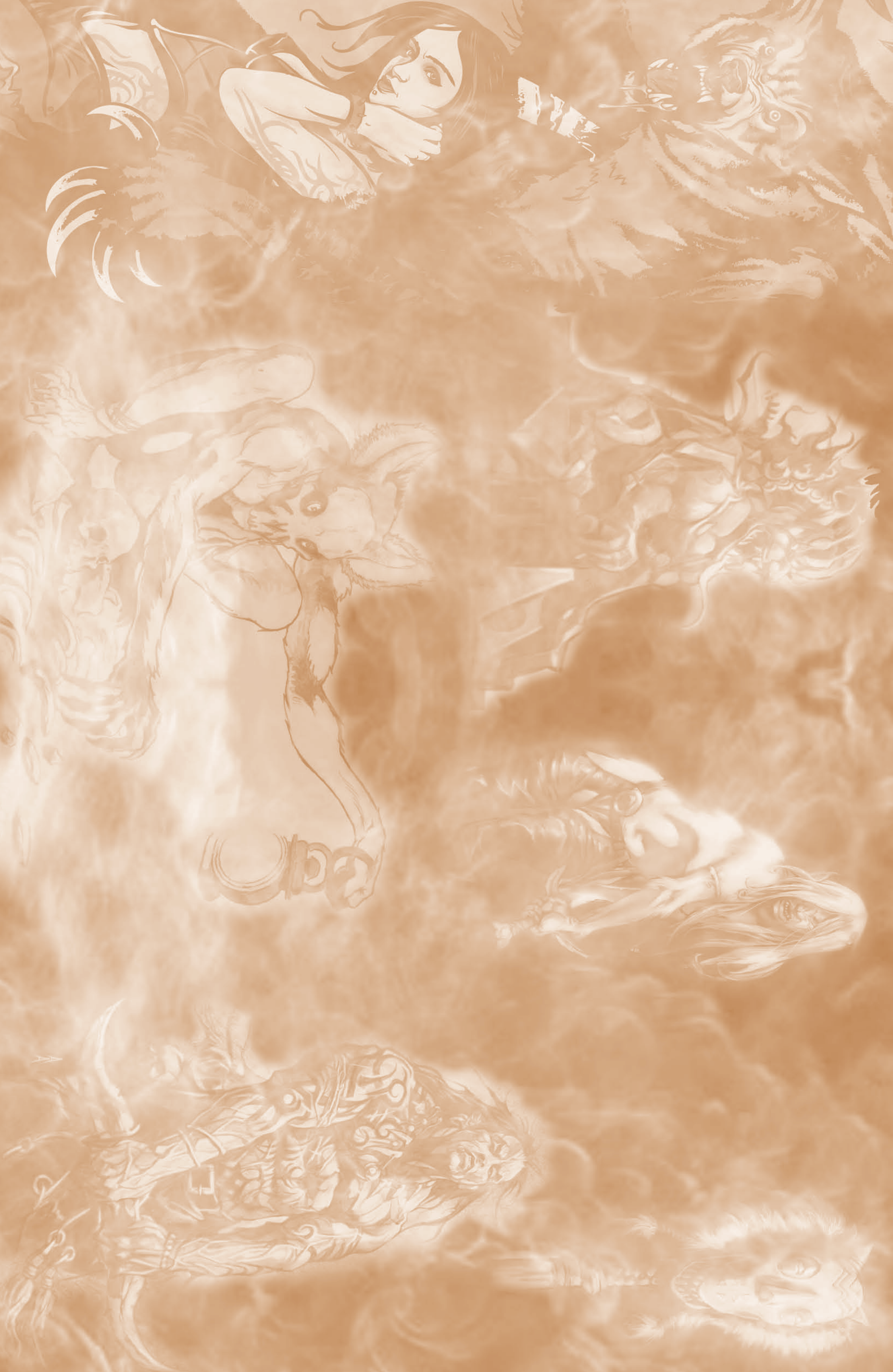
TO FIND A LOCAL RETAILER OR ORDER ONLINE:

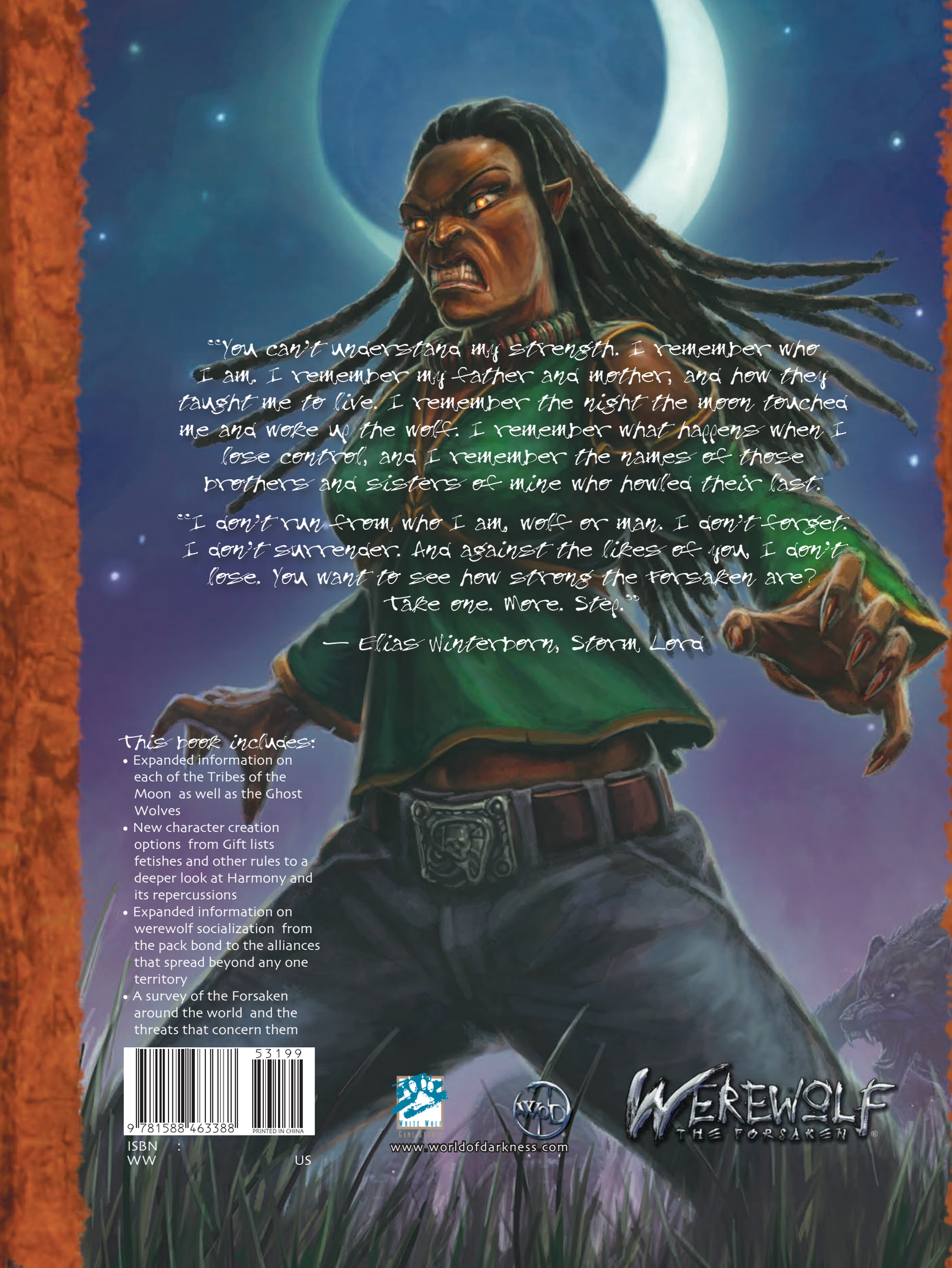
WWW.WORLDOFDARKNESS.COM



White Wolf, Vampire and World of Darkness are registered trademarks of White Wolf, Inc. Werewolf the Forsaken and all other indicated titles are trademarks of White Wolf, Inc. All rights reserved.


CHANGELING
COMING IN 2007





"You can't understand my strength. I remember who I am. I remember my father and mother, and how they taught me to live. I remember the night the moon touched me and woke up the wolf. I remember what happens when I lose control, and I remember the names of those brothers and sisters of mine who howled their last.

"I don't run from who I am, wolf or man. I don't forget. I don't surrender. And against the likes of you, I don't lose. You want to see how strong the Forsaken are? Take one. More. Step."

— Elias Winterborn, Storm Lord

This book includes:

- Expanded information on each of the Tribes of the Moon as well as the Ghost Wolves
- New character creation options from Gift lists fetishes and other rules to a deeper look at Harmony and its repercussions
- Expanded information on werewolf socialization from the pack bond to the alliances that spread beyond any one territory
- A survey of the Forsaken around the world and the threats that concern them

53199
9 781588 463388
PRINTED IN CHINA
ISBN :
WW US
www.worldofdarkness.com

WEREWOLF THE FORSAKEN®